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ABSTRACT

This paper traces the development of the Ed.D., explores the purposes the degree serves, and assesses its value. The creation of the degree stemmed largely from the reluctance of faculty in Arts and Sciences to offer the Ph.D. in professional schools. The one thing most Ed.D. programs have in common is that it is supposed to be an applied or practitioner professional degree. Data on the effect of the Ed.D. on practice is generally limited to examinations of the effect of the degree on the recipient's career path. There is little evidence about the importance of the degree for the profession of educational leadership. It would seem important to reconfigure the degree to meet the needs of practice, and there should be systematic study of the impact of receipt of the Ed.D. on educational practice. Attached to this paper is another commentary on the role of the Ed. D., "Degree of Distinction: The Ed.D. or the Ph.D. in Education," by Benjamin Baez, also presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association for the Study of Higher Education, 2002. This paper suggests that the debate over the relative merits of the Ed.D. and Ph.D. degrees reflects the struggle between the education and employment fields. It would be more useful to avoid viewing the need for either degree as a reflection of a particular reality and instead engage in a study of how mechanisms of power establish the need for these degrees and distinction between them in the first place. (Contains 20 references.) (SLD)

Rethinking the Ed.D., or What's in a Name?

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The Ed.D. or Doctor of Education is a beleaguered degree. In the field of practice, the Ed.D. is criticized for its failure to be neither fish nor fowl. Many Ed.D. programs could be seen as a watered down version of the Ph.D. in Education and seemingly fail to provide practitioners with the knowledge, skills, and behaviors needed for effective leadership in educational settings (e.g., McCarthy, 1999). Within academe, the Ed.D. lacks status as a doctoral degree (Clifford & Guthrie, 1988). As a professional degree, it not only lacks the status of the Ph.D., considered to be "the highest degree in academic disciplines" (Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation, 2002), but it also lacks the status of other professional degrees such as the J.D. (Doctor of Jurisprudence) and the M.D. (Doctor of Medicine). Finally, the Ed.D. is hampered by its imitation of the Ph.D. rather than its creation as a unique degree. For example, to earn a Ph.D., one takes graduate-level course work and a qualifying or comprehensive examination and writes a dissertation. These same expectations exist for the Ed.D. student. Differences between the degrees consist of variations in the kind and number of courses to be taken as well as the nature of the comprehensive examination and the dissertation (Miklos, 1992; Richardson & Walsh, 1978). What usually goes unquestioned is that the Ed.D. degree will consist of these three components.[1]

As a holder of an Ed.D., I am personally affected by these perceptions of the Ed.D. Charged by Bill Tierney, president of ASHE, to write a paper about rethinking the Ed.D., I decided to take this opportunity to understand why the Ed.D. is so beleaguered. I shall trace why the Ed.D. developed, speculate about the purposes it serves, and make an assessment of its value

[1] According to Osguthorpe and Wong's (1993) survey of doctoral-granting colleges or schools of education, 98% of the institutions that have an Ed.D. require the dissertation.

to the field of practice and to colleges of education. To me, a key question is whether the field and schools/colleges of education need the degree. If they do, do they need it in its current configuration as a psuedo Ph.D.?

Development and Purposes of the Ed.D.

Creation of the Ed.D. stemmed largely from the opposition of Arts and Science faculty to professional schools wanting to offer the Ph.D. Hollis (as cited in Richardson &

Walsh, 1978) wrote in 1945 that Arts and Science faculty had several concerns, including whether or not "professional fields possessed a body of scholarly knowledge suitable for offering the Ph.D" and whether certain research topics were "suitable" (p. 1). As a result, Harvard University developed the first Ed.D. in the early 1920s. Similar to the Ph.D., Harvard's Ed.D. was "designed for advanced scholarship," but unlike the Ph.D., it was also for "applied research rather than original research (McLaughlin & Moore, 1991, p. 2). Thus from its beginning, one of the Ed.D.'s reference points was the Ph.D. The Ed.D. was supposed to be different from the Ph.D. in its applied focus but this focus was developed within the format of the Ph.D.

As of 1997-98, over 220 institutions offered a doctoral degree in education (National Center for Education Statistics, 2001) and at least 180 of these institutions offered the Ed.D. in 1999 (Bruckerhoff, 2000). The Ed.D. is most apt to the sole education doctorate in comprehensive colleges and universities and least apt to be the only education doctorate at research universities (Osguthorpe & Wong, 1993).

A glance at some institutions' websites shows wide variation in the focus of the Ed.D. across these many institutions. For example, only one Ed.D. is offered at the University of Missouri-Columbia—an Ed.D. in Educational Leadership, whereas the Ed.D. at Penn State could

be in higher education, educational administration, adult education or five other areas. There are also institutional variations in degree requirements, including credit hours to be earned, research competencies to be developed, and courses required. Similarly, there are institutional variations in format with some universities offering Ed.D. programs only to cohorts taking weekend classes and other universities following the more traditional format of weekly courses taken by students admitted individually and not as part of a cohort (See Anderson, 1983; Deering, 1998; Dill & Morrison, 1985; Miklos, 1992; Osguthorpe & Wong, 1993; Richardson & Walsh, 1978).

The one commonality that seems to exist among institutional variations of the Ed.D. degree is that it is supposed to be an applied or practitioner or professional degree. Penn State makes clear the professional nature of the Ed.D. with its assertion about the difference between the Ed.D. and Ph.D. in educational administration: "The career goal of one pursing a D.Ed. should be the professional practice of educational administration. The career goal of one pursuing a Ph.D. should be research and scholarly work" (Penn State College of Education, 2002).

As a professional degree, the Ed.D. should prepare people who are or wish to be practice-oriented leaders in the field of education, typically but not exclusively considered to be occurring in P-12 and higher education settings. Thus its purpose for the field of practice is presumably to prepare leaders and thus improve educational practice.

Aside from its official or professional purpose, the Ed.D. may also serve as to buffer the Ph.D. from student and practitioner demands for a doctoral program that meets their needs and interests rather than those of the faculty. As noted earlier, requirements for the Ed.D. and Ph.D. vary widely across institutions, but in general Ed.D. programs are likely to be more practitioner-

oriented in content, require fewer research courses, and have more flexible residency requirements than the Ph.D. (Anderson, 1983). Without the Ed.D. as an option for students seeking the doctorate, schools/colleges of education desirous of doctoral enrollments might have to change the content and scheduling of Ph.D. courses and admit students whose interest in conducting research is not what faculty would like it to be.

Value of the Ed.D. to the Field of Practice

Existence of the Ed.D. potentially affects the field of practice in several ways. One effect may simply be that more educational leaders have the doctorate because of the existence of Ed.D. programs. People often seek the Ed.D. because they need it as an educational credential to make them eligible for a pay raise or a higher-level administrative position. This may be particularly true in the field of educational administration, partly because the National Policy Board for Educational Administration "advocated that the doctorate become a prerequisite for entry in the educational administration profession" (McLaughlin & Moore, 1991, p. 3). Also, while no states require the Ed.D. as an entering credential for principals and/or superintendents, having the degree is often expected in job searches for these positions.

