

## **Enhancing Professionalism in Education through the Living-Theories of Practitioner-Researchers.**

Jack Whitehead, University of Cumbria.

**59:39 minute video of the keynote presentation to the Research Institute for Professional Learning in Education (RIPLE) Summer Conference 18 June 2014, Carlisle with the theme of ‘Teacher Researchers: change agents at work’.**



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nw-iFTrkL5I>

**Notes for the keynote presentation to the Research Institute for Professional Learning in Education (RIPLE) Summer Conference 18 June 2014, Carlisle with the theme of ‘Teacher Researchers: change agents at work’.**

My thanks to the organizers of this year’s RIPLE Summer Conference for the delightful opportunity to contribute to the theme of the conference on ‘Teacher Researchers: change agents at work’, with my address on ‘Enhancing Professionalism in Education through the Living-Theories of Practitioner-Researchers.’ I say ‘delightful’ because it enables me to reflect and share what I have learnt from some 47 years of professional engagement in education since writing, in 1967, my special study on my initial teacher education programme on ‘The Way To Professionalism In Education?’ in the library of St. Martin’s College that is now the Lancaster campus of the University of Cumbria. In 2013 I was pleased to accept a 5 year contract with the University of Cumbria as an Honorary Professor in Education with the role of supporting research and in fulfilling this role I identify with the Research Institute for Professional Learning in Education:

RIPLE draws on a range of research methodologies with a particular emphasis on applied research for the improvement of practice. We use, and support serving teachers in using, a range of practitioner and action research methodologies including mixed methods approaches, ‘Living Theory’ action research, narrative enquiry and phenomenological enquiry. The purpose is to generate knowledge and evaluate practice in a wide range of professional contexts through practitioner, collaborative and child-centred methods. RIPLE is particularly successful in supporting teachers and schools in using research as an intensive and effective form of continuing professional development.

<http://www.cumbria.ac.uk/Courses/SubjectAreas/Education/Research/RIPLE/HowWeDoResearch.aspx> )

In supporting the purpose of RIPLE to generate knowledge and evaluate practice in a wide range of professional contexts I shall focus on the contribution we could make, as contributors to RIPLE, to enhancing professionalism in education. I shall suggest that at the heart of this contribution is the recognition of each other as educators.

In emphasising the importance of this recognition of each other as educators I am drawn to Fukuyama's (1992) point:

Human beings seek recognition of their own worth, or of the people, things, or principles that they invest with worth. The desire for recognition, and the accompanying emotions of anger, shame and pride, are parts of the human personality critical to political life. According to Hegel, they are what drives the whole historical process. (p. xvii)

I have organized my presentation in terms of:

- i) Defining a profession.
- ii) What is educational?
- iii) What constitutes a living-educational-theory?<sup>1</sup>
- iv) Enhancing professionalism in education through generating and sharing the living-theories of master and doctor educators.
- v) Responding to the 2014 BERA-RSA report on 'Research and the Teaching Profession: Building the capacity for a self-improving education system' (BERA, 2014).
- vi) Recognising each other as master and doctor educators.

### **i) Defining a profession**

In my 1967 study of improving professionalism in education I used Fisher's and Thomas' (1965) four criteria for distinguish a profession:

- i) A long period of specialized training.
- ii) A broad range of autonomy for both the individual practitioners and for the occupational group as a whole.
- iii) An acceptance by the practitioners of broad personal responsibility for judgments made and acts performed within the scope of professional autonomy.
- iv) A comprehensive self-governing organization of practitioners. (p. 325)

In defining a profession of educators I shall add to the above criteria the fifth criterion of:

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<sup>1</sup> I also use living-theory as a shorthand for living-educational-theory. Living Educational Theory refers to the paradigm, methodology and methods used by individuals in creating their own unique living-educational-theory from the ground of their methodological inventiveness (Dadds & Hart, 2011).

- v) Making a contribution to the professional knowledge-base of education.

This fifth criterion is at the heart of my case for enhancing professionalism in education when I focus on the importance of continually creating and making public our embodied knowledge as educators through our practitioner-research.

The lack of progress in England in enhancing professionalism in education, since 1967 can be appreciated, for instance, by the decision of SSAT (The Schools Network) to launch a campaign to professionalise the teaching profession!

