
AN EDUCATIONAL QUESTION VIA RABBIT HOLE: WHAT IS AN EDUCATIONAL QUESTION?

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Taking up Biesta's notion of "educational questions,"¹ I jump down the rabbit hole,² attempting to find generalized characteristics of educational questions. The concept of educational questions has been taken up topically, or as a related component to topics within philosophy of education. The rabbit hole approach provided a new perspective for attempting to discover the characteristics of educational questions and to engage with six authors, and, seemingly, six conceptions of educational questions. Schulz suggests that the rabbit hole can operate as iterative, exhaustive, or associative.³ This paper traces my exhaustive and associative "rabbit hole" via questioning and inquiry to reveal the ways in which various conceptions of one single concept are presented when philosophy of education students explore educational questions within the field.

In contrast to Alice in Wonderland's experience with the rabbit hole physically leading her to a specific destination—a new world—the modern conception of the rabbit hole is without a determined destination, deviating from Carroll's intended meaning and taking on a new metaphorical nature. Falling into the rabbit hole is without "a means to an end. It's an end in itself—an end without end, inviting us ever onward, urging us to keep becoming; as Alice would say, curiuser and curiuser."⁴ It evokes the notion that we inevitably find ourselves accidentally getting "lost" to the point of distraction and that it takes a substantial amount of time to do so.⁵ It is not time wasted; it is the opulence of a "guilty pleasure,"⁶ positioning knowledge as the pleasure. The freedom to go down the rabbit hole opened up perspectives on inquiry and questioning that arise in this paper. Even with this paper, the rabbit hole has not ended; it is still actively occurring. There is much more to discover as I grow curiuser and curiuser. For instance, there is more to come to know about how to situate philosophy of education between the discipline of philosophy and the field of education. While there are related questions about how to situate philosophy of education, this

¹ Gert Biesta, "Is Philosophy of Education a Historical Mistake? Connecting Philosophy and Education Differently," *Theory and Research in Education* 12, no. 1 (2014): 65–76, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1477878513517338>.

² Kathryn Schulz, "The Rabbit-Hole Rabbit Hole." *The New Yorker*, April 5, 2018, <https://www.newyorker.com/culture/cultural-comment/the-rabbit-hole-rabbit-hole>.

³ Schulz, "The Rabbit-Hole Rabbit Hole."

⁴ Schulz.

⁵ Schulz.

⁶ Schulz.

paper is not intended to engage that body of work directly, although we will see that the concept of an educational question cannot be discerned apart from this broader conversation.

DOWN THE RABBIT HOLE

Educational questions are brought to light by Biesta in his work on connecting the disciplines of education and philosophy.⁷ Biesta discusses the potential to connect philosophy to the field of education in an alternate way by asking “educational questions” about education in lieu of philosophical questions about education. Biesta suggests that the very crux of the position of philosophy of education, as residing within the discipline of philosophy versus the discipline of education, depends upon the way in which we pose our questions on education.

Biesta explains that the German/Continental tradition utilizes philosophy as “one of the resources for asking and answering” educational questions,⁸ while the Anglo-American tradition asks philosophical questions about education. Yet, no examples of educational questions are provided, leaving us to decipher what an educational question *is* and how to reconstruct our Anglo-American philosophical questions about education into educational questions about education. If educational questions possess such an important dichotomy from philosophical questions, how do Anglo-American philosophers shift their thinking in order to construct them?

Searching journal databases for “educational questions,” Saeverot’s interview with Biesta surfaced.⁹ While the interview contextualized many of my outlying questions, the fullness of the notion of educational questions eluded me. Thus, my trip down the rabbit hole began. I attempted to leave Saeverot¹⁰ and Biesta’s¹¹ texts behind, but they were there, calling to me often. As they persisted in my thoughts, I have attempted to reconstruct their presence throughout the journey down the rabbit hole.

MAPPING THE PATH

In order to create a traceable path from beginning to end, I constructed a list of journals related to the field of Philosophy of Education.¹² Journals

⁷ Biesta, “Is Philosophy of Education a Historical Mistake?”

