

## Jack Whitehead's Review of

Huber, J. & Mompoin-Gaillard, P. (2011) *Teacher education for change: The theory behind the Council of Europe Pestalozzi Programme*. Strasbourg; Council of Europe,

### **together with a proposal for a collaborative enquiry.**

I do recommend this text. It is a lively, engaging read, written with passionate commitment by informed and engaged educators. The Pestalozzi Programme of the Council of Europe with its 47 member States offers a practical way for European Educators to construct their sense of European Identity through the initial and continuing professional development of teachers and teacher educators.

I am contextualizing this review within the call for submissions for the 2012 Annual Conference of the American Educational Research Association:

The mission of AERA is “to advance knowledge about education, to encourage scholarly inquiry related to education, and to promote the use of research to improve education and serve the public good.” Our mission is sound. We have been vigilant in executing the first half of our mission: We hold each other to high standards, we review critically each other’s scholarship, and we invest significant time and energy in an effort to publish only the best education research.

We have been less vigilant and less effective, however, in promoting “*the use of research to improve education and serve the public good.*” In an effort to pursue more fully our mission—and to emphasize the use of education research—the 2012 Annual Meeting in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, will include a host of innovative sessions and special events designed to engage AERA members and other participants in intense dialogue on the theme “Non Satis Scire: To Know Is Not Enough.” (Ball & Tyson, 2011, p. 198)

In the first half of the review I am seeking to show that the contributors advance knowledge about education and encourage scholarly inquiry related to education. Their writings are clear, they demonstrate high levels of scholarly enquiry and are most informative in showing how their ideas connect with and are informed by the theories from a wide range of thinkers.

In the second half of the review I am seeking to explain why the Pestalozzi Programme will need to relate to participants in the programme as knowledge creators who are exploring the implications of asking, researching and answering questions of the kind, ‘How do I improve what I am doing?’ for the programme to reach its full potential to improve education and to serve the public good. This approach will require an understanding of how to support the generation of the living educational theories of practitioners as they seek to live as fully as they can the values that carry hope for humanity. I make a proposal for a collaborative action research project in which we could work together to live these values as fully as we can.

In Chapter One on *Education and Society* Claudia Lenz describes the key role of education for sustainable democratic societies. Lenz focuses on social cohesion as an important condition for an inclusive democratic culture. She emphasizes the importance of offering a protected realm for encounter for the development of dialogue on cultural diversity and social justice:

*This can prevent the emergence of closed group identities, and rather allows individuals to develop a multiple sense of belonging. Education, thus, can play an important role in the process of sustainable change. The everyday practice of teaching and learning can provide a grassroots dimension to democratic decision making..... (p.23)*

For Lenz the Pestalozzi Programme addresses teachers and teacher trainers as lifelong learners, offering them learning experiences which can enable them to guide students in their learning for sustainable democracies- or, following Hannah Arendt's thoughts, the work of Pestalozzi aims at the constant (re) construction of a world shared by equals (p.24).

Arthur Ivatts writes about *Education vs. educations* with penetrating questions and responses to issues of competing education. He describes the third strand of the Pestalozzi Programme with the European modules which provide training opportunities for teacher trainers as 'multipliers' of key themes across members states. He also describes how these modules span key areas of knowledge, values, skills and understandings including: education for democratic citizenship and human rights; intercultural education; the teaching of history for sustainable democratic societies; linguistic and cultural diversity; media education and new media based on human rights; and prevention of crimes against humanity with additional seminar themes that have also included co-operative learning, the image of the other, and democratic school governance.

Pascale Mompoin-Gaillard considers "*Savoirs*" and values vs. themes: transversal components of teaching for strengthening democratic societies. I particularly like Mompoin-Gaillard's focus on values in supporting sustainable democratic societies. She emphasizes the importance of calling on the frames of values of individuals to raise awareness of and sensitivity to the issues of human rights, democracy and the rule of law. She also emphasizes the importance of values in designing teacher education programmes that support democratic societies.

Liutaras Degésys writes about *Education as liberation of the self: principles and concepts of learning and teaching in the Pestalozzi Programme*.

