

**LEARNING AND CHANGE THROUGH ACTION
RESEARCH**

To appear in
J. Henry (Ed.)
Creative Management
London: Sage.

Peter Reason
Centre for Action Research in Professional Practice
School of Management
University of Bath

Action research has a long history, going back to social scientists' attempts to help solve practical problems in wartime situations in both Europe and America. Greenwood and Levin (1998) trace its origins to the work of Kurt Lewin in the 1940s to design social experiments that could take place in natural settings. Lewin is credited with the phrases "Nothing is as practical as a good theory" and the suggestion that if you want to understand an organization the best thing to do is try to change it. According to Greenwood and Levin, these early action research experiments, together with the pioneering work of the Tavistock Institute in London after the war, showing how production technology and work organization are inextricably linked, strongly influenced the links between action research and social democracy in Scandinavia. Pioneering work with Volvo, Saab-Scania and Alfa Laval helped change our understanding of industrial organisation away from rigid Taylorist approaches to work design, and toward the more flexible forms of semi-autonomous work organization with which we are more familiar today.

But the origins of action research do not rest only in Western social science. Another important influence have been liberationist movements particularly among underprivileged people of the South where approaches to research, evaluation and education have been used as tools for social change. The argument here is that the creation of knowledge is in the hands of the rich and powerful elements of an increasingly global society, and works to enhance their interests against those of the disenfranchised majority world (one of the strongest political arguments against technologies such as genetic engineering of crops is that it supports the interests of powerful multinationals against the interests of subsistence farmers; see for example Vandana Shiva's website).

Selener (1997) traces the theoretical roots of what has come to be called participatory action research to liberationist writers such as Marx, Engels, Gramsci. Freire (1970) in particular has emphasised the importance of helping disadvantaged people develop critical thinking so that they could understand the ways in which they were disadvantaged by the political and economic conditions of their lives and could develop their own organized action in order to address these issues.

So participatory research has a double objective. One aim is to produce knowledge and action directly useful to a group of people—through research, through adult education, and through sociopolitical action. The second aim is to empower people at a second and deeper level through the process of constructing and using their own knowledge: they "see through" the ways in which the establishment monopolizes the production and use of knowledge for the benefit of its members. This is the meaning of consciousness raising or *conscientization*, a term popularized by Freire for a "process of self-awareness through collective self-inquiry and reflection" (Fals-Borda & Rahman, 1991:16). The tradition of participatory rural appraisal similarly is concerned with "putting the first last" and creating practical knowledge of use to the underprivileged members of our world (Chambers, 1997).

Other important influences on action research have been the experiential learning movement (Kolb, 1984), action learning (Revans, 1982), humanistic psychology (Heron, 1992; Reason & Rowan, 1981), popular education [Gaventa, 1991 #427], organization development (Shani & Pasmore, 1985), feminist thinking (Mies, 1993). A recent special issue of the journal *Management Learning* (Raelin, 1999) contains

articles exploring Action Research (Dickens & Watkins, 1999), Participatory Research (Park, 1999), Action Learning (Marsick & O'Neil, 1999), Action Science (Putman, 1999), Action Inquiry (Torbert, 1999), and Co-operative inquiry (Reason, 1999). These are all contemporary forms of action oriented research which place emphasis on a full integration of action and reflection, so that the knowledge developed in the inquiry process is directly relevant to the issues being studied—as Torbert (1981) puts it, creating a form of knowledge useful to the actor and the point of action. They also place great importance on the democratic nature of the research process: as Greenwood and Levin emphasize, action research “is fundamentally about the transformation of power relations in the direction of greater democracy” (Greenwood & Levin, 1998:88; see also Toulmin & Gustavsen, 1996). This is first because democracy is of over-arching value in its own right, and second because inappropriate, authoritarian use of power in all societies, means that only a tiny fraction of knowledge and capacities are used to confront important problems. Thus contemporary forms of action research place great importance on collaboration between all those involved in the inquiry project, aiming to help the individual practitioner develop skills of reflective practice and organization and community members develop a culture of open inquiry as part of their work life, to develop learning organizations or communities of inquiry.

