LIVING INCLUSIONAL VALUES IN EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS OF PRACTICE AND JUDGEMENT

Keynote Address for the
Act, Reflect, Revise III Conference
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Summary

A previous keynote to the Act Reflect Revise Conference, focused on the significance of *Creating Our Own Knowledge* (Whitehead, 2000) for enhancing our professional knowledge-base as educators. This 2005 keynote develops the theme of creating our own knowledge in living theories of our productive lives in education. I am thinking of our lives as educators and practitioner-researchers as we influence the education of our students, each other and the social formations in which we live and work. I call our explanations of these educational influences, living educational theories, to distinguish them from explanations generated by theories in the philosophy, psychology, sociology, history, economics, politics, administration, leadership and management of education.

The living theories flowing through web-space from http://www.actionresearch.net will be used to emphasise the importance of the uniqueness of each individual's creative response to their experience, values, context, skills and understandings. Drawing on Alan Rayner's (2005) idea of inclusionality I will use these living theories to stress the importance of developing new, relationally dynamic standards of judgement in education that appear to me to carry hope for the future of humanity and our own. Evidence from these living theories will also be used to show how they are contributing to the development of cultures of enquiry (Delong, 2002; Delong, Black & Wideman, 2005) within the education systems of our School Boards in Canada and our Local Education Authorities in the UK.

I see the development of our living theories as helping to fulfil the mission of the University of Bath. The University has a distinct academic approach that emphasises the education of professional practitioners, fosters high achievement and promotes original inquiry, innovation and collaboration (University of Bath, Corporate Plan, 2004-2005/6 Draft Update, June 2005).

Introduction

To give some historical context to this 2005 keynote here is what I wrote in 2000 as I looked to the future in terms of being accountable to values that carry hope for the future of humanity. Drawing on value statements from the Ontario College of Teachers (1999a and 1999b) I said that I particularly liked the idea of being accountable to the values of:

> *…endeavouring to develop in students respect for human dignity, spiritual values, cultural values, freedom, social justice, democracy and the environment;*
>
> *…working with other members of the College to create a professional environment that supports the social, physical, intellectual, spiritual, cultural, moral and emotional development of students.* (OCT, p.2, 1999a)

I advocated relating these values in our action research to the OCT (1999b) standards of practice for the teaching profession and focused on the standard of ongoing professional learning:

Teachers are learners who acknowledge the interdependence of teacher learning and student learning. Teachers engage in a continuum of professional growth to improve their practice. (OCT, p. 15, 1999b)

As well as the standard of Leadership and Community:

Teachers are educational leaders who create and sustain learning communities in their classrooms, in their schools and in their profession. They collaborate with their colleagues and other professionals, with parents, and with other members of the community to enhance school programs and student learning. (OCT, p.13,1999b)

I drew attention to the ideas of Fran Squire and Linda Grant in their work for the Ontario College of Teachers on the development of standards of practice and to Fran Squire's (1998) questions:

What implications arise when standards of practice are linked to action research endeavours?

How do we keep the spontaneity and individualism inherent in action research as we establish criteria for its recognition in the educational community?

Over the five years since presenting the 2000 keynote, more evidence has been produced about the implications of linking standards of practice to action research in a way that keeps the spontaneity and individualism inherent in action research as we establish criteria for its recognition in the educational community. The evidence is flowing through web-space in the living theories of individuals who have explained their educational influences in their own learning and in the learning of others. The evidence shows how the values individuals use to give meaning and purpose to their lives can be transformed into living standards of judgement. Before I focus on this evidence I want to respond to a video-clip and two photographs to emphasise the importance of visual narratives in the communication of living theories and living standards of judgement. I am thinking of visual narratives that focus on: the learning of individual pupils; the importance of sharing our affirmations of inclusionality; the importance of taking account of the influences of social context on what makes learning possible.

By inclusionality I am meaning a relationally dynamic **awareness** of space and boundaries that is connective, reflexive and co-creative. Alan Rayner (2005) communicated this meaning of inclusionality to me as he explained some of the limitations of the dominant logic that is used in most traditional theorising in education. This is the logic that eliminates contradiction from 'correct' thought and treats individuals as if they were discrete and separate selves rather than distinct and relational complex selves. You can access the video-clip of the communication that helped to develop my inclusional awareness at http://www.jackwhitehead.com/rayner1sor.mov (36.89 MB)

To show what I am meaning by the relationally dynamic awareness of inclusionality and affirmations of inclusionality I want to show a 20 second video-clip that was taken in 2000 with one of Cheryl Black's classes. It shows the kind of relationally dynamic movements at the start of a lesson I think you will all be familiar with. You can access the clip at:

http://www.bath.ac.uk/~edsajw/stand/cbs.mov

By moving the cursor along the time-line you can experience the relationally dynamic awareness of space and boundary being expressed in the classroom. At the moment that Cheryl feels the touch on her jacket and turns round to engage with the student I see, feel and understand the affirmation of inclusionality between Cheryl and her student.

