WHY RUSSELL DIDN'T THINK HE WAS A PHILOSOPHER OF EDUCATION

PAUL HAGER
School of Adult Vocational Education / University of Technology, Sydney
P.O. Box 123, Broadway 2007, Australia

I. INTRODUCTION

The case for maintaining that Russell was not a philosopher of education is considerably boosted by taking serious account of his own views on the matter. While I am not aware of his ever claiming to be a philosopher of education, on various occasions he vigorously asserted the opposite. In his "Reply to Criticisms" Russell states that he has "... always maintained that there was no logical connection ... between my views on social questions and my views on logic and epistemology."[1] He points to the example of Hume, with whom he agrees so largely in abstract matters, yet disagrees so totally in politics. In his 1940 submission to his lawyer in the New York "Chair of Indecency" case, in which his social writings, including those on education, were cited in evidence against him, Russell testified as follows:

> ... the petition is based on a misunderstanding of the word "philosophy" (which I know is often taken by ignorant people to mean theories for the conduct of practical life).... The books and opinions mentioned are no part of my philosophy and cannot be correctly described as philosophy at all.[2]

Elsewhere he asserted that *Principles of Social Reconstruction*, a book often quoted for its views about education, was not written in his

[1] In P. A. Schilpp, ed., *The Philosophy of Bertrand Russell* (Evanston and Chicago: Northwestern U., 1944), p. 727.
[2] Quoted in *BRA* 2: 159.

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capacity as a philosopher.[3] Significantly, in *My Philosophical Development*, a detailed account of the evolution of his work as a philosopher over a period of seventy years, no mention is made of his social and political writings.

Further, Passmore has concluded that a reading of Russell's works supports these assertions of a dichotomy between his philosophical and his social and political writings. As evidence that this is so, Passmore points out that:

> In the preface to *On Education* he made it clear that he was writing as a parent to parents, not as a philosopher to philosophers. Whereas in *Our Knowledge of the External World* he had argued that the philosopher should avoid large untested generalizations and should remember that advocacy is no part of his task, his *On Education* abounds in large generalizations and is through-and-through advocacy. It is in no sense an application of Russell's general philosophical views to the special field of education. One could not possibly guess, reading *On Education*, that Russell was at that time committed to the philosophy of logical atomism.[4]

Passmore further observes that Russell provides a "striking example" of an expert philosopher having written about education when what he had to say has "... not been at all philosophical, in the professional sense of that word." As Hare points out, other philosophers including Ayer, Perry and Park have shared this judgment.[5]

So, *prima facie*, the case for denying that Russell was a philosopher of education looks conclusive. At best, Russell tells us, any connection between his philosophical and socio-political writings is psychological.[6] By this he means that the same general critical spirit, the basing of beliefs on evidence, being open to various viewpoints, etc. is exhibited in both.

[3] See J. G. Slater, "The Political Philosophy of Bertrand Russell", in J. E. Thomas and K. Blackwell, eds., *Russell in Review* (Toronto: Samuel Stevens, Hakkert, 1976), p. 138.
[4] J. Passmore, *The Philosophy of Teaching* (London: Duckworth, 1980), p. 4.
[5] W. Hare, "Russell's Contribution to Philosophy of Education", *Russell*, n.s. 7 (1987): 25.
[6] B. Russell, *My Own Philosophy* (Hamilton, Ont.: McMaster U. Library P., 1972; written in 1946), p. 10. See also Slater, "The Political Philosophy of Bertrand Russell", pp. 138, 153–4.

Despite all of this, various recent writers, most notably Hare and Woodhouse,[7] have sought to portray Russell as a philosopher of education. Hare because he believes that, firstly, Russell made an important contribution to our understanding of the fundamental difference between education and indoctrination, and, secondly, that he formulated and defended a conception of teaching appropriate to the ideal of education. Woodhouse on the grounds that Russell "applied the same method of scientific philosophy in his educational thought as he did in his philosophical writings."[8] Hence, according to these writers, Russell's denials that he was a philosopher of education should be disregarded.

