

CHAPTER 10

THE PURSUIT OF VISIONS

The great issues that face us in education and administration cannot be understood from science alone; they require insight, appreciation, judgment and commitment. (Greenfield, 1991c:225).

Professor Thomas Greenfield retired in mid-December 1990, after twenty five years working under the OISE banner. The reality of retirement was particularly difficult for him. There was "a wrenching quality about it" (Greenfield interview, 16.1.91) that he could not quite understand. The weeks immediately beforehand were weeks of rancour and frustration. As the retirement date drew closer he succumbed to feelings of deep bitterness and withdrew from the faculty at OISE - he simply shut himself off - spending more time socially and professionally with his students. Some of his colleagues were puzzled by his "anti" behavior. Others shrugged it off as "the usual Greenfield". Greenfield had refused any formal retirement ceremonies on the grounds that they would "reek of insincerity". Then one Thursday afternoon he simply walked out of OISE and did not return. A couple of trusted secretaries and some friends cleared his office. During early January, the long hours spent with him daily were never spent at OISE. Usually we worked at his home and

at a frenzied pace. It was my weariness that called a halt each day not Greenfield's.

This chapter focuses on the events of Greenfield's life and his writings of during 1991. It completes the analysis of Griffiths's publications that mention Greenfield's work, from 1986 to 1995; and Willower's relevant publications from 1986 to 1996. And it presents a brief dialogue between Griffiths and Greenfield and between Greenfield and Willower using material from interviews with the two American scholars and Greenfield's responses to these interviews. These dialogues never took place. They are the compilation of the author using authentic interview material and they bring to completion this intellectual discourse.

Retirement

Greenfield was a study in contrasts. He deeply felt leaving OISE and withdrew, like Jonah, (Greenfield, 1983a:298) into himself seemingly oblivious to the effect his prickly behavior had on other people. But Greenfield was nothing if not a highly sensitive human being. He needed time to accept his own changing life (Personal correspondence). "Changes and diversions" were the order of the day for a while then "a long bout of winter illness" hit. His health was beginning to break down. In late January "impulsively" he bought a condominium in Toronto and spent some weeks "moving from the house, cutting down

the furniture and holdings of several years and getting deep into the problems and pressures of mortgages, renting and real estate agents (Personal correspondence, 11.3.91). By early March he was visiting OISE again, often at weekends and seemed settled into a new office.

By then too he had finished a new paper. He had been invited by the Organisation Theory SIG (Special Interest Group) of AERA, "one of the alternative platforms but an important one" (Personal correspondence, 7.3.91) to present "a retrospective view of my work and to comment generally on the field". He tried to "address many issues, old and new" in the paper and it became a "kind of testament to my thinking over the decades". He titled the paper *Re-forming and Re-valuing Educational Administration: Whence and When Cometh the Phoenix?* and presented it in Chicago on April 6 1991. A version of it had circulated through *Organisation Theory Dialogue* in March 1991. Greenfield wrote:

Goodness knows how it will be received or who will be there to receive it, as the session is scheduled for 6.15 pm on Saturday evening, which is not prime time at AERA (Personal correspondence, 25.3.91).

Whatever his fears Greenfield found "the session satisfying and stimulating" (Personal correspondence, 15.4.91). Mid-June to mid-July 1991, Greenfield was travelling in England and Germany. His England part of the trip was "to do some interviews with Peter Ribbins, with the aim of making a

publication of eight or ten of my papers, but in the context of commentary (Personal correspondence, 31.5.91).

The experience turned out to be:

... most rewarding, but I was glad to be home again. I worked out a proposal for publication with Peter. With some luck and hard work, this may result in a publication of a collection of my writing sometime next April/May. For the rest, my activities were very little to a rational purpose. I visited Canterbury and York and found myself deeply moved in both these sacred sites. I soaked up the culture and the Zeitgeist of both countries and feel that may indeed be helpful in my work, though it would be hard to explain why it would be so to a systems analyst or accountant (Personal correspondence, 14.7.91).

Late July-early August 1991, Greenfield was on the west coast of Canada to conduct two seminars, one at the University of British Columbia, the other at the University of Victoria and "to meet with colleagues especially my great and loyal friend, Chris Hodgkinson" (Personal correspondence, 25.7.91). He had already had an invitation to attend a seminar at Melbourne University, Australia in January 1992 and had some hesitations about the trip; "the heat of Melbourne; talking to university administrators about "collegiality"- I'm not sure it's the kind of thing I want to do". He continued:

Another reason for my hesitation is that I want to choose what I spend my time and energy upon and for me organised events such as this - ten days of it - come rather low in the priorities (Personal correspondence, 14.7.91).

August also brought "a series of diagnostic tests, the results of which are already pretty apparent: I remain in

generally good health but I have ever more reason to ensure that the strength I have is spent on what is rewarding and worthwhile" (Personal correspondence, 14.7.91).

Throughout August and September Greenfield was working on "papers for the Collected Papers hoping to get a first version of the manuscript to Ribbins before the Edmonton conference. He was also thinking about his Edmonton paper. He had been invited to present a paper to the Thirty-fifth Anniversary Conference of the Department of Educational Administration at the University of Alberta at the end of September. However, he was not feeling as well as he had. "Part of this is just a psychological low and part is a recognition that my health is not as strong as it was" he wrote (Personal correspondence, 14.7.91). By the end of September, Greenfield was beginning to doubt that he would be able to accept the invitation to Australia because "things are just too unsettled and I just don't feel able to make the commitment" (Personal correspondence 24.8.91).

The paper presented in Edmonton was entitled *Science and Service: The Making of the Profession of Educational Administration* (1991c). This was Greenfield's last paper. He wrote that:

The Edmonton conference went very well. It was an intense and powerful exchange of ideas ... I think I was in good form for the presentation of my paper. I certainly felt as though I was speaking from the heart ... I felt a little inspired by it all and the

questions, all of which were excellent launched me into some pointed comments. I feel very satisfied by it all, the paper and the conference itself. I have decided to include *Science and Service* in the collection, as I think it does look at things in a new perspective, and is certainly a helpful companion to *Phoenix* (Personal correspondence, 4.10.91).