The photograph below was taken from Mark Potts' (2003) enquiry *How can I use my own values and my experience of schools in South Africa to influence my own education and the education of others?* **http://www.bath.ac.uk/~edsajw/module/mpsa.pdf**

This is what Mark wrote to accompany the image:

> *Perhaps it was the optimism that I felt as I spoke with this 17 year old student of Economics about his aspirations to go on to College and be an accountant, followed by the sadness as I spoke afterwards to his teacher who told me that there was no prospect of this because the family was too poor to pay the College fees. In my mind I thought of the opportunities lying ahead of the children in the well-resourced schools that I had seen during my visit. That was the source of the anger that I felt.* (Potts, 2003)

This image and narrative serves to emphasise the vital significance that context can play in education and of the importance, for those of us who affirm the inclusional value of social justice, to work together to eliminate the influence of poverty on educational opportunity.

I often find images carry more meaning than words, although I usually need words to communicate the significance the image has for me. I also find conversations with others about images help to develop shared meanings of the values that help to constitute my productive life. I call these shared meanings about embodied values the **affirmations of inclusionality** and the representation of these meanings, **visual narratives**. As I will show later these affirmations of shared meaning can be transformed, in the course of their clarification and emergence in practice, into living critical standards of judgement. Such standards are needed to judge the validity of any claim that we know our educational influence in our own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of our social formations. Such standards are needed in validating and legitimating our living theories.

Such affirmations and visual narratives can be understood in a conversation between myself and Marie Huxtable. Marie is a psychologist working on educational projects in the Bath and North East Somerset local authority, the equivalent of your School Board. The affirmations of inclusionality felt and understood by Marie Huxtable and me are focused on our responses to the expressions in the eyes, face, body and hands of the pupil below as she shows what she has been working on, to the photographer Belle Wallace. Belle Wallace is currently President of the National Association for Able Children in Education (in the UK) and you can access her biography at http://www.nace.co.uk/home.htm?tasc_biography.htm~mainFrame We both felt a flow of life-affirming energy in our responses to the image and with each other. We recognised this flow of energy between us and affirm that it carries our hope for the future of humanity and our own. For us, the way the pupil shows Belle what she had produced carries two affirmations. There is the affirmation from the pupil that what has been produced is a source of pleasure and satisfaction. There is the affirmation from Belle and ourselves that we are seeking to enable ourselves and others to feel this quality of pleasure and satisfaction in what we and others are producing. I am associating such affirmations with what I mean by living a productive life in education.

 I now want to return to the hope I find in sharing affirmations of values of inclusionality with those we teach and learn with, in different cultural contexts.

Sharing affirmations of values of inclusionality

In Croatia, Branko Bognar, his colleagues and their pupils, have produced a visual narrative to show their meanings of action research, creativity and validation.

On the 3rd July 2005, Branko posted this visual narrative to the British Educational Research Association 2005 e-seminar on *The nature of educational theories: what counts as evidence of educational influences in learning?* While watching the video clips, with their visual narrative, I shared the meanings of action research, creativity and validation being communicated by the pupils and teachers. The video-clip on validation shows 10 year old pupils presenting evidence, from their action research accounts of their own learning, with a capacity for reflection that demonstrates their understandings of their own educational influences in their own learning. Here is Branko's letter with access to the video-clips.

> *Dear friends,*
>
> *I worked hard for two days and two nights to translate and title video recordings where you could see live example of our effort to apply action research in our educational practice.*
>
> *First video (available at http://www.e-lar.net/videos/Creativity-en2.wmv 11 Mb[1]) was starting point in Vesna Simic's and my action research. Our shared value is creativity, so we try to find a way how to fulfil this value. We realised that creativity is enough fulfil in her teaching of arts. But she confessed, and we find evidence for that when we analysed video recordings of her teaching, that she realised subject society and nature[2] on traditional and uncreative way. So we decided to improve creativity in that part of her educational practice.*
>
> *On second and third videos (available at http://www.e-lar.net/videos/AI2_0002.wmv 30.5 Mb and at http://www.e-lar.net/videos/Validation.wmv 29 Mb) we could find that children should not be treated only as participants in action research of adults (teachers) but also as co-researcher or standalone researchers. Marica Zovko, class-teacher was mentor to her students and I was mentor to her. Her students evidenced that they understand process of action research and know how to apply them to improve their living practice.*
>
> *Warm regards,*
>
> <div align="right">*Branko*</div>