There are thus many ways of approaching action research and action learning, and in the rest of this chapter I offer one way of thinking about different approaches to action research which is based in our own work at the Centre for Action Research in Professional Practice at the University of Bath, and my collaboration with colleagues worldwide. More extended discussions of both theory and practice can be found by consulting the references cited.

Characteristics of action research practice

I want to emphasize five important characteristics of action research which, I believe, distinguish it from more traditional forms of management research

First, while the primary purpose of academic research is to contribute to an abstract “body of knowledge” available to third-persons, it has long been argued that “the findings in our scholarly management journals are only remotely related to the real world of practicing managers” (Susman & Evered, 1978:582). In contrast, the primary purpose of action research is to develop practical knowing embodied moment-to-moment action by research/practitioner, and the development of learning organizations—communities of inquiry rooted in communities of practice (Argyris, Putnam, & Smith, 1985; Argyris & Schon, 1974; Argyris & Schon, 1996; Senge, 1990).

Second, as we have seen above, action research has a collaborative intent: a primary value of action research strategies is to increase people’s involvement in the creation and application of knowledge about them and about their worlds. Fundamentally, if one accepts that human persons are agents who act in the world on the basis of their own sensemaking; and that human community involves mutual sensemaking and collective action, it is no longer possible to do research on persons. It is only possible to do research with persons, including them both in the questioning and sensemaking that informs the research, and in the action which is the focus of the research. Of

course, this collaboration between persons is not something which can be produced by fiat, as it were: collaborative relationships emerge over time, and may require careful facilitation for them to emerge at all. In many ways we can say that the development of organizations and communities able to inquire into and learn from their experience is the primary purpose of all action research strategies, and as we have seen above, this is important as a fundamental expression of human rights [Payne, 1791 #1435].

Third, while most forms of academic research separate the knower from what it is to be known, and conduct their research from a distance (through surveys and questionnaires, for example) action research is rooted in each participant's in-depth, critical and practical experience of the situation to be understood and acted in. This leads to the fourth characteristic of action research that truth is not solely a property of formal propositions, but is a human activity that must be managed for human purposes (Mitroff, 1998) which leads action research practitioners to take into account many different forms of knowing—knowledge of our purposes as well of our ideas, knowledge that is based in intuition as well as the senses, knowledge expressed in aesthetic form such as story, poetry and visual arts as well as propositional language, and practical knowledge expressed in skill and competence. Table 1 shows a version of the extended epistemology based on the work of Heron and Reason (Heron, 1971; Heron, 1996; Reason, 1988; Reason, 1994; Reason, 1998; Reason & Heron, 1995)(Heron, 1971; Heron, 1992; Heron, 1996; Reason, 1988; Reason, 1994a; Reason, 1994b; Reason, 1999; Reason & Heron, 1995). Others, notably Park (1999) and Torbert (1991) use different descriptions with similar intentions.

Finally, action research aims to develop theory which is not simply abstract and descriptive but is a guide to inquiry and action in present time. A good theory arises out of practical experience, articulates qualities of practice to which we aspire, and challenges us, moment to moment in our professional and personal lives, to discover ways to realize these qualities in action.

Thus we can highlight the radical shift between the basic aims of most managerial research and participatory action inquiry: the former aims at universalizable, valid certainty in reflection about particular pre-designated questions, participatory action inquiry aims at timely, voluntary, mutual, validity-testing, transformative action at all moments of living

Strategies for action research and practice

We can identify three broad strategies of action research practice (Reason & Torbert, in preparation; Torbert, 1998):

- First person action research/practice skills and methods address the ability of the researcher to foster an inquiring approach to his or her own life, to act awarely and choicefully, and to assess effects in the outside world while acting.
- Second person action research/practice addresses our ability to inquire face-to-face with others into issues of mutual concern—for example in the service of improving our personal and professional practice both individually and separately. Second person inquiry is also concerned with how to create communities of inquiry or learning organizations.

- Third-person research/practice aims to create a wider community of inquiry involving persons who, because they cannot be known to each other face-to-face (say, in a large, geographically dispersed corporation), have an impersonal quality.

