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ABSTRACT

This paper offers a view of educational research in which individual practitioner-researchers are creating and testing their own living educational theories and living standards of practice and judgment in the course of exploring questions related to the improvement of their practice. The power behind what counts as knowledge in education has been centered in the academy, rather than in the form of knowing educators have in their professional practice as educators. The first part of this presentation focuses on the interpretation of video images from some conversations related to education that the researcher had with students whose research programs he was supervising or influencing. The presentation also includes some accounts, presented through multimedia, by teacher-researchers in which they analyzed the ways their spiritual, esthetic, and ethical values were influencing their students' learning. The focus in these discussions was on the communicability of the educators' living standards of judgment in testing the validity of claims to educational knowledge. These discussions lead to an examination of the ways in which the meanings of spiritual, esthetic, and ethical values in the researcher's discipline of education have been clarified and have evolved in the course of their engagement with institutional power relations over a 27-year period. The discussion also shows how the values and insights that have developed over the researcher's professional life have been integrated within the doctoral inquiries of students over the years. This discussion also takes into account the way in which power relations in the academy have been influenced by economic rationalism, and the tension between economic factors and moral principle this research has experienced. An appendix contains the action plan for the development of this paper. (Contains 26 references.) (SLD)

Living Standards of Judgement in
What We Know and How We Know It

Jack Whitehead

Paper prepared for the Annual Meeting
of the American Educational Research Association
(Seattle, WA, April 11-13, 2001)

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“Living Standards Of Judgement In What We Know And How We Know It”

Jack Whitehead, Department of Education, University of Bath.

Presented at AERA, Seattle, Session, Division D3, 44.09, **Alternative Paradigms, Methods and Analysis in Qualitative Research in Education**

14th April, 2001

Having participated in the paradigm wars for the past thirty years (Whitehead, 1993), as I worked at establishing the academic legitimacy of the idea that living educational theories grounded in the educational practices of educators can contribute to educational knowledge creation, I am now wanting to move into a more peaceful phase of my scholarship of educational enquiry as I focus on extending the educative influence of living educational theories through exploring the nature of living educational standards of practice and judgement. So, rather than contributing to a view of educational research as constituted by a number of competing or alternative paradigms I want to offer a view of educational research within which individual practitioner-researchers are creating and testing their own living educational theories and living standards of practice and judgement in the course of asking, researching and answering questions of the kind, ‘How do I do this better?’ I am thinking of the ‘this’ in such questions as being focused on the education of individuals and social formations.

This presentation marks a break with my previous presentations to conferences of educational researchers. These have been concerned with ‘legitimising’ the idea, logics and languages of living educational theories. They can be accessed from the JW’s writings section of actionresearch.net. In this ‘legitimation’ phase of my enquiry my main engagement has been with the power relations in the Academy which influence what counts as educational knowledge. With my re-focusing on the educative influence of living educational standards of practice and judgement, my main engagement is now on establishing and sustaining communicative relationships with audiences as I research the processes of extending the influence of living educational theories and their living educational standards. With my constant use of the work ‘living’ to characterise my contributions to educational knowledge perhaps it might be helpful to connect with the following distinction between ‘spectator’ and ‘living truth’.

Existentialists such as Gabriel Marcel (cf. Keen, 1966) distinguish between "spectator" truth and "living" truth. The former is generated by disciplines (e.g., experimental science, psychology, sociology) which rationalise reality and impose on it a framework which helps them to understand it but at the expense of oversimplifying it. Such general explanations can be achieved only by standing back from and "spectating" the human condition from a distance, as it were, and by concentrating on generalities and ignoring

particularities which do not fit the picture. Whilst such a process is very valuable, it is also very limited because it is one step removed from reality. The "living" "authentic" truth of a situation can be fully understood only from within the situation though the picture that emerges will never be as clear-cut as that provided by "spectator" truth."
Burke, A.(1992) Teaching: Retrospect and Prospect. Footnote 6 on p. 222, OIDEAS, Vol. 39, pp. 5-254.

Having spent years advising practitioner-researchers on how to improve their practice and create their own living theories, I sense some delight in the advice being offered by these researchers on how I might improve my own as I create my own living truths! Here are responses from two researchers I am bearing in mind in this presentation:

Jacqui Scholes-Rhodes - *Have a great time in Canada (and America) - my only comment on your document re aesthetic, spiritual and ethical values would be: I'm not sure I've ever heard you express them. I've heard you talk around them, and about the theory of living through them, but I think I would also appreciate being able to see them shine off the page at me, and then project themselves from a conference platform. Maybe I am too harsh a judge and am too coloured by my own sense of how it should be. So, please take the comments in context!* (e-mail 19/03/01)

Terri Austin - *This is what I would like to see as a member of the audience. I would like to see your standards of practice clearly explained and laid out so that I could make direct connections to the teacher researchers you cite. Something visual might be helpful.*

I think the best example or demonstration of you moving into your 'peaceful period' and living your values of a spiritual, aesthetic and ethical nature is how you relate to your audience. Pulling them in, making them feel welcome and relaxed so they are receptive to your ideas is a living manifestation of your values. In a sense, they are there and are available to be influenced by you which is what you are showing through the work of your students. Your session is an opportunity to practice your beliefs. (e-mail, 19.03/01)

In practicing my beliefs, here is something I say to all the practitioner-researchers whose research programmes I supervise and which I think will resonate with what you know about yourselves.

