



<http://researchspace.auckland.ac.nz>

ResearchSpace@Auckland

Copyright Statement

The digital copy of this thesis is protected by the Copyright Act 1994 (New Zealand).

This thesis may be consulted by you, provided you comply with the provisions of the Act and the following conditions of use:

- Any use you make of these documents or images must be for research or private study purposes only, and you may not make them available to any other person.
- Authors control the copyright of their thesis. You will recognise the author's right to be identified as the author of this thesis, and due acknowledgement will be made to the author where appropriate.
- You will obtain the author's permission before publishing any material from their thesis.

To request permissions please use the Feedback form on our webpage.

<http://researchspace.auckland.ac.nz/feedback>

General copyright and disclaimer

In addition to the above conditions, authors give their consent for the digital copy of their work to be used subject to the conditions specified on the Library Thesis Consent Form.

Narrative Identity

Ricoeur and Early Childhood Education

SANDY FARQUHAR

**A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy,
The University of Auckland, 2008.**

Abstract

The thesis argues that who we are, what we aspire to, and how we enact social and cultural practices are a result of the way we narrate stories about ourselves as both individuals and members of communities. The question ‘Who am I?’ is frequently answered with reference to what is important to us: our commitments and what we determine as good, valuable and right. Our identity is thus inextricably woven into our understanding of life as an unfolding story, bound by an ethical commitment to what we value. In this way, understandings of narrative and identity become part of the social and cultural context of education, drawing upon complex relationships between individual and community. It is through narrative that we construct *truth* about ourselves in relation to others.

The central concern of the thesis is the interplay between the ‘capable’ child subject and various readings of texts that form the educational landscape in Aotearoa New Zealand: in curriculum documents with their emphasis on relationships, reciprocity, community, culture and language; and in policy documents with their emphasis on economic rationality. The thesis examines some important narratives that emerge from readings of these curriculum and policy documents, and the impact of those narratives on identity formation in early childhood education. Examined in turn are a liberal narrative, an economic narrative and a social narrative. Each of these narratives emphasises particular discourses and rationalities within education. The thesis finds these narratives inadequate to explain understandings of the self of early childhood education.

The thesis argues that Ricoeur’s hermeneutical approach enables a range of narrative possibilities for early childhood education. The use of Ricoeur’s narrative theory in the thesis is twofold: a methodological approach for the study, and a critical exploration of the formation of ‘narrative identity’ (for both the individual and the group) through an examination of selected narratives. The thesis responds to the tensions of these narratives through Ricoeur’s understandings of ‘intersubjectivity’ and ‘just institutions’ and provides educators with an ethical framework by promoting Ricoeur’s understandings of the ‘good life’ and a ‘capable subject’.

Acknowledgements

The thesis would not have been possible without the support of my family, in particular my partner, Peter and my daughter, Zavara. I appreciate their patience and understanding throughout. Thanks also to members of my wider family and to friends and colleagues who supported me in numerous ways.

I have been fortunate to have the superb supervision of two outstanding philosophers of education, Peter Roberts and Robin Small. I have enjoyed their careful critique, wise counsel and invaluable support.

I have appreciated the support of *The Philosophy of Education Society of Australasia* through the Doctoral Scholarship award, and the opportunity to present many of the ideas developed in this thesis at their annual conferences. I would also like to acknowledge the Faculty of Education at the *University of Auckland* for the Tertiary Education Grant and for the study leave that enabled me to complete this thesis. Both organisations have provided me with a stimulating and supportive academic ‘home’.

Table of Contents

Abstract	<i>ii</i>
Acknowledgements	<i>iii</i>
Table of Contents	<i>iv</i>
Abbreviations	<i>vi</i>
Introduction	1
Chapter outline	6
Chapter 1. The Child of Te Whāriki	11
Policy developments: from liberalism to neoliberalism.....	12
Local policy developments in a global context.....	20
The curriculum context	28
Towards a narrative framework	33
Chapter 2. Situating Ricoeur’s Narrative Theory.....	36
Narrative and identity.....	40
Narrative knowledge and education.....	47
Narrative: from formalism to poststructuralism.....	52
Narrative, interpretation and identity	56
Chapter 3. Ricoeur’s Hermeneutic: A Narrated Child Subject.....	58
Mimesis and metaphor	63
Explanation, understanding and interpretation.....	68
Temporality and historicity	70
Narrative identity and intersubjectivity.....	73
Ricoeur and early childhood	82

Chapter 4. A Liberal Individual	86
Sources of the liberal, humanist self	90
Twentieth century liberalism and education	97
Liberalism and the children of <i>Te Whāriki</i>	102
The ‘late modern’ individual.....	112
Chapter 5. An Individual Entrepreneur	117
The global economy and human capital.....	121
New Zealand childcare in a global context	127
The metaphor of business in early childhood.....	133
The individual entrepreneur	139
Chapter 6. A Social Institution of Childhood	144
<i>Te Whāriki</i> : a social history.....	148
Community and belonging	151
Family on the move.....	155
Culture and biculturalism	160
Institutions of childhood.....	166
Chapter 7. A Ricoeur Narrative: The Intersubject.....	169
Troubling identity.....	170
Identity and intersubjectivity.....	173
Community and ‘just institutions’	179
Narrative identity and new possibilities	188
Conclusion.....	193
Bibliography	197

Abbreviations

To facilitate reference to Ricoeur's writings, the following abbreviations are used in the thesis when referring to his published books and anthologies. The dates included below refer to the versions of the books used in the writing of the thesis and listed in the bibliography. Citations of Ricoeur's other writings, such as papers and chapters in general collections, follow conventional author-date style.

<i>FM</i>	<i>Fallible man (1965)</i>
<i>FT</i>	<i>From text to action. Essays in hermeneutics, II (1991c)</i>
<i>HS</i>	<i>Hermeneutics and the human sciences: Essays on language, action and interpretation (1981)</i>
<i>INT</i>	<i>Interpretation theory: discourse and the surplus of meaning (1976)</i>
<i>MHF</i>	<i>Memory, history and forgetting (2004)</i>
<i>OA</i>	<i>Oneself as another (1992)</i>
<i>PA 1</i>	Explanation and understanding: On some remarkable connections among the theory of the text, theory of action, and theory of history. In <i>The philosophy of Paul Ricoeur: An anthology of his work (1978a)</i>
<i>PA 2</i>	Metaphor and the main problem of hermeneutics. In <i>The philosophy of Paul Ricoeur: An anthology of his work (1978b)</i>
<i>PS</i>	<i>Political and social essays (1975)</i>
<i>RI</i>	<i>A Ricoeur reader. Reflection and imagination (1991d)</i>
<i>RM</i>	<i>The rule of metaphor (1977)</i>
<i>SE</i>	<i>The symbolism of evil (1969)</i>
<i>TJ</i>	<i>The just (2000)</i>
<i>TN 1</i>	<i>Time and narrative. Volume 1 (1984)</i>
<i>TN 2</i>	<i>Time and narrative. Volume 2 (1985)</i>
<i>TN 3</i>	<i>Time and narrative. Volume 3 (1988)</i>