By the end of October the last pages of *Greenfield on Educational Administration* were in the post to Ribbins.

Greenfield mused that:

It is hard now to imagine where all the time and work went into preparing the manuscript but I can assure you it took a great deal of both. After I had what I thought was a final manuscript I decided to read the whole and was moved to make a good many further revisions and corrections. The changes are small in most cases but with *The Man Who Comes Back* I made substantial cuts, particularly in the opening section (Personal correspondence 26.10.91).

This prompted some questioning from me on which version is now the official version or version of record? Does the latest version cancel out the earlier, published paper? And what of Greenfield's belief that words once written must stand alone (Greenfield, 1988)? Something prompted the earlier version of the text. Has time reshaped thoughts? Greenfield's reply noted that:

The pruned version of *The Man Who Comes Back* is certainly a different document than the original, different time, different purpose. I'm not sure if the new is a better writing, but it certainly is different, and I now like it better. It is not simply that the author cannot forever be anxious parent, it is that readers read their own meaning into texts. The multiplicity of texts is the very ground on which hermeneutics arises, giving spur to the search for true meaning, yet limited by the realisation that human interpretation can never penetrate to the level of God's word that is assumed to lie somewhere in the

text. The multiplicity of texts by definition makes all legitimate, but is also the spur to get that better or true version (Personal correspondence, 26.10.91).

In mid-November Greenfield cancelled a trip to Winnipeg and Saskatoon where he was to give seminars because of ill health. Revision of the interviews with Ribbins was continuing through November 1991 and Greenfield was eager to complete them. He was also surprised at their quality. He wrote "There is certainly a force to them that draws one into them and that perhaps is why I made the rather extensive changes and additions to them" (Personal correspondence, 24.12.91). Ribbins had asked him to comment on *Science and Service*, since it was not written at the time of the interviews. He wrote one version and then revised it. By the end of November most of the revisions were completed although some finer points dragged on well into December.

On November 29 1991, Greenfield formally celebrated his retirement from OISE. He was now ready to celebrate with family, colleagues and students. Professor Ed Hickcox gave the occasional address which he called "Coming Sideways through the Cellar Door". Greenfield was deeply touched by Dr. Jim Ryan's tribute which began with the words "Thom Greenfield changes people's lives". He found "the event quite wonderful and a little overwhelming - it was precious to me" (Personal correspondence, 4.12.91). On December 21 Greenfield wrote:

Work on the book has taken a great deal of time. But yesterday I finished it, at least for now. Now there seems just all too much to do before leaving for Australia. I am determined to do it (Personal correspondence).

But by December 26 the visit was cancelled. Greenfield wrote:

I just don't have the stamina I once had under pressure - I was never good at it - and my health is weaker than it was ... I work steadily and with enjoyment but not at the pace I could at one time (Personal correspondence).

His summary of the year was very optimistic:

My year has had several happy events, the publication of two papers I think highly of; a successful collaboration with Peter Ribbins resulting in a contract to publish a collection of my writings; the Foreword by Chris Hodgkinson which is both gracious and insightful and the celebration of my retirement. My cup runneth over (Personal correspondence, 26.12.91).

Greenfield's health was "variable through February and March, making progress and then slipping back again" (Personal correspondence). By March 1992 his health was deteriorating slowly. Constant bouts of illness left him weakened and from mid May 1992, he was much dependent on care workers, students and friends. By the end of July he was in steady decline. Time at home was interspersed with frequent hospitalisation. Friends, colleagues, his daughter and a team of care workers cared for him at home. By early October 1992, he required round-the-clock nursing and on Saturday December 19, 1992 about 8.45pm he died peacefully. A copy of his book *Greenfield on Educational*

Administration: Towards a Humane Science had arrived on Wednesday, 16 December.

The Phoenix

Hodgkinson's *Foreword* to the Greenfield and Ribbins book stated:

... the game begun by Greenfield is still in play. Sides can be and are taken, and, though the melee rages and subsides with the varied distractions of a changing ethos, and with the energies of the contestants, still time cannot be called. Greenfield remains a stimulating irritant to the ranks of the professoriate. For some a burr under their saddles, for others a continuing inspiration (Hodgkinson, 1993:xiv).

Greenfield's *Phoenix* paper (1991b) described the state of play. All the customary themes were present. The first sentence was a statement about values. Greenfield recalled that "the present is a time of dialectical struggle in educational administration" (Greenfield, 1991b:2) between those who follow the "established empiricist highroad to truth" and those who value the "human and moral perspective". In the "ambiguity and uncertainty" that prevail everywhere" almost everyone calls for a rejuvenation, for something new" (p2). Differences persist "in what that newness should consist of". Greenfield overviewed the past (pp2-8) mentioning the organisation theorists who were associated with positivism such as Griffiths, Getzels, Parsons, Willower, Burrell and Morgan, Pitner and a couple associated with Greenfield's own humanistic views, Ribbins and Hodgkinson. He returned to

"the question of the divisibility of facts and values" (p8) which "continues to bedevil an understanding of the paradigms and issues of methodological adequacy" and expanded on his notion of values quoting from Weber, Hodgkinson and Barnes (pp9-10). Then he looked forward to what the new was likely to be and concentrated on three issues; firstly, the openness of the field to inquiry which involved a discussion of the kind and quality of articles appearing in the journals. Greenfield wondered whether the journals could do better in the future (p11). Secondly he focused on "faddism or trendyitis [that] is endemic to education and its administration" (Hodgkinson, 1990:10 in Greenfield, 1991a: 13) and that fail to address the fundamental, moral problems in education (pp12-14) and thirdly, he considered the school as "a crux of value and for value" (p14). Greenfield believed that the "shape of the new phoenix has education at its core and value: values in all their complexities..." (p14).