The Ed.D. is also useful as a degree for those seeking administrative positions in higher education institutions, particularly community colleges, as the educational background of community college senior administrators demonstrates. As example, a recent survey of the Chief Executive Officers in California's community colleges indicated that of the 83% holding doctorates, 54% held the Ed.D. (California Postsecondary Education Commission, 2000). Queried as to reasons for seeking the doctorate (Ed.D. or Ph.D.), over 64% of the respondents indicated that "job advancement and promotion" was "very important" (p. 184).

Individuals' desire to increase their career opportunities may also be combined with a genuine desire to learn how to be an effective or more effective educational leader. Thus they are seeking answers to how to improve the field of practice and skills to do so. In a recent study of California community college administrators, over 47% of respondents indicated that gaining "organizational and leadership skills" (p. 184) was a very important reason for seeking the doctorate (California Postsecondary Education Commission, 2000).

Whether possession of the Ed.D. makes a difference in degree recipients' professional behavior is an important question that needs to be answered to determine the value of the Ed.D. to the field of practice. Presumably recipients of the Ed.D. will perform differently in their positions than before they received the degree.

Because of the many variables that affect a person's behavior, it is extremely difficult to ascertain if an individual's professional behavior has changed as a result of attaining the Ed.D. Limited research has been done on the effect of doctoral programs (whether Ed.D. or Ph.D.) on degree recipients' career and professional behavior. Researchers who have examined the literature on K-12 administrator preparation programs, including doctoral ones, found little indication of the relationship of these programs to administrative performance or school improvement (Miklos, 1992; McCarthy, 1999; Shakeshaft, 1999). For example, in her analysis of the evolution of educational leadership preparation programs, McCarthy (1999) concluded that "there is insufficient research documenting the merits of program components in relation to administrator performance" (p. 133). She did note one study in which graduates of the Danforth Foundation principalship preparation program were assessed by their colleagues as to their leadership, and the colleagues "agreed that the graduates used effective leadership practices" (p.

134). However, this was not a doctoral program. Furthermore, few educational administration program evaluations have been conducted that ask doctoral degree recipients about the effect of the degree on their practice. The latest requirements for National Council for the Advancement of Teacher Education (NCATE) accreditation require a variant of this question and thus may lead to more information about Ed.D. recipients' perceptions of the degree's effectiveness in helping them in the field of practice.

Besides asking degree recipients, another way to ascertain the value of the Ed.D. for the field of practice is to ask those who hire or work with educational leaders about their views on the importance of the doctorate for administrative positions. For example, superintendents in California were surveyed as to the importance of superintendents and principals having a doctorate in education administration/leadership (no distinction was made between the Ed.D. and the Ph.D.). According to the survey respondents, it was less important for principals to have the doctorate than for superintendents. Also, superintendents from small districts were less likely to consider the doctorate important for either principals or superintendents than were superintendents from large districts. When asked about the benefits of completing a doctoral program, the superintendents were most apt to mention its "symbolic value (credibility and respect as a basis for leadership)" (California Postsecondary Education Commission, 2000, p. 20). Almost half indicated that the doctorate's "symbolic value exceeded the training value" (p. 20).

There is also little research about the impact of the Ed.D. (or the Ph.D.) in higher education upon practice in higher education institutions. To my knowledge, no one has studied whether possession of a doctorate in higher education improves one's ability to be an effective

administrator although degree recipients are sometimes asked if they think it has (e.g., California Postsecondary Education Commission, 2000). Few higher education programs routinely conduct program evaluations that ask their graduates to assess the value of the degree to their educational practice (Townsend, 1990). One national study did examine the career paths of four national cohorts of graduates of higher education doctoral programs and asked these graduates about the impact of the degree on their career paths. A number of higher education doctoral recipients expressed disappointment that the doctorate had not provided the anticipated career boost and also indicated frustration "with the low status of higher education as a field of study" (Townsend & Mason, 1990, p. 75). The researchers also asked if the respondents would pursue a higher education doctorate if they were starting over and still wanted a doctorate. Forty-three percent of those who would seek a doctorate again answered it would not be in higher education. However, over 70% of the 539 respondents to the survey indicated their "doctoral work to be 'highly relevant' or 'relevant' to their subsequent professional studies: (p. 75).

In examining the respondents' career paths, the variable of type of doctoral degree was considered. It appeared that neither type of degree had "a greater impact [on career paths] than the other on careers in higher education administration" (Mason, 1991, p. 271). However, college and university faculty members or those employed in K-12 education were more likely to hold the Ed.D. than the Ph.D., but the same was not true for college administrators.

Ed.D. programs are not the only graduate programs that lack evidence of the positive impact of their degrees upon degree recipients and the field of practice. Ph.D. programs in education also lack this kind of evidence as do master's level teacher education programs. According to a recent United States Department of Education (2002) report on teacher education,

the research "on the effects of [K-12] teachers having a master's degree" suggests that "the effects are weak, at best" (p. 8).

This lack of evidence of a degree's value and effect is not unique to education. A recent study of the economic value of the M.B.A. to degree recipients concluded that "there is little evidence that mastery of the knowledge acquired in business schools enhances people's careers, or that even attaining the M.B.A. credential itself has much effect on graduates' salaries or career attainment" (Pfeffer as cited in Mangan, 2002).

In short, the data on the effect of the Ed.D. upon practice are basically limited to perceptual data about the effect of a doctoral degree upon the recipient's career path or administrative performance in K-12 or higher education settings and degree-holders' indications of reasons for seeking the doctorate. As McCarthy (1999) notes, "perceptual studies are useful in determining the level of satisfaction" (p. 133) of degree recipients, but are not sufficient evidence of the value of the Ed.D. in improving the field of practice. We need more conclusive evidence that individuals with an Ed.D. are more qualified and skilled than individuals without the Ed.D. when serving in educational leadership positions.

Value of the Ed.D. to Schools/Colleges of Education

The existence of the Ed.D. has several effects on schools/colleges of education, depending upon institutional type. First of all, it is a doctoral degree that can be offered by colleges of education. Because the Ed.D. is often the first doctoral degree offered by regional universities (McLaughlin & Moore, 1991), colleges of education at such institutions are valued because their offering the Ed.D. increases institutional status: they are now doctoral-degree-granting institutions. This point is made clear in a study commissioned by Southern Connecticut

State University to determine if it should implement the Ed.D. The study's authors (Bruckerhoff, Bruckerhoff, & Sheehan, 2000), surveyed almost 200 institutions that offered the Ed.D. as of 1999 and found that when the Ed.D. is the first doctoral degree at an institution, "the Ed.D. has given a boost to the academic reputations of these institutions and has improved the morale of faculty, especially in the college/school of education" (p. viii).

In contrast, the offering of the Ed.D. in research universities is often seen as detrimental to the status of the school/college of education because of the low status of the Ed.D. in these institutions. In institutions where the Ph.D. was the first doctoral degree to be offered, the Ed.D. is often seen as a lower-status doctoral degree (Clifford & Guthrie, 1988). This perception of the lower status of the Ed.D. may be exacerbated when the degree is administered through a university's graduate school, the customary administrative unit for the Ph.D. Comparisons between the two degrees are invariably made, usually to the detriment of the Ed.D. (Clifford & Guthrie, 1988, Osguthorpe & Wong, 1993). In those institutions where the Ed.D. is administered by the school/college of education as a professional degree (just as law schools administer the J.D. and medical schools the M.D), it may be that the Ed.D. is less on the institutional radar screen for degree snobbery.

