

Acknowledgements

Several people have contributed to the development and progress of this work. I would like to thank them for the unique ways they did so:

- Prof M S Yadav, my supervisor, for his keen insight into the 'educational experience'; for his time, energy and humour, which made work so much more enjoyable;
- Prof Snehaben Joshi, Dean, Faculty of Education and Psychology, and Prof D R Goel, Head, CASE, for their cooperation;
- The Municipal School Board, Baroda, for permitting me to undertake this study in one of its schools; the staff of School No. 62, particularly Sunandaben and DF; Mrs N., the late principal, whose tragic death during the course of the study was a deep personal loss;
- All the children of 4a and 4b, who shared their worlds with me in that pleasant year away from the often lacklustre world of adults; to them I owe a rare and fulfilling learning experience;
- Prof T S Saraswathi, for intellectual and moral support through all times, for reminding me about the roses; debts beyond words; Prof Amita Verma, for sustained encouragement, and friendship;
- The Fulbright Foundation, for granting a fellowship to spend time at the Department of Curriculum and Instruction, University of Wisconsin in 1997-98;
- Prof Michael Apple and friends from the 'Friday Group' at C&I for sharing theoretical insights and educational concerns, and helping me to learn the full meaning of the global and the local, A for priceless *batepapo*, D for the subaltern view, and MA, for, well, everything;
- Friends at CASE from the 'past': Prof Sunirmal Roy, for believing such work should be done; Sulekhaben, for sharing her reflections on school teaching; Eisha, Uma, Shailaja and Ramu for being cheerful fellow-travellers; and Sarojben, librarian *uno*, who gave fresh colour to the world of books, for all the feeding and other support;

- Colleagues at the Women's Studies Research Centre: Prof. Parul Dave, for her cooperation; Zakia, Maushami, Phiji and others, for cheerfully waiting out periods of absence and silence; Nitinbhai for computer assistance; Janakbhai, for last-minute helping out;
- Trupti, for critical insights from the women's movement, and an intellectual comradeship only she could offer;
- Friends who affectionately badgered and cajoled: Farida, Vrijendra, Deeptha, Shivji, Subha, Indro, Bina, Neela (also for 'standing in' at all times!); for weekend sunshine, Rahi;
- My parents, wise and cheerful, for sharing in the little joys and pains of this work, and having boundless hope in me, always; my brothers, for being curious, this is what you get;
- My mother-in-law, Christa, for critical reflections on pleasant Srirangapatna evenings;
- Johannes, partner and mate, most exacting critic, for sharing his enviable quality of hearing in the voices of children the ways of the world; for believing in the project, and enjoying every moment of discovery; for so, so much more;
- And finally, Naina, our daughter, who asked the first questions that gave this research life, and has never stopped asking them; for graciously lending me 'our' time to complete this work; and for infusing the richness of childhood into my ways of seeing.

It is seeing which establishes our place in the surrounding world; we explain that world with words, but words can never undo the fact that we are surrounded by it. The relation between what we see and what we know is never settled.

John Berger. *Ways of Seeing*.

for

Naina, face of hope

and

*Johannes, 'in gratitude'
is not enough*