Naturally, the fullest kind of action research will engage all three strategies: first person research practice is best conducted in the company of friends and colleagues who can provide support and challenge; such a company is most likely to evolve into a second-person co-operative inquiry process. On the other hand, attempts at third person research which are not based in rigorous first person inquiry into one's purposes and practices is open to distortion through unregulated bias. The following account from Bob Hudson shows how one manager's first-person research evolved to include immediate colleagues (second-person) and on into the wider organization (third-person). As CEO of an NHS Trust in Wales, Bob led his organization's response to the reorganization of the health service in Wales which challenges the independent existence of the Trust—and with it his job as CEO.

The reaction from the Board down was to defend our position and to seek to build a power base that would enable us to survive as an independent organisation. While this was my own initial position, I could also see that that competitive relationships between organisations were hindering the delivery of service.

My initial attempts to engage the Board in a constructive debate on these issues didn't go down too well—the concern was about winning in the merger process. Speaking widely with my colleagues over the following weeks I discovered a mixed range of concerns, from personal survival and a desire to defend the patch to anxieties about the implications for clinical services.

My response was to concentrate on the process of debate rather than the solution. I reasoned that we needed to surface within the Board the complexities of the issues and the range of views held if we were to collectively find a way forward. Our first attempt suggested that what we needed was an organisation that looked like the one we had but was bigger! We had simply distorted our process to support the views we had brought to the meeting and there was a moment of collective recognition that this was what we had done. At a later session, using a process that forced us to articulate the assumptions we were using, we began to discuss openly the benefits of a range of merger models.

From this we engaged with the other organisations plus a wide range of other stakeholders. We did not propose a solution and seek to sell it to them, we sold a process on the basis that we might all learn something more ourselves. The final outcome was an agreement to the creation of a single Trust to replace the existing three—a solution that no one thought politically achievable at the outset. Support was not universal, the board of one trust continued to oppose the idea throughout but general stakeholder support was forthcoming and the idea survived.

There are a number of key points in this story for me:

- My own reflective practice was making me more open to different perspectives and more sensitive to reactions from organisational members to new thinking.

- I was beginning to develop corporate processes within the Trust that allowed a more open and reflective consideration of complex issues.
- I had also learnt to separate my personal future from these discussions: I openly acknowledged that I did not see myself competing for the post of CEO in the new organisation. This was a very liberating thing to do if risky.
- As a manager I have shifted from being a provider of solutions to someone who seeks to introduce new ideas and create spaces in which they can be discussed. I have taken this learning into my new job developing new strategy for NHSWales as a whole

First person action research/practice

First person inquiry is inquiry in many ways the experiential and practical foundation of all other forms of inquiry. It invites the individual—in their personal and professional, public and private lives—to attend to questions such as

- Who am I? What is important to me? What is worthwhile engaging with?
- What frameworks of thinking/feeling do I bring to my life and work? What creative and distorting perspectives do I bring? Am I stuck in one frame or able to appreciate and delight in alternative frames?
- What is the quality of my behaviour? Do I have a range of behaviours appropriate to the situation? In particular, can I act in such a way as to increase the quality of the conversation? Am I flexible, diplomatic *and* outrageous, cunning and simple, wise and foolish? Is my behaviour congruent with my purposes?
- Am I awake to what is happening within me and in the world around me?
- How do I act now to increase the quality of dialogue and inquiry?

First person research/practice brings scholarship to life, brings inquiry into more and more of our moments of action—not as outside researchers but as organizational and family members, and in our spiritual, artistic, craft, exercise, conversational, sexual, and other activities. It is open to anyone willing to commit to integrating inquiry and practice in everyday personal and professional settings. In fact, we all inevitably integrate inquiry and practice implicitly in our everyday conduct—although to integrate inquiry and practice both explicitly and implicitly in our everyday conduct is of course hugely demanding.

Some of the origins of first person inquiry lie in the work of Argyris and Schön and their descriptions of action science to explore the fit and misfit between theories-in-use and espoused theories (Argyris et al., 1985) and the “reflective practitioner” (Schon, 1983) developing skills of both reflection *on* practice and reflection *in* practice. Torbert has describes action inquiry as exploring the fit and misfit between four territories of human experience—between one’s purposes and intuitive sense of what needs to be attended to; how one understands and frames the situation to hand, one’s espoused theory; the qualities of one’s actual behaviour; and what is going on in the world outside. Judi Marshall describes this as living life as inquiry, “seeking to maintain curiosity, through inner and outer arcs of attention, about what is happening and what part I am playing in creating and sustaining patterns of action, interaction and non-action....” (Marshall, 1999:****)