The Ed.D. may also be of value to some schools/colleges of education because it leads to increased enrollments. Certainly if the Ed.D. is the only doctoral degree the school/college may offer, having an Ed.D. program will increase its graduate-level enrollment. Whether offering the Ed.D. in addition to the Ph.D. increases doctoral enrollments is not clear. If the Ed.D. is seen as an easier degree than the Ph.D. (California Postsecondary Education Commission, 2000), this perception may lead to increased enrollments in the Ed.D. program. On the more positive side, if

the Ed.D. is seen in the field of practice, particularly in K-12 educational settings, as a "practical professional [degree] program" (Clifford & Guthrie, p. 290), then it is likely to have enrollments regardless of perceptions about its difficulty as a doctoral program.

Is the Ed.D. Needed?

Because there is no conclusive evidence that the Ed.D. improves the field of practice, one way to rethink the Ed.D. is to see it as a degree that should be eliminated. Another reason to eliminate the degree might be its status in research institutions. As of 1989, 57 research institutions offered both the Ph.D. and Ed.D., 17 offered only the Ph.D., and seven offered just the Ed.D. (Osguthorpe & Wong, 1993). Offering the Ph.D. and eliminating the Ed.D. would most likely give schools/colleges of education in these institutions more status than offering both degrees or offering only the Ed.D. However, eliminating the Ed.D. would certainly be resisted by schools/colleges of education where the Ed.D. is the institution's first doctoral degree. In addition to increasing education faculty's morale and status, the Ed.D. increases these institutions' reputation and visibility and "may [also] help [them] gain additional doctoral programs in areas other education" (Brickerhoff, Bruckerhoff, & Sheehan, 2000, p. ii). In the case of the Ed.D., status is in the eye of the beholder. What offends one person's eyes delights another's.

Before terminating the Ed.D., one needs to be careful about what is being eliminated—the Ed.D. because there is no strong proof of its value to the field of practice and because research universities view it as a low status degree, or the concept of any doctoral degree in education, the Ed.D. or the Ph.D? I am unaware of any evidence that receipt of the Ph.D. in education positively affects one's professional behavior in the field of practice or that it has a

stronger effect than does receipt of the Ed.D. Rather, K-12 practitioners sometimes question the Ph.D. in education as too theory-driven and research-oriented for those in the field (California Postsecondary Education Commission, 2000). Some educational leadership positions require a doctorate in a particular area on the assumption that a doctoral program in this area provides the degree recipient with knowledge and skills that will positively affect the degree recipients' performance in positions in this area. Until and unless such evidence is provided, it seems wrong to require the doctorate, whatever its name. Aside from the Ph.D. having more status in academe, if not in K-12 education, elimination of the Ed.D. and maintenance of the Ph.D. would not seem to address the fundamental issue of the value of an education doctorate, whatever its name, to practice or educational improvement.

Should the Ed.D. Exist in its Current Configuration?

Since the credentialism of American society and more specifically the field of education is unlikely to go away, another approach to rethinking the Ed.D. is to consider whether it is necessary for the Ed.D. to be configured as it currently is. Does it have to require courses, a qualifying examination, and a dissertation, or can it break out of the Ph.D. mold and forge a truly distinctive degree that could be demonstrated to serve its recipients and the field of practice as more than a credential? To answer this question, faculty and practitioners would have to "think outside the box" and develop a new Ed.D. that is not always implicitly or explicitly compared to the Ph.D. and found lacking because it does not have the traditional components of the Ph.D. We need to accept that the Ed.D. will never have the currency of professional degrees like the M.D. and the J.D. because of the comparative low status of education as a field and be "brave enough to make it unique" (Susan Twombly, personal communication, July 3, 2002), not a pale version

of the Ph.D. I don't know if it's possible to rethink the Ed.D. sufficiently to make it unique, but I challenge my colleagues to consider the possibility and attempt the task.

To begin this task, education faculty need to work with practitioners and doctoral alumni to determine what kind of educational leadership is needed to improve the field of practice and what kind of program could develop the necessary knowledge, skills, and behavior for effective leadership. A ground rule for program discussions is that the program is not bound by the three traditional components of the Ph.D.: courses, oral examination, and dissertation. Perhaps a program could consist of supervised internships in a variety of roles and settings, culminating in a written and oral examination conducted jointly by each of the on-site supervisors and the education faculty. The internships could include some required readings and discussion with other doctoral students in internships. Perhaps a culminating research project might be conducted by a cohort of students who collectively conduct the necessary literature review, establish a methodology, with each student then conducting the study in her/his own educational setting. Additionally, one aspect of reconfiguring the Ed.D. might be deciding once and for all that it is a professional degree and needs to be administered by education units, rather than graduate schools.

Beyond reconfiguring the Ed.D. to develop a degree that truly meets the needs of the field of practice, there needs to be systematic study of the impact of receipt of the Ed.D. upon educational practice. Such study needs to go beyond perception studies of degree recipients. One possible approach is to develop "measures of leader effectiveness and relate effectiveness scores to the amount and type of graduate preparation" (McCarthy, 1999, p. 133). According to McCarthy, Fowler (1991) conducted such a study when he "created a measure of perceived

principal effectiveness (PPE) based on teachers' perceptions ...and related PPE scores to principals' level of education" (p. 133). Other, more time-consuming approaches are probably necessary to gain some clarity about the value of the Ed.D. to practice and practitioners. By ascertaining and implementing ways to assess the value of the Ed.D., education could set a model for other professions to use in examining the worth of their professional degrees.

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Degree Of Distinction:
The Ed.D. Or The Ph.D. In Education

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Those of us who study higher education tend to treat academic creations as the products of rational processes rather than as the results of political struggles over the power to create, itself. The tendency in the literature, for example, is to view the Doctor of Education degree (Ed.D.) independently of this struggle, as having a unique history that illustrates progression in thought and action. The Ed.D. is deemed to have particular definitions, uses, values, and, in short, a content in itself. While it is common to study the Ed.D. as a thing in itself, it seems more fruitful to study it in relation to its constitutive opposite, the Doctor of Philosophy degree (Ph.D.), which provides the Ed.D.'s meaning by establishing it as its difference. To say that such a study should focus on the two doctoral degrees does not mean that it should be comparative, as comparisons reinforce the difference and deflect attention from the mechanisms of power that create that difference. This paper treats the two doctoral degrees as products of classifying practices that guarantee but obscure the power of academic institutions to create and legitimate classifications of the social world and, thus, to dominate it.

Given this understanding of power, I argue that one must be leery of the distinctions educators create. In particular, those distinctions that support the Ed.D./Ph.D. debates, such as researcher/practitioner, theory/practice, liberal education/professional education, should be studied in order to uncover their underlying dialectics of power and difference. I want to use Bourdieu to argue that such distinctions reflect two kinds of struggles: Those in which individuals and institutions attempt to gain control over cultural fields (such as education and employment), and those in which cultural fields attempt to gain predominance over other fields. This study, therefore, does not treat the distinction between the Ed.D. and Ph.D. as a reflection of

a reality independent of politics and power, but as reflection of a particular state in the struggle to control the classifications of the social world.

