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ELIZABETH ASHTON, SCHOOL OF EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF DURHAM

VALUES EDUCATION THROUGH THE PURSUIT OF KNOWLEDGE: THE
SIGNIFICANCE OF METAPHOR FOR KEY STAGE TWO CHILDREN, WITH
PARTICULAR EMPHASIS ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION.

DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY, 1996.

ABSTRACT

The first section of the thesis provides an investigation of the theoretical background which has been influential for theories concerning the nature of childhood and the role of metaphor in the communication process. The analysis begins by examining the writings of Rousseau, moving to an investigation of the positivist movement and the significance of both for the work of Jean Piaget. The final chapter of the section provides discussion of theories of metaphor. It is shown how positivism has been influential in forming narrow perceptions which, by limiting definitions to those based on substitution theories, has obscured the wider significance of metaphor for thought and values formation. A new theory of metaphor is then presented.

In the second section data is analysed which suggests the experiences and concerns of childhood do not differ significantly from those of adults: the difference is one of content, rather than variety. Basic metaphorical structures are found to underlie the way in which people - children and adults - reason in attempts both to understand and formulate values and knowledge. The significance of metaphorical mapping networks in thought processes is examined. The final chapter of the section provides data analysis which investigates children's ability to learn how to interpret and create novel metaphors, which can enrich their thinking and language beyond conventional usage.

The significance of the theoretical background analysed in the opening section lies in the encouragement it gave to misleading assumptions concerning childhood and the learning process. Religious education in primary education is examined as an example of this, focusing on the work of Goldman which was based on Piagetian theory. His conclusions are examined critically and compared with analysis of data collected in the primary classroom. It is argued that Goldman accepted Piaget's theories uncritically and when he applied them to religious education, they contributed to serious underestimations being made of pupils' ability for learning to understand the significance of religion for everyday life. Recommendations include the urgent need for a reassessment of expectations of primary school children's intellectual, creative capacity and the necessity of selecting lesson material which, whilst beginning with their daily concerns and interests, extends children's thought and reflection beyond both.

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1996



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DECLARATION.

No part of this thesis has been submitted for a degree in this or any other University.

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INTRODUCTION

VALUES LEADING TO KNOWLEDGE: SOME OPPOSING
PERSPECTIVES0.00 The Debate.

Debate concerning values occupies the attention of government, religious bodies, academic publications, curriculum materials for schools, the media and popular opinion generally. Publications by the National Curriculum Council (1993) and OFSTED (1994) identify values as being linked closely with pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development, the interest shown reflecting current concerns that thought on these issues requires clarification. That in the eyes of some prominent leaders values held by society generally are presently causing great consternation and alarm is exemplified by the Archbishop of Canterbury's call for a major debate into the nation's spiritual and moral life (reported on B.B.C. television, 5th July, 1996).

Whenever violence takes place - particularly against the innocent - the question of values is drawn into subsequent discussion, whether nationally or locally. There seem to be two distinct varieties of values, namely those which constitute a criminal act if offended against, whilst others include moral misdemeanours which, although not criminal acts in themselves, are nevertheless frowned upon by some as being unhelpful - perhaps even harmful - particularly for the unsuspecting.

Both types of value were operating in the following incident which is unlikely to reach national headlines. It concerns a young woman who was recently found guilty of doctoring National Lottery scratch cards, with the result that every time she entered her local newsagents' shop she claimed a prize (*News Guardian*, 20th June, 1996). Her punishment was a fine of £160, one hundred and twenty hours community service and six months on probation. This lady was guilty of breaking the rules of the game and as a result had to be punished. A fundamental value of the activity had been contravened. An element of unfairness towards other gamblers would have been permitted if her conduct had not been condemned.

The second type of value is quite different because it cannot be *broken* in the sense that there is no rule against buying scratch cards and gambling one's own money. However, the game could be deemed immoral by some who saw an exploitation of vulnerable members of society by the encouragement given to gamble. The temptation of huge amounts of money as prizes, leading to unrealistic, romantic notions of how winning would enhance life's quality could lead to irresponsible attitudes generally. The point being suggested is that, however attractive romantic ideas might be concerning what would be *wonderful* rather than *probable* the world will retain *its own reality* (Babbitt 1962 edition: 18). Those imbued with romantic notions will be vulnerable in the face of

this reality and certain to become either disillusioned, wiser or long-suffering.

This thesis is concerned with the second type of values definition, values of the type which are not enforced by law and yet which, if not recognised and understood, can influence and determine the way in which society operates, often with disastrous results both corporately and personally.

What has been found of particular significance throughout this research is growing insight into how values dominate understanding and exert influence in ways which can be deceptive because of their conditioning powers, particularly if - even if they have faced ridicule - they manage to survive by masquerading in the disguise of some more outwardly seductive dogma, creating havoc for as long as they reign.

0.01 The Question of Definitions.

a) *Values and Logic.*

Defining values is, apparently, a very difficult task. They have been argued as being, for example, things which 'are good in themselves' (Halstead 1996: 5), 'qualities of things' (Dunlop 1996: 69), 'personal autonomy, respect for persons, impartiality and pursuit of truth' (Reiss 1996: 93), whilst Babbitt indicates that for those influenced by Cartesian Dualism:

anything that is not susceptible of clear proof in this logical and almost mathematical sense is to be rejected (1962: 35).

For the empiricist, therefore, the definitions suggested above would face immediate rejection on the basis of their origins in opinion and bias, rather than objective truth.

The debate is further complicated by considering the relationship between values and visions, in the sense of assuming 'vision' in this context as implying 'insight'. Ungoed-Thomas (1996: 143/154) provides an interesting discussion concerning the necessity for schools to have vision. He quotes Iris Murdoch:

we can only move properly in a world that we can see,
and what must be sought for is vision (Ungoed-Thomas
1996: 146).

This remark is developed in the context of the school, where it is stressed that, in educational matters, 'vision' needs to be interpreted as a 'high word' (Ungoed-Thomas 1996: 146). However the question which arises concerns what this 'high vision' implies, by whom, for whom and for what purposes. As is well known, visions leading to the formulation of various intellectual movements contributed to the necessary authority on which the philosophy of Nazism was based (for example, see discussion concerning the research of Blumenbach, in Bronowski 1976: 367).

Hitler, no doubt, believed himself to be possessed by high vision in his exalted plans for the Arian people, and yet, perhaps because of flaws in the theoretical bases used for his plans, coupled with distorted thinking, the threat

from Communism and the capacity of some for sheer brutality, *his* vision produced suffering and misery throughout the world.

Intellectual movements can be, at the worst, manipulated and, at the best, remodelled in order to bring about social and economic change. However, no matter how persuasive they might seem to be their logic ought never to be accepted as a guarantee of their realistic basis, as the reasoning of the creatures in Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*' makes clear. If beginning from false premises, however logical arguments might appear, their conclusions cannot be realistic and therefore their potential for proving positive for general well-being must be extremely limited.

b) *The Identification of Values.*

A fundamental question which arises from the above discussion is how far it is possible to discern whether values do originate from false premises, true premises or whether, indeed, there *is* an objective reality from which values emanate and against which they can be judged. In other words, are all values merely subjective, matters of feelings and emotions which have come crystalised as beliefs, or could there be a middle position (as discussed, for example, in Halstead 1996: 5/6). Therefore the problem persists in that some thinkers continued to assert that:

a teacher has a duty to give his own opinion, but to give it as an opinion, or as a matter of faith (Warnock 1996: 50).

For those who have accepted a positivist view of reality, and others who have blindly been initiated into one, there is no choice, since for them only that which can be proved to be neutral and value-free has true objectivity (see pages 58/59). Values then quickly become relativised: since they are not empirically verifiable they must be opinions and beliefs and since, on this account they are totally subjective, who is to say that one person's opinion is more true than that of someone else, or that one form of civilization is more enlightened than another (for discussion, see Warnock 1996: 47/48; Watson 1994b: 136/143; Hulmes 1994: 19/24; Kenworthy 1994: 81/83). From this stance the advocacy of neutrality arises, although Hulmes has shown this to consist of a stance in itself which produces its own particularly sinister effects (Hulmes 1979: 10).

However, the very fact that discussion takes place and opinions are expressed suggests that there is *something* underlying the subject under investigation. The problem seems to be that in talk about non-empirical matters, when people have different views about the same subject an additional, misleading deduction enters the debate, that for example, 'religion is false', 'values are only man-made'. In other words, insights are confused with fantasies, creative insight is confused with romantic illusion. The problem seems to be in managing to discern between the two polarities, and a

possible way forward could be, rather than discussion comprising a mere exchange of opinions, (see Halstead 1996: 10 for discussion on the Values Clarification Approach) to open up for examination the assumptions *underlying opinions*. A means by which this could be approached has been suggested by advancing Criteria for Discernment, several of which cite human experience and reflection on it as central to judgement (Watson 1993: 102/103).

0.02 The Communication Controversy.

a) *Two Kinds of Truth?*

A further problem inherent in values is how they can best be communicated. Central to this question is the nature and role of metaphor which, in this research, is defined as the innate human propensity, communicated through language, for using familiar phenomena and existing concepts in the process of attempting to accommodate new experiences within existing thought networks (page 114).

However, this theory is controversial. For those influenced by positivism (pages 95/102) statements are deemed to be empirically respectable if communicating 'literal meaning', whilst other types of statements are deemed inferior in that they indicate something possessed of only 'metaphorical' or 'figurative' meaning (pages 101/102). Metaphorical meaning is somehow considered to be distinctive from, and inferior, to non-metaphorical meaning. Again there

arises the assumption that there exist different kinds of truth which can be understood as the differences between 'facts' and 'opinions', the former appertaining to 'literal meaning' whilst the other is an appropriate label for 'metaphorical' truth (page 99). The falsity of this assumption becomes apparent if the truth of the statement 'she worked very late into the night' is compared with 'she burnt the midnight oil'. Additionally it is true to say that not all metaphors have 'literal' meanings (page 97). The question which could sensibly be asked resembles 'How many layers of meaning does the metaphor suggest', inferring that continued reflection could be necessary to penetrate a particularly profound insight.

Associated with this confusion are such statements as 'a mere metaphor' (page 99/100) which contribute to misunderstandings of the whole metaphorical communication process by failing to distinguish between the truth which is signified and the metaphor through which it is expressed (pages 100; 211).

b) *Metaphor and Education*

Confusions of the type discussed briefly above have led to misconceptions concerning the role of language in the learning process and, perhaps more significantly for education, to delusions concerning the apparent inability of

pre-adolescent children for engaging with its use (for example, Goldman 1964: 1965). Denials that religious insight can be communicated effectively by 'literal' expression, united with the opinion that the Bible is largely 'the language of poetry', when logically developed led to the recommendation that much of the Bible should be withheld from primary school Religious Education (page 212).

The problem stemmed, originally, from misunderstandings concerning metaphor which seriously limited definitions of its use to poetic, creative expression, whilst the huge metaphorical system which underlies everyday conception, language use and values has remained largely undiscovered until recent decades (pages 105/114).

The discovery of this conceptual, metaphoric system has increased understanding of the role of metaphor in influencing concepts, values and the insights from which knowledge develops, particularly in perception of the dangers associated with conceiving ideas and theories according to only one conceptual metaphor. For example, Pring (1966: 104/111) and Hull (1996: 39) refer to the conceptual metaphor 'education is business' when identifying the dangers of thinking of education as a producer and the pupil as its product, whilst Halstead (1996b: 27) makes use of the metaphor when writing of schools being judged by their 'quantifiable outputs' (Halstead 1996: 27). Edwards (1996: 178) does likewise by suggesting

teaching provides a 'quality of exchange that is crucial'. There exists another area of confusion, however, which has been called the 'conduit metaphor' (pages 76; 161/162). As Reddy (1993) has warned, to perceive words as the carriers of exact meanings which can be passed from one person to another, or stored in books or other recorded form, is to deny the naturally creative nature of people (for discussion, see Merttens 1996: 196/199). The fact that words undergo a constant process of interpretation, adaptation and creative application both in daily discourse, academic study and debate emphasises Reddy's theory. To glance at any single metaphor created by Shakespeare, for example, and to consider various possible interpretations illuminates this point:

the spring, the summer,
The childing autumn, angry winter, change
Their wonted liveries.
(*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, 2.1.III).

As suggested above, the task is not so much one of discovering *the* meaning as it consists of searching for insights into new *possible meanings*. It is in this way knowledge develops through continuing insights.

0.03 Values and Perceptions of Childhood

Mentioned briefly above, and in much greater detail in chapters two and seven, are notions of childhood which consider this phase in human development as a 'stage' towards greater personal autonomy (page 70/71). The logical

implication of this is to view childhood (particularly before adolescence) as a time of preparation for when true enlightenment will dawn, that is when literalism gives way to logical, scientific thinking (page 201), although the dangers inherent in this outlook rest on assumptions which are extremely fragile (pages 63/64).

Nevertheless, largely because of the theories of Jean Piaget (pages 70/71), notions have developed that childhood represents an intellectually inferior period to adulthood, characterised by restricted abilities - for example in the facility to understand more sophisticated forms of language use (Piaget 1959), a point which was developed by Goldman (1964; 1965) and applied directly to Religious Education, one of the few areas of the educational curriculum not investigated by Piaget himself (pages 211/214).

It is in the work of Jean Piaget that the two opposing intellectual movements mentioned throughout this chapter find unity, that is positivism and romanticism (pages 69/79). Their intertwining strands provide a disguise effective enough to shroud the true intellectual capacity of children, leading to the observation that:

too often children come home from primary school prattling of rain forests or the ozone layer, full of righteous indignation, but, naturally, without any understanding of the political or economic complications of the subject (Warnock 1996: 50).

Rousseau's theory of the Noble Savage continues to exert

power and influence over perception and opinion, enjoying both the Piagetian, empirical disguise in which it lurks and the powerful, magnetic mysticism which provides the adhesion between two opposing perspectives, both of which have led to serious, damaging and inaccurate theories concerning the world of childhood (pages 79/80).

0.04 The Scope of the Research.

The foregoing provides a glimpse of the focus of this thesis. Its primary intention is to investigate the intellectual capacity of the pre-adolescent schoolchild, examining in some detail the claims of Jean Piaget and the inheritance by the educational world of his theories (although they were never intended for this destination), a burden which politicians and others are currently attempting to understand.

The investigation necessitated bringing into its orbit other associated topics, for example the intellectual movements of positivism and romanticism which both heavily contributed to a central and major misunderstanding of the human condition. Both of these movements enabled earlier theories of metaphor, particularly those developed during the Middle Ages concerning the figurative-literal distinction, to gain greater significance and complicate the resulting confusion of how children think, learn and develop concepts.

This opening section is followed by a synopsis of the chapters of the thesis.

0.05 Analysis of Chapters.

CHAPTER ONE: This chapter presents an introduction to the origins of the research and the environmental background of the school where the research took place. Information is presented concerning the material from which the adult informants' writing was derived. The research design and methodology are presented. Character sketches of the child informants are provided.

CHAPTER TWO: analysis is provided of the theoretical background to the study. The influence of writings of Rousseau as expressed in *Emile* (1979 edition), and the significance of empirical positivism on European thought is summarized, specifically the relationship between positivism and the theories of Jean Piaget.

CHAPTER THREE: in this chapter theories of metaphor are presented. The function of metaphor as described by classical writers is analysed and compared with the writings of empirical positivists, whose work is shown to have influenced perceptions of metaphor until recent decades. Contemporary theories of metaphor are then discussed which perceive metaphor in three categories: firstly, conventional metaphor which has in tradition been assumed to be 'dead', secondly novel metaphor, that is metaphor traditionally understood as 'figurative language' and thirdly conceptual metaphors,

networks of perceived relationships and patterns which comprise the base for conceptual development.

CHAPTER FOUR: the assertions of Rousseau and Piaget that significant differences exist between the way in which children, on the one hand, and adults on the other, perceive life as different, are examined by an interpretation of data which comprises selected life events as perceived by both child and adult informants as being important. The data analysis infers that whilst the experiences identified as being personally significant were not different in variety, they were in content. This difference is reflective of the varieties of responsibilities faced by adults and children, but where adults show inadequacies in dealing with their responsibilities, there is evidence that children will occasionally attempt to shoulder them.

CHAPTER FIVE: this chapter applies contemporary theories of metaphor to writing produced by both adult and child informants. Conventional metaphor (traditionally called 'dead metaphor') is shown to comprise a large proportion of everyday, conventional language use. The limitations of conventional metaphor for extending thought from familiar phenomena to new in creative ways are discussed.

CHAPTER SIX: theories concerning the importance of novel metaphor as a means by which reflection on experiences can become more profound are analysed, and theories concerning how

novel metaphors work at both conceptual and communication levels are presented. A second data collection is then interpreted and theories presented concerning the extent to which teaching can help children extend their use of conventional metaphor to novel metaphors, and the value of this for helping them diversify their thought is discussed.

CHAPTER SEVEN: the chapter comprises an outline of the researches of Goldman (1964; 1965) whose work has been of significance for religious education during the past three decades. The aims of Goldman's work are discussed and shown to be distinctly Piagetian (chapter two). Goldman's perceptions of metaphor, specifically religious metaphor, are discussed by analysis of his writings. It is argued that empirical positivism was influential for Goldman's understanding of Biblical material and that his understanding of childhood was significantly influenced by the Romantic Movement. It is further argued that, although pervasively influential, Goldman's research has led to serious underestimations being made of primary school children's ability to understand Biblical material.

CHAPTER EIGHT: data collected from the classroom is interpreted and analysed showing that the child informants were able to interpret Biblical material in creative, diverse ways which were illuminating for their perceptions of their

own lives, giving further emphasis to the validity of the critique of Goldman (1964; 1965) presented in chapter seven.

CHAPTER NINE: the chapter presents the final data collection which consists of children's work on concepts of God, relating the findings specifically to the theories of Goldman (1964; 1965) who asserted their concepts were restricted within crude anthropomorphism. It is shown how appropriate lesson content in Religious Education can enable children extend their conceptual, metaphoric networks for thinking into a religious dimension.

CHAPTER TEN: in this final chapter, conclusions are drawn from the research and the consequent implications for education, particularly concerning the nature of metaphor in both the thought process and communication by language. Recommendations are made concerning the need to reassess current approaches to the teaching of religion in primary schools.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: a full Bibliography is provided.

APPENDICES: appendices consisting of children's scripts, transcripts and materials used in the data collection are provided at the end of the text of the thesis.

PART ONE: THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

CHAPTER ONE

THE RESEARCH PROJECT

1.00 Origins of the Research.

This research originated from observations of children working in the primary school classroom during my professional work as a teacher over nineteen years. . Although Religious Education provided the specific focus of my investigations, the implications of the research cover a much wider educational context. This comprises the effects of intellectual movements, namely romanticism and positivism, on thinking and understanding. The result has been to produce a particular view of childhood which, although proclaiming itself to be neutral, objective and therefore empirically respectable, is based firmly within the romantic traditions of Rousseau.

Observations made throughout my classroom work led me to question seriously the expectations which both theorists and practising teachers held of their pupils, especially concerning their capacity to understand the 'figurative language' which was believed to characterise Biblical writing. In particular, there was evidence that many of the curriculum materials provided for the children were concerned exclusively with everyday experiences, and in religious education particularly the general opinion expressed was that children of primary school age were unable to cope with abstract language and concepts based on

understanding of events and times far removed from daily life (Goldman 1964; 1965).

The recommendation which I constantly met indicated that all the primary school teacher could be expected to do was help the children prepare for adolescence, when they would be able to think in ways which allowed them to study Biblical material by opening up questions of faith and belief. Until then, it was recommended that religious education should be restricted to topics which explored either the phenomena of religion or everyday people and events, such as People Who Help Us which were within pupils' capacity (Goldman 1964; 1965). Because of the lack of any large-scale research in Religious Education since the work of Goldman, as pointed out by Petrovich (1988a: 44), I decided that this would be the particular focus for my own investigations, with the hope that the findings could be developed significantly at a later time.

The research was confined to an investigation of Christian materials since the researches of Goldman (1964) were concerned exclusively with Old and New Testament narratives. Additionally, it was his theories concerning Religious Education which have been of significance for the past thirty years, encouraging current developments in the teaching of world religions according to the phenomenological approach. Goldman's assertions concerning primary school children's apparent inability to engage

with 'poetic, religious language' has been pervasive throughout that phase of education.

However, my observations confirmed my belief that children's interests extended into areas far beyond their daily horizons. For example, they were quite capable of studying people who had lived many centuries earlier, in societies quite distinct from that of Britain in the late twentieth century. Additionally, they were able to make imaginative predictions of the future, based on current happenings, and even the pre-school child in the nursery unit quickly became excited by work on such topics as outer space or dinosaurs, although both were obviously outside of daily experience. It was clear that the thought according to which the children attempted to structure their experiences was based much more broadly than theory suggested.

It will be argued that a serious underestimation of children's potential was made. The research, therefore, was devised to investigate how children attempted to make sense of their experiences, the extent to which it differed from that of adults, and the way in which their reflections were structured. The hope was that new insights concerning the learning process could be formulated, based upon classroom teaching and children's responses to it, and that any recommendations advanced would help develop current knowledge.

This research, therefore, investigated the thought structures of primary school children, specifically those of ten

years of age. All of the research was carried out in one school and with one class of children. Descriptions of the wider and immediate neighbourhoods of the school follows, together with details of the individual children who were the informants.

Objections could be anticipated against the way in which the school environment and the personal details of the informants were presented on the grounds that they were purely subjective and anecdotal. To any objections of this nature I would point out that these details are indeed subjective and are characteristic of my stance as a teacher and researcher.

Any individual interacting with others, in my case as a professional working with the express aim of understanding motivation and how it can be used in the educational process, forms hypotheses as a result of observing people working within specific circumstances. Additionally, the presence of the professional among the informants does much to influence attitudes of everyone concerned, and therefore notions of neutrality in the classroom must always be utopian. As in the case of Colin, a true, practical example from personal, professional experience which is described elsewhere, the attitudes of various teachers towards pupils' interests and work can be crucial for the way in which their lives develop, often much later (Watson and Ashton 1994: 1/2). Any attempts at neutrality in the classroom will be interpreted by the children as personal indifference to them, and will usher into

relationships its own particularly unfortunate effects and results.

Regarding the method according to which the data were collected, the points made above regarding the illusory nature of neutrality in teaching is emphasised. Classroom work is always subjective in that it was produced at a particular time, under particular conditions and in the company of unique individuals. This is why it is so misleading to predict potential on the basis of achievement, a mistake made by many (for example Piaget 1959 edition; Goldman 1964; 1965).

This research project, therefore, presents its findings in the belief that absolute objectivity is unattainable, and that notions concerning its possibility have their origins in positivism (pages 57/66). The theories advanced are recognised as being *theories* only, not facts, a stance resembling that of Stephen Hawking working in the field of physics (1989: 11).

1.01 The School Environment.

a) *The Wider Neighbourhood.*

The wider neighbourhood where the children lived was important for forming attitudes generally and for spiritual and emotional development specifically. The region where they lived was a fringe area of a metropolitan district, close to one of the country's major rivers and an important port for European shipping. The region had, for centuries, depended upon the coal mining and shipbuilding industries but during the past fifty

years especially both had been in decline. During the lifetime of the children whose work was analysed, both industries had virtually disappeared from the region.

The social implications of this were immense. The region had a high incidence of unemployment, although part-time employment of women working in factories on local trading estates had become an important development. The region represented a mixture of former industrial landscape which had been, to a large extent, redeveloped by light industries. The trading estates where these industries were located were close to the housing estates which surrounded the school, and this created a rather depressing, utilitarian landscape.

The effects of the landscape on the life of the communities who lived there is a subject outside of the scope of this thesis, but a central effect arising from it on the lives of the children whom I taught was to direct their creative capacity and physical energy towards petty vandalism, theft and the antagonisation of neighbours. The development of defensive attitudes in order to protect their own families from criticism were common and frequently led to provocative retaliation from others living in the community. Because the environment itself was utilitarian and lacking in stimulation of a natural kind, for example with woodland or open spaces where it was possible to spend some time in quietness and peace, away from other people, its inhabitants sought excitement and adventure in these and similar ways.

However, the close proximity of the river and coastline, the latter comprising stretches of sandy beaches and high cliffs, did much to compensate for the sterile, man-made landscape. River activity was colourful and stimulating, but for most of the children life was lived on one or other of the housing estates which had been built originally to rehouse families living in decayed Victorian property.

b) *The Immediate Neighbourhood.*

The school where the research was carried out was a pleasant building which had been opened officially in 1954. It was a two-storey, red brick structure, with lawns at the front and a play-yard and playing field at the rear. It was the largest primary school in the Local Authority by which it was maintained.

The children lived on one or other of two contrasting housing estates, the first of which was a mixture of private and council properties, consisting largely of flats or small semi-detached houses with small gardens back and front. Busy main roads crossed the residential area, and there were rows of shops along the sides of these main streets where many of the children congregated with their friends in the evenings. The main roads were tree-lined.

The main assertion of the children who lived on this estate was that they had little to do: it was obvious why they felt this way. The streets were neat, but the planning was extremely predictable and unexciting: all the streets were built according

to the contours of the main roads. The communal play areas were specially laid out playing fields, but these did not lend themselves to imaginative, creative activities. Football and rounders were the usual activities seen taking place there. For many of the children with an appetite for adventure, tormenting the neighbours or petty vandalism, such as writing on walls or trespassing into gardens, were the type of activities which filled the creative void.

The second housing estate served by the school was also built largely between the two world wars. It was wholly council property, including a community centre, public houses and other centres set up by neighbourhood enterprise, particularly a Credit Union scheme. The housing consisted largely of flats, built in blocks. The estate had been designed geometrically, with the result the streets had become a kind of warren. Thirty years before, schemes of modernisation had been carried out, converting the flats into self-contained houses.

There existed a long tradition in the region that this particular estate was home to families who suffered outstanding problems, and living there had become a social stigma in itself. The morale on the estate was not heightened by the bleakness of the landscape: to quell muggings shrubberies which had formerly existed had been removed, but the grassed areas which took their place had become dumping grounds for all manner of household rubbish. Unemployment on the estate was running at approximately

80% when the research was carried out, and burglary, drug abuse, physical violence and general neglect contributed to civil rioting when Asian shopkeepers' properties were petrol bombed. Several children whose work is included in the research had been running around the estate in the early hours of the morning when the rioting broke out.

However, many families were ambitious for their children, and encouraged the values they perceived to be inherent in the school community. Parents were welcomed in school, and there was a Parent Teacher Association, although this was very poorly supported. There was a marked tendency among families to judge individuals according to the family to which a person belonged, and there was evidence that children tended to fulfil the expectations neighbours had of them.

1.02 The Informants.

a) *Adult Informants.*

The data produced by the adult informants were collected as a result of a Women's Writing Group working over a period of eighteen months, organised by the Cedarwood Centre and published in booklet form (Cedarwood: undated) simultaneously to the research carried out in the primary classroom. The adult data collection was incorporated into the thesis because:

1. All of the informants lived in the same neighbourhood as the child informants.
2. The adult data collection matched the type of writing which comprised the children's 'life diaries'.

3. Use of this particular data collection provided an important opportunity to compare adult and children's perceptions of experience, particularly concerning how concepts formed and influenced the way in which the experiences were structured.
4. Its use provided the opportunity to compare adult language use with that of the children.
5. The purposes of the Cedarwood Project were recognised by one of the writers as being to encourage examination 'about what's been right and wrong about my life' (Cedarwood undated: 6), in other words to encourage reflection on experience in order to interpret and become informed about life. This was an important element of the research carried out with the child informants.

It has been recognised that, although the adult scripts were produced by female writers, the children's scripts were produced by both boys and girls. It was felt that the use of this adult data collection was justified in that the writer is committed to recognising the individuality of people, regardless of gender. Gender influences are not considered to be significant for this particular research project.

b) *Child Informants.*

All of the data produced by the child informants were collected in the classroom between September, 1990 and December, 1991. The exact circumstances under which each section of data were collected is described specifically in the respective chapters. The collection comprises four distinct groups:

1. Accounts, obtained in the form of diaries concerning personally significant 'life events' were collected from the whole class as the individuality of the children was respected.
2. Responses of child informants to lesson material designed to investigate conceptual metaphorical structures of experience.
3. Creative writing and drawings.

4. Responses of child informants to teaching concerning novel metaphors.

The data are analysed according to the following criteria:

1. The nature of the relationship between conventional metaphor and conceptual development.
2. The extent to which conceptual metaphor contributes to the meaning attributed to experience.
3. The ability of the child informants to learn to interpret and create novel metaphors and relate this ability to Religious Education.

BRIAN: 10.6 years. (Youngest of three sons). This child was emotionally attached to his younger sister, whom he constantly protected from the teasing of other children. His great interest in life was football, and his mother often mentioned that he spent nearly all his time out of school playing with other children on the playing fields. He was thoughtful, but always in a rush to complete his work. An aspect of his personality was untidiness: he did not see any importance in hanging up his clothes or of maintaining a neat desk, and constantly was frequently found to have lost property. The child suffered quite badly from excema.

PAUL: 10.01 years. (youngest of three sons). He was a person who enjoyed life and who had a strong sense of fair play. He was particularly resentful of being bullied by his older brothers. In school he was quiet and rather moody, but enjoyed stories and drama. In fact, he thrived on responsibility, particularly being prepared to take a leading part in plays produced for the

entertainment of the other children. In the summer term, he showed himself to be a promising cricketer.

LISA: 10.05 years. (Younger of two: one sister). This girl was friendly, and particularly dependent on peer support. She came from a one-parent family, and had an older sister who had been in trouble during primary school constantly. She could write quite well, and spent much time laboriously practising cursive writing. Her sense of humour made her a popular member of the class, with the result that she developed an inflated sense of her own power, and began to use it in order to exclude other girls from her circle of friends. This form of bullying was particularly prevalent during long breaks, such as lunchtimes.

SIMON: 10.08 years. (Younger of two brothers). He was an attractive boy, mature in outlook and anxious to do well in school. His family was very supportive of school, and his mother often made visits to reassure herself that her son was behaving well: she admitted she dreaded hearing he was causing trouble, because she believed that early signs of this should be eliminated before he reached the High School.

LINDA: 10.09 years. (Had younger half-brother). This child was from a one-parent family, and was of Afro-European origin. She had a half-brother, and both of the children had learnt to

confront racial taunts. Her mother never visited school, but was articulate and frequently sent letters, expressing her gratitude for all that was being done for her children, both of whom were very polite and well-mannered. The child's grandmother expended much of her energy in caring for her grandchildren, and usually represented the mother at open evenings.

JAMES: 9.09 years. (Had younger sister). One of the problems this child had to learn to overcome was associated with his emotional vulnerability. He disliked sport, and this, coupled with the fact that he could easily be made to cry by other boys, encouraged bullying. In the classroom he was very eager to please. Previous teachers had considered him to 'be soft', and his emotional outbursts had created tensions and consequences which had taken up a great deal of extra time.

JOHN: 10.09 years. (only child). This child had a disability: his eyesight was defective, which meant he had to wear thick-rimmed glasses, and this encouraged other children to see him as a target for bullying. He was very reflective and had a strong sense of purpose. In addition, he was easily upset and had quite a short temper. His parents were very concerned that school should make no allowances for his disability, in the belief that he 'needed to be toughened up'. He worked very hard in the

classroom, and his basic openness and honesty were much respected.

DAVID: 10.08 years. (Elder of two brothers). The outstanding characteristic of this child was his love of music. He joined the class in mid-year. Physically he was of slight build and rather delicate in appearance, and he tended to seek girls for playmates rather than join in the rough-and-tumble of football with other boys. He was the only boy in the school ever to have played the recorder in worship sessions. His great asset was a sense of humour: he knew he was not very capable in games and laughed at himself. This meant that he was popular with the children and escaped being bullied.

CLAIRE: 10.07 years. (An only child). She was a quiet little girl who played imaginative games with a small circle of friends. She was from a single-parent family, an only child who was rather timid. In the evenings she preferred to spend her time indoors rather than playing with friends in the street, but on occasions she would invite other girls into her home to play with her toys. She tended to be rather immature and shy, and was afraid of older children.

SEAN: 10.11 years. (Younger of two brothers). He had an older brother who had been in constant trouble with the police. His

parents had separated although they had later attempted to rebuild their marriage. The father had, on several occasions, been suspected of car stealing and was unpopular in the neighbourhood. The child was popular among other children, largely because of his happy-go-lucky attitude to life, but he suffered because the parents of other children frequently attempted to break any friendships their own child tried to build with him.

KELLY: 10.04 years. (Had two half-brothers: both older). This child was the daughter of an older father, and possibly because of this she was particularly mature for her age. One of her many assets was a strong sense of humour. She was very kind, and very popular among other children. One of her major concerns at school centred around the fact that she felt she was unable to secure a boyfriend, and often used to ask advice about this from other girls. She was very protective of her mother.

SARAH: 10.03 years. (oldest of three children). She was the child of her mother's first marriage, and had a younger brother and half-sister. She was deeply resentful of her step-father. She did not live on either of the two housing estates described above, but in an old Edwardian flat on one of the main roads leading down to the river. She possessed an extraordinary creative flair, which surprised her parents. Her mother once

said 'I'm sure I don't know where we got her from'. She was very poor at games, but had learnt to laugh at her limitations here. She was a tough character, who could protect both herself and her friends from taunts from other children.

KERRY: 10.09 years. (Had three older brothers). This child had a rather diffident attitude to school. Her family was notorious for trouble-making in the neighbourhood, and her father and brothers had been in trouble with the police for drug-related offences. She could be deceitful, especially in sport, but had quite a flair for writing. She enjoyed borrowing books from the school library and spent a good deal of her spare time reading in her bedroom.

JENNIE: 10.01 years. (middle of three daughters). This child was very affectionate and kind. She was very popular among other children, but there was a sly aspect to her nature of which one was constantly aware. Her father belonged to a notorious family in the area and had been in trouble with the police for drunken assault on several occasions. His wife had threatened to leave him on account of this, and the child told me she dreaded either of her parents leaving home.

MARK: 10.00 years. (Elder of two brothers). This child was a thin, delicate boy from a single-parent family. He had a younger

brother with whom he was in constant trouble at home. The brothers had once deliberately set fire to the furniture in the living room, experimenting with matches. He tried hard to master reading, and enjoyed listening to adventure stories.

KARL: 10.06 years. (Youngest of three children: only boy).

This child had caused constant problems for teachers throughout his passage through the school. He had two sisters, thereby being an only son. His father had often expressed his belief that his son 'was a real lad', and that kicking, fighting and aggressive behaviour generally was to be expected of boys. However, this child showed a real flair for writing poetry. His poems showed him to be extremely reflective and with a strong sense of justice. This ability enabled him to begin to build a better self-image which did not focus on the defensive attitudes which had been dominant earlier in his life.

TOM: 10.10 years. (Youngest child of four: had three sisters).

This child was of mixed racial origin, and had suffered throughout his short life on account of this. He was a quiet, sensitive boy who enjoyed art and stories especially. Unfortunately, he had a poor self-image, and did not have great beliefs in his own ability, although his work was of a good standard. Teaching was focused mainly on boosting his self-image.

JANET: 10.07 years. (Had younger brother). A quiet, friendly child who came from a turbulent background. Her mother had convictions for shop-lifting, and her father had served time in jail on account of car-stealing. She had a strong sense of justice and spent much of her time out of the classroom attempting to protect her younger brother from bullying. Her mother confided to me that she wouldn't be able to cope at home if it wasn't for the things the children stole from the shops.

CRAIG: 10.09 years. (Middle brother of three). This child was very sensitive and likely to throw temper tantrums at short notice, usually because he felt he was being goaded by other children: this caused him to be an object for bullying. His written work was quite fluent, and he enjoyed discussion and frequently had something original to contribute to discussions. He had a strong sense of justice and was likely to react violently to anything with which he could not agree.

ANDREA: 10.08 years (An only child). This girl had been adopted by her mother's sister, and lived with her family quite close to her natural mother, with whom her adopted mother used to visit various public houses of ill repute. Andrea was quiet and friendly; she often would stay behind in the evenings to tell me about her life, and had formed very strong opinions concerning right and wrong. She was ambitious in that she hoped to get good

qualifications one day, leading to a well-paid job so that she could become independant of all her family.

ANDREW: 10.09 years. (Youngest of four brothers). Andrew was one of four sons, the older three all having spent some time in remand centres or jail. He was passionately fond of animals and birds and on occasions had become violent towards children suspected of cruelty. Although only ten years of age, he frequently spent time in the evenings in the company of older youths. He had been in trouble for throwing bricks at passing cars, and for breaking into the school building. He was unpopular with other children, whose parents tended to discourage friendships with him. His reaction was to bully all those who were not his friends, and as he was extremely strong and physically well-developed, other children were frequently found to take refuge as his friend.

MARGARET: 10.11 years. (She was the younger of two sisters). Margaret was bullied by her elder sibling. Her great interest in life lay in animals, especially dogs and horses, and she was friendly with a child who regularly visited stables. She also enjoyed discussing religion and history, and would often beg to be allowed to read a history book rather than concentrate on mathematics, which I usually let her do. She had a turbulent home life: her mother tended to be feckless and drank heavily.

She was often still asleep when the two children left the house in the morning. She was an affectionate child, who responded warmly to any individual interest shown in her.

1.03 Aims of the Research.

a) My first aim was to enquire into the theoretical background of child development which had been important for the way in which Religious Education had developed in schools, particularly concerning its significance for teacher expectations of pupils. I wished to compare any underlying assumptions which were found to be significant with my own professional observations of children. This was an integral part of the research because assumptions made are reflective of a general acceptance of the prevailing ethos of any particular period of history, and if the assumptions are found to be based on false premises, serious misunderstandings are likely to have taken place.

Conversely, if underlying assumptions are found to be in accordance with present experience, development within that particular research tradition would be likely to continue to deepen understanding and insight into questions concerning children's potential, motivation and achievement.

b) The second aim was to identify elements within the intellectual background described in (a) above which could have contributed to what I believed to be misunderstandings central to

the underestimation of pre-adolescent children's intellectual potential.

c) The third aim was to reinterpret any identified elements and to relate them to my observations of children working in the classroom. It was hoped to formulate new theories of how Religious Education could help children of primary school age in their reflection on experiences, structuring of them and the consequent development of concepts and values.

In addition to investigating the theoretical background to the research, the project also involved collecting two distinct types of data, namely writing from the informants concerning their experiences and reflections on them, and secondly, in the case of the child informants, their responses to materials designed according to the findings of (b) above. Analysis of the data was concerned specifically with identifying the informants' use of language and its significance in conceptual development.

1.04 Research Methodology.

a) *The General Framework.*

i) When planning my research, I examined various methodologies within which to work. I discovered two basic models, called the 'normative' and 'interpretative' approaches (Cohen and Manion 1994: 26/29). Explanations of both follow.

ii) The 'Normative' research model is based on the assumption that research data should provide objective evidence in that all personal views of the researcher are eliminated by the

methodology used. Thus, the normative researcher would work according to a positivist model by remaining detached, and outside of, what was seen to progress within the situation observed. Neutrality is deemed to be imperative for the normative researcher, for only by remaining neutral is it believed to be possible for the researcher to be able to withdraw from involvement and thereby be enabled to apply appropriate conceptual schemas to the phenomena under investigation which are free from subjective opinion and judgement.

I perceived, here, a central dichotomy between this research approach and the observations of working children as described above: how could a classroom teacher, deeply involved with pupils for the reasons outlined above take on a detached role and expect to be enabled thereby to elicit reliable data? My observations of children at work indicated that children will give of themselves when, and only when, they perceive that the adult working with them (either the researcher or regular teacher) is *personally interested and concerned* with their activities, concerns and dilemmas, and ready to help them whenever possible.

For this reason, detachment creates an impenetrable barrier between the normative researcher and his/her potential informants, particularly if the researcher attempts to collect data in such areas as the thought processes of children, for such areas of research differ significantly from observations of, for example, social behaviour. The detachment itself will cause most

children to become equally detached, and as a result they will offer only the very minimum of information because of their disinterestedness. It is for this reason, no doubt, that the results of normative research have been criticised as offering findings which appear to be 'banal and trivial' (Cohen and Manion 1980: 23), and this because the research method itself has eliminated the unique, interpretative ability of people to represent their experiences creatively.

It was for these reasons that I decided that the normative research method was inappropriate for my purposes, that is, to formulate a hypothesis concerning how children think, conceptualize and form values, and how the content of lessons can be planned to help pupils in their efforts.

111) A second research method is known as 'interpretative research'. The interpretative researcher is characterised by an inner view of social activity, which necessitates involvement by direct participation: neutrality is irrelevant, and can even be considered as being a barrier to access of the minds being researched. The interpretative researcher, therefore, will approach the problem to be investigated with preconceived hypotheses which will be tested according to the data collected. It is characteristic, therefore, for the researcher to work within unstructured conversations and interviews, offering suggestions and assessing how the informants respond by offering

theories which are structured according to the patterns and relationships which become apparent.

As a classroom teacher, I decided to base my research within the 'interpretative' model, although I deemed myself to be free to be as flexible as my professional role required. The 'interpretative' model was appropriate in that it allowed me freedom to use my own personality as a 'primary source' in efforts to probe the personalities of the informants, my pupils (Hulmes 1979: 90). I believed fervently that to attempt to eliminate personality would be to ensure the research would be sterile and the data collection void of meaning. I therefore perceived my professional role as comprising a combination of 'action research' - that is, retaining an active teaching role (Cohen and Manion 1994: 183; Bell 1993 edition: 6/8) and methods characteristic of the interpretative researcher.

iv) A danger which is inherent within all educational research concerns the way in which the researcher interprets the data collection. If, for example, the researcher was to use the data to *predict potential*, the results could be very misleading for the educator. This is because any data collected represents *present achievement* only, and if used in the former way, that is to predict potential, very serious misunderstandings of the ability of children could result. The assessment of potential is an extremely complex activity because of the innumerable variables which influence the behaviour of children at any

particular time, particularly the child's perception of the researcher him/herself, and involvement with informants over long and continuous periods of time would seem to be the only way in which a researcher can become aware of the influence of these variables upon individual personalities.