Degésys identifies the 'free possession of the self' as one of the most important qualities in education. He believes that the Pestalozzi Programme will develop human universality with its emphasis on civic and intercultural education and valuing independent thinking, openness to change and freedom. (p.51) Degésys offers the profound insight that whatever the theory, *it has to consist of a self-development principle and as with any theory, it has to contain methods, a methodology, an organisational structure, criteria and principles of analysis of*

*their effectiveness, all of which should match the original principle of self-education. (57)*

In Chapter Two on *Rationale and foundations of the Pestalozzi Programme*, Danielle Leclercq considers *The pedagogical foundations of the Pestalozzi Programme*. I found Leclercq's chapter particularly informative as she draws attention to key ideas of Pestalozzi, Bachelard, Piaget, Vygotsky, Dewey and Wallon. This integration of the ideas of others in the Pestalozzi Programme is continued by Josef Huber and Salmoeja Bitieriute in their *Further food for pedagogical thought: influences and inspirations* where they add ideas from Montessori, Freinet, Maslow, Rogers, Freire and Schon.

Danielle Leclercq then considers *Getting people doing.... to get them thinking* and focuses on the promotion of intercultural understanding and a sustainable democratic society with the values and principles championed by the Council of Europe. She emphasizes the importance of creating a network of educational professionals to disseminate examples of practice that are contributing to real, lasting change in education in their own countries. (p. 77)

The importance of networks is developed in Pascale Mompoin-Gaillard contribution in *Toward a community of practice: supporting the collaborative work*. She highlights the importance of focusing on practice in expanding the Pestalozzi network across Europe. Mompoin-Gaillard claims that people learn best when they have the possibility of working with other people who are involved in the same work, even if in different contexts, through processes of co-operation and collaboration. She believes that taking part in the sharing of experiences and discussions on learning makes professionals aware of their own learning and the learning of others, while forcing them to articulate their ideas and choices (p. 81). I am not sure about the desirability of 'forcing' individuals to articulate their ideas and choices, but I do support the idea of making the ideas and choices available to others as resources to use and learn from. I shall develop this idea in the second half of the review where I point to the evidence that making public the practitioners' accounts of their educational enquiries can help to change the ways of thinking and doing of professional educators.

In Chapter Three on Action for change Richard Harris and Ildikó Lázár consider *Overcoming resistance to change* and *Ways to bring about change*. They focus on the importance of understanding the nature of resistance before moving on to consider ways of bringing about change and point out that even where teachers have been curious to learn, the extent of any change appears limited. (p. 92) Drawing on experiences gained during the Pestalozzi teacher training seminars and workshops, as well as the trainer training modules, Harris and Lázár claim that part of the difficulties facing teacher trainers is that both trainee teachers and experienced teachers arrive with very different experiences of education and very different views about what constitutes effective teaching.

In thinking about ways of overcoming resistance they say that the most important part of the process of generating long lasting and meaningful change is probably the time needed by trainees or teachers to absorb new ideas, to see how they fit into their existing ideas or how their existing ideas have to be modified to accommodate them. They explain that it is important to recognise

that teachers' learning will occur in the training institution and in school, and that trainers may have to operate in both environments to bring about change. (p. 110)

Pavlina Hadjitheodoulou Loizidou considers the *Benefits of networking: an example from Cyprus*. Drawing on evidence from this practical example, Loizidou claims that:

Pestalozzi seminars proved to be a fruitful way to create a network of workers in teacher change who interact and collaborate with and within the group and aim at participating with larger networks of trainers and teachers to promote and improve trainers' and teachers' competences in diversity and teacher learning. Despite difficulties and limitations of participation and the involvement of "new" trainers to the Pestalozzi philosophy, the Cyprus example showed that working and expanding on the local level can articulate the Pestalozzi mission. (p. 133)

This contribution serves to emphasise the need for more research into the Pestalozzi network which focuses on the evidential basis of explanatory claims that the network has embraced practitioners in schools, trainers, researchers and other educational experts within the whole range of educational actors in actually achieving change and proficiency.