You can access the three video clips with their visual narratives to see if we share the experience of affirmations of inclusionality as you watch the pupils and teachers with their narrative that shows their co-created understandings of action research, creativity and validation. I just have time here to show an extract from the clip on validation with a 10 year old pupil researcher, Anica, as she strengthens the validity of her living theory of her learning through sharing it with others.

As we experience such affirmations of inclusionality I think we increase our confidence that we are understanding each other in terms of the values we use to give meaning and purpose to our lives. We can explain our educational influences in terms of these values. Such explanations can make significant contributions to the knowledge-base of education. Hence my interest in how we form and communicate the standards of judgement we use to account for our lives in education from the embodied values we seek to live by.

Those of you who have read the paper by Jackie Delong and me, in the first issue of the Ontario Action Researcher of 1998 (Delong & Whitehead, 1998), will see that I am continuing to emphasise the importance of the continuous regeneration of our living standards of judgement. If we are to show how our living standards enhance the quality of our professional knowledge-base in education we will need to show the relationship between our experience of

our embodied values and the living standards we use to judge our educational influences in our own learning and the learning of our students.

I shall now explain how this can be done through transforming affirmations of inclusionality into living standards of judgement.

Transforming affirmations of inclusionality into living collective~individual standards of judgement

I want to stress the importance of co-creation, in our affirmations of what matters to us, by referring to the standards of judgment that emerge as collective~individual standards of judgement. They are also critical standards in the sense that they are used to evaluate the validity of a teacher-researcher's claim to know their educational influence in their own learning, in the learning of their students and in the learning of social formations. The following account is taken from a recent presentation on living critical standards of judgement in educational theorising at the British Educational Research Association 2005 Annual Conference. It addresses the possibility of transforming affirmations of inclusionality into living standards of judgement:

"As a bedrock of my hope in human existence I bear witness to a flow of energy that carries hope for the future of humanity and my own. I experience love in such a flow of energy in what I do in education. My students tell me that they feel the expression of love for what I do as a life-affirming energy that flows into our relationship and influences their enquiries. I recognise this love in Cho's terms when he says that with love, education becomes an open space for thought from which emerges knowledge. For Cho, as for me, it is important to make clear that in explaining the educational influence of love in learning, between two or more people in an educational relationship, it is not a matter of *'merely caring for one another, nor do they pass knowledge between each other'* (Cho, 2005, p. 95). It is a matter of seeing that love opens a space for those in educational relationships to *preserve the distinctiveness of their positions by turning away from one another and toward the world in order to produce knowledge through inquiry and thought* (Cho, 2005. p. 95).

Is it possible to reach an intersubjective agreement on the meaning of love and other embodied values as living standard of educational judgment? Eleanor Lohr has provided some evidence in her research on 'Love at Work'.

(http://www.jackwhitehead.com/elFront%202.htm)

In China, Dean Tian Fengjun, Moira Laidlaw and their colleagues in China's Experimental Centre for Educational Action Research in Foreign Languages Teaching at Guyuan Teacher's College have demonstrated their affirmations of inclusionality in the development of living collective~individual standards of judgement.

More evidence that it is possible is provided by the agreement between Moira Laidlaw and me about the relational flows of meaning shown in the video clip below and from which the following still image was taken. We are agreed that what we are seeing in the video-clip can be described as a loving flow-form of life-affirming energy in educational relationships.

The following 9 MB video clip will take several minutes to download using Broadband (10 minutes on my system) and opens in Quicktime.

http://www.jackwhitehead.com/mlendSorenson.mov

More still images from the classroom with Moira Laidlaw at Guyuan Teachers College in China on the 15 October 2004 can be seen at:

http://www.jackwhitehead.com/moira151004/moira151004.html

To re-inforce our meanings of a loving flow-form of life-affirming energy, Moira also provided this photograph she took of a Mother and son, with the Mother's permission, in Xi an:

The use in my research of such multi-media representations of living critical standards of judgment emerged from the recognition that many significant meanings in educational discourse were communicated non-verbally, through multi-sensory perceptions. My colleague Margarida Dolan, through her work on *proprioception* has shown me the importance of multi-sensory perceptions in understanding the body in space. To appreciate and communicate meanings of flows of energy, whose form is being constituted by the expression of embodied values, the meanings can be understood in the course of their emergence in the practice of living enquiry.