Now it is true that there are well-known reasons why a philosopher, and in particular, one as eminent and successful as Russell was, might want to distance himself from philosophy of education. In many quarters, philosophy of education is viewed as, at best, marginal to the enterprise of philosophy. Nor is this view without reasonable foundation. For example, Passmore, in the course of producing his substantial book in philosophy of education, stated as follows:

> To be frank, I have never been satisfied either by what I have written or by almost anything I have read about teaching. The chance of writing even a reasonably good book on any branch of the philosophy of education is statistically very low indeed. This is no accident. It is terribly difficult to write in a manner which is neither philosophy for philosophy's sake, with an occasional example from teaching, nor just a series of commonplace banalities.[9]

If Passmore is in any way right about this weighty dilemma of either writing something that appeals to teachers, but is philosophically trite; or writing something that appeals to philosophers, but has nothing to say to educational practitioners, then we immediately have some further support for Russell's denials that he was a philosopher of education, since there is no doubt that his own writings on education were aimed at teachers and the general public, rather than professional philosophers.

[7] Hare, "Russell's Contribution to Philosophy of Education"; H. Woodhouse, "Science as Method: the Conceptual Link Between Russell's Philosophy and His Educational Thought", *Russell*, n.s. 5 (1985): 150–61; Woodhouse, "More than Mere Musings: Russell's Reflections on Education as Philosophy", *Russell* n.s. 7 (1987): 176–8; and Woodhouse, "Russell and Whitehead on the Process of Growth in Education", *Russell*, n.s. 12 (1992): 135–59.

[8] "More than Mere Musings", p. 176.

[9] *The Philosophy of Teaching*, p. ix.

However it seems that Hare and Woodhouse would be unimpressed by these sorts of arguments. Hare's retort is that "... the real test ... is whether or not any philosophy can be found in his writings on education."[10] An obvious reply to this would be that there is some philosophy in the work of plenty of writers on education. Are they all, thereby, philosophers of education? Surely some more stringent conditions need to be met for a writer to count as a philosopher of education? To see what such conditions might be, and thereby clarify Russell's status *vis-à-vis* philosophy of education, let us consider some work by Frankena which I have found to be very helpful for thinking about issues in philosophy of education.

2. WHAT IS REQUIRED OF A PHILOSOPHER OF EDUCATION?

Frankena begins by identifying two sorts of philosophy of education, viz. analytical philosophy of education and normative philosophy of education.[11] Analytical philosophy of education consists in the analysis of educational concepts, arguments, slogans and statements. Examples would be defining what is meant by teaching, distinguishing teaching from indoctrination, etc. According to Frankena, "... analytical philosophy of education consists entirely in such enquiries" and is a relatively new kind of philosophy of education. Normative philosophy of education, on the other hand, "... makes normative statements about what education, educators, and the schools should do or not do, about what the aims, content, methods, etc., of education should be or not be." Frankena sees normative philosophy of education as "... what educational philosophers have done historically and what some of them still do.[12]

[10] "Russell's Contribution to Philosophy of Education", p. 28.

[11] W. K. Frankena, "A Model for Analyzing a Philosophy of Education", in J. R. Martin, ed., *Readings in the Philosophy of Education: a Study of Curriculum* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1970), pp. 15–22.