The most recent conference, held in Manchester on 5-6 December 2013 at Manchester Central, saw the launch of SSAT's campaign to professionalise the teaching profession. (see - <http://www.ssatuk.co.uk/> )

In contrast with this failure in England to establish a Professional Body for Educators that can accredit their professional knowledge we have the success of the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) in explicitly recognising the term 'educator':

Professional learning is at the heart of teacher professionalism. In addition to the accredited in-service programs, members of the Ontario College of Teachers engage in a wide variety of professional learning in order to improve their practice and enhance student learning. All of these opportunities are an integral part of the professional learning framework. Educators participate in learning opportunities offered by their employers, the Ministry of Education, faculties of education, professional organizations, federations and subject associations. Through this professional learning, College members demonstrate a commitment to continued professional growth. (Ontario College of Teachers 2012)

The development of procedures and criteria for accrediting the professional knowledge of master and doctor educators, such as those described below, could have global significance for enhancing professionalism and for developing an understanding of what is educational. I want to be clear about differences between:

- the knowledge being accredited for masters and doctoral degrees and professional masters and doctoral degrees and;
- the knowledge that could be accredited as that of master and doctor educators.

In order to accredit the knowledge of master and doctor educators I am arguing that there will need to be transformation in what counts as educational knowledge in universities (Whitehead, 2014). I am seeing the knowledge of master educators in terms of their contributions to the professional knowledge-base which are distinguished by the explanations of their educational influences in their own learning and in the learning of their students or colleagues. I am seeing the knowledge of doctor educators in terms of their contributions to the professional knowledge-base which are distinguished by the explanations of their educational influences in their own learning, in the learning of their students or colleagues and in the learning of the social formations which include their practice and understandings

## **ii) What is educational?**

Gert Biesta (2006) points to one of the challenges we have to face today, that is the disappearance of a language of education in the age of learning (p. 118). He points to one way of understanding education that helps us respond to this challenge. I would like to take his argument further in developing our language of what is **educational** and so enhance professionalism through improving educational theorising and practice with living-educational-theories.

My introduction to the language of education was through Richard Peter's (1966) text on Ethics and Education in which he argued for a view of education that was distinguished by the transmission of something worthwhile to those committed to it, in a morally acceptable way that involved some degree of wittingness on the part of the learning. The view of educational theory, known as the disciplines approach that dominated teacher education courses in England during the late 1960 and 1970s was that it was constituted by the disciplines of the philosophy, sociology, psychology and history of education. In other words, unlike Biesta, I believe that we have a well developed language of education. However, we do not have a well developed language of what is educational.

Not all learning is educational. History shows us many examples in which individuals and cultures have learnt to commit crimes against humanity. I was born in 1944 at a time when millions of human beings were seen as sub-human and killed because of their difference to the dominant group. This has focused my attention on the responsibility of seeing what is educational as involving learning that carries hope for the flourishing of humanity. In other words I distinguish what is educational as involving learning and values that carry this hope. When I use the term educational knowledge I am meaning knowledge of learning that carries hope for the flourishing of humanity such as the value of becoming human described by Ginott (1972):

Dear Teacher,

I am a survivor of a concentration camp. My eyes saw what no man should witness:

Gas chambers built by learned engineers.

Children poisoned by educated physicians.

Infants killed by trained nurses.

Women and babies shot and burned by high school and college graduates.

So, I am suspicious of education. My request is: help your students become human. Your efforts must never produce learned monsters, skilled psychopaths, educated Eichmanns.

Reading, writing and arithmetic are important only if they serve to make our children more human. (p.317)

I am suggesting below that the transformation in what counts as educational knowledge in universities has already been achieved in the living-educational-theories that are accessible from <http://www.actionresearch.net/living/living.shtml> . The distinguishing characteristic of these theories is that the explanatory principles include the meanings of the expressions of the embodied values of educators that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity.

### **iii) What constitutes a living-educational-theory?**

A living-educational-theory is an individual's explanation of their educational influence in their own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of the social formations which influence the practice and the writings. I first put forward the idea of a living form of educational theory in an analysis of my educational development (Whitehead, 1985) and developed this idea into a living-educational-theory (Whitehead, 1989). I later made the distinction between Living Educational Theory as an approach to educational research and a living-educational-theory as an individual's unique explanation of their educational influences in learning (Whitehead, 2013).

The following brief narrative of my professional learning in education serves to explain my interest in generating educational theories that include the practical principles that you and I use to explain why we do what we do. It also serves to emphasise the importance of bearing in mind the sociohistorical and socioculture pressures, often exerted by universities, that eliminate the practical principles of practitioners from what counts as educational theory. I make this point because of my own experience of succumbing to these pressures in my own research and of recognizing the importance of submitted explanations of educational influence to democratic forms of evaluation, in overcoming these pressures.