I am fascinated by the question of whether it is possible and desirable to extend this agreement, between Moira and me, with your agreement. I am thinking of the agreement that as we watch the video-clip we~i are experiencing a loving flow-form of life-affirming energy in the channels of space and dynamic boundaries of the educational relationships. Such intersubjective agreement will be necessary for the development and legitimation of educational theorising with such living critical standards of judgment. I believe that such intersubjective agreement rests on our meanings resonating with your own. First, through the

uniqueness of our intuitive responses and then into the explicit cognitions of our shared language.

You can access the full presentation on *Living critical standards of judgement in educational theorising* (Whitehead, 2005a) - a multi-media presentation at The British Educational Research Association Annual Conference, September 2005, University of Glamorgan from http://jackwhitehead.com/bera05all/jwbera05pap.htm

Karen and Simon Riding, a husband and wife team of teacher-researchers, have provided more evidence on the possibility of creating shared understandings of affirmations of inclusionality that can be integrated in explanations of educational influences in learning. You can access this evidence in Karen's (Riding, 2005) paper on *Why I do what I do: How can I come to understand my educational influence in students' learning through the cross-generation mentoring of student researchers?* (http://www.jackwhitehead.com/monday/krtrans.htm). You can access the evidence on Simon's educational influence in helping to form and sustain school-based groups of teacher researchers from his dissertation (Riding, 2003) on:

> *'Living myself through others. How can I account for my claims and understanding of a teacher-research group at Westwood St Thomas School?'*
> Retrieved 13 October 2005 from http://www.bath.ac.uk/~edsajw/module/srmadis.pdf
>
> and from the Bitterne Park Teacher Research Group at http://www.teacherresearch.net/tr_bitternepark.html

In the creation of living theories with values that give meaning and purpose to our lives I imagine that you are like me in that your understandings have been influenced by a range of ideas from the theories of others. I also think that you are like me in valuing inclusional relationships while recognising the need for strong boundaries and responses that can protect against violation through hostile power relations.

The theories from other disciplines that we integrate into our living theories of our educational influences can help to extend the influence of inclusionality and strengthen the boundaries that can protect against hostile power. Before I consider the integration of such theories I want to draw your attention to the increase in the flow of evidence between 2000-2005 that shows how living theories are contributing to productive lives in education.

Evidence from 2000-2005 that shows how living theories can contribute to productive lives in education in enhancing the flow of values that carry hope for the future of humanity.

I view practitioner-researchers as knowledge workers who are creating and sustaining learning communities in their organisations. Because the practitioner-researchers I supervise for their masters and doctoral degrees work in a range of professions I have amended the Ontario College of Teachers statements about values to read for my purposes:

> *Endeavouring to develop in ourselves, colleagues and students respect for human dignity, spiritual values, cultural values, freedom, social justice, democracy and the environment;*
>
> *Working together to create a professional environment that supports the social, physical, intellectual, spiritual, cultural, moral and emotional development of each other.*

The evidence, that shows how the living theories of practitioner researchers are enhancing the flow of values that carry hope for the future of humanity, is in the explanations that individual practitioners have given for their educational influences in their own learning and in the

learning of others. The following evidence is flowing through web-space from http://actionresearch.net and includes my most ambitious multi-media narrative in Action Research Expeditions (Whitehead, 2004, http://www.arexpeditions.montana.edu/articleviewer.php?AID=80):

i) Jean McNiff's web-site including action research for beginners at http://www.jeanmcniff.com/

   In living a productive life Jean McNiff has made a major contribution to the literature on action research. Without Jean's inclusional capacities my own ideas would not have been communicated so well and so widely.

ii) Passion in Professional Practice 1-1V at http://schools.gedsb.net/ar/passion/index.html and the Ontario Action Researcher at http://www.nipissingu.ca/oar/

   The collection of accounts by teacher-researchers in the four volumes of Passion in Professional Practice have been produced with the motivation, energy, values, skills, commitment, and inclusional understandings of Jacqueline Delong, the teachers who contributed and Jacqueline's co-editors, Cheryl Black and Heather Knill-Griesser. The Ontario Action Researcher was brought into being with the energy, skill and values of Jacqueline Delong and Ron Wideman.