Josef Huber concludes with his thoughts on *Making a difference*. Huber emphasizes the importance of building on the strengths, working on the weaknesses and counteracting the threats faced by the Pestalozzi Programme. He stresses the importance in reaching a critical mass for a truly pan-European influence in integrating Council of Europe standards and values in the everyday practice in the classrooms of member states.

Huber emphasizes that the Pestalozzi programme should focus on what it is best suited to do without duplicating what can be done as well or even better by others in their national or international contexts. He believes that the programme is best suited:

... to promoting the basic standards and values of the Council of Europe – democracy, human rights and the rule of law – in education, offering training for the transversal savoirs, savoir-faire and savoir-etre which all teachers need so that their educational practice contributes to making our societies durably democratic. (p.145).

He is clearly committed to the idea that the experience of participation in a pan-European teacher training through the Pestalozzi Programme could become an integral part of every teacher's professional life. He also believes that the changes in European higher education brought about by the Bologna Process in creating a European Higher Education Area, could offer the opportunity to dedicate part of MA programmes of professional development to involvement and participation in European training activities dedicated to the knowledge, skills, attitudes and dispositions necessary for sustainable democratic societies in Europe. (p.145). Huber also believes that:

It is not any longer enough to offer some education provision for all citizens. If we want to meet the challenges our global world faces today, the education offered needs to develop the full potential of every citizen in our diverse democracies so that they contribute with all their experience and expertise to the way forward. This has moved beyond a humanistic wish, it has become a necessity for the survival of our democracies. (p. 146).

In this second half of the review I want to focus on the kind of research that could help to meet the second half of the AERA mission to use research to improve practice and to serve the public good. I am thinking of 'using research' in two senses. In the first sense the results of traditional research are applied to practice with the intention of using the research to improve practice and serve the public good. In the second sense practitioner-researchers engage in exploring the implications of asking, researching and answering questions of the kind, 'How do I improve what I am doing?' with the clear intention of improving practice and serving the public good. In this second half of the review I am focusing on this second sense of using research. The contributors to the above text have all made a contribution to advancing knowledge and encouraging scholarly enquiry. I am suggesting that the Pestalozzi Programme in the 47 member states of the Council of Europe will need to embrace a different form of research to enhance its influence in improving practice and serving the public good in developing a European Identity with teacher education.

What I have in mind is a form of action research in which individual practitioners are encouraged to explore the implications of asking, researching and answering questions of the kind, 'How do I improve what I am doing?' This was the kind of question I asked myself in the class I taught in 1967 in London's Tower Hamlets. I felt a tension because my pupils were not learning as much as I believed that they could do through the influence of my teaching. I found myself saying to myself, 'I've got to do this better?', 'How do I improve what I am doing?' I imagine that you have also experienced this kind of feeling, grounded in your desire to live your values as fully as you can, when you believe that something could be improved in what you are doing. This tension stimulated my imagination to think of ways of improving what I was doing. I choose one possibility to act on, acted on my action plan whilst gathering some data to enable me to make a judgment on the effectiveness of my actions in improving my practice and contributing to improvements in my pupils' learning. I evaluated the effectiveness of my actions and modified my concerns, ideas and actions in a continuing process of working to improve my practice in enhancing my educational influence with my pupils. The explanatory principles of living educational theories include the values that carry hope for the future of humanity. One of these values is the procedural value of democracy. In her writings on the democratizing potential of dialogical focus in an action enquiry, Laidlaw (1994) demonstrates how this value can be realized in a classroom:

This paper is concerned with showing how, as a university tutor, I have held onto my democratic principles in working with one student in an action enquiry as she has tried to answer the question, 'How can I improve the quality of learning for the benefit of my own professional

development and the pupils in my care?' Through a conversation with the student Sarah, I show how I facilitate the formulation of her action research question. Her concern is about improving her understanding and action with her pupils for the benefit of their learning. My emphasis is in setting a democratic framework within which she can realize her deepest educational values. This paper also seeks to make the point that it is in focusing on what constitutes an improvement in the quality of learning, and to what end, that educational knowledge is formed and developed. This paper makes a claim that it is the dialectical nature of attempting to act on democratic ideals in the search for educational improvement that can create an epistemology for educational practice. (p.223)