⁸ Biesta, “Is Philosophy of Education a Historical Mistake?” 9.

⁹ Herner Saeverot and Gert Biesta, “On the Need to Ask Educational Questions about Education: An Interview with Gert Biesta,” *Policy Futures in Education* 11, no. 2 (2013): 175–184, <https://doi.org/10.2304/pfie.2013.11.2.175>.

¹⁰ Saeverot and Biesta, “On the Need to Ask.”

¹¹ Gert J. J. Biesta, *The Rediscovery of Teaching* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2017).

¹² For the initial project, I chose to begin with journal articles. I would like to thank Chris Higgins and the scholars present at the 2018 Ohio Valley Philosophy of Education Society Conference for providing me with a list of texts to include in my reading for the expansion of the project beyond journal publications.

searched include: *Philosophy of Education, Educational Philosophy and Theory, Theory and Research in Education, Educational Theory, Journal of Philosophy of Education, Studies in Philosophy and Education, Philosophical Inquiry in Education, Ethics and Education, and The Journal of Aesthetic Education Dewey Studies*. One journal, *Educational Studies*, contained one of the noted authors, via general journal search. All other results are consistent with within-journal search findings.

Articles by Biesta,¹³ Bingham,¹⁴ and Le Grange¹⁵ were discovered in that respective order in *Educational Philosophy and Theory*. *Educational Studies* lead to de Oliveira Andreotti's article¹⁶ and the *Journal of Philosophy of Education* yielded Snir's article.¹⁷ Finally, *Ethics and Education* highlighted Laverty's publication.¹⁸

Before reading, I examined each publication's references. Although most were written before Biesta's foundational writing for educational questions,¹⁹ I was surprised to discover that none referenced Biesta's interview with Saeverot,²⁰ nor his 2014 publication. Further reference examination revealed that no cross-citations between *articles* existed. Yet, several authors cited each other's work on alternate publications. Citations existed for additional works of Biesta, Bingham, and de Oliveira Andreotti. Shared primary source authors, not publications, include: Cullen, Deleuze, Dewey, Derrida, Foucault, Lewis (T.E.), Masschelein, Plato, Rancière, Todd (Sharon), Waks, and Wittgenstein.

While the articles provide little overlap particularly in regard to Biesta's conception of educational questions, they provided multiple frameworks from

¹³ Gert Biesta, "The Rediscovery of Teaching: On Robot Vacuum Cleaners, Non-Egological Education and the Limits of the Hermeneutical World View," *Educational Philosophy and Theory* 48, no. 4 (2016): 374–392, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131857.2015.1041442>.

¹⁴ Charles Bingham, "The Hermeneutics of Educational Questioning," *Educational Philosophy and Theory* 37, no. 4 (2005): p. 553–565, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1469-5812.2005.00140.x>.

¹⁵ Lesley Lionel Leonard Le Grange, "Sustainability and Higher education: From Arborescent to Rhizomatic Thinking," *Educational Philosophy and Theory* 43, no. 7 (2011): 742–754, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1469-5812.2008.00503.x>.

¹⁶ Vanessa de Oliveira Andreotti, "Conflicting Epistemic Demands in Poststructuralist and Postcolonial Engagement with Questions of Complicity in Systemic Harm," *Educational Studies* 50, no.4 (2014): 378–397, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131946.2014.924940>.

¹⁷ Itay Snir, "Minima Pedagogica: Education, Thinking and Experience in Adorno," *Journal of Philosophy of Education* 51, no.2 (2017): 415–429, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9752.12238>.

¹⁸ Megan J. Laverty, "The World of Instruction: Undertaking the Impossible," *Ethics and Education* 9, no.1 (2014): 42–53, <https://doi.org/10.1080/17449642.2014.890318>.

¹⁹ Biesta, "Is Philosophy of Education a Historical Mistake?"

²⁰ Saeverot and Biesta, "On the Need to Ask."

which I could approach Biesta's conception. Alas, in my objective reading, I did not find what I sought to discover: what an educational question *is*.