[12] *Ibid.*

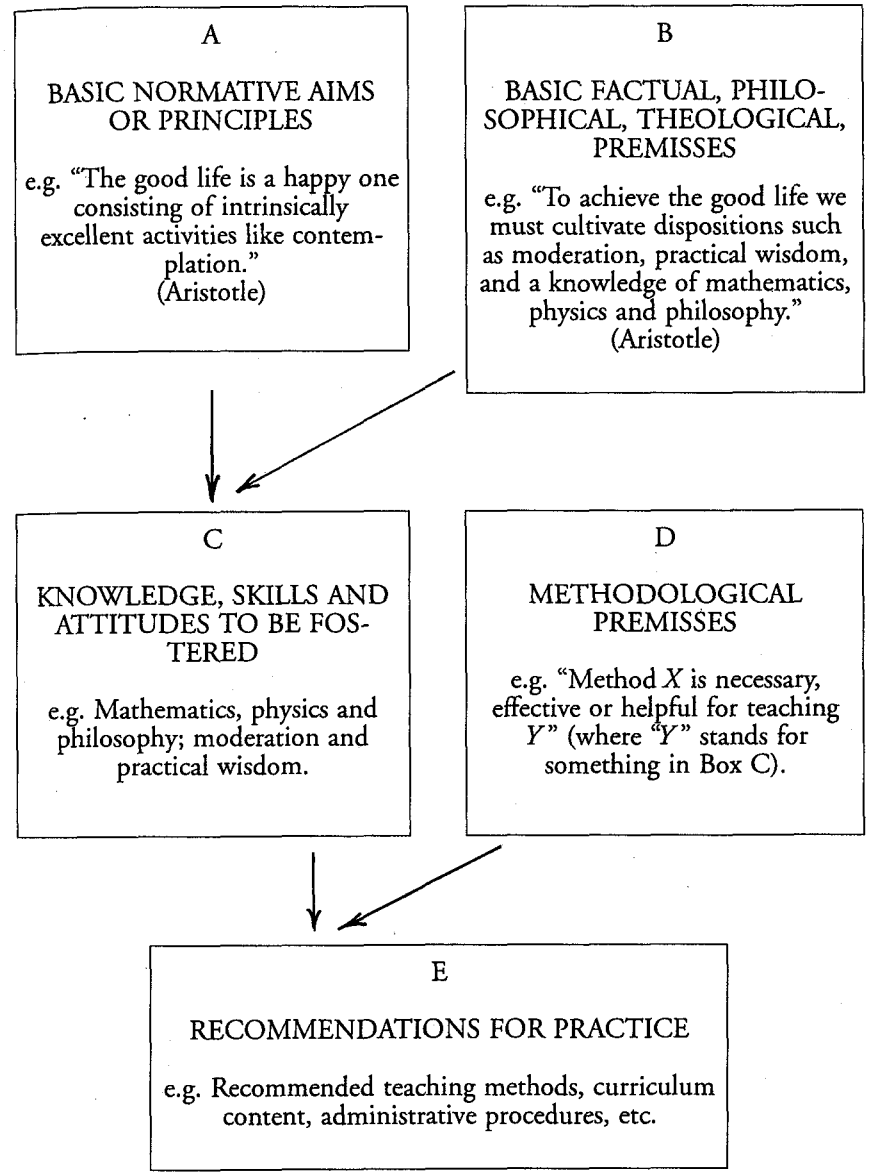
It would, indeed, be surprising if Russell had made a significant contribution to analytical philosophy of education as characterized by Frankena, since this grew out of the type of Oxford linguistic philosophy that Russell repeatedly criticized and lampooned (e.g. "It seems to concern itself, not with the world and our relation to it, but only with the different ways in which silly people can say silly things" [*MPD*, p. 230]). While there is obviously something profoundly dissatisfying with the notion that the *sole* role of philosophy is to make quite clear the meaning of questions, Frankena suggests that this activity has at least some point, e.g. his proposed model for analyzing a normative philosophy of education is itself a piece of analytical philosophy of education. However, since any possible contributions by Russell to philosophy of education are likely to be of the normative kind, let us move on to that.

Frankena's proposed model for analyzing a normative philosophy of education is based on the idea that such a philosophy would typically include up to five different kinds of statements. That there are five kinds of statements stems partly from the different natures of some of the statements and partly from the fact that some kinds of statement serve as premisses for others. Hence the five kinds of statement can be arranged in levels, with the various levels also having different degrees of generality or abstraction from the level of practice. As represented in Figure 1,[13] Frankena assigns the five different kinds of statements to "boxes" as follows: (A) Basic Normative Aims or Principles, (B) Basic Factual, Philosophical, Theological Premisses, (C) Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes to be Fostered, (D) Methodological Premisses, and (E) Recommendations for Practice. The differences between the boxes and levels will be clarified in the following discussion.

[13] I have made slight changes to Frankena's terminology, but the substance remains the same.