This paper was an important one for Greenfield "a kind of testament, speaking to all the issues - the intellectual and the interconnectedly personal - that have boiled up since 1974." (Personal correspondence, 18.5.91). Greenfield continued:

The occasion [of the presentation] was important and meaningful for me. It went fairly well but discussion was rather slow to begin, with people making statements largely unconnected to the text, or asking questions that did not join what I thought was the heart of the paper. Towards the end of the discussion, it gained a

clarity and conviction ... I sense a wave of understanding and support from the audience which previously I had been unsure of... One of the last comments came from a young man who suddenly said "Thank you for what you have done and written. Your work has been of great importance to me and I think of you as my father". And then one of the women said "Yes, you have been the lightning rod. You have taken the fire and helped to free us to think in new ways and about matters that concern us". I felt a great sense that it had not all been for naught (Personal correspondence, 18.5.91).

Science and Service

Phoenix (1991b) and *Science and Service* (1991c) formed a concluding diptych to Greenfield's life and work and they need to be read together. Two critical foci emerge; the utter uselessness of positivistic science in educational administration and the central place of values in organisations. The structure of both papers is similar. Both papers surveyed the past; both papers contained personal memories; both papers presented Greenfield's critique of the field and both papers emphasised the conflict between science and values in organisational life. The argument in *Phoenix* stressed science and in *Science and Service* stressed values.

Science and Service was the more overtly personal of the two. Greenfield was putting the past behind "achieving a transcendence of self and strife; seeking a letting go and a resolution" (Personal correspondence, 29.9.91). Like *Phoenix* this last Greenfield paper was a retrospective. It looked back on Greenfield's life as a student at the University of Alberta and "in a sense is a

retrospective of the collective life of a group of people who were dedicating themselves to the betterment of educational administration" (Personal correspondence).

Phoenix, on the other hand "is a retrospective look at a lonely journey undertaken by a singularly brilliant and moral individual" (Personal correspondence).

Greenfield felt extremely satisfied with *Science and Service*. He felt he was bringing people "cheerful news" (Personal correspondence, 4.10.91) about educational administration in the midst of change and uncertainty and this cheerful news focussed on values - rather, "the interweaving of fact and value" (Greenfield, 1991b:23.). In *Science and Service*, Greenfield was choosing "the middle ground" between opposing value and science camps. An organisation is "a moral order in action" and the administrator is "a representative of a moral order and an entrepreneur for its values" (p25). Epistemological considerations were now secondary for him. His thinking had moved emphatically into the world of values and values for Greenfield had a religious base which he outlined in the concluding section of *Science and Service*. He felt that such thinking was not new for him, "not a departure from previous positions, only an exploration of their implications" (Personal correspondence, 25.9.91). It put "a new twist on things" and represented "still further groping towards understanding". For Greenfield "the great conundrum ... is still unresolved". But perhaps "what it

is and which way to look to face it", is now clearer (Greenfield and Ribbins, 1993:270).

The Phoenix Controversy

Greenfield always resented the imperialist attitude towards educational administration of some American scholars and the consequent easy acceptance of inferior status by Canadian scholars. In his last musings as editor in the *CSSE News* he had written:

In my years as editor, I sensed a feeling among authors that it is somehow unfair, impolite or un-Canadian, to say what one thinks about a colleague's work. People in Canadian education seem to feel a terrible ambivalence about commenting openly and critically on Canadian scholarship in education. There is first the sense that if it's Canadian it's probably not worth talking about in the first place, and secondly, there is the feeling that it is somehow an act of betrayal to say anything that is pointed, controversial or argumentative about it (December 1979).

Some further comments about indifference and non-involvement of professional educators led Greenfield to conclude this short piece with the question "Where is the commitment among faculty of education members in Canadian universities to the study of Canadian education?" (Greenfield 1979d:10). This "Canadian inferiority" (Greenfield, 1976:130-131, 1983b:9) and unwillingness to engage in honest, intellectual discussion Greenfield connected with a general indifference to his work among Canadian scholars and it constantly rankled him.

In *Phoenix*, Greenfield gave expression to these

thoughts as he has done previously (1983b):

Considering how the Bristol and subsequent critiques of the field have been received around the world makes a point in the sociology of knowledge: as far as the intellectual leadership of educational administration is concerned, Canada must be seen, as in so many other matters, in its all too common position of cultural and ideological satellite to the United States. The support and interest of Canadian colleagues in my work is varied, but generally muted and cautious. As with many other cultural and academic matters, my Canadian colleagues have waited for the show to play New York and Los Angeles so they can read the reviews and thereby know what to think about it. Whatever contribution my work might have made, it has suffered from the ethnocentrism of America and of my Canadian colleagues (Greenfield, 1991b:3).

Richard Townsend and Ed Hickcox, colleagues of Greenfield's at OISE expressed disagreement with these sentiments from *Phoenix*. Townsend considered that Greenfield was wrong and that "[your] Canadian colleagues are proud of you and the luster you bring [us]" (Greenfield correspondence, 10.4.91). Greenfield responded that the position outlined in *Phoenix* was "both fair and accurate" and made the distinction between personal support and "corporate interest" - "scholars here do not cite my work and for the most part appear to be unaware of it". Greenfield continued to note what he called an "irony" - an inquiry asking if he would be nominated for the Canadian Association for Studies in Educational Administration (CASEA) Distinguished Service Award. He declined, saying that he did not meet the first criterion: involvement with the Association. Greenfield continued:

CASEA has yet to ask me to thank a speaker, let alone

chair a session or do a critique. That anyone in CASEA would think that I might do for the Association what I have travelled to England, Australia and the USA to do, is an idea whose time has not yet arrived in my home country (Greenfield correspondence, 10.4.91).