However, shared notions exist within the literature when one looks beyond their individual subject matter. First, de Oliveira Andreotti acknowledges Biesta for "encouraging" her to write the paper, which uses educational questions, although not explicitly stated, in studying questioning complicity. Second, there is an overarching theme of questioning authority in education, or as Lavery states "instructional skepticism,"²¹ its relationship to subject, object, and the Other, and the need to redefine scholarship.²² Third, seemingly superficial, but truly profound, the nature and precision of human questioning and word choice are deeply impactful to constructing meaning.

UNPACKING THE JOURNEY DOWN THE RABBIT HOLE

Biesta views educational questions about education as utilizing philosophy as a *resource* for answering them.²³ Yet, he does not contest the idea of asking philosophical questions about education, nor does he claim that the disciplines (education and philosophy) agree on what it means to ask philosophical or educational questions. Biesta's argument for educational questions centers more upon the notion of the resources we use to answer them and the ways in which this attaches the scholarship of philosophy and education to the disciplines.

Biesta's was the first article to surface during the within-journal search, yet no discussion of educational questions nor the term itself were present.²⁴ The article, a pretext to the publication of Biesta's *The Rediscovery of Teaching*, is reflective of the text. The second article, Bingham's,²⁵ provided more insight into the concept of educational questions via the work of Gadamer's 'true questions.'²⁶

Within the hermeneutical context, Bingham looks at how educational questions operate and discusses the use of questions versus statements. Bingham highlights the status of the object for which the question is intended. He states that "the use of a question intended toward an object presents us with the possibility that such an object may not exist as we originally thought."²⁷ Bingham cites the phrase from Gadamer: that a question "breaks open the being

²¹ Lavery, "The World of Instruction," 42.

²² Le Grange, "Sustainability and Higher Education," 750.

²³ Biesta, "Is Philosophy of Education a Historical Mistake?" 9.

²⁴ Biesta, "The Rediscovery of Teaching."

²⁵ Bingham, "The Hermeneutics of Educational Questioning."

²⁶ Bingham, 553.

²⁷ Bingham, 554.

of the object.”²⁸ This is one overlap with Biesta’s discussion of subject versus object that continues within additional publications.²⁹

For Bingham, ‘true questions’ are those that drive “right for that spot where the answer is truly unknown to both the questioner and the respondent.”³⁰ By carefully constructing questions, the questioner opens up space for both participants, student(s) and teacher, to engage. Yet, while Bingham supports Gadamer’s idea of ‘true questions,’ he disagrees with Gadamer on the idea that teachers cannot ask ‘true questions.’ Bingham argues that Gadamer has taken a subject-centered assumption which indicates that some people’s intentions in asking the questions will make them “less true.”³¹ Suggesting that Gadamer has confused ‘true questions’ with “asking a question with true intentions,”³² he contends that while teachers do not possess pure intentions, teachers can ask true questions or even pedagogical questions and, in the process, ‘break open’ an object. Bingham views the demand for a teacher to ask a ‘true question’ as being the moment where the teacher “ceases to exist *as teacher*,”³³ based on the paradox of pedagogical questions as ‘true questions’ requiring “openness” not afforded by the pedagogical question.

Bingham introduces three themes to keep in mind when we ask educational questions: non-superficiality, (pedagogical) humility, and circuitry (answering a question with another question). His understanding of educational questioning in response to Gadamer’s work adds to the conversation of Biestian educational questioning particularly in deciphering the linguistics of questioning. Signifying that the way we pose questions has the potential to ‘break open’ new meaning for the receiver. If we desire to provide this experience for the receiver, we need to unpack what it means to be ‘teacher’ and in what ways we desire to be ‘teacher.’ This construct not only takes me back to Biesta’s publications,³⁴ but to the work of Masschelein and Simons in which a space of suspension is created and the opening up of or “unlocking” of the world is possible for students.³⁵ Yet, Bingham reminds us that the student must be open to the possibilities of the meaning found in the questions, as well as the call to “*become* a questioner in order to understand a question.”³⁶

While still left with a gap in taking up Biesta’s focus on the relationship of educational questions in the positioning of philosophy of education within the discipline of philosophy *or* education, Bingham leaves me with a profound sense

²⁸ Bingham, 554.