Torbert argues that all good inquiring conversations will explicitly incorporate these four territories of experience. In conversation this means explicit framing—making clear the perspective you are taking and the purposes you are pursuing; advocating—being clear about the course of action you are proposing; illustrating—grounding this advocacy in a particular concrete example; and inquiring—inviting others to comment and respond. One can then find ways to monitor one's conversations, seeking to balance the four types of speech in one's own performance, listening to and seeking to help others in the conversation similarly. This kind of inquiry practice can over time transform conversations from habitual, unaware and repetitive rituals toward inquiring dialogue (Fisher & Torbert, 1995).

Bob Hudson's first person research enables him to re-evaluate his own assumptions about his organization, to separate his own interests from wider purposes, and to change his behaviour away from being solutions oriented toward creating processes for open debate.

Second Person action research practice

Second-person research/practice starts when we engage with others face-to-face to enhance our respective first-person inquiries, and is thus always present, albeit underdeveloped, in everyday life. Maybe the most fundamental form of second-person research/practice is friendship, and most forms of professional practice are at their best forms of mutual inquiry. The relationship between manager and managed, between doctor and patient, between consultant and client are often seen as based primarily on authority and expertise, but can all be reframed as process of mutual inquiry to which all involved bring their own different perspectives, knowledge, skills, and arenas of action. Thus a significant form of second person research/practice may be to make explicit and systematic these everyday, tacit forms..

One of the most clearly articulated approaches to second-person research/practice is co-operative inquiry (Heron, 1996; Reason & Heron, 1996). In a co-operative inquiry, all those involved in the research endeavour are both co-researchers, whose thinking and decision-making contributes to generating ideas, designing and managing the project, and drawing conclusions from the experience; and also co-subjects, participating in the activity which is being researched. A typical inquiry group will consist of between six and twenty people. As co-researchers they participate in the thinking that goes into the research—framing the questions to be explored, agreeing on the methods to be employed, and together making sense of their experiences. As co-subjects they participate in the action being studied. The co-researchers engage in cycles of action and reflection: in the action phases they experiment with new forms of personal or professional practice; in the reflection phase they reflect on their experience critically, learn from their successes and failures, and develop theoretical perspectives which inform their work in the next action phase. Co-operative inquiry groups thus integrate the four forms of knowing—experiential, presentational, propositional and practical—outlined in Table 1.

Mark Baldwin worked with groups of social workers to explore the tensions between professional discretion and bureaucratic procedures in the front-line implementation of social welfare policy. The groups were established following a day-long workshop at which these questions were identified, explored, and a

shared commitment made to developing more effective practice. The groups met for a half day session eight times over a six month period. One group provides a good example of the approach: group members agreed to explore how they used one particular bureaucratic document—a consent form which was legally required but often not completed since, in the professional judgement of the social workers, it was inappropriate to do so because it would be threatening or oppressive to their clients. They agreed to reflect carefully about each instance when they did or did not complete this form, to keep notes on what they did, and to bring all this to each inquiry group meeting for collective reflection. In this way their own first person inquiries were systematized and integrated with second person inquiry within the group. As a result of these reflections over time they were able to understand much better the intuitive processes by which they reached decisions in their practice, and to develop practices of mutual reflection and support which provided much improved professional practice and managerial control over what was before and entirely uncontrolled activity. Not only did they learn about how to manage professional discretion within the team, they also began to incorporate the processes of co-operative inquiry into their team practices in a sustained fashion. (Baldwin, 1998)

Bob Hudson extends his first-person inquiries into the second-person arena first by initiating reflective one-to-one conversations and then by creating workshop events at which his Board can reflect together about the challenges that face them. Note how they engage in two cycles of reflection, at the second attempt going deeper into and exploration of their assumptions that leads to a different end point.

Third person research practice

The practices of first- and second-person action research, while certainly challenging, are relatively well established: the inquiry processes an individual manager can undertake to develop his or her practice have been widely described and have been explored by probably thousands of managers and professionals worldwide; similarly well described and practiced are the second person processes a group of people may undertake, whether through co-operative inquiry, democratic dialogue, learning history and so on. One of the significant challenges for the field is how to develop third-person approaches to action research that engage large systems in democratic inquiry. Third-person research/practice attempts to create conditions which awaken and support the inquiring qualities of first- and second-person research/practice in a wider community, thus empowering participants to create their own knowing-in-action in collaboration with others.

