

## **Self-study contributions to a history of S-STEP**

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in the Convention Centre, Philadelphia, on the 4<sup>th</sup> April 2014.**

**6:37 minute introduction to the paper**



**<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uJS3VLGalpQ>**

### **1. Purposes**

The presentation fulfils three purposes. The first is to make self-study contributions to a valid history of S-STEP as additions to the history of S-STEP presented by Hamilton at the 2013 AGM of the AERA, S-STEP SIG, in relation to the theme of AERA 2014 on the power of education research for innovation in practice and policy. The second is to provide an evidence-based justification for the use of multi-media narratives with digital technology in S-STEP research to supplement printed text-based media for communicating valid explanations of educational influences in learning. The third is to present new living standards of judgment and explanatory principles in terms of the energy-flowing, relational, and inclusional values of self-study researchers whose inquiries are taking place in a range of international contexts.

### **2. Perspective(s)**

The following distinction is made between education researchers and educational researchers. Education researchers contribute knowledge about education from within the conceptual frameworks and methods of validation of the forms and fields of education such as the philosophy, psychology, sociology, history, leadership, administration, management, politics, economics and theology of education. Educational researchers contribute to educational knowledge in their explanations of

the educational influences of individuals in their own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of the social formations within which we live, work and research. The significance of this distinction for the American Educational Research Association is that it raises questions about the responsibilities of editors of AERA publications for educational research as distinct from education research. For example, in the Jan/Feb issue of Educational Researcher there is a special section on 'What should count as quality education research in education? Continuing the Discussion'. Our distinction emphasises the importance of asking, researching and answering the question, 'What should count as quality educational research?'

Our distinction between education research and educational research and our emphasis on producing valid explanations of educational influences in learning, has implications for Professional Development Research. The editors of Educational Researcher have accepted for publication a paper on professional development research by Hill, Beisiegel and Jacob (2013) who state that scholars should execute more rigorous comparisons of professional development design elements *at the initial stages* of program development. The designs compared must be carefully linked to open questions within the professional development literature (p. 476).

Our distinction between education and educational research focuses on professional development research that can produce validated and evidence-based explanations of educational influences in learning. We see no evidence in the paper by Hill, Beisiegel and Jacob, of a valid explanation of educational influences in learning.

Our central perspective is that self-study researchers have contributed to a history of s-step research through the generation of living-educational-theories that are informed by a culture-of-inquiry (Delong, 2002, 2013). A living-educational-theory is an explanation 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 live, work and research (Whitehead, 1989, 2013).

#### **i. Living-theory tenets and history.**

In 1993, the year of the founding of S-STEP of which he was a founding member, Whitehead (1993) produced The Growth of Educational Knowledge: Creating your own living-educational- theories. This included some of the tenets of living-theories including ‘I’ as a living contradiction in inquiries of the kind, ‘How do I improve what I am doing?’ It included the use of action-reflection cycles in which individuals expressed concerns when their values were not being lived as fully as they could be; the use of imagination in creating possible action plans and the choice of one to act on to improve practice; actions and gathering data to make a judgment on the influence of the individual in improving practice; evaluating the influence of actions; modifying concerns, ideas and actions in the light of the evaluations; producing a validated and evidence-based explanation of educational influences in one’s own learning in the learning of others and in the learning of the social formations in which the inquiry is located. It is these explanations that constitute a living-educational-theory.

The evolving history of Whitehead’s living-educational-theory can be appreciated in publications from the 47 years of inquiry (1967-2014) documented at <http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/writing.shtml> . In addition to the inclusion of ‘I’ as a living contradiction in explanations of educational influence, Whitehead has shown how to clarify and communicate the meanings of energy-flowing values in these explanations with the help of action-reflection cycles. He has also pioneered the use of multi-media narratives with living-logics (Whitehead, 2008, 2013) for distinguishing living-theory contributions to educational knowledge:



This 41:31 minute video at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l4xIg3E5Vt0>

shows Whitehead (2013b) introducing his idea of a living logic for educational research, to a session of the Philosophy of Education Special Interest Group of the British Educational Research Association on the 5th September 2013 at the University of Sussex.

In 2000, Delong invited Whitehead to contribute to a professional development programme in the Grand Erie District School Board in Ontario, Canada. Working with Cheryl Black they produced their first multi-media account that included the use of visual data to clarify the meanings of embodied expressions of values as explanatory principles in explanations of educational influence. Between 2000-2014 their collaboration has continued and includes contributions to understandings of a culture-of-inquiry grounded in Delong's (2002) original idea.

## **ii. A Culture-of-Inquiry**

A Culture-of-Inquiry emerges through the creation of a safe, supportive space where students and teachers are enabled to make explicit their values and make themselves accountable for living according to those values. They learn to recognize when they are not living according to their espoused values and are what Whitehead calls "living contradictions" (1989). Action-reflection cycles based on asking questions like 'How can I improve my teaching of these children?' become as natural as breathing. Experiencing values such as 'loving kindness' and 'loved into learning' (a value revealed by Campbell) (Campbell, 2013) in this democratic, non-hierarchical environment and recognition of their embodied knowledge, encourage students and teachers to take responsibility for their own learning.

The genesis and evolution of a 'culture-of-inquiry' bear review. In Delong's doctoral work, she discovered that one of her values was building a culture-of-inquiry, reflection and scholarship (2002). Through the experience of working with educators in a variety of positions and particularly as she supported them to conduct action research, the nature of a culture-of-inquiry

became more clear. This process took great steps forward as she worked with masters cohort students. Her original understandings in her thesis have been continuously evolving in terms of inquiry with the assistance of others. In her own learning and in that of her students, a safe, democratic learning environment (Laidlaw, 1994) became essential for enabling individuals to be vulnerable (a value revealed by Griffin) (Griffin, 2013) and open to honest and respectful critique in order to improve their teaching and learning. The tenets include:

- creating a safe and supportive space
- building relationships based on love, trust and respect
- creating an environment that supports self-determined learning
- embracing, modeling and supporting vulnerability
- valuing and unveiling embodied knowledge
- expressing life-affirming energy and inviting people to join in and pool their own.