Hickcox disagreed with Greenfield's view. In a long memo to Greenfield, Hickcox noted that:

... every course in theory in every Ed Admin Department in the country has incorporated [your] "stuff" in one way or another ... articles about epistemological issues in the field by Canadians always include references to you ... no one else in Canada has anywhere near the reputation you have (possibly excepting Hodgkinson)... in terms of name recognition, you have to be among the very top in our field in the world (Greenfield correspondence, 10.4.91).

After mentioning concrete examples of CASEA involvement with Greenfield, Hickcox continued:

I just don't think it is fair to totally castigate the organisation, claiming that you have never been asked to do anything. I also believe that, if you have not been asked to give thanks or chair in recent years, it is because you have not been very active ... Also, many of the younger professors and our students hold you in such awe that they are reluctant to approach you. You have stood somewhat apart in recent years, have not attended many sessions, and the result is that people are a bit shy (Greenfield correspondence, 10.4.91).

Greenfield responded (Greenfield correspondence 18.4.91) that Hickcox had raised "interesting and not insignificant matters". His reply addressed the major thrusts of Hickcox's argument. Greenfield declared that his "work has always had a kind of samizdat status in the field; students find it and push it among themselves: some committed faculty use it formally". Such use he felt, was more

exception than the rule. Regarding CASEA indifference Greenfield responded that "there has been virtually no interest or response in the forums of Canadian scholarship in educational administration". Invitations or requests from friends "by way of general academic service have nothing to do with [my] work and critique *per se*".

He continued:

The Canadian politicians of educational administration have from the first peep of controversy sided with those who would dampen it and deny it. The review of my IIP74 paper in *CASEA News* was personalistic, nasty, and negative. It has never been mentioned there since. But I rest my case on the events of 1978. That was the year of the Canadian IIP. Not one word did the organisers of that event allow to be said about my work or the issues it raised. No invitation was extended to me to participate in or contribute to that conference. Then there is the ironic contrast to be seen in the fact that 1978 was the year Griffiths gave the invited address to Division A of AERA, where he made the point that the field was in "intellectual turmoil" or "should be". And he identified my work as one of the prime reasons for that turmoil, for the necessary reassessment it occasioned in the field (Greenfield correspondence, 18.4.91).

In a note of the version of the text of *Phoenix* published in *Organisational Theory Dialogue*, Greenfield had referred to "the *ad hominem* attacks that my writings have generated" (Greenfield, 1991b:16). Hickcox in his response, expressed some understanding but wondered if Greenfield were over-reacting. Greenfield's response commented on "a mass of evidence ... that the hostility was rather general and that it continues to this day". He recalled two occasions when, because he had become "so accustomed to *ad hominem* comment" on his work, he was amazed when someone objected: one

occasion was in Montreal in 1985 when Richard Bates "rebuked the chair for permitting such comment". The other was at the University of Illinois in 1981 when the chair (Sergiovanni) interrupted questioning "to rule that [I] did not have to reply to the *ad hominem* and personalistic line of questioning" that was being pursued "with considerable fervor".

Greenfield wondered about including such comments in the published version of the paper and thought he would reconsider in the light of Hickcox's comments. However he remained firm in his conviction that the:

... comments represented a general and not insignificant truth. And that truth is germane to the theoretical points [I] am trying to make, which is why they appeared in the Chicago version of *Phoenix* and why they may appear again in its ultimately published form (Greenfield correspondence, 18.4.91).

The comments did not appear in the version of the paper in the Greenfield and Ribbins text (1993:172, 195). Time undoubtedly reshaped thoughts. Greenfield when questioned about the removal of text from *Phoenix* wrote:

I have had comments regretting the loss of that personal text, but Peter's point was that such material does not wear well and is unnecessary, while Edward seemed to think I shouldn't say those things, or that I should turn the other cheek. I accept. Let the text speak for itself (Personal correspondence, 2.11.91).

He had refused to be nominated by the University of Manitoba faculty (the selection committee was chaired by Benjamin Levin) for the CASEA Distinguished Service Award

(April 1991) on a number of grounds. He did not support such an award because:

CASEA has largely failed to put in place policies that would actively foster and sustain a critical intellectual environment in the Association. End-point recognition of scholarship is no substitute for providing the conditions which create and stimulate it in the first place (Personal correspondence, 18.5.91).

Greenfield also had "a distaste bordering on contempt for the Hollywood-Oscars approach to the recognition of scholarly achievement". CASEA, for Greenfield, "does more to acknowledge a show of scholarship than it does to foster and acknowledge true scholarship" and he did not want "to lend an iota of legitimacy to that charade". The answer was "No" but Greenfield appreciated "the sentiments and good offices" shown in recommending him.

In November 1990, Doctor R.J.S. Macpherson from the University of New England, Armidale, New South Wales had contacted Greenfield regarding his being the subject of a "Profile of Excellence" in the *Journal of Educational Administration*. Greenfield had sent an immediate reply saying that he did not like "being commemorated or memorialised" (email 14.11.90). He was not interested in "anything in the way of an *Apologia pro vita sua* but might be persuaded as a way of acknowledging "the great support, interest and understanding" his work received from Australian scholars and as a way of providing "contemporary forums and discussion" for his ideas. Greenfield wanted to

familiarise himself with the format of the profile and asked for time to do so. He replied again (email, 16.4.91) in the negative, that his acceptance would be "a show after the fact" and that he could not accept an Australian honour after refusing one from his "own countrymen". He expressed his discomfort with the word "excellence" and noted in conclusion "I hope my work will continue to be read and I want only to stand or fall thereby. All the rest is flim flammery and I don't want to do it" (email 16.4.91). Greenfield relented in June 1992 and accepted the CASEA award. It was accepted on his behalf by Benjamin Levin since he was too ill to attend the ceremony.

