

The Reconceptualist Perspective

Proponents of William Pinar's *reconceptualization* of curriculum theory, his *understanding* of curriculum, rather than its technical design and implementation (Pinar, 1978b), were almost as "slippery" to identify as the reconceptualization itself (Pinar, 1978b, p. 205). In a retrospective of his work, Pinar was later to state "[t]here is no reconceptualist point of view, or even points of view" (Pinar, 1988, p. 167). It was easier to discuss what reconceptualists were *not*.

Reconceptualists did not take the view that education was an area to be studied by specialists, rather than an area of specialism in itself. Those who took this view, Pinar referred to as *conceptual-empiricists*. Their work was based on the methodological testing of hypotheses in the manner of mainstream social science, and was typified by researchers such as Posner & Strike (1976).

Pinar has argued that a reconceptualist, sees research as both an academic and political phenomenon (1978a, 1978b, 1988, 2012). Working to "suppress, or to liberate" (Pinar, 1978b, p. 210) both researcher and participant, as well as "those outside the academic subculture" (p. 210). Epitomising Pinar's reconceptualization, is the notion of *currere*, a self-analysis of lived experience, an on-going, *complicated conversation* with oneself as the private intellectual, which allows for growth and interaction with the public sphere of pedagogy (Pinar, 1975). Arguably, by providing the enigmatic concept of the reconceptualization of curriculum theory, and the equally nebulous *currere*, Pinar has provided a sufficiently interpretive framework to encapsulate the multi-faceted nature of curriculum.

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References

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