It was from this set of insights, gained from practical experience of teaching, that I began to perceive the need of research which, because of being based in the classroom and carried out by the regular teacher, could collect data of a type which represented an in-depth study of the thought processes of ten year old children and eliminated the barriers created for them by feelings of suspicion and lack of trust.

b) *Specific Research Method: the Case Study.*

A serious effect of positivism (2.02), and one which has not been analysed up to this point in the thesis, has been to attempt to exclude from serious consideration all efforts to approach knowledge which were deemed to be outside of objective analytical method. However, if the assumptions upon which positivism was based are accepted as being flawed and therefore seriously misleading and misguided, huge areas of human interest and activity become accepted as viable and worthwhile research activities.

The specific boundaries for the case study which is presented in this thesis are based on acceptance of the following statements:

- i) that childhood differs from adulthood mainly on account of more limited experiences and time in which to reflect on them;
- ii) that both children and adults develop concepts as a result of interpretations of experience. The quality and viability of such interpretations depend on the underlying network of relationships and patterns perceived by each individual;
- iii) that everyday language use reflects the creative nature of the structure given to thought, reflection and eventually the development of concepts.

The parameters within which the case study was planned are closely connected with the above statements:

- i) to analyse how far adult thought processes differ from those of pre-adolescent children;
- ii) to discover whether the use of metaphor is an integral part of the thought process;
- iii) to analyse the language use of the informants in order to identify a means by which education can enable the relationship networks underlying reflection both deepen and develop.

This particular case study, therefore, constitutes an attempt to 'challenge existing assumptions which were held before the start of the data collection' (Hitchcock and Hughes 1995: 321). The data analysis has been planned to identify conceptual categories according to which people - both adults and children - attempt to give form and meaning to experience, possibly forming values as a result.

As a result of the data interpretation and analysis, new ideas concerning the process of learning will be advanced which both build upon Piagetian theory and yet reveal a substantially

more complicated structure for intellectual development than was described in Piagetian psychology. These ideas include recommendations for modifying the theories of Donaldson (1978; 1992).

1.05 The Uniqueness of the Research.

1. The research applies contemporary theories concerning the varieties and function of metaphor in thought processes and everyday language use to classroom work. This is done in order to offer a new evaluation of ten year old pupils' capacity for engaging with Biblical material.

2. The data collections are used to assess the extent to which adult and child informants' experiences differed.

3. A critique is offered of the theories of Rousseau (1979 edition) concerning the nature of childhood and of Piaget (1959 edition) concerning children's intellectual development by examining the positivism movement within which both sets of theories were formulated.

4. The above points (1/3) are united by relating the research conclusions to the theories of Goldman (1964; 1965) concerning children's apparent inability to work with Biblical material other than superficially.

5. The research results in recommendations for:

i) a thorough reassessment of children's intellectual capacity, particularly for engaging with language enriched by layers of meaning;

ii) new approaches to curriculum content in the primary school, including Religious Education, based on (i) above.

1.06 The Limitations of the Research.

1. It is recognised that thinking skills could be far in advance of the capacity of people to communicate in writing.
2. The informants could have experienced reluctance, privately, to reveal details of a personal nature.
3. The research conclusions are not intended to be conclusive: rather, they point towards the need for further research in this area of education.

1.07 Time-table.

January/March, 1991	Data Collections: children's experiences, interests; perceptions of family life.
April/May, 1991	Topic: The Poverty Problem. Data collection: poems, teaching the use of novel metaphor.
June/July, 1991.	Data Collection: children working with Biblical metaphors.
August, 1991/August, 1993.	Background Reading.
September, 1994/ August, 1996	Writing and completion of thesis.

1.08 Summary

This chapter provided an account of the origins of the research project, its underlying philosophy, aims, structure and design. The following chapter focuses on the significance of romanticism and positivism for the work of Jean Piaget.

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND: THE INFLUENCE OF ROMANTICISM
AND POSITIVISM IN THE PURSUIT OF KNOWLEDGE2.00 Introduction.

This chapter commences with an enquiry into two intellectual traditions which have been particularly important for education. It concludes by examining their significance for a particularly influential figure in the twentieth century educational world, Jean Piaget.

The discussion begins by presenting a synopsis of romantic writings of Rousseau as expressed in *Emile*, a work which has been used to justify progressive methods in education (for example, Blenkin and Kelly 1987). The discussion then moves to analysis of positivism, particularly the support it gave to movements in America and Europe which attempted to replace romantic notions of childhood with neutral, experimental forms of analysis. The chapter concludes by analysing the significance of both for the work of Jean Piaget.

2.01 Marking a New Era: Rousseau's *Emile*.

When "Emile" was published in 1762 the impact which the book was to have ultimately, worldwide, could not have been foreseen. Rousseau's writings represented an attempt to stem the flow of rationalism, to give emphasis to what he believed to be the true state of mankind in its infancy: "Everything is good as it leaves the hands of the Author of things;

everything degenerates in the hands of man" (Rousseau 1979 edition: 37). The concept of the Noble Savage was born, finding its origins in the eighteenth century romantic movement. This was an attempt to quell the tide of rationalism, particularly the narrow positivist focus which dismissed as prejudice everything which was unaccountable in Cartesian terms (Babbitt 1962: 35).

Rousseau's concern, as a Romantic writer in pre-Revolutionary France, was to encourage the society of his time to question the formal educational methods in use then. He was highly critical of a system where children were treated as miniature adults who needed to be moulded carefully through instruction and rote learning in preparation for their role in the adult world. He wrote, for example:

Nature wants children to be children before being men. If we want to pervert this order, we shall produce precocious fruits which will be immature and insipid and will not be long in rotting. We shall have young doctors and old children. Childhood has its ways of seeing, thinking and feeling which are proper to it. Nothing is less sensible than to want to substitute ours for theirs. (Rousseau 1979 edition: 90):

As did the other Romantics, Rousseau felt himself to be immersed in nature. His writings were reactions to what he saw to be the corruption of European society, and in order to escape what he perceived as its decadence, he attempted to return to natural living, seeing in children and primitive

peoples a natural purity which western civilization had contaminated (Rousseau 1754).

These theories were expounded in his "Discourse on the Origin of Inequality" (1754). Clark relates how Rousseau, having sent a copy of this work to Voltaire, received the following reply:

No one has ever used so much intelligence to persuade us to be stupid. After reading your book one feels that one ought to walk on all fours. Unfortunately during the last sixty years I have lost the habit.
(1969: 274)

Nevertheless, Rousseau's equation of childhood with the purity of those (such as the 'Noble Savage') who had managed to retain an innocence such as he believed could be found in nature, was developed fully in "Emile". The instruction given to children, which comprised their education, could be deceiving:

Apparent facility at learning is the cause of children's ruin. It is not seen that this very facility is the proof they learn nothing. Their brain, smooth and polished, returns, like a mirror, the objects presented to it. But nothing remains, nothing penetrates. The child retains the words; the ideas are reflected off of him. Those who hear him understand them, only he does not understand them. (Rousseau 1762 (1979 edition) 107)

He went on to argue that children were not 'capable of judgment; do not have true memory', and that they were rarely able to perceive 'connections between ideas'.

For Rousseau, then, childhood was a period of life when freedom from the constraints of the adult world was necessary

peoples a natural purity which western civilization had contaminated (Rousseau 1754).

These theories were expounded in his "Discourse on the Origin of Inequality" (1754). Clark relates how Rousseau, having sent a copy of this work to Voltaire, received the following reply:

No one has ever used so much intelligence to persuade us to be stupid. After reading your book one feels that one ought to walk on all fours. Unfortunately during the last sixty years I have lost the habit.
(1969: 274)

Nevertheless, Rousseau's equation of childhood with the purity of those (such as the 'Noble Savage') who had managed to retain an innocence such as he believed could be found in nature, was developed fully in "Emile". The instruction given to children, which comprised their education, could be deceiving:

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For Rousseau, then, childhood was a period of life when freedom from the constraints of the adult world were necessary

if the natural purity of spirit was not to be broken and corrupted. The system of education to which his criticisms were directed, however, was administered to the sons of the French aristocracy, an important point which has been continually overlooked by later theorists looking to "Emile" for theoretical support in their efforts to bring about radical educational reform (for example, Blenkin and Kelly 1987).

The main arguments of Rousseau which are pertinent to this thesis can be summarized as follows:

- * Childhood is part of a natural order which should not be perverted.
- * Childhood has a way of seeing the world which is distinct from that of adults and which should be allowed to develop naturally.
- * Attempts to instruct children, whilst seeming to be successful, are fruitless in that children are incapable of understanding and connecting the ideas presented.

The significance of this, for Rousseau, was expressed as follows:

Respect childhood, and do not hurry to judge it, either for good or for ill. Let the exceptional children show themselves, be proved, and be confirmed for a long time before adopting special methods for them. Leave nature to act for a long time before you get involved with acting in its place, lest you impede its operations.

(Rousseau 1762 (1979 edition): 107):

The concern of Rousseau was that rationalism was a corruption of the natural, original state of childhood:

We are born with the use of our senses ... these

dispositions are extended and strengthened as we become more capable of using our senses and more enlightened; but constrained by our habits, they are more or less corrupted by our opinions. Before this corruption they are what I call in us *nature*.

He equated childhood with this uncorrupted state, and what he believed to be its nature - a naturally pure, primitive stage, reflective of western society's development until it became tainted with decadence and corruption - became a focus for the investigations of Jean Piaget.

It was efforts to escape sentimental, naturalistic notions of childhood such as these, and to endow child study with what was assumed to be empirical respectability, that provided the necessary driving force to establish pedagogy as the science of child development in all its aspects. The development of the pedagogical movement is analysed below, following a discussion of the intellectual movement of positivism which provided pedagogists with the impetus necessary for developing their ideas within what seemed to be a scientific framework.

2.02 The Influence of Positivism

a) *Positivism as a Movement.*

The statement of OFSTED (1994: 13) that fear of subjective teaching has, so far, prevented the subjects of the National Curriculum from being presented in ways which educate in values is an example of a continuing misunderstanding concerning the respective merits of 'objectivity' and

'subjectivity', the origins of which can be traced to positivist influence.

Positivism has a long history which, in one form or another, runs parallel to the rise of modern science, developing particularly from the philosophy of Descartes, with 'the faith which was placed in logic and abstract reasoning and the closely allied processes of mathematical demonstration' (Babbitt 1962: 35).

Comte, writing in the nineteenth century, saw the origins of positivism as an intellectual discipline in the rise of science during the seventeenth century (Comte 1969 edition: 135), although there is evidence of its characteristics from much earlier times (Armitage 1972).

The influence of the movement has been significant generally, not least of all for education. This section provides a summary of the main focus of the movement as it provided an important framework for developments in education from the late nineteenth century onwards. A distinctive feature of positivism, influential for thought generally, was in the encouragement it gave to belief in the superiority of research methods which were considered to eliminate opinions on account of the 'objective' methods by which data were collected and hypotheses formulated.

In short, positivism was an intellectual movement whose adherents believed experimental research could produce

findings which were neutral and value-free (Depaepe 1992: 70). Hostility to metaphysics, a study which was not amenable to this approach, was denounced as being non-sensical (Ayer 1969: 173). Such an attitude can be found, for example, in the writings of Hume:

But what have I here said, that reflections very refined and metaphysical have little or no influence upon us? This opinion I can scarce forbear retracting condemning from my present feeling and experience. The intense view of these manifold contradictions and imperfections in human reason has so wrought upon me, and heated my brain, that I am ready to reject all belief and reasoning, and can look upon no opinion even as more probable or likely than another (Hume 1964 edition: 253).

The positivist movement spread particularly rapidly during the twentieth century, encouraged especially by the work of Professor Maurice Schlick and his colleagues during the first decades of the twentieth century. The continued hostility to metaphysics can be found, for example, in the writings of Carnap (1966 edition: 206/220). Overall, the positivist movement was concerned with the identification of 'things in themselves' (Kant 1989 edition: 87), believing this to be possible through eliminating subjective human opinion - that is, thought not supported by objectively obtained information - by the use of experiments and instruments, measurements and statistics although, of course, the interpretation of this 'objective' information depended upon this very type of reasoned analysis (Depaepe 1992: 75/6).

A desire for educational reform and professionalism helped create the climate conducive for experimental research (particularly as reflected in the pedagogical movement) to eventually become an integral component of educational science or sciences (Depaepe 1992: 70).

Depaepe, when analysing developments in experimental research between the years of 1890/1940 described the significance of positivism as follows:

this phenomenon was just one of many emanations of the almost limitless confidence in positivism ... scientific knowledge had to be gathered inductively and as a means of experimental research.

(Depaepe 1992: 69)

Accordingly attempts were made throughout Europe to establish the science of *pedology*, the scientific study of the child in all aspects. The intention was to escape as far as possible from romantic-religious, naturalistic and sentimental traits of perceptions of childhood, and by means of numerous types of observations, measurements and psycho-physical experiments, where possible using specialised instruments, to bring together fragmented scraps of knowledge. It was believed that:

Relationships should be able to be discerned between them about which experimentally verifiable hypotheses could be constructed and whereby ultimately partial as well as general patterns, laws and theorems could be derived to explain child development and child behaviour (Depaepe 1992: 75).

Belgian pedologists, inspired by the work of the American theorist Oscar Chrisman (1896) set up an experimental laboratory in Antwerp in 1899 to develop pedological approaches to child study, whilst in 1911 an international congress to discuss pedology took place in Brussels. Progress, however, was halted by the outbreak of war, but the *Institut Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, established at Geneva in 1912 as the result of the driving force of Edouard Claparede was to be more enduring, and significant for the work of Jean Piaget (2.03), who later became its Director. From its foundation, the intention was to teach experimental psychology and pedagogy at an academic level. The pedological pattern, supported by a positivist ethos, was the framework underlying the initiative.

The focus of Piaget's work was never educational although it has been applied extensively in an educational context (for example, Plowden 1967). Piaget's theories comprised an attempt to create an integrated theory of biology and philosophy of the mind (Wood 1990 edition: 10). Full discussion of these issues comprises section 2.03 of this chapter, and the final section of the thesis focuses on religious education as a specific example of how Piagetian psychology has influenced assumptions concerning the nature of childhood and curriculum development in primary schools.

Depaepe described the spread of positivism through the medium of pedology as follows:

In short, within the pedological paradigm, the positivist dream unfolded in full measure. Quantitative research methods were idolised and an almost magic power was given to the language of numbers. It was assumed unconditionally that experimental research was superior. Its objectivity was not doubted nor was the universal validity of the positive knowledge of facts...

(1992: 75)

Nevertheless, the pedological paradigm collapsed after the first world war, since its vision of a single science of the child was found impossible to establish. Its more lasting effect, nevertheless, was to encourage belief in the desirability, and possibility, of a scientific, value-free approach to pedagogical sciences, for example by research design of a type believed to be able to identify objectively 'facts' of childhood (Depaepe 1992: 77). These 'facts' - obtained by means of various kinds of tests devised by, for example psychologists such as Burt and Binet, were thought to be superior to other methods of information-gathering, since these were deemed to be subjective (Depaepe 1992: 76).

It is plausible, perhaps, to consider the extent to which efforts to establish a system in education which, as it was considered to be value-free and therefore impartial in making judgements, could have been an attempt to bring about social order and peace (Depaepe 1992: 70). As Depaepe suggests later:

Did not the desire for increasingly successful education give witness rather to a complete preference for a rationally ordered (and thus more controllable) society than to a true emancipatory interest in the child? (1992: 79).

If so, the efforts were futile, as subsequent events in European history were to show.

b) *The Effects of Positivism..*

i) Positivism, Experimental Psychology and the Child.

As described by Depaepe (1992: 67/83), positivism was a driving force behind the confidence felt during the late nineteenth and mid-twentieth centuries in the possibility of identifying facts concerning child development, particularly those which could be communicated statistically. Whilst there can be little doubt that experimental psychology could make a very important contribution to knowledge of the learning process, it is the contention of the writer that all research findings must be studied alongside other non-quantifiable factors, such as the quality of relationships between the teacher and child and the appropriateness of lesson content for individual interest. All are both central, and vital, to the learning process, although not necessarily following fixed patterns (see page 28 for further discussion). As stated by Depaepe, the pedagogists failed to recognise 'the complexity of the pedagogical-didactic process', but indirectly their commitment to value-free, neutral research continued, and

psychologists, like educationalists, discovered 'the market of the child' (1992: 78/80).

Assumptions that experimental research is a superior method for the identification of significant features of the learning process easily leads to a type of imperialism and imbalance in efforts to understand the intricacies of how learning takes place. This is because affective aspects of thought are as central to consciousness as rational thought:

The attempt of the rationalist to lock up life in some set of formulae produces in the imaginative man a feeling of oppression. He gasps for light and air.
(Babbitt 1962: 34).

To attempt to eliminate any aspect of human consciousness when carrying out research, especially with children, is to produce results which are, at the best irrelevant for describing reality, and at the worst extremely damaging and misleading. This is because at least one of the central characteristics of being human has been omitted.

It will be shown throughout later chapters of the thesis how metaphor is central to thinking and the way in which people attempt to make sense of their experiences. Positivist theories concerning metaphor are examined below in order to assess their contribution to theories which were developed later in an educational context.

ii) Positivism and Metaphor.

The focus of positivism when extended to metaphor in language developed several assumptions central to the thought of writers in the Middle Ages concerning 'figurative' and 'literal' uses of language, to the exclusion of other important factors identified by classical writers, for example Aristotle and Longinus (pages 91/93).

For example, phrases such as 'metaphorical meaning' and 'mere metaphor' have obscured distinctions between insights and the role of metaphor in attempts to express them. As stated by Soskice, 'states of affairs' have become confused with the ways in which they are expressed (1989: 70). Because of the importance of this issue for understanding the learning process, full discussion is developed in a later chapter (pages 98/101).

In addition, this narrow focus of metaphor in language was further restricted by such writers as Locke and Hobbes (pages 95/96), who argued it was merely an impediment to clear expression and the identification of 'facts'. This influential notion played a central role in preventing development of understanding of the much deeper operation of conventional metaphor in everyday thought and language use: again, discussion of this issue is central to later analysis (pages 105/116; 148/167).

Narrow interpretations of metaphor which emanated from positivism, coupled with assumptions concerning the supposed

neutrality of experimental psychology's ability to identify the facts of learning potential, were significant for Piaget's theories concerning pre-adolescent children's language use, even though his methods of research were criticised by positivists themselves (Boden 1978: 25).

It is to a synopsis of the influential work of Piaget that the chapter now moves, assessing the influence of the romantic and positivist movements on his thought and theories.

2.03 The Work of Jean Piaget.

a) *General Background.*

Jean Piaget was born in 1896 and died in 1980. Unofficial titles bestowed on him included "the Classroom's Freud" and "the Einstein of Psychology". Piaget set out to elaborate a biological explanation of knowledge. What he actually achieved was the construction of a "stage theory" of children's intellectual capacity which pervaded classrooms in all corners of the globe and, it has been suggested, encouraged teachers to hold extremely low expectations of their pupils (Brown et al 1979; Bryant 1974; Petrovich 1988).

b) *Formative Influences of Early Life*

Jean Piaget was the son of Arthur and Rebecca Piaget. His father was a historian and from an early age Piaget was discouraged by him from becoming a student of history. Piaget wrote that he got his 'love of facts' from his father, who

advised him against historical studies because history "wasn't a true science" (Vidal 1994: 13). Arthur Piaget was an unbeliever, but his wife nurtured her son within the traditions of liberal Protestantism. Her regular bouts of mental illness caused Piaget and his father to take "refuge in both a private and fictitious world" (Vidal 1994: 16). These early influences, operating within the climate of opinion created by positivism, were to be of great significance for Piaget's later academic life. This was the context in which Piaget developed his theories of childhood intellectual development which were ultimately to be so influential for primary school education (Plowden 1967) and particularly for religious education (Goldman 1964; 1965).

c) *Biological Interests.*

By 1912, Jean Piaget was described as being a "great mind", fascinated in particular by the study of molluscs and the way in which these aquatic creatures adapted to lakeside environments. He once described his obsession with molluscs as the "problem of species and their indefinite adaptations as a function of the environment" (Vidal 1994: 37). His goal in studying variations of species was to formulate a classification system and to devise a means of understanding the phenomenon of acclimatization. Of interest, for example, was how various species of molluscs had reached Lake Geneva and adapted to life in its waters. He declared that he had

"decided to consecrate (his) life to the biological explanation of knowledge" (Vidal 1994: 52).

d) *Liberal Protestantism and Positivism*

As a liberal Protestant working within the intellectual climate of positivism, Piaget was concerned to adapt religion and theology to secular developments, particularly to current thinking in science and philosophy, and the conviction that control of people by an external authority might be replaced by emphasis on individualism, what he believed to be an exclusive characteristic of Protestantism (Vidal 1994: 93). He was appointed to the staff of the *Institut Rousseau* in 1921 by Claparede, and later became its Director, a post which he held from 1933 until 1971. As shown earlier (page 61), this Institute had been founded by Claparde as a response to the pedological movement, the ideology of which was central to Piaget's researches, although his methodology has frequently been the subject of criticism because of its lack of statistics and controlled experimental design. He favoured interview techniques and criticised statistical methods on account of his perceptions of their lack of qualitative material (Boden 1978: 25).

The main work of Piaget was driven by his determination to show that maturity in its numerous dimensions (language, thought, morality) could be empirically verified and thus given the factual status necessary for acceptance within

positivism. He wanted to find a unity between science, psychology and values. As Fernando Vidal states:

For Piaget, science did not deal with values themselves, but it could help to explain value judgements. Once a personal experience had been formed, Piaget claimed, psychology could 'control' it and check its logical structure; for example, a militarist socialist would be led to examine whether or not militarism and socialism are logically compatible, and would then have to make a moral and practical choice. Logical and moral experience are closely linked (Vidal 1994: 230).

Piaget's assertion was that non-contradiction was a psychological and moral necessity, a function which was as biological as eating and drinking. Speaking in 1928 at a Swiss Revivalist Meeting, Piaget claimed that "by approaching values as empirical facts, psychology and sociology discovered the law of evolution that governed them in the individual and society" (Vidal 1994: 231).

It was this evolutionary approval that informed his works in the field of child psychology. Piaget's most famous books appeared between 1923 and 1929: *The Language and Thought of the Child* (1923); *Judgement and Reasoning in the Child* (1926); *The Child's Conception of Physical Causality* (1927) and *The Child's Conception of the World* (1929). All purported to show how central to childhood was egocentrism, an incapacity to feel empathy. For Piaget, the disappearance of egocentrism during the final 'stage' of development was both intellectual and moral (Vidal 1994: 230). Reason, for him, brought with it

a unification of religion, science and morality through the development of consciousness.

The purpose of his investigations into the thought processes of the young person was to show the child to be a microcosm of the developing state in passing through stages of egocentrism, with the capacity for concrete thought towards greater individualism or personal autonomy (Clark 1995: 81). This was the early phase of development asserted by Rousseau as being innocent (1976 edition: 79). Piagetian theory offers ideas concerning the *nature* of this innocence.

In a similar way, the society of the western world, for Piaget, was seen to have developed in corresponding stages, from primitive survival techniques to the acceptance of corporate, external control (especially as epitomised by the Roman Catholic Church) towards the individualism he believed to be offered by liberal Protestantism:

From the child and the primitive to the adult and the modern; from the fact that we have freed ourselves from egocentrism and from intellectual and moral coercion (quoted Vidal 1994: 231).

Piaget's equation of childhood with what he believed to be the condition of "primitive races" can be found throughout his writings:

the child will always discover motives which are sufficient to justify them; just as the world of the primitive races is peopled with a wealth of arbitrary intentions (Piaget 1923: 212).

in other words, childish dynamics seem to require contact; when the clouds drive the sun before them it is

because a breath issues from them ... the autonomy is analogous to that which we find in primitive peoples (Piaget 1926: 119).

It is our belief that the day will come when child thought will be placed on the same level in relation to adult, normal and civilized thought (Piaget 1927: 256).

There is here a primitive failure to dissociate between action and conscious effort (Piaget 1929: 178).

Piaget was not looking at individual children's cognitive development, but rather attempting to bring together and draw attention to what he perceived to be characteristics of childhood which appeared systematically - irrespective of individuality - throughout development. This attempt at classification has been described as follows:

What he is doing here is logically equivalent to setting out a museum exhibit for spectators to see. He starts with a taxonomy which he appears to read off from the data, but which in fact he brings to them (Clark 1995: 80).

It is for this reason that Clark asserted that:

Piaget's theory, interpreted as being about the cognitive development of the individual psychological subject, is incoherent, and thus can be of no practical value for teachers (Clark 1995: 78).

e) *Piaget's Work in Children's Language Development.*

When Piaget was asked why he practised experimental psychology, his answer was "Because I want facts" (Bringuier 1980: 49). However, Piaget's work reveals his assumption that in 'discovering facts' he was building upon, in an empirically respectable manner, those scraps of information derived from non-objective observations of the past (Depaepe 1992: 75).

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Piaget's investigations concerned enquiries into how children would respond when asked to match proverbs against provided answers. His investigation of proverbs is the nearest that his theories came to enquiring into children's ability to deal with metaphor: proverb can be understood as sharing many of the characteristics of metaphor (Winner and Gardner 1993: 430). The set task consisted of providing the children with a list of proverbs and asking them to pick a sentence which they considered to be an appropriate meaning. Piaget described what happened:

Now these facts, which we have pointed out without explaining them, are constantly to be met with in connexion with the proverbs; the child always justifies the most unexpected combinations. Here are a few examples in which syncretism brings about these justifications at any price.

(1959 edition: 146)

By 'syncretism' Piaget can be understood as meaning the child attempted to reason by 'schemas', or by a method of interpretation which involved looking at phrases, rather than by analysing meanings of single words and attempting to synchronise them. (Piaget: 1959 edition: 132). Hence, he found that ten year olds, when attempting to interpret proverbs, would apply groups of words from the proverb to what they saw to be a corresponding group in one of the sentences, and it was according to this 'schema' of words that the 'solution' was

selected. An example, taken from Piaget's writing, is the following:

Mat (10;0) connects the proverb 'So often goes the jug to water, that in the end it breaks' with the sentence 'As we grow older we grow better'. Now the proverb has been understood verbally. For Mat it means: *'You go to the water so often that the jug cracks; you go back once again and it breaks'*. The corresponding sentence is explained as follows: *'The older you get the better you get and the more obedient you become - Why do these two sentences mean the same thing? Because the jug is not so hard because it is getting old, because the bigger you grow, the better you are and you grow old.'*
(1959 edition: 138/9)

Piaget states that

It may be claimed that this absurdity is due to the fact that a child of 10 cannot realize that the symbolism of a proverb is exclusively ethical. This is undoubtedly one of the factors at work, although at that age children realize perfectly well that all proverbs are symbolic. But this factor alone does not explain the child's power to connect everything with everything else by means of general schemas, and to compare a jug to a child simply because both grow older. (1959 edition: 139)

Many more examples of children's responses which follow this pattern are provided and analysed, all of which seem to prove the 'fact' which Piaget is attempting to establish: that is, that children of Key Stage Two age, and earlier, think differently from adults in that they do not analyse according to detail. Instead:

In other words, the child seems to be on the lookout only for words resembling each other in sense or in sound ('petit' and 'petites', 'habit' and 'habitude') Here again the general schema is built up just as definitely. In syncretism of understanding, as in that of perception, there is solidarity between the details and the general schema.

(Piaget: 1959 edition: 157)

Two points need to be made here. Firstly, earlier in the chapter, Piaget mentioned that:

In order ... that the experiment should not be absurd, we analysed *only the answers given by the children who had been able to discover and defend the correct correspondence for at least one or two proverbs.* (1959 edition: 136)

What, the reader could with much justification insist upon knowing, happened to the data which did not fit this scheme? Statements such as these could lead teachers and researchers to believe that Piaget possibly interpreted all his data in ways which gave support to his theories, omitting any which did not. It is intriguing to read later in the same chapter Piaget's defence of this work, because:

The impression must often have been created that the children we questioned were making fun either of us or of the test, and that the many solutions which they discovered at will could have been exchanged for any others that might have suggested themselves, without the child being in any way put out.
(1959 edition: 159)

Secondly, Piaget's argument that absurdity was not a factor in the experiments because they showed that

As the years increased, there was simply a more or less sensible, diminution of syncretism (1959: 161)

is most unconvincing, if only because as the child became older, s/he would have had more opportunities of learning new words and increasing his/her vocabulary: the task would then become, simply, easier if experiences had been appropriate for the development of understanding!

What the children were probably doing was engaging in some kind of 'fun' wordplay, possibly attempting to turn the test into a game. If this should be correct, the rules required the players to creatively seek for patterns and relationships between the words. Because of the creative nature of individual ideas, the work of the children would not be in accordance with the 'set' answers against which their efforts were tested.

Although his earlier studies of molluscs concentrated on their adaptation to habitat, the corresponding importance of context in the interpretation of language was not, apparently, considered (Donaldson 1978: 38; 71). Expecting children to be able to provide satisfactory answers to the proverb-matching exercises without giving some indication of their application was a task which, not surprisingly, was beyond their ability to solve, as it would undoubtedly prove to be for adults placed in a similar position. Further research into this particular aspect of language comprehension could comprise an additional project.

Piagetian theory attempts to show that cognitive development could be described in terms of biological principles which were based on observable 'facts' (Hamlyn 1978: 51).

Another feature of Piaget's perceptions of words can be grasped from the following quotation:

the imaginative interpretations of imperfectly understood words (Piaget 1959 edition: 149).

This gives an indication of Piaget's assumption that words had set, unchanging meanings, a misunderstanding identified by Soskice (1989: 6) and by Reddy (1993: 164). It was 'set' solutions to the proverbs against which the efforts of the children to make sense of the task set were judged.

However, Reddy has shown to be false notions that words act as a conduit vessel, conveying 'set' meanings which can be passed from one person to another (Reddy 1993: 164). This assumption is erroneous since all messages undergo interpretation, and in the process meanings of words and phrases are redefined and assimilated according to the experiences undergone and concepts held by any individual. Piaget's conclusion that the children were unable to select the correct answer to the proverb provided is important because it reflects his assumption that there was necessarily one 'correct' answer.

As will be discussed in chapter three, this assumption is clearly influenced by positivism, where arguments that figurative language - for example, metaphors - are merely rhetorical devices, devised for communicating something which could be done more efficiently through literal language, are examined (3.03). However, the assumption was based on a narrow reading of classical writers' advice to students of

rhetoric whose insights penetrated much more deeply into the function and role of metaphor (3.02).

Regarding Piaget's notion of 'schemas', these are not necessarily so ludicrous as he seemed to have believed them to be. What the children were doing in their attempts to 'solve' the proverbs was to look for relationships, or ways in which ideas could be matched. This is characteristic of the way in which everyday phrases are modified and redefined - often metaphorically - in order to extend existing conceptual networks to newly encountered phenomena (pages 149/160).

In his attempts to establish 'facts' of learning, Piaget's analysis was inappropriate in that he attempted to apply theories within stages with a rough age-equivalence, irrespective of individual ability or personality differences. The assumption seems to have been largely biologically based: intellectual development followed set patterns, the content of which were determined by anatomical development related to age, rather than individual, creative capacity or insight.

What is fascinating is Piaget's outline of a further 'fact' or 'law' which he reckoned he could perceive in children's attempts to reason, and this was that they had a 'Need for Justification at any Price' (Piaget: 1959 edition: 145) and would, therefore, manipulate the material available to justify their ideas.

Two main points which arise from the above synopsis are:

- 1) Piaget's belief that proverbs necessarily had one correct meaning against which his informants' success could be measured;
- 2) his assumption that children's methods of attempting to understand proverbs proceeded through identifiable stages which were similar for all, but distinguishable from those at the 'final' stage of development.

Piaget's theory of language development in pre-adolescent children may be summarised as indicating their apparent inability to deal with 'figurative' language, a point which was to become central to the researches of Goldman (1964; 1965) who applied it directly to Religious Education (chapter eight).

Piaget's early interest in the classification of molluscs was instrumental in the formulation of his famous 'intellectual stages': they provided a system whereby child development could be neatly classified and which summarized the intellectual capacity of children in an orderly system.

However, Piaget's reasoning developed from false premises. Children do not develop towards individuality: they are individuals from birth, and it is the individual's capacity for creative thought which allows knowledge to develop, but this process is extremely individualistic and complex (Depaepe 1992: 78). It is Piaget's failure to accommodate the validity and significance of creativity in human development which is largely responsible for the

discreditation of his theories as being important for educational purposes (Ashton 1993a).

g) *The Influence of Piagetian Psychology.*

Although Piagetian psychology was used as a theoretical foundation for encouraging 'progressive' teaching methods (Plowden 1967), Piaget kept himself distanced from educational issues. The reason for this has been expressed as follows:

One reason is straightforward enough. Piaget simply did not see education as his business; it was not his primary concern and he therefore devoted little energy to these issues (Davis 1991: 22).

What Piaget *did* consider to be his business has been described above: he wished to show that maturity in its various diverse dimensions could be verified empirically. However, it has been shown that, although expressed in heavy mathematical and biological disguises, Piaget's theories are really:

the romantic evolutionary view of nature, with the construction of the self by an individual as he or she goes along reappearing as assimilation, accommodation etc., and it is probably this that has led him to be recruited by romantically inclined educational theorists. But this interpretation does not survive a close scrutiny of Piaget's writings (Clark 1995: 83).

Nevertheless the validity of Piagetian psychology should be assessed on additional criteria to its empirical respectability. However, it has been suggested above that the theories fail in that they do not recognise the importance of creativity in human development. It is the contention of the argument presented throughout sections two and three of the

thesis that, even though discredited scientifically, the theories of Piaget cannot be verified by non-scientific methods either.

Nevertheless, one of the uses made of Piagetian psychology has been to provide the teacher with a new role: 'a facilitator of learning', whereby:

the teacher's task is to provide an environment and opportunities which are sufficiently challenging for children and yet not so difficult as to be outside their reach ... learning can be undertaken too late as well as too early. Piaget's work can help teachers in diagnosing children's readiness ... (Plowden Report 1967: paras. 533/534):

The results of the implications of these ideas on primary school teaching have been severely criticised (Alexander et al 1992; McNamara 1993) and a plea has been made for teachers to be allowed to regain the freedom to actually teach:

Certainly, success here would go far to restoring to teachers their traditional role and proper responsibility. (Day 1983: 89).

The danger, of course, lies in attempts to define what 'traditional teaching' actually comprised. If teaching was to revert to, for example, the 'object lessons' of the nineteenth century, positivism could regain a grip on lesson content.

Piaget's work, if studied against a background of positivism, shows itself to have been significantly influenced by the confidence emanating from the movement in ways which were uncritical, although the parameters of positivism were extremely narrow and restrictive (Depaepe 1992: 69).

However, the influence of Piagetian psychology on educational practice and method has been enormous. The work of Ronald Goldman (1964; 1965) was based within Piagetian ideas and it has been his ideas which have been influential for the way in which Religious Education was to develop rather than theory based on other writings, (for example, Bruner 1978; Vygotsky 1978). It is to a critique of Goldman's researches that chapter seven is devoted.

Kohlberg and Mayer (1972) have argued that it was essential to base the whole primary curriculum on Piagetian stages. It is probably in mathematics, more than in most subjects, that Piaget's influence has been most apparent. Copeland (1979) suggested that the mathematics curriculum should be organised in ways which would give children experience in Piagetian mathematical tasks (such as the conservation activities, criticised by Matthews (1994: 51) as described above). Williams and Shuard (1986) begin their work with an uncritical overview of Piaget's theory and its value for teachers of mathematics.

All of these examples point towards an important influence of positivism: Piagetian psychology was accepted by many in the educational world as being what it seemed to claim to be: a value-free account of how children came to learn. Piaget's theories were accepted by many as being neutral in this sense, and it was hardly surprising that those induced by positivism

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believed this type of research was definitive in establishing a totally reliable account of child development. His theories were recommended as a base for both education administration and teaching methodology.

In Britain, the Plowden Report (1967) provided the seal of approval which was necessary if Piagetian ideas were to become accepted in the primary school classroom (for example, see paragraphs 23, 50, 371, 521, 522, 530 & 649).

The following chapter provides a critical examination of theories of metaphor, with the purpose of assessing the assumptions of Piaget, as they had been formulated by those working under positivist influence.

2.04 Summary.

Influential movements in thought, notably The Romantic Movement, specifically the writings of Rousseau, and those whose work was significantly dominated by positivism, created a restricted intellectual perspective which assumed value-free methods of collecting and interpreting data to be an exclusive means of acquiring reliable knowledge about child development.

Piaget was significantly influenced by both movements in that Romanticism encouraged assumptions concerning the nature of childhood, indicating it to be intrinsically different from adulthood. Positivism emphasised for him the necessity of establishing 'facts' by objective research methods and his work is an example of how both movements became entwined,

reinforcing each other and yet moving away from actuality because of their basic romanticism.

Central to Piaget's understanding of language were figurative/literal distinctions, all of which were characteristic of positivist thinkers. His work in child language development was developed from these assumptions. The following chapter examines theories of metaphor in order to assess the validity of the theories accepted by Piaget.

CHAPTER THREE
THEORIES OF METAPHOR

3.00 Introduction.

It is the purpose of this chapter to analyse influential definitions which have been provided of metaphor. It is shown how, since the Middle Ages in particular, notions of metaphor became increasingly restricted to modes of thought emanating from distinctions between 'figurative' and 'literal' expression. These distinctions have contributed to serious misunderstandings concerning the nature of metaphor, particularly confusion between supposed 'facts' and metaphorical expressions of them.

Discussion continues by considering current theories which recognise the significance of metaphor not only for poetry, literary prose and rhetoric as assumed traditionally (for example, Empson 1951; Black 1993; Cooper 1986), but also in providing a structure for daily thought and pragmatic discourse (Lakoff and Johnson 1980; Reddy 1993).

3.01 The Problem of Defining Terms.

a) *Traditional Theories of Metaphor.*

As outlined in earlier sections of the chapter (3.01/3.02) discussion of the nature and purpose of metaphor can be traced to the ancient world (Soskice 1988: 3/10; Gluckensberg and Keysar 1993: 422). A potentially perplexing variety of terminology is used by scholars when analysing analogical thinking. It is no easy task to construct a precise meaning for the various words

such as metaphor, symbol, sign, parable and model, as all may operate in efforts to communicate any particular insight.

Metaphor is a very commonly used term. In traditional usage - that is, in discussions which see distinctions between 'dead' and 'active' metaphors - only 'active' metaphors are recognised as being metaphors at all. Under contemporary theories, 'active' metaphors are renamed 'novel' metaphors in contrast to 'conventional' metaphors which include those traditionally categorised as being 'dead'.

The metaphors discussed in this section of the chapter are what contemporary theorists would agree to call 'novel' metaphors, that is metaphors which are creative and imaginative and which lead to the development of new insights and theories of meaning (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 139/136; Lakoff 1993: 202/252). Traditional theories concerning them incorporate ideas from the classical world, but emphasize especially the figurative/literal distinction which provided a suitable focus for positivist writers. This suitability concerned the notion that 'literal' language expressed facts, whilst 'figurative' language was mere embellishment (page 95/102).

Max Black (1971: 171) classifies metaphor under three headings: as instances of substitution, comparison and interaction. An example of metaphor used by Black in his exposition is "Richard is a lion" and is discussed at length by

Empson as being a 'standard metaphor', however inappropriate an example it could seem for some (Empson 1951: 342/3).

By the substitution view of metaphor Black means that which holds that "a metaphorical expression is used in place of some equivalent literal expression" (1971: 176), as in the traditional definition of metaphor as 'saying one thing but meaning another'. In this way, 'Richard is a lion' means 'Richard is brave'. The reason for this indirect way of communicating is either "to remedy a gap in the vocabulary" (1971: 177), in which case the metaphor soon acquires a new literal meaning, or "to give pleasure to the reader" - a stylistic "decoration".

A comparison view sees metaphor as "the presentation of the underlying analogy or similarity" (1971: 178), that is, as an implied simile. Here 'Richard is a lion' means 'Richard is like a lion', implying 'in being brave'. The statement is about both lions and Richard, but a precise equivalent in literal terms of the point of comparison is considered possible.

An interaction view of metaphor, however, sees it as allowing two separate systems of ideas to interpenetrate or illuminate each other. I. A. Richards' definition is quoted by Black: "In the simplest formulation, when we use a metaphor we have two thoughts of different things active together and supported by a single word, or phrase, whose meaning is a resultant of their interaction" (1971 180: quoted Richards). Thus in 'Richard is a Lion' thoughts about both Richard and lions are actively engaged

and cannot be given a satisfactory literal translation describing exactly how lions and Richard are similar. Any attempted translation would lose its cognitive content, as well as its expressive sharpness. Metaphors of this kind therefore are important in philosophy, not least of all because of the active engagement of the reader or listener. Black summarizes their nature. They are "not expendable. Their mode of operation requires the reader to use a system of implications (a system of 'commonplaces' - or a special system established for the purpose in hand) as a means for selecting, emphasising and organizing relations in a different field. This use of a 'subsidiary subject' to encourage insight into a 'principal subject' is a distinctive intellectual operation demanding simultaneous awareness of both subjects but not reducible to any comparison between the two" (1971: 186). A metaphor of this type is like a filter or a lens through which the main subject can be seen in a new light, and which acquires the power to inform and enlighten (1971: 186). A literal phrase attempting to convey an identical definition would be doomed to failure (page 97).

b) *Further Definitions of Metaphor.*

Discussions of metaphor have suggested other definitions, divorcing it from its two assumed elements, the signifier and the significant.

For example, Petrie and Oshlag liken metaphor to a bridge (1993: 584), in that attempts are being made through the use of

metaphor to bring about deeper understanding of the unknown by means of the known. Whether the bridging attempt is successful, however, would seem to depend upon both the appropriateness of the metaphor and the ability of the interpreter to identify personally both with the 'known element' of the metaphor but also with the insight being communicated concerning the largely new. The metaphor is perceived, therefore, to be dispensable when once the new insight is reached.