'At the moment the power behind what counts as knowledge is in the academy. It is not in the form of knowing that you have in your professional practice as educators, educational leaders administrators and learners. You have the form of knowledge in your professional practice that I am interesting in helping to make public and legitimate within the academy. Through engaging with questions of the kind, 'How do I improve my practice?' in which you exist as a living contradiction, I think I will be able to help you make public your embodied knowledge. By a living contradiction I am meaning that you experience yourself holding certain values which at times you recognise that you do not live fully in your practice. Over the next few years my task will be to work with you on the creation of your own living educational theories as you describe and explain your own learning in your enquiry. Being in education your enquiry is value-laden and we will need to clarify the meanings of your values in your explanations as these emerge through practice. I think you live your values as the standards

of practice and judgement to which you hold yourself account to yourself and to others'
(Amended extract from a taped communication with Robyn Pound, 7.10.96).

One of my living standards is to do, as far as I can, what I have committed myself to do. In August 2000 I committed myself to be here in the proposal I sent in to AERA. Here are my responses to three commitments I made in for this presentation:

i) This presentation of living standards of judgement in what we know and how we know it, will focus on interpretations of video-images from the researchers' educative relations with the teacher-researchers whose research programmes he is supervising or influencing. These will include Ph.D. and Masters' degree inquiries and the interpretations will be related to these students' learning in their educational inquiries.

This time last year I gave my first multi-media presentation at AERA on *Ways of knowing our educative influences on our students' learning. How valid are multi-media presentations and our associated explanations?* (Whitehead, 2000). The web version in the multi-media section of actionresearch.net contains a video-clip of me working as a supervisor with JeKan Adler-Collins in the final stage of his dissertation writing. Collins (2000) has documented his own learning in his successfully completed dissertation.

Let me now show you my own living standards of practice and judgement in what I do as an educator and researcher in my supervision of a Ph.D. researcher. This brings me to the part of my presentation which I think shows some of the possibilities of new forms of data storage and retrieval and of multi-media representations of educational enquiries for communicating and sharing the meanings of living standards of practice and judgement. I want to show you something that I cannot capture from within a written text. I am meaning the multiple images I can display on the screen, with the video clips and textual analyses I can call up at the touch of a button. I also believe that the clarification of the meanings of my embodied values in explanations for my educative influence, require ostensive definition to show the meanings emerging through time, practice and reflection.

(Projection of photoshop template with multiply images)

I now want to turn to the visual images and video-clips from educational conversations with Jackie Delong, a Superintendent of Schools who is researching her practice for her Ph.D. at the University of Bath, and myself, as her supervisor.

In a joint presentation later today on 'Knowledge-creation in educational leadership and administration through practitioner research', (Delong and Whitehead, 2001) we will be using using video-clips of our professional practices to define and communicate how our living values form the standards of practice and judgement we use in explanations of our educative influence. My three presentations on one day of AERA is something of a record for me. I'm not sure whether you are fortunate to have me first!

I now want to see if I can communicate the meanings of 'system's influence' as a standard of practice and judgement. I recognise the difficulties of communicating the meanings of values

as explanatory principles of educative influence. I was in one of my most lyrical expositions of my spiritual values to a seminar at the University of Bath some three weeks ago. I was completely engrossed in talking about my relations with the cosmos when my good colleague, Jen Russ, brought me down to earth with, 'Blow the Cosmos Jack – where's the evidence of your educative influence?! Here is some evidence:

(Frames of pictures of supervision sessions and video-clip talking about her 'systems influence' <http://www.bath.ac.uk/~edsajw/jdjwssystem.mov>)

In this clip, I am focusing Jackie on her 'systems influence'. In my experience, it is in the final phase of writing up that the researcher becomes clear about the question(s) the thesis has answered. It is worth stressing at this point that the clarification of the meanings of living standards of practice and judgement in explanations of educative influence, often taken place over several years. Ph.D. supervision usually lasts between 5-7 years for practitioner-researchers who are researching their professional practice. In this clip I am talking with Jackie about what to my mind shows, most distinctively in her work as a superintendent, her originality of mind and critical judgement. I am thinking particularly of the educational standard of practice which shows her educational leadership in the expression of her 'systems influence'. Jackie was recognised for her leadership in action research in an award from the Ontario Educational Research Council in December 2000. Let me quote from the most recent draft of her Abstract to explain why I am focusing my educative influence on helping Jackie to define and communicate the standards of practice and judgement which characterise her educative influence on the social formation of the Grand Erie District School Board.

Jackie writes:

This thesis is my own living theory of my learning about my educative influence as a superintendent of schools, an educational leader and insider researcher living in turbulent times - 1995-2001. It is a journey of professional learning and self-discovery through research-based professionalism as I ask, research and answer the question, 'How can I improve my practice as a superintendent of schools in a southern Ontario school district'

It represents and demonstrates my originality of mind and critical judgement as I describe and explain my living standards of practice that can be understood through my values for which I hold myself accountable. My originality of mind is being expressed through narrative and image-based form of communication in which I describe and explain stories of myself, a self-discovery of my need for internal and external dialogue, of how I hold together continuously in a living, dynamic way. a plurality of actions. I describe and explain my work in my many portfolios including the birth and growth of an action research movement in a school system that is restructuring amidst the impact of economic rationalist policies.

This thesis focuses my critical judgements on the clarification and use of the values that have emerged in my practice as I am able to construct and deconstruct the transformations that has taken place over the six years of the research and to understand what has moved me forward. The meaning of those values that I am articulating are grounded in my practice and constitute my living standards of practice and judgement in my explanations. They emerge

through reading, dialogue and reflection on my experience as I account for myself in my practice by ever moving forward while holding on to the sanctity of personal relationships and democratic evaluation within a hierarchical system and power relations.

Here is a transcript of our conversation to enable me to focus on the additional meanings which the visual record can communicate about the nature of our living standards of practice and judgement.

Jack ... to show how I am encouraging and supporting you, to make explicit in a way that is publicly shareable your own understanding of your standard of practice as a superintendent which is related to your system's influence....