For example, Toulmin and Gustavsen point to the major challenge of extending the relatively small scale action research projects so that “rather than being defined exclusively as ‘scientific happenings’ they (are) also defined as ‘political events’ with links to a broader debate on industrial democracy” (1996:11). They have begun to experiment with “dialogue conferences” which engage thousands of people in democratic dialogue on developmental tasks. Chisholm (1998) describes a large scale action research to build network organizations in the New Baldwin Corridor, and a depressed region of Pennsylvania, which involves similar action research to engage with large and diverse communities of people. The Urban Health Partnership, located at the King’s Fund in London, has used “future search” and similar conference

designs (Weisbord, 1992; Weisbord & Janoff, 1995) to engage large numbers of people, drawn from different health care, social work and community organizations, in explorations to improve the care of elders in UK inner cities. (Pratt, Gordon, & Plamping, 1999).

Bob Hudson and his colleagues move into a form of third-person research when they engage with other organizations and a wider group of stakeholders in the process of exploration which they have already started themselves. Note how important it is that they don't seek to impose a solution, but to create an situation in which continuing dialogue can take place.

Integrating First- Second- and Third-person action research/practice

Third person research represents in some ways the leading edge of action research practice: it presents us with the challenge of creating large scale participative democracy and of dealing with some of the major issues which confront our societies—issues of scale, of co-ordination between different stakeholders and interest groups, of “joined-up government” and so on. At the same time these large scale enterprises demand attention to first- and second-person inquiry practices. For you cannot facilitate a large scale inquiry conference unless you have developed a quality of inquiry in your own practice, so you exemplify inquiring behaviour and democratic dialogue, and are able to navigate the complex choices that such an event presents with a reasonable degree of comfort. You cannot do this unless you engage in mutual second-person inquiry with peers, friends prepared to truly support and challenge you, to engage with you on an in-depth journey of discovery. And of course, your first- and second-person inquiry will in many ways be fruitless unless at least in modest ways you are able to influence the wider third-person community to explore the issues that have engaged you. A third, very different example, will illustrate this.

Carlis Douglas started her PhD (Douglas, 1999) inquiries with the intention of exploring the application of equal opportunities policies and practices in British organizations. As she reflected on the project she had undertaken, she realized over time that a more pressing question was how Black professional women like herself could thrive, rather than simply survive in their organizational lives—a phrase she took as inspiration from the Black woman poet Maya Angelou. Her first person inquiry processes included writing reflective autobiography, careful recording and reflection on day-to-day professional activities, and experimentation with novel forms of behaviour. For her second person inquiry processes she established a small co-operative inquiry group of Black women, and used her professional consulting practices to develop inquiring dialogue with Black and white members of the organizations with which she worked, in particular in training programmes for Black women managers. Her third person inquiry processes were more tacit, but clearly involved increasing the amount of discussion and dialogue about issues of race and gender in the organizations she worked with, and influencing the development of policy and practice.

The inquiry processes were increasingly challenging. In her first person inquiries, Carlis noticed how the ways she had learned to survive which were quite typical of Black women—working very hard, not raising issues of race and gender, shielding herself emotionally from racist incidents and putting them down to ignorance—were also ways in which she stopped herself from

thriving—she overworked and made herself ill, and by shielding herself shut herself down emotionally, and so on. The second person inquiries both supported this observation and challenged it—the group members found they behaved in similar ways, but also realized that they shared a strong norm which made it a taboo to talk about these aspects of their experiences even between themselves as Black professional women. As one of the participant noted as they struggled with these issues, “If we hadn’t had this inquiry group we wouldn’t have even known what kinds of questions to be asking”! The second person inquiry provided a space to explore both these experiences and the taboo against discussion them under conditions of high and developing mutual love and trust. This provided Carlis with deeper understanding of the issues involved in raising these questions in the wider, second- to third-person discussions with Black women managers, and provided her with a wider range of options of action in these difficult discussions.