These 'metaphors of metaphors' can be helpful in that they prompt the reader to focus on a familiar aspect of the signifier - in these cases bridges and lenses - in order to appreciate the way in which metaphors work. Conversely they can be misleading by each example being taken as complete in itself. No single metaphor is adequate in communicating insight because of its intrinsic communicative task. Support must be given by focusing on insights conveyed by other metaphors which act as checks and balances. This is because each metaphor is interpreted creatively by each individual and the use of several metaphors ensure directions are provided by each, although the final interpretation is essentially individually creative.

In a similar way, the idea of a metaphor being a lens introduces another dimension to the task of definition: using this second image implies it is the unknown which is the focus and which takes up one's attention, rather than the lens (i.e. metaphor) itself, but the interpretation depends upon, in the

first instance, existing concepts and experience (Caird 1988: 152).

The 'bridge' definition is similar to the substitution, comparison and interaction theories, however, in that it sees as central to the meaning of the metaphor two distinct elements, one of which is the subject of the metaphor, that is, using Black's example 'lions', 'Richard', 'men' or 'wolves' (page 85/87). The 'lens' theory is dependant on two elements in a similar way, one 'above' and the other 'below' the lens: the theory is unable to eliminate either and excludes other elements from entering the interpretation process. Theories which are basically dependant on these two elements are criticised below.

c) *Limitations of Comparison, Substitution and Interactive Theories of Metaphor.*

Comparison, substitution and interactive theories of metaphor, however, all necessitate agreement on one assumption which is restricting because of the limitations they impose. This is because all three assume only two elements in the interpretation process, and that the insight concerns some aspect or aspects of at least one of them. Whilst this could be true of some metaphors which share quite a simple structure, for example, 'the time was ripe', meaning 'it was the appropriate time', it is not true for all, as a discussion of the metaphor of God's fatherhood illustrates.

In this metaphor, the reader is invited to search for similarities between fathers and God. The metaphor speaks of attitudes towards God rather than assertions concerning what God is believed to be. Personal perceptions of fathers could be brought into the activity: a source of comfort and guidance, a provider of life's necessities seem to be suggested, although not everyone's experiences of fathers would necessarily prompt these notions (Appendices A and B; Cedarwood undated). Nevertheless, it is not necessarily crucial that *personal* experience of a metaphor is needed for conceptual development to take place, since general experiences also contribute to efforts to interpret. In the case of fathers, conceptual development can be based on what is learnt about fathers from secondary sources, for example, by appropriate literature which introduces new perspectives and observations of experiences of others which could help modify and refine one's own ideas. Discussion of issues associated with this metaphor is provided in chapter nine, pages 251/256.

Another criticism which can be made concerns a complaint that all three theories, substitution, comparison and interaction, use examples in their exposition which are taken out of their uttered, or written, contexts, a point made elsewhere concerning the necessity of introducing work for children in suitable contexts (page 233). For example, the statement 'Richard is a Lion' could be literal if it concerned a lion which

was named Richard, but there are many other meanings too, none of which can be suggested sensibly without knowing who Richard is and the general circumstances of the claim. A further example, from the writings of Black (quoted by Soskice 1989: 46) 'man is a wolf' shares the same limitation as 'Richard is a lion'.

During the last two decades a huge metaphoric system has been discovered which underlies daily thought and discourse. The theories discussed above referred to metaphors used in the context of poetry or the communication of particularly profound insights. They were therefore constructed in order to examine what is now known to be only a small, although important, section of the whole continuum (page 114). The following section examines ideas of writers from the classical world, with the purpose of considering whether the restricted perceptions of metaphor outlined above emanated from their work.

3.02 Metaphor and Rhetoric: Classical Writers' Advice.

The power of metaphor in engaging the excitement of the writer with the creative effort of the reader was well known in the classical world. Metaphor in language was an art in which students of rhetoric were thoroughly trained. For example, Soskice quotes Aristotle:

by far the most important is to be good at metaphor. For this is the only one that cannot be learnt from anyone else, and it is a sign of natural genius, as to be good at metaphor is to perceive resemblances.

(1989: 9).

The perception of metaphor expressed by Aristotle indicates it to be a means of extending knowledge and understanding.

Similar insights were expressed by Quintilian:

the changes involved concern not merely individual words, but also our thoughts and the structure of our sentences. In view of these facts I regard those writers as mistaken who have held that *tropes* necessarily involve the substitution of word for word.
(quoted by Soskice 1989: 10).

Elsewhere Aristotle also noted that:

Metaphor also pre-eminently involves clarity, pleasantness and unfamiliarity, and it cannot be drawn from any other source. But one must also make one's adjectives and metaphors appropriate ('The Art of Rhetoric' 1995 edition: 221).

He gives a striking example of this by quoting from, and analysing, a well-known metaphor of Homer:

There is a difference, for example, in saying *rosy-fingered dawn* rather than *purple-fingered dawn* or, even worse, *red-fingered dawn* ('The Art of Rhetoric' 1995 edition: 219).

Demetrius wrote of the importance of appropriateness too:

In the first place we should use metaphors, for they more than anything make prose attractive and impressive, but they should not be crowded together, for yet far-fetched but from the same general area and based on a true analogy (1995 edition: 401).

Longinus recognised the use of metaphor as a way of creating sublimity and arousing the emotions:

I accept this, but at the same time, as I said in speaking of figures, the proper antidote for a multitude of daring metaphors is strong and timely emotion and genuine sublimity (1995 edition: 263).

The power of metaphor to enable the reader to share the excitement of the experience with the writer is impressive.

The writings of Aristotle and Quintilian express the insight that metaphor is concerned with the communication of thought, emotion, excitement and the extension of understanding through it. It is in this way that its use can help the reader or listener come closer to the insight being expressed.

As pointed out by Soskice, Aristotle was writing his *Poetics* to enable poets achieve excellence in style: metaphor was to be judged according to both its correspondence with what was signified and also by its sound, aesthetic quality. The hope was that oratory would achieve high standards in both argument and style and contribute to deepening thought and the sharing of insights which transcended simple description (Soskice 1989: 9).

3.03 Later Interpretations of Classical Theorists.

The question which follows concerns the origins of theories of metaphor which focus exclusively on the comparison theory, that is, perceptions of metaphor which understand it as comparing one phenomenon with another in order to comprehend the latter more clearly. Aristotle has become regarded as the exponent of this theory to the exclusion of his other definitions. The following assertion is made with confidence, conveying the notion that this was *all* that Aristotle wrote concerning metaphor:

Aristotle was interested in the relationship of metaphor to language and the role of metaphor in communication. His discussion of the issues, principally in the *poetics* and in the *Rhetoric*,

have remained influential to this day. He believed metaphors to be implicit comparisons, based on the principles of analogy, a view that translates into what, in modern terms, is generally called the comparison theory of metaphor (Ortony 1993: 3).

As shown above the insights of Aristotle into the function of metaphor in language went very much further than this. Nevertheless it is the 'comparison' theory of metaphor which has become firmly attached to his name:

Comparison theories assert that metaphorical utterances involve a comparison or similarity between two or more objects, e.g. Aristotle (Searle 1993: 90).

The interesting question which arises concerns from where this particularly narrow attribution of comparison theories to Aristotle originated. Soskice analyses the work of rhetoricians during following centuries but rejects notions that it was from them. She concludes that the over-emphasis on seeing metaphor as a comparison, or an ornamental device in language, cannot justifiably be attributed to their work:

the object of rhetoric was to move the will, but to move the will by good reasoning well presented, and not by verbal trickery (1989: 12).

And yet it is the comparison theory which has dominated perceptions of metaphor throughout the subsequent history of the western world. This has had the effect of confining discussion of metaphor to words, rather than perceiving metaphor as a means of extending understanding through thought processes, that is through concepts, an insight central to Aristotelian teaching (Soskice 1989: 9). Restricted definitions of metaphor have been so effective that they have become accepted as 'facts' rather

than as theories, although attributing this narrow view of metaphor to the classical world is inaccurate (for example, Lakoff 1993: 202)

3.04 Metaphor as Language Embellishment: Positivist Assertions.

Soskice (1988: 12) makes the point that it was from the seventeenth century that ornament and style in language were argued as being barriers to pure argument and knowledge concerning 'how things are' (Black 1993: 38). Examples are given below from the writings of two empiricists, John Locke and Thomas Hobbes.

The writings of Locke, specifically his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* expresses the idea that figurative language generally as developed in rhetoric from ancient times obscured clear vision and generated wrong ideas, even deliberately:

But yet if we would speak of things as they are, we must allow that all the art of rhetoric, besides order and clearness; all the artificial and figurative application or words eloquence hath invented, are for nothing else but to insinuate wrong ideas, move the passions, and thereby mislead the judgment; and so indeed are perfect cheats .. (Locke 1894: 146/ 147, qu. Soskice 1989: 12/13).

Elsewhere in the same essay, Locke writes as follows:

Let us then suppose the mind to be, as we say, *white paper, void of all characters, without any ideas: how comes it to be furnished? Whence comes it by that vast store, which the busy and boundless fancy of man has painted on it* (quoted Bronowski & Mazlish 1970: 235).

As a glimpse at this extract shows, Locke's own expression is actually full of metaphors, although its purpose was to attack

the notion of figurative speech and the embellishment of language. The numerous metaphors which Locke uses may be analysed as follows:

1. The mind is a form of stationery, e.g. paper;
2. the mind is a form of room, waiting for furniture;
3. the mind is a container, holding a store of information;
4. the mind is a type of painting, the content of which comprises the shapes and colours executed by the artist.

Similar patterns are found if a sample of the writing of Thomas Hobbes is analysed. The use of metaphor is castigated. Soskice quotes the following passage as his example of philosophers' absurdity in using:

Metaphors, Tropes and other Rhetorical figures (instead of beginning their discourse) from the Definitions, or Explications of the names they are to use; which is a method that hath been used only in Geometry; whose conclusions have thereby been made indisputable.
(quoted Soskice 1989: 12).

Yet Hobbes' own written expression matched that of Locke in that it was pervaded by novel metaphors:

Nature, the art whereby God hath made and governs the world, is by the art of man, as in many other things, so in this also imitated that it can make an artificial man; though of greater stature and strength than the natural, for whose protection and defence it was intended. (quoted Bronowski and Mazlish 1970: 239).

Wider definitions of metaphor and understandings of its nature and function in thought, linked to its role in the extension of knowledge, apparently remained outside of empiricists' perceptions.

The castigation of the use of metaphor by positivists built upon assumptions developed during the Middle Ages concerning apparent distinctions between 'literal' and 'figurative' forms of language, for example in writings of St. Augustine (Evans 1991: 105/114).

Of course, whilst not all language is metaphorical, the assumption that figurative language merely communicates something which could be expressed literally is simplistic (Lakoff 1993: 205). This is because, as a survey of novel metaphors indicates, metaphorical language has the power of expressing insights which transcend words themselves, and on occasions the metaphors used do not possess sensible literal meanings:

Pour into our hearts such love toward thee, that we
 loving thee in all things, may obtain thy promises.
 (Book of Common Prayer: Collect for sixth Sunday
 after Trinity Sunday).

I was more astonished than I showed the first time
 I felt my heart burn with fire. The sensation was
 not imaginary: I felt real warmth. I was amazed at
 the way the fire burst up in my soul and gave me
 unexpected comfort (Richard Rolle (1300-1349: quoted
 Handley et al 1987: 27)

Additionally, metaphor frequently provides opportunities for language to possess several layers of meaning, insights into which develop as a result of reflection and interpretation. For example:

O time! thou must untangle this, not I;
 It is too hard a knot for me to untie.
 (Twelfth Night, Act II, Scene II).

Superficial readings of the above lines could indicate the speaker was appealing to a person called Time, and that the problem was a knot - in rope, or embroidery threads - which could not be untangled. Nevertheless, when read in the context of the play, it is obvious that Shakespeare uses metaphor: the 'knot' refers to confusion in relationships, which only the passage of time will sort out. Increased reflection, however, suggests that the confusion is partly deliberate and partly emotional: the 'knot' comprises a complex entanglement of different fabrics which transcends the power of humans to bring to order. It is realisation that the superficial interpretation is inadequate as an explanation for the passage that the curious reader feels compelled to search for deeper meanings, and the more profound the metaphors, the longer the search is likely to last.

Notions that distinctions between 'literal' and 'figurative' uses of language can be made in all examples of metaphor have led to the assumption that the former is superior to the latter, since literal language was assumed by positivists to be synonymous with clarity of expression and the identification of 'facts'. Developing from this, the notion that anything which can *only* be expressed through metaphor is merely conjectural, a purely human construct and therefore less reliable, is persuasive, although flawed. The next step, that of asserting only science and mathematics can provide reliable knowledge, has

become dominant in popular thought in modern societies (see, for example, discussion in Newbiggin 1995: 51).

Discussion of 'literal' and 'figurative' uses of language, particularly positivist assertions indicating the latter is inferior to the former, have led to the formulation of phrases which signify confusion concerning the nature and function of metaphor as understood by classical writers. This important problem occupies a considerable place in the writing of Soskice (1989: 67/96). For example, she draws attention to the inadequacy of such phrases as 'metaphorically true', 'metaphorical truth' and 'mere metaphor':

We find in the writings of religion talk of the 'metaphorical truth of the ascension', or of the Beatific Vision being 'more than a metaphor' or of the language of transcendence as losing its original mythic value and becoming 'mere metaphor' (1989: 68).

Soskice argues that such phrases should be used with qualification, if at all, on account of the misunderstandings to which they could, and frequently do, lead (1989: 70).

That such phraseology indicates confusion concerning metaphor can be perceived by considering concerns of Lovelock about possible misunderstandings of his Gaia theory. He asserts that he is well aware that when he describes the ecosystem as being 'alive' because it behaves like a living organism he is speaking metaphorically, but continues by emphasizing the theory is 'real science' and no 'mere metaphor' (Lovelock 1991: 6). It is by the extension of concepts of 'being alive' to his insights

concerning the ecosystem that his theory finds form and a means of communication. The necessity Lovelock feels in adding this emphasis concerning 'no mere metaphor' indicates his awareness that some readers could confuse 'metaphor' with the 'fact' of his theory. It is of this type of confusion that Soskice writes.

The problem is that metaphors cannot sensibly be compared with supposed 'facts': it is *usages, or expressions*, which are either literal or metaphorical, not particular *facts* or ideas (Soskice 1989: 70). The metaphor is the *mode of expression*, not the supposed 'fact' or insight.

This can be illustrated further by analysing another metaphor:

Mantled in grey, the dusk steals slowly in.
("Winter Nocturne", Larkin: 1988: 225).

In the example taken from Lovelock (1991: 6), the insight he tried to communicate was his understanding that the ecosystem 'lived' in that it related to the organic world and reflected its manner of operation. The insight was *communicated* by using a metaphor, but *was not itself a metaphor: it was an insight!* Similarly, Larkin's insight concerning the nature of the approach of dusk is related to a cloaked (mantled) traveller, whose progress was slow but steady. These personal insights are 'facts' for Larkin about dusk just as 'being alive' was a fact for Lovelock concerning the ecosystem. Both thinkers used metaphors as a means of communication, but the *communication*

method cannot be contrasted with the *insights* of either example.

As Soskice states:

We do not imagine that there are two kinds of states of affairs, literal and metaphorical, but we do acknowledge that there may be two (or more) ways of expressing the same state of affairs (1989: 70).

As pointed out by Soskice, to be unable to understand metaphors is to be unable to understand many statements at all (Soskice 1989: 85). This is because metaphors may express many insights at depths which would be otherwise inexpressible. The following extract from Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre* illustrates this point:

A Christmas frost had come at midsummer: a white December storm had whirled over June; ice glazed the ripe apples, drifts crushed the blowing roses; on hay field and cornfield lay a frozen shroud.
(Bronte, C. 1934 edition: 321).

There are numerous possible interpretations of the metaphors used here, including the following, which are given to illustrate their vapidness in contrast to the original metaphors:

- 1) The extreme happiness of Jane on the eve of her marriage turned to one of utter desolation.
- 2) What had been fertile had become transformed into sterility.
- 3) That which had been full of potential (the marital relationship) had died on the verge of its fulfilment.

To be unable to understand the metaphors is surely to be unable to understand the passage in any depth whatsoever. The distinctions between 'literal' and 'figurative' are nonsensical.



Instead, multiple meanings of varying depths and intensities are present in the passage, awaiting identification and the reader's interpretations.

Additionally, the necessity of knowing the context in which the metaphors quoted above is stressed, as is the fact that the insight being expressed is not one which concerns apples and ice, roses and snow drifts, or seasonal changes generally. Rather, its focus is one of human emotions, particularly joyous expectation transforming into deep despair.

3.05 The Question of Dead Metaphors.

So far, definitions of metaphor have been confined to the novel, or poetic, but the idea that metaphors which lose their original metaphorical meaning and become 'dead' metaphorically is an accepted distinction frequently referred to by theorists (Ortony 1993; Cooper 1986; Fraser 1993).

Examples of dead metaphors include 'to kick the bucket' - in one sense referring to the last kicks of animals tied to a beam called a 'bucket' (Fraser 1990: 330). Perhaps the metaphor is not so much dead as its original meaning unknown: anyone using the phrase concerning the approach of death without knowledge of the phrase's origin must realise that it is being used in an unusual manner!

Davidson also cites the example of the 'mouth of a river' (1978: 35). As Davidson mentions, perhaps there was once a time when rivers were not considered to have mouths. However, is

there perhaps some justification in maintaining that 'the mouth of a river' is no more metaphorical than talking about the mouth of a dog? What is of significance is the *aspect* of mouths which is being used in the phrase: if one is envisaging a mouth with tongue and lips for the river, the usage cannot refer to the mouths of bodies, but if the aspect of a mouth (in the case of a river) happens to be the major opening, through which water-borne transport passes to and fro, in a similar way to food and the cutlery upon which it is carried to the mouth, the metaphor can be seen to be as effective as it ever was.

An alternative way of viewing the question is to consider whether 'dead' metaphors are metaphors at all. This is discussed by Soskice (1989: 72; Cooper 1986: 119; Black 1990: 25).

Reasoning suggests that if an utterance has lost its 'figurative' function it can no longer be a metaphor.

This is the meaning of an assertion which maintains that dead metaphor 'is not a metaphor at all, but merely an expression that no longer has a pregnant metaphorical use' (Black 1990: 25).

However, the apparent distinctions made between figurative and literal meaning reflects the myth of objectivism, the underlying assumption being that expressions necessarily once indicated directly 'things in themselves' (Lakoff 1979: 210).

Soskice (1989: 72) argues that it is impossible to be precise as to when 'metaphorical usage becomes an accustomed or literal usage', whilst Cooper (1986: 130) attempts to define

'dead' metaphors as dead because they have 'developed a new usage outside of the parent domain'. Could the notion of 'dead' metaphors, with an 'established' meaning arise from unquestioning acceptance of definitions provided by lexicographers?

An interesting observation is made by Sadock (1990: 45), who indicates the possibility of metaphors becoming 'frozen' when they are lexicalized. This point is also discussed by Soskice (1989: 83), who agrees that 'dead' metaphors began their lives outside of the lexicon, but that even when included in it maintain their metaphorical meaning. There exists, too, the theory that children's jokes revitalize, or bring back to life, 'dead' metaphors. An example provided is 'what has eyes and cannot see' (Caird 1988: 153; Ashton 1994a: 361/363). However, as discussed above, this use of language, like 'kicking the bucket' and 'mouth of a river' simply focuses on different aspects of the noun for different interpretations.

Theories such as these concerning 'dead' metaphors have been superseded by contemporary theories of metaphor. Contemporary theory extends definitions of metaphor to include metaphors from one end of the continuum (novel metaphors) to those at the other (dead, or conventional metaphors), with others fitting between these two polarities according to how far creative insight is called upon for either their creation, interpretation, or both.

One might argue that labelling metaphors which no longer, for many, require fully conscious interpretation as being 'dead'

is misleading, since the metaphors according to which one lives one's life are extremely active indeed, influencing one's life-view and attitudes towards it. This point was perceived by George Eliot and elaborated by her as follows:

It is astonishing what a different result one gets by changing the metaphor! Once call the brain an intellectual stomach, and one's ingenious conception of the classics and geometry as ploughs and barrows seems to settle nothing. But then it is open to someone else to follow great authorities and call the mind a sheet of white paper or a mirror, in which case one's knowledge of the digestive process becomes quite irrelevant. (quoted by Soskice 1989: 82/3).

A distinctive feature of conventional theory of metaphor, to which the following section moves, is that metaphors ranging from the mundane to profound can be found within its system.

3.06 Conventional Metaphors in Conceptual Structures.

a) *Examples of Conceptual Metaphors.*

Theories concerning 'dead' metaphors emanate from traditional theories concerning metaphor: 'dead' metaphors are said to be metaphors which have lost their original metaphorical meaning (3.05).

However, if these 'dead' metaphors are reassessed according to contemporary theories of metaphor (Reddy 1993; Lakoff and Johnson 1980) far from being 'dead', they can be recognised as occupying a central, active role in conventional language, comprising indeed many phrases which permeate everyday language and thought.

Everyday language is, to a large extent, structured around conceptual metaphors: new phenomena, ideas and suggestions are accommodated within existing conceptual systems which, at least partially, offer a vocabulary which is helpful in understanding and evaluating new ideas (Ashton 1994a).

Conceptual systems are constructed by means of experience, either of physical phenomena (for example, of water) or of characteristic elements of any activity (for example, warfare or agriculture). The following examples of conceptual metaphors were selected at random from a local newspaper (*Newcastle Journal*, 13th March, 1996).

Argument is War Metaphors.

- * Major in New Euro Battle
- * the information centre beat all competition
- * Battle to Save Arts Centre
- * Union Leaders vow to fight cuts
- * a new product has been developed which will revolutionise the process of cleaning paint spray guns
- * he attacked the system

The 'war' metaphor is an appropriate vehicle for expression in that the struggle to accomplish is seen in terms of attempting to defeat someone/something else: the 'something else' is perceived as being an opponent, or a barrier to progress. As in warfare, strategies are planned and put into action in order to achieve an objective, and the whole operation is conceived as

war. Thus, the concept of 'war' helps the structuring process find form and meaning.

Action is Water Metaphors

- * Awards Come Flooding In
- * Dole Sweeps In
- * A Revolution sweeping a textiles company has spawned multi-million pound orders
- * those unable to attract sponsorship are in danger of draining away
- * there is a vast reservoir of expertise available in the North East
- * Most people cannot think why we don't pump some of these lottery millions into the NHS
- * ... in a letter which was leaked

Physical experiences of water provide a vocabulary and conceptual structure according to which several phenomena can be effectively communicated: these experiences include:

water moves rapidly;

water disappears from sight (drains/leaks) if a fracture develops in pipe-lines

water can be stored in large quantities for future use

water can be spread to other places (pumped)

Business is Agriculture

- * the curtains and bedlinen manufacturer is reaping the rewards of a new era
- * it is sponsorship that beefs the prize money
- * Syria is ripe for northern business

In these examples, metaphors from the agricultural cycle provide a structure according to which business can be conceptualized: to make profits is likened to harvesting: earlier toil and labour are rewarded, whilst sponsorship is advocated in terms of fattening beef cattle: the funds will become steadily larger. The ripeness of crops (that is, crops ready for harvesting) are likened to the Syrian economy which is ready for business activity.

In all the above examples, statements about some area of activity - business, politics and finance - were made from within a concept of another subject which provided partially appropriate vocabulary and structure. The reader was thereby creatively involved in making the connections in order to make sense of the meaning of the statements.

However, as Lakoff has shown, the use of any one metaphor in communicating insight and meaning must necessarily obscure other aspects of the subject under analysis (1980: 10). Context is of vital importance in any interpretative exercise, including education (Donaldson 1978: 38; 71). It is impossible to fully explicate the use of the sentence, that is, the nature of the speech act performed in an utterance of a sentence without reference to the context. 'Context' includes both the physical circumstances as they actually are, and as they are perceived to be by the speaker, as are social, cultural and linguistic circumstances generally.

There can be little doubt that the Piagetian tests concerning ten year old children's incapacity to understand proverbs in ways characteristic of adults caused insurmountable difficulties because the proverbs were decontextualised. Because there were no contextual clues available, not surprisingly the children were unable to perform satisfactorily (Piaget 1959 edition: 146).

The following section therefore analyses the various conceptual metaphors used in a particular context, showing the appropriateness of the concepts used in the process of communication and their effectiveness in conveying meaning.

b) *Conceptual Metaphors: An Analysis of Contextual Usage.*

The following conceptual metaphors were used during a recent inter-Departmental University meeting where the way in which the two departments would combine was under discussion:

Journey Concepts

- * it will give us a broad consensus of the way forward
- * things will clear as we go along
- * we must get ourselves into a position from which we can make progress
- * what this group is moving towards is consensus
- * we must get it out of the way
- * we need to move away from there
- * is that an acceptable way forward?
- * we are not in a position to move forward
- * this is an on-going review

* we must progress along that road

The conceptual metaphor 'Decisions are Journeys' creates a climate for discussion which structures assertions in a context with which all speakers and listeners can identify. The vision is progress, and the destination of the journey successful unification of the two departments concerned. However, underlying the statements is awareness that some roads might not lead to the desired destination, and in addition it could be too early in the negotiations to follow certain 'routes'.

Shipping Concepts

* That could be a safe haven

* We can ferry ideas around

Just as ships at sea are in danger of sinking, wrong decisions could be disastrous for the coming merger; ideas could be 'ferried around' (the conduit metaphor) between people as the ferry sails back and forward between two landings. The ultimate hope was that the new, unified Department would provide a place of employment safe from redundancy (a safe haven).

Agricultural Concepts.

* We have deep rooted problems

* That is an example of organic planning

* We could kill programme areas

* We need organic growth

* We need to judge whether the time is ripe

In this case, knowledge of agriculture provided a suitable concept for discussion of the dangers to be faced in the amalgamation: that some problems of long duration existed and needed to be dealt with was recognised, as was the need to be careful not to 'kill' new, promising plans any more than it would be wise to kill young animals which would bring greater profits when fully matured; development from existing, successful arrangements were envisaged as 'organic growth'.

Construction/Building Concepts

- * we can certainly ensure we have adequate structures
- * we need sound foundations for the structures
- * we need plenty tools for the job
- * most important of all are the initial frameworks
- * when we have got them off the ground

Here, the building industry provided appropriate, and convenient, concepts for the vision of the meeting: new ideas required form and to endow them with this tools were necessary. The administrative systems planned were envisaged as 'frameworks' and 'structures', and it was recognised that these systems would require sound foundations, or sound planning, if they were to support the needs of the new Department.

c) *The Function of Conceptual Metaphors*

As described by Lakoff and Johnson (1980: 3/6) conceptual metaphors work in subtle ways which transfer experience from one domain in order to illuminate another, less familiar. In the

case of the University planning meeting, diverse collections of concepts were brought into play, each containing appropriate conventional metaphors which contributed to, and enriched, the discussion and decision making process. Had a single conceptual metaphor exercised control over the discussion, important aspects of the meeting would have been obscured and not opened up for reflection.

Conceptual metaphors operate throughout everyday language use, comprising both the conventional and novel, although the former seem to be more prevalent in this context than the latter. The wide use of conventional metaphors in everyday language contexts is characterised by the comparative ease with which they can be interpreted within each conceptual metaphor. This is a necessary requirement for conventional language where speed of thought and communication is usually a practical necessity. It seems to be this ease of interpretation which becomes, for some theorists, an indication that these conventional metaphors are 'dead', although as indicated earlier, (pages 102/105) they comprise an important means by which both thought and the language in which it is expressed becomes vitalised and endowed with increasing insight.

Whilst the conventional metaphors to be found within commonly used conceptual structures enrich the dialogue and discussion, novel metaphors which have even greater power of this kind do not feature on more than several occasions. This could

be on account of the demands made by novel metaphors in both creative and interpretative senses. Everyday discourse, which is frequently, and appropriately, of a utilitarian nature, requires immediate responses. It is hardly surprising that novel metaphors are more closely associated with poetic, literary works, where deeper, penetrative insight and interpretation are appropriate.

Nevertheless, as Lakoff has stated, it is from the rich domain of conventional, conceptual metaphorical systems that novel metaphors find birth (Lakoff 1993: 228). Conventional language use, and the thought processes which underlie it, provide the foundations from which more profound insights (perhaps in the form of novel metaphors) have the potential to develop.

This is not to assert that novel metaphors (or other forms of symbolic language) necessarily carry only one correct meaning: indeed their power lies in their inherent freedom to allow for individual interpretation. It was failure to recognise the creativity of the attempts of the children to match proverbs, coupled with Piaget's belief that there was necessarily one correct answer, which led to his conclusion that children of around ten years of age were unable to interpret language in ways acceptable to the adult world (page: 76). The richness of their creative efforts remained unrecognised and their ability was underestimated. A similar misunderstanding pervades the work of

Goldman which focused on children's thinking in the field of religion, and his theories are examined in chapter seven.

3.07 A New Theory of Metaphor: *The Continuum Theory*.

As pointed out, existing theories of metaphor are restricted to acceptance of the notion that all metaphors are dependent upon two elements, either or both of which provide the focus for the insight or idea being communicated (page 89). However, this assumption works only for a restricted variety of metaphors such as those used in the examples provided from the writings of Black (1971) and Richards (1936: quoted Soskice 1989).

The following elements are suggested as being appropriate for defining metaphors which include conventional metaphors, such as those described above (page 105/114). The theory is illustrated by diagram (Appendix ~~F~~).

- * Metaphors express a new insight which could not be expressed so vividly or accurately in any other way. The metaphor is neither a replacement, comparison, embellishment nor interactive means of expressing the inexpressible. The inexpressible remains inexpressible and can only be communicated by means of a *network of innumerable associations*, or thought networks, the structure of which is dependent on individual insight, and open for modification as a result of discussion and further reflection.
- * Innumerable associations are necessary because of the checks and balances which each provide for growing insights: no single

metaphor can ever be adequate for expressing an insight which transcends language.

* Interpretations of metaphors are essentially individual because all associations (perceived relationships and patterns) depend on previous experiences and reflections on them.

* Metaphors can be classified on a continuum which polarises the conventional with the novel, but which is flexible. The decision of where any metaphor should be cited on the continuum depends upon the individual, creative effort which is necessary to reach an acceptable interpretation. It is wise to hold all interpretations as being partial and provisional.

* All metaphors possess the potential to be interpreted at varying levels. The extent to which this is possible is, again, an individual matter which, hopefully, develops through debate and continuing reflection (Ricoeur 1991: 375).

A summary of the above suggests the following definition of the Continuum Theory of Metaphor:

*** associated networks of thought which, by drawing together on the basis of similarity, suggest an embodiment for developing, fresh insights, understanding or wisdom.*

This definition escapes the earlier literal/figurative restrictions which developed in the centuries following the classical writers, and also from positivist definitions which argued metaphor was merely language embellishment.

Its significance lies in the scope it provides for extending metaphor to thought, rather than limiting its application to

language. In addition the traditional 'double element' of the metaphor (for example, *Richard is a lion*) is opened up in ways which allow for individual associations, or thought networks.

This definition reveals the restrictive nature of traditional theories of metaphor which, because of focusing exclusively on those at the novel, poetic extreme of the continuum, failed to recognise the conventional system which forms the structure of everyday thought and language at the other. This latter provides a base from which to extend and deepen reflection and its communication further along the continuum towards engagement with novel, poetic metaphor.

Assertions of Piaget (page 73/74) concerning the assumed inability of children to engage with 'figurative' language cannot be accepted as a reliable theory and helpful in assessing their true potential. This is because their daily language use is likely to include conventional, metaphoric structures (page 148/160).

3.08 Summary.

In this chapter definitions of metaphor as traditionally accepted were presented, and argued as having emanated from restricted readings of writers from the classical world which, when further restricted by narrow theories influenced by positivism contributed to confusion concerning the status of 'dead' metaphors. Writings from the classical world were shown

to comprise much greater insights concerning the nature and function of metaphor than has generally been recognised.

Contemporary theories concerning the metaphorical nature of thought, conceptual structures and the transfer of these conceptual structures to new domains of activity were examined.

It was discussed how the phrase 'dead metaphors', as used in traditional theories of metaphor, is extremely misleading. This is because apparently 'dead' metaphors are very active and comprise a huge, conventional metaphoric system which profoundly influences both thought and conceptual structure.

The chapter concluded by emphasizing that whilst everyday language use is rich with conventional metaphors which are generally organized into conceptual structures, novel metaphors seem to play a minor role in everyday discourse. However, it was suggested that the conceptual, metaphorical nature of thought networks provided the foundations from which novel metaphors could develop.

A new theory of metaphor was offered, The Continuum Theory, which, by removing the literal/figurative restrictions from definitions allowed them to be replaced by association networks. These were discussed as being flexible in that they allowed scope for individual interpretation at diverse levels of profundity at appropriate positions along the continuum.

The following chapter opens the second part of the thesis. By analyzing specific life-events of the informants, a critique is developed of the central claims of Rousseau (1979 edition) and

Piaget (1959 edition) that childhood is inherently different from adulthood.

P

**PART TWO: DATA PRESENTATION: ADULT AND
CHILDREN'S PERCEPTIONS OF EXPERIENCES**

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION: ADULT AND CHILDREN'S PERCEPTIONS OF
SIGNIFICANT LIFE EXPERIENCES.4.00 Introduction.

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce the second section of the project, beginning by examining assertions of Rousseau (pages 53/57) and Piaget (page 66/79) that childhood represents a phase of human development which is intrinsically different from that of adulthood (page 71).

4.01 The Data Collection.

It is Piagetian psychology which has been particularly significant in providing the theoretical foundation for the way in which primary school education was to develop (Plowden 1967: paragraphs 23, 50, 371, 521, 522, 530, 649). However, Piagetian psychology was planned within narrow parameters with predetermined outcomes (page 70). His thought was overwhelmingly dominated by romantic notions of both child development and the wider development of society. Nevertheless, the theories constructed were expressed in a style suggestive of an objective research method, such as those encouraged by the pedagogical movement in whose traditions he was working (page 61). The conclusion was reached that Piagetian theory is very much more misleading for educationalists than is generally recognised, particularly in inferring that childhood is *different* from that of adulthood (page 70/71).

Whilst it is appreciated that an observer might not attribute the same depths of profundity to the work of the children as I did, and that all interpretations of the data are inescapably subjective irrespective of who might happen to be the interpreter, it is also true that the informants would have been likely to have responded quite differently to another observer. As indicated earlier, it is my belief that the deeper one's acquaintance with the individual, the greater is the potential for the development of one's insights into the potential of the other. It is the creative, individualistic character of the person which ensures total objectivity to be an impossibility.

The data presented in this chapter comprises written accounts of life events which were perceived as being significant for the informants. The adult informant data is published (Cedarwood: undated), whilst that obtained from the children was collected over a period of three months' classroom work. Use of both sets of data enabled comparisons to be made in order to examine the claims of Rousseau (page 53/57) and Piaget (pages 71/79) concerning differences between the two groups. The children's writing was stimulated by discussions arising from studies of children's literature, principally the Victorian novels "What Katy Did" (Coolidge) and also "Alice in Wonderland" (Carroll). Both of the stories raise subject matter of interest to the children, namely stories of sibling rivalry, relationships between family members and friends, and concerns about security.

4.02 Data Analysis: Peer Relationships.a) *Friendships*

The following child wrote at length about his ideas concerning friendship:

If you have not got a friend try to get one. I have two friends, Scorer and Daniel. We play with my cars outside on the ramp and we have fun. We are best friends and we will be for a long time. I like playing with fires with my friends. (Mark)

Whilst this piece of writing incorporates within it something of the spirit of the writer, especially the last sentence, the reader is left wishing to probe beneath the surface. For example, where were the fires lit, what form of enjoyment and excitement did they create, was there an element of mischievousness inherent in the activity or was it in some way primitive enjoyment of one of the elements?

The idea of loyalty in the bond of friendship was evident:

A friend is someone who cares about you and plays with you and they should stick up for you. (Kelly)

The following two pieces of writing revealed a little more about the nature of childhood friendships from the child's own perspective:

I would tell my friends if I was in trouble, but I would not tell my mam. I would tell my friends things that I could not tell my mam. If I broke with one of my friends I would not tell my mam. (Janet)

There is much that one is left feeling it would be fascinating to know: for example, what kinds of confidences are children likely to share with their friends that they could not

tell their parents? Why should a break in friendship be thought something unsuitable for parents to know?

Through the subsequent discussion and writing stimulated by specific events from the novels mentioned above, the children volunteered to confide in me concerns and interests which they considered similar to those described in the stories introduced to them (4.01).

b) *Tensions within the Peer Group.*

My observations of Key Stage Two children working together in the classroom led me to believe that much of a child's mental energy is taken up with the state of their relationships with friends (and enemies), often to the neglect of their classroom work. Research points towards the significance of the social structure of the classroom which apparently eludes the notice of many teachers, or is relegated as being 'nonsense'. Krappman writes:

Even more astonishingly, there were many more instances in which the child in need asked for help (i.e. from a peer) in a commanding tone, derogated the help given, or ridiculed the benefactor, mostly without any provocation. These behaviours were observed in situations related to children's social affairs as well as in situations related to instruction.

(1992: 173/186).

As Krappman indicates (1992: 178), because of changing working methods in the primary classroom, for example by way of collaborative group work, problem-solving activities and less

teacher-initiated learning, the 'peer world has invaded the classroom even more than before'.

The data indicated, however, that tensions like these were not created by the classroom: they seem to be an integral part of the process of learning to socialise and form relationships with other people.

The importance of peer pressures was significant for the children whom I taught. Brian wrote:

Yesterday I felt miserable because (my friends) would not play with me and they tease me.

He went on to say that when teased it made you 'want to fight'. David described how:

I have a dread when someone is going to get you and they are chasing after you and you feel like they are going to get you. Someone has been spiteful to me for no reason. I feel like I am going to get them.

Physical threats are frequently made by one child to another and cause much concern. Linda wrote:

I felt safe when I got home because a girl called Janet was going to kick me in.

She could not offer a reason for the threat, maintaining she hardly knew Janet at all. Andrew described how he and his friend had played happily together all day but the following morning at school:

my friend was spiteful because he wouldn't let me play a game because he didn't like me.

What had caused the sudden dislike? Possibly something unconnected with Andrew, such as the fact of Sean having played

with other children before Andrew's arrival, leading to his elimination from the new peer group. Behaviour of this kind can be bewildering and hurtful to the individual, even though they themselves are likely to engage in similar patterns of play without thinking about it. The collapse of friendships among young children can be traumatic, producing feelings of jealousy, loneliness and depression (Erwin 1993: 221).

Paul wrote at length concerning his emotional life:

I feel miserable when I am beaten up by my big brother. I can't do anything or he'll just do it even more to me. I feel bad-tempered when I'm being beaten up or sent to the shop. When that happens I feel bad tempered or upset. I feel as though I want to cry but I can't. I also feel as though I am burning up inside me. When I feel no-one cares about me I think I am not wanted. Nobody does anything to cheer you up.

This last observation is echoed by Andrew, who stated that:

Once I thought no-one cared about me and I was nearly crying.

Sometimes illness (whether real or imagined?) can bring a certain amount of satisfaction with it: John commented:

I felt cared for when my mam looked after me when I was ill.

This was in contrast to the time when:

I was bored when no-one would let me play. I felt that everybody was against me.

Conversely, John himself felt spiteful when he behaved similarly towards another child:

I felt spiteful when I did not let someone play with me. I felt that something might happen to me.

Linda remembered, at the age of nine, incidents that had

taken place five years earlier, when she had been in the Infant Department:

Once when I was in the infants there was a girl who always had something horrible to say to me and one day she said something that made me very angry. I felt like having a fight with her.

Just what was said was not revealed. Simon's misery was spotted by his mother, who was able to offer a solution. He wrote:

I was miserable when I had nothing to do, and then my mam tells me to wash the dishes!

c) *Children's Perceptions of Adult Authority.*

Children's concerns, however, do not solely relate to their own varied moods and those of their peers. Interest and curiosity can lead to tensions 'in case they are found out'. When hearing about the changes in size experienced by Alice during her time in Wonderland, the children expressed concern that she might be the wrong size when she got home, and would, in consequence, be in trouble with her parents. Chastisement for naughtiness or for being mischievous is a prospect which they do not welcome. Claire wrote:

I was very worried when I had my mam's gold ear-rings in and I took them out and snapped one of them. Then I buried them in the soil. I lost my nana's wedding ring. It was on the dressing table and I tried it on but it was too big, and it fell off my finger. When I look at her rings it makes me scared and she always says 'I have lost my wedding ring'.

Simon's problem was quite different, but real enough for him:

I go out with Melanie and I don't want my mam and dad to find out. They both think I am too young to have a girl friend.

John, when spending a weekend at the family caravan, had been amazed when a girl on the site suggested that they 'should go out together', a suggestion which had taken him quite by surprise. However, this romance came to an abrupt end, for a few weeks later he wrote the following sad lines:

When I was at the caravan at the weekend my girlfriend told a boy to shake some metal ladders when I was going down the climbing frame. She said it for a joke. In my mind I thought that I should push the boy. When I got down I fell out with the girl. Later on I was crying because I felt stupid for falling out with her.

John confided in me later that he had not told his parents a thing about this, and never intended to do so. The reason he gave was similar to that offered by Simon: he was sure they would think he was too young to have a girl friend.

The inner thoughts of James concerning his friends were different: he described his anxieties about them: were they trustworthy? Did they have good times whilst he was made to go to bed early by his mother? The following is an example of how children will reflect if the subject in question is important enough to them:

When I was waiting for Ian, while he got ready, I thought what is he really like? In the house is he moody, or happy or greedy? I thought is he really stupid or does he just put it on? (James)

d) *Children and Animals.*

As could be expected, the death of a pet is something which is really distressing for children: they consider their pets to be friends of a special kind, and their deaths can be violent

assaults on the stability of their lives. Brian described how he learned of the death of his rabbit:

I felt miserable when my rabbit died. When I got up in the morning I heard a knock on the door. I opened it. A boy said 'is that your rabbit'? He pointed to the middle of the road.