My professional engagement includes some 6 years teaching science in London Comprehensive Schools with three years as Head of Science in Erkenwald Comprehensive School in Barking. During this period between 1967-1973 I enhanced my professional learning and development through studying for the Academic Diploma in philosophy and psychology of education and the Master's Degree in the psychology of education at the Institute of Education of London University. This experience of academic study of education transformed my sense of vocation from being a science teacher in comprehensive schools to becoming an educational researcher in a University with a focus on the generation of educational theory. The transformation came about because of what I perceived as a mistake in the dominant view of educational theory in my academic study of education, known as the 'disciplines' approach to educational theory. In this approach educational theory was held to be constituted by the philosophy, psychology, sociology and history of education. Some 11 years after I joined the School of Education at the University of Bath, Paul Hirst (1983), one of the proponents of the disciplines approach to educational theory acknowledged the following mistake when he wrote that much understanding of educational theory will be developed:

... in the context of immediate practical experience and will be co-terminous with everyday understanding. In particular, many of its operational principles, both explicit and implicit, will be of their nature generalisations from practical experience and have as their justification the results of individual activities and practices.

In many characterisations of educational theory, my own included, principles justified in this way have until recently been regarded as at best pragmatic maxims having a first crude and superficial justification in practice that in any

rationally developed theory would be replaced by principles with more fundamental, theoretical justification. That now seems to me to be a mistake. Rationally defensible practical principles, I suggest, must of their nature stand up to such practical tests and without that are necessarily inadequate. (p. 18)

The mistake was in replacing the practical principles used by teachers to explain their educational influences with the principles from the disciplines of education. I am suggesting that the language and logic of the academic study of education that generated this mistake, is also at work in the BERA-RSA (2014) inquiry I consider below.

My change in vocation was driven by a desire to contribute to enhancing professionalism in education by focusing on the generation of valid forms of educational theory that included the practical educational principles of professional practitioners.

The theme of the conference on 'Teacher Researchers: Change agents at work', resonates with my own concerns.

I first focused on the 'Teacher as Researcher' in 1972 in the conclusion of my Masters Dissertation on 'A preliminary investigation of the process through which adolescents acquire scientific understanding' (Whitehead, 1972):

It is perhaps unjustified to infer too much into the fact that of 111 projects reported to the Schools Council Document Projects in June 1971, 76 were situated in Universities, 11 in Colleges of Education and 2 in Schools. These figures would seem to be an indication, however, of at least one unquestioned assumption, educational research is best done in Universities. It may be that the effectiveness of the transmission of valued knowledge within schools would be improved by situating more projects within schools with teachers as educational researchers. (p.46)

This point can be related to the locations of the researchers who contributed commissioned papers to the BERA-RSA Inquiry and the researchers who formed the steering group (BERA, 2014).

My first research project with the teacher as researcher driving improvements in schools was one of the first Local Curriculum Development Projects funded by the Schools Council in 1975-76. The draft and the final report I produced on the project show a transformation in my understandings of how to explain the educational influences of individuals in their own learning and in the learning of others. The draft report shows how I succumbed to the historical and cultural pressures of academic writing by using models of changes in teacher and learning, evaluation and innovation to explain the teachers' learning, whilst eliminating the practical principles the teachers used to explain their own learning. I had regressed as an 'academic researcher' to working within the limitations of the 'disciplines' approach to educational theory in eliminating the practical principles of the teachers I was working with.

Whitehead, J. (1976) An 11-14 Mixed Ability Project in Science: The Report on a local curriculum Development. DRAFT March 1976  
<http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/jack/jwmaemarch1976all.pdf>

On submitting this draft report to the teachers for their critical reflections I was surprised by their response when they said that they recognized the academic quality of the report but could not see themselves in it. They asked me to go back to the data I had collected and reconstruct the report so that they could see themselves reflected in it.

With the help of Paul Hunt, a former PGCE student of mine who was working in his first year of teacher in one of the project schools the report was reconstructed to the liking of the teachers who affirmed its validity:

Whitehead, J. (1976) Improving Learning for 11-14 Year Olds in Mixed Ability Science Groups. Final Report August 1976  
<http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/ilmagall.pdf>

The differences between the reports are most marked. The draft report explains professional learning in terms of the most advanced academic theories of the day and omits the practical principles of the teachers. The final report explains professional learning in terms of the practical principles of the teachers with insights from the most advanced academic theories of the day.