And in an even wider context, these insights provide us all with a better understanding of how institutional racism is built and maintained through very complex and subtle process involving both Black and white people and their mutual inability to talk about questions of race. While we need to address these issues at a level of third-person inquiry, it is abundantly clear from Carlis’ work that this cannot be adequately undertaken except through processes which invite all those involved to engage in what we have here called first- and second-person inquiry—in-depth explorations of the personal experience and behaviour in the company of others similarly engaged.

As Greenwood and Levin point out, action research lies at the very centre of human life. (1998:90). Action research is a family of approaches through which we can work to develop democratic dialogue in the service of mutual understanding and more informed action. It is an approach to living based on experience and engagement, on love and respect for the integrity of oneself and others. It depends on our willingness to rise above presupposition, to look, and to look again, to try out different behaviours, to risk security in the search for understanding and appropriate forms of action. All this in the service of opening possibilities for creative living.

Table 1

- *Experiential knowing* is through direct face-to-face encounter with person, place or thing; it is knowing through empathy and resonance, and is almost impossible to put into words.
- *Presentational knowing* emerges from experiential knowing, and provides its first expression through forms of imagery such as poetry and story, drawing, sculpture, movement, dance and so on.
- *Propositional knowing* "about" something, is knowing through ideas and theories, and is expressed in abstract language or mathematics.
- *Practical knowing* is knowing "how to" do something and is expressed in a skill, knack or competence.

Knowing will be more valid—richer, deeper, more true to life and more useful—if these four ways of knowing are congruent with each other: if our knowing is grounded in our experience, expressed through our stories and images, understood through theories which make sense to us, and expressed in worthwhile action in our lives.

References

- Argyris, C., Putnam, R., & Smith, M. C. (1985). Action Science: Concepts, Methods, and Skills for Research and Intervention. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.
- Argyris, C., & Schon, D. (1974). Theory in Practice: increasing professional effectiveness. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.
- Argyris, C., & Schon, D. (1996). Organizational Learning II. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- Baldwin, M. (1998). Constructing Care Management: policy implementation as a participative learning process. Unpublished PhD, University of Bath, Bath.
- Chambers, R. (1997). Whose Reality Counts? Putting the First Last. London: Intermediate Technology Publications.
- Chisholm, R. F. (1998). Developing Network Organizations: Learning from Practice and Theory. Reading, Mass: Addison Wesley.
- Dickens, L., & Watkins, K. (1999). Action Research: Rethinking Lewin. Management Learning Special Issue: The Action Dimension in Management: Diverse Approaches to Research, Teaching and Development, 30(2), 127-140.
- Douglas, C. (1999). From Surviving to Thriving: Black women managers in Britain. Unpublished PhD, University of Bath, Bath.
- Fals-Borda, O., & Rahman, M. A. (Eds.). (1991). Action and Knowledge: breaking the monopoly with participatory action research. New York: IntermediateTechnology Pubs/Apex Press.
- Fisher, D., & Torbert, W. R. (1995). Personal and Organizational Transformations: the true challenge of continual quality improvement. London: McGraw-Hill.
- Freire, P. (1970). Pedagogy of the Oppressed. New York: Herder & Herder.
- Greenwood, D. J., & Levin, M. (1998). Introduction to Action Research: Social research for social change. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