²⁹ Biesta, *The Rediscovery of Teaching*.

³⁰ Bingham, “The Hermeneutics of Educational Questions,” 555.

³¹ Bingham, 557.

³² Bingham, 557.

³³ Bingham, 557.

³⁴ Biesta, “The Rediscovery of Teaching.”; Biesta, *The Rediscovery of Teaching*.

³⁵ Jan Masschelein and Maarten Simons, *In Defence of the School: A Public Issue* (Leuven: Education, Culture & Society Publishers, 2013), 42.

³⁶ Bingham, “The Hermeneutics of Educational Questions,” 563.

of how linguistic precision influences our posing questions and the potentiality they possess.

In, *Sustainability and Higher Education: From arborescent to rhizomatic thinking*, Le Grange presents an alternate meaning for educational questions in his independent use of the term outside of Biesta's work. For Le Grange, educational questions are questions such as "what and how we should learn."³⁷ Superficially, this construct of educational questions doesn't appear to delve deep enough into the Biestian conception of the term due to its connectedness to learning. Yet, as I read further, a familiar theme surfaces as Le Grange advocates for redefining the role of scholarship within the sustainability of education and the university's role in it. This notion parallels Biesta's call to redefine the role of the teacher in education.³⁸ This parallel depicts a sense of the role of asking educational questions in redefining education both in the broader sense of the term and in what components constitute "education" itself.

From the perspective of disciplinary knowledge being deterritorialized, Le Grange takes the stance that developing a rhizomatic sustainability of education requires that scholarship be reimagined beyond Boyer's four functions of scholarship: discovery, integration, application, and teaching.³⁹ Citing Hymen et al. from 2001, Le Grange promotes new assemblages of scholarship within the university that redefine the role of university within Boyer's functions of scholarship and, thus, would potentially redefine the role of professor. Le Grange's work, although not directly connected to Biesta, leaves me with a sense of the need to ask educational questions and further 'break open' the role of teacher.

Next, de Oliveira Andreotti, in her article *Conflicting Epistemic Demands in Poststructuralist and Postcolonial Engagements With Question of Complicity in Systemic Harm*, mentions "educational questions" in the abstract, stating: "Next, I present a concrete example of an academic incident that illustrates how politics of identity and ideas of justice/injustice, innocence, or complicity in harm can mobilize different epistemic demands, conceptualizations of ethics, and educational questions."⁴⁰ Following an analysis of poststructural and postcolonial theories in education, educational questions come into play when de Oliveira Andreotti attempts to use Connell's 2007 "dirty theory— . . . theorizing that is mixed up with specific situations—" in order to clarify and make sense of her own experience.⁴¹ de Oliveira Andreotti recounts her experience at an unspecified philosophy conference highlighting the problems with politics of identity and the relation of complicity. This leads her to list a paragraph of what I perceive to be educational questions, such as: "Why

³⁷ Le Grange, "Sustainability and Higher Education," 742.

³⁸ Biesta, "The Rediscovery of Teaching;" Biesta, *The Rediscovery of Teaching*.

³⁹ Le Grange, "Sustainability and Higher Education," 750.

⁴⁰ de Oliveira Andreotti, "Conflicting Epistemic Demands," 378.