I provide in the following sections a brief overview of the doctoral degrees, and I explain the current understanding of their purposes. Next, I argue that the Ed.D./Ph.D. debates reflect conflict over the purposes of higher education. This conflict takes place predominantly within the field of higher education. I then argue that the field of higher education is itself experiencing challenges from other fields, especially the field of employment. This conflict also is reflected in the debate over doctoral degrees. I use Bourdieu's work (and others) to argue that we may pose questions about doctoral degrees differently. Specifically, one may inquire into the extent to which conflict over the degrees reflect the struggles taking place within education, and between education and employment, over control of meaning-making processes. Finally, I argue that it is the idea of distinction itself which must be understood for its effects in organizing individuals and education in particular ways.

Doctoral Degrees: A (Very) Brief Overview

"Doctoral" degrees apparently originated in medieval universities, which trained men for the major professions in Law, Medicine, and Theology. The term *doctor*, deriving from the word *doceo*, referred to "teacher," and the "doctoral degree" marked the medieval qualification to teach in other universities.[1] "Research," as a purpose for the doctoral degree, originated in the

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[1] See John Radford (2001), Doctor of What? *Teaching in Higher Education*, 6, no. 4, 527-529, 528; see also, Hugh J. McDonald (1943), The Doctorate in America, *Journal of Higher Education*, 14, no. 4, 189-194, 190.

German university of the nineteenth century, which was redefined by Humbolt to further his belief that the various sciences constituted a "whole" unified by philosophy and that their knowledge furthered universal enlightenment.[2] The practice of research came to the universities with the rise of the sciences, and the Ph.D. became the qualification for such practice.[3]

The American Ph.D. was first awarded by Yale University in 1861.[4] But it was not until the establishment of The Johns Hopkins University in 1876, modeled after German universities, that the Ph.D. became a significant part of American Universities. Yet, at Johns Hopkins, the Master of Arts (M.A.). and Ph.D. originally were not considered separate degrees, or, more accurately, they were not awarded for different things. This was the case until 1909 when the University established the M.A. as a degree for college teachers and reserved the Ph.D. for the small group of individuals who it judged able to make first-rate contributions to original research. From then on the holder of the Ph.D. was deemed something of an expert on a small technical issue in a discipline.[5] By the middle of the twentieth century, however, the Ph.D. had

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[2] Radford, "Doctor of What?", 528.

[3] Laurence R. Veysey (1965), *The Emergence of the American University*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 176.

[4] John S. Brubacher and Willis Rudy (1958), *Higher Education in Transition: A History of American Colleges and Universities, 1636-1956*. New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 189.

[5] See Radford, "Doctor of What?", 527.

become, as Brubacher and Rudy explain, the "union card" necessary for college teaching, whether or not its holders actually conducted research.[6]

American universities, at any rate, oriented the Ph.D. in the direction of potential research, even though fewer than 20 percent of Ph.D. holders actually produced research.[7] Perhaps this fact led to the creation of different kinds of doctoral degrees. That is, there seemed a recognition that the Ph.D., a research degree, was not actually producing researchers, so other degrees would be necessary (reserving the Ph.D. for researchers). Furthermore, the calls by the professions for high credentials required a rethinking of doctoral education, and so Harvard University granted the first Ed.D. in 1920 for practicing educators.[8] The Ed.D., and other doctoral degrees, however, were seen as different from, and less prestigious than, the Ph.D.[9]

The Ph.D still is seen as research-oriented and the Ed.D. as practitioner-oriented. Because the Ph.D. is associated with research, which is the most important function of the university, and because most of its holders spend their time solely teaching (or administering), critiques abound. Some critics advocate different degrees for teaching and administration.[10] Others question

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[6] Brubacher and Rudy, *Higher Education in Transition*, 190.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Ibid.

[9] See, for example, McDonald, "The Doctorate in America," 190.

[10] See Radford, "Doctor of What?", 529.

whether the Ph.D. is at all necessary for college teaching,[11] although similar critiques suggest that the Ph.D. can be redefined to account for a broader conception of faculty work.[12] Many critics, however, lament what they deem to be a watering down of the Ph.D. degree.[13] But such a claim is possible only because the Ph.D. is understood to be for training and credentialing researchers and scholars.

Despite the attributed differences between the two degrees, studies of them do not reveal significant differences. There seems generally few differences in admissions criteria, course requirements, and dissertation research (although differences may be found when comparing individual institutions).[14] For example, a 1994 study of Ed.D. and Ph.D. dissertations by Nelson and Coorough found little differences in the kinds of studies performed, methods used, and intended audiences, although Ph.D. dissertations were more likely than Ed.D. ones to use high

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[11] See, for example, Kenneth C. Petress (1993), Are Doctorates Really Needed for Non-research Positions? *Journal of Instructional Psychology*, 20, no. 4, 321-322.

[12] See, for example, J. L. Lagowski (1996), Rethinking the Ph.D.: A New Social Contract, *Journal of Chemical Education*, 73, no. 1, 1.

[13] See, for example, McDonald, The Doctorate in America, 190.

[14] See Jered B. Kolbert and Johnston M. Brendel (1997), Current Perceptions of the Doctor of Philosophy and Doctor of Education in Counselor Preparation, *Counselor Education & Supervision*, 36, no. 3, 207-215.

level statistics (but even this was not a large difference).[15] If there is little actual difference between Ph.D. and Ed.D. degrees and programs, what can account for the apparent unease with the use of the Ph.D. for things other than research (or even college teaching)? Why have a degree for practitioners? Why do educators insist on both degrees or one over the other? What is the purpose of the doctoral degree in the first place? I believe that the conflicts over doctoral degrees belie a struggle within the field of higher education over its purposes, a point I elaborate on in the next section.

Doctoral Degrees, Or The Purposes Of Higher Education

Those arguing that the Ed.D. should be more "practitioner-oriented" and the Ph.D. more "research-oriented" seem to be making claims about higher education similar to those made by early critics. Indeed, there is in such claims traces of the disagreement between Hutchins and Dewey about higher education; the former arguing that general education is paramount because it "trains the mind" to deal with society's problems, and the latter arguing that experiential learning better prepares students to solve those problems.[16] There has been constant debate over whether colleges and universities should prepare individuals for the workplace, or whether they should give them a liberal education so that individuals can participate fully in a democracy. At

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[15] Jack K. Nelson and Calleen Coorough (1994), Content Analysis of the Ph.D. versus EdD Dissertations, *Journal of Experimental Education*, 62, no. 2, 158-168.

[16] See John Dewey (1966), *Democracy and Education: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education.* New York: The Free Press; Robert Maynard Hutchins (1978), *The Higher Learning in America.* New York: AMS Press.

any rate, with regard to the Ed.D./Ph.D. debates, the privilege given to practice assumes the university should prepare individuals adequately for the world of work; the privilege given to research and theory assumes the university's purpose is to produce knowledge for, and understanding of, the world.