In 1976 (Whitehead, 1976) I produced my first explanation for my educational influence in my own learning and in the learning of others and subjected this to the criticism of a validation group in order to improve the validity of my explanation. This was done within a process of democratic evaluation. I called this explanation of educational influence in learning, a living educational theory, to distinguish it from the explanations generated from traditional theories to explain the learning of individuals. In much educational research explanations for the learning of individuals are 'derived' from the abstract generalizations of traditional theories. In living educational theory research, the explanations for learning are generated by individuals in explorations of the kind, 'How do I improve what I am doing?'. Living theories do not deny the importance of explanations derived from traditional theories. They integrate insights from these theories in the course of their emergence through practice. I am thinking of insights from theorists such as those identified by Leclercq, Huber and Bitierute in the first half of this review.

Dubravka Kovačević and Renata Ozorlić-Dominić (2011) have edited a collection of papers from the European workshop on Action Research in the Function of the Professional Development of Teachers, which took place in Croatia, May 2010, in the framework of the Council of Europe Pestalozzi Programme. Participants came from Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Georgia, Greece, Latvia, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Turkey, UK. Kovačević and Ozorlić-Dominić make the point that:

The prevailing models of in-service teacher training which focus primarily on the content knowledge and the development of individual instructional skills do not enable the teachers to face the challenges of the complex context of contemporary teaching. They place teachers in the role of implementers rather than creators of change. With this publication we wish to promote action research as a means of empowering teachers for taking an independent and deep insight into their work that will lead to better understanding of themselves, their learners, and subsequently, the improvement of their teaching practice. (p.177)

As well as being creators of change, teachers can also be knowledge-creators in educational enquiries of the kind, 'How do I improve what I am doing?' I have set out evidence of the knowledge-creating capacities of teacher and other

practitioner-researchers in the Inaugural Mandela Day Lecture of the 18<sup>th</sup> July 2011, presented in Durban, South Africa (Whitehead, 2011).

To fulfill the potential of the Pestalozzi Programme for enhancing a European Identity with teacher education, I am suggesting that educators throughout the member states of the Council of Europe should be encouraged to create and share their living educational theories as they work and research to improve their practice. I am thinking of the financial and cultural encouragement that could be given to educators in continuing professional development programmes throughout the Council of Europe to ask, research and answer questions of the kind, 'How do I improve what I am doing?' This suggestion supports Huber's point above about the significance of masters programmes in dedicating part of these programmes of professional development to involvement and participation in European training activities dedicated to the knowledge, skills, attitudes and dispositions necessary for sustainable democratic societies in Europe.

Huxtable, (2011) has already sketched out an action research proposal, including masters units, for living values and improving practice cooperatively at <http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/huxtable/LLCCPD/Home.html>

I am suggesting that this proposal for collaborative enquiries could be engaged with by educators, educational administrators and other educational leaders to fulfill the potential of the Pestalozzi Programme to enhance the well-being and learning of pupils and teachers throughout Europe with the values, knowledge, skills, attitudes and dispositions necessary for sustainable democratic societies. I am also suggesting that this process could also enhance the educational influence of the Pestalozzi programme beyond European boundaries. I am thinking particularly of showing how to fulfill the second half of the mission of the American Educational Research Association in using research to improve education and serve the public good. I am also thinking of connections with the Transformative Education/al Studies project in South Africa. This is a three year study (2011-2014) funded by the National Research Foundation of South Africa (Conolly, Meyiwa, Pithouse-Morgan, 2010), with the following originality statement:

**2. Originality statement:** *The originality of this research lies in a number of factors:*

*2.1 this large-scale critical reflective self-study research into teaching and learning interventions for transformative educational practice in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) is the first of its kind in South Africa, and worldwide.*

*2.2 this project is simultaneously multidisciplinary and multi-institutional;*

*2.3 this research project targets a number of seemingly unrelated educational problems through a single integrated and holistic intervention, which can be interpreted and applied in diverse ways which are context-dependent.*

I am proposing that Educators throughout higher education in member states of the Council of Europe could be encouraged, culturally and with financial support, to engage in master's programmes with self-studies of their own practice as they

seek to live the values that can sustain our democracies, as fully as possible. They could generate and share their own living educational theories in a global collaborative project of learning to live as fully as possible the values that carry hope for the future of humanity.