Lisa described at length what happened the evening when her dog was knocked by a car:

I was very worried when my dog got knocked over. I was playing out and my dad and sister had gone to get my nana and they took the dog. They did not put a lead on the dog. When they got back my sister was getting out of the car too so my dad went into the house because my sister was getting him but Toby got out of the car too. Toby just kept on running and went onto the main road. Then a car came and knocked him over. My sister ran home and told my dad and he took a towel and went and picked him up and my mum, dad and sister took him to the vet's. I stayed at the next door neighbour's house. I was very, very worried.

e) *Other Concerns.*

David's concerns were connected with his love of music. As this was something of a minority interest in this particular school - especially for a boy - he became something of a target for teasing:

What I am thinking is music. Will I get my music tests right? Will I become a music teacher? My uncle and all of my family think I might get on TV, on the 'Young Entertainer of the Year'. I keep thinking that I will never get a piano. My mam says I might get one for my birthday or Christmas present. Everyone calls me a cissy because I like music. I just ignore them.

The support of the family was very important to this child, and he persisted with his interest in music. Of significance in this particular case was the child's friendly personality. He

built up a group of friends of his own, and it was this small group which gave him the security at school which was so necessary to his happiness.

4.03 Data Interpretation: Peer Relationships.

The outstanding feature of the above data concerns anxiety. This becomes a focus, for example, through children's worries that friends might have been guilty of deception, because if isolated from one's peers it is all too easy to become a target for bullying. As indicated by Krappman, a surprising feature of classroom observations concerned the deliberate intention of children to attempt to humiliate others, even in trivial ways (Krappman 1992: 179).

The experience of David was to discover that his love of music led to teasing because, for his peers, an interest such as this was unusual and considered inappropriate for the male role. His success in being able to successfully ignore them would ultimately depend upon other aspects of his personality and how far they enabled him to become accepted within the peer setting.

Anything perceived as a threat to a lifestyle which seemed to be reasonably secure and satisfying required some response, and the degree of appropriateness of the response had important implications for the future happiness of the individual concerned. Perhaps a helpful definition of wisdom concerns the ability of individuals to make decisions which are likely to contribute positively to the quality of life: to be able to

discern as a result of reflection. Of interest, nevertheless, is how individuals perceive happiness: whether personal contentment and fulfilment through sensing oneself to be in control of others, for example, or through successful efforts to maintain what had become understood to be familiar and secure, whether friendships, or ownership of healthy pets. Motivation seemed to depend upon individual interpretation of experience, leading to personal values.

The thoughts of the children were directed towards either a) preserving the *status quo* if this was desirable, or striving for improvement in the future. Thus, one could look back to past experiences and decisions made, or reflections which were stimulated by them, as experiences upon which to draw in the future. Reflection on experience can provide a network of understanding which could be helpful in informing reactions to any future experiences of a similar nature.

What is significant for personal values, nevertheless, is how one conceptualizes the experiences: what are the personal benefits of having friendships which are secure and on a basis of mutual trust, or a lifestyle where one is able to pursue one's interests without persecution by others? Is there anything to be gained by being a bully? What is valued would seem to be security, whether attained with the support of trusted friends, by freedom from bullying or by becoming a bully oneself.

Written accounts of pre-adolescent friendships did not occur among the data produced by the adult informants. When it was suggested that the ladies might like to write about childhood, the resultant scripts were concerned solely with family relationships (Cedarwood: undated). This could be because, for many, friendships formed in the primary school are fleeting relationships, often broken, whilst family relationships exert a continuing influence over life, both economically and socially. However, it is from their friends that children learn how to form relationships: peers are the source of companionship, 'a face of reality and a measure of equality' (Roffey et al 1994: 7).

4.04 Data Analysis: Family Relationships.

a) *Background to the Data Collection.*

Not all of the interests and concerns of the children focused around their own everyday, personal relationships, however. They were keenly aware of relationships which existed between family members. This data collection was stimulated by discussion following Jane Eyre's adventures at Lowood School, (Bronte) and also the activities of Katy in "What Katy Did" (Coolidge).

It must be stressed that writing about family life was an optional activity. The children were given alternative activities which very few of them chose to take up but in fact, out of the whole class only two chose to exercise the option. I suspected this was because they were desirous of completing some

unfinished work which they had enjoyed doing the previous day, and not because they were unwilling to produce the type of writing suggested.

The following written accounts of their perspectives of the parental relationship were given to me in privacy and I did not realise that the children had chosen to dwell on this private aspect of life in their writing. I was curious when one child came to me and asked if he could write 'what happened' on a sheet of paper 'in case anybody picks up my book and reads what I put'. I told the rest of the children that they were welcome to write on paper if they wished, and with only one exception, everyone did so. All names which the children revealed and which could be used to identify individuals have been altered.

b) *Behaviour Within the Family.*

What became obvious to me was that the children suffered much, personally, when their parents were in dispute but the tendency was to keep the information to themselves.

Kerry described what happened when her parents had disagreements which led to silence between them: the children in the family evidently became used as go-betweens. She wrote:

When my parents fight I hate it because they shout and my dad slams the door of the living room and turns the TV up high. But sometimes I like them because they laugh and carry on, but when they fight they don't speak to each other at all and my brothers and sisters and I have to take messages to each of them.

Jennie wrote the following lines about a time when she had

witnessed her father attack another man:

My dad is kind and helps everyone. He has ups and downs but they blow over soon. He never shouts at people but one day he made me cry when we went to my grandma's. He saw the man who punched my uncle and he ran outside and I ran after him. My dad asked the man why he had done it. My uncle had lots of stitches in his eye. My dad started to punch him and he ran off and he was bleeding. When we got back home I ran upstairs. My dad came up and he would get anybody who was picking on either my sister or me.

Of particular significance in the above are the last two lines: they reflect the child's belief in the solidity and security of the family unit, which is apparently perceived as providing a bulwark against supposed threats from other members of the community and perhaps by society generally. Of interest to me particularly was when the next day Lee, whose father had been in dispute with another man, came to me offering further information: he announced that he and his dad 'were going out tonight to get that man, and we are taking base-ball bats and all'.

Kelly's experience took a different focus, which was echoed in the writing done by other children:

When I was a little girl I used to live in the flat and my mam had a job but she didn't get very much money. My mam had to pay all of the bills as well. My dad used to come home and tell my mam to give him money. She used to give him money because she would otherwise get beaten up by him when he was drunk. When he didn't have any money he used to go to the Pub and have a drink on the H.P. My mam went to the pub to see him and she had to pay pounds that he owed. I think all dads and mams should be kind and loving.

It should be noted that Kelly asked me to destroy this script, but I gained her permission to make my own hand-written copy of

it. The result of the parental conflict can be gleaned from another script written by the child. It could well be that the child had been told these things by her mother when she asked why she and her father were living apart.

She later wrote the following, which is similar to the account written by Sean which follows it in that both children endeavoured to stop parental fighting:

I have no grandparents. They are all dead. I only have my mam and dad. My dad is always arguing with my mam and he beat me up by punching me because I said that my mam could do without that because she had an awful day at work. Then when it was too much for her she told my dad that she wanted a separation so my dad has left. He has a flat at ----. I don't go to see him because he hits me for nothing. The house is up for sale and when we move my mam and I will be alone. I'm glad because its always my mam that decorated and paid all the bills and all my dad wanted to do was watch his video and listen to his records. I still love my dad but I don't want to see him.

Sean wrote:

When my parents fight I am worried in case my dad leaves home. I tell them to stop it but it is no good. They just send me to bed and once when they were fighting I got scared. I thought 'what am I going to do' and I started crying. Then my mam told my brother off (he is older than me) and he said he was going to leave home and I didn't want him to go. I went upstairs and all of his clothes were ready and I ran downstairs and told them to stop fighting. They took no notice so I said that my brother was leaving home. They both ran upstairs and told him not leave home. But I still love my mam and dad and they made friends again.

This very sad story, bad enough as it was, did not reach the depths of despair which the following experiences describe.

What is particularly disturbing is that the child (Andrea)

accepts the situation in which she has found herself; what I found astonishing was that she actually wished to write about it:

My dads are called Graham, Geordie and Steven and I will have another dad called Jeff soon. I don't really like any of my dads because I only really know one of them but he has left the house and is living in ----- . When I was little I was adopted and my real mam is my auntie and my real auntie is my mam. My real dad is called George but I don't call him dad. I call my uncle dad. I think the whole idea of dads is horrible and stupid. Mams are all right, but they are not really much better than dads.

Fortunately, at a later time, when the children heard how kind Alice's older sister had been when she brushed the leaves off Alice's face whilst she was sleeping, and how kind Katy's dad and aunt had been to the children, they were willing to discuss their parents in a much more positive light. Here are some of the remarks:

My mam and dad have never done anything but kind things to me. My dad has always backed me up 100%
(Tom).

I felt safe when my dad saw a boy's mam because her son was threatening me (John).

Children absorbed and remembered times when they felt that their parents had treated them unjustly. Occasions such as these came to their minds when hearing of the injustice suffered by Jane Eyre at the hands of her cousin, John Reed. For example, Janet described an experience she had which had taught her something additional about her father:

My father has a very short temper. I found this out when I was helping him fix his bike. I was playing with my car when it hit a pile of mud. My dad shouted at me and sent

me in.

Kerry described a time when her father had a violent argument with one of her siblings:

Then one time my sister had just got a new leather jacket and she was going to wear it for the roller-rink but my dad said 'no'. So she went stamping up stairs and my dad followed her up. Then he started to hit her down stairs. I nearly cried because he was hitting her so hard.

Karl resented a time when he felt that his mother had treated him unfairly. No doubt his mother felt extremely harrassed at the time, but this was his description of what happened:

I do not like my mam because she always shouts and argues with me. When I have only one toy down she says 'Put it back, boy, now' in a really loud voice. When my friends want to play with me I say 'Please can my friends come in please?' and she says 'No'.

Health problems are very significant for children, and they are extremely sensitive concerning them. Brian wrote at length about his skin condition, eczema:

It worries me because it might not go away. I have had it since I was a baby. Last month and this month I have been to the doctor's about six times so I have missed a lot of schooling because of my skin. At school when people see it they get as far away as possible because they think they might catch it but they can't. I have to take tablets and put cream on. I have about five different kinds of cream. Yesterday it started bleeding so I had to stay off school.

Attempts made by parents to 'make light' of physical ailments can be distressing for children. The following is Craig's account of his experience and his reactions to it:

My dad keeps making fun of me because I have a problem. He keeps calling me names because of it. My mam says he is only joking but I don't think so. He keeps shouting at me. I go to see a specialist about the problem. She is called Dr. XX. I once told her that my dad keeps

making fun of me and when we left the Health Centre my mam told me that I was quite cheeky. I want my dad to be nicer than he is. I think that all dads should be nice and shouldn't pick on their children.

Two children chose to write about their grandfathers. These are their observations:

My grandad is great. He is always falling asleep and he loves gardening. He hates other exercise, just like me. He doesn't get angry or shout. (Sarah).

The same child continued by contrasting her grandfather's behaviour with that of her father:

My dad shouts a lot and he always argues. He threatens to hit me and I tell him to go away and get lost. Sometimes he is nice and he tries to help me but I hate it. My mam hates noise and she loves listening to the news. She likes to sleep and to cook and to sew.

Janet described her grandfather, moving on to tell an anecdote about one of his friends:

My grandad goes to the pub every Sunday and my grandma does not like him going because he has a friend and he says that he will hit anybody who gets in the way and he treats his children badly. In fact, he does not have his children any more because they are in homes. Once he threatened to touch me, my two sisters and my brother. When I see grandad's friend coming I cross over the road.

A common theme to all of these pieces of writing is a wish for peace between parents, grandparents, siblings, and the community generally, no doubt because peace is envisaged as bringing with it greater personal happiness and security. However, the actual making of peace is something beyond the children's creation, as most of them had grown to realise. In situations such as those described, what alternatives were available to them except to become defensive towards oneself,

one's family, or, in the case of the breakdown of the marriage, towards the chosen parent?

4.05: Data Interpretation: Family Relationships.

The informants described tensions which existed within the family unit, and they were perceived as threats to the form of personal security and happiness with which the children were familiar and with which they felt they could cope.

Parental quarrelling, therefore, brought with it anxieties that the quarrels would lead to parental separation. This had been found in earlier research (Ashton 1989: 26/29). In addition, the informants were ready to pronounce against what they believed to be the injustice of parental behaviour: Craig, for example, considered his father's comments about his medical problem to be insensitive and inappropriate, whilst Sarah declared herself justified, apparently, in telling her father to 'get lost' when he shouted at her or tried to tell her what to do.

The informants also felt deep concern that siblings should not be excluded from the family unit: thus Kerry found herself acting as mediator between her elder sister and father.

Perhaps the most striking anecdote, from Andrea, concerns her experiences of fathers. Her adoptive mother (her natural mother's sister) entertained several male friends who were accounted for as 'dads', but the child was not deceived, indicating in her writing her dissatisfaction concerning the

roles of both fathers and mothers. Instability in adult relationships, whilst seeming from the child's perspective to be threatening to security, could with emotionally mature children (who could be mature in this way because of the parental instability) cause them to develop profound insights into ethical questions. In the case of Kelly, her experience of fathers led her to confusion: she loved her father, but because of her experiences had no wish to see him.

Experiences of family life are reflective of similar patterns to those found in data collected from adult informants (4.06). Parental instability and dissonance within the family unit led to perceptions of threats to the existing, familiar structures within which life was led. What where valued were the people and circumstances which had provided the informants with the measure of security which they considered themselves to have. Their efforts, except perhaps in the cases of Andrew and Kelly, were directed towards the preservation of the family unit. These children had experiences which seemed to have convinced them that new directions were desirable if, indeed, life was to be better.

Overall, the structure given to the assimilation of the experiences was similar to that described above: the hope was that by the effort of individuals present, circumstances would improve and stability would be achieved and, presumably, maintained. The hope was that life would be secure in the

future. The acute perceptions of the children concerning the realities which comprised their present lives did not support the theories of Rousseau that:

... (the child) does not know even the name of history, or what metaphysics and morals are. He knows the essential relations of man to things but nothing of the moral relations of man to man. He hardly knows how to generalize ideas and hardly how to make abstractions. (Rousseau 1979 edition: 207).

Conversely, the data indicated a deep, personal involvement in all forms of human relationships and a capacity for making judgements on them. The informants showed a genuine concern both for their own personal relationships and those of others known to them, and as the data revealed, the informants frequently showed greater sensitivity to relationships than did some of their adult counterparts whose writing is analysed below.

4.06: Data Analysis: Adult Experiences.

The source of the data collected from adults, and the reasons for using it in this thesis has been described earlier (1.02). The purpose of this women's writing group was described as being to help them:

discover the liberating effect of self-organization and to rediscover self-esteem through having the chance to exercise dormant skills. (Cedarwood undated: 5).

The writing produced by members of the group provides an informative account of experiences undergone, and their effects on the quality of life of everyone concerned.

a) *Memories of School.*

One writer describes her memories of her first day at school. The experiences are similar to those reported by the child informants: fear of unfamiliar people, new surroundings and - perhaps most of all - fear of being parted from her mother:

I remember my first day at school, sitting in the school hall with my mother, waiting for my name to be called then being taken to the classroom to meet my teacher. I screamed and hung on to my mother, terrified of being left there with all those new faces. This went on for weeks and weeks. (Cedarwood undated: 26).

Relationships between family members were concerns frequently expressed, the most common problem being the parental relationship:

When I was little I used to come in from school and watch my mam and dad fighting not knowing what was happening. It really shocked me, especially when other people can hear your mam and dad arguing in the streets. (Cedarwood undated: 62)

The last sentence is significant, reflecting as it does concern lest any weakness within the family structure was being publicly revealed. The perceived threat to the writer's security is obvious. The violent nature of family life was described thus:

I have lived with violence from being a child because my dad always used to hit and beat my mother up. I remember the fact also that she seemed to accept being beaten up as though it never happened ... I started running away to get away from dad because he never ever showed me or my brother any love. If he got the chance to beat me up he would. I know I did a lot of bad things but that was because he never ever said anything nice about me. (Cedarwood undated: 57)

This type of turbulent home background was a common theme for these adults, as it had been for the children. Another

writer expressed her memories of her mother who was held in considerably lower esteem than her father:

Mam was the wicked one. She picked on us big ones, six of us all together and she had all the trouble while dad was out a work. We were like angels when he came in and trips with him were great because we saw our mam all the time. (Cedarwood undated: 24).

The following informant found herself having to care for her grandmother who suffered from cancer, a duty which was found to be extremely onerous because of its interference with her own life. The effects of the experience (and perhaps a guilty conscience) continued to trouble her twenty eight years later:

Although I loved her very much I gained my freedom with her death. For the first time I could do what I wanted, I was not restricted by a timetable. For some years after her death I had nightmares that I was still looking after gran and she would not let me live in my own house. Twenty-eight years later if I am particularly upset I still have this nightmare. (Cedarwood undated: 22).

An informant had an illegitimate baby when aged fifteen; the presence of the baby did not interfere with her lifestyle because her mother brought it up as her own. She expressed her experience as follows:

My mam bought everything for the baby and then when she arrived, a bouncing little girl, my whole family was over the moon because it was all grandsons at the time and Emma - that is my daughter - was the first grand-daughter. Even my sister was so happy she bought her all sorts. And still to this day she is still spoiled off them even though I have another three children now at the age of 20. (Cedarwood undated: 23).

Many of the adult writers recreated the type of home life from which they had suffered themselves when children, in that they

themselves now suffered at the hands of a violent partner as their own mothers had done earlier. The following writer describes the first time her husband physically abused her:

The first time he hit me I was shocked. It was on a Saturday morning. My mam came down to see if I was all right and when she saw the black eye and the bruising on my face she wanted to know how it happened. I told her I knocked myself against the door. (Cedarwood undated: 54).

This experience was similar to that described by another writer:

When Danny got sent to prison I was glad. Glad for the peace. But I knew if I didn't find somebody else by the time he got out he would come back home to me and the kids and start where he left off all over again. Honestly, we couldn't cope with life like that again.
(Cedarwood undated: 54).

The interesting question which arises is why these people became caught in this vicious circle of unhappy family life. Research into the significance of social background would form an additional project outside of the focus of this thesis. Nevertheless, what was of significance was to come to understand how far the experiences described in the above sections were characteristic of the human situation, rather than of any particular chronological age. Rousseau set out to convince readers that childhood was significantly different from adulthood (Rousseau 1979 edition: 90), ideas which, as discussed have been extremely significant in the development of child psychology throughout the succeeding two centuries (pages 18/20). And yet this data collection indicates that adult perceptions of

significant life events concern the need for security, and in this are little different from those of the child informants.

4.07 Data Interpretation: Experiences of Adult and Child Informants.

A significant difference between child and adult informants was very much concerned with timescale: to ten year old children the world of adulthood seems very far away, probably because the length of their entire lives at this time must be nearly doubled before they can reach it, and to them at ten years of age this seemed to be an extremely remote goal and irrelevant to their present situation.

The most striking features of the data collection, however, were their similarities. The overall difference seems to be one of actual content rather than of variety: for example, adults expressed concern over breaks in friendship, but these were the friendships of their adult lives, often with husbands or boy-friends. The *circumstances* leading to dispute were likely to be quite different to those leading to peer conflict in childhood.

If the example of John is considered, and the circumstances which led to his broken romance, it is clear that i) adults would be unlikely to be climbing up a frame as this boy was, and ii) that pushing the frame would have been unlikely to be so upsetting for them as it was for him. Nevertheless, what was important was the *quarrel* which resulted, and evidence is to be found copiously which shows that quarrels of this type broke out

among adults regularly for varieties of reasons. In the case of the adults, conflict usually arose from disputes with husbands or partners, (Cedarwood undated: 25; 54; 61), or with family members because of teenage pregnancy leading to illegitimate birth (Cedarwood undated: 25), although on occasions the birth of an illegitimate baby was believed to have united family members (Cedarwood undated: 21; 25).

The detail contained in the narratives is not of nearly such significance as the outcome, which for many seemed to pose a threat to personal security, that is, the continuation of daily life in its relatively safe, familiar pattern, or being forced to adapt to changing circumstances. In the case of the adult informants, examples include the birth of a new baby, or fears the husband or partner is beginning to feel trapped in the relationship (Cedarwood undated: 52; 61), whilst the child informants described family tensions (Andrea; Kelly), or mistrust of friends (James; John). The underlying psychology is similar irrespective of chronological age, although the actual detail is different.

The efforts of both adults and children were directed towards either maintaining the familiar, reasonably secure circumstances of their daily lives against perceived threats, whether posed in the form of peers, neighbours, siblings, illness or parents.

Further research among neighbourhoods representative of various social and cultural communities is another area of research which could enable new understandings emerge of the apparent urge of many to retain the familiar in preference to facing the unknown.

On this basis, no evidence was found in the data to support the view of Rousseau (1979 edition: 90) that the types of concerns of childhood, the ability of the children to reason concerning them, or the way in which they were expressed, were significantly different from those of adults. Additionally, support was not found either for the statement from Plowden concerning eleven year old children's 'fairly crude and concrete sense of justice' (1967: 25), which was based on Piagetian psychology (Plowden 1967: 20). Conversely, some of the children's comments and apparent reactions to parental quarrelling, for example, showed even at the young age of ten years they had, in several instances, the capacity to think more clearly and logically than did the adults.

Overall, the experiences undergone by the children were both rich and varied, positive and negative, reflecting concern for their personal future and that of their families. The driving force for their efforts to retain the security which they perceived in their lives provided a focus for effort and concern. Life was thereby given meaning, but whether reflection concerning

the possible truth of this meaning was likely to develop is impossible to assess. Certainly this is an area in which Religious Education could be a major contributor.

The data analysis and interpretation points to two significant findings:

1. The experiences of the informants (adult and child) differed in content, rather than variety. Most of the experiences described were closely connected to anxieties about their basic security.
2. No evidence was found to support theories of Rousseau (1979 edition) or of Piaget (1959 edition), mirrored by Plowden (1967: 25) that life for the child differed significantly from that of the adult. Rather, the content of the experiences undergone indicated that those significant for childhood developed into corresponding equivalents for adults: for example, relationship dilemmas predominated, but whereas in childhood these were focused on friendships and the survival of the family, in adulthood the focus was more concerned with the detail of relationships within the family unit: the significance of friendships and peer relationships diminished in importance. Nevertheless the survival of the family unit was important to all, adult or child. However, the overall value concerned the need for security, and this was dominant in both childhood and adulthood.

4.08 Summary.

In this chapter the experiences of the informants, recorded in writing as examples of significant life events, were analysed and interpreted according to topic. It was found that, in contrast to the assertions of Rousseau (1979 edition) and Piaget (1959), echoed by Plowden (1967: 25), the varieties of experiences undergone by the two groups of informants did not differ significantly in variety. However, the actual detail of the content of the events recorded differed between the two groups. This basic difference is reflective of the responsibility placed on adults concerning provision of security for both their children and themselves.

The following chapter of the thesis concerns an assessment of data in order to identify any evidence of the use of metaphor in the structuring of thought and concepts and its expression in writing.

CHAPTER FIVE

DATA PRESENTATION: INFORMANTS' USE OF CONVENTIONAL METAPHOR
IN EVERYDAY LANGUAGE CONTEXTS.5.00 Introduction.

The previous chapter, by analysing and interpreting data, argued that theories of Rousseau (1979 edition) and Piaget (1959 edition) were misleading in their suggestions that the nature of childhood thought differed significantly from that of adulthood.

The purpose of this chapter is to ascertain the extent to which the informants used conventional metaphors in their written descriptions of significant life events. The function of the metaphors used is considered, particularly effects they could have in shaping and influencing opinions and the development of values.

5.01 The Data Collection

The nature of the data collection (Appendices A, B and Cedarwood Undated) has been described in an earlier chapter (1.02). For the purposes of this chapter these writings were analysed according to the following criteria:

1. To ascertain the extent to which the informants used conventional metaphor (as defined in 3.06) in their exposition;
2. to examine the function of metaphor in the structuring of experiences;
3. to analyse the possible influences of the metaphors on the way in which people conceptualize and develop values (3.05).

5.02 Data Analysis: Informants' Use of Conventional Metaphor

a) *Introduction.* In chapter three (3.06) theories concerning the way conventional metaphor is used in everyday expression were presented and analysed, using data collected from newspapers and dialogue recorded during an Inter-Departmental meeting. It was shown that metaphor is by no means confined to poetic, literary expression, but rather pervades everyday uses of language.

In this section, the data provided in Appendices A and B, together with published material (Cedarwood undated) is analysed. The conventional metaphors identified are classified and presented for analysis within the appropriate conceptual metaphors.

Language can be perceived as representing efforts to communicate perceptions of patterns and relationships (that is, thought networks) in various levels, from the profound to the mundane. Since ideas do not come to anyone just 'from the air', some degree of thought must underlie all expression. Extending definitions of metaphor to encompass conventional, standard speech acts is a method for both penetrating layers of language use in order to assess both the phenomena or experience against which concepts develop, and also the possible layers of thought which underlie them.

As outlined earlier, novel metaphors (which category comprises a huge variety of metaphors which vary considerably in profundity) probably reflect particularly authentic thought, whilst the conventional metaphors analysed in this chapter are

examples of the least profound. Nevertheless their existence in everyday speech reflects the complex nature of both thought and language construction. This has indicated an important base from which both could be developed, moving towards a developing ability to use novel metaphor which is dependent on reflection, imaginative, creative insight and increasingly profound perceptions of relationships (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 13; Cameron 1991; 1996).

b) *Orientalional Concepts*. The conceptual metaphor most prevalent was of an orientational focus (spacialization) (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 14/24). Throughout daily life, from an early age, human beings experience space: as babies they are lifted up and laid down. Up quickly becomes associated with more: for example, a young child quickly learns to believe that a high pile of something (say sweets) probably contains more than would a low pile; a high pile of ten pence pieces obviously is worth more than a low pile of similar coins.

In conventional metaphors, these experiences provide concepts which are transferred to a different focus in order to formulate a method of structuring understanding. It is this process of transfer which gradually builds up conceptual networks. Thus:

* My mam comes to *pick me up* (accompany the child - Brian)

Just as a baby is lifted up by an adult, the collection of an individual by someone else is expressed as a 'pick up'.

This early concept easily acquires different connotations: *up* becomes associated with knowing more (children go *up* into a 'higher' class each September) whilst younger children (with less experience) are in *lower* classes because they are assumed to know less. It is a small creative step from here to begin to associate *up* with greater experience, and *down* with less. Hence, to visit one's mother is conceptualized as going *up* whilst she is said to *come down* to see her daughter or son:

* My mam came down to see if I was all right (Cedarwood undated: 54).

To leave the family home to venture into the world outside (perhaps envisaged as being full of danger, excitement and mystery) is conceptualized as being *down*:

* ... waiting for the taxis to take you down to the "Clarendon" (Cedarwood undated: 12).

* I went down for Lee (James)

* When I am walking down the street (Sean)

* I went down to the office (Cedarwood undated: 62)

A village near to the housing estate was built on the other side of the railway line. Thus the orientation changed conceptually:

* You've got to go over to Percy Main (Cedarwood undated: 45).

This can be translated as indicating Percy Main is 'across' the railway line: therefore one 'goes over' to the village, rather than 'up' or 'down' to it.

For those people who had experience of living south of the River Tyne, living north of this boundary was conceptualized as being 'up':

* My dad had to move his job *up* here to North Shields (Cedarwood undated: 26)

* He brought me back *up* here to live (Cedarwood undated: 26)

Thus, movement north is conceptualized as 'up', whilst presumably south would be 'down'. This orientation is suggested on maps, where north is indicated spatially upwards, south downwards and east and west 'across'.

Orientational metaphors were used extensively to describe mood and emotion. Feelings of bad-temper, moodiness and frustration were conceptualized as being *down*, no doubt because of *up* being associated with positive phenomena, such as more, greater or better experience, whilst *down* holds negative connotations: savings going *down* indicates less money, whilst 'low quality' indicates inferiority. Applied to emotional concerns, the following examples were identified:

* My dad has his *ups and downs*. They blow over soon (Jennie)

* When I get down I say to myself 'its this house, or its the kids or my husband (Cedarwood undated: 52)

* Things don't seem to be picking up (Cedarwood undated: 64)

* I'm right down in the dumps (Cedarwood undated: 52)

* It can make the kids feel sick and down (Cedarwood undated:

The use of the phrase 'beat me up' was frequent in descriptions of physical violence:

- * I feel miserable when I am getting beaten up off my brother
(Paul)
- * I was worried I would get *beaten up* off some bullies (Mark)
- * He began *beating me up* (Cedarwood undated: 53)
- * My dad always used to hit and *beat my mother up* (Cedarwood undated: 57)

In these examples, the word *up* reflects a different conceptual base. Just as *up* indicates 'more', 'more' can be identified with 'a lot'. Therefore, to be 'beaten *up*' means to be 'beaten a lot', that is, to be badly beaten.

On two occasions the word 'round' was used metaphorically, but with two distinct meanings:

- * My head *is spinning round and round* (Paul)
- * She asked me to call *round* (Cedarwood undated: 11)

In the first case, the conventional metaphor is used slightly more creatively than in the second with the result that its meaning is not explicit: the reader is urged to interpret. In the second case, to go 'round' simply means to 'visit', and the metaphor has a similar meaning to go 'down' or 'across'.

These conventional metaphors are connected with, and developed from, experiences of physical orientation. They become endowed with other, slightly different meanings so that the concept can be extended to a different subject and thereby

brought into the conceptual, metaphoric framework of understanding.

c) Container Concepts.

Conceptual metaphors which perceive the person, or family unit, as a container were used frequently, particularly by the adult informants. Examples of the former include:

- * I feel I am *burning up inside me* (Paul)
- * *Inside my mind* I felt like hitting the boy (John)
- * It (the music) *reached inside* people (Cedarwood undated: 9)
- * I had had enough of *my life packed with people* (Cedarwood undated: 22)
- * I just let it *build up inside me* (Cedarwood undated: 52)

For the adults, domestic ties were sometimes seen as a curtailment of personal liberty:

- * I was *tied to the house* (Cedarwood undated: 52)
- * I'm not *stuck in the house* all the time (Cedarwood undated: 61)
- * He wanted his freedom and nothing was going to *stand in his way* (Cedarwood 1990: 53)

This is why the domestic situation was perceived in terms of a container, even a trap or prison.

The end of a relationship was perceived in terms of a family member being 'thrown out' of the home. In these examples, the 'home' is perceived in terms of, for example, a kettle which is emptied of its unwanted contents:

- * Or else throw the man out (Cedarwood undated: 61)
- * I've never had contact with my mam or dad since *they threw me*

out of the house (Cedarwood undated: 26)

On occasions conceptual metaphors signified that the housing estate was an entity in itself, distinct from the 'outside' and hostile world:

- * That's when the TV and Press came to *poke their noses in* (Cedarwood undated: 46)
- * You've got to go across to *Percy Main* (see above, and Cedarwood undated: 45)

With container metaphors, physical experiences of containers are transferred to life itself: the concept undergoes development in order to accommodate experiences such as powerful emotion (which are perceived as being 'inside'); dispelling of family members for one reason or another (being 'thrown out'). The function of the metaphors seems to be in finding expressions which are appropriate to certain circumstances, adapting slightly the concept involved and applying it to the new idea. The new idea then becomes assimilated within existing conceptual networks. These expressions are passed from one generation to another, building up, in all probability, forms of expression which possess regional characteristics. Cultural traditions according to which the expressions have developed are so embedded within the communities concerned that the metaphorical nature of the expressions do not require conscious interpretation, but nevertheless their metaphorical nature is clear.

d) *Journey Metaphors.*

The concept of life as a journey is well known and easily applied to life's events because everyone is familiar with

journeys, whether they consist of foreign travel, visits to friends or family, stories of journeys from literature, or simple journeys to the local shopping centre or school. Life as a journey is a conceptual notion. Each journey has a starting point, whether the home, school or workplace, with events taking place on the journey itself which involve one in decision making. The destination may be planned or it may possess only dim reality far in the future. Whatever the case, the concept itself provides a conceptual framework within conventional language use. The following are examples:

* He wanted his freedom and nothing would stand in his way
(Cedarwood undated: 53)

The husband of the informant, according to her perception, saw his domestic responsibilities as barriers to his 'journey of life', that is, 'his way' and freedom to pursue it. She continued by describing how he allocated all responsibilities, for debt payments, child-rearing and housing concerns to her in order that he could proceed unimpeded on his 'way'.

In a similar manner, another informant described how her grandmother's death was a personal release for her:

* I *gained my freedom* with her death (Cedarwood undated: 22)

Earlier, the informant had described how, from an early age, she had been given the responsibilities associated with caring for her grandmother who suffered from cancer, and was housebound. These responsibilities meant that:

* I did not have the care-free freedom most teenagers enjoy

(Cedarwood undated: 22)

The grandmother's death meant freedom was obtained from:

- * the monotonous round of work and nursing (Cedarwood undated: 22)

Instead of the circular, everyday routines associated with her ties, death opened up 'the road ahead' for the granddaughter.

The birth of an illegitimate baby into the household (the mother was a fifteen year old) was found to be a much more positive event than the informant had feared. She perceived the birth as an 'arrival', the beginning of a new journey:

- * My mam bought everything for the baby, and *when she arrived* a bouncing baby girl, the whole family was *over the moon* (Cedarwood undated: 23).

Emotionally, the family was given a boost: they were 'over the moon' and evidently the kinship ties were strengthened, since earlier in the account the informant described how she had anticipated trouble on account of her pregnancy.

Disease was conceptualized as an unwelcome visitor: the wish was that it would go on a journey, and thus 'go away':

- * It worries me because *it might not go away* (Brian)

The hot temper of one father was described in terms of length:

- * My father has a *very short temper* (Karl)

Here, tempers are conceptualised in terms of journeys, short and long.

The following statement is similar, in that a journey helps the informant conceptualise her relationship with her husband:

- * My husband and I were *walking the fine line* between nervous exhaustion and nervous breakdown (Cedarwood undated: 23)

The journey - that is, the relationship - is equated with a walk along a tight-rope, fraught with imminent danger.

In all of these examples, experience and understanding of journeys allows other experiences to be drawn into the conceptual, metaphoric network, but for this to be done, slight modifications are made to the connotations normally applied to the situation.

e) *War Metaphors.*

The concept of war being a state where one has enemies who will thwart one's ambitions at any opportunity, with the result that one must always be either prepared to attack or defend personal interests, is one which can be found to structure and inform understanding of life's events:

- * I felt *everyone was against me* (John)
- * if someone was *picking on my family ...* (Jennie)
- * he would *stick up for her* (Jennie)
- * dads shouldn't *pick on their children* (Craig)

In all of these examples, the children perceived their family as, ideally, a unit which provided security against the hostility of the outside world. The isolation felt by John was caused by not having someone to play with, leading to the feeling that he was in opposition to others. Jennie and Craig commented on what they considered to be a form of victimisation. For them, this was visualised as 'picking': just as this word indicates precision in the identification of something to be tackled, for example the

removal of a thorn from a finger, in a similar way they felt people were identified and attacked in various ways. To 'stick up' for someone involved support resembling voting, where one 'stuck up' one's hand in order to register the vote. Jennie used this concept to accommodate her understanding of loyalty.

When writing about the life of the community on her particular housing estate, an adult informant conceptualized efforts to win satisfactory maintenance as war:

* If they want something done *they've to put up a fight themselves* (Cedarwood undated: 45).

Another adult described, in a double metaphor, how she felt when her husband shouted at her 'once too often':

* A switch deep inside me was *flicked on to rebellion* (Cedarwood undated: 22).

In all of these examples, attempts to retain order in an otherwise chaotic existence, both physically and emotionally, was conceptualized in terms of war. The 'Argument is War' metaphor provides an example of a conceptual metaphor which is inherently dangerous. This is because it has the power to influence and form attitudes to life generally which are potentially destructive rather than positive, a point which is developed later in this chapter (page 165).

f) *Other Conventional Metaphors Identified.*

Among other conceptual metaphors used by the informants are the following. Gambling involves risking losing one's money in

the hope of gaining more: this concept was transferred to emotional support provided by parents:

- * He (his father) has *backed me up* 100% (Tom)
- * She told me *she would be behind me* (Cedarwood undated: 23)

In the latter example, being 'behind' refers to the money usually placed on horses: in this case, the concept is modified slightly to associate the idea of 'backing' with 'support'.

The building industry provides conceptual metaphors which allow emotional turmoil to find structure and a means of expression:

- * Since I've *broken up with* my boyfriend (Cedarwood undated: 14)
- Just as building is normally associated with creation, the opposite of destruction, the failure of a relationship is perceived as demolition.

5.03 Data Interpretation: The Function of Conventional Metaphor

a) *Introduction.* In the light of the above data analysis, support could not be found for Lakoff's assertion that the addition of a conventional metaphor to a statement did not add to its perceived meaning (1980: 170). Rather, classifying conventional metaphors within conceptual relationships indicates that their creation has the propensity to add considerably to the way in which people view their lives and develop values.

Furthermore, use of conventional metaphor within conceptual systems constitutes very early uses of language (Marschak and Nall 1985: 54).

b) *Conventional Metaphor Within Everyday Language.*

The above data analysis indicates that everyday, conventional language comprises, to a significant extent, conventional metaphors which can be classified conceptually. These conceptual networks consist of understandings and insights which have become unified through the association of ideas. The basic ideas develop from experiences of several types, for example physical experiences of space, time or travel, or more abstract phenomena such as warfare.

Subtle modifications are made to initial concepts, such as perceptions of 'up' and 'down', allowing new experiences to be conceptualized and integrated within the conceptual network. In this example, 'up' can be understood as more, a lot, better and even happier.

As stated by Lakoff, metaphor is primarily composed of thought: metaphor in language is secondary (1993: 208). This is because of the reflection which underlies the perception of relationships between experiences. Words themselves are creatively redefined and endowed with new meanings.

It is for this reason that the 'conduit metaphor' can be misleading (Soskice 1989: 6; Reddy 1993: 165/201). An example of the use of the conduit metaphor comes from a BBC News Broadcast, 1.00 pm on 15th April, 1996. When reporting on latest develop-

ments in the Israeli/Lebanese War, it was stated "the message is certainly getting across", in the context of bombings by Israeli troops apparently effectively disrupting Lebanese society.

However, what was the message conveyed by the bombings? The dangers inherent in this use of the conduit metaphor include reinforcing simplistic ideas that a straight-forward message actually existed which could be "got across" by violence. Superficial thinking about extremely complex international issues is thereby encouraged, with an additional inherent danger which was described by Reddy as follows:

This model of communication objectifies meaning in a misleading and dehumanizing fashion ... It influences us to talk and think about thoughts as if they had the same kind of external, intersubjective reality as lamps and tables. (1993: 186).

As he continues, the conduit metaphor is particularly dangerous in that it:

neglects the crucial human ability to reconstruct thought patterns on the basis of signals (Reddy 1996: 18).

If samples of viewers were to be interviewed and asked what they considered the message of the Israeli bombings to be, assumptions encouraged by the conduit metaphor - that there was a single 'message' which violence communicated - could be revealed as misleading and potentially dangerous.

Rather than words being perceived as 'containers', the carriers of meanings which can be transferred from one person to another directly, each recipient becomes actively involved in the

process of interpretation. This is because, as creative beings, people will always relate new stimuli to existing experiences and networks, and so reinterpret.

The data analysis indicates that conventional metaphors form a considerable portion of everyday language and that children are introduced to its use from an early age. These conventional, conceptual network systems are so embedded in the culture of communities that, superficially, their metaphoric nature can easily pass unnoticed. Children inherit everyday phrases and expressions which rapidly become an essential part of their thought process and vocabulary.

The data analysis did not provide any support for theories of Piaget (1959 edition) that children of ten years of age differed significantly from adults in their ability to interpret symbolic language. Conversely, evidence suggested that their use of conventional metaphor in writing was similar to that of adults, reflective of cultural traditions within the community. Further research, which analysed conventional metaphor use in speech, as against writing, could well reveal conventional usage to be more prevalent in the former since young children especially, when struggling to apply language in a written form, are often unable to write as fluently as they speak.

In addition, the way in which the thought processes worked for the children did not suggest differences from that of adults. What was striking were the similarities. Evidence was not

forthcoming, therefore, to support assertions by Rousseau, such as:

Childhood has its ways of seeing, thinking and feeling which are proper to it. Nothing is less sensible than to want to substitute ours for theirs.

(1979 edition: 90).

What could be interpreted as incapacity for dealing with abstract ideas could, in all likelihood, reflect limited experience. Therefore, any system of education would be well advised to identify and build upon existing conceptual networks in order to develop pupils' potential for engaging in imaginative thought and speech in ways which develop creative reflection.

c) *The Significance of Conventional Metaphor for Reflection.*

Conventional metaphor, like novel metaphor, allows its user to understand relatively abstract, or unfamiliar, subject matter in terms of established metaphorical concepts. This activity involves the extension of the existing concepts by subtle adjustments being made to key words and phrases. The effect of this is to construct networks for thinking which are both subtle and creative, informative and logical.

This conceptual system, rather than comprising 'dead' metaphors (e.g. as discussed in Cooper 1986: 118/139), is very much alive, providing thought structures which enable the thinker to both conceptualize and express conceptual insights in language. Moreover the networks are, on account of their

creative construction, fluid and provisional with regard to any knowledge which is assimilated and endowed with meaning.

Nevertheless, conventional metaphorical language has several limitations, consideration of which are important for education especially.

d) *Limitations of the Conventional Metaphoric System.*

1) Whilst conventional metaphoric concepts allow people to understand new phenomena by relating it to those more familiar, restriction of conceptualization within too few networks could lead to limited vision and distorted perceptions of reality. This is particularly dangerous in the light of the theories of Reddy (1993) concerning the conduit metaphor working in human thought and understanding, where meanings of words are perceived to be literal and constant, rather than partial and creative. The origin of the problem lies in the development of earlier literal/figurative distinctions of language use by positivists (pages 95/102).