Eisner's (1993) points in his AERA Presidential Address to the need to extend the forms of representation used in educational research. Through our use of digitalized, multimedia narratives we show how visual data can be used in explanations of educational influence to communicate meanings of energy-flowing values such as 'being loved into learning'.

Our perspectives include insights from publications from members of S-STEP over the 21 years since its foundation in 1993 such as the Special Issue of Teacher Education Quarterly (1995) on Self-Study and Living Educational Theories; Methods for the Self-Study of Teacher Education Practices (Tidwell, et. al. 2009) and Canadian Perspectives on the Self-Study of Teacher Education Practices (Kitchen and Russell, 2012). Our self-study contributions to a history of S-STEP are focused on explanations of educational influences in learning, within cultures-of-inquiry, that transcend limitations in solely, printed-text accounts, in communicating the meanings of embodied expressions of energy-flowing values.

This self-study contribution to a history of S-STEP also includes:

i) Polanyi's (1958) perspective on personal knowledge in a decision to understand the world from one's own point of view, as an individual, claiming originality and exercising judgment, responsibly with universal intent. The importance of this decision in our contribution to a history of S-STEP research cannot be overemphasised. It is the primary decision and acceptance of responsibility in exploring the implications of asking, researching and answering the question, 'How do I improve what I am doing?'. This grounding in personal knowledge is accompanied by a commitment to enhance the objectivity of an explanation through the mutual rational controls of critical discussion (Popper, 1975, p.44). The mutual rational controls are strengthened by the use of a validation group of between 3-8 peers that focuses on four questions of social validity derived from the work of Habermas.

ii) Habermas' (1976) perspective on using four criteria of social validity in

communication and social evolution focus on comprehensibility, truthfulness, rightness and authenticity. We strengthen the validity of our explanations by asking validation groups, of between three to eight peers, to address four questions of social validity:

- How could I enhance the comprehensibility of my explanation?
- How could I strengthen the evidence I use to justify the assertions I make?
- How could I deepen and extend my understanding of the sociohistorical and sociocultural influences on my writings and actions?
- How could I improve the authenticity of my explanation in showing over time and interaction that I am truly living the values I claim to hold as fully as possible?

iii) Schön's (1995) advocacy of action research as a research approach to generating a new epistemology for the new scholarship of teaching. Our epistemology of educational research includes the unit of appraisal of an individual's explanation of their educational influences in learning. The living standards of judgment include the embodied expressions of energy-flowing values as explanatory principles to be used in evaluating the validity of the contributions to educational knowledge. The logic that distinguishes the rationality of the epistemology is a living-logic that can incorporate insights from propositional and dialectical logics without denying the rationality of these logics (Whitehead, 2013b).

iv) Delong's (2002) perspectives on Living -Theory as a means to improvement in the policy and practice of the individual and the system, within a Culture-of-Inquiry. The inclusion of a culture-of-inquiry within our explanations of educational influence marks an original contribution to the history of S-STEP research. Through making public her embodied knowledge and its evolution, as a Superintendent of Schools, Delong brought together, in her explanation of educational influence( *ibid.*), both individual and systemic influences in the creation of living-educational-theories.

v) Whitehead's (2008) perspectives on the importance of studying our *values in action* in our teaching practice, using digital video, stresses the importance of the visual records of our practice and communicating our understanding of the values-laden practical activity of education in the creation of a living-educational-theory. These visual records can help self-study researchers to see themselves in a relationally dynamic network of space and boundaries that are connective, reflexive and co-creative(Rayner, 2004) within a culture-of-inquiry that focuses on Noffke's perspective below.

Whitehead has developed the following questions to guide practitioners' inquiries:

- What is my concern?
- Why am I concerned?

- What am I going to do about it?
- What data will I gather to help me to judge my effectiveness?
- How does the data help me to clarify the meanings of my embodied values as these emerge in practice?
- What values-based explanatory principles do I use to explain my educational influence?
- How do I use my values-based standards of judgment in evaluating the validity of my claims to be improving my practice?
- How will I strengthen the validity of my values-based explanations of my educational influences in learning?

vi) Noffke's perspective about the need to address social issues in terms of the interconnections between personal identity and the claim of experiential knowledge, as well as power and privilege in society (Noffke, 1997, p. 329). We acknowledge the significance of Noffke's points in strengthening the validity of our living-educational-theories and are grateful that she took the time to engage so carefully and critically with living-educational-theories through the mutual rational control of critical discussion.

### **3. Methods, techniques, or modes of inquiry**

Our mode of inquiry accepts Whitehead's (2009) point that each practitioner-research can create their own living-theory-methodology. They can use McNiff's (2009) idea that an individual can generate their own living theory through their own story. We also use Delong's (2002) original insight that a living-theory-methodology can be developed in engaging with and evolving cultures-of-inquiry.

Action reflection cycles are used in forming, researching and answering questions of the kind, 'How do I improve what I am doing?' in the context of contributing to a valid history of S-STEP. The cycles include: the expression of concerns when values are not being lived as fully as the practitioner-researcher believes to be possible; imagining possible improvements; choosing one to act on; acting and gathering data to make a judgment on the effectiveness of actions; evaluating the effectiveness of actions; modifying the concerns, ideas and actions in the light of the evaluations and producing an explanation of learning that is submitted to a validation group to help to strengthen the validity of the explanation.

The technique for showing the significance of explanations of educational influence involves the use of visual representations of practice with digital video. The methods for clarifying and communicating the meanings of energy-flowing values as explanatory principles include the process of empathetic resonance with video data (Huxtable, 2009). This process of empathetic resonance is another of the original contributions we have made to the history of S-STEP research.

We first encountered the idea of empathetic resonance in the writings of Sardello (2008). For Sardello, writing from his theistic perspective *empathetic*

*resonance*, is the resonance of the individual soul coming into resonance with the Soul of the World (p. 13). Writing from our secular perspectives we are using *empathetic resonance* to communicate a feeling of the immediate presence of the other in communicating the living values that the other experiences as giving meaning and purpose to their life. In other words we use empathetic resonance to clarify and communicate the meanings of the embodied expressions of our ontological values and the ontological values of others as these are used as explanatory principles in explanations of educational influence.

**vii) The use of multi-media narratives in clarifying and communicating the meanings of embodied expressions of value.**

A transformation in our presentations and understandings of the nature of the knowledge carried through print based texts and those carried in multi-media narratives began when Delong invited Whitehead to work with her on a masters Degree programme. Whitehead visited Brock University in Ontario, Canada as a Visiting Professor to work with the masters group tutored by Delong. In 2000 we produced our first multi-media narrative on The Living Standards of Practice and Judgement of Professional Educators (<http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/stand/brst.html> ).

This marked the beginning of a transformation in our understandings of the nature of educational knowledge and living educational theories from a dialectical epistemology into an inclusional epistemology with Whitehead's statement:

I am suggesting that visual records are needed which enable the meanings carried through our words, to be related directly, through ostensive definition, to the meanings which are embodied in our practices and educative relationships.

Here is the extract from the paper that gives more detail of the beginning of this transformation in Whitehead's understanding:

One of the ways I am developing my understanding of the nature of the living standards of practice of professional educators is to move between the meanings embodied in educative relationships, visual records of the relationships, and the meanings in my language. To help to develop this understanding I will focus on the meanings in Cheryl's educative relationships at the beginning and end of one of her music lessons.

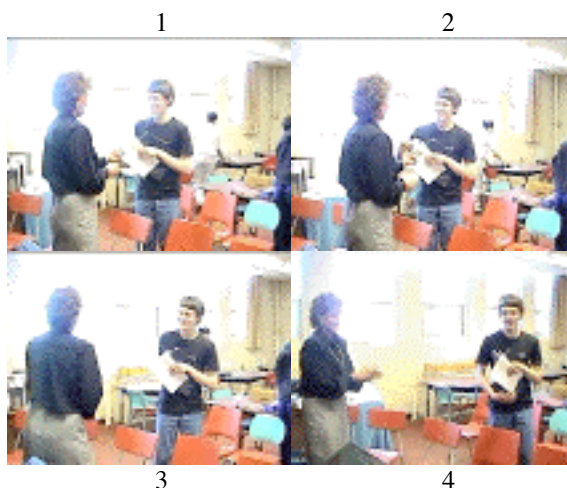
At the beginning of the class, before the formal lesson has started, a pupil notices that Cheryl has some chalk marks on her Jacket. The six photographs below were taken from a digital video of the lesson and show the moments around an episode of some 30 seconds duration. The meanings I want to focus on are concerned with the ease with which the pupil feels that she can rub the chalk dust from the teacher, the ease of the teacher's response and



in pictures 5 and 6 the looks and relationship which carry for me the life-affirming energy which I am associating with an erotico-spiritual, living standard of practice and judgement in the life of a professional educator.



I now want to focus on the end of the class, when the formal lesson has finished. The antecedents for this is that the teacher remembers that the pupil had tried to engage with her earlier in the day but she had explained that she was too busy at the moment to talk. At the end of the lesson she calls to her student to ask what it was that he wanted to show her. He comes over to the teacher and shows her a photograph of his girlfriend. The sequence of photographs show the ease and pleasure each is finding in the exchange and photographs two and four carry for me, the same erotico-spiritual quality of engagement as the relationships did at the beginning of the lesson.



In communicating the nature of such living standards of practice and judgement together with the meanings of other values which carry passion, I am suggesting that visual records are needed which enable the meanings carried through our words, to be related directly, through ostensive definition, to the meanings which are embodied in our practices and educative relationships.

One of our most significant contributions to a history of S-STEP may be our relationally dynamic representations of educational relationships that are distinguished by the spirit of the African way of being of Ubuntu, I am because we are:

The following 1:58 minute video shows Cathy Griffin communicating an Ubuntu way of being to the Ontario Teachers' Federation and Ontario Association of Deans of Education on Creating Circles of Hope in Teacher Education on the 22nd February 2014, in York University, Ontario, Canada. We have learned to take great care in explaining the context in which a video was taken and working with Quinn's idea of 'decentring' to share with others, what is in our minds:

Decentring is a vital idea. It is the achievement whereby I learn what it is that you need to hear or experience in order to share what is in my mind, whether it be a question, an idea or a supportive anecdote. (Quinn, 1997, p. 86)



We want to focus on Cathy's embodied expressions of relationally dynamic meaning around 26 seconds of the clip when she is introducing Jack to the group. Jack is on SKYPE. The 'we' refers to Jackie and Jack. What we want to focus on is our communication of the meanings of embodied expressions of flows of life-affirming energy and the relationally dynamic awareness of others that Cathy is distinguishing as an Ubuntu way of being. We shall return below to the shared communication of meanings of embodied expressions of flows of life-affirming energy which we use in our explanatory principles and living standards of judgment when we focus on Jackie's expression of this flow of energy in her communications at an International Conference of Teacher Research.



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lvtnJhynjts>

As we move the cursor backwards and forwards around 26 seconds (the still image above) and listen to Cathy's introduction we experience an inclusional flow of life-affirming and loving energy. We are distinguishing this inclusional flow of energy through Cathy's interpretation of Ubuntu as she goes on to describe Ubuntu as 'I am because we are'.

What we believe we have brought, as an original contribution to a history of S-STEP, is an inclusional and relationally dynamic understanding of a flow of life-affirming energy that is expressed in our love for what we are doing together in education, within our contributions to the generation, sustaining and evolving culture-of-inquiry. Cathy distinguishes our relationships in terms of my supervision of Jackie's doctoral research programme, Jackie's supervision of Liz's and Cathy's masters research for their dissertations and Liz's and Cathy's relationships with their pupils. Liz and Cathy described their experience of Jackie's educational relationships in her supervision as 'being loved into learning' (Campbell, 2013; Griffin, 2013). As we move the cursor along this 1:58 minute clip we are using a process of empathetic resonance to clarify and communicate our embodied expressions of our meanings of a flow of life-affirming energy and being loved into learning within a culture-of-inquiry.

To make our learning public, we make use of such multi-media narratives of explanations of educational influence as we create communicable, valid accounts of our living-educational-theories. In the process of creating such accounts we not only enhance our own learning and lives but also hope to enhance the learning and lives of others and contribute to the pooling of knowledge that carries hope of creating a more humane world. Our research indicates that text alone cannot communicate fully the meaning of ontological values such as loved into learning, loving kindness and responsibility for supporting others in their learning. Recognizing Lather's (1994) point about the irony inherent in trying to represent something that can never reach the being of the thing itself, we believe that multi-media narratives can get closer to communicating the meanings of energy-flowing values than can be done using text alone. We are claiming that the editors of journals such as 'Teaching and Teacher Education', can promote scholarly inquiries that go beyond written text by using alternative, visual forms of representation to communicate meanings that cannot be carried by written text alone (Hunter, et. al., 2012).

Our S-STEP research has also helped to focus attention on the necessity of recognising and representing flows of life-affirming energy in explanations of educational influence. DeLong (2013) has made original and significant contributions to both the recognition and representation of these flows of energy:

During the course of my thesis I unveiled what I thought was a prerequisite space, a Culture-of-Inquiry, for educators to influence themselves, others and social formations. This Culture-of-Inquiry space is an environment for giving voice to teachers. I frequently exhort them not to allow others to speak for them, to represent their embodied knowledge for and by themselves. I invite them into a Culture-of-Inquiry, a culture of love and support and encouragement, to unveil their embodied knowledge and create their own living-educational-theories. The passion that I feel for encouraging teachers to create knowledge can be seen in the following video-clip.



3:11 minutes - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qsECy86hxA>

In the 3:11 minute video-clip, I am contributing to an international panel at an International Conference of Teacher Research. I am responding to a question about my support for teacher-research in the Grand Erie District School Board in Ontario. The process of empathetic resonance involves moving the cursor along the clip and responding to moments in which the viewer experiences the greatest flow of energy from the speaker. For example, as the cursor is moved backwards and forwards around the moment at 2:49 minutes, I am talking about the 'SWAT' team arriving to support a teacher in her research. Both Jack and I claim that the second image below (at 2:49 minutes) shows me expressing my life-affirming energy and valuing of an embodied expression of a Culture-of-Inquiry in which several individuals are responding to the needs of another. The expression of my life-affirming energy at 2:49 minutes was evoked through my response to a question about the support I am giving for teacher-research. The responses of others appear attracted into an inclusive space with me and they experience a pooling of a flow of their own life-affirming energies. If we try to communicate the experience of my presencing this flow of life-affirming energy with the words, 'flow of life-affirming energy' without the visual data, we (Jackie, Jack, Liz and Cathy) are claiming that something vital about the meaning is lost.

I believe and evidence from others confirms (Griffin, 2011; Campbell, 2011) that this expression of life-affirming energy invites people to join in and to pool their own. In addition to my passion, there are practical supports like time release from class, money for resources and local and international conferences, frequent learning sessions with district and international presenters, small group network meetings

and publication of their work. These resources were available to teachers and administrators because of my way of relating to systemic influences, my political nous, which allowed me to find funding for supporting action research in Grand Erie through my work as a Superintendent of Schools. (Delong, 2013, pp. 29-30)

In Delong's AERA 2011 paper, she attempted to explicate to the audience the significance of the videos in a way that had not been clear in Delong's 2010 paper:

Based on critique of the use of multi-media (Delong, 2010a), further explanation is required to explain the meanings of the knowledge represented and created through the interpretation of videoclips. At the S-STEP session, 'Seeking Democracy through Self-Study' at the 2010 AERA, the discussant, Nathan Brubaker, gave useful criticism on three themes: Pedagogical Practice, Transformation and Community. On Pedagogical practice, he asked, What is actually going on in these classrooms, in this community? On Transformation, he asked, What is the actual evidence to support claims of transformation [in creating a better world, in social justice]? On Community, he challenged us, While maintaining our safe environment, are we broadening our community?

Nathan Brubaker's (2010) discussant comments suggest the need for a strengthening of issues of validity in relation to explanations of educational influence that included multi-media representations.

6:32 minute video at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yhjLLMig2Rw>

In the session, one of the members of the audience indicated that the loving relationship between two critical friends, Theresa and Lee, was not clear to viewers. We think that the poor resolution of the clip may have been a contributor and we can seek to improve that this year. In addition, however, we need to improve our clarity: What are our best examples of energy-flowing values in the creation of living educational theories (Whitehead, 1989) and how do we make sure they are clear to the viewers? In order to address some of the tensions that the discussant addressed, one of the ways in which Delong tried to improve the clarity of the meaning of the videoclips this year is she has transcribed each of them which had been a recommendation of the editor of the Electronic Journal of Living Theories (<http://www.ejolts.net>) about her paper (Delong 2010b): <http://ejolts.net/node/174>.

Although it is a very time-consuming process, Delong thinks that it has allowed her to be more aware not only of the words but also of the body language inherent in them. [http://www.spanglefish.com/actionresearchcanada/index.asp?pag\\_eid=225581](http://www.spanglefish.com/actionresearchcanada/index.asp?pag_eid=225581)

Since that time, we have endeavoured to be much clearer in our explanations checking frequently with readers and audiences that our videos as data and validating documentation support our claims to know.



#### **4. Data sources, evidence, objects or materials**

In this section, we have organized the data and evidence in three sections. The first is to make self-study contributions to a valid history of S-STEP as additions to the history of S-STEP presented by Hamilton at the 2013 AGM of the AERA, S-STEP SIG, in relation to the theme of AERA 2014 on the power of education research for innovation in practice and policy. The second is to provide an evidence-based justification for the use of multi-media narratives with digital technology in S-STEP research to supplement printed text-based media for communicating valid explanations of educational influences in learning. The third is to present new living standards (Laidlaw, 1996) of judgment and explanatory principles in terms of the energy-flowing, relational, and inclusional values of self-study researchers whose inquiries are taking place in a range of international contexts.

##### **i. Self-Study and the Power of Education(al) Research**

Relating to the theme of AERA 2014 of “The Power of Education Research for Innovation in Practice and Policy”, we are describing and explaining the ways in which we have contributed to the history of educational innovations in the practice and policy of S-STEP research. In doing this we are emphasizing the distinction we are making between Education and Educational Research. This distinction has significant implications for an exploration of the theme of AERA 2014. We are claiming that Education Researchers contribute knowledge about education from within the conceptual frameworks and methods of validation of the forms and fields of education such as the philosophy, psychology, sociology, history, leadership, administration, management, politics, economics and theology of education. We are claiming that this knowledge has no power in any innovation in practice and policy until it is used by individuals to influence these innovations. However, Educational Researchers contribute directly to innovations in policy and practice in their contributions to educational knowledge in their explanations of the educational influences of individuals in their own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of the social formations within which we live, work and research. The educational knowledge generated by such Educational Researchers, in influencing the learning of social formations, can relate directly to influencing innovations in policy and practice.

Evidence for this claim that practitioners researching their own practice and creating their own living theories can be seen in the following data:

a) The December 2013 issue of the Educational Journal of Living Theories (EJOLTS [ejolts.net](http://ejolts.net)) with the contributions:

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**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*

b) Evidence for this claim that this knowledge has no power in any innovation in practice and policy until it is used by individuals to influence these innovations can be seen in Griffin's inviting students to evaluate her practice and become co-researchers using action research to improve their learning:



*Video 4: Grade 6 student explain their concerns, barriers to learning, & action plans*

<http://youtu.be/rz2sSUeZlno>

We refer here, as well to Tim Pugh's work with Grade 7-8 students, encouraging them to be co-researchers in making connections between technology and learning in the classroom (DeLong, 2010, p. 25

<http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/aera10/jddAERA20100402OKopt.pdf>

c) Evidence can be seen in the Bluewater Action Research Network influencing systems. It can be seen in the February 22, 2014 presentation to OTF/OADE influencing broader systems.

d) Evidence can be seen in our influence in legitimating values as standards of judgment through our own doctorates and supervision of masters degrees bringing new standards of judgment into the Academy.

e) Further evidence is grounded in data from *creating cultures-of-inquiry and engaging high school students to research their own lives* (Campbell, 2012) and from, *creating cultures-of-inquiry and engaging elementary students to create their own questions and conducting their own action research facilitating action research with staff and sharing the results within a school system* (Griffin, 2012); creating the living theory processes that provide a framing for improving our own and others' practices and policies. These data are also drawn from High School philosophy classes, Senior Elementary classes, Elementary teachers' collaborative inquiry and Master of Education theses, as well as data drawn from classroom, district and provincial policy documents. The Data presented in the above accounts by Campbell and Griffin also draws on videotapes of class presentations, keynotes and workshops on S-STEP at international conferences, discussions, and local and global SKYPE recordings of collaborative inquiries, located on YouTube. Campbell originated the idea of 'being loved into learning' and Griffin brought an emphasis on 'vulnerability' into meanings of a culture-of-inquiry.

f) Evidence has been written and presented at S-STEP sessions over the last 17 years in original self-study research including Democratic Evaluation and a

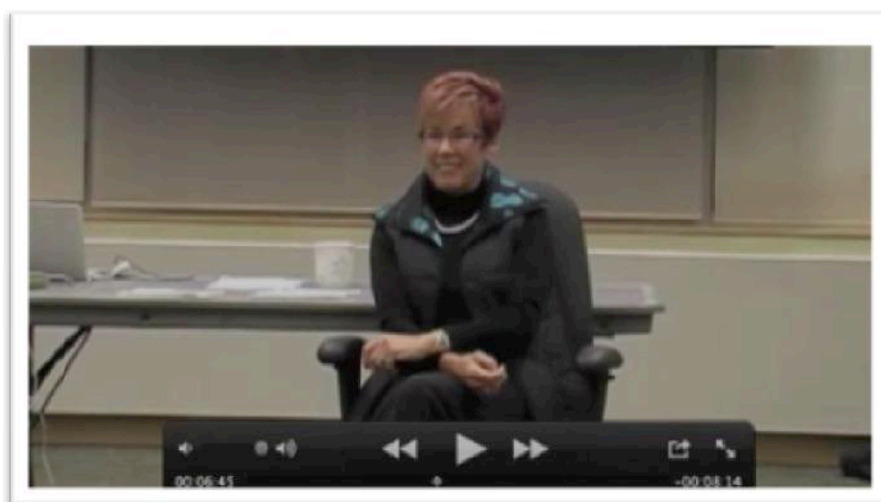


Pedagogical Model both processes that are being adapted in classrooms in order to improve teacher practice and student learning (Griffin et al, 2014). The democratic evaluation process was explicated:

One of my learnings into the nature and improvement of my life as a superintendent and later as university professor was that quality relationships can be deepened and strengthened through a willingness to let others into my world and let down the walls of protection to expose my vulnerabilities. Sustained trust is at the heart of my educational relationships and essential to the creating of a Culture-of-Inquiry where human flourishing can thrive. My commitment to build trust and respect focused on the power of rational argument not on the power of position. As part of trust building, the process of establishing democratic evaluations started when, as superintendent, I asked the principals in my family of schools to chair my evaluation process to elicit critical feedback on how I might improve.

In addition to my practice since 2008 to videotape my lessons and review them for data to improve my teaching, in 2010, while I was teaching the Research methods course to the Bluewater masters cohort, I asked the group of 19 to provide an evaluation of my teaching. I sat in the middle of the circle with the video camera on me and they provided me with some very concrete suggestions for improvement.

It was a difficult process to experience but I had spent time preparing myself as much as I could. Being able to absorb the suggestions afterward by reviewing the videotape of the event was essential to retaining all of the information and making significant changes in my practice. I was modelling a process that I hoped might be adopted in their own way by the members of the group.



A full description and explanation of the process is contained in the 2011 AERA paper: Transforming educational knowledge through making explicit the embodied knowledge of educators for the public

good (<http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/aera11/jdjwaera11.pdf>)

The pedagogical model resides in “The educational significance of a teaching model for the creation of a culture-of-inquiry”:

Power is a significant theme in understanding the modus operandi of schooling. The processes of professional development and teacher training, and indeed teaching, still cling to the mental model (Senge, 1995) of a hierarchy of educators as the gatekeepers of temple of knowledge to which students can be admitted. In my research and in that of my students, the embodied knowledge of each of us is valued and unique. Once that value is held, teachers and students can be co-learners and knowledge creators in a living curriculum and a culture rich with creativity and exploration.

Data of my commitment to providing a safe and comfortable space is evident in the pedagogical model that Delong developed over several years and shared at AERA 2012 (DeLong & Whitehead, 2012).

The method emerged to include four steps, located on YouTube.

**First**, the professor reads and responds to written papers, listens to student concerns in emails and other communications, including SKYPE conversations and determines what she thinks the students need as the next step in the inquiry process, as in a ‘just-in-time’ approach.

**Second**, she shares her observations, plans and intentions for the next session with the cohort group on SKYPE with her critical friend (Whitehead). He listens, responds and makes suggestions for improvement. It is uploaded to YouTube.

**Third**, she shares her plan at the next master’s session by playing the conversation as the plan for the day.

**Fourth**, she reviews the events with her critical friend through the same process with a view to planning the next session (p.4-5).

These two processes, democratic evaluation and pedagogical model are currently informing the Living-Theory action research in a Culture-Of-Inquiry form of self-directed professional development in the Bluewater District School Board. These teachers have emerged from hierarchical “I know what you need to know” form of professional development to one where they take ownership of their learning by asking and answering, “How can I improve my practice?” Melissa articulates this significant transformation in her life:



<http://youtu.be/A6mw9qbSwO0>

Melissa: This has been by far the most valuable pd that we have participated in and it's because it wasn't that top down, imposed, 'this is what you need to learn process.'

## **ii. Multi-media narratives for communicating valid explanations of educational influences in learning.**

The video resources in these accounts are also used as a means to enhance explanations for the creation of a culture-of-inquiry. This emphasizes the significance of our claim that multi-media narratives can give new, deeper and richer meanings, to solely printed text. These valid explanations of educational learning are explained in the OTF/OADE paper, "Classroom Teachers Re-working and Re-interpreting Professional Development Policy to Support Sustainable Professional Learning":

### **Abstract**

In this paper, we present the results of our Osprey School 2012-2013 Teacher Leadership Learning Project (TLLP). As designers of our own math project last year and promoters of teacher-led professional development this year, we speak as practitioner-researchers involved in innovative re-working of professional development practice. We demonstrate the power of Living Theory action research (Whitehead, 1989) to engage teachers and students in deep, sustainable, transformative learning in which insights from education research are put into practice, reflected upon and modified cooperatively by teachers and students to improve our practice. We demonstrate the power of democratic cultures-of-inquiry (DeLong, 2002), in which unique, imperfect individuals approach discussion with humility and influence each other by being open about intentions and inviting others to evaluate our practice. We give evidence of the effectiveness of using personal and communal values as standards of judgment and as points for discussion. We identify and validate the nature of our influence through written and oral feedback, artifacts and digital technology. We are claiming that through this project we were able to improve student learning, improve teaching practice, create an environment for improved learning (a culture-of-inquiry) and have demonstrated the

sustainability of Living Theory action research.

**Bluewater Action Research Network:** With sustainability of the living theory in a culture-of-inquiry process in mind, Cathy and Liz, in consultation with Jackie, submitted a proposal so that educators across the system might enjoy a similar experience to the Osprey group during the 2013-14 school year. Upon approval from the Ministry of Education, invitations went out to the system and on December 5, 2013, the first meeting of BARN occurred at the Bluewater District Board Office (agendas <http://mentoringmoments.ning.com/group/bluewater-action-research-network>).



*Video 5: Bluewater Action Research Network Beginnings*  
<http://youtu.be/IOm9UZi8WXM>

In this clip, three members of BARN share their concerns about their teaching practice and where they'd like to improve. First, Susan, a grade 3 teacher, expresses her enjoyment of the safe and trusting environment with time to think and her concerns as a first step to articulating a research question. By the end of the second meeting on January 10, 2014, each member of the group was able to articulate their question and consider how they would know if they had improved to Jack Whitehead on SKYPE. In the second clip, Kim shares her concern about how to improve her practice to move level 3 students to level 4 on the EQAO assessment. Finally, Janice shares her concerns as an Early Childhood Educator in Kindergarten recognizing that the issue of self-confidence is a concern for teachers in all grades.

At the time of writing, we have sessions planned for March, April and May. Between sessions, small groups meet and discuss their data gathering in person, on email, via SKYPE, on Google Drive and using Mentoring Moments (<http://mentoringmoments.ning.com>).

The outcome of BARN this year will be the publication of individual projects from the participants and presentation of their work to various groups within and outside the school and district. The group will work together to decide on a digital form of sharing (e.g. website,

ebook)(Griffin et al, 2014, p. 17-18).

Evidence, objects and materials to show the effectiveness of 'I' questions in self-study research in improving practice and generating knowledge, in realising the AERA conference theme, are also drawn from self-study, living theory masters dissertations and doctoral theses from the UK, Canada, the Republic of Ireland, Israel, Australia, Canada, South Africa, Norway and Japan. These are publically available and on the internet from

<http://www.spanglefish.com/ActionResearchCanada> and  
<http://www.actionresearch.net/living/living.shtml>

Evidence of the extending influence and sustainability resides in the sharing of systemic influence in Japan in November 2013 and at the OTF/Ontario Association of Deans of Education in February 2014.



46:42

JWUlecturewithoutintro

November 25, 2013 6:27 PM

<http://youtu.be/4fgOjNcfu2I>

In the OTF/OADE paper, the authors share the significance of their research:

Propositional knowledge has a wide acceptance: it is significant that the embodied knowledge of educators is being recognized as valuable and that practitioners independently conduct reliable and valid research. Educators and students in the Bluewater District School Board conduct their own research, speak with their own voices, share their authentic learning and their embodied knowledge creating new knowledge through their own living-theories. From the vision of two teachers to four teachers to a network of educators, the process of creating living-theories in a culture-of-inquiry is influencing teacher practice and student learning for improvement at a spectrum of levels of learning. This non-hierarchical, democratic process is collaborative, innovative and creative. The knowledge that has been created by the practitioner-researchers, in that it is enhancing the flow of values that carry hope for the future of humanity, can also be understood as contributing to the generation of a new educational humanism (Hamilton & Zufiaurre, 2014) (Griffin et al, 2014, p. 15).

We shall return to this paper below when considering the scholarly significance of our presentation.

Further evidence of some of the sociohistorical and sociocultural influences that can serve to transform the living ‘I’ questions of self-study researchers into a conceptual, abstract and propositional form of self-study can be seen in the excellent work of the Transformatory Education(al) Studies (TES) Project in South Africa and in contributions to the Journal, ‘Studying Teacher Education’ (STE). In his discussant’s responses to a TES symposium at AERA, Whitehead (2012 - <http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/acara12/jwTESAERAresponse0212.pdf>) focused attention on the danger of transforming the embodied knowledge of practitioners into a solely propositional and print-based account. He also made this point in relation to contributions to STE (Whitehead, 2009 - <http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/jwselfstudyjournal1109.pdf>).

In contrast to this transformation into propositional knowledge, Wolvaardt (2013), in her doctoral research programme on a living theory of teaching undergraduate medical students, retains a direct, practical relationship to improving practice and policy. This is first time that a doctorate in a South African context has produced a living-theory in medical education.

### **iii. New Living Standards of Judgment and Explanatory Principles**

From the OTF/OADE paper, a culture-of-inquiry was identified as seminal to the teacher’s explanatory principles for their learning and living theories:

An essential aspect of this process and these results was the creation of a culture-of-inquiry as it developed and deepened for the improvement of learning through the course of our project. We want to be clear that the results in both teacher practice and student engagement attained in this project were accomplished because of the time, energy and commitment to a safe, supportive, trusting environment for risk-taking. A culture-of-inquiry is essential to the development of living theory action research processes. Each of the classroom teachers articulated strongly that the process increased their self-confidence “just as valuable as changing my practice as a math teacher was the increased confidence in myself as a teacher, learner and risk-taker” (Melissa, p. 15)(Griffin et al, 2014, p.19).

The inclusion of new explanatory principles and living-standards of judgment in our contributions to a history of S-STEP research focuses on ‘being loved into learning’ and a recognition of the importance of ‘vulnerability’ in influencing cultures-of-inquiry that enhance the flow of values that carry hope for the future of humanity. Delong was surprised by the responses of Campbell and Griffin to her supervision of their masters programmes. Both Campbell (2013) and Griffin (2013) explained the significance of Delong’s influence in terms of ‘being loved into learning’.



(Campbell (2013), Griffin (2013) and Delong (2013) all acknowledged the importance of recognising one's own vulnerability and the vulnerability of the other in S-STEP research. Because of this acknowledgement (Whitehead, 2013; Delong, Griffin, Campbell & Whitehead, 2013) have come to recognise the importance of acknowledging the vulnerability of oneself and others in generating cultures-of-inquiry with S-STEP research that makes original contributions to educational knowledge and enhances the flow of values that carry hope for the future of humanity.

One area of learning for us has been coping with situations where the context for our presentations has inhibited our value of a culture-of-inquiry. In our presentation of our 2013 paper in the S-STEP session, you can see us standing at the podium with our backs to the others, presenting at the audience and breaking down our relationship:

For the sake of completeness, having shown some of our conversations in the preparation of the AERA 2013 presentation, here is a video of our presentation at AERA 2013. What the four of us can see, hear and experience is our individual contribution to the presentation. We can see ourselves being influenced by the sociohistorical and sociocultural norms of presentations at an international conference. We speak directly to the audience. We are focused on our aural communications and not on our embodied expressions of meaning. The video helps us to feel and re-live the energy-flowing values that motivate us to present our ideas in this public forum. When compared to the above video-clips of our conversations in preparing the presentation, what is missing from the presentation is an explicit understanding of our relationally dynamic values, through which we created the presentation and lived our value of a democratic way of creating together. The presentations in this issue of EJOLTS, with our multi-media narratives focus explicitly on overcoming this omission in the AERA 2013 presentation.



14:03 minutes 28/04/13 <http://www.YouTube.com/watch?v=jjmfKJ7Gtsw>

After the session, each of us committed to ensuring that we did not permit that violation of our living standard of judgment to recur. In preparation for the OTF/OADE presentation we deliberately planned to make whatever changes were necessary in the environment and in the mode of presentation so that we could live with our audience in a culture-of-inquiry. In the clips on page 9, we hope that you can see and feel our relational way of being and the recognition of our own vulnerability. We must keep revisiting this dilemma because we default to accepting the denial of our values of a relational way of being and a culture-of-inquiry.