iii) Living Theories from http://www.bath.ac.uk/~edsajw/living.shtml

iv) Masters accounts from http://www.bath.ac.uk/~edsajw/mastermod.shtml

v) Margaret Farren's homepage with her pedagogy of the unique and web of betweenness. http://webpages.dcu.ie/~farrenm/

vi) Yaqub Murray's welcome to his multiracial and inclusive Postcolonial Living Education Theory - practice, research and becoming at http://www.royagcol.ac.uk/~paul_murray/default.htm

vii) Action Research in China at Guyuan at http://www.bath.ac.uk/~edsajw/moira.shtml . See also the educational conversations originated by Moira Laidlaw working at China's Experimental Centre for Educational Action Research in Foreign Languages Teaching, hosted by Guyuan Teachers College, and by Branko Bognar working in the Philosophical Faculty of the University of Osijek in Slavonski Brod, Croatia at – http://www.e-lar.net/education/moodle/

viii) Living Action Research with Je Kan Adler-Collins in Japan at http://www.living-action-research.org/

I now want to quickly browse through the living theory and masters programme sections of actionresearch.net to point to the evidence that shows practitioner-researchers *working together to create a professional environment that supports the social, physical, intellectual, spiritual, cultural, moral and emotional development of each other.* I refer to educators who have produced such living theories as master and doctor educators. I think such educators hold the key to enhancing professionalism in education.

I urge you to the living theories being produced in China's Experimental Centre for Educational Action Research in Foreign Languages Teaching that show the development of *students' respect for human dignity, spiritual values, cultural values, freedom, social justice, democracy and the environment* http://www.bath.ac.uk/~edsajw/moira.shtml

I also hope that you will access the latest living thesis to be awarded a doctorate from the University of Bath. Marian Naidoo's account of '*I am because we are (a neverending story). The emergence of a living theory of inclusional and responsive practice*' provides a visual narrative of the meanings of a passion for compassion and I particularly want to recommend Marian's thesis to you (http://www.bath.ac.uk/~edsajw/naidoo.shtml)

Having drawn attention to where the increased evidence over the past five years can be accessed, to show the   influence of living theories in productive lives, I want to stress the importance of evaluating the validity and rigour of claims to know our educational influences in relation to the evidence. Not having the time now to explain the use of Habermas' ideas on social validity in communicative action, Winter's six principles for enhancing the rigour in action research accounts and Polanyi's ideas on personal knowledge I have included these explanations in Appendix 11 of this address. You can access these from this web-based address (Whitehead, 2005b) at:
http://www.jackwhitehead.com/monday/arrkey05dr1.htm

I now want to speculate about the significance for our futures of developing our inclusional awareness in living theories of our productive lives in education.

Looking to the future with an inclusional awareness for developing living theories in our productive lives in education.

Each living theory thesis has had to satisfy an internal and external examiner that it has fulfilled the criteria of: originality of mind and critical judgement; the extent and merit of the work; containing matter worthy of publication. These are criteria used by the University of Bath to judge a doctoral thesis. In every thesis I have examined and viva-voce examination I have attended it has been necessary for the candidate to demonstrate the extent and merit of a living theory thesis by showing a critical engagement with the theories of others. These theories are drawn from various forms and fields of knowledge. I believe that everyone in the audience or reading this address will have been influenced in their learning by the ideas and theories of others.

Integrating theories of politics, economics, philosophy, sociology, history, psychology, psychotherapy, psychoanalysis, theology, leadership, administration and management into our living theories.

Each   living   theory   flowing   through   web-space   from http://www.bath.ac.uk/~edsajw/living.shtml contains a unique constellation of values and ideas drawn from a range of contexts, experiences and theories. The living theories engage with the ideas of others in a way that is consistent with Barnett's (2000) ideas of supercomplexity and fragility:

> *What is on offer, then, and for the first time, is the realization of a fully educated human being in the sense that human being in a supercomplex world has to attain a self-monitoring and self-critical capacity and yet be able to live the resulting fragility of human being. Nothing like this has been needed before; and, as such, nothing like this has seriously been possible. The new conditions of supercomplexity make it possible for and, indeed, require higher education to live up to its rhetoric for the first time. Now, at last, a higher education can be realized.* (Barnett, 2000, pp.164-165)

You can access the latest writings which show the integration of insights from the theories of others in my theorising in Appendix 2 on *Notes on the Ideas of Others in the Growth of my Understandings* – see http://jackwhitehead.com/bera05all/jwbera05pap.htm