An example can be provided by considering the *War* conceptual metaphor (pages 158/159). The particular focus of this metaphor is to perceive others as a threat to one's own security and contentment, which could lead to particularly unnecessarily aggressive behaviour and perceptions of life generally.

Examples of the 'War' conceptual metaphor abound. In *The Times* (15th April, 1996) competition between supermarkets was described in the language of war:

Tesco is reducing the cost of baked beans to 3p a tin from today in the latest round of the supermarket *price-cutting war*.

Elsewhere in the same newspaper, political matters were reported within the same conceptual structure:

While new Labour was *trumpeting* an *overwhelming* victory in Tamworth ...

There are at least two points which endow metaphor with enormous powers for influencing thought and attitudes:

- 1) their frequency of presentation;
- 2) their apparent appropriateness.

How far the conceptual metaphor of war happens to be appropriate for either trade or politics is very much open to debate, but there is little doubt that its use contributes powerfully to the development of attitudes toward both.

The more appropriate the application of any particular metaphor seems to be, the more often it will be used in expression, and therefore both of the above two points reinforce each other. It is for this reason that the question as to whether, in fact, certain conceptual metaphors are appropriate needs to be regularly asked. To help balance the inadequacy of any single one, many metaphors are necessary to correct and modify concepts and insights which evade direct description (Watson 1987: 219).

ii) As discussed, conventional metaphor constitutes a considerable portion of everyday speech and language. However,

much of its imagery has become so obvious that its metaphorical nature has become diluted and accepted within everyday language conventions. The result has been for these extremely subtle, creative networks to lose their powers to stimulate conscious interpretation since this is done automatically, at a subconscious level.

In addition, perhaps because of this gradual absorption of conventional metaphors within everyday language, their users have become unable to evaluate the various meanings which the metaphors create. The conduit metaphor (Reddy 1993) unhelpfully suggests that the metaphors actually convey 'facts'.

The activities described in the following chapter were designed in order to obtain data which would help assessment of the informants' ability to work with novel metaphor which, as described by Lakoff is 'an extension of our everyday, conventional system of metaphorical thought' (1993: 246) and possessed with powers of extending understanding to greater depths of insight.

5.04 Summary.

The data analysis provided evidence that the informants' use of everyday language supported current theories that conventional metaphors occupy a large part of not only language use but also the thought networks which underlie it (Lakoff and Johnson 1980; Lakoff 1993). Conventional metaphors constitute an important component of conceptual systems which allow new ideas and

experiences to become conceptualized in terms of the more familiar. Nevertheless, on account of the inability of any one conceptual metaphor to communicate insights adequately, others are necessary to provide balances and checks to interpretations.

As a result of the data interpretation, support was not found for either Rousseau (1979 edition) or of Piaget (1959 edition), where it was asserted that childhood thought, and the ability to engage with symbolic language, differed significantly from that of adults.

The limitations of conventional uses of language were mentioned at the end of the chapter. These included dangers associated with the conduit metaphor leading to assumptions encouraging inflexible perceptions of reality.

The following chapter provides data analysis concerning the child informants' ability to learn to both interpret novel metaphors of others and to create their own.

CHAPTER SIX

DATA PRESENTATION: THE CAPACITY OF CHILD INFORMANTS
TO UNDERSTAND NOVEL METAPHOR6.00 Introduction.

The previous chapter did not find support for theories such as those found in the writings of Rousseau and Piaget, that:

- a) the content of childhood experiences was significantly different from that of adults;
- b) that children's reflections and use of language was confined within concrete parameters.

Conversely, it was found that:

- c) the differences in experiences concerned content rather than variety; further, that the way in which descriptions of experiences were structured were similar, reflecting basic needs connected with security;
- d) conventional metaphor comprised a significant element of the language used in written accounts of significant life events by both adult and child informants.

This chapter develops the investigation by analysing the function of novel metaphor in helping deepen perception and thought. By interpreting data collected from the child informants an assessment is made of their capacity for extending their use of conventional metaphor into the creation and interpretation of novel metaphor.

6.01 Novel Metaphor, Thought and Language Use

Lakoff made the point that until the late 1970s, discussion about metaphor referred to what is now understood as novel metaphor because:

the huge system of conventional metaphor had barely been noticed (Lakoff 1993: 237).

Novel metaphor has been described as the beginning of original thought:

Original pieces of thinking have, I suppose, nearly always been started on metaphor (Empson 1951: 339).

A similar point is made by Lakoff:

Metaphor allows us to understand a relatively abstract or inherently unstructured subject matter in terms of a more concrete, or at least more highly structured subject matter (1993: 245).

The reason for this has been given as follows by Ricoeur:

These models then have the heuristic power of "re-describing" a reality inaccessible to direct description. (1991: 369).

Novel metaphor has been described as differing from conventional metaphor only in that it is an extension of it:

Poetic (i.e. novel) metaphor is, for the most part, an extension of our everyday, conventional system of metaphoric thought. (Lakoff 1993: 246).

Novel metaphor has the following effect:

Ricoeur sees metaphor as an act of semantic pertinence, the creation of new meaning (Baynes, et al 1991: 353).

Regarding interpretation, however, it would seem that context is vital, since novel metaphor comprises multiple meanings, rather than literal and figurative ones (Ricoeur 1991: 375). To use novel metaphor is to think creatively and to develop thought beyond the boundaries of conventional language in ways which can illuminate past experience, daily

activity and to what we feel we know and believe (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 139).

Here are examples:

- * Quine's philosophy is a large continent, with mountain ranges, deserts, and even a few Okefenokee Swamps. (Putnam 1991: 235).

One immediately tries to equate this philosophy with the images provided: it is extensive and variable (a large continent); it has parts of profundity (mountain ranges) but in places it is easy for the reader to become trapped (swamps). The description is powerful and exciting, taking one far from conventional imagery.

- * Home is where one starts from. (Eliot 1987: 209)

Eliot sums up neatly, through novel metaphor, the conventional metaphoric structures of the writing of the children and adults: home provides the base from which all activities develop: it is a secure base, from where one receives sustenance, rest and shelter. Life issues forth from home on its journey. The metaphor 'life is a journey' is developed by bringing together the 'journey' idea with 'home', a symbol of stability. Perceptions of both 'life' and 'home' are enhanced by their interplay as relationships are sought.

- * Before Israel finally reached the stage where she was able to choose a king who would be acceptable to all the tribes at once, there were a number of experiments in kingship. (Thompson 1982: 99).

Numerous metaphors are used in the above passage: the Israelite people are personified as a woman moving towards maturity which, when accomplished, would be able to choose an acceptable king, just as the mature woman is able to enter into marriage on adulthood.

* The night waxed old (Drayton 1973: 103).

In the above line, attention is arrested because the usual metaphor of night as the end of a journey, or the twilight of life itself, is depicted as a beginning: this is because the night was old: old age is overtaken, according to Christian culture, by rebirth. The reader feels intrigued to discover what will follow night, usually envisaged as the end of all things: time is usually thought to have come to an end. Lunar symbolism (by using the word 'waxed') indicates fullness which will be followed by decline (waning), possibly the small hours of the morning, or the beginning of a new day.

How do the above metaphors contribute towards stimulating deeper reflection about life itself? Firstly, everyone is familiar with journeying, or moving from one to place or another, albeit confined to travel between home and the housing estate's shopping centre. The metaphors build upon this structure by extending the concepts which they have created to other fields: in these examples home as a place from which life sets off, Israel as a state gradually becoming politically mature and night as being the forerunner of a new

day, rather than an end of a journey. Novel metaphors are complex in that a familiar concept is used as a basis on which new concepts will be formed and given structure by the creation of new metaphors.

As stated, the writing of the informants was largely based on conventional metaphor (pages 166/167). That children did not use novel metaphors could be used to claim proof for the work of Goldman who stressed the 'literal' nature of their thought prior to adolescence (1964: 76/80). However, as the adults did not do so either, the question which arose concerned not so much their incapacity to use novel metaphor as the lack of past opportunities for stimulating and enabling language use move beyond conventional parameters, the latter being adequate for ordinary discourse but limiting for deeper reflection.

However, the question remained: had the children the ability to interpret and create novel metaphors, and if so, were the metaphors effective in enriching their perceptions of life?

6.02 Background to the Data Collection.

A central aim when collecting the data was to gain evidence of children's potential, in contrast to evidence of achievement (page 48). In order to elicit the necessary data, it was therefore decided to conduct the research

according to *action research* methodology (Cohen and Manion 1994: 183).

It was shown earlier (page 80) that Piagetian theory encouraged the role of the teacher to be perceived as one of learning facilitator. This is reflective of Piagetian notions of pre-adolescent children's progress through intellectual stages where they are deemed to be *unable* to respond to direct teaching; hence the change in the teacher's role.

My research, however, was directed to investigating this claim by assessing children's ability to respond to direct teaching and also to assess the extent to which they were able to extend and develop these newly acquired skills in ways which were both creative and illuminative of insight into their understanding of personal concerns and interests.

6.03 Data Analysis: Children's Reflections, as Expressed Through Novel Metaphor.

a) *Theoretical Background*

I wished to discover specifically:

- a) the extent to which the children were able to engage in the use of novel metaphors.
- b) The extent to which any use of novel metaphors contributed to deepening reflection.

The following data collection resulted from classroom work which began with an investigation of the Poverty Problem. The data are presented in a way reflective of the active research method which is appropriate for the primary school

teacher, and is concerned not only with the assessment of achievement but also with reflection on possible potential, a requirement for the planning of future lesson material.

It is not surprising that in a culture such as that of the western world where money has become indispensable, for many, as the means of acquiring a comfortable lifestyle, poverty should hold fascination for people. This could be because in extreme cases poverty acts as a warning of what could happen if one became destitute and unable to support oneself. It is also true that, no matter how affluent society becomes, there will always be some who scarcely have the means to subsist. In addition, there are those who seem to choose to be poor, living the life of a vagrant. Thus, perceived values are in conflict with those advocated by, for example, the media and political agencies for society generally.

Vagrancy is a subject which appeals to the imagination of young children especially, in conflict as it is with the values frequently held, for example that affluent living reflects a successful life. I wished to investigate, therefore, how the children responded to the challenge presented by vagrancy to conceptual metaphors such as Money is Success and also to the extent to which they could both understand novel metaphors of others and construct their own.

b) *The Data Collection and Analysis.*

The investigations commenced with class discussion.

Many of the children had seen people begging on the streets when they had accompanied their parents shopping. They were eager to describe the various instruments which they had seen them playing, the particular sites where the various beggars habitually were to be seen and the comments which they had heard them make to passers-by. Some of the children thought of beggars as figures of fun: comments concerning their physical appearance and clothing were commonplace and reflective, perhaps, of the notion that here were people who had failed to succeed in ensuring the quality of life had met even basic standards of respectability.

There was much confusion concerning the reasons for poverty, and they doubtlessly reflected some of the attitudes expressed by their parents and grandparents. Brian said, for example,

People are poor because they spend all their money on tabs and drinks. They should save their money instead of wasting it.

Conversely, Lisa felt it was:

the government's fault because they should keep the gas bills down.

That old people were poor was generally agreed, although the children were unable to provide reasons to support this opinion. There was a general chorus of 'no' when it was

suggested that being a beggar could have something good about it, such as living outside or not having to worry about bills. I felt rather concerned at the attitude so frequently expressed that it was quite acceptable to view beggars seen in the streets as being legitimate targets for ridicule. In order to deepen the children's ideas about this I introduced to them the poem 'Meg Merrilees' (Keats 1972 edition: 406). Poetry is a recognised medium for sharpening perceptions of experience and developing sensitivity because it seeks for meaning in the experiences it recreates and illuminates (Hall 1989: 12). It is for this reason that poetry is an indispensable component of the curriculum, an insight discussed elsewhere (for example, Hall 1989; Walter 1989).

As with any metaphor, those used in this poem hold their power by involving the reader actively in interpretation. Nevertheless metaphor can only be successful in conveying meaning if the imagery used has some familiarity for the reader: it is the quality of the imagery which will enable the creative construction of possible meaning to take place. The next step - and pupils frequently need encouragement to take it - is to allow great examples from the world of literature to stimulate the imagination (as advocated, for example, by Priestley 1992: 34).

The effect of this is described by Ricoeur:

These models (novel metaphors) have the heuristic power of "re-describing" a reality inaccessible to direct

description (Ricoeur 1991: 369).

When teaching *Meg Merrilees* to the children I read the poem to them (they all had a copy) and we discussed what kind of person Meg must have been, and why we thought what we did. Everyone agreed she lived outside and was probably a tramp. I asked the children, in order to find out how they were attempting to deal with the numerous metaphors used by the poet, if she was lonely. They reckoned not: this because she had some brothers and sisters. I asked how a woman's sisters could be trees? A few children said they weren't real trees: she was very close to nature. Sarah took it upon herself to tell the class that because she loved nature she always had plenty of company - birds, animals and all growing things.

This was a very interesting idea to the children. I asked them what kind of things she did with all her spare time, and Mark pointed out she used things from nature to earn a living: making mats from rushes. He said she filled in her time by reading, but not from a *real* book: she loved wandering around the churchyard reading grave-stones. When I asked the children if any of them had ever done this they were eager to relate their experiences: it became obvious that gravestones and churchyards were places they loved to wander around.

Because of this interest, some weeks later I arranged a visit to a local church, and we undertook a graveyard survey, reading the names of those buried there and discussing what they could have been like during their life on earth. The

following day, I reminded the children about Meg Merrilees and we re-read the poem. We then discussed the various tramps they had seen in the local town centres, and I contributed my own experiences of tramps seen in various cities.

Some children wondered if any of the people buried in the churchyard could have been tramps. I suggested they could imagine some of them had been, and could they write a poem about them in the way John Keats had written about Meg Merrilees. The following are examples of the work which resulted, some of which is provided in Appendix B (a).

Lavender Lily.

Lily was a flower girl,
 Her house was in the air;
 Sweet lavender she picked gladly
 Without a single care.
 Her shop it was the streets;
 After noon and after morn
 Wearing her shoes, all tattered and torn,
 She walked to see her mother yew
 Who once, in olden days, she knew.
 Her bed was the moorland grass
 On mountainside or in the pass.
 Her fingers were the summer breeze
 Her voice like rustling in the trees.
 Her face was pretty, like the swan,
 Her sparkling eyes, a lake.
 Her old white dress and purple shawl
 She bought once from an ancient stall.
 Her soul, God rest it, it has left -
 People say 'it was for the best'.
 They found her in the lavender field
 With her flowers as her final shield.

The poet, Sarah, offered the following explanation for her lines at my request:

* *Her house was in the air:* she lived outside in the open, so the air was like her house.

- * *Her shop it was the streets:* that the street was like a giant shop where she could pick up and choose out of bins and gutters.
- * *She walked to see her mother yew:* this means she was close to nature and she felt like the yew tree was her mother.
- * *Her fingers were the summer breeze:* her hands were soft and gentle like a summer breeze.
- * *Her voice like rustling in the trees:* her voice was crisp and cheerful.
- * *Her face was pretty as a swan:* she was very pretty.
- * *Her sparkling eyes a lake:* her eyes were bright and sparkling.
- * *With her flowers as a final shield:* the flowers were around her, protecting her from sun, rain, bugs and beetles.

The child's poem displays a level of sympathy for the vagabond which is romantic in focus, resembling Keats' own style: her interest in the vagabond is thoroughly impersonal in that she is not emotionally involved in the woman's poverty, but sees her approach to death as a gradual immersion within nature. This style may be found in some of Wordsworth's verse, for example, 'Margaret, or the Ruined Cottage'.

How reasonable is it to interpret Keats' poem as an attempt to reconcile extreme poverty and vagrancy with the metaphor 'Life is a Journey', spirituality and immersion in nature being the vehicle for travel? Certainly Sarah's poem 'Lavender Lily' can be understood in this way, but there is also a reproof in the concluding lines: this gentle person whose 'face was pretty as a swan' had no greater protection on the occasion of her death than sweet-smelling lavender: her fellow creatures had abandoned her to nature.

This imaginative child made the request later that week that she should write another poem, on the grounds that she 'had had an idea'. It should be noted that Sarah was very sensitive to the countryside, and was an avid reader whose leisure time was largely spent reading nineteenth century novels. She was reading an unabridged version of *Jane Eyre* at home in bed, inspired to do so by the abridged edition which she had heard in the classroom. This was her second poem:

Mary's Ghost.

She died in pain
 So she rose again.
 Up in the highlands,
 High on the moor,
 Mourning her death,
 A soul so poor.
 Deep in the mist
 With shawl on shoulder
 Neither living nor dying,
 Not even growing older.
 Her voice is not heard
 But seen is her ghost -
 Floating on the mist
 Of the Moor.

The influence of *Meg Merrilees* on the child's imagination is obvious, particularly in *Lavender Lily*. However, whilst she followed the pattern used by Keats, there can be no doubt that the novel metaphors she used were of her own creation. *Mary's Ghost* can be seen to be a development of her thought: whilst the pathos of the lines reflects both the situation of Meg and of Lily, Sarah has added to it the dimension of

mystery by turning the former vagabond into a ghost: the lives of both Lily and Meg had come to an end, and the reader is led to understand they are at rest, but not so with Mary, who for some reason (perhaps because of her treatment by other people) is compelled to wander the earth, seeking peace: the child told me this was why she said she was 'a soul so poor'. The social reproof is clear.

During these lessons, two boys asked if they could each write poems with the same title: this because they made it up themselves and said they thought it was 'good, because both the words begin with T: people will remember it!' The following poems are the results of their work.

Tramp Ted.

Ted was a tramp
 Walking towards death's door.
 He remembers his family
 Which doesn't love him any more.
 He rummages in bins
 Looking for tit-bits to eat:
 Anything he finds is a real treat.
 At night he can't get to sleep -
 There is no blanket.
 When at last he does die
 The world around won't notice -
 Just as before (Brian).

The composer of the above poem had always been extremely troublesome in school, showing interest only in football. His provocative behaviour took the form of mischievousness and restlessness, and he had been said by many of his teachers to be extremely immature. However, when introduced to the use of

metaphor, a new dimension of his private reflection opened up as he found he could communicate his ideas and he showed himself to be a child of quite profound thought. His poem is reflective of quite profound levels of sensitivity to the absence of love and the coming of death because of poverty, the cause of which could be laid at society's door.

The following lines were written by his friend, Simon:

Tramp Ted.

His house is a doorway,
 His bed a box.
 He walks the streets searching
 Bins for food.
 If he gets any money he
 Spends it at the pub.
 His seat is a dump,
 His search is for blankets
 To keep him warm.

Again, the impact of *Meg Merrilees* on the child's imagination had been significant, and provided him with a means by which he could express his insights into the practical results of poverty.

Overall, the above poems reflect dissatisfaction concerning the vagrants: the implications are that society has in some way neglected to care for its members, since the vagrants described were forced to make the best of the natural comforts they found available: their fellows had been unwilling to contribute to their wellbeing.

b) *Understanding Other Aspects of Life Through Novel Metaphors.*

The tone of Margaret's poem was quite different from the above examples, although produced during the same lesson. She loved Christmastime because, as she said, 'people are usually good-tempered and you always enjoy things more'. Judging by this comment, it is possible that the following poem provides a personification of Christmas, although it is extremely unlikely that the child had ever heard of this term:

She is Christmas.

She is like Christmas.
 She sparkles and tinkles,
 She is like a little fairy on top of
 a Christmas tree.
 If she waves her magic wand
 All the little Christmas fairies will come to
 her,
 Because she is my Queen, and always will be.

The heart of the poem is that the Christmas Tree ornament does much to create an ethos of happiness. Life is worth living, and it is such things as the ornament and what it represents which make it so.

The following poem, written by James, is on a theme popular with children: that is, that the wind is something like a monster which is trying to get inside your house. Imagery such as this is comforting when you know that no real threat exists to one's security, at least of that particular type. The imagined threat is invented purely for psychological comfort and enjoyment, perhaps becoming in the unconscious a symbol for all the threats which seem more

realistic. The associated hope is that they, too, will be equally unfounded.

Children are usually quick to understand the imagery when it is pointed out to them but it is not so common to find them able to express their understanding in words as did this child:

The Wind.

The wind is a monster
Howling under the doors,
Creaking and crackling under
The floors.
Over go trees with a mighty crash -
The wind roars on, pleased!

I asked James if the wind really had claws and scales, as dragons and monsters in pantomimes usually have, but he laughed and explained that in his poem he meant the wind was *like* a monster: it wasn't one in real life.

Simon wrote the following poem in the last few days of term when Sports Day was about to take place. It should be noted that he was quite outstanding at sprinting, and he was clearly hoping to win, although he could not feel this was a certain outcome:

Waiting for My Turn

Its hard to wait for your turn
To run to win or lose.
When you do lose
You sit out and wait
And where you sit you
Shiver and shake,
Freezing. Suddenly you are an
Ice-cube, standing

Quite still.

The effects of nerves on this child's performance were, in fact, minimal, but nevertheless before the event he had suffered inwardly because of sheer enthusiasm, no doubt believing life would be enhanced by a win, and attempted to use creative metaphors to convey something of his feelings.

The following poems were stimulated one summer afternoon because of the appearance of a fly on the classroom window. It was attempting, in some desperation, to escape into the world outside of the window pane. A group of girls expressed their sadness at its suffering, even though Sarah argued that no-one had asked it to come in. Margaret was concerned about the pain it might have been feeling, and how horrible it must be to just die and leave your body behind to dry up in the dust on the window-sill. I suggested that the children might like to write either a poem or a description of the fly's plight. The following resulted.

The Trapped Fly.

Where has it been?
 Why has it come?
 Banging and weeping
 Against the window,
 all day long.
 Why, on this certain day?
 Its beginning has come.

The above, written by Andrew, is a reflection on the reality of death: why should it occur just then, and was death a new beginning? The following idea no doubt had been strengthened by class work recently completed about Biblical -

and other - evidence for the resurrection of Jesus, and can be found in the other poems written on the subject of the fly.

Kelly's poem, below, is most interesting because her ideas have a Platonic influence. Some days before I had shown the child a picture of Michelangelo's sculpture 'The Dying Slave', the theme of which I had explained to her at her request: that the idea of the sculpture was that when the slave died, his spirit would be freed from his body. The idea is central to the ending of the poem and reflective of the ability of children to transfer learning to new situations if stimulated to do so by the lesson content and context:

The Trapped Fly

The fly will try to get out
 But there is no hope.
 So hot, trapped -
 As it dries and starts to die
 It finally gives its last sigh
 And its soul is free.

The hopelessness of escape from the material world in a material form is contrasted with the freedom of its soul on physical death, quite a profound idea for reflection by a ten year old. Attempts to 'Make Life Better' seemed doomed to failure!

Sarah's poem on this subject was quite different in that she attempted to give the fly a means of communication and appeal to people. This appeal was acted on by the group

because the children captured the tortured fly in a paper towel and released it through an opened window! She wrote:

The Trapped Fly
 Help! Help! What can I do?
 No-one will help me,
 Not even you!
 Help, help, trapped in a room,
 Soon I'll be dying
 Instead of just flying ...
 What can I say? What can I do?
 Please help me ... I'm asking you!

It is interesting to speculate why young children find insight and emotion so much easier to express through the medium of poetry. Certainly by the age of between ten and eleven, and probably much earlier, children seem to learn to associate the expression of feelings with poetry, whilst prose is associated with plain description, despite the richness of conventional metaphor in its construction (pages 105/112). An important reason for this, no doubt, is connected with assumptions they have absorbed from early life concerning the apparent prosaic style of everyday prose which usually has a utilitarian purpose and the poetic style of poetry which seems to have a non-utilitarian function, relating instead to insights and interpretation of experience (Hall 1989: 16).

To help them apply the use of metaphor to writing which is not in the form of verse takes a considerable amount of thought, planning, and the provision of numerous examples of writing which uses metaphor in this latter way.

The only children in this particular group who used metaphor in a prose context were Mark and Karl.

The following are examples of how they attempted to apply their new skills when writing about the events of Whitsuntide.

Mark wrote:

When the disciples found the Lord was alive the devil came out and love went in. New life started to grow inside of them all.

Karl's writing concerning the events shortly after the crucifixion were described metaphorically too:

When they found that Jesus had gone the hand of the devil reached deep down inside and took away their hope. That night a man appeared and they knew it was Jesus. They went into the lane and told the people how to live in peace.

6.04 Data Interpretation: Children's Reflections as Expressed Through Novel Metaphor

The children's ability to engage in the use of creative metaphors may be assessed by their achievements. They were able to:

a) Work in contexts which were appropriate on account of the familiar focus of lesson material. Because the children had all developed values associated with the problem of poverty, they were able to extend their experiences by projecting their interests into new fields. The use of creative metaphor enabled them do this in ways which were creative and stimulating because their thoughts were freed from the constraints found within conventional metaphor usage.

b) The children had been able to apply their newly developed skills in written language to other fields, such as their personal feelings concerning wildlife, and personal experiences such as those developed from sports days.

c) The ability of the children for using language symbolically exceeded profoundly the limitations indicated by Piagetian psychology (Piaget 1959 edition: 137/8). Their success may be accounted for by the appropriateness of context, the fact that they had been taught the use of novel metaphor and that they were encouraged to apply their skills to areas of life which held interest for them. Throughout the research, I did not find evidence to support the claims of Piaget regarding children's inability to interpret or create symbolic language in acceptable ways. (Piaget 1959 edition: 137/8).

d) The data analysis and interpretation reflected that children's potential for developing their achievements through direct teaching, if planned within appropriate contexts, exceeded expectations indicated throughout Piagetian theory.

6.05 Summary

This chapter presented the results of data collected as a result of work carried out with the ten year old informants according to interpretative/action research methods, but specifically within the case-study approach (page 49).

Their achievements exceeded limitations of the ability of ten year old children for engaging with 'figurative language' as indicated by Piaget (1959 edition: 137/8). In addition, assertions of Rousseau (1979 edition: 90) concerning the irrelevance to children of the art of reflection did not find support. Conversely, the informants showed that they could be very critical and reflective of experiences undergone and they were able to communicate their values by using novel metaphor.

The following, and final, section of the thesis provides data analysis and interpretation which assesses the researches of Ronald Goldman (1964; 1965) into pre-adolescent children's ability to engage with Biblical material. The section begins with a chapter critically examining Goldman's work.

**PART THREE: THE SIGNIFICANCE OF METAPHOR IN
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

CHAPTER SEVEN.

ASSUMPTIONS UNDERLYING THE RESEARCH OF GOLDMAN INTO
THE RELIGIOUS THINKING OF CHILDHOOD7.00 Introduction.

This chapter presents an investigation of the background to the researches of Ronald Goldman which were focused on Religious Education (1964; 1965). These theories continue to be cited as significant for understanding children's religious thinking over thirty years after their publication (for example, Bastide 1987: 18/23; Miles 1996), although their Piagetian base has been continually shown to be unsound (for example, Bryant 1982; Minney 1985; Petrovich 1988; Clark 1995). A reason for the sustained popularity of Goldman's theories could be because there has not been any large scale research into the intellectual potential of children for understanding religion since their publication over thirty years ago (Petrovich 1988a).

Because of this continuing interest in the work of Goldman, an examination of the origins of assumptions upon which they were based is provided in order that their usefulness as a means of understanding children's religious thinking can be assessed. The chapter concludes with a survey of the longer term influences of Goldman's work on Religious Education.

7.01 Background to Goldman's Researches.

a) *The Perceived Need for New Approaches to Religious*

Education..

Ronald Goldman was by training a research psychologist whose work in the area of Religious Education, published between 1964/1965, stemmed from a wider interest in the intellectual and emotional development of the young (Goldman 1965: biographical note). Cited as a more specific reason for the research was his "concern for the effectiveness of Religious Education", although effectiveness for *what* was not clarified (Goldman 1964: xi).

Several factors combined to convince many people associated with education in the middle of the twentieth century that fresh thinking and new approaches to Religious Education were required.

The Plowden Report (1967) expressed dissatisfaction with the use of the title "Religious Instruction" as used in the Education Act of 1944, preferring instead "Religious Education" (1967: 203). Whilst changing 'instruction' to 'education' in the educational context of the school was entirely appropriate, this change was also reflective of a growing recognition of shortcomings in teaching methods which presented pupils with material for study whilst failing to help them learn how to interpret it.

This is illustrated in the following statement which was published fourteen years before the Plowden Report (1967). It was argued to be desirable that a move away from 'mere scripture teaching' should be made:

'it is the duty of the school to place before its pupils a rational statement of Christian belief, suited of course to their age and abilities' (Curtis 1953 edition: 382).

The perceived importance of 'rationalising' statements of Christian belief demonstrates a continuing influence of positivism. For the content of Religious Education - or any other subject - to be intellectually respectable it was thought necessary, by some, to present it in the language approved by scientific method, a concern central to the nineteenth century pedagogical movement (pages 60/63). Rational statements were deemed to be safe, and therefore respectable, in a scientific sense because of their assumed objectivity (page 58).

The other point raised by Curtis concerns suitability of lesson material according to pupils' 'ages and abilities'. In fact similar ideas had been put forward nearly three hundred years earlier by John Locke, whose words follow the Preface for an Agreed Syllabus of Religious Education published in 1666:

As for the Bible, which children are usually employed in, to exercise and improve their talent in reading, I think the promiscuous reading of it through by chapters as they lie in order, is so far from being of any advantage to children, either for the perfecting their reading or principing their religion, that perhaps a worse could not be found. For what pleasure or encouragement can it be to a child, to exercise himself in reading those parts of a book where he understands nothing?

(From a letter of John Locke, 6th February, 1686, quoted in West Riding Agreed Syllabus

of Religious Education 1966: ix)

A point implied by John Locke, and raised by the Plowden Committee, concerned the intellectual capacity of children for engaging with the Bible: what was the appropriate time for introducing certain materials to pupils? (Plowden 1967: 207/8). The assumption that chronological age was of *significant* importance for the selection of material does not seem to have been questioned. It was the *child* who was unable to cope with Biblical material, not the adult. Further research among adults which examines this belief would contribute valuable insight into assumptions concerning an area of learning which are taken for granted, rather than being the subject of systematic investigations.

Goldman's work comprised an attempt to provide an account of how the intellectual capacities of pupils for intellectual development (in his case, the development of religious thinking) followed maturational sequences in a way similar to that of physical development (Goldman 1965: 77/192). His researches were therefore timely in that they corresponded with statements made by Plowden on the same subject (1967: 9/10).

Also expressed by the Plowden Committee was the notion that the content of Agreed Syllabuses of Religious Education, which had been introduced during the decade following the end of World War I, 'discourage teachers from thinking out schemes

for themselves' (Plowden 1967: 205). The Plowden Committee continued by quoting one witness who wrote as follows:

In almost every case the syllabus was based on factual knowledge which it was felt a child ought to have ... Educational thought today is questioning whether the basis ought not rather to be the development of religious concepts, and the meeting of the religious needs of children at each point in their lives (Plowden 1967: 208).

The work of Ronald Goldman was cited as being an example of 'investigation on these lines' which was in progress at that time (Plowden 1967: 208). Despite the call for 'rational statements of Christianity' to be presented to pupils (page 194 above) uncertainty and confusion existed as to whether children could actually deal with 'factual knowledge' of religion although no clear statements were issued concerning what a 'factual account' could comprise. Subsequent developments in the form of the Phenomenological Movement (pages 215/216) represented efforts to reform teaching approaches in Religious Education in this direction. However, the question which gained prominence at this time concerned whether attention ought to be directed towards developing religious concepts?

The work of Goldman favoured the latter approach, but on account of the restricted perceptions within which his theories were developed, their educational value is considered to justify critical analysis.

7.02 Goldman's Research Base in Piagetian Psychology.

a) *Goldman's Research Method and Materials.*

Goldman's method of collecting data was based upon the Piagetian model, since:

... as much of the data to be evaluated was similar in nature to the problems used by Piaget the clinical-interview used frequently by Piaget served as a model, and a technique was developed to apply to individual pupils. (Goldman: 1964: 36)

His stated aim was as follows:

To see whether Piaget's three stages could be applied to the realm of religious thinking, I selected five questions from the Bible stories in *The Picture and Story Religious Thinking Test*, and the responses to these were scored independently by those psychologically trained and conversant with Piaget's ideas. (Goldman: 1964: 51)

The aim of Goldman's initial research was explicitly shown to be an investigation into whether the claims of Piaget concerning intellectual stages of development were relevant to Religious Education. They did not question the *validity* of the 'stages' or whether it was realistic to confine children's development within the narrow parameters which Piaget had created (pages 69/71). As pointed out by Petrovich, Piaget's stages of development are only found when his particular testing techniques are used (1988a: 47).

Nevertheless, to this end Piagetian interview techniques were used to construct research materials. These comprised pictures and questions with multiple-choice answers which related to Goldman's versions of three Bible narratives,

Moses and the Burning Bush, the Red Sea Crossing and the Temptations of Jesus (Goldman 1964: 247/259).

The particular selection of Biblical material made by Goldman has been criticised. For example, Petrovich made the point that the selection represented:

unfamiliar or strange material, beyond the children's ordinary experience. All three stories depict extraordinary events, or miracles, and are therefore highly unfamiliar to all but those children who have been initiated into the conventions of how such events ought to be understood (1988a: 47).

Additionally, Watson quotes from Hilliard, who argues that the children were unlikely to be able to respond to the task in ways which would have found approval by Goldman:

It would need an exceptional theological maturity in a child or adolescent to point out to the questioner that he could not really give any answer to this kind of question in the terms in which it is asked and with all the assumptions it seems to make (quoted Watson 1987: 163).

Given these circumstances, it is hardly surprising that the findings of Goldman reflected Piagetian theory in that the responses of children to his research questionnaires indicated 'powers of thought develop in a fairly predictable sequence' (Goldman 1965: 45). This statement is reflective of Piagetian theory:

the stages of development we have described always succeed one another in the same order, as do their substages which is clear enough proof of the 'natural' and spontaneous character of their sequential development (Piaget 1991 edition: 12).

Given the selection of material which comprised the research questionnaires underpinning the work of Goldman, important questions ought to be asked concerning their reliability for helping teachers assess children's intellectual capacity for religious thinking. Perhaps what is even more urgently required is a reassessment of the reliability of the Piagetian testing procedures on which they were based, particularly their relevance for educational purposes (pages 71; 79).

Although readers were assured that the researcher working with the children was 'friendly and interested but neutral, encouraging and praising effort throughout' (Goldman 1964: 250), the content of the research materials was not neutral. As stated by Goldman himself, these had been constructed deliberately because

'the discussion of each question with each child revealed the possibilities of checking the child's mode of thinking by Piagetian methods (Goldman 1964: 51).

Thus Piagetian theory was sanctioned by Goldman's research as enlightening for the teacher concerning reasonable pupil expectations in Religious Education.

b) *Goldman's Perceptions of Childhood.*

Another example of Goldman's uncritical acceptance of Piagetian research method and conclusions is found in his agreement with Piaget's erroneous notion that childhood

represents an unsophisticated, credulous stage of human development, reflective of primitive societies (page 70/71).

For example, when discussing children's responses to the wonder of life generally, Goldman states:

Since the sense of awe, or the feeling of the numinous of the young child is strong, although still in a primitive form, this natural sense of mystery should be respected (1964: 234).

Again, he used the following statement to support his view of the primitive nature of childhood:

It is often said that children are similar to the primitives in their approach to the holy (1964: 116).

Associated with this are his views that childhood is inferior, intellectually, to adulthood. For example, he writes of 'the move forward from the early stages of fantasy' which:

liberates him from the triviality of so much childish thought but also limits him at a new level to thinking in terms of specifics. He is not interested in principles but in fact (Goldman 1964: 236).

He is quite decisive about this inferiority of children's thought in contrast to the more enlightened state of the adult:

It is clear that because the forms of thought used by children are childish and immature, children's religious ideas and their concepts will also be childish (1964: 67).

Again, Goldman implies that adult, rational thought is superior to the supposed 'fantasy' of childhood, the latter being gradually replaced by the former:

where the natural world is concerned, therefore, it is probable that the (pupil) conceives of it in

terms of dualistic systems ... one system is composed of growing logical-scientific concepts where artificialism is gradually being abandoned for a more rational view (Goldman 1964: 114).

What is suggested by Goldman is that childhood is an immature, or early stage within a long progressional sequence towards the maturity of adulthood which finds expression in scientific thinking. Thus childhood is characterised as a period dominated by 'pre-scientific limitations' (Goldman 1964: 229).

There is little justification in contrasting creative achievement (which Goldman appears to confuse with 'fantasy') with the development of 'a logico-scientific thought system' (Goldman 1964: 114), and even more significantly for inferring that the latter is superior, or representative of greater intellectual maturity than the former, as a survey of some of the great works of literature will clarify (Ashton 1993a: 168). Attitudes which attempt to do so are reflective of the narrow perspectives of positivism (pages 95/102).

A further problem, which was also discovered in Piagetian psychology, concerns a confusion between perceptions of the creative capacity of many children and romantic assertions concerning childhood (pages 69/71). This is reiterated in the following statement of Goldman:

Their innocent and rather naive assumptions about all kinds of things make them both endearing and exasperating creatures to live with (Goldman 1965: 34).

Goldman's romantic notions of childhood are remarkably similar to the sentiments expressed by Rousseau:

Love childhood; promote its games, its pleasures, its amiable instinct. Who among you has not sometimes regretted that age when a laugh is always on the lips and the soul is always at peace? Why do you want to deprive these little innocents of the enjoyment of a time so short ...? (1979 edition: 79).

As earlier discussions of children's concerns and experiences indicated, however, their perceptions of life do not differ significantly from those of adults (page 146). What would justify consideration is not so much the content of experiences but the deeper emotional dilemmas which become part of their human interpretation. This suggests that the nature of childhood does not differ so significantly from that of adulthood as romantic writers would suggest.

Although disguised in the style of scientific method and neutrality which was in accord with a prevailing positivist ethos (Goldman 1964: 248), his researches were actually representative of his own personal, romantic vision of childhood which was similar to that of Piaget who in turn had developed romantic ideas drawn from Rousseau's writings (page 79).

7.03 Goldman: Confusion Between Potential and Achievement and Two Modes of Thinking.

a) *Confusion 1: Potential and Achievement.*

A further important question which needed to be asked by Goldman before carrying out the tests concerned i) the *opportunities* experienced by the child for having learnt what was to be tested and then testing ii) how far the children's learning had been effective.

To test children's ability of interpretation in areas where they had not had opportunities to learn, and to use the findings to indicate inability to do so is obviously absurd. This emphasises questions already raised concerning the validity of any empirical research carried out with children which tests present learning and understanding but uses the data collected to make prognostications about potential (page 48). Goldman's preparation in this respect was limited to enquiring whether or not the informants had heard the Bible stories he intended to use before the occasion of the test (Goldman 1964: 214).

Confusion is apparent between these two areas, that is between a) levels of learning achieved and b) potential for learning new material. There is little justification for asserting achievement to be a trustworthy indicator of potential. This point becomes particularly obvious if one considers, for example, the possibility of a non-swimmer learning to swim: to argue that because the individual could not do so before being taught does not justify the belief that s/he *could not* be taught to do so. In a similar way, to

maintain that children are unable to understand proverbs, metaphor or any of the tropes because they are unable to do so on the occasion of a test should not be taken as proof that they *do not have the potential to learn*. This subtlety seems to have escaped Goldman's analysis as it had done that of Piaget.

b) *Confusion 2: Goldman's Meaning of 'Thinking'*.

A further question which arises concerns the type of thinking which Goldman was investigating, whether *logical reasoning* or thinking associated with *opinion and belief*. This was not made clear by him.

The research of Goldman was deemed to be concerned with 'what a child is able to grasp intellectually' (1964: xi), and one which the title of his first publication suggested: "Religious Thinking From Childhood to Adolescence" (Goldman: 1964). However, as pointed out by Petrovich there is ambiguity concerning how Goldman was using the word 'thinking': whether as i) the use of reasoning powers to form concerns, make judgements and draw inferences or ii) thinking as opinion, or attitude to information, as expressed in value judgements (1988a: 45/46). Whilst his stated interest was in thinking of type (a) his real interest seems to have been in type (b), which is concerned not so much with logical thinking capacity as with opinions and beliefs, particularly as they related to ideas about three Bible stories, Moses and the

Burning Bush, The Red Sea Crossing and The Temptations of Christ.

This confusion in perceiving with which kind of thinking Goldman's researches was concerned may be cleared by referring to his research materials, where one of the statements to be read to the informants was:

When I ask you questions just tell me what you think. there are no right and wrong answers - it isn't an exam of any kind. Just tell me what you think.
(Goldman 1964: 248).

Rather than being about 'what a child can grasp intellectually' (Goldman 1964: xi), it is obvious that he was really concerned with opinions and beliefs expressed at the time of the test, rather than with what they could be enabled to comprehend by teaching. The confusion is, therefore, confirmed as outlined on page 204: there was an apparent inability to distinguish between potential and achievement.

What Goldman's research did investigate were children's creative responses to materials which called for sophisticated levels of theological insight. Responses to the questionnaires were then presented as examples of pupils' limited intellectual potential, presented in a pseudo-scientific research framework of statistics, for example, a table comparing chronological age groupings with 'full literalism' and 'near full literalism' (Goldman 1964: 77) which, superficially, seemed to be value-free but in actuality

was modelled on a framework virtually certain to produce predetermined outcomes (Goldman 1964: 250).

7.04 Goldman's Perceptions of Religion.

a) *Goldman's Perceptions of the Nature of Religion*

Goldman proclaimed religion to be:

fundamentally a pattern of belief, and not an intellectual formula ... the emotional aspect of religious thinking is of great importance (Goldman: 1964: 31).