- Heron, J. (1971). Experience and Method: an inquiry into the concept of experiential research: Human Potential Research Project, University of Surrey.
- Heron, J. (1992). Feeling and Personhood: psychology in another key. London: Sage.
- Heron, J. (1996). Co-operative Inquiry: research into the human condition. London: Sage.
- Kolb, D. (1984). Experiential Learning: experience as the source of learning and development. London: Prentice Hall.
- Marshall, J. (1999). Living Life as Inquiry. Systematic Practice and Action Research, 12(2), 155-171.
- Marsick, V. J., & O'Neil, J. (1999). The Many Faces of Action Learning. Management Learning Special Issue: The Action Dimension in Management: Diverse Approaches to Research, Teaching and Development, 30(2), 159-176.
- Mies, M. (1993). Feminist research; science, violence and responsibility. In M. Mies & V. Shiva (Eds.), Ecofeminism. London and New Jersey: Zed Books.
- Mitroff, I. I. (1998). On the Fundamental Importance of Ethical Management: Why Management Is the Most Important of All Human Activities. Journal of Management Inquiry, 7(1), 68-79.
- Park, P. (1999). People, Knowledge, and Change in Participatory Research. Management Learning Special Issue: The Action Dimension in Management: Diverse Approaches to Research, Teaching and Development, 30(2), 141-158.
- Pratt, J., Gordon, P., & Plamping, D. (1999). Working Whole Systems: Putting theory into practice in organizations. London: King's Fund.
- Putman, r. (1999). Transforming Social Practice: An Action Science Perspective. Management Learning Special Issue: The Action Dimension in Management: Diverse Approaches to Research, Teaching and Development, 30(2), 177-188.
- Raelin, J. (1999). Special Issue: The Action Dimension in Management: L Diverse approaches to research, teaching and development. Management Learning, 30(2), 113-248.
- Reason, P. (Ed.). (1988). Human Inquiry in Action: developments in new paradigm research. London: Sage.
- Reason, P. (Ed.). (1994). Participation in Human Inquiry. London: Sage.
- Reason, P. (1998). Co-operative Inquiry as a Discipline of Professional Practice. Journal of Interprofessional Care., 12(4), 419-436.
- Reason, P. (1999). Integrating Action and Reflection through Co-operative Inquiry. Management Learning Special Issue: The Action Dimension in Management: Diverse Approaches to Research, Teaching and Development, 30(2), 207-227.
- Reason, P., & Heron, J. (1995). Co-operative Inquiry. In R. Harre, J. Smith, & L. Van Langenhove (Eds.), Rethinking Methods in Psychology (pp. 122-142). London: Sage.
- Reason, P., & Heron, J. (1996). A Layperson's Guide of Co-operative Inquiry. Centre for Action Research in Professional Practice, University of Bath. Published on World Wide Web <http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/LAYGUIDE.htm>.
- Reason, P., & Rowan, J. (Eds.). (1981). Human Inquiry: A Sourcebook of New Paradigm Research. Chichester: Wiley.
- Reason, P., & Torbert, W. R. (in preparation). Toward a Transformational Science: a further look at the scientific merits of action research. .
- Revans, R. W. (1982). The Origin and Growth of Action Learning. London: Cartwell Bratt.

- Schon, D. (1983). The Reflective Practitioner. New York: Basic Books.
- Selener, D. (1997). Participatory Action Research and Social Change: Cornell Participatory Action Research Network, Cornell University.
- Senge, P. (1990). The Fifth Discipline: the art and practice of the learning organization. New York: Doubleday.
- Shani, A. B., & Pasmore, W. A. (1985). Organizational Inquiry: towards a new model of the action research process. In D. D. Warrick (Ed.), Contemporary Organization Development: current thinking and applications . Glenview, Illinois: Scott, Foresman and Co.
- Susman, G. I., & Evered, R. D. (1978). An Assessment of the Scientific Merits of Action Research. Administrative Science Quarterly, 23(December 1978), 582-602.
- Torbert, W. R. (1981). Why educational research has been so uneducational: the case for a new model of social science based on collaborative inquiry. In P. Reason & J. Rowan (Eds.), Human Inquiry: a sourcebook of new paradigm research (pp. 141-152). Chichester: Wiley.
- Torbert, W. R. (1991). The Power of Balance: transforming Self, Society, and Scientific Inquiry. Newbury Park: Sage.
- Torbert, W. R. (1998). Developing Wisdom and Courage in Organizing and Sciencing. In S. Srivastva & D. Cooperrider (Eds.), Organizational Wisdom and Executive Courage . San Francisco: New Lexington Press.
- Torbert, W. R. (1999). The Distinctive Questions Developmental Action Inquiry Asks. Management Learning Special Issue: The Action Dimension in Management: Diverse Approaches to Research, Teaching and Development, 30(2), 189-206.
- Toulmin, S., & Gustavsen, B. (Eds.). (1996). Beyond Theory: changing organizations through participation. Amstedom: John Benjamins.
- Weisbord, M. R. (Ed.). (1992). Discovering Common Ground - How Future Search Conferences Bring People Together to Achieve Breakthrough Innovation, Empowerment, Shared Vision, and Collaborative Action. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc.
- Weisbord, M. R., & Janoff, S. (1995). Future Search: an action guide to finding common ground in organizations and communities. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler.