

**HOW DO I IMPROVE MY PRACTICE? CREATING A DISCIPLINE OF
EDUCATION THROUGH EDUCATIONAL ENQUIRY**

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VOLUME 2

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Jack Whitehead

Note to the Reader.

The thesis is presented in two volumes. Volume One contains the narrative commentaries which link the six parts of the thesis. The parts contain the papers published between 1977-1999. Presenting the commentaries together may help a reader who wishes to develop a sense of the thesis as a whole before moving into the different parts. Volume Two contains both the publications and the narrative commentaries. The commentaries are included on yellow paper between the different parts. They are intended to help the reader move to the different parts and access the publications.

Because of the different page numbers in the different publications, I have adopted a system of referencing in the narrative introductions which refers to the part number and the page number in the original publication. So, for example,

"The significance of self-study has been highlighted by Zeichner (1998) who has said that 'The birth of the self study in teacher education movement around 1990 has been probably the single most significant development ever in the field of teacher education research'." (4.6, p.241),

refers you to Part 4, Paper 6, Page 241. References in the narrative introductions have been collected together at the end of the whole work.

Acknowledgements

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In particular I want to bear in mind those practitioner researchers who have asked me to supervise their action research programmes. As I look through the Appendix of my Presidential Address to BERA in 1988 I recall our time together and the pleasure we shared on the successful completion of this phase of your enquiry. As I look at the living theory section of my action research homepage on <http://www.actionresearch.net> I feel the delight in seeing your original contributions to knowledge of our subject, education. I also feel affirmed in your acknowledgements of the value you found in our conversations and in our being together. Those of you who continue to attend our Monday evening sessions know what energy you give back to me.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis shows how living educational standards of originality of mind and critical judgement in educational enquiries has created a discipline of education.

The meanings of these standards emerged from an analysis of my research published between 1977-1999. The analysis proceeds from the base of my experience of myself, my 'I', as a living contradiction in the question 'How do I improve this process of education here?'

An 'educational' methodology, which includes 'I' as a living contradiction, emerges from the application of a four-fold classification of methodologies of the social sciences. Then the idea of living educational theories emerges in terms of the descriptions and explanations which individual learners produce for their own educational development.

A logic of the question, 'How do I improve my practice?', emerges from my engagement with the ideas of others and from an exploration of the question in the practical contradictions between the power of truth and the truth of power in my workplace.

A discipline of education, with its standards of originality of mind and critical judgement, is defined and extended into my educative influences as a professional educator in the enquiry, 'How do I help you to improve your learning?'.

My living educational theory continues to develop in the enquiry, 'How do I live my values more fully in my practice?'. I explain my present practice in terms of an evaluation of my past learning, in terms of my present experiences of spiritual, aesthetic and ethical contradictions in my educative relations and in terms of my proposals for living my values more fully in the future.

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