FIGURE 1

FRANKENA'S MODEL FOR ANALYSING A PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION



The first thing to notice about Frankena's model is that its boxes distinguish among five different kinds of statements that it is claimed might appear in a normative philosophy of education. Three of these kinds of statements are themselves normative, viz. those about fundamental aims and principles for education (Box A), those about the knowledge, skills and attitudes that education ought to foster (Box C), and those about the practical methods and procedures that education ought to follow (Box E). As well there are factual statements either about what knowledge, skills and attitudes are conducive to achieving the fundamental aims or following the fundamental principles for education (Box B), or about methods that are useful or effective for the acquisition of particular knowledge, skills and attitudes (Box D). Frankena argues that some such factual statements, including possibly hypotheses that explain factual statements, psychological theories, experimental findings, predictions and the like, are necessary for a complete normative philosophy of education. In addition, he argues, a normative philosophy of education will often contain epistemological, metaphysical or theological statements in Boxes B or D, though he thinks that none of these are necessary for a complete normative philosophy of education. Finally, Frankena allows that any of the boxes, where appropriate, will include some bits of analysis, e.g. definitions of concepts, etc.

The second noteworthy feature of Frankena's model is that it comprises two parts: arguments with A and B as premisses for C as conclusion (ABC pattern), and arguments with C and D as premisses for E as conclusion (CDE pattern). Of these two parts, Frankena points out that the ABC pattern is the more properly philosophical, while the CDE pattern is the more practical.[14] He suggests that his model distinguishes three kinds of normative philosophy of education: (a) one that is complete in that it incorporates both the ABC and CDE patterns; (b) one that is more philosophical (the ABC pattern), which leaves the details of implementation to educators; and (c) one that is less philosophical (the CDE pattern), whose author might take the list of knowledge, skills and attitudes from some more philosophical work, or eclectically derive them from a range of sources, or simply accept

[14] "A Model for Analyzing a Philosophy of Education", p. 21.

what is valued by society, parents, the state, the church, etc. Sometimes, arguments which initially appear to be of the CDE pattern will turn out to include statements from Boxes A and B as assumed premisses. Frankena further points out that distinguishing these patterns is relatively easy in authors such as Maritain, but much harder in the case of others such as Dewey or Whitehead (*ibid.*). Warren suggests that Frankena's complete model is one that "... few philosophers beyond Plato, Aristotle, and perhaps John Dewey have articulated clearly."[15]

Our main question then becomes: How do Russell's writings on education line up against the Frankena model? If these writings are not particularly philosophical, as he and others have claimed, then we would expect that they would largely conform to Frankena's CDE pattern. I believe that there is a lot in Russell's educational writings that does indeed fit the CDE pattern. Although this paper is not the place to attempt a thorough analysis of Russell's educational writings in terms of the Frankena model, I am also convinced that there are substantial sections of these writings that conform to the ABC pattern. In relation to the fundamental aims and principles for education (Box A), Russell wrote repeatedly, for example, about the need for education to produce people who could think for themselves, people who would think globally rather than nationally. Hence much of his educational writings concerns the knowledge, skills and attitudes that education ought to foster (Box C) consistent with this general aim. This is reflected in detailed discussions of such things as open-mindedness, the provisional nature of knowledge, concern for the truth, etc. In the course of these discussions, we typically find Russell offering rationales for why the favoured kinds of knowledge, skills and attitudes will help to achieve his fundamental aims or principles for education (Box B).[16]

Perhaps much of Russell's overall writing on education is piecemeal

[15] W. G. Warren, *Death Education and Research: Critical Perspectives* (Binghamton, N.Y.: Haworth P., 1988), p. 179.

[16] Examples of Russell arguing in both the ABC and CDE patterns can be found in Hare, 1987; Woodhouse, 1985 and 1992; B. Mattai, "Education and the Emotions: the Relevance of the Russellian Perspective", *Russell*, n.s. 10 (1990): 141–57; M. J. Rockler, "The Curricular Role of Russell's Scepticism", *Russell*, n.s. 12 (1992): 50–60.

and not very systematic. Likewise he appears to have changed his mind on some points.[17] Nevertheless Russell does provide clear-cut examples of each of the various parts of Frankena's model. I conclude, then, that this supports those who argue that Russell was a significant philosopher of education. This conclusion is strengthened by the fact that there are relatively few complete philosophies of education (in Frankena's sense). This leaves us with the question of why Russell was so sure that he was not a philosopher of education. To make further progress on answering this question, let us turn to what Russell himself thought was involved in doing philosophy.