For the early critics of graduate education, the distinction between the arts and sciences and the professions was clear. Veblen, for example, asserts that the pursuit of higher learning was the raison d'etre and province of graduate schools in the arts and sciences, and professional education (indeed, even undergraduate teaching) was antithetical to this.[17] For Veblen, the difference between the university and the "lower and professional schools is broad and simple; not so much a difference of degree as of kind."[18] The lower and professional schools are "occupied with instilling such knowledge and habits as will make their pupils fit citizens of the world in whatever position in the fabric of workday life they may fall," while the university prepares "men for a life of science and scholarship; and it is accordingly concerned with such discipline only as will give efficiency in the pursuit of knowledge and fit its students for the increase and diffusion of learning."[19] While Veblen was not concerned with doctoral degrees per se, his defense of "higher learning" echo that of those critics who claim that the Ph.D. should be

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[17] Thorstein Veblen (1993), *The Higher Learning in America.* New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers.

[18] Ibid., 14.

[19] Ibid., 15.

concerned with research, or the pursuit of knowledge, while the Ed.D. should be concerned with training efficient practitioners in the "workday life" they choose.

Yet, as discussed previously, most holders of the Ph.D. do not pursue research (and never have), and now the difference between degrees seems more ideological than material. The fact of the matter is that, from many accounts, very little differences exist between the degrees produced.[20] But the distinction lives on despite the fact that it is premised on a past that never -- or rarely ever -- materialized in fact. So the debate about doctoral education appears to be a manifestation of something other than this difference. I believe the true debate within higher education is over the purposes of higher education, generally, and graduate education, particularly. Narratives that suggest a "watering down" of the Ph.D., or those suggesting that the Ed.D./Ph.D. differences be made clear, can be read as a defense of the practice of research as the raison d'etre of the university, while those emphasizing the value of the Ed.D., or those suggesting a redefinition of the Ph.D. to account for its non-research uses, can be read as

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[20] See Kolbert and Brendel, Current Perceptions of the Doctor of Philosophy and Doctor of Education in Counselor Preparation; Nelson and Coorough, Content Analysis; Russell T. Osguthorpe and Mei J. Wong, The Ph.D. versus the Ed.D.: Time for a Decision, in *Innovative Higher Education*, 18 (1993): 47-63.

defending a notion of the university as also preparing individualS for the workplace, or at least for something other than research.[21]

There are other variations of this struggle over the purposes of higher education. Some critics suggest that the title of the degree is less important than the content of its program. For example, Iannone argues that the key measure of an Ed.D. programs is whether it encourages students to become more reflexive, more critical of the status quo, and more prepared to initiate social change.[22] This assumes, of course, that universities should promote social change, rather than merely further knowledge for its own sake or simply prepare individuals to reproduce the status quo.[23] Perhaps the status quo being challenged is the idea of what counts as knowledge. Winter, Griffiths, and Green, for instance, suggest that the Ed.D. forces universities to deal with

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[21] For an illustration of these contrasting claims at one campus, see Paul R. Smith (2000), A Meeting of Cultures: Part-time Students in an Ed.D. Program, *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, 3, no. 4, 359-380.

[22] Ron Iannone (1992), A Critical Perspective Reform Paradigm for Ed.D. Programs, *Education*, 112, no. 4, 612-617.

[23] Indeed, the debates about the Ed.D. and Ph.D. often seem to acknowledge that the world changes (or should), but they strip the Ph.D. or the Ed.D. of its potential for change. One is deemed "research-oriented" and the other "practice-oriented," and both are not seen as appropriately exceeding the purposes that animated them. Each is understood to represent different purposes and play different roles in the social world that is changing. Thus, our notions of the world allow for change but our notions of the degrees do not. I think that this understanding anchors the degrees in a particular time and space, but it fails to recognize that such time and space perhaps never were.

the conflict between knowledge which is reliable and unbiased and knowledge which can be used wisely toward a good purpose.[24] These argument all suggest struggle over the purposes of higher education as either furthering social utility or pursuing disinterested knowledge.

Regardless of how the conflict over the purposes of higher education manifests itself -- research versus practice, disinterested pursuit of knowledge versus social utility -- distinctions are established and legitimated. Why are such distinction necessary? What is at stake in the distinctions educators make? I believe that the struggle within the field of higher education over its purposes is part of a larger political struggle to control the classifications that will govern the world. These struggles take place not just within particular fields, such as higher education, but between fields, such as education and employment. The distinctions that educators live by -- such as researcher/practitioner, theory/practice, liberal education/professional education, disinterested knowledge/social utility, and so forth -- obscure the domination that takes place when arbitrary distinctions are legitimated as obvious, natural, inevitable, and so forth. These distinctions may be arbitrary but they are not imaginary -- they produce material (and psychic) effects; they produce the very reality they purport to represent. It is to the "distinctions we live by" in education that I direct the next section of this paper.

Doctoral Degrees: Distinctions We Live By

I intend the title of this paper to be ambiguous. The terms *distinction* and *degree* are used for their multiple meanings. The dictionary definitions of *distinction* refer to "making different,"

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[24] See Richard Winter, Morwenna Griffiths, and Kath Green (2000), The 'Academic' Qualities of Practice: What are the Criteria for a Practice-based Ph.D.? *Studies in Higher Education*, 25, no. 1, 25-37.

and "difference," but also to "honor" and to the "quality that makes one seem superior or worthy of special recognition." *Degree* refers to "relative condition" and "relation," as well as to the "rank given by a college or university to a student who has completed a required course of study, or to a distinguished person as an honor."[25] These meanings mirror the functions of power, which works by differentiation and by establishing classifications that contain hierarchies (explicit and implicit) providing value and worth. These classifications, with their varying degrees of worth, reward, and punishment, are incorporated by individuals, becoming embodied in a significant sense, and thus appear natural and inevitable.

While many may agree that the Ph.D./Ed.D. distinction is arbitrary, the other distinctions that undergird it are rarely seen as such. Thus, the practice/theory and researcher/practitioner distinctions that support and undergird the idea of difference in degrees are seen as legitimate. Indeed, the theory/practice distinction has a long history. It widely has been made since the 17th century and is now not just a distinction but an opposition.[26] Williams explains, however, that theory is always in active relation to practice: "an interaction between things done, things observed and (systematic) explanation of these. This allows a necessary distinction between *theory* and *practice*, but does not require their opposition."[27] This relation, of course, can be made prejudicial when *theory* is privileged, say, in doctoral programs (especially Ph.D.), or when

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[25] See *Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language*, Second Collegiate Edition (1984). New York: Simon and Schuster.

[26] See Raymond Williams (1983), *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*, rev. ed. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 316-318.

[27] Ibid., 317 (emphasis in original).

practice has become so conventional or habitual that theory is degraded because it challenges some customary action.[28]

This discussion about theory and practice provides a segue for discussing the struggle the field of higher education faces over the distinctions that matter. The claims made for or against the Ed.D. belie a challenge to the authority of institutions of higher education. For example, it appears that other social institutions want to get into the degree-granting game, and not just to credential individuals but to redefine the criteria of the credentials. In almost any issue of the Chronicle of Higher one can see that multiple entities, mostly for-profit institutions but also government agencies, school districts, and corporations, want to get into the degree-granting game, and they question the emphasis on theory over practice. The authority to grant degrees (and to establish their criteria) has for many years been the purview of the traditional college or university. But now the academy is being challenged as the sole producer of professional credentialing, and this challenge forces it to seek to keep control of this function.[29]

The use of the Ed.D. reflects in some ways the challenge being made to the university's social (and traditional) function. There seems a concern that traditional university education is not meeting the needs of society (and especially the workplace), even as doctoral training has become increasingly necessary for credentialing individuals for high-level positions in the professions. There seems then a destabilizing of the traditional role of the university as a

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[28] Ibid.