For example, much can be learnt from the work and research of Margaret Farren and her colleague Yvonne Crotty at Dublin City University. You can access details of Farren's work on 'Action Research: Living Theory Collaboratory', 'EJOLTS – Educational Journal of Living Theories', 'E-Portfolios' and Masters Dissertations at <http://www.margaretfarren.net/>. Details of Crotty's work, as Director of the DIVERSE Conference 2011 (Developing Innovative Visual Educational Resources for Students Everywhere) can be accessed at <http://diverse2011.dcu.ie/welcome.html>.

There is also much to be learnt about such masters programmes from work outside the member states of the Council of Europe. I am thinking of Dr. Jacqueline Delong's work with Masters programmes associated with the Grand Erie District School Board and the Bluewater District School Board in Ontario, Canada, and legitimated by Brock University.

The global significance of Delong's work can be appreciated from the resources made freely available from her 'Welcome to Action Research Canada' at <http://www.spanglefish.com/ActionResearchCanada/>:

#### ***"Welcome to Action Research Canada***

*As a practitioner researcher for most of my life and formally since 1996, I have been devoted my energy to researching my own practice and encouraging and supporting others to research theirs.*

*In a culture of inquiry, values are expressed in different contexts with an energetic and dynamic response to creating individual and system spaces for learning and growth. The transformatory nature of my learning as a superintendent of education is described and explained in my Ph.D (Delong, 2002). I have been concerned that educators' voices be heard loud and clear (Delong et al, 2001-2009) and to this mission was added that aboriginal teachers' voices be heard loud and clear. The focus of my learning over the years, 2007-2009, demonstrated the growth in my educational knowledge with respect to my understanding of Indigenous ways of knowing, historical and current contexts, alternative ways of representing knowledge and how I might bring Indigenous ways of knowing into the Academy.*

*Learning about alternative and multimedia forms of generating knowledge has required that I become more proficient in using these forms for my own research and in order that I might teach others. Pushing the boundaries of data representation such as artefacts, performance art, photos, video clips and webcam communication has produced conflict with current practices in universities and*



*school systems as Schon (1995) predicted. Nevertheless, smooth stories of self (MacLure, 1996) will never bring about improvement and change. I am committed to bringing teachers' practitioner research into the knowledge base of teaching and learning.*

*In this work, the meanings of the embodied energy-flowing values that educational researchers use to explain their educational influences are shown to have epistemological significance for educational knowledge."*

Dr. Joan Walton, the Director of the Centre for the Child and Family at Liverpool Hope University in the UK, has explained, in the Action Learning, Action Research Journal (Walton, 2011), how a collaborative inquiry: *How do we, individually and collectively, integrate research and practice to improve the wellbeing of children?* can be undertaken in ways that include the generation of living educational theories that are focused on living as fully as possible the values that carry hope for the future of humanity.

I am proposing that we extend such collaborative enquiries into our own practices and pool the expression of our life-affirming energies, values and understandings for the public good.

In doing this we could perhaps bear in mind Habermas' (2002) point that:

The private autonomy of equally entitled citizens can only be secured only insofar as citizens actively exercise their civic autonomy. (p.264)

You could respond to the above review and proposal in the 2011-12 practitioner-researcher e-forum and we could work together to enhance the flow of values and understandings that improve practice and serve the public good. You can join the practitioner-researcher e-forum at:

<https://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/cgi-bin/webadmin?SUBED1=practitioner-researcher&A=1>

and access the archives at:

<https://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/cgi-bin/webadmin?A0=practitioner-researcher>

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