3. RUSSELL'S VIEW OF PHILOSOPHY

Throughout his career Russell adhered to a characteristic view of the nature of philosophical analysis. According to Russell, philosophical analysis has two parts in that it, firstly, proceeds backwards from a body of knowledge to its premisses, and, secondly, proceeds forward from the premisses to a reconstruction of the original body of knowledge. Russell often referred to the first stage of philosophical analysis simply as "analysis", in contrast to the second stage which he called "synthesis". While the first stage was seen as being the most philosophical, both stages were nonetheless essential to philosophical analysis. It is obviously beyond the scope of this paper to demonstrate the claim that Russell consistently adhered to this view of philosophical analysis throughout his career. However, a consideration of some representative writings of Russell will further clarify his view of philosophical analysis and its implications.[18]

[17] Woodhouse, "Russell and Whitehead on the Process of Growth in Education", argues that in the 1916 *Principles of Social Reconstruction* Russell focused education on the organic growth of the individual, but by 1926 (*On Education*) he had abandoned this view for a mechanistic behaviourist approach. However there may not be as much conflict here as Woodhouse claims. The 1916 ideas seem to fit Frankena's ABC pattern, whereas the 1926 examples discussed by Woodhouse are of the CDE pattern. In principle there seems to be no reason why a general aim of growth might not be served by some use of conditioning at the level of practice. (I owe this point to Nicholas Griffin.)

[18] For detailed discussion see P. Hager, *Continuity and Change in the Development of Russell's Philosophy* (Dordrecht, Holland: Kluwer, forthcoming 1994). See also N. Griffin, *Russell's Idealist Apprenticeship* (Oxford: Clarendon P., 1991), and A. D. Irvine, "Epistemic Logicism and Russell's Regressive Method", *Philosophical Studies*, 55 (1989): 303–27.

Russell's initial philosophical work largely concerned the foundations of mathematics, so we find in his writings a very clear account of philosophical analysis applied to mathematics. He holds that the task of mathematical philosophy is twofold. First,

> ... to analyse existing mathematics, with a view to discovering what premisses are employed, whether these premisses are mutually consistent, and whether they are capable of reduction to more fundamental premisses. (*PoM*, p. 3)

In this way, analysis passes "from the complex to the simple, from the demonstrable to its indemonstrable premisses."

This analysis "to greater and greater abstractness and logical simplicity" (*IMP*, p. 1) was viewed by Russell as the most philosophical part of mathematical philosophy. The second, more mathematical, part of the task of mathematical philosophy takes us in the opposite direction from analysis. When "we have decided upon our premisses, we have to build up again as much as may seem necessary of the data previously analysed, and as many other consequences of our premisses as are of sufficient general interest to deserve statement" (*PM* 1: v). This synthesis stage is capable of yielding more than the existing mathematics that was analysed in the first place. According to Russell (*IMP*, p. 2), we "shall find that by analyzing our ordinary mathematical notions we acquire fresh insight, new powers, and the means of reaching whole new mathematical subjects by adopting fresh lines of advance after our backward journey."

Russell's use of the terms "premisses" and "results" in his discussions of analysis requires comment. In the strict sense, of course, premisses and results, being components of deductive arguments, can only be *propositions* or *statements*. However, analysis leads not only to propositions, but also to *concepts* or *ideas* which are *primitive* at one level of analysis and *defined* at the next level down (see, e.g., *IMP*, pp. 3–4). At the higher level these concepts or ideas are used in *definitions* that provide further premisses. When characterizing his method of analysis, Russell sometimes, for convenience, uses "premisses" in a

wider sense to refer to concepts or ideas, as well as strict propositions. Take, for instance, Peano's analysis of natural number theory via three primitive concepts and five primitive propositions. In Russell's wider sense the three concepts and five propositions are the premisses, yet, strictly speaking, the only premisses are the five primitive propositions. However, including the concepts (0, number and successor) amongst the premisses is fairly innocuous since they are used to *define* further premisses (e.g. "1 is the successor of 0"). In the next breakthrough in analysis, due to Frege, the concepts ceased to be primitive (e.g., he provided a definition of number). This wider sense of "premisses" is typically employed in Russell's descriptions of philosophical analysis.