.....there is a big emphasis on relationships and connections. That's a common standard that runs through almost everything I do - if I can see a way of helping people or ideas or systems to connect I think it creates a more effective system to support student learning. If you've got people or systems going in different directions it is wasting the talent and the energy... the other thing is that when I see people who can carry something forward I try to pull all the supports behind them so that they can do that. That's two pieces of it. It doesn't capture it all but it captures two pieces of - And my need to see things always getting better ...



Still 1



Still 2

I want to focus both on my influence on Jackie's non-verbal expression and her verbal definition and communication of her educational standard of 'system's influence' in her work as a superintendent. I want to focus your attention on the embodied values Jackie is expressing non-verbally when she says 'pull all the supports behind them' and 'so that they can do that..' ie; carry something forward. What I am working on with Jackie is an

exploration of the value of this multi-media form of communication in producing valid explanations of her educative influence on a social formation as she works at improving her 'system's influence'. I think the following point from Jackie's Abstract bears repeating

This thesis focuses my critical judgements on the clarification and use of the values that have emerged in my practice as I am able to construct and deconstruct the transformations that has taken place over the six years of the research and to understand what has moved me forward. The meaning of those values that I am articulating are grounded in my practice and constitute my living standards of practice and judgement in my explanations. They emerge through reading, dialogue and reflection on my experience as I account for myself in my practice by ever moving forward while holding on to the sanctity of personal relationships and democratic evaluation within a hierarchical system and power relations.

I am hopeful that this presentation, when compared with the presentation last year shows an enhanced understanding of the nature of my living standards of judgement as I engage with Jackie in helping her to express, define and communicate her own.

In explaining my educative influence in relation to my values I do not want to be understood as saying that I have educated my students. The only person I claim to have educated is myself. I think that I can claim to have had an educative influence. The distinction is important to me. I think that the influence of what I do, to be educative, must be mediated by the creativity and critical judgement of those who are learning with me. Because this is part of the way I understand education, I cannot claim to have educated someone else. I do however claim that spiritual, aesthetic and ethical values are important in influencing student learning. Here is the second point, from the original proposal, which focuses on values.

ii) The presentation will also include the accounts of the teacher-researchers in which they analyse the way their spiritual, aesthetic and ethical values are influencing their students' learning (14, 15). The multi-media presentation will focus on the communicability of the living standards of judgement in testing the validity of claims to educational knowledge (8).

Let me show you what I mean by 'The presentation will also include the accounts of the teacher-researchers'. I can now call up from actionresearch.net the papers and research theses of the teachers-researchers in which they analyse the influence of their values in their students' learning. I want to draw attention to Ben Cunningham's thesis with its focus on his spiritual journal. In my paper for this presentation on the web, I have also included an account from Moira Laidlaw in the paper on the web in which she describes my spiritual, aesthetic and ethical influence in response to a question I asked her about my influence. I am associating my spiritual values with assenting to life up to the point of death, to the life-affirming energy I feel in my educative relations and to the state of being grasped by the power of being itself. I am associating my aesthetic values with my capacity to give form to whatever medium I am working with. In relation to education I am thinking of my capacity to give a virtual form to the values I see my students holding. I think of my aesthetic values as being expressed as we work together on giving a form to the student's life, through learning, in ways that are mediated by the student's creativity and critical judgement. I am associating my ethical values with value-words such as freedom, justice, democracy, care, compassion

and enquiry. I also associate my ethical values with my embodied values, which I clarify in the course of their emergence through practice, and through which I explain why I do what I do. I think of values as human goals for the sake of which I act as I do. Here is Moira's response to my request for feedback on my educative influence. Moira's Ph.D. is focused on her classroom enquiries with her pupils:

Date: Sun, 18 Mar 2001 09:47:00 -0000
From: Moira <mlaidlaw@lilypad.club24.co.uk>
Reply-To: mlaidlaw@lilypad.club24.co.uk
Subject: your educative influence
To: Jack Whitehead <edsajw@bath.ac.uk>

Difficult one this, Jack, but I want to respond, even though it won't be fulsome, given the nature of my workload at the moment.

Your spiritual, ethical, aesthetic influence in terms of values on my learning? O.K. First a separation is necessary, but also misleading. Given also that a linguistic description/explanation won't really carry much ontological and epistemological meaning, I'll try some shorthand here.

You have given me space to grow, ethically in particular. I would suggest that for me, your ethical influence has been greater than in the other two aspects. This is because of many things. First my own background, in which certain values were fragmented and eroded, meant that I had less certainty, less confidence in ethical areas than others. Secondly, I have always been fascinated by the ethical implications of our actions ('our' = human beings') probably because of my uncertainty, my relativistic experiences with ethics when I was growing up. You acted as a catalyst for me in the development of my own ownership of ethical values in the classroom (and because I can't wholly separate, in my wider life as well). How did you do this? You did it by engaging on a professional and educational level with whatever my educational enquiry was about. By engagement, I am meaning that sense of being fully present in the moment as the enquirer wrestles, seeks to know, seeks to improve, seeks to understand. Seeks to become MORE, richer, fuller, more life-affirming. Your particular enablement for me, in the ethical sense, has manifested itself in the way in which now I can write a report on Hayley with a sense of history between us. A sense of 'rightness', appropriateness. You have helped me, through the discipline (meant in both senses) of living educational enquiry, to articulate, to describe, to explain what it MEANS to be accountable for my own actions in the name of education. You have helped me, through hours of listening, through your being-present in my learning to fly for myself and the people I teach and learn with. It has sometimes, in the early stages, been rather

like a fledgling daring to fly from the nest, trying, fluttering around, stumbling, coming back for a sense of base, and then trying again. Ethically, it has enabled me to ground ontologically in a sense of myself as the ground of my being. You have been enthusiastic in that process, always pushing a little bit harder than I felt competent to deal with - but even *that* is an ethical issue, isn't it? As I learnt to take responsibility for my own learning, then I was more competent to make educational judgements for myself and for others in my charge (in loco-parentis) because I had been through the process with you.