The differences between these two reports highlights a tension I have felt throughout my professional life in education. It is the tension between the historical and cultural pressures to explain educational influences in learning from within the theories of the disciplines of education and the recognition that explanations of educational influences in learning should include the practical principles of the practitioner who is working and researching to improve practice in enquiries of the kind, 'How do I improve what I am doing?' This question is missing from the titles of the papers below that were commissioned by the BERA-RSA Inquiry (BERA 2014). I am suggesting that the authors of the papers are constrained by historical and cultural pressures to keep within the accepted canons of academic writing that eliminates the 'I' and the practical principles, in the knowledge generated by practitioner-researchers.

My own resolution of this tension has been to focus on the explanations produced by an individual to explain their educational influence in their own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of the social formations in which they work and research. I think that it is worth emphasising that I call these explanations living-educational-theories to distinguish them from the explanations derived from the theories of the disciplines of education. These explanations draw insights from the most advanced social theories of the day without being reduced to the explanations of any of these theories. I want to be clear about this point. I am suggesting that everyone present today has the capability of producing a valid explanation of their educational influence in learning and that a valid explanation will include insights from the most advanced social theories of the day. In saying this I am not devaluing the importance of these insights or the work of academic researchers in the disciplines of education who are generating these theories. What I am doing is making a clear

distinction between education research and educational research. I am seeing education research in terms of such forms and fields of research as the philosophy, psychology, sociology, history, economics, theology, management, leadership and administration of education. I am seeing educational research in terms of educational enquiries that produce valid explanations of the educational influences of individuals in their own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of the social formations in which we live and work.

The importance of addressing social issues in the generation of a living-educational-theory was highlighted by the late Susan Noffke when she wrote in a direct reference to living-educational-theories:

As vital as such a process of self-awareness is to identifying the contradictions between one's espoused theories and one's practices, perhaps because of its focus on individual learning, it only begins to address the social basis of personal belief systems. While such efforts can further a kind of collective agency (McNiff, 1988), it is a sense of agency built on ideas of society as a collection of autonomous individuals. As such, it seems incapable of addressing social issues in terms of the interconnections between personal identity and the claim of experiential knowledge, as well as power and privilege in society (Dolby, 1995; Noffke, 1991). The process of personal transformation through the examination of practice and self-reflection may be a necessary part of social change, especially in education; it is however, not sufficient.' ( Noffke, 1997, p. 329)

I agree with Noffke that living-educational-theories should address issues of power and privilege in society. An example of how this can be done is in a recent living-theory Master of Technology Dissertation from Durban University of Technology on How do I use my living and lived experience to influence creative economic independence in others? by Bonnie Kaplan (2013-<http://www.actionresearch.net/living/living.shtml> ), who engaged with issues of high unemployment in a South African context. I do hope that you will access Kaplan's dissertation to see who she fulfils one of the claims in her Abstract:

I have used autoethnography with action research to describe the interventions that I initiated, report on their implementation, as well as the evolution of new perceptions and understandings that developed as a result. By using my own and the participants visual data with still images and video with visual narrative I demonstrate the evidence of my living theory and self-study to influence creative economic independence in others and reflect critically on what has been done and achieved, and critically assess the way forward.

In relating 'The Teacher as Researcher: change agents at work', to Kaplan's research, I like the focus in Kaplan's study on Autoethnography, Action Research and Self-study in the generation of her own living-theory in her Narrative Inquiry. Autoethnography brings together a self-study with an emphasis on cultural influences. Action research focuses on the researcher's exploration of the implications of asking, researching and answering questions of the kind, 'How do I improve what I am doing?' Generating a living-theory involves the production of a valid explanation of the individual's educational influence in their own learning, in the learning of others

and in the learning of the social formations which influence their writings and practice. You can also access the evidence of the generation of a living-theory in the context of medical education in Wolvaardt's (2013) thesis from the University of Pretoria on 'Over the conceptual horizon of public health: a living theory of teaching undergraduate medical students':

This research is a rich account of my complex context and my connected practice and through action research I claim to live my values of care and agency. My living theory of practice as a form of meaning making could help others to look over their own conceptual horizons in search of wholeness.

Another way in which practitioner-researchers could engage with issues of power and privilege in generating their living-educational-theories is by holding themselves to account for living as fully as possible their value of global citizenship (Coombs, Potts & Whitehead, 2014).

What I now want to focus on is enhancing professionalism in education through the living-theories of practitioner-researchers.