[29] For example, universities have opposed NIH plan to grant Ph.D.'s.; see Bruce Agnew (1999), Scientists Block NIH Plans to Grant Ph.D.'s, *Science* (June 11), 1743.

credentialing entity. Yet the need to credential -- and the doctoral degree as the credential *par excellence* -- keeps hold even as the traditional credentialing entity is being called into question.

The challenge to the field of higher education (both by individuals within the field over its purposes and by other fields over its authority) takes place through the creation and legitimation of distinctions (or through the de-legitimation of established distinctions). Distinction, therefore, is a function of power, a power that legitimates itself by legitimating the distinctions it creates. Bourdieu theorizes that social subjects distinguish themselves from, and try to gain dominance over, others by the distinctions they make.[30] And the distinctions made within the field of education, Bourdieu proposes, carry particular force: They not only classify but ensure, through the attribution of status given by degrees and certifications, the assignment of individuals to hierarchically ordered social classes.[31] Thus, the distinctions educational institutions make exercise a form of symbolic domination which reinforces material domination. As Bourdieu states,

> The official differences produced by academic classifications tend to produce (or reinforce) real differences by inducing in the classified individuals a collectively recognized and supported belief in the differences, thus producing behaviors that are intended to bring real being into line with official being.[32]

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[30] Pierre Bourdieu (1984), *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*, trans. Richard Nice. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 6.

[31] Ibid., 23.

[32] Ibid. 25.

Symbolic power works by *recognizing* something as legitimate and worthy (or recognizing something else as illegitimate and unworthy) and its effects are incorporated by individuals, who then act accordingly to dominate others or be dominated by others.

Bourdieu sees the power to distinguish as a kind of cultural capital because distinctions yield a profit. Bourdieu does not mean profit in the economic sense, but in the ability to control what is legitimate (or attractive, tasteful, distinctive, etc.) in the cultural fields (such as education, music, art, politics, etc.). Bourdieu argues that culture and economy are intricately related in a web of mutual constitution; the class distinctions of the economy inevitably generate symbolic distinctions of culture, which in turn regenerate and legitimate the economic class structure.[33] Cultural distinctions, therefore, are determined by socio-economic structures, but they are supported by theories which deny that determination. Bourdieu argues that academic theories, in particular, attribute primary value precisely to the purity and disinterestedness of intellectual judgment, and so they are central weapons in the exercise of symbolic power which reinforces the status quo and were developed historically to fill that role.[34] Bourdieu, accordingly, critiques all notions of universal cultural values, especially of the intelligentsia, and the ideology of the intellectual and cultural autonomy from economic and political determinants

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[33] For a good discussion of this point (and others) about Bourdieu's theory, including its limitations, see David Gartman (1991), "Culture as Class Symbolization or Mass Reification? A Critique of Bourdieu's *Distinction*," *American Journal of Sociology*, 97, no. 2, 421-447.

[34] See also Nicholas Garnham (1986), "Extended Review: Bourdieu's *Distinction*, *Sociological Review*, 34, no. 2, 423-433, 423.

which the intelligentsia has constructed in defense of its material and symbolic interests as the "dominated fraction of the dominant class."[35]

Bourdieu's theory hinges on the notions of *habitus* and *fields*. Although I briefly explain habitus, I am more interested in this paper in speculating about how his theory of fields reposes the issue of the Ed.D. vis-a-vis the Ph.D in a different light. In the next part of this section of the paper, I discuss Bourdieu's ideas of the habitus, but I end this section emphasizing his notion of fields and the struggles by and for them.

Bourdieu's Habitus

Habitus explains how individuals act to reinforce class structures. Bourdieu has offered very little in the way of a clear definition of habitus but says that

> The habitus is not only a structuring structure, which organizes practices and the perception of practices, but also a structured structure: the principle of division into logical classes which organizes the perception of the social world is itself the product of internalization of the division into social classes. Each class condition is defined, simultaneously, by its intrinsic properties and by the relational properties which it derives from its position in the system of class conditions, which also is a system of differences, differential positions, i.e., by everything which distinguishes it from what it is not and especially from everything it is opposed to; social identity is defined and asserted through difference.[36]

The habitus, for Bourdieu, is the embodied form of class dispositions. It apprehends differences between conditions and practices in accordance with principles and processes of differentiation which are perceived by individuals as natural. Thus, class structures are misrecognized by individuals (because of the habitus) as natural. The habitus, however,

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[35] Ibid., 424.

[36] Bourdieu, *Distinction*, 171-172.

functions to dominate individuals by reinforcing class distinctions, and, therefore, class structures.

Others have explained the notion of the habitus more clearly than has Bourdieu himself. The habitus has been defined as the internalized class norms which regulate individual practice.[37] It suggests a socially-constructed sets of embodied dispositions.[38] These dispositions are the embodied product of an individual's history, experience (especially in early childhood) and social location,

> becoming over time an ethos, a set of flexible but enduring mental structures and bodily schemas that organize, orient, and direct comportment in private and public space. . . . [The] habitus generates regular and immediate responses to a wide variety of situations without recourse to strategic calculation, conscious choice, or the methodical application of formal rules.[39]

In other words, the habitus is a system of schemes of perception and discrimination embodied as dispositions reflecting an entire history of the group and acquired through the formative experiences of childhood.[40]

The habitus is both constituted by social practice and constitutes social practice. First, it is constituted by social practices which place limits on what is and is not thinkable or intelligible,

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[37] See Garnham, Extended Review, 424.

[38] See Robert Holton (1997), Bourdieu and Common Sense, *SubStance*, 84, 38-52, 39.

[39] Keith Topper (2001), Not So Trifling Nuances: Pierre Bourdieu, Symbolic Violence, and the Perversions of Democracy, *Constellations*, 8, no. 1, 30-56, 38.

[40] Roy Nash (1999), Bourdieu, 'Habitus', and Educational Research: Is It All Worth the Candle? *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 20, no. 2, 175-187, 177.

on what are possible and sensible responses and what are not. Second, it is constitutive of social practices because it establishes the various hierarchies characteristic of social fields, the reproduction and transformation of social structures, and so forth.[41] For Bourdieu, the school, perhaps as much of the family, produces habitus by reproducing class distinctions.[42] The schools function, according to Bourdieu, as sites where competencies are constituted, and where the competencies are given positive or negative sanctions, reinforcing what is acceptable and discouraging what is not.

This perspective of the habitus, however, assumes too much about class structures and too little about human agency. I think it over-determines class structures, indicating that class distinctions are more static and stable over time and space than seems to be the case, thus, determining too completely individual action on the basis of social position. It also underestimates human agency, which clearly is constrained by class structures, but is not completely captured or defined by them. Individuals do exercise, following Butler, an agency that emerges from the margins of power.[43] As Butler points out, while Bourdieu's habitus provides one important way of understanding how individuals incorporate class norms and conventions, it nevertheless fails to account for how individuals, once initiated by the habitus, resist and confound those norms and conventions which regulate them. When individuals resist

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[41] Topper, Not So Trifling Nuances, 39.