It is the emotional content of religion, leading to belief, which is important for his research emphasis, rather than intellectual understanding. This is unremarkable given that Goldman apparently did not consider religion to have an intellectual base. Consequently for him, religion represented:

a way of life to be lived, not a series of facts to be learnt (Goldman 1965: 6).

A potential difficulty which this statement opens up, especially for those influenced by a positivist ethos, is how to reconcile this view of a religious interpretation of life - that is one concerned entirely with feelings - with the other described by Goldman as a more mature 'logico-scientific thought system' (Goldman 1964: 114).

This statement of Goldman is reflective of the fact/opinion divide referred to earlier (pages 13/15) and the basis of the assumption upon which the division rests, namely the narrow positivist view that scientific experiments, using

instruments and statistics were the only means of identifying 'facts' which were neutral and value-free (page 59). The absurdity of this notion may, of course, be understood through recognising that the human mind cannot be eliminated so decisively, entering as it does into all aspects of enquiries, whether scientific or the artistically creative. All hypotheses are dependant on the human ability to offer interpretations of results which are likely, in due course, to be shown as mistaken or inaccurate, a point made clear by numerous scientists, for example (Hawking 1993: 10; Popper 1972: 355).

However, the view of religion held by Goldman was undoubtedly focused upon affective responses to life. It was recommended that

More conscious attempts may be made through music, dancing, painting and creative work to help children to fantasise their way into religion (Goldman 1964: 233).

This was in order to

feed the child's crude deity concepts and his physical anthropomorphisms in such a way that he refines his crudities of religious thinking as far as his limits of experience and ability allow (1964: 232).

The creative activities described above were thought of as throwing up 'intellectual bridges' for the future, when the coming of adolescence and with it a capacity for 'intellectual

thought' would involve leaving behind 'the limitations of concretising experience' (Goldman 1964: 88).

b) *The Purposes of Goldman's Researches for Religious Education* .

Goldman described his view of religion as representing a central-to-liberal position (Goldman 1964: 49):

The view is held that Scripture is the inspired but not the infallible Word of God, transmitted or revealed to fallible men, who at times have only partially grasped and communicated the truth revealed to them (1964: 49).

A central theme of his researches is that pupils could easily be led towards this particular understanding of religion, thus fulfilling the recommendation of the Plowden Committee that:

They (the children) should be taught to know and love God and to practise in the school community the virtues appropriate to their age and environment (Plowden 1967: 207).

This is a particularly disturbing approach to teaching in that education, rather than being concerned with the pursuit of knowledge through gradually maturing personal values and understanding is being eroded by a form of initiation into a particularly narrow view of the Christian religion. The form advocated by Goldman denied it any intellectual vigour (Goldman 1964: 31). This focus found authority in the Plowden Report where, by encouraging the elimination of controversy from Religious Education, supported 'initiation' approaches in preference to those of an open, educational approach which could have engaged children in controversy from an early age

in efforts to teach them how to develop critical awareness, sharpen perceptions of life generally and encourage attitudes associated with openness and fairness:

Children should not be unnecessarily involved in religious controversy. They should not be confused by being taught to doubt before faith is established (Plowden 1967: 207).

Preparation for full initiation into a particularly narrow version of the Christian religious faith was to be undertaken in the primary school. Plans for how this could be done were provided by Goldman, for example in the Life Themes which comprised a significant element of his recommendations (Goldman 1965: 141).

7.05 Goldman's Perceptions of Biblical Language.

a) *Goldman's Understanding of Literalism.*

There is considerable vagueness in Goldman's tendency to classify language into what he sees as distinctive, separate compartments, recognition of which is essential if sensible interpretations are to be made. This problem is particularly apparent on at least two points, which are discussed below.

1. A major point requiring clarification is the sense in which Goldman uses phrases such as 'the language of poetry', 'religious language', and 'matter-of-fact-language' (1965: 33). He makes the point, for example, that to:

take religious language at its face value, in a literal sense as children will tend to do, only creates confusion and difficulties where they need not exist (Goldman 1965: 33).

The assumptions which cause confusion concern notions that

- * religious language differs from non-religious language;
- * that 'religious language' is improperly understood if only read at 'face value', that is in a literal sense.

Goldman recognised that in some ways 'religious language' could be similar to 'the language of poetry', but this awareness was not explicitly explained. Nevertheless the assumptions concerning 'poetic language' were applied rigidly and contrasted with 'matter of fact language' when assessing what he believed to be children's literalism (Goldman 1964: 77). For Goldman, the apparent problem arose because he ruled out the possibility of literal interpretations of Biblical language as being, simply, true. For example, he wrote:

It anticipates they (the children) need weaning from a literal reverence for the Bible towards a critical so that they may begin to see scripture as true in a spiritual and not necessarily literal sense at all (Goldman 1965: 147/148).

As pointed out earlier (page 97) not all metaphors are possessed of sensible, literal meanings, but neither are all literal meanings necessarily nonsensical. For example, when reflecting on the Temptations of Jesus (Luke 4, vv 1/13), how wise is it to dogmatically insist the 'devil' was a feeling inside of Jesus, without tangible material form? The possibility must always remain open that Satan had taken on some kind of material substance. This does not, however, eliminate the possibility that the story also embodies many

additional layers of meaning, the discovery of which could be a life-long process (page 18).

2) The second point relates to Goldman's use of phrases such as 'metaphorical truth' and 'poetic truth' (Goldman 1965: 163). As pointed out earlier (pages 99/100), phrases of this type reinforce notions that 'metaphoric truth' is a distinctive type of truth, quite different from non-metaphoric truth which can be expressed in 'matter of fact language' and interpreted sensibly at face-value. From this position it is not difficult to see how the idea that 'metaphoric truth' is therefore vague, and consequently inferior to 'non-metaphoric truth' could arise and influence reflection, values and perceptions of knowledge which result. From a positivist focus, this again would raise the fact/opinion division which was central to confusions in Goldman's work (pages 206/207).

b) *Goldman's Concern Regarding Children's Literalism.*

A concern central to Goldman's researches was his belief in the limitations imposed on children's thinking because of their apparent inability to interpret language in any other way than the literal. As shown above, for Goldman literal interpretations of scripture were false. For example, he describes how children approaching eleven years of age perceived the devil in Jesus' Temptations as 'a fantasised or conventionalised man, visible and with physical attributes' (1964: 172), whilst pupils approaching twelve years, eight

months, perceived the devil as 'a propensity within every person' (1964: 174), and on this basis argues for a growing sophistication in thought as 'pupils' concepts leave anthropomorphisms behind' (1964: 173).

The dogmatism of theories concerning Biblical interpretation which dismiss such notions as the devil being a visible man was mentioned above (page 210). Goldman's researches are full of similar examples drawn from pupils' responses to his questionnaires (1964: chapters five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten eleven twelve and thirteen). The result was for Goldman to proclaim that, on account of the 'immaturities which remain' during the primary school years (1965: 29), it was an 'impossible task to teach the Bible as such to children much before adolescence' (1965: 8). This was on account of it being 'evident that a basic, literalist stage exists until about 12:11 chronologically' (1964: 242).

Nevertheless, Goldman's theories are only valid if his assumptions are acceptable. These assumptions are:

- * That Piagetian theory was a valid method of assessing intellectual development and applicable to educational contexts.
- * That childhood is essentially concerned with fantasy, and characterised by romantic notions, such as innocence, naivety and a basically 'endearing' attractiveness (Goldman 1965: 34).
- * That literal interpretations of language are necessarily incorrect.
- * That the Bible 'is the documentation of a revealed religion and is largely description of how revelations of the

divine came to men (Goldman 1964: 68).

The first three points have been refuted throughout earlier discussions (pages 69/71; 95/102). Regarding the final point concerning the nature of the Bible, it is by no means necessarily acceptable that definitions of the Bible should be restricted in this way. For example, researches by Rohl (1995) indicate a firm historical base for much content of Old Testament material, whilst many aspects of New Testament material, including evidence for the historical Jesus, have been identified as real events in history (for example, Filson 1964; Bornkamm 1973).

Goldman's assertions concerning pre-adolescent children's literalism are dependent on his view that the Bible is essentially a poetic, literary work. However, much the same could be said about traditional fairy tales, although here the literal truth, or otherwise, of the narratives does not seem to be important in the search for meaning. As Bettelheim pointed out, the way in which literature is effective in stimulating thought and reflection on experience is central to a gradual development of wisdom. On these grounds, even if one agreed with Goldman and denied the Bible any status other than one of fine literature, its multiple layers of meaning remain central to its educational value, a point which is also true to other forms of literature:

The conscious and unconscious associations which fairy tales evoke in the mind of the listener depend on his general frame of reference and his personal

preoccupations (Bettelheim 1991 edition: 13).

The reason for this is that literature is deeply embedded in, and originates from, interpretation of life's experiences. It is not the actual detail of the experiences which is significant but the deeper, emotional aspects which can be illuminating and informative for those who find them stimulating for reflection. The ways in which they are expressed or written will nearly certainly include the use of metaphor, both conventional and novel. The greater the extent novel metaphors are created to communicate ideas and insights, the greater the need will be for interpretation (page 116).

Tracing the historical events which inspired reflection and study of the interpretations given to them transcends arguments concerning whether certain material is figurative or literal. It is in the search for meanings at all levels, including the literal, and reflection on the human interpretations of historical experiences which lead to the pursuit of knowledge and the on-going development of values.

7.06 Goldman in Perspective: a Critical Overview.

a) Goldman was a pioneer figure in researching relationships between psychology and children's potential for relating to religion. Consequently it is his theories which have been of influence upon Religious Education in schools (for example, see discussion in Grimmit 1973: 47). This can be noted from the following three widespread and influential approaches to Religious Education.

b) *The Existential Approach*: this is described by Grimmitt (Grimmitt 1973: 52), whereby depth themes are constructed with the aim of conceptual development by relating learning to all the experiences of pupils, both secular and religious, since they are all said to contribute to a basis for religious conceptual development. The similarity of depth themes to the life themes of Goldman has been remarked upon (Grimmitt 1973: 54/55). Nevertheless, depth themes are described as being 'purely secular', having the intention of exploring and examining life through feelings, acts and experiences (Grimmitt 1973: 55). Again, preoccupation with the affective aspects of learning is striking. Pupils are encouraged by these studies to develop tolerant attitudes to those of religious persuasion.

c) *Phenomenology*. As a movement, phenomenology, or the study of the practice of religion, can be perceived as being an attempt to ensure Religious Education would be a respectable subject in the school curriculum in that the subject was believed to have been freed by this approach from valid criticisms of being confessional: this on account of phenomenologists

setting aside their preconceptions about reality in favour of an unbiased investigation ...'
(Hay et al 1990: 6).

The defensive nature of the whole conception originated within the context of positivism. The assumed 'objectivity'

of phenomenology seemed to be guaranteed by neutrality, although this latter concept was thoroughly analysed and shown to be another form of confessionalism. It was argued as being all the more sinister in that it purported to be neutral (Hulmes 1979: 10).

If one accepts Hulmes' arguments, neutrality can be seen to be a stance in Religious Education which encourages agnosticism and strengthens attitudes which develop into secularism: neutrality thereby becomes another form of confessionalism.

d) *The Experiential Learning Movement*: it arose from notions that religion originates from human experience. However, it has been pointed out that this assumption is not necessarily borne out in fact: religion is based on certain truth claims which are deeply held within cultural systems (Wright 1993: 73/4).

However, insights concerning such 'truths' develop as a result of experience and reflection on it. Tradition is the encapsulated experience of many people over centuries, but if allowed to become fossilized, perhaps because of original forms of expression becoming superseded and therefore remote, the insights which could have been illuminative and helpful for all ages easily become lost. The necessity of helping pupils examine critically insights of past times to help them illuminate their understanding of current concerns is a vital

aspect of education. The probability of the Experiential Learning movement achieving this however seems doubtful, if only because it fails to relate to genuine experiences and concerns of childhood.

Teaching in primary schools according to the Experiential Learning approach has been significantly influenced by the work of Dr. David Hay (Hay et al 1990). The approach has the intention of engaging children in activities which serve to provide opportunities for spiritual experience in the classroom. A main objection to the Experiential Learning movement is that the activities which it comprises follow set procedures and have pre-determined outcomes. This is particularly inappropriate for spiritual development, which is characterised by its innate sense of freedom (John 3, v 8). Although purporting to relate to children's experiences, the activities are deliberately structured within set parameters and do not, in fact, relate to the deeper concerns of young people in ways which are positive and informative for future decision making and the development of values.

A worrying feature of the activities is their propensity to encourage introspection, often into areas of children's lives which they are likely to have gone to considerable efforts to conceal. For example, in the Matrioshka Doll activity (Hay et al 1990: 99/101) children are asked to reflect on private, family and friendship aspects of their

lives to an extent which can be seen to be an intrusion of their privacy. The educational value of activities such as contained in Hay's material is dubious, particularly in view of the negative outcomes which look likely.

The approaches to Religious Education outlined above reflect the climate of the times in which they were developed. The Existential approach and Phenomenology developed from attitudes formed within positivism; the Experiential Learning movement arose from growing concern about children's spirituality and the desirability of addressing their needs through education. However, none of the developments related to children's actual experiences and concerns, an area which had not been thoroughly investigated. In addition, the planning which was central to them did not focus on the true capacity of children for using metaphorical language (5.02).

All of the approaches share a central, and significant flaw. This is that they failed to recognise the individuality and profundity of creative thought of many children. The ideas of Rousseau, expressed during the eighteenth century, have retained an astonishingly powerful influence on opinion, and this had been united, even more astonishingly, with a search for the 'facts' of how children attempted to make sense of their lives. Thus the study of childhood had united two movements, Romanticism and Rationalism, although the former had originated from opposition to the latter (page 53).

The narrowness of this position is dangerous generally, but for education specifically since it denies the validity of the uniqueness of the individual. Thus, all children were assumed to follow set patterns of development (stages of intellectual growth), characterised by associated intellectual incapacities which were said not to disappear until 'maturation'. This particular theory, when mistakenly assumed to be a fact of learning, quickly became a dogma itself.

The narrowness of Goldman's researches has been investigated in this chapter, including his perceptions of religion, the nature of childhood and his restricted perceptions of the intricacies of language. His work was found to be confused throughout, for example by failing to distinguish between achievement and potential and the presentation of a view of childhood which was firmly based in romantic notions which led him to misunderstand children's innate creative capacity and its educational value. This led to the conclusion that his work should no longer be considered as informative research when planning approaches to Religious Education in the primary school.

7.07 Summary.

The narrow parameters within which Goldman conducted his researches in the field of religious education are evident throughout his work. His assumptions concerning the apparent innocence and intellectual incapacities of childhood are

reminiscent of those of Rousseau, whilst the psychology of Piaget provided what was assumed to be a 'factual' framework according to which intellectual development could be quantified and presented. Accordingly, both the interview techniques used for the data collection and the manner of the data presentation reflected the Piagetian mode. Overall his researches, although disguised by empirical method, are reflective of the romantic view of childhood which pervades the writing of Rousseau (1979 edition) and the work of Piaget (Clark 1995: 83).

One of the underlying assumptions, which was so central to his approach, concerned the apparent 'fact' that only post-adolescent people were able to engage in rational, analytical thought and use sophisticated language. Goldman expressed this view as follows:

For children before 10 years old or later maturational development has not arrived at the point where the complexity of thinking demanded by religion can be coped with at a satisfactory intellectual level (1964: 23).

In the case of religious thinking, 'a satisfactory level' implied the ability to interpret 'figurative' language, by which was meant novel metaphors.

Theoretically, the researches were found to be confused and potentially damaging, both in research methodology and the fact that they were structured according to pre-determined outcomes.

The following two chapters of this thesis investigate the claims of Goldman concerning children's intellectual capacity for understanding religion, and comprise data collected from the child informants as a result of classroom work on Biblical writings produced over a period of three months.

CHAPTER EIGHT

DATA PRESENTATION: THE USE OF METAPHOR IN RELIGION:
CHILDREN'S INTERPRETATIVE ABILITY.8.00 Introduction.

This chapter presents data collected during the course of teaching the ten year old informants. It was designed to enquire into the claims of Goldman that children of this age were unable to understand 'the complexity of thinking demanded by religion' (Goldman 1964: 23) on account of literalist interpretations of figurative language persisting until they were 'at least twelve years, eleven months of age' (Goldman 1964: 242).

8.01 Theoretical Background to the Data Collection.

The data were collected as a result of the final section of the cross-curriculum project (page 52) which focused particularly on the teaching of novel metaphor (chapter six).

In the previous chapter the researches and theories of Goldman were examined critically. This was done by relating them to Piagetian psychology and the intellectual movements which had been influential for both.

Like that of Piaget, Goldman's perception of childhood was shown to resemble the romantic notions of Rousseau (1979 edition) whilst his understanding of metaphor, like that of Piaget, had developed from traditions formed within the restricted parameters of positivism, particularly as found in the writings of Locke

(quoted Soskice 1989: 12/13) and Hobbes (quoted Bronowski and Mazlish 1970: 235).

The result was to assert pre-adolescent children's capacity for dealing with complex uses of language to be considerably more restricted than formerly recognised.

It was stated in the Plowden Report that 'the Bible is neither a work of science nor of history' (1967: 208). This controversial view is central to Goldman's researches. Additionally, he considered it to be a 'fact' that the Bible comprised 'more (the) language of poetry than matter of fact language' (Goldman 1965: 33) and since a 'basic literalist stage exists until about 12:11 years' (1964: 242) he asserted that

much of the Bible must be introduced at a later date when (the child) is capable of dealing with it in poetic rather than in literal terms (1964: 230).

However, it was shown earlier (5.02) that conventional metaphor comprised a significant part of the everyday language used by the informants. The literalism claimed for them by Goldman could not, therefore, be so pervasive as he believed. In addition if, as stated by Lakoff:

Poetic metaphor is, for the most part, an extension of our everyday, conventional system (1993: 246)

the ability of the child informants for learning to create and interpret novel metaphors could well have been much more within their capacity than understood by Goldman. This was because the

foundations to do so had been laid gradually by early language experiences (Ashton 1994a).

It has been illustrated how conceptual networks of a metaphorical character are significant for learning as new phenomena are absorbed within existing structures (pages 105/114). This theory seemed to be at variance with that of Donaldson (1978: 123/4), who identified two separate learning modes, 'socially embedded learning' and 'disembedded learning'. Therefore, the data analysis was used to investigate this theory.

Accordingly, lessons were planned with the purpose of collecting data, the analysis and interpretation of which would allow assessments to be made of:

- a) the children's ability to engage with pictorial symbols (as a preliminary activity to engagement with 'word symbols') and poetic, novel metaphors in a religious context;
- b) to examine the theory of Donaldson (1978: 123/124) that there exist two distinct types of learning.

The importance of young people being taught not only how to create their own religious metaphors but also to interpret those used in world religions has been remarked upon (Wright 1996: 167). The purpose of this and the following chapter is to establish their capacity for learning how to do both.

8.02 Data Analysis: Children's Drawings.

The first activity involved the children in using symbols to communicate their ideas about characters in their drawings of Bible stories. Later, their ability to engage in a

similar way with novel metaphor was to be investigated (following sections of this chapter and chapter ten). The aim of the activity was to assess their ability to 'decentre', or perceive a situation outside of their own everyday lives, an ability denied to them by Piaget (Donaldson 1978: 40/50).

Several weeks before this particular data collection, the children had studied the stories of Moses and of Joseph and His Brothers from the Judeo-Christian tradition. I reminded the children about these stories, and suggested that they might like to draw pictures of them, showing what kind of people were in the story. Could they think of ways in which the artist could show people what was going on inside the minds of the characters? The following are examples of the work produced, and represent a cross section of work ranging from simple ideas to profound.

* Sarah (Appendix C [a]).

A picture of Joseph being dragged away by the slave-traders was produced. A camel waits in the background, whilst a slave-trader drags Joseph, who is tied by the wrists, across the sand. I discussed the picture with the child, asking her why she had chosen the various symbols shown in the story and attributed them to the two figures. These are her responses.

The Key. The children had been taught about the use of keys in Geography lessons, and the idea is reproduced here. The symbol of good is shown as a sun: I was told this was because the sun is a kind of light, and it makes you feel happy. Conversely, evil

is shown to be a black cloud, with thunder coming from it:
thunder is frightening and ugly.

Joseph: he had not done anything really wrong - he had only 'shown off', and yet his brothers had treated him very badly. Even when tortured like this, he did not fight and scream. The child told me that as the story proceeds you find out Joseph had learnt to use his brain to help himself.

The slave-trader: he was symbolised as being completely evil: it was wrong to buy and sell people as though they were potatoes: the man had to make a living, but this was a wrong way to do it because it was very cruel. The child told me that what happened to Joseph, being taken away from his home to live among strangers, was the kind of thing she would hate to happen to herself.

Claire (Appendix C [b]).

This child chose to draw a picture of Moses as a baby in the bulrushes with the princess coming to find him. The soldiers of the pharaoh are shown in the background, approaching the River Nile. She explained to me that she had 'made up' her own symbols to show what the people were like inside. The explanations follow.

The Princess: the child believed the princess to have been kind and good because she had saved Moses' life: this had been a very dangerous thing to do but she had been very brave. She went on to say that she herself loved flowers: they were cheerful, just

like the princess, so she used them as a symbol of the goodness of the princess.

The Baby Moses: he, too, was symbolised by flowers because, as a tiny baby, he couldn't have done anything wrong. She said that babies were lovely, and brought happiness to their family.

The Soldiers: they were deemed to be wicked because it was so horrible to kill little helpless babies. She used guns and swords to symbolise the cruelty involved with being a soldier and having to obey wicked orders.

James (Appendix C [c]).

This child produced a picture to illustrate the difficulties faced by the characters in the story of Moses and the Bulrushes. I was unable to interpret his ideas fully, and so discussed the drawing with him. This is how he explained it:

The key: this was the explanation of the symbols which he had used above each of the people in the picture, to help me understand 'what they were like'. When applied to them, this is the picture which emerged.

The Pharaoh: he is shown as 'very bad': the child also mentioned the symbol was useful in depicting an Egyptian head-dress. He explained that the Pharaoh was 'very bad' because he was in the act of drowning a baby in the River Nile: this was wrong because the baby was innocent. Accordingly, the baby held by the Pharaoh above the waters had above it the sign 'very good': it had not done anything wrong.

The Mother of Moses: she is shown as being a mixture of 'good and bad'. The child explained the 'good' related to the fact that she was trying to save her child, and had thought of a good idea, whilst the 'bad' referred to the great worry she was suffering, and which should never have developed. The baby Moses is a mixture of 'good' and 'bad'. I was puzzled by this, and asked how Moses was bad: how could a small baby have done anything wrong? The child explained that was the 'good' part of him: the bad referred, not to anything 'in the baby', but to the fact that he was in great danger: that was the nature of the 'bad' which he perceived.

The princess: she was 'good' because, when she found the baby later, hidden in the bulrushes, she adopted him and allowed his real mother to look after him in the palace without reporting what she had found. The kindness of the princess, the child told me, proved that she was altogether honest and good.

Of particular significance is the way in which the child conceived of good and evil: he seemed to believe that both are forces which can exist independently of people but which will 'take you over' if they get a chance. This is how he understood the baby Moses: for example: the 'bad' which was threatening his life was quite separate from his mind and body, but was nonetheless real enough. When I asked him if 'bad' and 'good' were real, he replied that you can tell they are real because 'of what the people do' when they have been 'caught' by them.

8.03 Data Interpretation: Children's Drawings.

All three children whose work has been analysed showed the ability to both feel empathy for the characters in the story (Appendix C (a)). In addition, and most importantly, they were also able to make judgements of their behaviour and motivation and were able to depict their ideas in signs derived from the metaphors underlying their conceptual development. They were able to do this, even though the stories were remote from their experiences both historically and geographically because of the following reasons:

- * The structures of the stories were based on familiar patterns and relationships: danger, aggression, kindness, threats to security.
- * The stories could be interpreted according to familiar metaphors, and they provided examples of their success: for example, for both Moses and Joseph decisions made were instrumental in ensuring progress on the Journey of Life would be positive because of their success in overcoming potentially damaging obstacles to progress such as kidnap, fear, cruelty, jealousy and betrayal. This indicated for them the continuing support of God. Negative aspects of the events of the stories were melodramatic examples of things the children feared, even subconsciously, in their own lives. For this reason, they could relate to them in depth.

* The depth of reflection of which each child was capable varied: this, however, had nothing to do with the 'stage' he had reached as theories of Goldman would indicate. It happened to be a fact that the child whose work was particularly profound (James) was the youngest child in the class. The levels of reflection given to any particular task vary enormously, and depend upon many variables, such as who the child is sitting near, how the child is feeling at that particular time, the extent to which the task has appealed to past experiences and been found capable of illuminating them.

These findings lead to significant conclusions concerning the theories of Goldman (1964; 1965) and Donaldson (1978).

a) When Goldman questioned children about Moses and the Burning Bush (Goldman 1964: 104/107) he interpreted his findings by concluding that interest in the physical, external details of the story were dominant for the informants' interest until at least eleven years of age. It was only among the 'older and more able pupils' when insights concerning 'spiritual encounter with truth' were found to emerge. As Goldman's research was undertaken with pupils between the ages of five and seventeen years, 'older pupils' apparently refers to those at the upper end of this age range.

The data interpretation outlined above contrasts considerably with Goldman's assertion. In all cases, the

interests of the children as they illustrated their chosen story focused on moral aspects of good and evil which they were able to perceive in gradations. These judgements were not confined to the results of the conduct displayed, but to its actual motivation. For example, Claire depicted the bravery of the princess in attempting to save Moses by hiding him in the bulrushes as 'very brave' because of the dangerous situation, even though the outcome of her action was not known at that point. The evil of the Pharaoh was synonymous for James with his decision to kill the male babies because of babies' innocence. In contrast to Goldman's findings, the work of the informants was exclusively concerned with behaviour, its motivation and effects upon individuals. It is very likely that Goldman's data reflected the levels of understanding he outlines because, as Howkins (1966: 12/13) states, the narratives which he chose emphasized the *extraordinary* in the course of the exposition, and it was hardly surprising that the informants focused on this in their responses. Owing to their inability to engage with novel metaphor on account of not having been taught its use, it was extremely unlikely they could have responded in any other way but that of crude anthropomorphism.

A similar pattern emerges if Goldman's conclusions concerning informants' responses to questions concerning the physical events of the Dead Sea Crossing are considered. Goldman discusses how the 'literalism' of the children caused them to

account for the events in terms of magic. This is contrasted with the 'non-artificialism where natural logical-scientific thinking is found by the child to be the only satisfactory explanation', a stage identified by Goldman, in so far as religious thought is concerned, as not starting before the mid-teens (Goldman 1964: 114). He stated:

This process of literalism seems to continue far too long for the healthy religious development of young people (1964: 115).

However, when the informants were illustrating the story of Moses and the Bulrushes there was never any interest shown whatsoever in physical considerations, for example, whether the basket could have sunk or sailed off down the River Nile. Concern was focused completely on evaluations of human motivation and its outcome for other people. The miraculous elements of the stories chosen by Goldman for his research, and the questions he asked concerning them were, as he stated, chosen because of their conduciveness to Piagetian testing techniques (Goldman 1964: 51).

The selection of Biblical material, if concerned with education, must be done within appropriate contexts which are related to the educational needs of pupils, in the case of this research with their developing sense of sympathy and empathy for the plight of others. The grave error apparently made by Goldman concerns the motivation of his research: he was really testing the testing techniques of Piaget, and the originality of his work lay only in that he was the first researcher to apply

the theories to the field of Religious Education (Goldman 1964: 51).

The research interpretation presented above does not find any reason to concur with Goldman's assertions, namely that 'it is an impossible task to teach the Bible as such to children much before adolescence' (Goldman 1965: 8).

Of particular importance for the successful completion of the task was that, in this particular instance, the children were given choice concerning which particular section of which story each individual would select for illustration. This enabled the children not only to take some personal responsibility for their work, but also ensured that each child had an opportunity to select a particular focus which was personally appropriate.

b) Donaldson describes how changing the context of a test in order to help children relate its detail to their own everyday lives caused them to increase their levels of success significantly (1978: 22/24). She used this example as a means of developing her theory of "embedded learning" and "disembedded learning", that is, learning which is based on everyday, familiar events and circumstances - "embedded learning" - in contrast to learning which is unrelated to familiar contexts - "disembedded learning" - and stated that official education required the latter, which presented so many difficulties to most people (1978: 123/4).

However, the informants were able to relate successfully to events certainly outside of their daily experience: infanticide, slavery and kidnap. The point being emphasized is that the children had little difficulty in using their socially 'embedded' thought (concepts of danger and negative motivation) in perceiving and empathizing with threats to safety, details of which were considerably outside of their experiences both geographically and historically. Yet in Donaldson's example they were unable to describe a mountain view from any position but their own around a table, although in the restructured activity their ability to hide a doll among a network of walls was sound.

Donaldson's theory is that mountains and views were outside of their daily experience: they did not 'make human sense' to them, and yet as stated above slavery, kidnap and infanticide were not within their experiences either, but they were able to empathise with victims of all three.

It would seem that it is not the actual detail of the experiences which are important, but the emotions connected with them: the children's lives were full of emotional trauma (Appendices A and B) and they were able to extend these experiences in efforts to sympathise with the Biblical characters. Mountain views are impersonal, but hiding from a policeman is not: the result was that the children could identify with the latter activity, but not the former. (Donaldson 1978: 21).

In the words of Bettelheim:

The conscious and unconscious associations which ... stories evoke in the mind of the listener depend on his general frame of reference and his personal preoccupations (Bettelheim 1991 edition: 13).

In other words, what is important for successful learning is the ability to extend existing networks to new experiences, and to absorb the latter within them. In this way, learning is completely interconnected: two modes of thinking (socially embedded and disembedded) do not really operate. What seems to happen is that certain individuals develop greater facility to perceive relationships and patterns between familiar and new, and therefore become enabled to develop existing conceptual networks more extensively. Developing children's ability to engage with novel metaphor, therefore, contributes significantly to sharpening perception and deepening sensitivity generally (Spurgeon 1993 edition: 5/7).

The research outlined above indicates that it is *moral principles*, and emotions which become associated with them, such as threats being made to personal security, which fit into existing conceptual networks, and that the insights which result can be both conceptualized metaphorically and communicated in a similar way.

c) The following responses are made to the points raised at the beginning of the chapter:

1) Evidence was not found to support the theories of Goldman (1964; 1965) that the thinking of pre-adolescent children is confined within literalism. Conversely, if taught using material of an appropriate type (that is, which could be absorbed within existing conceptual networks) the informants were able to express

deep insight and empathy towards the plight of Biblical character. Additionally, literal interpretations of Biblical material are not necessarily incorrect, but instead can comprise early responses to profound, theological insights which teaching can develop beyond these initial stages;

ii) rather than finding support for theories of Donaldson (1978) concerning the existence of two distinct learning modes, the evidence suggested that what she signifies as "disembedded learning" really comprises extended conceptual networks which, rather than being distinct from "embedded" learning, incorporate both. Embedded learning comprises networks for thought which have not developed beyond elementary phases.

8.04 Data Analysis: Children Interpreting Biblical Narratives.

a) *The Blind Man: an Analytic Activity (Appendix C [b]).*

Whilst the children had been able to formulate and arrive at judgements and express them pictorially, I wished to discover if they were able to apply their ability to use novel metaphor in interpretations of written material from the Bible.

The children were invited to seat themselves according to friendship groups, and each group was given the text of Mark 8, v

22/25:

They came to a village where some people brought a blind man to Jesus and begged him to touch him. Jesus took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the village. After spitting into his hand, Jesus rubbed his hands onto the blind man's eyes and asked him if he could see anything.

The man look up and said "Yes, I can see people, but they look like trees walking about".

Jesus again placed his hands over the man's eyes. This time the man stared, his sight returned and he saw everything clearly.

Jesus sent him home, saying "Don't go back into the village".

The principles according to which the parable was constructed included compassion, simplicity, and kindness: these are values which were attractive to the children because of their

personal familiarity (page 134). It was for this reason the narrative was chosen as being appropriate.

When Goldman (1964: Appendix A) questioned children concerning Biblical material, they were required to answer set questions about Bible stories:

which had been chosen because the discussion of each question with each child revealed the possibilities of checking the child's mode of thinking by Piagetian techniques (Goldman 1964: 51).

Because of the importance of a) the appropriateness of the narratives for the children and b) the importance of context, I selected the Biblical narratives according to their emotional content (8.03).

The following scripts resulted from the children's discussions when asked to write what they thought the story might mean:

1. We think that the story means that Jesus can cure all evil or darkness and bring light and goodness. I think the story is about Jesus' power.
(Jennie, Andrew and Margaret).
2. The story is about the blind man who wanted his eye sight back and the story says how Jesus did it. Jesus did it by spitting in his hand and rubbing it on his face. At first the man saw walking trees then he saw clearly. The story means that you can help people like Jesus helped the blind man - that is, people who cannot help themselves (Craig and Sarah).
3. The story is about a man who was blind but Jesus cured him. The story is a metaphor about healing people.
(Brian, Simon and Karl).
4. The story is about helping people and being kind. Also Jesus being kind, helping old people and their feelings and also making them feel thankfulness to one another. The story tells us about Jesus always helping people

from near and far. Jesus also helps sick people and animals by giving them help and also thinking of God's power. The man who is blind was in darkness then he went into light. It is also about not understanding. (Linda, James and David).

5. I think the story is about light and good because Jesus helped the blind man to see again by rubbing his eyes. I think it means helping and being kind because Jesus is a sign of good (Andrea and Tom).
6. The story is about kindness and how Jesus helped people even if they were blind. He could make them see again. It is also about happiness when the man could see again. The story means that Jesus is kind to people who come from far and near. Jesus is a sign of good and so is the blind man (Paul, Lisa and John).

Among the various interpretations of this parable which are possible are:

- 1) Jesus really did cure the blind man, resulting in the cure of his physical blindness: he could see.
- 2) Jesus did not cure the physical blindness: the parable illustrates, by the use of extended metaphor, the religious teaching that Jesus would help people understand God's purpose and by doing so increase the quality of their lives.
- 3) Jesus really did effect a physical cure of the man's blindness, and this actual event became an extended metaphor for the Early Church in their efforts to interpret the life of their Master. (Jeremias 1971: 86; 89; 90).

As analysis of the children's ideas shows, their responses fall within the interpretations suggested above.

As the first group indicated, Jesus himself could be understood as 'light', and this was, for the children, an acceptable interchange with 'good'. When I asked group six why they thought the formerly blind man was good in the same way as

Jesus, they answered this was because he was 'in light'. Group four, interestingly, associated sight with understanding.

It was clear that the story had been puzzling for the children and I considered this to be a most positive finding: Biblical material is extremely complex and continues to be deeply debated centuries after it was originally written. A valid criticism of Goldman's Biblical work with children was that he adhered to 'right and wrong' interpretations of the metaphors used: the former were considered to be 'figurative' whilst the latter were said to be 'literal' (Goldman 1964: 220/244). The answers provided by the children indicated that they had been attempting to interpret and that their thinking had developed beyond distinctions of this nature because of the flexible, creative nature of their thinking.

8.05 Data Interpretation: Children Interpreting Biblical Narratives.

The data analysis presented above suggests that the theories of Goldman (1964: 235) concerning 'late Junior' children's inability to appreciate the miracles of Jesus in terms other than magic do not offer a reliable indication of pre-adolescent children's potential for either understanding religious metaphors or for being able to interpret symbolic language presented in a religious context (Goldman 1964: 242).

Goldman's assertions concerning 'a basic literalist stage' existing until 'about the age of twelve years eleven months'

(Goldman 1964: 242) is entirely inconsistent with the findings presented above. The inflexible distinctions held to exist between 'literal and 'figurative' uses of language are inconsistent with the contemporary theory of metaphor (3.06).

The data collected indicated that:

- a) Children of at least ten years of age are able to reflect in depth on problems presented in religious writing, and in doing so will draw on their existing concepts of moral principles such as compassion, goodness and kindness.
- b) Novel metaphor enabled the children extend their efforts to interpret to a much greater extent than could their use of conventional metaphor.
- c) The data reflected a capacity for creative thought in their efforts to offer interpretations of the narrative which enriched their responses and were stimulating for further reflection.
- d) Personal experience of the children, in this case of kindness and compassion, were important for the way in which they attempted to evaluate the characters in the story: thus Jesus and the Blind Man were considered to be signs of 'good' in themselves in that they personified the principle of good which was associated with kindness and compassion.

Evidence to support Donaldson's theory concerning the two separate modes of learning 'socially embedded' and 'disembedded' was not found: rather, the informants' thought united existing metaphorical usage with new material because of the

appropriateness of the content of the latter (Donaldson 1978: 76/85). As indicated above, disembedded thought seems to comprise network extension which moves beyond elementary perceptions.

8.06 Data Analysis: Children's Creative Writing.

a) Background to the Activities. (Appendix C [c]).

The final activity which I planned was designed to investigate how far the children could create a story of their own to illustrate what they thought to be an important facet of life. This was to discover if the children were able to perceive the particular function of a story as possessing a didactic purpose, as reflected in some Biblical stories, rather than their understanding remaining confined within literalist interpretations. The latter perceive stories as being necessarily historically true, such as described by Goldman, and thereby likely to be discarded later as 'rationally untenable' when 'natural logical-scientific thinking' is possible (1964: 114/115; 220/244).

Their task was this. Could anyone think of a good way of helping younger children learn what they themselves had understood about a certain lesson? Simon suggested writing a story, but Claire had a different idea. She stated that nearly everybody hated assemblies (that is, collective worship sessions) so would it be a good idea to write plays to perform when the younger children - especially infants - were there. When I asked

why assemblies were unpopular, the overall view was that they were always the same and that the stories read 'didn't really have anything to do with you'.

The children organised themselves into working groups in order to produce a play for collective worship. Little guidance was given, except for me to remind them that the play had to be to teach the younger ones something which they thought was important.

The criteria against which I intended to assess the children's work were as follows:

- * The extent to which the children were able to apply their skills in the use of metaphor to a specific task;
- * how far they were able to give their plays some didactic purpose;
- * the extent to which they drew upon personal interests and experiences for the content of their plays;
- * the meaning which they attributed to their plays and why they thought it was important.

b) Data Presentation and Analysis.

The plays which the children wrote are given below, and in the following section, with their explanations which were given when they read it through to me later. The original scripts are included in Appendix C [d] and [e].

- i) Lisa, Margaret, Claire, and David.

The Howl on the Hillside

(the youngest might not
be the weakest).

- Father I am going out with Ben to mind the sheep, dear.
- Mother OK, John, but don't be long because the dinner is nearly ready.
- Young son Please, father, can I go?
- Mother Sorry son, not tonight! Come on, hurry up, its cold.
- Wolf (a wolf howling in the background - she kills Ben).
- Father Sorry son, but Ben is dead.
- Young son No, he couldn't be: there must have been some mistake!
- Mother No, son, I saw it with my own eyes.
- Young son Right then, I won't take it any longer.
- Mother Where are you going, Sam?
- Young son You will find out. I'll come for you, you big bully.
- Wolf (Tries to scare Sam: she howls and dies)
- Mother I am very proud of you, son. Now go to bed and I will make your favourite supper tomorrow night.
- Young son OK, then mother. Goodnight everybody!

Merely a quick read of the children's work would not justify the thought which had been given to producing the script of this short play. This was the first occasion when the children had been asked to write a play and the way in which they presented

the text was ambiguous. However, after they had explained their ideas to me it was obvious that they had a very clear purpose in mind. The difficulties for the reader include:

- * they were unsure of how to list the players: whether to use their 'play names' or the real names of the children taking part;
- * they did not think of listing all the characters, or making clear who the various children were pretending to be;
- * stage directions were missing.

However, discussions with the children soon cleared up all of my initial queries. They told me that they had noticed from stories in their reading books how the youngest son of a family - often called Hans - is thought to be stupid, and yet it is nearly always him who wins in the end - something like Jack in the Beanstalk! Their play was to try to teach people that the youngest person in the family could well be the bravest or cleverest.

To make this point they decided to put the story in a background which young children would be able to understand - they thought sheep, shepherds and a wolf would be exciting for them, and yet not too frightening. As Lisa pointed out, the young son was not allowed to go, but it was he who managed to kill the wolf later, after their father had let the elder son die. They hoped the play would help younger children in families to feel stronger - that is, more confident. They asserted that this was the meaning of the play, and its purpose was to help the little ones in school learn. Margaret made the point, upon my

asking if they had used any metaphors in their play, that the play was 'one big metaphor about people and their families'. The youngest child, in their experience, was always 'bossed about' as if s/he did not know anything.

I asked the children whether they thought anything in the story was very sad: they agreed that the death of a child fell into this description, but made the point that sometimes 'you have to have a sacrifice' to teach people a lesson: the melodramatic nature of the play made this point clearly! The children's limited writing skills, at this time, hindered them in communicating their understanding of the pathos of the situation which they were, nevertheless, able to discuss with me. This is an important aspect of writing produced by people (either child or adult) who find the whole writing process somewhat laborious: their limited skills in this direction should not be taken to indicate equally limited levels of thought and sympathy!

This play, then, was about wisdom. I asked the children what had given them the idea and Lisa pointed out that it was something like David the Shepherd Boy in the Bible: everybody agreed with this, and Brian said 'that is what things are like, but often the weak, or young, person is really the cleverest'. A few of the children admitted to being treated as though they were babies by their older brothers and sisters - and sometimes by their families - and felt resentful. Teachings which point out

the error of such stereotyping by older people of younger children is, therefore, welcomed by the latter.

ii) Group Two: Sarah, Kelly and Kerry. The Coloured Man.

(Every Person is Equal, Regardless of Colour).

Cast: Coloured Man
Crowd
Priest.

Scene: A coloured man walks into a crowd. All are on their way to church.

Crowd. Huh, you can't go to church. You're different: you're not one of us. Go away. You have no right to be here.

Scene. But the priest hears them and says

Priest. He has just as much right as you. We are all God's children. We were all created by him. No matter what creed or colour.