Griffiths: 1986-1995

During this period, Dean Emeritus and Professor Emeritus Dan Griffiths had two publications that were relevant to his involvement with Greenfield. The first was *Administrative Theory*, Griffiths's chapter in Boyan's *Handbook of Research on Educational Administration* (1988). This paper presented a history and analysis of educational administration from 1946 when Kellogg money was forthcoming for development in educational administration up to the present. Greenfield thought that this article was "very perceptive" (Greenfield interview, 11.12.90).

Griffiths connected Greenfield's IIP74 paper with "the demise of the theory movement" (Griffiths in Boyan, 1988:30). It was "the coup de grace" in which Greenfield

"made an across-the-board denunciation of every aspect of the theory movement" (p30). Griffiths commented that Greenfield developed and changed his argument in a number of papers. The "most important one" and the latest paper referenced by Griffiths was Greenfield's (1985a) paper. He noted that "the main thrust of Greenfield's critique was epistemological" (p30) and while the critique was hailed in the Commonwealth it was largely ignored in USA because "the arguments [are] too extreme and too inclusive" (31). Little empirical research resulted because Greenfield's line of argument was inconsistent and offered little but an "attack on the theory movement" (p31). In reporting a study by Boyan (1982) Griffiths noted that seven articles of Greenfield fell within the radical humanist paradigm categorised by the Burrell and Morgan schema (p43). Formerly Griffiths had placed him in the radical structuralist paradigm (1979a:14, 1986:267). Greenfield was "the sole critic" in this category. Griffiths concluded:

It is quite clear that he is completely opposed to positivism, to rationalism and to all aspects of functional structuralism. But it is very difficult to determine what he would substitute ... what might emerge from Greenfield's thinking would, indeed, be anti-organisational organisational theory (see Griffiths, 1986:266) (p43).

In 1991 Griffiths edited an edition of the *Educational Administration Quarterly* on non-traditional theory and research in educational administration. Non-traditional merely meant "not the usual stuff"

(Griffiths interview, 4.12.90). Each theory had to be accompanied by an account of actual research which tested that theory. Griffiths had realised that in the "767 pages of Boyan's *Handbook* almost 100% of the best of the research done in recent times" (Griffiths, 1994:2) was traditional. He wanted to present a different set of lenses in which to view educational organisations and administration. He collaborated with Ann Hart and Billie Blair on a study entitled *Still Another Approach to Administration: Chaos Theory*. Greenfield commented that this was Griffiths "still seeking the grand synthesis with chaos theory" (Greenfield interview, 11.12.90) and:

either implicitly or explicitly going back to the models of logical positivism, going back to the standards set by the physical sciences, especially the mathematical sciences, looking for rigorous, acceptable theory to account for observations that he sees around him. Chaos theory raises again the issue of the continuity of the sciences: of whether the social sciences, the cultural sciences, are at one with the physical sciences; and of whether the methods that have been developed in the physical, mathematical sciences, are the appropriate ones for looking at social phenomena, and therefore whether the whole of reality is a unity, all external to the individual, separate from individual responsibility. That's the direction all this is going (Greenfield interview, 11.12.90).

Emeritus Professor Griffiths presented a paper at IIP94 on May 20, at the Greenfield Session. He titled his paper *After Greenfield - What?* Theoretical pluralism was the theme of the paper, the basic idea being that "all problems cannot be studied fruitfully by a single theory" (Griffiths, 1994:2). In the face of later criticism of

current academic research (Astley and Zammoto, 1992:443 in Griffiths, 1994:2) he declared Greenfield's critique "rather gentle".

Griffiths's second paper of relevance during this period was his 1995 review of the Greenfield and Ribbins book for the *Educational Administration Quarterly*. Therein he wrote:

Seeing the papers together made me see Greenfield in a new way and answered a question I asked myself whenever I read one of his papers or heard him speak, 'What is he trying to do?' I suppose this is another way of asking, 'What is he?'... When his papers are viewed as a whole, it is very clear that he is first and foremost a critic. Greenfield's critique deepened over the years, but did not broaden. It started as an attack on the Theory Movement ... and that is what it remained. ... Although only an embryonic theory emerges from Greenfield's papers, the critique of the theory movement is clear, strong, consistent and emotional. His efforts at proposing courses of action based on the critique are, on the other hand, fumbling and feeble.

... I doubt Greenfield would have been as controversial as he was if it were not for his style ... Greenfield's style was extremely confrontational, and with his superb command of the English language, he was very successful ... The battlefield metaphor is used extensively. Greenfield did indeed believe he was fighting a holy war (Griffiths, 1995:151).

And so ended a little over twenty years of comment and critique. It had all been said.

Griffiths-Greenfield: point and counterpoint

What follows is significant text from an interview with Dean Dan Griffiths at New York University, 4.12.90 followed by responses from Professor Thom Greenfield at OISE, 11.12.90.

On Theory

Griffiths:

Americans don't look on theory as an ideology. Greenfield wants a theory he can believe in. This is a completely foreign idea to us I think it's foreign to anybody who is in the field of science.

Greenfield:

You can see issues much more clearly in Griffiths. I'd much rather read Griffiths than Willower because at least, it's coherent and consistent. There is no egoistic name dropping. I guess he sees the a-theoretical character of much of the work in USA but he doesn't understand the larger issue of the implicitness of theory. There is theory willy-nilly! One doesn't make any empirical assumptions, observations or do any research without invoking an implicit theory. You can't make statements about the world without invoking some kind of implicit theoretical structure. He himself is ideological about his theory. His insisting that there is no ideology is of course, to invoke an ideology.

On Values:

Griffiths:

He's simply hung up on values. We've had that argument. Larry Iannacone and I debated Orin Graf and John Ramseyer at one of the NCPEA meetings in the early 1960s and we debated this business of values. They kept saying that values are important. Once you say it, so what? Values are embedded in policies. Don't waste a lot of time

talking about values in the abstract, which is what a lot of fellows love to do. It's just simply a waste of time. If you're going to talk about administration, you talk about things in terms of administration. What are the policies? What are the by-laws? By-laws are full of values.