Russell stresses a number of very important points about such analysis in mathematical philosophy that flow out of the above:

(i) *It is unlikely to be final.* We "have no reason to suppose that it is impossible to find simpler ideas and axioms by means of which those with which we start could be defined and demonstrated" (*PM* 1: vi; *cf. IMP*, pp. 3–4). Hence, e.g., though the logicist program of *Principia Mathematica* was never perfectly realized, the point is that even if it had been, it wouldn't have ruled out the possibility of yet further analysis.

(ii) As a corollary of (i), *the "existing mathematics" on which analysis is practised changes as the subject itself evolves.* As the frontiers are pushed back, yesterday's premisses become tomorrow's results from which a new generation of mathematical philosophers will start the backwards journey of analysis. Thus the mathematical philosophy/mathematics distinction "is one, not in the subject matter, but in the state of mind of the investigator" (*IMP*, p. 1). So, e.g., the logic of relations becomes part of mathematics.

(iii) *The premisses established by analysis are far from being self-evident.* "In mathematics, the greatest degree of self-evidence is usually not to be found quite at the beginning, but at some later point; hence the early deductions, until they reach this point, give reasons rather for believing the premisses because true consequences follow from them, than for believing the consequences because they follow from the premisses" (*PM* 1: v).[19] A corollary of this, of course, is that there

[19] See also Russell, "Logical Atomism" (1924), *Papers* 9: 163–4, and "The Philosophical Importance of Mathematical Logic" (1913), *Papers* 6: 33.

may be alternative premisses from which the same given set of results is deducible. This is the basis of Russell's characteristic open-mindedness about the finality or otherwise of his philosophical views at any given stage. An example of the premisses being far from self-evident is provided by Russell's definition of number. A "number is anything which is the number of some class", where the "number of a class is the class of all those classes that are similar to it" (*IMP*, pp. 18–19), is clearly a less self-evident definition than "a number is any of 1, 2, 3, 4, ..., etc."

It is also clear from Russell's writings that the view of philosophical analysis just described for mathematical philosophy is the model for all of his subsequent philosophical analysis.[20] According to Russell: "The business of philosophy, as I conceive it, is essentially that of logical analysis, followed by logical synthesis."[21] Evidently, logical analysis in general philosophy involves the same backwards journey as it did in mathematical philosophy:

> ... every truly philosophical problem is a problem of analysis; and in problems of analysis the best method is that which sets out from results and arrives at the premisses.[22]

Likewise general philosophy follows mathematical philosophy in having logical analysis mirrored by logical synthesis:

> When the philosopher's work has been perfectly accomplished, its results can be wholly embodied in premisses from which deduction may proceed. (*PoM*, p. 129)

Each of the last three quotations comes from a context where Russell is emphatically asserting that his method of analysis has general application in philosophy. Likewise, when summing up his career, Russell repeatedly stated that a *single* method was common to all of his philosophical ventures.[23]

[20] See, e.g., *PLA*, *Papers* 8: 160–1.
[21] "Logical Atomism", *Papers* 9: 176.
[22] "The Philosophical Importance of Mathematical Logic", *Papers* 6: 33.
[23] See, e.g., HWP_3, pp. 788–9, and *MPD*, pp. 98 and 162.

From a consideration of the foregoing, as well as other statements that Russell makes about his general views on philosophical analysis, the three features already noted stand out once again:

(i) *Analysis is unlikely to be final.* This applies in several ways. Not only is analysis never final in the sense that new premisses may be discovered in relation to which existing premisses are results, but also there is the ever-present possibility of alternative sets of premisses for the same results. In the former case, further stages of analysis in no way invalidate earlier ones. As Russell repeatedly emphasizes, no error will flow from taking complex objects to be simple at one level of analysis, as long as it is not assumed that such objects are incapable of further analysis. Thus "... points may be defined as classes of events, but that does not falsify anything in traditional geometry, which treated points as simples" (*HK*, p. 269).[24]

In the latter case, to ask what are the minimum premisses for a given set of results "is a technical question and it has no unique answer" (*MPD*, p. 162). Hence philosophy is assigned the task of devising alternative sets of premisses:

> Philosophy should be comprehensive, and should be bold in suggesting hypotheses as to the universe which science is not yet in a position to confirm or confute. But these should always be presented *as* hypotheses, not (as is too often done) as immutable certainties like the dogmas of religion.[25]

(ii) *Analysis enlarges the domains of particular subjects.* Just as we saw philosophical analysis extending mathematics, so also with science.[26] Indeed, this role may exhaust the usefulness of philosophy, i.e. Russell suggests that all sound philosophy may be parasitic on science and mathematics.[27] This view locates philosophy at the frontiers of the particular exact sciences. As the frontier is extended, territory that once belonged to philosophy becomes exact enough to be incorporated into science. Thus "every advance in knowledge robs philosophy of some

[24] See also "Logical Atomism", *Papers* 9: 173, and *MPD*, pp. 164–5.

[25] "Logical Atomism", *Papers* 9: 176.

[26] *Our Knowledge of the External World*, rev. ed. (London: Allen and Unwin, 1926; 1st ed., 1914), pp. 189–90. See also "Logical Atomism", *Papers* 9: 176–7, and *MPD*, pp. 169–70).

[27] "Logical Atomism", *Papers* 9: 163.

problems which formerly it had ..." (*IMP*, p. 141). It remains for philosophy to move to the new frontier. Hence Russell's description of philosophy as occupying the "No Man's Land" between "theology and science" (HWP_3, p. 13), and the maxim that "science is what you more or less know and philosophy is what you do not know" (*PLA*, *Papers* 8: 243).

(iii) *Analysis leads to premisses that are decreasingly self-evident.* Russell made this point emphatically in "Logical Atomism":

> The technical methods of mathematical logic, as developed in this book, [*Principia Mathematica*] seem to me very powerful, and capable of providing a new instrument for the discussion of many problems that have hitherto remained subject to philosophic vagueness.... When pure mathematics is organized as a deductive system—i.e. as the set of all those propositions that can be deduced from an assigned set of premisses—it becomes obvious that, if we are to believe in the truth of pure mathematics, it cannot be solely because we believe in the truth of the set of premisses. Some of the premisses are much less obvious than some of their consequences, and are believed chiefly because of their consequences. This will be found to be always the case when a science is arranged as a deductive system. It is not the logically simplest propositions of the system that are the most obvious, or that provide the chief part of our reasons for believing in the system. With the empirical sciences this is evident. Electro-dynamics, for example, can be concentrated into Maxwell's equations, but these equations are believed because of the observed truth of certain of their logical consequences. Exactly the same thing happens in the pure realm of logic; the logically first principles of logic—at least some of them—are to be believed, not on their own account, but on account of their consequences.[28]

Since this feature of Russellian analysis is the one that is most at odds with some common interpretations of Russell's work, it will pay us to consider it in more detail. The following table catalogues the multitude of ways that Russell describes the results and premisses in his accounts of analysis:

[28] *Ibid.*, 9: 163–4.

TABLE I

CHARACTERISTICS OF RUSSELLIAN RESULTS AND PREMISSES

Results (or Data):	Premisses:
More complex	Simpler
Relatively concrete	Abstract
Common knowledge	
Vague	Precise
Logically interdependent	Logically independent
More obvious	Less obvious
Undeniable	
Inexact and approximate	Definite
Indubitable	Dubitable
Puzzling	
Confused	Clear
Self-evident	
Ambiguous	

At first sight it may appear puzzling that though the results (as compared with the premisses) are "self-evident", "undeniable" and "indubitable", they are also "inexact", "vague" and "confused". Russell produces some striking examples to show that there is no inconsistency here: the something approaching us through a thick fog is undeniably (indubitably) some object or other though we have only a vague (confused, inexact) idea of just *what* it is (*MPD*, pp. 98–9); likewise the novice hearing a symphony might be impressed by the parts evidently (indubitably) forming a whole, yet be very vague (confused) about how the parts relate to one another to constitute the whole (*MPD*, pp. 169–70).

The characteristics of results and premisses listed in Table I clarify an ambiguity in Russell's use of "simple". The premisses are *simple* in the primary sense that the results can be *compounded* from them. However, as the Oxford dictionary confirms, "simple" also means "easily understood", i.e., the *results* could also be seen as simple in that they are concrete, common knowledge, obvious and indubitable. Russell appears to have been using the term in this second sense when he said that "the point of philosophy is to start with something so simple as not to seem worth stating, and to end up with something so

paradoxical that no one will believe it" (*PLA*, *Papers* 8: 172). This interpretation makes Russell's statement perfectly consistent with the account of philosophical analysis that has been offered in this paper.