I think you have vision, phenomenally, and a long-term view which enables there to be a firm grounding in the present as a process of becoming. Ontologically, that must, in the living out of it fully, become articulated in practice. In the classroom, I'm not meaning that I think, 'what would Jack do?' I am thinking, what should I do that enables the kind of dialectical process of learning best to be accomplished, given that I have some experience now, of what it means to grow in this way?

Of course, I am implying spiritual and aesthetic values here, and would not for a moment question your influence in these areas too. However, the emphasis is different for me. Spiritually, I believe I am very different from you, and have a great deal more ontological security about my spiritual values than I had about the ethical. I believe that I am spiritually intelligent, and always have been. I have been less open, perhaps to looking for spiritual guidance or mentorship. Sometimes, indeed, I feel that your sense of the spiritual and mine are not particularly compatible. Your I/You emphasis is not quite mine. I sense a Thou. However, in terms of spirituality as an earth-bound celebration of life, then I have learnt from you. How? What have you done? Well, you have been consistently enthusiastic and respectful about my enquiry (this is also an ethical issue of course, in the Rogerian and also Foucault way of respecting the other). You have exuded a life-affirming energy, which means your door is always open, both literally and metaphorically. You are enormously conceptually flexible, and embrace new ideas so optimistically. You expect people to be good (I mean as a generality, rather than a particular!!!) and this is empowering. This deeply resonates with my own sense of the worthwhileness of every human life.

Aesthetically I have learnt something about balance from you. Aesthetically I think my writing is more fluent than yours and pays greater attention to spiritual values in the metanarrative. However, I have learnt a great deal about how values are embodied in the text and in one's own practice. From you I have learnt a great deal about verisimilitude. How have you done this? Well, you are so much

yourself, Jack, consistent and affirming of life-affirming and educational values (we're assuming that 'educational' equals life-affirming/enhancing, positive, 'good' values)... I have known you very seldom only being inconsistent in terms of denying these values. So you've been a role model.

'Be the changes you want to see in the world' as they say at VSO, and I think you are. It is something I aspire to.

In analysing my own spiritual values in my explanations of my educative influence I want to turn to the second clip of a conversation with Jackie Delong as I am responding to the draft abstract, discussed above. I want to ask you to focus your attention on the non-verbal communications which you feel and see taking place as I move the digital images rapidly backwards and forwards across the screen.

(Video-clip of supervision session <http://www.bath.ac.uk/~edsajw/jd2ndAbsm.mov>)

Can you take a minute to share with your neighbour the most significant meaning (s) you give to your experience as you watch the clip. Here it is again.

All I want to draw your attention to here is what I am calling the spiritual energy in my assenting to life up to the point of death (Bataille, 1990). I believe that this spiritual energy is a vital ingredient in explanations for my educative influence and I am simply drawing attention to what I see as a significant area for further exploration. Here is a clip that, for me, carries this energy:



I now want to turn to my living educational standards of practice and judgement in relation to power relations and economic rationalism.

iii) Other research on standards of judgement has focused on the power relations which determine what counts as knowledge and the crises of legitimation and representation (16, 17). The analysis in the presentation will examine how the meanings of the spiritual, aesthetic and ethical values, in the researcher's discipline of education (18), have been clarified and evolved in the course of their engagement with the institutional power relations over a period of some 27 years. It will take account of the way these power relations have been influenced by economic rationalism (19). The analysis will also show how such values and insights have been integrated within 8 successfully completed doctoral inquiries over the past six years.

I am purposely ending this presentation with some sense of fragmentation, with a feeling that the piece doesn't satisfy my aesthetic sensibilities. I am doing this to stress that authentic accounts of my own educational development are anything but a smooth story of self.

I have examined elsewhere how the meanings of my ethical value of academic freedom were clarified and evolved in the course of my engagement with institutional power relations over the period 1973-1993 (Whitehead 1993). The period 1993-2001 has been marked by the successful completion of the living theory theses in actionresearch.net. This accumulated knowledge base was created at a time when the globalisation of capital movements was linked in the UK to the implementation of government policies which were explicitly grounded in economic rationalism. McTaggart (1992) describes the influence of economic rationalism in terms of devaluation and demoralisation in a way which resonates with my own concerns:

"Economic rationalism is not merely a term which suggests the primacy of economic values. It expresses commitment to those values in order to serve particular sets of interests ahead of others. Furthermore, it disguises that commitment in a discourse of 'economic necessity' defined by its economic models. We have moved beyond the reductionism which leads all

questions to be discussed as if they were economic ones (de-valuation) to a situation where moral questions are denied completely (de-moralisation) in a cult of economic inevitability(as if greed had nothing to do with it).” (McTaggart, p. 50, 1992)

Educational enquiries of the kind, ‘How do I live my values more fully in my practice?’ and ‘How can I help you to improve your learning?’, carry for me a range of values, including economic value. I hold a tenured appointment at the University of Bath until August 2009 and this has, so far, ensured my economic well being together, I must add, with the additional economic security provided by being in a two income family.

In this presentation I think that I have located my enquiry in the educational context of my workplace in which my own spiritual, aesthetic and ethical values are embodied in what I do and are explicated in explanations for my educative influence in terms of my living standards of practice and judgement.

In seeking to extend the educative influence of living educational theories I am explicitly seeking to educate social formations in the direction of living such values more fully. One such social formation is the Academy. My evidence for claiming that the creation and testing of living educational theories is now embodied within the knowledge base of the Academy is in the living theory section of actionresearch.net. In seeking to extend the influence of living educational theories I am now turning to the expression, definition and communication of the living standards of practice and judgement which help to constitute living educational theories as disciplined forms of knowledge. It is my belief that the education of social formations rests upon extending the influence of living educational theories through living more fully the values which constitute the standards of practice and judgement we use to account for our lives to ourselves and to test the validity of our claims to educational knowledge with others.