A wide range of theories will have influenced different people listening to or who read this address. One of the challenges facing us in education is to offer this range of insight within the

given curriculum to our students and pupils. We are also faced with the challenge of enabling our students to create their own knowledge, identities and actions in ways that carry hope for the future of humanity. I am suggesting that there is such hope in the living theories I have brought to your attention and in the living theories of our own existence and learning being developed as I speak by each other and the pupils and students we teach. I look forward to seeing these theories being shared and joining the flow through our face-to-face conversations and through the interconnecting and branching channels of communication offered by web-space to enhance our awareness and understandings of inclusionality. On Monday evenings in the University of Bath there are educational conversations in which practitioner-researchers share their experiences and ideas. You can connect with these from:

http://www.bath.ac.uk/~edsajw/monday.shtml

You can also keep up to date from the the What's New section of:

http://www.bath.ac.uk/~edsajw

You will see the **global range of interests** in these conversations and the recent concerns that focus on the importance of education in a community's response to working with Aids in Nongoma, Kwa-Zulu Natal. In making the world a place of well-being we still have much to do in enhancing the flow of values that carry hope for the future of humanity and our own.

As I conclude this 2005 keynote I would like to thank the organisers of Act Reflect Revise III for once again giving me the opportunity to share ideas from my research programme into living educational theories and to share ideas from your own work in the Grand Erie District School Board and in Ontario. In conclusion I think it is worth returning to the images of the pupils whose expressions certainly convince me that what we are seeking to accomplish, as we gather together to celebrate our work at our Act, Reflect, Revise III Conference, is such a worth while part of our productive lives in education. I am now looking forward to sharing your accounts for the rest of the day and hope to see them flowing through web-space very soon!

Endnotes

[1.] I tried to make balance between file size and quality of reproduction. I know that quality should be improved by using advanced technology which I do not possess because it is too expensive for me.

[2.] Society and nature is subject in lower grade of primary school in Croatia.

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Appendix 1

Ideas from Barnett (2000) on *Supercomplexity*

"The constellation of fragility

… there are four concepts that are key to understanding the post-modern university:uncertainty, unpredictability, challengeability and contestability. They have distinguishable features but they also have interlinking features. While a number of other concepts are associated with them in the constellation of fragility, it is these four that stand at its center.

Uncertainty is that state of being in the world in which one is aware that one's state of mind is itself open-ended. Uncertainty is that state of being in which one cannot be certain. Uncertainty is partly cognitive, but it is primarily experiential: it is an expression of one's mode of being in the world.

Unpredictability is that state of knowing in which one cannot predict with any security what is likely to happen at some future moment of time. It is a much more bounded concept that uncertainty. It has point in situations where one would wish to form expectations about the world. A state of unpredictability exists where one cannot tell what is going to happen. Science and technology, in their broadest senses, are sites where we seek predictability; but so, too, are our ordinary experiences as actors in the world.

Challengeability is that state of affairs in which our assumptions about the world are subject to counter-intuitive experiences. It is that state of affairs wherever we can be caught out. Suddenly, something takes our breath away; we have the stuffing knocked our of us. The assumptions on which we depended, but of which we were hardly aware, are – in the same moment – both revealed and found to be inadequate.

Contestability is that state of affairs in which a proposition or framework might be subjected to the counter-punch of a rival proposition or framework. It indicates a situation in which competing voices might wish to be heard and can be heard.

While there emphases vary, these four ideas all exhibit five features. Firstly, they contain both cognitive *and* experiential aspects. Secondly, they indicate the possibility of an undermining from the material world, from the world of human agency or from the world of ideas. Thirdly, they speak to an openness in our capacity to act in the world as well as to understand it. Fourthly, they could come into play in the presence of either collective understandings or those of individuals. And lastly, they have point in relation to understandings which could be highly systematized or which could be tacit assumptions, of which we are hardly aware. (p.65)

"Far from reducing the role of the university, the replacement of the constellation of knowledge by the constellation of fragility opens out to the university a new and more important role. Knowledge and control are not, thankfully, available (That belief partly led to Auschwitz). What is both necessary and possible – just – is an enlightened societal self-monitoring. The university can become a pivotal institution in this process of collective self-enlightenment. The constellation of fragility opens up the prospect of a reflexive reconstitution of society." (p.69)

".… In constructing an ethos for the late-modern university, we have to accept matters as they are: we have to acknowledge that we are faced with multiple uncertainties and that nothing has any solid basis to it. Let us continue to act together and to reason together; but do not pretend that, in the process, we have reached or will reach a position with any security of purity. Let us hold to our values, by all means. But let us not get carried away and attach any absolute quality to them. We all have to be self-ironists now." (p.123)

"In a supercomplex world, the key challenge is not one of knowledge but one of being. Accordingly, the main pedagogical task in a university setting is not that of the transmission of knowledge but of promoting forms of human being appropriate to conditions of supercomplexity. Teaching becomes the discomforting of minds and beings; but it becomes also the comforting of minds and beings. Students are embarked on a never-ending process of

self-doubt and self-reflection, but also of determinate action, of living purposively with wry acceptance amid half-sensed precariousness......

Understood in this way, university teaching attains – *for the first time* – the promise of a *higher* education. Now, under conditions of supercomplexity, higher education is obliged both to produce a dislocation among its students and to enable them not just to tolerate this dislocation but to live effectively through it. The dislocation has now to embrace the three dimensions of being: knowing, self-identity and action. This is a complete education, in that it extends across the full dimensions of human being. But it is also a genuine *higher* education, in that it calls for the highest order of self-reflexiveness, a self-reflexiveness that understands that, at best, only a precarious stability is attainable. This is a self-reflexiveness that does not delude itself with the soft option of *any* grand narrative – of truth, justice, economic competitiveness, virtue, community and the like – but accepts, even if resignedly, that there is no security to be had.

What is on offer, then, and for the first time, is the realization of a fully educated human being in the sense that human being in a supercomplex world has to attain a self-monitoring and self-critical capacity and yet be able to live the resulting fragility of human being. Nothing like this has been needed before; and, as such, nothing like this has seriously been possible. The new conditions of supercomplexity make it possible for and, indeed, require higher education to live up to its rhetoric for the first time. Now, at last, a higher education can be realized. (pp.164-165)

Barnett, R. (2000) Realizing the University: in an age of supercomplexity. Buckingham; Open University Press.

Appendix 11

Enhancing the rigour and validity of our claims to know our educational influences in our own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of social formations.

In enhancing the rigour of living theories I recommend the use of Richard Winter's six principles from Chapter Four of his *Learning From Experience.*

This is how I respond to the six principles in terms of enhancing the rigour of living theories

Reflexive Critique
In asking, researching and answering questions of the kind, 'How do I improve what I am doing?' I hold myself accountable to living my values as fully as I can. This accountability involves a reflexive critique that shows I am aware of normative pressures on my understandings of freedom, democracy, love, justice, respect, compassion, validity, rigour and what counts as knowledge. This is what I understand by engaging in a reflexive critique in action research. I hold myself accountable, in my claim to know my educational influences in learning to the values I hold and which I have related to the normative social order in which I live and work.

Dialectical Critique
I draw my understandings of dialectical critique from the work of Eduard Ilenkov (1978) where contradiction is the nucleus of dialects. Ilyenkov asks 'If an object exists as a living contradiction, what must the thought be that expresses it?' My dialectical critique begins with my experience of existing as a living contradiction when asking the question, 'how do I improve what I am doing?' In enhancing the rigour of my living theory through dialectical critique I express, define and communicate the ontological values I use to give meaning and purpose to my existence in the course of their emergence in my enquiry. The process of clarification and communication transforms the embodied ontological values into

communicable epistemological standards of judgement that I use to evaluate the validity of my claims to know my educational influence.

Risk
I draw my understanding of risk from Erich Fromm's work in the Fear of Freedom where he says that if human beings can face the truth without panic they will realise that there is no purpose to life other than the purpose we give to our lives through our relationships and productive work. Fromm believes that we are faced with the choice of uniting with the world in the spontaneity of love and productive work or of seeking a kind of security that destroys our integrity and freedom. I see the rigour of a claim to know my educational influence as working with the risk and fragility of being at the edge of one's competence in projecting oneself into a future that is unpredictable, with the hope that one can look back on one's life with the feeling that it was worthwhile.

Plural Structure
In constructing a living theory of educational influence in learning I am aware of spiritual, aesthetic, ethical, political, economic, psychological, sociological, historical, psychotherapeutic, psychoanalytic and others influences in my learning. Each influence requires a different form of expression for its representation and communication. These different forms of expression help to strengthen the rigour of a living theory in terms of its plural structure.

Multiple Resource
In acknowledging the numerous influences in my own learning I need to draw on multiple resources from the work of others. I acknowledge the influences of these multiple resources in the creation of my living theory by showing how they influence my own learning and practice.

Theory Practice Transformation
In the construction of a living theory there is a necessary connection with practice in the sense that this is required in asking, researching and answering questions of the kind, 'how do I improve what I am doing?' Forming a living theory at a particular time can be seen in relation to a life of enquiry involving a continuous process of transformation. A living theory at any particular time, can be understood as a transition structure in a process of transformation. The rigour of research process in constructing living theories can be enhanced through a demonstration, within the living theory, that both practice and theory are being transformed in the process of enquiry.