[42] Nash, Bourdieu on Education.

[43] Judith Butler (1997), *Excitable Speech: A Politics of the Performative.* London and New York: Routledge, 156.

those norms -- by, for example, refusing to abide by traditional gender classifications -- they essentially open up the habitus, Butler suggests, to an unpredictable future.[44]

Bourdieu's notion of the struggles within and between cultural fields, however, seems relevant to the claims made about the Ed.D. and Ph.D. It seems to me that the relevant question is not whether theory and practice, or research and practice, are important distinctions in themselves. The question should be: What establishes an agent's authority to recognize one, both, or neither as legitimate and worthy. The power to legitimate things is what needs to be studied, for such power reinforces social structures but obscures this effect. It is to this concern that I direct the rest of this section.

The Ed.D Versus Ph.D., Or, Struggles Within and Between Fields

I want to propose that the academic distinctions associated with the Ed.D. and Ph.D., such as the distinctions between research and practice and practice and theory, are created by the cultural fields of education and employment, which face challenges within themselves and from the other for the power to distinguish and to dominate by doing so. Distinctions are the effects of power relations among classes, but they appear in a misrecognized form because their logic is that of distinction.[45] They take place, however, in particular cultural fields, which mark and reinforce class relations by establishing differences and positions whose worth are marked by their relative distance from economic necessity.

Fields are mutually supporting combinations of intellectual discourses and social institutions, which have no reference to realities beyond themselves but function to legitimate

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[44] Ibid., 142.

[45] Garnham, Extended Review, 425.

social institutions, which also have no absolute meaning beyond themselves.[46] Thus, education signifies a cultural field in which the power of individuals and institutions is largely (but not completely) determined by the cultural capital they own. Capital can take the form of academic credentials, liberal education, wealth, scholarly reputation, and so forth. Cultural capital authorizes one to establish the distinctions which maintain class structure and thereby legitimate social domination.

The field of education, moreover, determines the conditions by which relations within it take place. Cultural fields (and their sub-fields) are governed by specific laws of practice that determine both the conditions of entry into the field (e.g., economic capital, professional degrees, social connections) and the specific relations of force within it. The education field may determine, for example, that the Ph.D. will be worth more than the Ed.D. in the higher-education sub-field because the former credentials researchers, which are valued more than practitioners by institutions of higher education. Such laws indicate that fields are relatively autonomous from each other in the sense that distinctions valuable in one field or sub-field (e.g., higher education) are not necessarily valuable in another (e.g., the employment field or professional sub-fields). Thus, the privilege given to theory over practice in higher education may not be easily translated into a similar privilege in the non-academic workplace, which, indeed, may privilege the inverse, that is, practice over theory.

While fields are relatively autonomous from each other, they face constant struggles within themselves and with other fields. Thus, the distinctions that will matter in higher

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[46] Derek Robbins (1993), The Practical Importance of Bourdieu's Analyses of Higher Education, *Studies in Higher Education*, 18, no. 2, 151-163.

education, such as research or practice, disinterested knowledge or social utility, are constantly contested by those seeking to establish their distinctions as more worthy than others. And the relations between higher education and other fields are constantly shifting as the power to legitimate distinctions is gained by one or another field. To discuss academic distinctions, such the Ph.D./Ed.D., researcher/practitioner, theory/practice, without accounting for the struggles within fields and between fields misses altogether the temporality of particular orderings, as power relations within and between fields do shift. In other words, the power to distinguish is, I think, the issue that should be explored with regard to doctoral degrees and not necessarily particular distinctions, as those change when the power to create them shifts. Distinctions are valuable, however, to the extent they refer one to this power.

One may say, for example, that debates over doctoral degrees reflect constant power struggles within the field of education over what knowledge is most worth knowing -- theoretical or practical -- and which practices are worth most pursuing -- research, teaching, or practice. Furthermore, one can say that conflict over the Ed.D. and its practical aspects reflect struggles and challenges made to the field of higher education's legitimacy by the employment field, which constantly seeks to gain predominance over the education field by forcing it to abide by its (often economic) interests. The diatribes by critics such as Veblen thus can be viewed as attempts to justify cultural distinctions that will give their versions of reality greater authority over those that challenge them. Veblen seems to be responding to struggles over which knowledge and practices are most worth pursing, as well as to challenges to institutions of higher education made by the professions. Such struggles are always, as Bourdieu suggests, between the

"dominated fractions of the whole and the dominant fractions over the definition of the accomplished man and the education designed to produce him."[47]

Conversely, higher education attempts to maintain its position over the employment fields by insisting and legitimizing its credentialing functions. It seeks to make its credentials invaluable in the employment fields. Agents and institutions within fields attempt to strategically assimilate aspects of other fields in order to strengthen their resistance to the absolute threat which other fields might pose. This may be why higher education might emphasize practical knowledge in doctoral education -- and establish the Ed.D. for that purpose. Higher education might be seeking to assimilate parts of the employment field in order to prevent the threat to its authority by that field. For Bourdieu, intellectuals (and other cultural actors), which he calls the "dominated fraction within the dominant classes," struggle to maintain the legitimacy of their cultural distinctions over and against the economic ones. Intellectuals, for example, struggle to maximize the autonomy of the cultural field and to raise the social value of the specific competencies (and, thus, distinctions) involved in it, in part by trying to raise the scarcity of those competencies.[48] They might, therefore, reject the legitimacy of practice over theory because the former seems more interested and connected to the world of work, which values the "practical" in order to maximize its economic dominance.[49]

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[47] Bourdieu, *Distinction*, 92.

[48] Garnham, "Extended Review," 429.

[49] According to Bourdieu, intellectuals maintain their dominance through the notions, theories, and distinctions they create. And, thus, while these "dominated fractions within the dominant classes" may advocate and fight for political and economic equality, as members of the dominant classes, they will

The important point here is that struggle takes place within and between cultural fields over distinctions. As Robbins points out, educational institutions do not manufacture students who possess universally-valid qualifications which offer corresponding opportunities of employment.[50] Occupational opportunity provides a point of conflict in the struggle between the education and employment fields to develop their own mechanisms for reproducing and differentiating themselves. The struggle is one in which the field of education attempts to sustain institutional and ideological independence from other fields, while the field of employment, particularly industry and commerce, wishes to use its own criteria for selection. The field of employment seeks to appropriate the values of education (such as the value of credentials) while the field of education seeks to accommodate the fields of employment: Through institutions specifically established to meet perceived needs of industry and commerce (such as professional schools), and through the accommodation in the curriculum of employment values like work-experience and work-based learning.

If this is correct, the Ph.D. and Ed.D. debates reflect the struggle between the education and employment fields, each incorporating aspects of the other in order to dominate the other, or, at least, to thwart the threat to its legitimacy by the other. That the Ed.D. exists as a "practice-oriented" degree is in some way a reflection that the University is losing it absolute authority to dictate what counts as valuable knowledge and cultural practice, and that it must accommodate

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never advocate for cultural equality, because determinations of culture are what give them legitimacy and dominance over the dominated classes (e.g., the working class) and over the dominant groups of their own classes (e.g., leaders of industry and commerce).