When I discussed this play with its authors, they told me their idea had come from an incident in the playground, where a black child had been bullied. In addition, several children, on reading the script of the play, mentioned it had been Asian shopkeepers whose properties had been petrol-bombed during civil riots on the estate where they lived.

They remembered hearing mentioned in collective worship sessions the teaching that the colour of people's skin was not important: what mattered was what kind of person you were inside. Brian pointed out that he remembered, in addition, the words of a hymn called 'The Board is Black, the Chalk is White': it did not matter what colour you were: God had made everyone.

These teachings had been effective in helping the children reflect on racist issues, and they had been able to express their values creatively.

8.07 Data Interpretation: Children's Creative Writing.

As before, the ability of the children to engage creatively with metaphor in order to express their developing values and argue for the reality of certain moral principles demonstrated that children's potential for both creating and understanding stories as a means of communicating an insight far exceeded the parameters suggested by Goldman (1964: 242).

The children were able to apply their skills in the use of novel metaphor to a specific task and with a didactic purpose, which they were motivated to do because their work had been given a purpose: it was to teach younger children something important.

The interests and experiences of the children in their choice of subject were important, and their existing values were expressed throughout their work. It is thus found racism was condemned because of belief in fairness and equality, whilst assumptions indicating younger people are weaker were questioned. Later discussion with the children, as provided above, indicated their capacity for arguing for the values expressed and a sophisticated ability to reason and make judgements.

There was no evidence that either the theories of Goldman concerning basic literalism among pre-adolescent children (1964;

1965) or those of Piaget (1959 edition: 139) concerning their apparent inability to understand and engage with symbolic language provide a reliable guide for teachers when formulating schemes of work in the curriculum area of Religious Education. Indeed, it is suggested that these researches seriously underestimate the true potential of pre-adolescent children for reflection and their ability to communicate their ideas symbolically.

In addition, the data did not provide any support for Donaldson's theory concerning distinctions between 'socially embedded learning' and 'disembedded learning': rather, learning will be effective when new ideas can be seen to relate to existing conceptual metaphoric structures for thought, and these are based on experience. Networks will continually extend to embrace new insights and perceived relationships.

8.08 Summary: Interpreting Religious Metaphors.

Interpretations of data presented in this chapter have indicated that pre-adolescent children's potential for understanding religious writing and the insights which underlie it exceed considerably the conclusions reached by Goldman (1964; 1965). However, their capacity to engage with the use of novel metaphor - both in interpreting and creating - are closely connected to both appropriateness of content and relevance of context. If these latter are present in the materials provided,

the children can work successfully, beyond what could be inappropriate, literal levels of interpretation.

There remained one further important area of Religious Education which was investigated by Goldman (1964: 100), where he asserted that crude anthropomorphism persisted until 'the first two years of secondary schooling'. Development of concepts of God is central to any understanding of religion because it is often the concept of God which forms the first thoughts of the child when considering questions associated with the creation of the universe and origins of life. It is to an investigation of this topic that the final chapter moves.

CHAPTER NINE

DATA PRESENTATION: CHILDREN DEVELOPING CONCEPTS OF GOD

9.00 Introduction.

This chapter comprises an enquiry into children's ability to understand teachings concerning the fatherhood of God. In his researches, Goldman asserted that crude anthropomorphism was intrinsic to childhood, rather than being learnt and in addition:

The language of the Bible and the authoritative weight of scripture reinforce the physical interpretations children will make about the nature of God.

(Goldman 1964: 99).

Since concepts of God are fundamental for understanding religion, it was considered important to examine this claim of Goldman:

*) that Biblical language reinforced crude anthropomorphism.

Preceding chapters have shown how children of ten years of age were able to learn how to create and interpret novel metaphors, including those applied within religious contexts. Goldman's claim that children's religious thinking before the approximate age of thirteen years was confined within literal thought was therefore found to be an unreliable guide for assessing capacity for understanding Biblical narrative (Goldman: 1964: 242).

This chapter investigates the extent to which this capacity for working with novel metaphors could be extended to work concerning concepts of God, beginning with an overview of

interpretations of expressions concerning the fatherhood of God which emphasize relationship aspects of the metaphor.

9.01 Theoretical Background to the Data Collection: the Christian Concept of God as Father.

a) *The Metaphor of 'Father' for God.*

The use of the noun 'father' when speaking or reading about God is doubtlessly one of the most commonly used metaphors in Christian scripture, with origins in Judaic traditions (Eichrodt 1962: 59). In addition it is also a metaphor which, when understood to point towards a physical father, leads to a host of problems which are extremely difficult to eradicate later (Watson 1987: 164/169).

The metaphor of the 'fatherhood of God' draws together several metaphors from Judaic traditions, and unites them within a personal framework (Eichrodt 1961: 206/210). Thus, to envisage God as father is to endow seemingly impersonal attributes of the deity with characteristics which are evocative of one able to sustain one in time of need and provide for basic needs. Hence the metaphor God as father is able to provide:

* stability: God is the creator, who is responsible for our creation and who accepts responsibility for our infancy and the environment against which it develops. One is justified, therefore, to trust in God the Father (Genesis 1 vv 1/2; Psalm 42; Psalm 45).

* security and preservation: God's reality is secure, as a fortress against all manner of dangers and adversities; He is our protector (Psalm 16; Matthew 8 vv 24/29; John 10 vv 11/16).

* relationship: works within a relationship which accepts the reality of human shortcomings because of immaturity and offers forgiveness and guidance, in the light of the power (grace) given for individuals to accept this forgiveness (Luke 15, vv 11/32; Mark 8 vv 22/25).

These aspects of fatherhood can be used to help pupils understand the metaphor of God's Fatherhood because they are closely connected with both the needs of the children - regarding, for example, security and stability - and the structuring process which underlies their thought and conceptual development. Indeed, developing children's understanding of concepts of God as found in scriptures could usefully form the main focus for work done in primary schools throughout Key Stages One and Two if they are able to develop thought beyond crude anthropomorphism. This is because adequate concepts of this nature are essential if understanding of religion is to be enabled to proceed beyond very early stages of thought.

b) *The Fatherhood of God: Problems in Interpretation.*

Unfortunately teaching in primary schools concerning the central Christian concept of God as Father has been generally spectacularly unsuccessful in Religious Education. Indeed, it could well be that failure to recognise pupils' ability to engage

with novel metaphor has resulted in a lack of direct teaching, and therefore encouraged, by omission, developments associated with crude anthropomorphism.

Children's concepts of God is a well known research area, and all those who have worked in this field agree that the metaphor becomes confined within narrow, crude anthropomorphism which creates a barrier to reflection on the theological uses of the metaphor: God is thought of as an old man in the sky: ((Rogers, 1983, Loukes, 1961 Gates, 1976, Watson, 1972, Heller, 1986, Spain, 1978; Ashton 1989). There is evidence that ideas of this type existed among early people of ancient Judaic traditions, who 'acquired a most inadequate conception of the divine supremacy', no doubt because very early ideas remained undeveloped (Eichrodt 1961: 211). Eichrodt continues by asserting that this did not necessarily create problems for the people living at that time: the development of the spiritual aspects of God were developed within the Christian faith, where 'it was easy to accommodate the recognition of God's spiritual nature without prejudice to his immediacy in religion' (Eichrodt 1962: 212).

However simplistic, crude anthropomorphic concepts of God are far from adequate for modern times, where children are able to acquire impressive degrees of sophistication with modern technology. The problem is that people are not normally aware of their ignorance concerning religion, in contrast to their

awareness of lack of subject knowledge in other areas, for example, in quantum physics or history (Watson 1987: 106).

Petrovich has shown that this crude anthropomorphism is, contrary to Piagetian theory, a concept which, rather than being intrinsic to childhood, is something learnt from adults (Petrovich 1988). It is also a misunderstanding of the metaphor and is unhelpful in enabling pupils begin to understand to what the metaphor of God's fatherhood refers: that is to the special relationship He has with human beings whom He has created, and for whom He accepts responsibility throughout the journey from infancy to spiritual maturity.

It was insight into this special relationship with God which was significant for Julian of Norwich, the mystical writer active during the fourteenth century. Julian accommodated the fatherhood of God with motherhood, brotherhood and union with a husband. She writes:

In this way I saw that God was rejoicing to be our Father; rejoicing too to be our Mother; and rejoicing yet again to be our true Husband, with our soul his beloved wife. And Christ rejoices to be our Brother, and our Saviour too. (Julian of Norwich: 1982 edition: 151).

Each metaphor exemplifies and develops the others: the special relationship represented by each metaphor offers the possibility of insight into God's relationship with all those whom he has created to deepen towards maturity during life's progress through successive experiences and the insights inspired by them.

Theories formulated within the narrow limits set by empirical positivism would deny the validity of metaphor in reaching towards truth. Yet, as illustrated throughout this thesis, thinking of this kind is innate to the human mind: indeed it is through creative thought and the reinterpretation of metaphors that insights are enabled to deepen and perception of relationships sharpen. The task of education, specifically language education, can be usefully thought of as a means by which young people can be helped to explore their growing insights creatively, using them to test ideas against the interpretation of experience which itself provides evidence for analysis.

There is, indeed, evidence that misunderstanding of what it is with which religion attempts to deal is so deep that few people actually know the misunderstanding exists. That God is an old man in the sky and this belief may be demonstrated by pointing towards great works of art - such as Michelangelo's figures on the Sistine Chapel ceiling - has permeated the thinking of many people and come accepted as all that religion has to offer. Such lack of understanding of the use of religious symbol and metaphor has two opposite but related main effects:

1. The idea of God as man is accepted and defended dogmatically.

2. The whole idea of religion is rejected on the basis of the misunderstanding, in that modern scientific studies have proved religion to be false - no astronaut has seen God whilst hurtling through space in modern spacecraft.

Both of these involve immersion in error and ignorance. The much longer term results can, however, be really serious and damaging. Whilst the possibility that total rejection of religion on the basis of crude anthropomorphism is extremely likely, perhaps an even more negative result is the danger that pupils will be led to believe that all life has to offer is confined to the material world - that is, all that is available to the five senses - and its associated values.

c) *Children's Experience: the 'Fatherhood of God Metaphor.*

The use of the metaphor 'father' for God offers much scope for helping children's conceptual development concerning the parental role to be understood in a positive manner. Work in language has much educational significance here, because very often children can be found to have developed concepts of fatherhood which could well be at variance with the Christian model (Watson 1972: 226/229). Indeed, some children can be perceived as struggling to reconcile the image of an ideal human father with their actual experience.

For example, Kelly (Appendix A) described how her mother constantly battled with her father, the latter being content to sit at home watching videos whilst his wife worked to raise money for the household. The physical violence which she witnessed added to her dilemma, causing her to state 'I still love my dad but I don't go to see him'.

In a similar way Kerry (Appendix A) described how she had seen her father bully her elder sister when the latter insisted on wearing a leather jacket for an evening out with her friends, whilst Jennie (Appendix A) wrote about an occasion when she saw her father attack another man, causing her so much distress that her father apparently felt compelled to try to justify his violence to her. Karl (Appendix A) observed how he had once discovered that his father was very short-tempered, whilst Craig (Appendix A) considered his father to be taunting him on account of his medical problem: this experience was summed up in the following sentence: 'I think all dads should be nice and shouldn't pick on their children'.

Andrea had very depressing experiences of fathers. For this child, a 'dad' was a casual visitor to the home who was frequently replaced by another male figure. The result was that she thought 'dads are horrible and stupid, and mams are all right but they are not much better than dads' (Appendix A).

Children will rebel fiercely in the face of what they consider to be inappropriate parental behaviour (Sarah: Appendix A) and in addition they will sometimes try to intervene in the parental dispute (Sean and Kelly: Appendix A).

In the light of such negative experiences as these, how can Religious Education help the children to understand 'fatherhood' - or indeed 'parenthood' in a more positive fashion? Some purposes in attempting to do so include helping break 'vicious

circles of outlook' which encourage negative attitudes to life generally and in promoting growth towards maturity by encouraging reflection on distinctions between the ideal and the actual (Watson 1972: 228). By examining the Christian understanding of God's fatherhood children can be encouraged to investigate the human need for security, and teachings which show how God is understood as the personification of this: the need for security is well within the experience of all (Appendix A). In this way, insights of people who lived in societies during times quite different from the present can be opened up for discussion and reflection.

The following sections describe work done with children which was based on investigating the idea that God can be understood as a source of support and comfort throughout life.

9.02 Data Analysis: "The Lord is My Shepherd".

a) Work for the children was planned particularly in the context of God being a partner in a sustaining relationship. The data was collected as a result of classroom work carried out over four weeks; its purpose was to discover how far the informants were able to transfer their earlier work on metaphors to new material. The criteria against which the data was to be assessed were:

1. the capacity of the children to relate to the idea of God being a source of comfort and security in life;
2. the ability of the children to perceive that the relationship aspect of God is central to informing everyday events of life;

3. their ability to relate new material to existing conceptual metaphors, and thereby develop and deepen perception.

The children's scripts are provided in Appendix D (a). They had shown that they had been able to offer interpretations of the Healing of the Blind Man (8.05) in a variety of ways, all of which had been soundly reasoned and presented. I now wished to investigate how they would attempt to relate to a psalm, because the latter are written in a quite different style to the New Testament miracles and parables. For example, the Healing of the Blind Man miracle was told in such a way that could suggest it was a 'straight' story, whilst the psalm, in contrast, consists largely of statements which comprise personal insights into God's goodness. The medium of poetry had been effective earlier (6.03) in encouraging the children to express their own insights and reactions to human dilemma, making use of metaphor. Would the children respond to the psalm as an expression of insight, or as a straight story without a didactic purpose? Would they be able to perceive any meaning in it, or would they, as theorised by Piaget, simply look for patterns among the phrases and words? (pages 73).

The children were given freedom to choose working groups, each of which was given the text of Psalm 23, 'The Lord is My Shepherd'. Information provided was confined to telling them the word psalm meant a song, or hymn from a book in the Bible of that name. Many of the psalms were thought to have been written by David the Shepherd Boy who had killed the giant Goliath.

They were given the task of discussing the psalm in order to arrive at answers to the following questions:

- * What do you think the writing is about?
- * Have you any ideas about what the psalm might be trying to teach? The working groups were given fifteen minutes to discuss and write their answers. The following are transcripts of their work.

1. (Linda and Karl) The Lord is my shepherd I shall not want means that the Lord is like a shepherd. The song is a gentle and peaceful song. I will fear no evil for thou art with me means don't be afraid or worried because God will be with you. And I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever means stick to God at all times, stick with him for ever. The Lord is like a shepherd because he looks after us. Many people like this psalm because it makes them enjoy the good things in life. The whole psalm is a metaphor.

2. (Jennie and Simon) The song is very nice to hear and very gentle. By the words I felt very happy for the song. I walk through the valley of the shadow of death means that God is with me if I am in danger, so it is all right. The Lord is my shepherd means that God is like a shepherd and a shepherd looks after sheep like God looks after people and countries and also pets in the R.S.P.C.A.

3. (Lisa, James, John and Kelly) The song is very nice to hear. It has a very nice gentle feeling. The line in the song that said I will fear no evil means I am not scared of evil. The valley of the shadow of death means God is with me all the time and if I am in danger I will be all right.

4. (Brian, Andrew and Margaret). My cup runneth over is a metaphor. It means I have got too much. Another metaphor is the Lord is my Shepherd. It means God is like a shepherd in some ways but not in others. For thou art with me is a metaphor and it means the power of God is with him. This psalm gives a feeling of all the good things in life.

5. (Sarah, Kerry and Paul). The Lord is my Shepherd means that God looks after people just like a shepherd looks after sheep. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures means that God is peaceful. He leadeth me beside the still waters means that you needn't worry when God is around. I will fear no evil for thou

are with me means that God is in the person who wrote the psalm. It is a gentle psalm and a hymn has been written about it.

6. (Claire, Sean and Andrea). The Lord is my Shepherd means God is like a shepherd and like a shepherd looks after sheep God looks after people. He maketh me to lie down beside green pastures and he leadeth me beside the still waters means God is like still waters and green pastures and it makes you think of peace. My cup runneth over means God has given you everything you want and he cannot give any more.

There was no doubt that all the groups had identified metaphors within this psalm and had offered reasonable interpretations of them. The idea of God offering help and support was understood in some depth.

- * the tone of the psalm, expressed by several children as being 'peaceful' or 'gentle' seemed to appeal to the affective aspects of their thinking. This resulted in feelings of empathy for the ideas expressed: peace, safety and contentment are values which can be continually noticed as central to the kind of life to which they aspired (Appendix A).
- * many of the metaphors used in the psalm emanate from the natural world: still waters, green pastures, valleys, and these have been identified by Carl Jung as archetypes of the collective unconscious. They have been found to be extremely stimulating images for children, as they are for adults (Ashton 1989).
- * There were a number of aspects of the psalm which had proved to be particularly successful: in particular, the pastoral setting was attractive to their imaginations, and indicative

perhaps of times when they themselves had enjoyed being out of doors.

- * All of the children had responded to the general tone of the psalm, that of movement and the meeting of one kind of hurdle or another to progress on the journey. The notion of God being present in a mystical, unseen way, providing guidance was well within their perception.
- * Several values arose in the discussion provided by the children: the desire for safety, security and general well-being. They could perceive clearly that the psalm was teaching all these could be found in a relationship with God.
- * The children did not express any crude anthropomorphic concepts of God.

Of particular significance was the way in which the children reacted to the tone of the psalm: they were able to respond warmly to the effect the words had for them. Although the physical setting of the psalm was obviously remote from their actual experience, the general experience was familiar: that of travelling and feeling supported in one way or another. The psalm seemed to present a cameo of their experiences. The addition of concepts of God offered a new dimension for reflection.

9.03: Data Interpretation: "The Lord is My Shepherd".

The above data analysis provides evidence that children's ability, at least by the age of ten years, allows them to learn

to understand the metaphor of God's fatherhood in ways which avoid the problem of crude anthropomorphism.

Theories of Goldman (1964: 234) indicated that 'the emphasis is much more upon supernatural than superhuman concepts of the deity'. However, the data elicited from the informants found no support for either this assertion or others concerning crude anthropomorphism (Goldman 1964: 87/92).

By way of contrast, the children's ideas indicated the following.

1. They were able to identify with the metaphor of God's fatherhood in that faith in God's presence ensured feelings of peace, comfort and the provision of everything that could be needed.

2. The children recognised the metaphor of "shepherd" and based their interpretations of it on existing knowledge and experience: thus the metaphor could be seen actively extending creative ideas and insights. For example, one group described this insight as follows:

The Lord is my shepherd means that God is like a shepherd and a shepherd looks after sheep like God looks after people.

3. The children were able to identify the tone of the psalm as being associated with gentleness: "it has a nice gentle feeling" and "it is a gentle psalm and a hymn has been written about it".

4. The children were able to interpret the metaphor "my cup runneth over" as being concerned with God's benevolence.

Goldman mentioned that between the ages of nine and fifteen pupils would see conflict between their simplistic ideas of God and their 'growing awareness of scientific matters' (Goldman 1964: 235). The point made by Goldman was that, since children were 'literalist' in thinking until at least thirteen years of age, they were unable to be taught to think of God in ways which were not crudely anthropomorphic. As language used to communicate ideas about God was largely poetic and metaphoric, it was not until the age of thirteen years that:

the adolescent is now in what I would call his religious stage of development, in which he is intellectually ready to apprehend what is the Christian faith.

(Goldman 1965: 49).

Criticism of the assumptions upon which assertions of this kind were based was provided earlier (pages 199/202; 204/214).

However, when Biblical material was selected according to its potential for contributing to the informants' reflections on their own experiences (chapter eight), an entirely different picture emerged.

They were acutely aware of the importance of such principles as kindness, peace and other positive aspects of life. These concepts, and the values associated with them, had grown from the children's daily lives and experiences. It is not, therefore,

possible to agree with Goldman's assertion that increased chronological age:

... liberates him from the triviality of so much childish thought. (Goldman 1964: 236)

This is because it is early childhood experiences which do so much to form foundations, both conceptually and linguistically, upon which later progress can be built.

The following section presents data which investigated the extent to which the informants were able to create narratives themselves concerning their insights into the divine-human relationship.

9.04 Data Analysis: Creative Writing.

a) *Introduction.*

Having investigated the children's reactions to both a miracle story (pages 237/239) and a psalm (pages 260/262), I wished to investigate the extent to which they could perceive a parable as a means of teaching about God's relationship with people.

By way of introduction, I introduced the children to the parable of the Prodigal Son. Time was given to class discussion, which ranged from what kind of sons the father had, whether the father had been right to allow his younger son to waste the money, and the fairness of celebrating his return home. The children were of the opinion that the father had been right

initially: as Sarah stated, 'everybody has to learn a lesson'. The children were divided about the father's response to the boy's return home: some thought he should have been made to work on the farm 'to teach him a lesson', whilst others thought the lesson had already been learnt.

We also discussed the idea of forgiveness: the children felt it was very difficult to forgive people, such as when your friend has just broken your new toy, and the point was made that you have to decide which is more valuable: a person or a toy. This had been the choice of the father: his young son or the money.

b) *Presentation of Data and Analysis.*

Following these discussions, the children were asked to write a story of their own, something like the Prodigal Son. The story was to teach others about God. They were given the choice of writing a story or a play at their own request. The following are examples of the material produced, with analysis. The children's scripts are provided in Appendix D [b].

Brian, Kerry and Jennie.

The Robbers: Sid is Forgiven.

Bob Lets go in that shop and steal the money.

Sid Yes, lets. You keep the man in the shop busy while I get the money.

Bob All right.

Bob Knock, knock. Hello, have you got a green ball?

Shopkeeper Yes, I'll just have a look.

Bob Right now, its your turn.

Sid (opens till) Come on, lets go. I've got the money.

Bob Lets go to my house and hide.

Sid I wish I had not done that.

Bob So do I.

Sid Let's go and replace the money.

Bob All right.

Sid Run in and put the money back Bob.

Bob Even if we hadn't put the money back God would have forgiven us.

Sid No, he would not.

Angel Yes, he would.

Sid Who said that?

Angel I did, Sid.

Sid Its an angel!

Angel Follow me to God. (They go to the centre of the room).

Jesus God wants to see you two.

God Sid, I would forgive you. Now go, and remember what I have said. Go off.

The children told me they got the idea for the play from all the muggings which took place in the streets near to school. Brian also pointed out that you often heard of muggings on the television and in the papers. Jennie said her grandmother was frightened to go out in the dark and only went to her club when her friend was calling for her. They then walked to the club and back together. That experiences of this nature occupy much of the mental energy of children, who worry about their relatives

and friends, cannot be doubted (Appendices A and B)). The children went on to tell me that they wished the muggers themselves did feel sorry later. Margaret said 'you never hear that they did', and stated that plays like theirs might help muggers to think hard about what they had done, and to feel sorry. It was for this reason that these children too felt their play was 'one big metaphor' and was true, even if a robber like Sid didn't usually feel sorry.

I asked the children from where they got the idea of God forgiving the robbers. They said it was like the story of the Good Samaritan in a way, but their ending was different because in Jesus' story the robbers never came back.

This group did perform their play for the school a week later. During rehearsals they pointed out that they had a problem. They reckoned it was fine to have an actor for Jesus, but if God was power, how would you show power on the stage? I pointed out to them that this was the problem everybody, including the people who wrote the Bible have, because even the word 'God' is not strong enough to describe what we mean. Jennie suggested that they could just have a voice for God, and that was probably the best they could do 'without confusing the infants'. I asked them if they thought God would have a voice and John, after a moment, put forward the idea, which was acceptable to everyone, that he had, but 'not a voice you can hear, like ours'.
Group 5: Paul, Simon, James, John and Janet.

The Graffiti Gang is Forgiven.

- Reader This is a story about four children, Sam short for Samantha, Nick short for Nicola, Joe and Steven.
- Nick I hate school and I don't believe in God. Graffiti is best.
- Sam Yes, it's great.
- Reader Nick and Sam had run away from school and they were going to meet Steven.
- Teacher I am sick of those two girls running away. (She sits on a chair).
- Nick Hello Steven. We've found a great wall. (they walk up to the wall).
- Steven I don't think I will go to school any more. Its rubbish. (Sam scratches head).
- Man from Council I am sick of painting over graffiti that the gang has done.
- Steven Wow! Who is that? (an angel appears).
- Angel Hello, I am an angel. Come with me and you will see Jesus Christ.
- Sam But why would he want to see us? We've been naughty.
- Angel You'll see; you'll see.
- Reader Meanwhile Mary and Joseph were thanking the shepherds for coming.
- Mary Thank you for coming to see my baby. (she shakes hands with the shepherds).
- Joseph Look! There are some children coming!
- Sam I still can't believe we are going to see Christ.
- Steven Look, we are here.
- Nick Oh, isn't he cute. I wish we had not been naughty and run away from school.
- God The children learned their lesson and never ran away

from school or did graffiti on the wall.

The everyday lives of the children have prominence in the story of this play: as outlined earlier (1.01) the housing estates where they lived were continually vandalised, and gangs of young people were constantly in trouble with the police. Of particular significance are the following points:

- * It became obvious that their ideas had been influenced particularly by school collective worship sessions, and information picked up from both school and home. Several children mentioned carols which they had remembered from Christmas time. The remarks confirmed that learning is certainly not confined to formal education;
- * There could be no doubt that these children were well aware that defacing public property was wrong, even if one was not caught: the possibility of discovery added zest and excitement to the game;
- * Playing truant from school was seen as a form of release, following which one was free to engage in activities which were forbidden: in effect, one misdemeanour created an aura of excitement which encouraged others.

When I asked the children the purpose of their play, they told me it was intended to put other children off doing wrong things. I asked why this was so: what difference would seeing Mary, Joseph and Jesus make? They said that would be proof that the story of Christmas was true, and that if Jesus had been real, then we should take notice and avoid being naughty.

Upon suggesting to the children that people seeing the play might just say 'But things like that never happen: there are no such things as angels', they were keen to tell me that angels 'and so on' were not really important. What really mattered was the message of the story: because Jesus was real, God was real too. People should take notice and not do things like writing on walls and staying off school 'because it doesn't matter'. The play was intended to help teach this to 'the little ones'.

9.05 Data Interpretation: Creative Writing.

There could be little doubt that the children in both groups understood fully the function of a parable: it was told to teach a specific point. In the case of both plays, the point suggested was that God had a relationship with people, and was prepared to intervene when necessary. In making these points, the children began by placing their play within the context of their everyday lives, but went beyond this by adding the dimension of God's concern for people, and this was the climax of the stories they wrote.

The context of everyday life comprises short adventures with friends: playing truant, mugging, defacing property: these are the kinds of activities with which young children are extremely familiar, comprising as they do the elements which make up the challenges which they either create for themselves or for each other.

To examine their experiences through the medium of religious teaching provides opportunities for children to reassess their values and develop existing concepts reflectively.

The inadequacies of the theories of Goldman for accounting for children's thinking in the field of religion concerns the inappropriateness of the context according to which his research materials were introduced. All three of the selected Biblical stories comprised material suitable for teaching, allowing the children to reflect on various layers of possible meanings. Goldman's error consisted of an inflexible approach to Biblical interpretation based on the rigid, literal/figurative distinctions developed within the climate of opinion encouraged by positivism (page 65). Because of this rigidity, the children had very limited chances of success.

9.06: Data Analysis: Examples of Subsequent Reflection.

a) *Introduction.*

The final section of this chapter concerns two stories written by children a few weeks later: this work was produced spontaneously during a free writing period when the children chose their own story titles: it arose as a result, undoubtedly, of reflections on the work described above, and is thus an example of the most important aspect of the teaching: the material presented had been of significance for the subsequent thought of the children and had provided them with an additional

focus within which to interpret experiences. The scripts are provided in Appendix D [c].

b) *Analysis of Children's Work.*

The first story to be analysed was written by Paul. The story is about good and evil, or the conflict between darkness and light. The writing style is fairly typical of a ten year old child, but shows early attempts to draw conclusions of a moralistic nature from the events which are described, and which can be seen to be symbolic: further discussion with the child revealed this to be so (see below).

The Dwarf and the Prince.

There was once a prince called Prince Henry. He was walking through the dark and gloomy wood when he heard a noise. It was like a piece of paper moving. A man jumped out of a tree with a newspaper and half an eating apple. He was being very grumpy because I was on his land. I had heard people say that they had seen him and he had darkness in him.

All of a sudden I saw some more of them. I went for a walk with them to know them better. I got to like him. He was called Doggal. He had a red cap on. (We) became good friends. He became good so I had brought light to him. I came to see him every day.

When discussing the story with the child, he told me that he didn't believe in dwarfs, but that did not matter. The story was really about darkness and light. The dwarf in the story was making himself miserable when there was no need. He suggested this could have been because the dwarf just 'got fed up' with doing the same kind of things every day.

However, to meet someone new can be exciting: he told me that the half an eating apple mentioned stood for the dwarf

himself: he was only half what he could have been, and it was their growing friendship which helped him to become a much nicer person. Therefore, the child felt he had helped someone in darkness move into light.

The second story was written by Linda. Again, it is reflective of detail from everyday life, but the child wove together these details with creative ideas which reflected her continuing reflections on differences between right and wrong, or darkness and light.

The Giant Dragon.

One night I was walking to my house. I saw a big green slimy tail coming from around the corner. I told my mam and my brother to put their trainers on. But of course my brother put his trainers on the wrong way round. I said to mam 'I will paddle my own canoe'. My mam said take care, the dragon is dangerous.

I saw my mam's chopping knife so I poked the dragon with the knife. This time I stuck it in the dragon's heart and the sword pierced its heart.

It means I was good and the dragon was bad.

Again discussion with the child left me in no doubt that all of the events of the story were symbolic: the dragon, in particular, was the personification of everything that was bad and evil, and the child saw herself as a kind of champion who had the power to destroy it.

In both cases, the stories illustrated symbolically specific experiences undergone by the children. They were minute examples of adventures experienced and successfully overcome, just as, in

a wider context, daily life for the adults (Cedarwood Centre undated) can be thought of as a series of challenges, each of which demanded decisions and actions and all are significant for perceptions of future survival, security and contentment.

Educationally, the value of the work done was that it contributed to the reflective process of the children. Although only two examples of this were actually committed to paper, it is probable that similar ideas and thoughts would permeate the consciousness of many of the children, causing them to ponder, question and evaluate within whichever conceptual framework provided them with a means to structure and make sense of their experiences and subsequent thought about them.

9.07 Data Interpretation: Examples of Subsequent Reflection.

When assessing the data collection the following aspects of the children's work were analysed.

They were able to apply their skills in the use of novel metaphor to specific tasks. Indeed, they had come across naturally the concept of an 'extended metaphor' (Caird 1988: 160), that is allegory.

They could present their ideas in ways which reflected a clear didactic purpose. They were clearly able to transfer their studies of parable and miracle stories to events of their own lives, both actual and imaginary, and the latter had a clear, didactic purpose.

The subject of their work was closely influenced by, and perhaps even caused by, personal and corporate neighbourhood experiences. The children were able to endow their compositions with meanings in which they believed and for which they were ready to argue.

As a result of the data analysis and interpretation, the findings of Goldman (1964; 1965) were found to be inadequate and unreliable as theories against which to plan Religious Education in the primary school curriculum. The reasons for these inadequacies can be found in the basic assumption which underlay the initial planning of Goldman's researches, and that assumption was that Piagetian theory itself provided a sure and certain means of understanding the world of the child.

9.08 Summary: Children's Ability to Develop Concepts of God.

The chapter examined critically theories of Goldman (1964; 1965) that pre-adolescent children were unable to develop concepts of God which were not crudely anthropomorphic in character. Interpretations of data, collected as a result of classroom work, indicated that, if Biblical material is presented to children within appropriate contexts which allow them to relate the material creatively to their own concerns and experiences, they are able to both appreciate and interpret Biblical narratives in ways which go far beyond crude anthropomorphism.

Their natural use of conventional metaphor in everyday language provided an invaluable base from which successful learning concerning the use of novel metaphor could develop.

Evidence was not found to support theories of Goldman (1964; 1965) that pre-adolescent children's religious thinking was confined to concrete experience. Conversely, development of understanding of relationship aspects of the metaphor of God as Father were well within their capacity, if supporting lesson material was selected appropriately for their interests and concerns and in suitable learning contexts.

CHAPTER TEN

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

10.00 Introduction.

In this final chapter, conclusions are drawn from the text of the thesis in three sections, namely the Theoretical Background, Implications for Children Learning and the need for reassessment of approaches to Religious Education in the primary school curriculum.

10.01 Theories of Metaphor.

The research provided analysis of data which

- * did not support the romantic view of childhood which dominated the theories of Piaget and Goldman;
- * supported contemporary theories of metaphor which indicate its significance for both thought and language use;
- * suggested that from an early age people are initiated into the use of conventional metaphor through ordinary daily discourse;
- * further suggested that the resulting conceptual metaphorical thought networks provided an important base from which to introduce ways of interpreting and creating novel metaphors;
- * indicated pre-adolescent school children's capacity for engaging with novel metaphor is much greater than formerly realised;

- * suggests increasing facility in the use of novel metaphor contributes heavily to the enrichment of thought and values development;
- * suggested the advisability of helping children diversify the range of conceptual metaphors according to which they structured perceptions of life and formulated personal values.

10.02 Implications for Children Learning.

The research provided examples of a community's use of conventional metaphor in daily discourse. As a result of this, it is suggested that a complete reassessment is required of the pre-adolescent child's capacity for engaging with metaphoric language. This reassessment should focus specifically on:

- * identification of existing conceptual metaphors in everyday language;
- * ways in which these conceptual metaphors could be diversified in order to help children avoid becoming trapped within narrow thinking modes, for example within conceptual metaphors such as 'Argument is War' or 'Life is a Game';
- * ways in which existing conceptual structures could be used to develop language use towards poetic, novel metaphor, for example by introducing appropriate literature in the curriculum. Use of literature which is rich

in symbols and metaphors contributes greatly to children's emotional development by enriching conceptual thought networks. This is achieved through the stimulation of new perceptions of relationships and patterns among experiences (Bettelheim 1991 edition: 3);

- * the importance of appropriate learning contexts: by planning lesson content within existing areas of interest and concern in ways which develop thought concerning them develop beyond everyday contexts and phenomena - both historically and geographically.

10.03 Religious Education.

It is suggested that a serious underestimation has been made of pre-adolescent children's capacity for religious thinking and understanding.

It is therefore suggested that an urgent reappraisal is required concerning:

- 1) pre-adolescent children's intellectual capacity for engaging with narratives from scripture (including that of World Religions) which will contribute positively to moral and spiritual development;
- 2) the need for curriculum development which incorporates present approaches, for example phenomenology and experiential learning, with lesson content focusing on scriptural teachings. By introducing pupils to religious teachings which offer opportunities for extending existing ideas into a

religious dimension, assumptions underlying present values and opinions could be explored from new perspectives. This should address the 'spiritual and moral' aspects of personal development as required by the Education Reform Act (1988)

(OFSTED 1994) both positively and effectively;

3) how to use children's existing conceptual, metaphoric thought networks as a basis for teaching them how to both interpret and create novel metaphors as presented in religious contexts;

4) ways by which children's concepts of God (as found throughout world religions) can be developed so crude anthropomorphism can be avoided or refined.

The scheme of work outlined in Appendix E combines insights concerning children's use of metaphorical networks in the process of thinking with their anxieties connected with security issues. This is an example of a possible new approach to curriculum development programmes.

10.04 General Conclusions.

The conclusions and recommendations offered above are done so not in attempts to provide answers or to offer 'facts' concerning the learning process. Dangers associated with notions that it is possible to reach either have been illustrated throughout the thesis by referring to the influences of positivism.

Attempts by Piaget and Goldman to provide scientific accounts of child development, based on empirical data, were shown to be based within romantic, evolutionary ideals which did not engage with childhood as reflected by the data collection. Although the thinking and learning processes are essentially creative, with conceptual metaphors dominating the way in which new experiences are accommodated within existing thought networks, to perceive childhood as being essentially romantic is misleading. Furthermore, it is stressed that the creativity of childhood (or of the human) is the very element of our psychology which has prevented empirical research methods from providing convincing theories of how people assimilate experiences, learn and develop concepts and values. As stressed throughout the thesis, the concerns and interests of childhood do not differ significantly in variety from those of adulthood. Responsibilities associated with the latter phase of life demand a different focus, but the way in which they are approached and discharged does not differ significantly from the ways in which children cope with friendships and other concerns. The emotional element, connected to needs of security and given form both creatively and individually, cannot be eliminated.

It is, nevertheless, suggested that research into child development, particularly intellectual development, is an area that requires much research by focusing on the metaphorical

nature of the thinking process, particularly the way in which conceptual metaphors influence the development of values and make their own distinctive contribution to the pursuit of knowledge. This thesis comprised an attempt to suggest possible ways forward.

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APPENDICES

BRYAN

My Eczema

It worries me because it might not go away. I have had it since I was a baby, last month and this month I have been to the doctors about six times so I have missed a lot of schooling because of my eczema. At school when people see it they get as far away as possible because they think they might catch it but that's not true. I have to take tablets ~~and~~ and put cream on. I have about five different kinds of cream yesterday I started bleeding so I had to stop of school.

APPENDIX A: Children's Scripts: 'Experiences and Concerns'.

BRIAN

I felt miserable when my rabbit died. When I got up in the morning I heard a knock on the door. I opened it - a boy said is that your rabbit he paraded to the middle of the road. I felt worried and a night because shawn broke a boys bike and the boys dad blamed me. One day I went to the shop to buy something I brought it home my sister broke it I felt disappointed. I bought a book at the book fair it was lost when my mom was painting my room I looked all over for it I could not find it anywhere. I was afraid when I was

APPENDIX A: Children's Scripts: 'Experiences and Concerns'.

PAUL

Feelings

I feel miserable when I am getting beat up off my big brother I cant do anything or he'll just do it even more to me. I feel bad-temperd when I am also getting beat up or always getting sent to the shop or people are annoying me when that happens I feel bad-temperd and upset. all the time this happens I feel as though I want to cry but I dont. when I am ill I feel my head is spinning round and round. and I want to be sick I also feel as though I am burning up in side me. when I feel nobody cares about youx me I think I am not wanted nobody does anything to cheer you up.

APPENDIX A: Children's Scripts: 'Experiences and Concerns'.

TOM

Parents

My dad has never done anything bad to me he has always backed me 100 hundred percent if I wanted to join a club I could, and if I wanted to go swimming I could.

My Mam has ~~can~~ never done ~~out~~ anything bad to me my mum and dad are both nice to me.

When I ~~was~~ was little I used to put a shoe next to the door and if the shoe or the door moved I searched the room with a cricket bat.

APPENDIX A: Children's Scripts: 'Experiences and Concerns'.

LISA

I WAS very worried when my dog got knocked over I was playing out and my dad and sister had went to get my NANA and they took the dog. They did not put a lead on the dog. When they got back my sister was getting out of the car and Toby my dog got out of the car too so my dad went into the house because my sister was getting him and Toby just kept on running and onto the main road then a car came and knocked him over so my sister ran home and told my dad and he took a towel and went and picked him up and my Mum, Dad and sister took him to the vets and I stayed at the next door neighbour's house I was very worried about my dog Toby.

APPENDIX A: Children's Scripts: 'Experiences and Concerns'.

SIMON

go out with Melonie and
 don't ^{want} my mam and dad
 to find out because they
 say I am too young to
 have a girlfriend.

Feelings

was miserable when I had
 nothing to do and then my mam
 tells me to wash the dishes.

When I was bad-tempered it was
 because my batteries ran out and
 my pinball game wouldn't work and
 none of my other games did because
 they nearly all take batteries as well
 as well as my pinball game.

was bored when nobody came
 out when I called on them
 then I have to go home and
 my mam has a film on and
 it is black and white or
 a film I've seen and I have
 nothing to do and I am
 restless.

APPENDIX A: Children's Scripts: 'Experiences and Concerns'.

LINDA

Once when I was in the infants, there was a girl who always had something horrible to say to me, and one day she said something that made me very angry. I felt like having a fight with her.

When I had a fight with my brother (Martin) I made him cry and I felt sorry for him.

When my mam turned the light off I felt afraid because a girl told me about a horror film. On Friday I was supposed to sleep at my nana's but my cousins asked if we could sleep at their house. Their mam said yes, my cousin Leanne said I hope you have a nice time with your mam, so I went in the back and slammed the door.

APPENDIX A : Children's Scripts: 'Experiences and Concerns'.

JAMES

When I was waiting for Ian while
he got ready I thought what's
he really like. In the house is
he moody or happy or greedy
When I was in bed I
thought what were all my
friends doing watching tv or
playing around the houses.
When I went down for Lee
I thought is he really stupid
are does he just put it
one.

APPENDIX A: Children's Scripts: 'Experiences and Concerns'.

JENNIE

My dad is kind and helps everyone he has his ups and downs but they all blow over soon he never hits people but one day he really made me cry me and my dad went to my nanas and my dad saw the man that punched my uncle and he ran out side and I ran after him and started to shout at him I ran and sat in the car my dad asked the other man why he did it my uncle has lots of stitches in his eye my dad started to hit him the other man started to cry and he ran away bleeding when we got back I ran up stairs my dad came up and said if someone was picking on your sister you would stick up for her and I said yes and we all went down stairs and my dad got us some sweets to watch a good film

APPENDIX A: Children's Scripts: 'Experiences and Concerns'.

JOHN

I was pleased when my dad made me a desk
for my computer. I felt pleased.

I felt like being kind when I had got a star
at school.

I was feeling excited when my mam and dad
bought a new car.

I was long for christmas to come. I felt like
that it would never come.

I was thrilled when I got a bike for
christmas.

I was attracted to a girl because she was
keep being kind to me.

I was enjoying a part I went to I
felt I was enjoying myself.

I felt happy when I got to the carnival
site and saw my friends. I was happy.

I felt amazed when a girl called Lisa from
Durlington said she would go out with me.

I done a good turn for an old
lady when she had fallen over.

I felt safe when my dad saw a boys man
because her son was threatening me.

I felt cared for when my mam looked after
me when I was ill.