#### **iv) Enhancing professionalism in education through generating and sharing the living-theories of master and doctor educators.**

A living-theory is grounded in an exploration of the implications of asking, researching and answering the question, 'How do I improve what I am doing?' I believe that everyone here today will recognize this question as one that they ask themselves. What I am suggesting is that enhancing professionalism in education requires fulfilling the four criteria above for distinguishing a profession, together with a focus on the fifth criterion of improving practice and making a contribution to the professional knowledge-base with our living-educational-theories as master and doctor educators.

The professional body for teaching in England between 1998 and 2012 was the **General Teaching Council for England (GTCE)**. The GTC was established by the Teaching and Higher Education Act 1998 with the two aims: of contributing to improving standards of teaching and the quality of learning, and to maintaining and improving standards of professional conduct among teachers, in the interests of the public. The GTC was abolished by the Government on 31 March 2012 with some of its functions being assumed by a new body known as the Teaching Agency, an executive agency of the Department for Education. This failure to create a comprehensive **self-governing** organization of practitioners marks the professions failure to fulfill of the above five criteria for distinguishing a profession. The failure also highlights a weakness in our professional autonomy for both ourselves as individual practitioners and for the occupational group as a whole in recognizing each other as master and doctor educators.

Whilst on a visit to South Africa in 2006 I visited the headquarters of the South African Council for Educators (SACE). SACE is the professional council for educators, that aims to enhance the status of the teaching profession through appropriate registration, management of professional development and inculcation of a code of ethics for all educators. I am suggesting that we follow the lead of South

African educators and create a Council for Educators. However, I think that we will need to go further than SACE in focusing on the relationships between the Council for Educators and the University accreditation of the contribution to the professional knowledge-base of master and doctor educators in the living-educational-theories we produce in our programmes of continuing professional development.

I am not underestimating the difficulties of establishing a relationship between a Council for Educators and the universities role in accrediting the living-educational-theories of master and doctor educators in higher degrees that give academic recognition to the living-theories that are grounded in the embodied knowledge of master and doctor educators. I believe that the difficulties are compounded by the way that the way the Research Excellence Framework - REF (and the previous Research Assessment Exercises - RAE), place educational research within the unit of assessment of Education for the allocation of funding for research in universities. Even though 'impact' of research is now recognized in the REF the way that judgments have been made in the past for the allocation of funding has focused on education research, rather than educational research. This will disadvantage those university departments of education that focus on research that emphasises the accreditation of the embodied knowledge of educators together with its evolution. To emphasise this point I focus on the decision by the University of Bath to withdraw its PGCE programme with no new trainees joining the programme in September 2014. A programme which began some 48 years ago. The grounds given by the University focused on 'a lack of strategic fit with the university's research-led vision'. Given that there can be few more important activities for the future of a country than enhancing the quality of education through research, this leads me to question the 'research-led vision' of a university that can close down the possibilities of developing a research-led initial teacher education programme.

Here is one legacy from those years (Laidlaw, 1993) of a research-led contribution to the initial teacher education programme at the University of Bath. It is the booklet on Action Research in Initial Teacher Education (<http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/preserve.shtml>):

This booklet offers a route towards a kind of educational research theorizing that is grounded in the living-theories produced by practitioners. Living-theories draw insights from traditional forms of theorizing but with very different living standards of judgment (Laidlaw, 1996) to provide epistemological validity to the educational theorizing. The standards of judgment are grounded in the ontological values expressed in the educational relationships of practitioners.

To return to the problem of the funding of educational research; I believe that it will be necessary to face this problem by encouraging universities to continue to support initial teacher education programmes by developing research-led visions that include enhancing the professional knowledge-base of education in the living-educational-theories of master and doctor educators.

The procedures and criteria for accrediting the educational knowledge of master and doctor educators already exist within universities. For example, most doctoral degrees are judged in terms of their original contribution to knowledge, the quality of the critical engagement with the ideas of others and for containing matter worthy of

publication although it need not be presented in a way that is ready for publication. These criteria have already been used to accredit the living-theories of the embodied knowledge of doctor educators with the award of a Ph.D., but the recipients cannot receive recognition as doctor educators because we do not have a Council of Educators in relationship with universities for this public recognition. Procedures and criteria for the award of masters degrees have already been used but without the recognition as master educators.

My justification for claiming that the procedures and criteria already exist in universities for accrediting the living-theories of master and doctor educations is in the evidence from practitioner-researchers who have successfully completed their masters degrees in which they made public their embodied knowledge together with its evolution in their enquiries, ‘How do I improve what I am doing?’