I have included my accepted proposal/action plan for this session as an Appendix, so that you can evaluate the extent to which I’ve done what I said that I’m going to do!

I want to end this presentation with something which is at the limit of my understanding; it is about something I do not know related to the way power relations which influence regimes of truth have themselves been influenced by economic rationalism. The tensions around not knowing are moving my enquiry on. I want to invite you to see if you can think of ways of helping to move my enquiry forward. Let me repeat what I say about the issue in point iii of my proposal:

iii) Other research on standards of judgement has focused on the power relations which determine what counts as knowledge and the crises of legitimation and representation (16, 17). The analysis in the presentation will examine how the meanings of the spiritual, aesthetic and ethical values, in the researchers’ discipline of education (18), have been clarified and evolved in the course of their engagement with the institutional power relations over a period of some 27 years. It will take account of the way these power relations have been influenced by economic rationalism (19). The analysis will also show how such values and insights have been integrated within 8 successfully completed doctoral inquiries over the past six years.

As I move to the limit of my understanding I want to focus how the values in my discipline of education have been clarified in the course of their engagement with institutional power relations. I also want to take account of how the power relations have been influenced by economic rationalism.

Let me now point to the analysis in the presentation which examines my discipline of education as it emerged over the past 27 years. This is contained in my own Ph.D. Thesis (Whitehead 2000) on 'How do I improve my practice? Creating a discipline of education through educational enquiry?'. It is available for your critical and creative evaluation in the living theory section of actionresearch.net. This thesis now sits alongside the living theory thesis of other students of education whose work I have supervised. I think that the accumulated knowledge-base in the living theory section provides sufficient evidence to demonstrate that educational researchers can create forms of educational knowledge from the discipline of educational practice. The significant epistemological move in the creation of living educational theories is in the inclusion of 'I' as a living contradiction in claims to educational knowledge and in the use of living educational standards of practice and judgement to form a discipline of education through the exercise of originality of mind and critical judgement.

I wish to offer a further piece of evidence related to the evolution of my spiritual, aesthetic and ethical values. It relates to Sir William Taylor, a former vice-chancellor of Hull University and one of the three examiners of my first Ph.D. submission to the University of Bath, in 1980. The other two examiners were Professors Jack Wrigley and Jeff Thomson. Their signatures appeared below the following judgements in their examiners' report on my research:

Has the candidate shown that he is able to conduct original investigations and to test his own ideas and those of others? NO

Does the thesis contain matter worthy of publication? NO

The candidate **may not** be permitted to re-submit his thesis in a revised form

These judgements were made within a set of power relations in the University that supported a written instruction to me from the University Secretary and Registrar that:

"I must re-iterate that no question may now be raised about the competence of the examiners..."

I haven't spoken to William Taylor for 20 years, not since his judgements on my research. Then, last month my wife Joan, who is Professor and Dean in the Faculty of Education at the University of the West of England (UWE), invited me to social evening on 24th March 2001. This was to mark the closure and demolition of the site of the old 'Redland College of Education' which is part of the UWE. The Faculty of Education at the University of the West of England is due to move from the 'Redland' site to a new building on a main university site

in September 2001. Joan had explained that I was likely to be an evening of nostalgia between people who knew each other well and that I unlikely to know anyone there, that she was unsure of the kind of evening it would be, but that she would like me to accompany her. I guess those of you with partners might recognise the mixed emotions with which I anticipated the evening!

So, I found myself in a room full of people I didn't know. However, the first person to approach Joan was Sir William Taylor (although he had known Joan for years, he said later that he had never connected the two of us. I reckon that this is probably because she is such a warm and loving individual!). I then discovered that he was to give the keynote address and some minutes later we were sitting next but one to each other on the 'high table' for dinner! Suddenly, the evening which I had anticipated as simply accompanying Joan out of a feeling of camaraderie, became an enlivening and pleasureable experience. I want to offer my pleasure in the evening as evidence of the evolution of my spiritual, aesthetic and ethical values as I move the focus of my enquiry from 'legitimation' to 'influence'. Thinking of William Taylor in the past has evoked violent emotion linked to the institutional power relations which placed his judgement as examiner beyond my questioning. My unexpected pleasure in the evening was partially due to my recognition that this violent emotion had been replaced by the pleasure in the recognition of having transcended both the above judgements on my originality and the institutional power relations which supported them, in my present enquiry into extending the educative influence of living educational theories and living standards of judgement. My pleasureable response to the evening gives me some hope that my spiritual values are now more engaged with influence than legitimation, my aesthetic values are engaged more with influencing the education of social formations and my ethical values are engaged more with expressing care for others.

Whenever I write papers such as this about the nature of educational theory and knowledge, I find myself remembering this history of the power relations and regimes of truth which have shaped the growth of my knowledge. In the process of 'legitimizing' my original ideas on the nature of educational theory and educational knowledge, I have been subjected to pressures which could have constrained a less determined individual. These aren't my words. They come from a report made to the Senate of the University of Bath in 1991 by a working party established by Senate to investigate evidence concerning a matter of my academic freedom. My response to these pressures has been whatever I considered necessary to defend my creative space in the University (Whitehead, 1993). When attacked in the past, I have tended to defend myself by acting in ways which are intended to deter further attack with the certainty of a very damaging response. MAD comes to mind – as in mutually assured destruction!

The working party on a matter on academic freedom also concluded that:

“The Working Party therefore concluded that, as far as the University's formal procedures are concerned, Mr. Whitehead's two Ph.D. examination results, and the competence of otherwise of his examiners, are dead issues”.

There is something about someone telling me that something which affects me is a 'dead issue' which helps to keep it very much alive for me. This is particularly true when the statements are made with the support of institutional power relations.