⁴¹ de Oliveira Andreotti, 383.

should I be the one singled out to risk my relationship with an important (albeit, problematic) leader in the field when many other people could have articulated the challenge? How could the responsibility for something difficult, risky, and important be passed on so easily?”⁴² Reading the questions led to deep engagement with de Oliveira Andreotti’s thought process as she poses questions that appear to ‘break open’ her experience, diving deeper into the experience and continuing the circuitry of her questioning. Proceeding through the article, the reader gains the sense that we’ve journeyed with de Oliveira Andreotti as she unpacks her educational questions. The journey ‘breaks open’ the possibility of what we experience when de Oliveira Andreotti thanks Biesta for encouraging her to “pursue the ideas in this paper.”⁴³

Snir picks up the work of Adorno’s notion of educational questions under the overarching theme of critical education in *Minima Pedagogica: Education, Thinking and Experience in Adorno*. For Snir, the core of education is the activity of thinking, and the article centers upon the ideal of “thinking as the essence of critical education.”⁴⁴ Similar to Biesta, the theme of thinking about thinking, questioning what is known, and questioning how we question, is at the core of some form of rediscovery or redefining of education and/or scholarship. Snir additionally relies on the German conception of Bildung, which Biesta mentions in his interview with Saeverot. Bildung involves being open to the world, taking in that which we come into contact with in the world, and creating or, perhaps, learning something from it. While Snir’s use of Bildung differs from Biesta’s reliance on Pädagogik, it is noteworthy that both reference a shared Germanic tradition. In the interview with Saeverot, Biesta mentions Adorno and his idea of Halbbildung—partial knowing without context and understanding—which is also noted by Snir.

Snir delves into discussion of minima pedagogica, or thinking as action via essay writing, along with discussing education for thinking under the pretext of Adorno and contrasts it utilizing the connection of experience and thinking in education via Dewey.⁴⁵ Snir points out that while Dewey and Adorno have their “obvious differences,” they share several apprehensions. Not only do students need to think, but they must encounter the world itself, discovering connections and problem solving. Thus, when encountering the world based on Deweyan notions, one must recognize that thinking is connected to both passive and active elements of experience in order to find new ways to engage with phenomena, to create things from them, and to solve problems.⁴⁶ This idea aligns with the Biestian conception of existing within the world in a grown-up way.⁴⁷ Grown-up-ness for Biesta means taking up one’s responsibility in a moment or moments

⁴² de Oliveira Andreotti, 385.

⁴³ de Oliveira Andreotti, 394.

⁴⁴ Snir, “Minima Pedagogica,” 415.

⁴⁵ Snir, 417.

⁴⁶ Snir, 419–420.

⁴⁷ Biesta, “The Rediscovery of Teaching;” Biesta, *The Rediscovery of Teaching*.

where you in your uniqueness are called to take up your exclusive responsibility. Uniqueness is a conception that calls upon a specific individual and requires the individual to either heed the call or to turn away from it. In the moments where we answer our call to grown-up-ness, we enter into being in a grown-up way. Additionally, Snir evokes the writings of Bingham, Masschelein, and Simons in the notion of ‘breaking open’ or encountering the world.

Further aligning with Biesta is the notion of subject and object relied upon by Snir. A significant portion of the article is spent outlining the object and its role in learning. Snir cites Adorno as believing the world to be an “object of thinking,”⁴⁸ versus students in schools believing the knowledge of the world to be possession or investment. For Snir, much like Biesta, school is a place where suspension is achieved, and the core experience is the object and/or subject-matter. He suggests that the subject-matter is there as an object of knowledge and also as a sort of subject that speaks to the student. Resembling Biesta, Snir cites the work of Masschelein and Simons, *In Defence of the School*. Snir’s discourse on subject, object and subject matter, in addition to discussion on the role of the teacher, aligns well with Biesta.⁴⁹

Laverty mentions educational questions in *The World of Instruction: Undertaking the Impossible*, stating: “Throughout history, philosophers have reflected on educational questions.”⁵⁰ While the article is not focused on educational questions, notions of Biesta are present within Laverty’s discussion of “instructional skepticism.”⁵¹ Here she suggests a responsibility of philosophers of education to teach the tradition of instruction *and* undertaking such instruction, rather than just instructing.