To see an explanation of learning whose rigour has been enhanced through the use of these criteria I would recommend:

Peggy (Kok) Leong's M.Ed. Dissertation, Action Research: The Art of an Educational Inquirer Peggy graduated in 1991, University of Bath. Retrieved 12 October 2005 from http://www.bath.ac.uk/~edsajw/peggy.shtml

In enhancing the validity of living theories I recommend the use of Habermas' (1976) four criteria of social validity in reaching a shared understanding and the use of Polanyi's ideas on personal knowledge, affirmation and conviviality in enhancing the quality of the personal validity of our beliefs about the worthwhileness of our productive lives in education.

I shall develop the thesis that anyone acting communicatively must, in performing any speech action, raise universal validity claims and suppose that they can be vindicated (or redeemed). Insofar as he wants to participate in a process of reaching understanding, he cannot avoid raising the following – and indeed precisely the following – validity claims. He claims to be:

   a) a)   *Uttering something understandably;*
   b) b)   *Giving (the hearer) something to understand;*
   c) c)   *Making himself thereby understandable. And*
   d) d)   *Coming to an understanding with another person.*

The speaker must choose a comprehensible expression so that speaker and hearer can understand one another. The speaker must have the intention of communicating a true proposition (or a propositional content, the existential presuppositions of which are satisfied) so that the hearer can share the knowledge of the speaker. The speaker must want to express his intentions truthfully so that the hearer can believe the utterance of the speaker (can trust him). Finally, the speaker must choose an utterance that is right so that the hearer can accept the utterance and speaker and hearer can agree with on another in the utterance with respect to a recognized normative background. Moreover, communicative action can continue undisturbed only as long as participants suppose that the validity claims they reciprocally raise are justified. (Habermas, 1976, pp.2-3)

Working with the following ideas from Michael Polanyi I strengthen the personal validity of my claims to knowledge by searching for truth, understanding the world from my point of view and stripping away the crippling mutilations of centuries of objectivist thought. My emphases in the quotations below serve to highlight Polanyi's influence in my personal knowledge.

"From Chapter 10 *Commitment*

Fundamental Beliefs.
I believe that in spite of the hazards involved, I am called upon to search for the truth and state my findings. This sentence, summarizing my fiduciary programme, conveys an ultimate belief which I find myself holding. Its assertion much therefore prove consistent with its content by practising what it authorizes. This is indeed true. For in uttering this sentence I both say that I must commit myself by thought and speech, and do so at the same time. Any enquiry into our ultimate beliefs can be consistent only if it presupposes its own conclusions. It must be intentionally circular. (p.299)

From Chapter 11 The Logic of Achievement
In the rest of this book I shall outline some views on the nature of living beings, including man, which clearly follow from the acceptance of my commitment to personal knowledge. Having decided that **I must understand the world from my point of view, as a person claiming originality and exercising his personal judgement responsibly with universal intent**, I must now develop a conceptual framework which both recognises the existence of the other such persons and envisages that fact that they have come into existence by evolution from primordial inanimate beginnings. (p. 327)

From Chapter 13. The Rise of Man
I have arrived at the opening of this last chapter without having suggested any definite theory concerning the nature of things; and I shall finish this chapter without having presented any such theory. This book tries to serve a different and in a sense perhaps more ambitious purpose. **Its aim is to re-equip men with the faculties which centuries of critical thought have taught them to distrust.** The reader has been invited to use these faculties and contemplate thus a picture of things restored to their fairly obvious nature. This is all the book was meant to do. For once men have been made to **realize the crippling mutilations imposed by an objectivist framework** – once the veil of ambiguities covering up these mutilations has been definitely dissolved – many fresh minds will turn to the task of reinterpreting the world as it is, and as it then once more will be seen to be. (p. 381)

Biographical Note:

Trained in philosophy and psychology, **Jack Whitehead** has been a Lecturer of Education at the University of Bath since 1973. In his own words: "My passion has been to contribute to the development of a view of educational theory that enables each individual to create their own in a way that includes their 'learning to live' values of humanity more fully in their practice." He has published numerous works on action research including the recent *e*books, *You and your action research project* (with Jean McNiff and Pamela Lomax) and *Action research in organizations* (with Jean McNiff). His homepage is http://www.actionresearch.net and he can be reached by e-mail at edsajw@bath.ac.uk.