You can access these successfully completed Masters Dissertations and Units at <http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/mastermod.shtml>.

For example, the University of Bath recognised these degrees as MA degrees in education. As far as I am aware there is no University in the UK that recognises the masters degree knowledge generated by practitioner-researchers as the knowledge of a master educator. I am suggesting that this lack of recognition by universities of the embodied knowledge of educational practitioners as that of master educators is holding back professionalism in education and hence we need to create a Council of Educators to generate this recognition.

The University of Bath has also recognized the successfully completed Doctoral Degrees of teacher-researchers and other educational practitioners in the form of living-educational-theories and you can access these at:

<http://www.actionresearch.net/living/living.shtml>

As far as I am aware there is no university in the UK that recognises the doctoral knowledge generated by teacher-researchers as the knowledge of a doctor educator.

Because we have no professional body to recognize our practice in terms of being master and doctor educators it is a priority to develop a comprehensive self-governing organization of practitioners in a Council of Educators. In my experience of examining Master of Education and Doctor of Education programmes, there is still much to be done in recognizing the nature of the embodied educational knowledge of master and doctoral educators and distinguishing this knowledge from the education knowledge produced by university education researchers in the 2014 BERA-RSA research report (BERA 2014).

One of the ways we could contribute to the public and professional recognition of our embodied knowledge as educators is through our publications. If you would like to see an example of how this is being done do access the Educational Journal of Living Theories at:

<http://ejolts.net>

and the December 2013 issue at:

<http://ejolts.net/node/209>

As you can see the Editorial Board of EJOLTS have focused on the life-affirming and life-enhancing values embodied and expressed by Nelson Mandela. The Board is encouraging each one of us to generate and share our living-educational-theories as our living legacies:

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“What counts in life is not the mere fact that we have lived. It is what difference we have made to the lives of others that will determine the significance of the life we lead.” — Nelson Mandela

Nelson Mandela embodied the life-affirming and life-enhancing values of a world in which humanity might flourish, which members of the EJOLTS community aspire to live as fully as they can through their practice.

From 2010, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) declared 18th July as Nelson Mandela International Day. Mandela Day is an annual celebration of Nelson Mandela’s life and a global call to action for people to recognise their individual power to make a difference and help change the world around them for the common good.

Mahatma Gandhi also personified the principle of:

Being the changes he wanted to see in the world.

We want to contribute to the living legacies of Mandela and Gandhi by encouraging and supporting you to make public your living-theory accounts of what you are doing to live that change and the difference you are making to the lives of others. In the process we believe we will develop democratic ways of creating together and, ‘...inspire people to embrace the values of democracy and contribute towards the ideals of ensuring a just and fair society’ (Nelson Mandela Centre of Memory, 2013). In the words of the Mandela Day’s campaign slogan:

“Take Action; Inspire Change; Make Every Day a Mandela Day.”

Editorial board

Here are the contents of the December 2013 issue and I want to focus on the contributions to educational knowledge made by Jacqueline Delong, Elizabeth Campbell, Cathy Griffin and myself which I am claiming distinguish their contributions as those of master and doctor educators as they enhance professionalism in education through generating and sharing their living-theories.

Whilst Jacqueline Delong was a Superintendent of Schools in the Grand Erie District School Board in Ontario, she completed her living-theory doctorate at the University of Bath with my supervision (DeLong 2002). In 2012 Delong tutored both Elizabeth Campbell, a secondary school teacher, and Cathy Griffin, a primary school teacher, to the successful completion of their living-theory masters degrees which focused on

improving their educational influences in the learning of their pupils.

These are the kind of contributions to enhancing professionalism in education with living-educational-theories that I believe will help us to create a profession of master and doctor educators.

Foreword (pp. i-vii)  
Moirra Laidlaw

Introduction to living theory action research in a culture of inquiry transforms learning in elementary, high school and post-graduate settings (pp. 1-11)  
Elizabeth Campbell, Jacqueline Delong, Cathy Griffin & Jack Whitehead

Evolving a living-educational-theory within the living boundaries of cultures-of-inquiry (pp. 12-24)  
Jack Whitehead

Transforming teaching and learning through living-theory action research In a culture-of-inquiry (pp. 25-44)  
Jacqueline Delong

The heART of learning: Creating a loving culture-of-inquiry to enhance self-determined learning in a high school classroom (pp. 45-61)  
Elizabeth Campbell

Transforming teaching and learning practice by inviting students to become evaluators of my practice (pp. 62-77)  
Cathy Griffin

The significance of living-theory action research in a culture of inquiry transforms learning in elementary, high school and post-graduate settings(pp. 78-96)  
Jacqueline Delong, Cathy Griffin, Elizabeth Campbell & Jack Whitehead

**(The June 2014 issue of EJOLTS is available from <http://ejolts.net/node/221>).**

The importance of such international collaborations and partnerships in enhancing professionalism, in generating living-educational-theories as transformational continuing professional development, has already been presented to a BERA conference (Huxtable & Whitehead, 2013):

An international continuing professional development (CPD) project, ‘Living Values Improving Practice Cooperatively’ has been established in response to the need to enhance professionalism in education with flexibility in offering content, tuition, assessment for accreditation and costings of programmes of continuing professional development. This is a research project for leaders, teachers and other professionals, from a variety of fields, who are committed to improving the life-chances and wellbeing of individuals and communities and to enhancing the professional knowledgebase of education, by enquiring individually, collaboratively and co-operatively into the processes of improving their practice and knowledge-creation in the creation of living-

educational-theories. We understand these theories to be the explanations that individuals produce to explain their educational influences in their own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of the social formations in which we live, work and research.

I am suggesting that the procedures and criteria already exist within the processes of University accreditation for initial degrees and for master and doctoral degrees that can be used for accrediting the embodied knowledge of master and doctor educators but with the additional recognition that the knowledge being accredited is that of master and doctor educators.

For example, most doctoral degrees are awarded on the grounds of making original contributions to knowledge, an appropriate critical engagement with the ideas of others, methodological appropriateness and containing matter worthy of publication, although it need not be presented in a form ready for publication. These criteria have been applied to all of the living-theory doctorates at <http://www.actionresearch.net/living/living.shtml> . I am arguing that all that is now needed to enhance professionalism is a Council of Educators, or an organization such as the Ontario College of Teachers to recognize this knowledge as that of a doctor educator. A similar case can be made for the use of existing procedures and criteria for the award of masters degrees for the knowledge presented in the Master Educator's Writings section of <http://www.actionresearch.net> at <http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/mastermod.shtml> as being the knowledge of master educators.

What I am arguing for can be seen as an extension of the argument put forward by Deirdre Smith (2012) of the Standards of Practice and Education Unit of the Ontario College of Teachers. Smith explains how narrative-based professional learning processes were employed within a collaborative partnership to support teacher induction in ways that honoured the lived experience of beginning teachers. I have provided evidence above of narrative-based professional learning processes in the generation of living-educational-theories that can distinguish the practice and knowledge of master and doctor educators. Whilst these living-theories are already being used to enhance professionalism in different parts of the world there are no professional bodies in education that are recognizing this practice and knowledge as that of master and doctor education. Perhaps OCT can lead the way.

I shall now relate the above contributions to enhancing professionalism in education, through generating and sharing our living-educational-theories, to the contributions and limitations of the BERA-RSA inquiry into 'Research and the Teaching Professional: Building the capacity for a self-improving education system' (BERA 2014) in contributing to the professional knowledge-base of education.

### **Responding to the 2014 BERA-RSA report.**

I imagine that everyone here, who is committed to enhancing professionalism in education, will be interested in the findings of the 2014 BERA-RSA Report on 'Research And The Teaching Profession: Building the capacity for a self—improving education system' (BERA 2014).

The contributions of the inquiry to educational knowledge are clearly set out in the Executive Summary with recommendations that are jurisdiction-specific on initial teacher education; continuing professional development; research leadership and capacity and practitioner engagement. The recommendations also focus on the potential for greater dialogue than currently takes place amongst policymakers, practitioners, teacher-researchers and the wider research community.

I am suggesting that one of the weaknesses of these recommendations is that they ignore the educational knowledge already generated by practitioner-researchers such as DeLong (2002; 2010). DeLong has explored the implications of accepting this responsibility in supporting the creation of a research-rich organisational culture in the generation of a culture of inquiry within a large district school board in Canada.

The contributions made by the BERA-RSA inquiry, to the professional knowledge-base of education, can also be evaluated in relation to the following limitation which has already been overcome by practitioner-researchers who are enhancing their professionalism in the generation of their living-educational-theories. This limitation, described below, and the educational knowledge generated by practitioner-researchers, that has overcome these limitations, is not however recognised in the inquiry.

A major source of evidence for the contributions of the inquiry was provided in the seven academic papers that were commissioned in the course of the inquiry. Each of these papers contributes knowledge within the field of interest defined by their titles.

I am suggesting that a major limitation of this knowledge is that the papers omit explorations by practitioner-researchers of the educational knowledge they have created in exploring the implications of asking, researching and answering questions of the kind, 'How do I improve what I am doing?' The major limitation is that the evidence-base of the inquiry omitted any understanding of the epistemological transformations in educational knowledge and of the processes of enhancing professionalism in education that has already been provided by practitioner-researchers. I have examined elsewhere how the constraining power of education researchers, as distinct from educational researchers, influence the emergence of educational knowledge and theory (Whitehead, 2014).

I shall now suggest that the development of our profession will rest on recognizing each other as educators.

#### **v) Recognising each other as master and doctor educators.**

I began by thanking the organisers of this RIPLE conference for the invitation to present this keynote and the University of Cumbria for appointing me as an honorary Professor in Education. In relation to my sense of being recognised as a professional in education the title of Professor, in relation to my subject, education, is one that I value. However, I am suggesting that recognising each other as master and doctor educators and gaining this recognition by a professional body, linked to accreditation in higher education, is of crucial importance in enhancing professionalism in education.

Through Living Theory research the educator recognises, values and improves their own and other's contributions to the development of educational theory and practice. Living Theory research is concerned with creating and offering knowledge of self in and of the world as well as knowledge of practice – which is different to other forms of research and why it is so powerful as a way of engaging in continual professional development that keeps the professional connected with their values.

It may be that by the end of my contract with the University of Cumbria in 2018 we shall have earned the recognition of ourselves as master and doctor educators for both the quality of our educational practices and of our contributions to the professional knowledge-based of education.

I shall conclude by returning to focus on our contributions to fulfilling the purpose of RIPLE to generate knowledge and evaluate practice in a wide range of professional contexts through practitioner, collaborative and child-centred methods. In doing this I believe that RIPLE will be making a major contribution to enhancing professionalism in education through helping to make public and validate our living-educational-theories as practitioner-researchers. I am thinking of the role of the journal Practitioner Research in Higher Education in making public our embodied knowledge as master and doctor educators, and the role of the University in accrediting this knowledge as the knowledge of educators that is contributing to enhancing professionalism in education:

Practitioner Research in Higher Education publishes research and evaluation papers that contribute to the understanding of theory, policy and practice in teaching and supporting learning. The journal aims to disseminate evaluations and research of professional practice which give voice to all of the participants in higher education and which are based on ethical and collaborative approaches to practitioner enquiry.

The audience consist of a wide range of professionals involved in teaching and supporting learning in higher education. The journal aims to encourage and support new researchers and writers in higher education, including colleagues working within educational partnership organisations. Papers submitted are peer reviewed by two anonymous reviewers. Click on the 'Archives' link above to view previous issues of the journal. (see- <http://194.81.189.19/ojs/index.php/prhe> )

By focusing on questions of the kind, 'How do I improve what I am doing?' in the context of professional educational practice, I am suggesting that we can all be change agents at work. As teacher-researchers, who are generating, sharing and gaining recognition for our living-educational-theories as explanations of our educational influence in learning, I am suggesting that we can all enhance our contributions to professionalism in education.

It has been a delight to share these ideas with you and to look forward to the rest of the RIPLE Conference.

**Note.**

Last night, on the 17<sup>th</sup> June 2014, there was a gathering at the University of Bath to mark the ending of the initial postgraduate education course. I contributed to this programme during my time at the University of Bath from 1973-2009 and I should like to mark the occasion by referring to the living legacies (Forester, 2014) of some students and staff who have made public their embodied knowledge as educators. You can access the knowledge of those I recognise as master educators through making public their embodied knowledge in their masters degrees at:

<http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/mastermod.shtml>

and those I recognise as doctor educators through making public their embodied knowledge in their doctoral degrees at:

<http://www.actionresearch.net/living/living.shtml>

In 1992/3 Moira Laidlaw produced her guide on Action Research in Initial Teacher Education for students in the Department of Education. This shows how pre-service teachers can generate their own living-educational-theories at:

<http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/preserve.shtml>

Moira Laidlaw (1996), a doctor educator, made an original contribution to living-educational-theories by showing how the embodied values that constituted living standards of judgment were themselves living and evolving in her 1996 doctoral thesis on How Can I Create My Own Living Educational Theory As I Offer You An Account Of My Educational Development?

at:

<http://www.actionresearch.net/living/moira2.shtml>

You can access my 5:21 minute video to mark the ending of the PGCE course at the University of Bath after 48 years at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JZEv5Xsut9A>



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