After dialogue regarding the term ‘education’ and the notion of instructional skepticism across the works of well-known philosophers, Laverty concludes that instruction as “task,” or “the work of schools,”⁵² does not ensure learning, nor is instruction always synonymous with teaching. She states that if she is correct, her call to take up instruction and the additional dimensions of schooling becomes an imperative for philosophers of education, particularly in teaching this tradition to students. Here, again, we note alignment with Biesta in his discussion of asking educational questions and in his 2017 text regarding separating teaching from learning and from education. Laverty is calling for a new role or, perhaps, a recommitment to the role of passing on the tradition of teaching *and* taking up instruction. The call is reminiscent of Biesta’s broader call to rediscover the role of the teacher, how we ask questions, *and* the tools we use to answer them matters. If we define a question as educational and answer it as an educational question, this has particular outcomes. Asking educational

⁴⁸ Snir, “Minima Pedagogica,” 421.

⁴⁹ Biesta, *The Rediscovery of Teaching*.

⁵⁰ Laverty, “The World of Instruction,” 42.

⁵¹ Laverty, 42.

⁵² Laverty, 46.

questions ‘breaks open’ new possibilities, just as Laverly calls for the new possibility of passing along *and* taking up.

Most of the articles drew parallels to Biesta or explored similar yet independent conceptions of the term ‘educational questions.’ However, no article fleshes out the term, nor suggests a definition or defines the parameters of what qualifies as educational questions under their conception of the term. Feeling incomplete, I sought out the influence which led Biesta to compose his article,⁵³ White’s essay, *Philosophy, Philosophy of Education, and Economic Realities*.⁵⁴ While the rabbit hole provided broad engagement with educational questions within philosophy of education, as a new student, I lacked the desired depth and defining characteristics of the term. If philosophers within the field are utilizing the term “educational questions,” it seems to imply that the term possesses a common understanding or definition among philosophers of education. Yet, when seeking to understand the term and discovering no similar description or characteristics of educational questions within found articles, how do students construct their understanding and knowledge of the term when reading published pieces and entering into the field?

PRIMARY SOURCE

Although included in a book, *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Education* by Harvey Siegel published in 2009, I sought out White’s essay to provide the context of what Biesta was responding to in his work. White also discusses the connection of philosophy of education to philosophy in regard to the fact that Siegel believes it to be a branch of philosophy, as well as a branch that was “flourishing.”⁵⁵ Cited by White, Siegel states that in the history of Western philosophy, “philosophical questions concerning education were high on the philosophical agenda.”⁵⁶ White states that during the 1950s to the 1970s, academia made significant contributions to the field and literature of philosophy of education. Today, he claims the field has largely been “abandoned” and is “no longer recognized” as part of the discipline of philosophy.⁵⁷ White’s thesis lies in questioning if Siegel’s claim—that philosophy of education is a branch of philosophy—is correct.⁵⁸

⁵³ Biesta, “Is Philosophy of Education a Historical Mistake?”

⁵⁴ John White, “Philosophy, Philosophy of Education, and Economic Realities,” *Theory and Research in Education* 11, no. 3 (2013): 294–303, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1477878513498180>.

⁵⁵ White, “Philosophy, Philosophy of Education, and Economic Realities,” 294.

⁵⁶ White, 294.

⁵⁷ White, 295.

⁵⁸ Important to note is that this conversation is part of a much deeper and broader conversation (i.e. Dewey, Arcilla, Levinson, Biesta, Siegel, etc.) in regard to the position of philosophy of education belonging in philosophy or education. For the purposes of this paper, the rabbit hole led me directly to White’s essay, which cited Siegel’s views, which places this conversation within this broader conversation that is

Early on, White declares that answering his thesis question lies in how the question is perceived. On the surface, White's notion of educational questions lies in one question: "Is Siegel's ideal that philosophy departments should normally have someone on the staff with a specialist interest in educational questions?"⁵⁹ Yet, as he continues to question Siegel, a deeper connection persists.