## 5. **Results and substantiated conclusions**

We have organised our results and substantiated conclusions in terms of our three purposes related to:

- i. Self-Study and the Power of Education(al) Research.
- ii. Multi-media narratives for communicating valid explanations of educational influences in learning.
- iii. New Living Standards of Judgment and Explanatory Principles.

### **i. Self-Study and the Power of Education(al) Research.**

The self-study inquiries provide explanations of the educational influences of practitioner-researchers to show how they have contributed to a valid history of S-STEP in explaining the power of education research for innovation in policy and practice. The explanations include both constraining influences and opportunities. In the explanations it has been demonstrated that the power of education research for innovation in practice requires the mediation of self-studies by educational and other self-study researchers to influence practice. The analysis shows how the generation of the living educational theories of self-study, educational researchers can integrate insights from the theories of education researchers in a way that sustains a connection with, improving practice, generating knowledge and engaging with policy formation, its implementation and evaluation.

### **ii. Multi-media narratives for communicating valid explanations of educational influences in learning.**

The substantiated conclusions include alternative forms of representing valid explanations of educational influences in learning, other than solely printed text-based media. The evidence of these alternative forms of representation includes self-study inquiries in Elementary, High School and Graduate settings (Campbell, Delong, Griffin & Whitehead, 2013; Delong, Griffin, Campbell and Whitehead, 2013). It includes evidence of educational influence for innovation in policy and practice in the context of classrooms, schools and school systems. It includes evidence of educational influence of S-STEP research in international contexts in Asia, Australia, South Africa, Europe and the Americas. The evidence is presented in digital, multi-media narratives:  
DeLong in Japan

(<http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/japan/jdJWU091113rev.pptx> &  
<http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/japan/jdJWUNov313.docx> )



Whitehead in Thailand

(<http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/jack/thaischedulemay2013.pdf>)

Whitehead in South Africa

(<http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/jack/jwmandeladay2011.pdf>)

Delong in America and Canada (<http://ejolts.net/node/213> &

<http://www.spanglefish.com/ActionResearchCanada/> )

Tattersall in Australia

(<http://www.actionresearch.net/living/tattersallphd/philtphd.pdf>)

### **iii. New Living Standards of Judgment and Explanatory Principle.**

As well as deepening and extending the explanatory principles and living standards of judgment with ‘being loved into learning’ and ‘vulnerability’ in generating cultures-of-inquiry, our S-STEP research has explicated a living logic for evaluating the validity of contributions to educational knowledge from a living-theory perspective.

The conclusions include a recognition of the limitations of propositional and dialectical logics in structuring valid explanations of the educational influences in learning of self-study researchers. A form of living logic has been presented to overcome these limitations.

### **6. Scholarly significance.**

The presentation demonstrates the realisation of the potential of the living-theories of S-STEP researchers (Whitehead, 2008) to make valid contributions to the history of S-STEP in relation to the power of education research, as distinct from educational research, for innovation in practice and policy. Education researchers can propose innovations in policy. However, innovations in practice suggested by education researchers require the mediation of self-study educational researchers or other practitioners for the innovations to be put into practice. What we mean by mediation is that we cannot say that we have educated anyone else. Whatever we do has to be mediated by the other within their own learning.

Educational self study researchers make innovations directly in relation to policy and practice. The scholarly significance of our self-study contributions to the history of S-STEP has focused on our professional development research for over 30 years. The multi-media narrative above, in which we have explained our educational influences in our own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of the social formations in which we live and work, has scholarly significance for the print-based publications of the American Educational Research Association, such as Educational Researcher and the educational responsibilities of the present and future Presidents of AERA and the Annual Meeting Program Chairs. We are claiming that there is a failure to make a clear distinction between education and educational research in AERA publications, especially in Educational Researcher, and in the themes of the Annual Meeting

Themes. This failure is allowing the dominance of the language and logic of education researchers to dominant the publications and the themes at the expense of focusing on the nature of educational research and on the generation of validated, evidence-based explanations of educational influences in learning. We have shown above, in this self-study contribution to the history of S-STEP, how multi-media narratives using digital visual data can communicate the meanings of the embodied expressions of energy-flowing values that constitute practical principles for explaining educational influences in learning.

Our presentation can also be seen as a response to Schön's (1995) call for the development of a new epistemology for the new scholarship in demonstrating how the embodied knowledge of professional educators can be made public through digital, multi-media narratives. It answers Snow's (2001, p. 9) call for procedures for accumulating such knowledge and making it public and the need for a critical mass of practitioner researchers' studies. The new epistemology reveals a living logic for making sense of the explanations of self-study researchers of their explanations of educational influences in learning. These explanations include the educational influences of the s-step researcher in their own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of the social formations in which their practice is located.

The scholarly significance is also demonstrated in the knowledge created by self-study researchers in their validated explanations of educational influence. In our own explanations we have included the voices of students as we support them in expressing and evolving their responsibility for their own learning. This can perhaps be seen most clearly above where we include a 1:58 minute video to show our relationally dynamic representation of educational relationships that are distinguished by the spirit of the African way of being of Ubuntu within a culture-of-inquiry. We are identifying Ubuntu as a way of being that is contributing to the flourishing of humanity through the generation of a new educational humanism (Hamilton, & Zufiaurre, 2014).

In validating our explanations of educational influence we have included the voices of practitioner researchers in which they take some responsibility for their own learning and for the learning of their students. Our educational influence in the learning of others demonstrates that what we have been doing with our students has been mediated by them through their own imaginations and creative and critical responses into their own learning. To be consistent with our own values we have explained that we are living our democratic values within a culture-of-inquiry as fully as possible.

These explanations have included understandings of the constraints and opportunities related to the sociocultural and sociohistorical contexts in which the self-study researcher is located. In evaluating the validity of these explanations new living standards of judgment and explanatory principles have been introduced, including the energy-flowing, relational, and inclusional values of self-study researchers whose inquiries are taking place in international contexts. Our validated explanations in living-educational-theories have explained how educational environments can be transformed in improving education and carry hope for the future of humanity through improving practice and policy within a culture-of-inquiry.

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