Greenfield:

It's a whole new mode of discourse. Values are critical. We can't use the same techniques, dimensions and propositions for talking about values that we use when we're talking in terms of positivistic, systemic theory. I certainly am grateful to Griffiths because though he has been critical and though he was initially so very bitterly opposed, he has done the right thing I think, ultimately. I just wish he would do more of it. I wish he would look more carefully at what I have said consistently in various articles. I recognise that many of those articles are not easily accessible, especially to American scholars.

It's not easy to share a platform with Dan Griffiths.

though as I recall the session at North Illinois University he made many of the points I might have made. Perhaps that reflected the beginning of a turn in his thinking. I don't do well in those somewhat gladiatorial settings.

There's a great openness, a greater orientation to test the reality of the situation but still, when you push him, what comes out is the old systems theorist and positivist.

The two scholars would always disagree on

fundamental issues about theory and science. Yet the published argument and counter argument which occurred between them over these years certainly helped build the epistemology of educational administration as an academic field.

Willower: 1986-1996

Professor Don Willower continues to be a prolific contributor to journals. He writes especially on broad themes in educational administration that look at trends and developments over decades. Most make only a passing reference to Greenfield's work. In *Inquiry into Educational Administration: The Last Twenty five Years and the Next* (1987) Greenfield was mentioned in one sentence thus " ... writers like T.B. Greenfield emphasise the insights into individual realities coexisting in particular settings that such research can provide" (Willower, 1987:14). *Synthesis and Projection* (1988) was Willower's chapter in the Boyan, *Handbook of Research on Educational Administration*. The purpose of the article was "to discover trends, examine issues, implications and possibilities and to comment critically on them when it seems appropriate to do so" (Willower, 1988:729). Greenfield was given somewhat greater space here. Willower firstly noted that, like Griffiths and Foster in critiquing the turmoil of the field:

T.B. Greenfield and others of like mind contend that much of the research in educational administration is

of little value because it has been oriented to objectivity rather than to subjective experience (p729)

and:

Others, such as T.B. Greenfield (1980), are more oriented to the personal and particular. They see qualitative studies as providing insights into the individual and separate realities that coexist in different contexts (p732).

Willower proceeded (p740) to criticise Greenfield's "phenomenologically oriented view" as he had done previously (1981, 1982, 1983, 1985) and declared once again that "there is virtually no connection between the former, that is, philosophical phenomenology and Greenfield's ideas". Greenfield's subjectivism was grouped with the Neo-Marxist belief "that most theories reify organisations" (p740). Willower then cited a 1987 criticism of Greenfield's work by Evers - Greenfield "ignores reasonable ways of distinguishing good interpretations of experience from bad ones" (p740) and a 1985 criticism by Lakomski that "Greenfield's view employs positivistic assumptions that promote separation of values and facts". Willower went on to note that Greenfield's writing was "philosophically uninformed" and gave the impression that "there are two main views in the philosophical world ... subjectivism and positivism" (p741). Willower's final comment on Greenfield in this paper again quoted Evers and his assertion that some interpretations of experience were better than others. Willower was amused by Evers "making a play on the title of an article" (p743) by Greenfield. He

noted that "when that worthy enters his office, he goes through the door in the wall, not through the wall". This kind of critique could be classified as debunking (see Gronn, 1983:35).

The fullest criticism of Greenfield's work occurred in Willower's 1992 paper (pp364-375). He "covers the scholarly literature on the administration of public school organisations ... intellectual trends and cross-currents in the field". Under "The Subjectivistic Perspective" heading (p367) Willower briefly outlined Greenfield's position and noted the difficulty of finding "explicit connections between Greenfield's views and empirical studies" because Greenfield's subjectivism "is essentially a criticism of modes of theory and research" (p367). Willower noted the "charge of relativism" or "the notion that in Greenfield's subjectivism, no norms are available to distinguish good ideas from bad ones" (p368). He asserted that Greenfield did not "come to grips explicitly with the traditional epistemological question: What is knowledge?" (p368); neither did he "set forth a systematic position on values" but rather "cited approvingly" (p369) Hodgkinson's systematic position on values. In summary Willower remarked:

Taken together, the neo-Marxist and subjectivist critiques in educational administration have enlivened the literature of the field, broadened the philosophical range of scholarship, and contributed to methodological diversity (p369).

"The indiscriminate nature of their criticisms and the one-sidedness of their proposals" made them controversial in Willower's eyes.

Administration of Education as a Field of Study again focused on "the broad intellectual forces that have influenced educational administration as a field of study" (Willower, 1994:53). Greenfield was included with the subjectivists and the same criticism followed as had been made in previous papers (Willower, 1987, 1988, 1992). Willower expressed his belief here that the Evers and Lakomski (1991) view of Greenfield's work was "one of the broadest treatments of Greenfield's position".

Whither Educational Administration? The Post Postpositivist Era (1993) was similar in theme and critique of Greenfield's work as all the Willower papers of this period. Willower declared that Greenfield was "the most voluble and persistent advocate" (Willower, 1993:16) of subjectivism; that the 1970s were "marked by disputes which were sometimes acrimonious and which spawned a good deal of confusion as well" (p18); that Greenfield's use of "phenomenology was a small slip" (p19) compared to his "loose use of positivism" to refer to "virtually any quantitative inquiry" and that "subjectivist ... views have enjoyed their prominence and even some dominance but they appear to have run their courses and begun to wane" (p19).