My tension and curiosity are now focused on how to analyse the clarification and evolution of the meanings of my values in the course of their engagement with the education of social formations. This will include an engagement with institutional power relations. I tend to think that it is worth keeping open, as live issues, an engagement with the University's formal procedures! I have an intuition that it might be evidence of the education of the social formation of the University, if the University recognises formally, the importance of my own contribution to my field of research as I keep alive issues around the University's formal procedures, and the explicit recognition of injustices. Just to add a bit of ironic humour to this last point I want to say that I was giving this paper a final proof read to give to Professor Bill Scott, our Head of Department of Education, when a colleague popped into my office to let me know that the activity I had been associated with (creating living educational theory) had been removed from the latest draft of the University's submission for our National Research Assessment Exercise! Living Theory has now disappeared as an activity – it came to light briefly and has now been extinguished! Perhaps you might ensure it continues to live within a wider international research community.

I don't yet know how to include a representation of my emotional responses which help to characterise the meanings of my values in the course of this engagement. I found it relatively easy to include video-footage of my educative relationships with my students which showed something of my life-affirming energy and my passion for learning. I am finding it difficult to communicate how fury, anger, disgust, humiliation and aggression, and my responses to these emotions, are also part of the clarification and evolution of the meanings of my values in the course of their engagement with institutional power relations. Perhaps I could communicate something of these meanings through a dramatic form of presentation in the here and now, by asking you to accompany me into a meeting in 1991 with four colleagues who formed the Senate Committee that was set up to investigate a matter of academic freedom in relation to my own work. The context was that the Board of Studies for Education had passed by one vote a recommendation to Senate that such an investigation should be carried out on the grounds that there was prima facie evidence that my academic freedom had been breached. A preliminary report had been produced which concluded that my academic freedom had not been breached. There was no mention that I had been subjected to any pressure. Here is a reconstruction of my passionate response to this preliminary report, which was followed by an inclusion in the final report which referred to pressure:

"The Working Party did not find that, in any of Mr. Whitehead's seven instances, his academic freedom had actually been breached. This was, however, because of Mr. Whitehead's persistence in the face of pressure; a less determined individual might well have been discouraged and therefore constrained."

I intend to video-tape this part of my presentation to see if it helps with the representation of emotional meanings in later presentations!

I now want to address the point in the above extract from my proposal for this presentation that:

It will take account of the way these power relations have been influenced by economic rationalism (19).

In taking account of economic rationalism I draw my understanding from sociologists who include, Bourdieu (1992), Whitty (1997) and Brown and Lauder (2001).

The power relations I have in mind are those which Foucault (1980, p, 133) describes in terms of regimes of truth. He writes about the power relations which influence the procedures which determine what counts as truth in specific contexts. The contexts I have in mind are the Western Academies within which power relations work to give higher status to propositional theories of professional knowledge, over the living, dialectical theories of practitioner-researchers.

I use what Habermas (12) has described as knowledge-constitutive interests in relation to truth where he writes about practical, technical and emancipatory interests. In particular I use his ideas on the validity claims we make in reaching mutual understanding. That is, our communications should be comprehensible. We should provide evidence for our assertions. We should reveal the normative background of our communication and we should reveal our authenticity in interaction through time.

I identify with Whitty's (1997) analysis of quasi-markets in education with his call for collective action:

"Part of the challenge must be to move away from atomized decision making to the reassertion of collective responsibility without re-creating the very bureaucratic systems whose shortcomings have helped to legitimate the current tendency to treat education as a private good rather than a public responsibility." (p. 37)

I also identify with Brown and Lauder's (2001) call for the development of collective intelligence:

"Collective intelligence can be defined as empowerment through the development and pooling of intelligence to attain common goals or resolve common problems..... the struggle for collective intelligence therefore involves more than a democratization of intelligence, it involves making a virtue of our mutual dependence and sociability which we will need to make a dominant feature of post-industrial society based on information, knowledge and lifelong learning". (pp. 218-219)

Working with Bourdieu's (1992) ideas I live the following tension between an insider researcher who also integrates insights into his understanding from these outside researchers:

"The logicism inherent in the objectivist view point inclines one to ignore the fact that scientific construction cannot grasp the principles of practical logic without forcibly

changing their nature. Objectification converts a practical succession into a represented succession, an action orientated in relation to a space objectively constituted as a structured of demands (things 'to be done') into a reversible operation performed in a continuous, homogeneous space. This inevitable transformation is inscribed in the fact that agents can adequately master the modus operandi that enables them to generate correctly formed ritual practices, only by making it work practically, in a real situation, in relation to practical functions. An agent who possesses a practical mastery, an art, whatever it may be, is capable of apply in his action the disposition which appears to him only in action, in the relationship with a situation (he can repeat the feint which strikes him as the only thing to do, as often as the situation requires). But he is no better placed to perceive what really governs his practice and to bring it to the order of discourse, than the observer, who has the advantage over him of being able to see the action from outside, as an object, and especially of being able to totalize the successive realizations of the habitus (without necessarily having the practical mastery that underlies these realizations or the adequate theory of this mastery). And there is every reason to think that as soon as he reflects on his practice, adopting a quasi-theoretical posture, the agent loses any chance of expressing the truth of his practice, and especially the truth of the practical relation to the practice." (Bourdieu, pp. 90-91, 1992).

Given what I have said about living contradiction, living truth, living theory and living standards of practice and judgement, my own position is that the creation of living educational theories may offer an opportunity to understand the education of social formations. I am thinking particularly of the significance of values in explaining the education of social formations in ways which refuse to permit unchallenged the influences of regimes of truth or economic rationalism on distorting the creation and legitimation of living educational theories. I imagine that my present explorations will enable me to extend my own educational knowledge as I engage with the education of social formations in ways which support the further embodiment of educational values within their cultures and institutional contexts.