[50] Robbins, The Practical Importance of Bourdieu's Analysis.

the world of work if it is to continue to have dominance in the cultural field. Brennan notes that the Ed.D. may reflect a necessary pragmatic reaction to the pressure for increased credentials among professional groups, thereby enabling the university to live up to its "service" function for professional groups and attract students for funding faculty in times of competitive pressures.[51] Although, within the field of higher education, the Ed.D. is treated as second-class degree, a compromise that allows for the necessary expansion in higher degrees but does not compete with the central function of the Ph.D. as an induction into research and the academy generally.[52]

More likely, it seems to me, the fact that the Ed.D. and Ph.D. programs do not necessarily abide by the distinctions established by the education and employment fields -- they are very much alike -- illustrates that struggles within the field of higher education over what is worthy are quite strong. The field of higher education does not have the internal coherence that perhaps the field of employment has, and thus, its internal struggles may prevent it, paradoxically, from completely thwarting challenges from other fields but also from being completely dominated by them. In other words, the field of higher education can not avoid the power of the distinctions the employment field makes because its struggles make it susceptible to challenge, but the struggles within it prevent those distinctions from completely taking hold because they are constantly challenged.

These struggles, it must be stressed, reflect the mechanisms of power at work. To put any position in a distinction above another is to gain control over the power to do that. And one must

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[51] Marie Brennan (1995), Education Doctorates: Reconstructing Professional Partnerships Around Research? *Australian Universities' Review*, 38, no. 2, 20-22, 20.

[52] Ibid., 20

understand power for that very fact, rather than attempt to explain a distinction as if it did not have meaning beyond itself. The power to distinguish is what is at stake in cultural fields, but this power is obscured by the embodiment of the distinctions themselves -- the distinctions appear natural, obvious, inevitable, and so forth. Individual and group identities shape themselves according to these distinctions. Bourdieu explains this embodiment through his theory of the habitus. I am not sure if he is correct, but, clearly, understanding why and how individuals incorporate regulatory norms is important (an issue beyond the scope of this paper). But this understanding begins, I propose, by seeing distinctions as effects of power and struggle.

Power works by establishing difference and binaries which are set up in opposition to each other, and in education some of important ones are theory/practice, micro/macro, school/training institution. Such dichotomies mislead and become more real than the processes they aim to represent.[53] Understanding them as such provides the possibility of critical agency. I am interested, therefore, in maintaining the part of Bourdieu's theory that suggests the power of, and struggles within, cultural fields. But I believe also that while those fields provide significant constraints on individuals' ability to think and act, they too are subject to unpredictable futures when individuals act unconventionally. My overall purpose in this paper, however, is not to provide an answer to the Ed.D./Ph.D. debate; indeed, if my premise is correct, no grounding exists from which to do so. I merely seek to have educators think differently about the distinctions they make, and to spark discussion about the power of academic institutions to structure the world.

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[53] See Michael Grenfell (1996), Bourdieu and Initial Teacher Education: A Post Structuralist Approach, *British Educational Research Journal*, 22, no. 3, 287-306.

The Ed.D. Or The Ph.D.: Degree Of Distinction

This paper attempts to repose in a new light the question of whether or not one needs the Ed.D. over and against a Ph.D. Indeed, a "need" is unrecognizable outside of the discourses about needs, which attempt to gain control over social resources by dictating how an issue will be constructed and practiced. Thus, to make a claim about any need is to engage, as Fraser argues, in a politics of needs interpretation.[54] I believe one should avoid viewing the need for either the Ed.D. or Ph.D. (and its distinction) as a reflection of a particular reality and to engage in a study of how mechanisms of power establish, discursively and materially, the need (and distinction) in the first place.

The theory/practice, researcher/practitioner, and disinterested knowledge/social utility distinctions -- the first term in each distinction being the privileged one in the academy -- and their materialization in the certification individuals receive from doctoral programs, exercise a kind of domination, in that when one position is privileged over another, individuals are coerced to see themselves as more or less worthy than others depending on whether they believe themselves "owning" the privileged position. More significantly, distinctions foreclose positions available for individuals to be. One must pay attention to who or what is authorizing and legitimating particular distinctions, for what purposes, and how they become embodied and thus reproduced. Such inconspicuous forms of domination, denigration, and exclusion, often go

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[54] Nancy Fraser (1989), Talking About Needs: Interpretive Contests as Political Conflicts in Welfare State Societies," *Ethics*, 99, no. 2, 291-313, 292.

unnoticed because the distinctions supporting it appear so obvious and unremarkable; they appear to be beyond the arenas of power and politics.[55]

Yet, distinctions between degrees, as do most distinctions, carry the elements of power and politics. Each degree, being more or less worthy than the other, depending on the privilege given, maintains its definition and authority by its degree of distinction from the other. Indeed, it is the degree of distinction itself that is marketable. The Ed.D., signifying the privilege given to practical knowledge and social utility, allows one to market the claim that the theoretical knowledge provided by the Ph.D. is unimportant, and the point of educational institutions is to train people for the world of work. But the holder of the Ph.D., signifying the primacy of the research function and theoretical knowledge, can market the opposite claim. Individuals, however, are regulated by either position and by the distinction. They incorporate the distinctions as being "what they are" and "what they are not." Each degree, therefore, may signify struggles over the power to differentiate and legitimate, and thereby dominate.

It might be useful to re-frame the issues associated with the Ed.D. as Brennan proposes. She argues that the reactions to the Ed.D., and the approaches to its practice, embody quite divergent views about the nature of universities, knowledge production, and the place of the intellectual.[56] In particular, they reveal the habituated dualisms between vocational and academic education, between theory and practice, and between knowledge workers in universities and in other institutions. The Ed.D. offers, Brennan argues, a means for restructuring relations between academic and other sites of knowledge and practice by demanding a reconfiguration of

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[55] Topper, "Not So Trifling Nuances," 42.

[56] Brennan, "Education Doctorates," 20.

university research relations with other professionals in the field. In turn, this change of relations is made possible by altering the ways in which universities have conceptualized and taught research.[57]

I am not sure that privileging one degree over another adequately deals with the logic of distinction and its effects in structuring the social world in ways that maintain relations of domination. If the mechanisms of power, and the social relations they engender, can be resisted, one must understand the power to regulate through the establishment of difference. Furthermore, distinctions are not only differences, but oppositions, and as such they contain latent hierarchies. It is possible that degree differences are important, and perhaps necessary (how can one tell?), but they need not be practiced as oppositions. More important, if distinctions are created within the field of education, and if they reflect symbolic power at work, then it is the distinction itself that individuals must avoid. To act unconventionally toward a distinction, such as the Ed.D./Ph.D. one, is to resist the effects of its power, to refuse to give the distinction legitimacy. That may be the critical measure of the doctoral degree -- one that challenges distinctions as reflections of the power to create distinctions and to foreclose others. A "degree of distinction" may be one that allows an individual to question his or her degree of distinction from others.

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[57] Ibid., 20.

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