Educational Administration: Inquiry, Values, Practice (1994) was the retitled, revised edition of the Willower paper *Educational Administration: Philosophy, Praxis, Professing* presented as the National Council of Professors of Educational Administration (NCPEA) 1991 Walter Cocking lecture. Again the paper took the grand view of educational administration over four decades and numbered Greenfield among the subjectivists. It considered three aspects of Greenfield's work - his attack on science, his concern about values, "and the relationship of subjectivism to empirical studies in educational administration" (Willower, 1994:12). This is Willower's most extensive critique of Greenfield's work (pp11-15, 20, 25) although he has said it all in previous papers. He repeated the charge that "Greenfield's treatment of positivistic science has been described as an attack on a straw man" (p20); that Greenfield's social scientists and administrators are "robot-like, heartless and without compassion" (p25). He rarely quoted Greenfield's exact words and concluded that "the simple truth is that the practical empiricism of scientific method works" (p60).

The final paper in which Willower mentioned Greenfield was *Inquiry in Educational Administration and the Spirit of the Times* (1996). He wanted to point out "the powerful and exciting philosophical alternatives to the various forms of subjectivism, critical theory and post modernism in vogue today" (p351). The article mentioned

Greenfield twice (Willower, 1996:351-352) and quoted from Greenfield on positivistic science and his attack on Simon's "administrative man". These were already mentioned in a little more detail in the 1994 paper and Willower believed both were "inaccurate and unfair" (p352). "Subjectivists of the Greenfield variety" (p352) saw science as "an adversary" and engaged in "polemical rather than educative" writing on science. Willower's concluding comments remarked that subjectivism and other similar categories of thought "are all creatures of the times, the more so because of their lack of intellectual plausibility and the staying power such plausibility confers" (p362).

Willower-Greenfield:point and counterpoint

This is part of the text of an interview with Professor Don Willower at Penn State, 6.11.90 and Professor Thom Greenfield's reply at OISE, 3.12.90. The dialogue provides some insight into the personalities and perceptions of both scholars and lends some understanding to the antagonism between them.

Willower:

Thom is a good scholar. I rank him very highly. He was obviously their star in those years. He felt his ideas then were startlingly different and that he had to pay for that. In truth, because his values are different, he got a lot more attention. People are always looking for something new, especially in educational administration but Thom's

stuff is not new. He got much more mileage than otherwise because his ideas were against the mainstream. There wasn't much of a mainstream then. The professionals in the 50s/60s didn't know a damn thing about value building in educational administration. I never think of Thom as a leader. He's more of an outrider and he wants to be.

Greenfield:

Willower has this habit of speaking *ex cathedra* about philosophical issues. I don't understand a lot of what he's saying. It seems to be very idiosyncratic to him and I certainly wouldn't attempt to justify or explain it. He will climb on any band wagon that seems to be going some place. He picks up bits of arguments here and there, and use them to his advantage.

Willower:

I was originally trained in philosophy. That's where I run into some problems with Thom, having been trained in Buffalo, under Martin Farber, who had studied with Husserl. He was a little critical of Husserl's philosophy of phenomenology. I had good training too in sociology and the philosophy of science side of that. Alvin Gouldner is my mentor in sociology. I had no education training, but at that time, there was a huge teacher shortage and they had the Intensive Teacher Training Program. I took a couple of credits and found that the administration side was interesting to me from an organisational perspective. Then I had a couple of years of residence, taught educational administration at Buffalo and some foundation courses, and

came down to Penn State in 1959. There was more of a social science orientation here. I've always been keen on and I've done empirical studies right along including ethnographic style. They're observational type studies. I did my first observational study in the early 60s. I've been doing qualitative work for quite a while and I had written on values also with a philosophic focus in the *Professorship* article 1964. So I have this idea that this whole thing is part of the tradition.

My own view is sort of an amalgam of ideas. I've been very influenced by Dewey. My Masters thesis was done under Martin Farber on Dewey's conception of values. I like his conception of science and philosophy. It's so open, so free, undogmatic. I've always been very comfortable with that. I thought of myself as a combination of that work, of logical empiricism which to me, was almost devoted to questions of meaning. So when Greenfield came out with his ideas about quantitative and anti-quantitative research and talked about phenomenology, he was saying a lot of things I kind of agreed with but I was really taken aback by his simplistic view of it. Firstly I knew what phenomenology was. I had studied it. Greenfield was not talking phenomenology. The only thing that was close to phenomenology that he was talking about, that phenomenologists are interested in, was introspective analysis. I'd call Greenfield's stuff subjectivism. Most subjectivists have a problem with relativism. So how does

he handle it? I ask him "What is your theory of knowledge?"
He never really answers that.

Greenfield:

I suppose he's evoking there the spirit of modern
positivist thought and at the heart of it, that's what
Willower is. He's saying that the only meaningful
questions or statements are statements that are meaningful
empirically; what Evers and Lakomski call the "synthetic
statement". They're empirically founded. Evers points out
how that notion comes a cropper. The whole movement is
nowhere. And here's Willower still defending logical
positivism and Dewey. He calls it anti-dogmatic. It's a
dogmatic defense of anti-dogmatism. He certainly does not
look at the complexities of the issues. He certainly does
not grapple with it in the depth that Evers does. Evers
knows that logical empiricism is dead.

Subjectivists certainly point out the diversity in
values. It is not necessary in my view to be a relativist
because you are a subjectivist. Some relativists are.
Others of us are not. The point is that you will not find
a criterion for choosing values simply by looking
subjectively at the difference of values. The argument is
- and it goes right back to Weber - that if you want to
judge values you must stand out of the points of view that
are inherent in social reality and the moment you step out
you are no longer a scientist. You yourself are an
advocate of values even as you are describing other people

advocating values. That issue Willower does not understand. You don't have to be relativist to recognise that, as people see them, there are different values for motivating their actions in the world and there are different bases for justification; and that, in those justifications themselves there is no way of arbitrating differences. You must stand outside of the framework. Then what are you standing on is the question. There are those subjectivists who would not attempt to stand outside it and say there is no basis for choice. That's one of the ways of looking at it but you're not necessarily limited to doing so. Evers stood outside it. He made his own comments and judgments.