One idea I am playing with concerns a tension I experience between the certainty I feel that I have deserved promotion in the University and my continuing refusal to request promotion because that would break a commitment I made in 1991. I made this commitment in recognition of the political integrity of those who helped to secure me a tenured appointment until 2009 by overcoming a decision by the University to terminate my employment 1976. Promotion is accompanied by loss of tenure! I'm smiling ruefully at the way this particular exercise of my ethical principles has cost me money – lots of money! In other words there is a tension between the economic imperative of economic rationalism and moral principle which I am working to resolve.

I am now at the limit of my present understanding in accounting for the way in which power relations have influenced the legitimation of living educational theories and have themselves been influenced by economic rationalism.

Finally I want to fulfil my point from the proposal that:

The analysis will also show how values and insights have been integrated within 8 successfully completed doctoral inquiries over the past six years. (This is now 9 with Terri Austin's thesis – Terri graduates in July 2001 from the University of Bath)

As part of my self-study of my teacher-education practices I seek to understand the nature of my educative influence with the aims of improving this influence and of contributing to the professional knowledge base of education. So, when I say 'integrated' I have a specific point in mind. I am seeking to understand the nature of my educative influence in relation to the integration of my ideas within the educational formation of the individual researcher. My point carries an ethical commitment to respecting the creativity of the individual researcher. In characterising my influence as educative, I need to see that the individual has freely and creatively appropriated my ideas in a way, which affirms their own sense of creating themselves. The affirmation I get from their acknowledgement that they have found my ideas helpful in this way is also vital in sustaining my life-affirming energy in my educative relationships. Looking forward to your response. I think that the enquiries addressed by the researchers, whose work I have supervised and which have been 'legitimated', show how these values have been integrated. The titles of the Ph.D. enquiries in the living theory section of [actionresearch.net](http://www.actionresearch.net) may bear repeating. The following list is more extensive and includes both Masters and Ph.D. living theory enquiries:

Austin, T. (2001) *Treasures in the Snow: What do I know and how do I know it through my educational inquiry into my practice of community?* Ph.D. Thesis, University of Bath, In the Living Theory section of <http://www.actionresearch.net>

Adler-Collins, J. (2000) *A Scholarship of Enquiry*, M.A. dissertation, University of Bath. In the Living Theory section of <http://www.actionresearch.net>

Cunningham, B. (1999) *How do I come to know my spirituality as I create my own living educational theory?* Ph.D. Thesis, University of Bath. In the Living Theory section of <http://www.actionresearch.net>

D'Arcy, P. (1998) *The Whole Story.....* Ph.D. Thesis, University of Bath. In the Living Theory section of <http://www.actionresearch.net>

Eames, K. (1995) *How do I, as a teacher and educational action-researcher, describe and explain the nature of my professional knowledge?* Ph.D. Thesis, University of Bath. In the Living Theory section of <http://www.actionresearch.net>

Finnegan, (2000) *How do I create my own educational theory as an action researcher and as a teacher?* Ph.D. submission, University of Bath, under examination.

Holley, E. (1997) *How do I as a teacher-researcher contribute to the development of a living educational theory through an exploration of my values in my professional practice?* M.Phil., University of Bath. In the Living Theory section of <http://www.actionresearch.net>

Hughes, J. (1996) *Action planning and assessment in guidance contexts: how can I understand and support these processes while working with colleagues in further education colleges and career service provision in Avon*. Ph.D. Thesis, University of Bath. In the Living Theory section of <http://www.actionresearch.net>

Laidlaw, M. (1996) *How can I create my own living educational theory as I offer you an account of my educational development?* Ph.D. thesis, University of Bath. In the Living Theory Section of <http://www.actionresearch.net>

Loftus, J. (1999) *An action enquiry into the marketing of an established first school in its transition to full primary status*. Ph.D. thesis, Kingston University. In the Living Theory section of <http://www.actionresearch.net>

Evans, M. (1995) *An action research enquiry into reflection in action as part of my role as a deputy headteacher*. Ph.D., Kingston University. In the Living Theory section of <http://www.actionresearch.net>

Whitehead, J. (1999) *How do I improve my practice? Creating a discipline of education through educational enquiry*. Ph.D. University of Bath. In the Living Theory section of <http://www.actionresearch.net>

I want to finish by encouraging you to engage with the living theory theses in [actionresearch.net](http://www.actionresearch.net) and to bear in mind the possibility that the expression, definition and communication of living educational standards of practice and judgement could hold the key to the development of a new qualitative epistemology in the new scholarship of educational enquiry.

As I focus on living educational standards in what I know and how I know it, I want to draw your attention to the above accumulated knowledge-base for your creative and critical engagement I also want to focus attention on Terri Austin's Ph.D. Thesis. Terri is the present chair of the AERA SIG on the Self-Study of Teacher Education Practices and later today we have our Town Meeting to explore how we review self-studies in relation to the questions, 'What do we know? How do we know it?'

Along with Ken Zeichner (1999), I believe that the self-study of teacher-education practices movement is a most significant development in educational research. I also believe that Terri Austin's thesis, along with those above, has made a most significant contribution to the development of a new scholarship of educational enquiry. For as Terri Austin says:

This thesis shows an alternative to traditional forms of criticism frequently found in academic work related to the growth of knowledge. This alternative is a written representation of my values that I use as my living standards of practice and judgement in the self-study of my professional practice. (See Thesis Abstract, Austin 2000).

I am hopeful that we might develop an educational conversation, perhaps through the chat room facilities on actionresearch.net on the nature of the living educational standards of practice and judgement in the new scholarship of educational enquiry.

Appendix

The accepted proposal/my action plan from August 2000.