However, there is an even more fundamental reason why there is confusion about simples in Russell's philosophy. It stems, I believe, from another ambiguity—this time in what Russell means by "analysis". It has been pointed out already that on one understanding of the term, *analysis* is the first, and more philosophical, stage of Russell's method. The second, more mathematical or logical, stage is, of course, synthesis. However, on the other understanding, *analysis* is the name of Russell's philosophical method. Let me call the former understanding the *narrow* interpretation of analysis, and the latter the *broad* interpretation. I suggest that the confusion resulting from these two meanings of "analysis" has led people to concentrate on the first stage of Russell's philosophical method and treat that as all there is to it. What is left out makes all the difference about how one treats relations in Russell's philosophy.

4. IMPLICATIONS FOR PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

On Russell's conception of philosophy, the focus should be on the "results" as the raw material for philosophical analysis. In the context of Frankena's model, this means primarily the contents of Box A. Progress in philosophy of education would consist in taking the fundamental aims and principles for education (the current premisses), and, by analysis, arriving at a new set of premisses from which these current premisses can be deduced as results.[29] This moving backwards from the contents of box A adds a new dimension to Frankena's model. Russell believed, I think rightly, that he never attempted this. Hence by his own characterization of philosophy, he never made a serious contribution to philosophy of education. Whether anybody else has done so by Russell's criteria is a moot point.

From the preceding discussion, Woodhouse is evidently mistaken in his claim that Russell "applied the same method of scientific philos-

[29] Philosophical analysis of other premisses in, e.g., Boxes B and D, may also be appropriate, though this may not be, in many cases, a particular task for philosophy of education. (I owe this point to David Hitchcock.)

ophy in his educational thought as he did in his philosophical writings".[30] In addition, Woodhouse is confused about Russellian analysis, construing it in his 1992 paper as taking the narrow form of analysis outlined above. By overlooking the synthetic aspects of Russellian analysis, Woodhouse is able to posit, falsely, a logical connection between Russell's logical atomism and the educational ideas in *On Education.*

A natural reaction to the above would be to ask whether Russell's conception of philosophy is too narrowly rigid. Earlier we saw him assigning to philosophical analysis the role of extending mathematics and science and suggesting that this role may exhaust the usefulness of philosophy. By making all sound philosophy parasitic on science and mathematics in this way, Russell is in grave danger of excluding ethical, political and social questions from the philosophical agenda.[31] Such an outcome would suggest that Russell had too austere a conception of philosophy. In this context, the contrast with Whitehead is very interesting. It appears that Whitehead developed his philosophy of education first, and then later developed his more general philosophy of process. Unlike Russell, where the spectacular successes in mathematical philosophy led to a conception of philosophy that leaves little room for philosophy of education and the like, Whitehead developed a metaphysics that he saw as consistent not only with science and mathematics, but also with his earlier philosophy of education.[32]

5. CONCLUSION

We have found that Russell strongly denied that he was a philosopher of education. Yet Frankena's model for analyzing a philosophy of education suggested that, although his educational writings are reasonably wide-ranging without being particularly systematic, they nevertheless appear to contain the necessary components of a philosophy of education. So Hare and others seem to be justified in claiming that Russell was a substantial philosopher of education. This raised the

[30] Woodhouse, "More than Mere Musings", p. 176.

[31] For more on this see Slater, "The Political Philosophy of Bertrand Russell" (cited at n. 3).

[32] See Griffin, *Russell's Idealist Apprenticeship*, p. 81, note 39.

question of why Russell thought otherwise. It has been shown that in the period when he produced his main educational writings, he adhered to a strong view about the nature of philosophy that sets standards not met by these writings on education. This strong view about the nature of philosophy threatens to limit philosophy to mathematics and science. While this suffices to explain Russell's own estimate of the status of his educational writings, it is unlikely to convince those who wish to claim him for philosophy of education. After all, what is wrong with being a philosopher of education whose educational views are not logically connected to your more technical philosophy?