As for Willower's charge that I never really answer his question about a theory of knowledge, that's ridiculous. Insulting! It means he pays no attention to what I say. I've written paper after paper addressing the issue. It's just so grossly in character. He says Greenfield says there are only two views. For goodness sake! He will not understand the argument. You try to make the argument for a multiplicity of views and he then says "You've only got two views!"

Willower:

Maybe Greenfield does not take this question of knowledge as an important question. To me he's a version of subjectivism. It wasn't something new. My own view of science is a kind of endurance one. It is very human, very

easy to get muddled up; the kind of thing that ends up being an effort on the part of people of good will to understand the world and how people behave and what's going on. You do it within the norms that developed within a field of study and you do your best and try and be as unbiased as you can, recognising that it's damned hard to do that and trying to make explanatory and logical sense of what it is you're saying about whatever phenomena you're interested in. I've never thought of science the way Thom has. The difference is I've done a lot. I've always viewed social science as a kind of intellectual gauge in which you try to make sense out of things you see and you never, dogmatically, hold to it but you try to be as logical as possible.

We come from entirely different perspectives. He is not a scientist, not a social scientist. He's like he said. He's an old English teacher. That's where he's coming from and therefore he doesn't have a good grasp of what science is with all its works. He has an idealised, negative view of it. I don't recognise the science he talks about. He thinks of science as a subject matter. I think of it as a method and I don't see scientific method as being inappropriate for understanding people. By scientific method I mean I make sense out of what I see - logical explanations I call it; try it out, work at it in other settings and try to generalise. We generalise all the time in life. Generalisation is saying that this is

the way you think it works. It's not set, not final. The essence of science is its self-correcting nature and that's something Greenfield misses completely. That's the very essence of it no matter what kind of science it is. I like the term "inquiry". I've always used that. It's not something Greenfield has.

He's never gotten away from a sort of anti-positivism and when he has gotten away from it, he's gone into groupie things like Greek monasteries and things that nobody relates to. He hasn't come to grips with this business of the schools and how you can make schools better, how you can enlarge people's understandings. Really the arguments that Thom has spent a lot of time in perfecting are not practical.

Greenfield:

Where does he get the notion that I think about science just as a subject matter? I don't talk about it that way. The people who raise the issue of the difference between social and physical science, they never talk about it as a subject matter. The question is whether methods of physical science can be applied to the constructions of the social world as well; whether the constructions of the social world are of the same nature as physical reality; whether you can be scientific about a value. He doesn't address that question. He doesn't recognise it. How are you to be logical about values? Trying to build a set of statements that are empirically verifiable - if it's not

empirically verifiable, it's not science. It's not warranted. It's all part of the positivist tradition and he won't see that some of the fundamental issues are asserted, not discovered, not warranted. Those non-warranted motivations are the powerful drivers in social reality in many cases. All you have to be is empirical, pragmatic and instrumental.

Willower:

I think that what's going to happen with Thom's stuff is that he'll always be sort of a footnote. I think that's about as much as he can expect to be; someone who pursued the subjectivist view in educational administration.

Whenever somebody looks at the history of the intellectual strains in educational administration he will be seen as the spokesman for the subjectivist view. If there weren't a Greenfield someone would have done that in one way or another. The times were right for it.

Greenfield:

So I'm part of the self-correction of science. It's all in the system! The system is self-correcting!

Willower:

The field, at the moment is in a state of confusion. People don't know where they are going. I think there's a lot of room for diversity, for different strands of thought, for different kinds of work, but I think this idea that there's nothing to look to or understand about research and scholarship, I think that's incorrect. I think that

people who are not in the tradition of science, have the problem. They expect too much from science. They don't understand that it's a very hit-and-miss kind of thing. The nature of science is iffy and fun for that reason.

See, we lack a research tradition in educational administration. Anybody who understands the philosophy of the field knows that. The profession of the late 50s/60s was in confusion so there were no philosophical debates. It was sort of "this is the way the social sciences are working and we're borrowing most of our stuff from the social sciences". Then along came the Theory Movement. I never thought of a movement. It was just people coming to a realisation. It never was a mission. The movement part came because you had a group like UCEA coming on and they had all sorts of seminars including, by the way, several on values, one on philosophy. Then there was Farquhar's thing on the humanities. They didn't know what science was because they didn't do science and so the expectations were too great for what was going to come out of it. After 10 to 15 years anybody could ask the question, "Well, what do we absolutely know?" and somebody would answer "Absolutely nothing". So now there are a lot of different approaches and each one has its own place and we're trying to understand the whole thing better, how to improve it, how to apply what we know. But the subjectivists and neo-Marxists, they've had their day! They're on the way down! The reason is that they're too one-sided and they don't fit

the research tradition of sociology. People won't do their research and they can't make it fit into these things well enough and so they're no longer as powerful as they were.

Greenfield:

I just don't think he understands what he's talking about. He cites people, takes a piece here and there to bolster what he thinks is the right position, his position. The theory may be on the way down. I don't think he understands why.

There's nothing wrong with the past. The thing is that I don't think he sees the issues in live, vivid, critical depth. I just find there's nothing there at all. It's certainly a clear indication of the quality of thought in parts of the field. Here's one of the leading exponents of theory and research in the field and this is what he has to say about the leading edge issues, no more than that.

Conclusion

"The pursuit of visions and ideas" led Greenfield from positivistic science and empirically based research to the "marriage of science and service - or rather of science and values" (Greenfield, 1991c:199). The journey was tortuous and metamorphic. There was more than a little conflict - with family, students, colleagues and other academics and for a while the parry and thrust of argument and counter argument prevailed. How did people respond to Greenfield and to his view of organisations and

administration? And what did he leave to scholars and to the field of educational administration? Chapter Eleven seeks to answer these questions for some individuals in specific contexts within specific cultures of educational administration.