The issue of paradigm proliferation (1,2,3) has focused attention on the issues of the nature of the standards of judgement, which can be used to test the validity of claims to educational knowledge within the postmodern context. Lyotard expresses the problem well when he says:

A postmodern artist or writer is in the position of a philosopher: the text he (she) writes, the work he (she) produces are not in principle governed by pre-established rules, and they cannot be judged according to a determining judgement, by applying familiar categories to the text or to the work. Those rules and categories are what the work of art itself is looking for. The artist and the writer, then, are working without rules in order to formulate the rules of what will have been done. (p. 81)

The development of self-study in qualitative research, together with the advances in digital technology (5) has extended the range of forms of data representation in educational research (6). They also offer new possibilities for the development of new standards of judgement and new forms of scholarship in teacher education (7) and educational inquiry (8).

The idea that individuals can create and test their own living theories (9, 10) in their self-studies of their own educational inquiries is raising questions about the epistemological warrants for the claims to knowledge being made from within such a perspective (11, 12, 13).

The explanations given by educational action researchers of their educative influence with their students, raises questions in qualitative research about both the nature of the explanations and the standards of judgement which can be used to test the validity of the explanations. The problem of defining clearly the standards of judgement is particularly difficult when the explanations contain spiritual, aesthetic and ethical values. The difficulty arises because the meanings of such values often require non-verbal forms of communication, such as video, performance or the expressive arts. The communication of the meanings of the spiritual, aesthetic and ethical values in explanations for the educative influence of professional educators is at present, undertheorised.

This presentation of living standards of judgement in what we know and how we know it, will focus on interpretations of video-images from the researchers' educative relations with the teacher-researchers whose research programmes he is supervising or influencing. These will include Ph.D. and Masters' degree inquiries and the interpretations will be related to these students' learning in their educational inquiries.

The presentation will also include the accounts of the teacher-researchers in which they analyse the way their spiritual, aesthetic and ethical values are influencing their students' learning (14, 15). The multi-media presentation will focus on the communicability of the living standards of judgement in testing the validity of claims to educational knowledge (8).

Other research on standards of judgement has focused on the power relations, which determine what counts as knowledge and the crises of legitimation and representation (16, 17). The analysis in the presentation will examine how the meanings of the spiritual, aesthetic and ethical values, in the researchers' discipline of education (18), have been clarified and evolved in the course of their engagement with the institutional power relations over a period of some 27 years. It will take account of the way these power relations have been influenced by economic rationalism (19). The analysis will also show how such values and insights have been integrated within 8 successfully completed doctoral inquiries over the past six years.

- 1) Donmoyer, D. (1996) Educational Research in an era of paradigm proliferation: What's a journal editor to do? *Educational Researcher*, Vol. 25, No.2, pp. 19-25.
- 2) Anderson, G. & Herr, K. (1999) The new paradigm wars: Is there room for rigorous practitioner knowledge in schools and universities? *Educational Researcher*, Vol. 28, No.5, pp. 12-21, 40.
- 3) Lather, P. (2000) Paradigm Talk Revisited: How else might we characterize the proliferation of research perspectives within our field? Paper to AERA, New Orleans, April 2000.
- 4) Lyotard, F. (1986) *The Postmodern Condition: A report on Knowledge*, p. 81, Manchester; p. Manchester University Press.
- 5) Harris, K. (1998) *Harris Video Cases*. Utah; Brigham Young University.
- 6) Eisner, E. (1997) The promise and perils of alternative forms of data representation. *Educational Researcher*, Vol. 26, No.6, pp. 4-10.
- 7) Zeichner, K. (1998) *The New Scholarship in Teacher Education*. Transcript of Vice-presidential address to Division K of AERA, San Diego, 1998.
- 8) Whitehead, J. (2000a) How do I improve my practice? Creating and legitimating an epistemology of practice. *Reflective Practice*, Vol. 1, No.1, pp. 91-104.
- 9) Whitehead, J. (1989) Creating a living educational theory from questions of the kind, 'How do I improve my practice?' *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 19, pp. 41-52.
- 10) Whitehead, J. (2000b) Living standards of research, reflection and renewal. Keynote address to be presented at the conference of the Ontario Educational Research Council. December, 2000.
- 11) Hamilton, M.L. & Pinnegar, S. (1998) Conclusion, in Hamilton, M.L. (Ed.) (1998) *Reconceptualising Teaching Practice: self-study in teacher education*. London; Falmer.
- 12) McNiff, J. (2000a) (Ed.) *Educational Research in Ireland*. Dublin; September.
- 13) Lomax, P. (1999) 'Working Together for Educative Community Through Research: developing a new professionalism' Paper presented at the BERA Symposium at AERA 1999, Montreal.
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- 15) Laidlaw, M. (1997) How can I create my own living educational theory as I offer you an account of my educational development? Ph.D. Thesis, University of Bath, in the Living Theory section of <http://www.actionresearch.net>
- 16) Habermas, J. (1976) *Legitimation Crisis*. London: Heinemann.
- 17) Denzin, N. & Lincoln, Y. (1994) *The Handbook of Qualitative Research*. London; Sage.

- 18) Whitehead, J. (1999) How do I improve my practice? Creating a discipline of education through educational enquiry. Ph.D. Thesis, University of Bath, in the Living Theory section of <http://www.actionresearch.net>
- 19) Whitty, G. (1997) Creating Quasi-Markets in Education, in Apple, M. (1997) (Ed.) Review of Research in Education, Washington, AERA.

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- Brown, P. & Lauder, H. (2001) *Capitalism and Social Progress*. Basingstoke; Palgrave.
- Foucault, M. (1980) *Truth and Power*, in *Power/Knowledge*, Gordon, C. (Ed) (1980). Brighton; Harvester.
- McTaggart, R. (1992) *Reductionism and Action Research: Technology versus convivial forms of life*, in Bruce, S. & Russell, A.L. *Transforming Tomorrow Today*. Published by Action Learning, Action Research and Process Management Association Incorporated, Brisbane, Australia.
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