APPENDIX A: Children's Scripts: 'Experiences and Concerns'.

JOHN

Feelings

My friend said some thing about my W. eyes
 inside my mind I felt like hitting him but I
 did not because he was only 6. - one in

When I was at the caravan at the weekend
 my girlfriend told a boy to shake some metal
 adders when I was going down the climbing
 rope she said it for a joke in my mind I thought
 that I should push the boy when I had got down
 I fell out with the girl later on I was crying
 because I felt stupid for falling out with her

When I was feeling ill I felt I might die
 when I had got wrong I felt that nobody
 cared about me and I felt like running away

I felt like starting a drink when I was thirsty

I felt like fighting when I was angry because
 someone had just kicked me

I felt spiteful when I did not let someone
 play with me I felt that something might happen
 to me

I was worried when a boy threatened me
 I felt he would come into my house and
 kill me

I felt that everybody was against me
 when I had lost my favourite game I
 felt sad

I was jealous when I had a game that
 I did not want to give my game friend
 in return for a game that I really wanted

APPENDIX A: Children's Scripts: 'Experiences and Concerns'.

DAVID

What I am thinking is music. Will I get my music tests right? Will I become a music teacher? My uncle and all of my family think I might get on T.V; on the young enterx entertainer of the year. I keep thinking that I will never get a piano. My mam says I might get one for my birthday or Christmas. everyone calls me a cissy because I like music. I just ignore them.

APPENDIX A: Children's Scripts: 'Experiences and Concerns'.

CLAIRE

Experiences What worries me.

I was very worried when I had lost my mums gold ear rings in and I took them out and I snapped one of them. And then I buried them in the soil.

I was also worried when I lost my nans wedding ring it was on the dressing table and I tried it on but it was too big and it fell off my finger. When I look at her rings it makes me scared. And she always says I have lost my wedding ring.

APPENDIX A: Children's Scripts: 'Experiences and Concerns'.

SEAN

When my parents fight i am worried
in case my dad leaves home. and i
tell them to stop it but it is no good
they must send me to bed and once when
they were fighting. i got scared i
thought what am i going to do and
i started crying and my mum told
my brother off. and he said he was
going to leave home and i didnt
want him to go. so i went upstairs
and he had all his clothes ready. so
i ran downstairs and told them
to stop arguing. they didnt
notice so i said my brother was
going to leave home. and they ran
upstairs. and told him not to
leave home. but i still love my
mum and dad and they made
friends again.

APPENDIX A: Children's Scripts: 'Experiences and Concerns'.

KELLY

I have no Grandparents they are all dead.
I only have my mam and dad. My Dad
is always arguing with my mam and he
beated me up by punching me because I
said that my mam could do without a
argument because she had a awful day at
work. Then when it was to much for her
she told my dad that she wanted a
seperation. So my dad has left he
has a flat in [unclear] I don't go
to see him because he hits me for
nothing. The house is up for sale and
when we move my mam and I will
be alone. And I'm glad because its
always my mam that decorated and
payed the bills and all my dad wanted
to do was watch his videos and listen to
his records. I still love my dad but
I don't go to see him.

APPENDIX A Children's Scripts: 'Experiences and Concerns'.

SARAH

My grandpa is great. He's always falling asleep. Loves gardening. Hates exercise. Just like me. He doesn't shout or get angry.

Dad

He shouts alot has a bad temper. and we always argue. He threatens to hit me and I tell him to go away or get lost. sometimes he's nice. - Sometimes he tries to help but I hate it.

Grāma

kind loving welltemperd quite funny. But she takes a fit if you say belly or bum.

Mum

kind Gentle loving Good temperd. tries to help us all the time. hates noise. takes the news. (YUK). likes to sleep like cooks and sows.

KERRY

When my parents fight I hate it because they shout. And my dad slams the livingroom door and turns the tv up high. But some times I like them because they leave and carry on. But when they fight they don't speak to each other at all. And me and my brothers and sisters have to take messages to each of them. Then one time my sister had just got a new leather jacket. And she was going to wear it for the roller rink but my dad said no. So she went stamping up stairs and my dad followed her up. Then he started to hit her down stairs and she nearly cried because he was hitting her so hard.

APPENDIX A Children's Scripts: 'Experiences and Concerns'.

MARK

Grand parents and parents

I Do not like my mam because she allways
shouts and argys whith me ~~and rips my art up when~~
~~I take it home~~ and when I have onle one toy
down she says put it back boy now in aready loud voise
and when my friends want to play with me
I say please can my friends in please and she said no.

APPENDIX A Children's Scripts: 'Experiences and Concerns'.

KARL

When I was little I had a huge bear.
and when my mother turned ~~down~~ turned the light ~~light~~
off it looked like it was coming towards me.
and one night it fell on me.
so the next night I slept under the bed
my mam said I was silly.

One day I was trying to keep
my balance on the curb when I hit a
lamb ~~lamb~~ lamp post and I had a
bump on my head my mam said it was
my own fault for day dreaming.

my father had a very short temper ~~so~~ I
found this ~~out~~ ^{out} when I was helping
him fix his bike I was playing with
my car when it hit a pile of
net my dad ~~shouted~~ ^{shouted} at me and sent
me ~~in~~ when I am at my grandpa's
he always lets me sit on the
hubs roof and the woman next door
gives me sweets and my grandma always
gives me biscuit, and then when my
mam comes to pick me up she
gets a video that we can watch

JANET

Grandparents and Parents

My granddad goes to the pub every
 Sunday and my grandma does
 like him going, because he has
 a friend and he says that
 he will hit ~~on~~ any body
 who get in his way and ^{badly}
 he treats his children ~~badly~~
 and he does not have
 his children any more ~~because~~
 because they are in a home
 Once he ~~foot~~ ~~foctend~~ ~~fentend~~ x
 Once he ~~foctend~~ to touch me,
 my two brothers and my sister
 I have not seen this man
 but I think I know who he
 is because there is a man
 who I pass about every morning
 when I go to school, and I
 go near him because I cross
 the road

CRAIG

Grandparents + Parents,

~~X~~ My dad ~~is called Brian~~ ^{My Dad} ~~he keeps~~
 keeps making fun of me because I have
 a problem. He keeps making calling me
 names because of it. My mam says
 that he is only joking, but I don't
 think so. He keeps on shouting at
~~to~~ me. I go to see ~~xxx~~ a
 specialist about my problem. She is
 called Dr Patel. I once told
 her that my dad keeps making
 fun of me and when we left
 the health ~~center~~ centre, my mam
 told me that I was quite
~~cheeky~~ cheeky. I want my dad
 to be nicer than he is. I
 think that all dad's should be
 nice and shouldnt pick on their
 children.

APPENDIX A Children's Scripts: 'Experiences and Concerns'.

ANDREA

my Dads are called
 Graham, Cordie, Steven and I will
 have a nother dad call Jeff
 one. I dont really like any of my
 dads because I only really ~~see~~ no
 one of them but he has left
 the house and is living in
 when I was little I was
 adopted and my real mam is my
 aunty. and my real aunty is my
 mam. my real dad is called
 George but I dont call him
 dad I call my uncle dad and
 I think dads a horrible and
 stupid stupid. and mam are all right
 but thoe not much better than
 dads.

I like to set my self a target
 and when a car comes I try to
 beat it to the lamppost or the
 gate. And if I am on a busy
 road I try to jump all the cars.
 And when Im walking along
 the street I keep one foot on
 the big stones and one foot on
 the small stones
 I am not bothered about
 if my mam knows.

APPENDIX A: Children's Scripts: 'Experiences and Concerns'.

ANDREW

Once I felt ill because I had a tummy ache
And I felt very very ill

Once I thought no one cared about me
and I was nearly crying

once I says I would steal but I
tried it and I got took to the
police station and when I was in the
police station. And I felt worried

once my friend was spiteful because
he wouldn't let me play anymore because
he didn't like me

Once I was disappointed because I
had no friends ~~and~~

once I felt dreaming

Some one was coming to see me and
I was dreaming they were going
to get me

APPENDIX A Children's Scripts: 'Experiences and Concerns'.

MARGARET

When I go to bed at night I have to have the door open so far past my light switch or other wise I can not get to sleep. I think that I am trapped in my room and that I can not get out. Because when we moved in that house what we are in now if I shutted the door from the inside it could not open by the inside you can only open the door by the out side but now that is fixed.

When I go to the shop if there is a car coming I say to my self I have to get past two or three houses befor that car does but if I dont I have to give my Sister any thing she wants out of my room, but some times I just give her any thing

APPENDIX B Children's Scripts: Creative Writing.

BRIAN

My early life
when I first went to school
I was playing about and I split
my tongue. I had to go home
later on my friend called on
me but I was still not
very well my mam bought me
a toy gun. I accidently shot
my sister in the eye two days
later when I woke up in
the morning I found out
that my dog had died
because of the cold. Three days
later I woke up in the
middle of the night I heard
a siren it was an ambulance
It came to my house
it took my mam to hospital.
the next day me and my
dad went to visit her

APPENDIX B: Children's Scripts: Creative Writing.

BRIAN

I worry about my next door neighbour. He is very old and needs an oxygen machine to breathe. His wife died 5 months ago. He lives by him self. His daughter and son in law visit him every day. He is called Tom. He is in hospital at the moment.

APPENDIX B : Children's Scripts: Creative Writing.

PAUL

Child A. The poem was written directly into the child's English book and copied immediately afterwards by the teacher.

Tramp Ted:

Ted was a tramp,
 Walking towards death's door.
 He remembers his family
 Which doesn't love him any more.
 He rummages in bins,
 Looking for tit-bits to eat:
 Anything he finds is a real treat.
 At night he can't get to sleep -
 There is no blanket.
 When at last he does die,
 The world around won't notice -
 Just as before.

APPENDIX B Children's Scripts: Creative Writing.

PAUL S.

Darkness

In darkness you wont be able to see anything at all some people are afraid of the dark because they think monsters only come out when its dark so if you come out when its dark you will be killed. IF it were not for the sun we would be in darkness. Some animals can see in the dark like bats. In darkness people attack you like robbers, killers, muggers, car thieves. you feel afraid because in darkness you can not see if you are going to be attacked. Darkness is a sign for evil and light is a sign for good. Black and red is evil and white is good.

APPENDIX B Children's Scripts: Creative Writing.

PAUL

Light

If it was not for light the whole world would be in total darkness. Nobody would be able to see. It is the sun that gives us light. Nobody is afraid of the light, some artists. Light hoses can save peoples lives when there at sea a light house guides them to shore.

When I was three I wondered what it ~~is~~ would be like to go to school. When ~~eventual~~ I had started school & my answer had been solved. I liked the people and the teachers and I thought they were the best. The first person my mam saw at the school out of the children was David Seymour. He was kind and did never fight.

APPENDIX B

Children's Scripts: Creative Writing.

MARGARET

She is Christmas

She is like Christmas,
She Sparkles and twinkles,
She is so like a little fairy,
On the top of a Christmas tree,
If she waves her magic wand,
All the little Christmas fairies will come to her,
Because she is the Queen and always will be.

APPENDIX B: Children's Scripts: Creative Writing.

LISA

I can remember my first friend at nursery. She had short dark hair and dark blue eyes but I can't remember her name. When I was three, just before I started nursery my cousin Kate was born. I used to stand on a chair and talk to her and when I said Katy she made funny noises in her throat but she didn't when anyone said Kate. I can remember that one day ~~the~~ at nursery I was painting a picture and my mam came for me but I wouldn't go home until I finished my picture and had to go to bed ten minutes earlier. The picture was a pink stripe with purple circles and green and blue dots all over the page.

APPENDIX Children's Scripts: Creative Writing.

SIMON

was worried when I first
 came to this school because
 did not see anybody in
 this school because I was not
 in this ^{Collingwood} nursery I was in
 Meadow well nursery. But when I
 come into Mrs ~~Six~~ Sykes class
 then I saw Ian Hall he was
 the only person I knew in
 the class I knew him because
 he was my friend that I
 used to play with and Lee
 and also David who lived
 in Ripley Avenue and Ian lived
 down the road from them
 and I lived in Borterey Grove.

I am worried about my dad
 because he is diabetic and if
 he does something like lift
 something really heavy it hurts
 him, and he can not work.

I am worried about my eyes
 because I am taking drops
 because my eyes are sore.

APPENDIX B Children's Scripts: Creative Writing.

SIMON

The light is a sign for good.
 Darkness is a way to show evil.
 The things for good is catching people
 who are getting chased by the
 police. helping elders by doing jobs
 for them. and taking hurt animals
 to the vet for people. Darkness is for
 the people who steal cars. People who
 steal elders handbags. People who shop-
 lift are just the same.

I argue with my brother
 when I am helping him
 and he shouts at me when
 I don't no wat he means
 when he asks me to do
 something.

APPENDIX B Children's Scripts: Creative Writing.

LINDA E.

Darkness makes me feel like, when you go into a dark place without the light on it makes you afraid. Darkness makes me think about evil things.

Darkness make's some people unhappy when they are blind because they can't see the light. Darkness is like somebody has died and their family ~~are~~ is in darkness and do~~s~~ not feel like ~~being~~ being happy.

I can remember before I went to school when I went to my Aunty Brenda's Golf - course because my mam worked there, I used to play golf. I remember the first day at school and I thought I would not make any friends but I made friends with - Sharon Lee, Michelle Fleming, Victoria Richardson ~~and~~ and Sarah Mcmaster. At playtime we played sea-serpents.

APPENDIX B (cont.) Children's Scripts: Creative Writing.

JAMES

11.7. (This poem was written directly into the child's English book: it was copied immediately afterwards by the teacher)

The Wind.

The wind is a monster
 Howling under the door,
 Creaking and creaking under
 The floor.

Over the trees with a big bang
 The wind goes roaring on.

APPENDIX B Children's Scripts: Creative Writing.

SIMON

Wild B. (These poems were written directly into the child's English book, and were copied immediately afterwards by the teacher).

Waiting for My Turn.

It's hard to wait for your turn,
To run to win or lose.

When you do lose you
Sit out and wait

And while you sit you

Shiver and shake,

Freezing. Suddenly you are

An ice-cube, standing

Quite still.

Tramp Ted.

His house is a doorway.

His bed a box.

He walks the streets searching

Bins for food.

If he gets money he

Spends it at the Pub.

His seat is a dump;

His search is for blankets

To keep him warm.

APPENDIX B Children's Scripts: Creative Writing.

JAMES

Before I went to school I was very excited about going but when I got there I didn't like it. I liked playing with the toys in

Sometimes in darkness people get scared because they can't see anything and they start to get scared because they hear spooky noises and see shadows. Darkness is the opposite to light and in darkness if you try to read sometimes you strain your eyes. Burglers wear dark clothes so they can hide themselves in the dark.

Light is the opposite of darkness and you don't get frightened when you're in light you can play out in light but when you sometimes go to bed during the day you don't get frightened because it's light.

APPENDIX B Children's Scripts: Creative Writing.

JOHN

I can remember when I was two my mam and dad thought I was blind and one day I was sitting in my chair and my grandma walked in and she thought if I could not see her I was blind. Then I gave a little smile and my grandma knew I could see her. I can also remember what I was thinking the day before I started Nursery. I thought what will it be like? I can remember the day when I went away in my tent on holiday. I remember when I was going to go in the infants I was worried because I would get kicked in or get wrong of Mr. Gay the headmaster or any other teachers.

Light is something that stops you from feeling afraid. Light can also be winning a football match or being your birthday or Christmas. Light can also mean when it is not dark.

APPENDIX B (2): Children's Scripts: Creative Writing.

DAVID

Some times darkness makes me feel afraid. In feel, safe, I some times think when I am scared. That darkness is a evil power. I get a feeling that God is a power like light. There is a feeling of darkness when something bad happens like someone dies or I am ill or when people call me about my eyes. Darkness can be a sign. Darkness is like being bored or it can be if you do not understand something. Light can be some one telling you and helping you. Darkness can also be when you do not want something of your own but you want something that your friend has got.

APPENDIX B (a): Children's Scripts: Creative Writing.

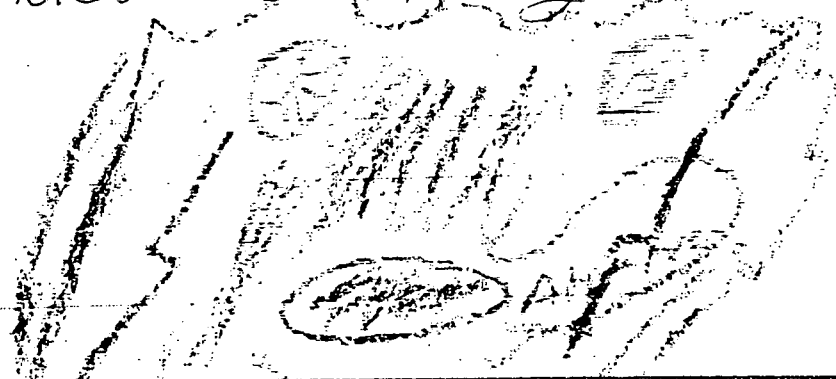
CLAIRE

When I was young I was very frightened about going to nursery. The first day when I had to go, I hid under my bed blankets and shook. When I got to nursery I wouldn't get out of the car, I finally got to the nursery and I did like it. When it came to the end of the week I wanted to go on Saturday and Sunday, but I couldn't.

I was very upset when my brother, Craig, nearly broke my train set. It started when I was playing with my train set, but my brother wanted to play with it with his friend who always broke things, I told my brother that only he could. My brother started to cry. He kicked the train-set and he nearly broke it. My train set is now in the dust.

SEAN

His face is like a thunderstorm
 His face is like a thunderstorm
 in the clouds making thunder
 in the sky
 it shakes the ground
 make me fall
 He is big and round
 and he bounces off the ground
 His face is red like fire
 he throws thunder balls at
 the ground
 As he fades away
 I look all over for
 holes in the ground.



APPENDIX B (cont): Children's Scripts: Creative Writing.

KELLY

~~Light and Darkness~~

Sometimes I am afraid of the dark because the shadows of my toys are on the wall and it is scary and the shadows of trees look like monsters and the trees are bashing of my windows and they make noises and sometimes I go under my blanket and sometimes my mam comes in my bedroom to see if I am asleep and I pretend

when I am walking down the street I think that someone is walking behind me and I think that they go to grab me and take me away and I ~~that~~ am in darkness

and when I get to bed and I am in bed and I go to the toilet ~~toilet~~ I go and when I come back I think someone is following me into my bedroom so I run in my bedroom and slam my door and I am in darkness

APPENDIX B (a): Children's Scripts: Creative Writing.

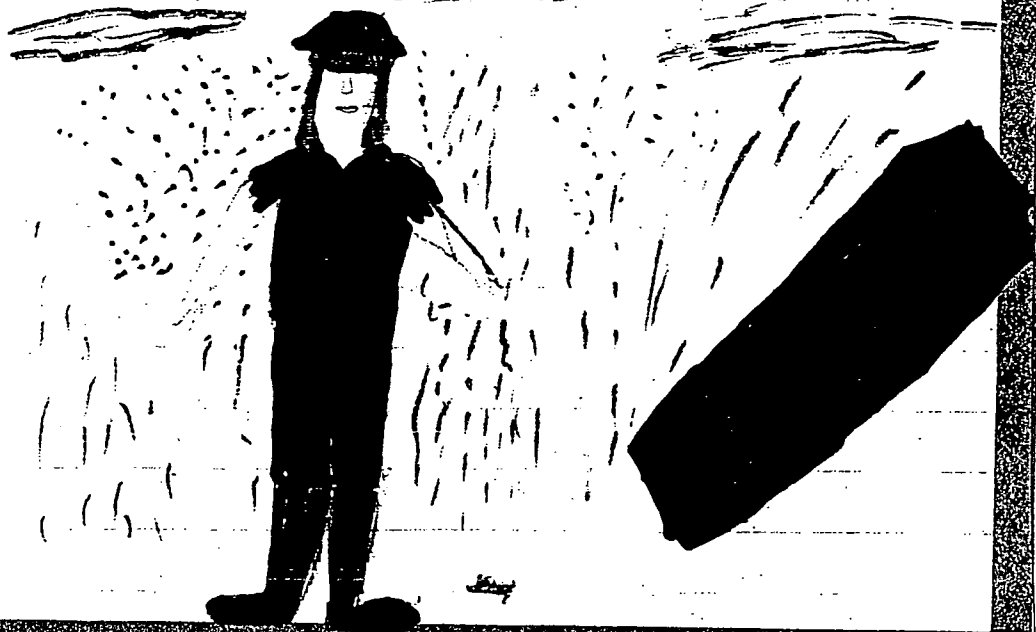
SARAH

His face is a thunderstorm
 His eyes are like the lightning flashing
 among

His voice is the thunder growling and
 roaring

His face is the thunderstorm evil and bad
 His smile is the sun hidden behind clouds
 never to be seen

His clothes are black as the night
 If you're to face him you'll freeze
 with fright.



APPENDIX B . . . Children's Scripts: Creative Writing.

SARAH

(the poem was written into the child's English book: it was copied immediately afterwards by the class teacher).

Lavender Lily.

Lily was a flower girl,
Her house was in the air,
Sweet lavender she picked gladly
Without a single care.
Her shop it was the streets;
After noon and after morn
Wearing her shoes, tattered and torn,
She walked to see her mother yew
Who once, in olden days, she knew.
Her bed was the moorland grass
On mountainside or in the pass.
Her fingers were the summer breeze,
Her voice like rustling in the trees.
Her face was pretty, like the swan,
Her sparkling eyes, a lake.
Her old white dress and purple shawl
She bought once from an ancient stall.
Her soul, God rest it, it has left -
People say 'it was for the best'.
They found her in the lavender field
With her flowers as her final shield.

the text was ambiguous. However, after they had explained their ideas to me it was obvious that they had a very clear purpose in mind. The difficulties for the reader include:

- * they were unsure of how to list the players: whether to use their 'play names' or the real names of the children taking part;
- * they did not think of listing all the characters, or making clear who the various children were pretending to be;
- * stage directions were missing.

However, discussions with the children soon cleared up all of my initial queries. They told me that they had noticed from stories in their reading books how the youngest son of a family - often called Hans - is thought to be stupid, and yet it is nearly always him who wins in the end - something like Jack in the Beanstalk! Their play was to try to teach people that the youngest person in the family could well be the bravest or cleverest.

To make this point they decided to put the story in a background which young children would be able to understand - they thought sheep, shepherds and a wolf would be exciting for them, and yet not too frightening. As Lisa pointed out, the young son was not allowed to go, but it was he who managed to kill the wolf later, after their father had let the elder son die. They hoped the play would help younger children in families to feel stronger - that is, more confident. They asserted that this was the meaning of the play, and its purpose was to help the little ones in school learn. Margaret made the point, upon my

APPENDIX B Children's Scripts: Creative Writing.

KERRY M.

Before I came to school
I thought the teachers were
very strict but they were
not. I can remember I
couldn't say e I said
a. Once I went to a zoo
with my mam I was
smighted.

TOM

his face is a thunderstorm
 he was very angry
 you could see the devil in his face
 he didn't want help
 when he was old
 because he was bitter
 but he'd had know
 he's kind & loyal
 to rest
 and God had granted
 meaning his rest

The Closed door

When they found that Jesus had
 gone the hand of the devil
 reached deep down inside and took there
 hope. That night a man appeared
 and they saw it was Jesus
 so they went into the temple how to
 take in peace

APPENDIX B : Children's Scripts: Creative Writing.

KARL

Under standing
When the Desiples found out the lord
Was alive the devil came out and love came
in and new life started to grow in side
them all.

APPENDIX B (a): Children's Scripts: Creative Writing.

MARK:

When I was going to start the infant
I thought about what it would be like
the next day and I was going
to school I thought what friends I
would make and I was worried
in case I would get beat up
by some bully's then thought what
my teacher who would be like
and what her name would be when I
was walking to school I thought who the
class would be like.

APPENDIX B Children's Scripts: Creative Writing.

JENNIE².

my dad always drinks and he
 also smokes forty tabs in a
 day. When he gets drunk he
 starts shouting. I also worry a
 lot about my grandad and
 grandmother. I worry every day
 when I come home from school
 when I walk down my street
 I usually get chased of older
 people than me. My dad and my
 older brother argue and fight
 all the time.

At night time I think that
 my teddys are protective
 but when my mam turns
 my life light of I think they
 are going to get my like
 my dusty bin I thought it
 was looking and saying
 Im coming to gonna get
 you I like to tell my
 parents because we can
 have a good laugh about

APPENDIX B : Children's Scripts: Creative Writing.

KARL P.

my Dad will not leave the
 house. Because he only ones me
 with him all of the time
 and every where he goes. I have
 got to go. I like my dad
 and when he comes from work
 he gives ^{me} ~~my~~ two pounds every
 day and. I still have some money
 the next day and my dad give
 me two pounds last night. and
 I have still got a pound left
 So then. I will have three pounds
 tonight

APPENDIX B Children's Scripts: Creative Writing.

LISA

When I am lonely Darkness is in
 my head all the time. Darkness
 comes when I do not feel very well
 or when it is quiet. Darkness comes
 when I am in bed and I have no
 one to talk to. Darkness comes
 when I am reading books also when
 watching television because I am
 bored most times. Television is
 not very nice because the films
 are always about cowboys and
 Darkness comes to my head every
 time. When it is dark and I go
 past a bush I think there is some
 one going to jump out. Darkness
 is like when a car is killed and
 also been horrible to each ^{each} other
 and fighten with other
 people. Darkness can be when
 some one dies in your family
 because they have been in Darkness
 all there ^{life} lives.

Appendix B: Children's Scripts: Creative Writing.

ANDREW

My nana died and I was in
Darkness

I went to the shop and I was
in DARKNESS BECAUSE I LOOKED
and my Dad was gone.

one day I was playing with
my friend then I looked and he
was gone.

when I went in the house I
told my friend to wait and when
I came back out he was gone.

APPENDIX B: Children's Scripts: Creative Writing.

MARGARET

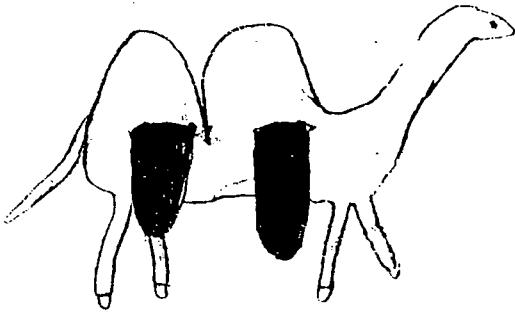
Once I was at my friends house and we
 were listening to some music and it was
 about nighttime and I was sitting
 on the bed and all the lights went off
 My friend said Deborah why did you
 turn the lights off and the music went off
 we got scared and all of a sudden
 the music went back on and the lights
 at the same time. At minute later.

At night I all ways think that a ghost
 is in my cupboard and when I am a
 sleep it is going to kill me.
 And I think that that is in ^{darkness} ~~darkness~~

APPENDIX C (a) The Story of Joseph.

SARAH

The Story of Joseph.



C

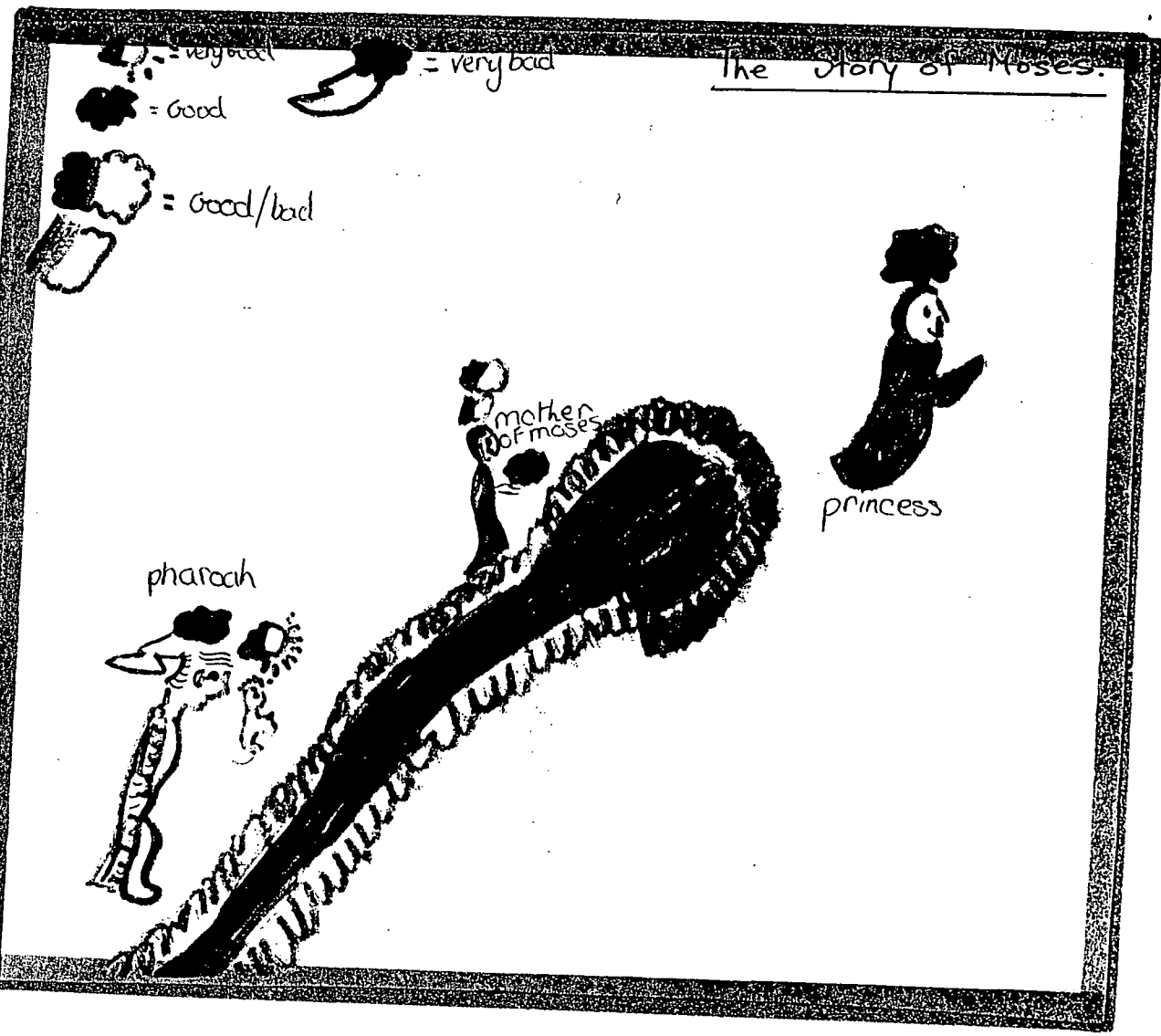
APPENDIX C (a) The Story of Moses.

CLAIRE



Appendix C (a) The Story of Moses.

JAMES



APPENDIX C (b) The Blind Man.

Jennie, Andrew and Margaret

The Blind Man

I think the story means telling us that jesus can cure all evil or darkness and bring light and goodness.

I think the story is about jesus power.

APPENDIX C(b) The Blind Man.

Craig and Sarah

The blind man

The story is about the blind man who wanted his eyesight back and the story says who Jesus do it. Jesus do it by spitting in his hand and rubbed it on his face a fist the man saw walking trees then he saw clearly.

The story means that you can help people like Jesus help the blind men that can not help them self.

APPENDIX C(b) The Blind Man.

Brian, Simon and Karl.

The blind man.

The story is about a man who was blind but Jesus cured him.

The story ~~means~~ is a metaphor about healing people.

APPENDIX C(b) The Blind Man.

Linda, James and David.

The Blind man

- 1) The story is about helping people and been kind also Jesus been kind helping old people and there feelings also making them feel thankness to one another.
- 2) The story tells us about Jesus is all way helping people from near and far. Jesus also helps sick people and animals by given them help and also thinking of gods power. The man that is blind was in darkness then going in to light because helping poor people also not under standing.

APPENDIX C (b) The Blind Man.

(Andrea and Tom)

The Blind man

- 1 I think the story is about light and good because Jesus helped the blind man to see again by rubbing his eyes.
- 2 I think it means helping and being kind because Jesus is a sign of good so is the blind man.

APPENDIX C (b) The Blind Man.

(Paul, Lisa and John)

The Blind man A

- 1 The story is about kindness and how Jesus helped people even if they were blind he could make them see again. It is also about happiness when the man could see again.
- 2 The story means that Jesus is kind to people who come from near and far. Jesus is a sign of good and so is the blind man.

APPENDIX C (c) Play: The Howl on the Hillside.

Lisa, Margaret, Claire and David.

2/12/89The howl on the hillside

Tracy:- I am going out to mind the sheep dear,

Katy:- Okay John but don't be long because the dinner is nearly ready.

Sam:- Please father can I go?

Tracy:- Sorry son not tonight! Come on, hurry up it is cold.

Kristyn:- (wolf howling in the background and Kill's Dawn)

Tracy:- Sorry son but Ben is dead.

Alison:- No he couldn't have, there must have been some mistake!

Tracy:- no son, not this time, I saw it with my own eyes.

Alison:- right then I won't take it any longer.

Tracy:- Where are you going sam?

Alison:- you will soon find out. Come and get it you big bully.

Kristyn:- (scares sam off. She howls and dies)

Katy:- I am very proud of you son, now go to bed and I will make you your favorite supper tomorrow night.

Alison:- Okay then mother Goodnight every body.

APPENDIX C (c) Play: The Coloured Man.

Sarah, Kelly and Kerry.

cast
 coloured man
 crowd
 Priest

Scene a coloured man walks into
 a crowd. all on the way to church

crowd "Huh you can't go to church
 you're different you're not one
 of us go away? you have no
 rights to come here"

Scene but the priest hears them and
 says

Priest "He has just as much right as
 you. We are all gods children.
 We were all created by him.
 No matter creed or colour"

APPENDIX D (a) The Lord is my Shepherd.

Linda and Karl.

Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd I shall not want means that the Lord is like a shepherd. and The song is a gentle and peaceful song. I will fear no evil, for thou art with me means don't be afraid or worried because God will be with you. And I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever means: stick to God at all times, stick with him for ever. The Lord is like a shepherd because he looks after us. Many people like this psalm because it makes them enjoy the good things in life. The whole psalm is a metaphor.

APPENDIX D (a): The Lord is my Shepherd.

Jennie and Simon.

psalm 23

The song is very nice to hear and very gentle by a word and I feel very happy for that song. I walk through the valley of the shadow of death means that god is with me if I am in danger so it is all right. The Lord of my shepherd means that god is like a shepherd and a shepherd looks after sheep like god looks after people and countries also pets in the R.S.P.C.A.

APPENDIX D (a) The Lord is my Shepherd.

Brian, Andrew and Margaret.

psalm 23

My cup runneth over is a metaphor it means I have to much. Another metaphor is The lord is my shepard it means god is like a shepard in some ways but not in others. For thou art with me is a metaphor and it means the power of god is with him. This psalm gives a feeling of all the good things in life

APPENDIX D (a) The Lord is my Shepherd.

Sarah, Kerry and Paul.

Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd means that
 God looks after people just like
 a shepherd looks after sheep.
 He maketh me to lie down in green
 pastures means that
 God is peaceful.

He leadeth me ~~to~~ beside the
 still waters means that you need
 not worry when God is around.

I will fear no evil for thou
 art with me means that
 God is in the person
 who wrote the Psalm.

It is a gentle Psalm and
 a song hymn has been
 written about it.

APPENDIX B (a) The Lord is my Shepherd.

Gleire, Sean and Andrea.

Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd
 mean God is like a shepherd
 and like a shepherd looks
 after sheep God looks after
 people.

He maketh me to lie
 down beside green pastures
 and he leadeth me beside
 the still waters mean
 God is like still waters and
 green pastures and it makes
 you think of peace.

My cup runneth over means
 God has given always
 every thing I want he
 can not give me more.

APPENDIX D (a) The Lord is my Shepherd.

Lisa, James, John and Kelly.

The song is very nice to hear
and it has a very nice gentle
feeling. The line in the song
that said I will fear no
evil it means I am not scared
of evil. The valley of the
shadow of death it means
God is with me all the
time and if I am in danger
I will be "all right."

APPENDIX D (b) Play: The Two Robbers.

Sid is Forgiven.

Brian, Kerry and Jennie.

The Two Robbers

Bob. lets go in that shop and steal the money.

Sid. Yes lets. You keep the man in the shop busy while I get the money.

Bob. all right.

Bob. Knock Knock. hello have you got a green ball. Yes shop keeper I'll just have a look.

Bob. Right now its your turn.

Sid. Ping. come on lets go I've got the money.

Bob. lets go to my house and hide.

Sid. I wish I had not done that.

Bob. So do I

Sid. lets go and replace the money.

Bob. all right

Sid. Run in and put the money back bob.

Run in and put money Back.

APPENDIX D (b) Play: The Two Robbers (continued)

Sid is Forgiven.

Bob Even if we hadnt
put the money back
God would forgived us

Sid No he would not -

anga yes he would

Sid who said that

angel I did Sid

Sid Its an angel.

angel follow me. to God
go to center of room

Jesus God wants to see

you two.

God Sid I would forgive

you. Now go and

remember what I said

go of

APPENDIX D (b). Play: The Graffiti Gang is Forgiven.

Paul, Simon, James, and Janet.

Nick
Katy The graffiti gang is forgiven
I hate school and I don't believe in God
graffiti is best.

Sam
Katie O Yes it's great. (Walks the stage.)

Reader
Tracy Nick and Sam had ran away from school
and was going to meet Steven.

Teacher
Reanne I am sick of them two girls running away.
(Sit on a chair)

Nick
Hello Steven we've found a great wall.
(Walk up to)

Steven
Simon
and Joe
Robbie I don't think I will go to school
any more. (Simon) It's rubbish. (Robbie)

Sam
nan from
Council
Andrew B. (Scratches head)
I am sick of painting over
graffiti that that gang have done.

Steven
Wow who is that.

Angel
Michelle Hello I am ~~the~~^A angel come with me
(Becomes to them)
and you can come and see Jesus Christ.
Sam
But why would he want to see us?
We've been naughty.

APPENDIX Play: The Graffiti Gang is Forgiven.

(Continued).

Angel You'll see You'll see.

Reader Meanwhile Mary and Joseph were thanking the
shepherd for coming.

Mary

Alison

Thankyou for coming to see my baby.
(Shake hands)

Joseph

(Point to them)

Lee O.

Look there is some children coming.

Sam

I still cant belive we are going to see

Steven

christ.
Look we are here.

Vick

Oh isint he cute. I wish we had not
been naughty now and ran away from school.

God

Lee O

The children learned thier lesson and
never ran away from school or do
graffite on the wall.

God. This is a Begining story about four children
called sam short for samantha Vick short
for Nicola Joe and Steven.

APPENDIX D (c) Story: The Dwarf and the Prince.

Paul.

The dwarf and the prince

There was once a prince called prince Henry. He was walking through the dark and gloomy wood when he heard a noise. It was like a piece of paper moving. A man jumped out of a tree with a newspaper and a half eaten apple. He was being very grumpy because I was on his land. I had heard people say that they had ^{seen} ~~set~~ him and he had darkness in him. All of a sudden I saw some more of them. I went for a walk with them, to know them better. I got to like him. He was called Deygal. He had a red cap on. I and him became good friends. He became good so I brought light in to him. I came to see him every day.

APPENDIX D (c) Story: The Giant Dragon.

Linda

The Giant Dragon

One night I was walking to my house ~~to~~ I saw a big green slimy tail coming from around the corner. So I told my mam and my brother to put their trainers on. But ofcourse my brother put the his trainers on the wrong way round. I said to my mam I will paddle my own canoe. My mam said take care the Dragon is dangerous. I saw my mams chopping Knife so I poked the dragon with the knife. This time I stuck it in the dragons hart and ~~so~~ the sword pierced its hart. It means I was good and the dragon was bad.

APPENDIX B

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES: METAPHORS OF GOD

Metaphor of God: God as Light.

* Stories concerned with security: passages from Alice in Wonderland (chapters one, two and three) and class discussion of children's personal experiences: being afraid in the dark and the effects of a light being switched on.

* Analysis, in groups, of short stories/poems, asking children to identify elements of darkness and light.

* 1) Light and Darkness Card Activities: children work in groups, studying everyday events shown in pictures, for example, flowers, a wedding, cigarettes, cream cakes. Each group to put forward their opinions and why they are held concerning whether the picture would be best symbolised by darkness or light.

ii) Children listen to short taped extracts of music, for example, a pop song, a dance tune, choral music, ballet music, and decide whether it could best be symbolised by darkness or light.

* The Poverty Problem.

Classroom work on the causes of poverty: for examples of content of teaching, see chapter six.

* Jesus as the Light of the World

- * the effects of lighting a candle in the darkness;
- * the effects of lighting one candle from another;
- * switching on a powerful torch in a completely dark garden;
- * the function of a lighthouse: the story of Grace Darling (Ashton and Kenworthy 1994: 7)
- * group discussions of the symbolism in Holman Hunt's 'The Light of the World'.

* Light and Understanding

- * discussion of the meaning of this Hindu prayer:
 Lead us from the darkness to the light,
 Lead us from lies to the truth,
 Lead us from death to everlasting life.
 (quoted Ashton 1994b: 51)
- * discussion of the meaning of this passage from the *Qu'ran*:

God is the light of the heavens and of the earth,
His light is like a shelf that holds a lamp
within a crystal of star-like light.

(*Qu'ran 24 v 35. Light*).

(Quoted Ashton 1994b: 51).

Work on the metaphor 'God is Light' could be extended by study of the metaphor 'God is Sustainer', developing concepts of God found in Psalm 23, 'The Lord is My Shepherd' (chapter nine), leading to further discussion:

- * The Prodigal Son: can God be thought of as
 - * the farmer?
 - * with a body;
 - * forgiving;
 - * owning a farm;
 - * with two sons;
 - * wise;
 - * always there when needed;
 - * allowing people to choose for themselves, risking making mistakes and learning from the experience.