White contends that philosophers of the arts are interested in "achievements across millennia," which are both an independent sphere of philosophy as well as linked to additional domains of philosophy such as ethics, epistemology, etc.⁶⁰ Where he differentiates philosophy of education lies within the philosopher of education's interest in the *current*, the here and now of the world, acknowledging that most philosophers of education engage with what is happening in "their times" as it links to broader questions regarding the "good life" and existing within the world among others.⁶¹ White does not go without acknowledging the long line of history in education and the idea that education is not independent from the more encompassing philosophical questions of life, being human, etc., reminding us that this is the precise reason that we draw upon philosophy in order to answer the questions (unspecified in type) we have. Noteworthy is that White does not expect philosophers to focus solely on what is present in front of us. White is not confining us to the present, rather he is inviting us to form our questions from what *is* present in the here and now in order to ask deep broad questions while peering through a variety of lenses such as the interpretive, normative, and critical.⁶² These questions are meant to address the fundamental questions of *who* we want to be as humans and what type of world we aspire to live within. Although White uses temporal words to describe the position of the philosopher and their writings with the here and now, I view it as more a call for us to ground our abstractions in what *is* happening rather than leaving the connection to the present unstated.

White identifies the shortcomings of the field but directs his attention to the position of philosophers of education. In reviewing Siegel's text, he notes that included philosophers of education write "against a broader background of involvement with the culture of our times than other philosophers."⁶³ He cites philosophers Meira Levinson and Harry Brighouse, who "breathe the passion for educational issues of the day"⁶⁴ into their work, distinguishing the two from non-

for the moment outside the boundaries of this project and will require attention and study.

⁵⁹ White, "Philosophy, Philosophy of Education, and Economic Realities," 295.

⁶⁰ White, 295.

⁶¹ White, 295.

⁶² Kathy Hytten, "On Building Islands of Decency," *Educational Studies* 54, no. 1 (2017): 99–108, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131946.2017.1388806>.

⁶³ White, "Philosophy, Philosophy of Education, and Economic Realities," 297.

⁶⁴ White, 297.

educational philosophers included within the text, who state their educational aims and then address their claims in purely philosophical epistemology or within the framework of a specific philosopher's work. White views three essays by Randall Curren, Martha Nussbaum, and Phillip Kitcher from Siegel's text as being markedly different as they engage "both with the world of education today and with how philosophical thinking can be brought to bear on this."⁶⁵ This discussion allowed me to contextualize Biesta's discussion of educational questions and find space to identify characteristics of them.

The discussion put forth by White assisted in framing the articles found within the rabbit hole. While Snir and Bingham certainly were not without their own present-day connections to the field, they both took on the work of a specific author, Adorno and Gadamer respectively, referencing the authors frequently and framing their own arguments within the framework of the specific author. Whereas, with Laverty, de Oliveira Andreotti, and Le Grange more distinguishing elements of asking educational questions were present as they asked what appear to be educational questions and attempted to answer them, providing a connection to the current state of things within the field of education. White's notion of how authors frame their work became palpable and provided some context through which I can decipher who is asking educational questions and who is asking philosophical questions about education.

THE EDUCATIONAL QUESTION

Although my journey as a student of philosophy is just beginning, the trip down the rabbit hole has left me with even more questions about the intricacies of connection between the articles and authors. Alas, I have no definitive definition of educational questions to bequeath to you, but, conceivably, the field isn't in possession of a definitive definition. What we know is that educational questions are questions asked of education from an educational perspective and that philosophers of education utilize philosophy as a tool in answering them. Educational questions are situated in the here and now of education, producing a discussion grounded in the trends and issues of today, rather than that of yesterday. I liken this much to Laverty's discussion of teaching *and* taking up. The educational question is asked, philosophized both with the works of the past and/or today, and is taken up within the context of the today weaving in the influence of the present culture, relevant here and now, breaking open the world to its audience. The question is not contextualized within the author's educational aims and reinforced by the work of a classical philosopher or epistemological framework.⁶⁶ Rather, the author employs philosophical thinking and the application of components of the field of education as it is today in order to shed light upon the question and provide insight into plausible answers. Although my generalizations require deeper investigation, it is important to note that I have succeeded in asking my own educational question

⁶⁵ White, 298.

⁶⁶ White, 298.

and in ‘breaking open’ my own understanding of educational questions. Although my question exists still in an unanswered state, as a student of philosophy, isn’t that the purpose: to ask the educational questions?
