Creating a living-educational-theory from questions of the kind, 'how do I improve my practice?' 30 years on with Living Theory research.

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Abstract

30 years ago, a paper of mine, *Creating a living-educational-theory from questions of the kind, 'how do I improve my practice?'* was published, that is most often referenced in relation to Living Theory research. The paper still offers an easy introduction to my ideas about living-educational-theory. I re-visit the paper in order to share my present understanding of Living Theory research and living-educational-theories. I have used the hypertext facility enabled by EJOLTS, to update the six headings of the 1989 paper with my 2019 insights.

I also use the latest technology to include digital visual data to communicate the meanings of educational practices and educational relationships. I use these data to show how I clarify and communicate the meanings of my embodied and ontological values. I use these as explanatory principles and standards of judgment in explanations of educational influences in my own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of the social formations that influence my practice and understandings.

I provide evidence from universities around the world that living-educational-theory accounts (valid values-based explanations of educational influences in learning) have been recognised as contributing to global academic knowledge and discourse. I conclude the paper by focusing on enhancing the influence of Living Theory research as a contribution to a global social movement with values of human flourishing and projections into the future.

Keywords: **Living Theory research; Educational Practitioner Research; Human flourishing; Values; Living global citizenship.**

Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to share my present understanding of Living Theory research. The question, 'How do I improve my practice?' may appear to be the same, but the meanings of 'I', 'improve' and the context that influences my practice, have changed. In 1989, my purpose was to create a new discipline of educational enquiry that would bring the validated embodied knowledge of educational practitioners into the academy for academic legitimation. I wanted to do this as a contribution to enhancing professionalism in education by adding the educational knowledge generated by individual educators to the professional knowledge-base of education. I wanted to do this in a way that also acknowledged the importance of drawing insights from traditional theories into the living-educational-theories.

The 1989 paper continues to be relevant for practitioner-researchers who are exploring the implications of asking, researching and answering questions of the kind, 'How do I improve what I am doing?' The implications include the generation and sharing of a valid explanation of their educational influences in their own learning. The extensions and transformations of these understandings over the past 30 years are focused on the generation of valid, evidence-based explanations of educational influences in one's own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of the social formations that influence practice and understandings with the values of human flourishing.

Because of the importance of digital visual data in my research, for the communication of meanings of embodied expressions of life-affirming energy with values of human flourishing, I include here the recording of my 18-minute TEDx talk at the University of Bolton on the 24 October 2019 on Living Educational Theory research. I include this video as I have been told that it is a very clear expression of my meaning of Living Theory research.

Video 1: TEDx talk https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jf1kFHLdiPY

I chose the image above because, as I move the cursor along the clip, I see myself expressing and communicating a flow of life-affirming energy with values of human flourishing. I am also encouraging the participants to generate and share their own living-educational-theories as contributions to enhancing the educational influence of Living Theory research as a global social movement.

Through Huxtable's (2012) influence I now make a clear distinction between a living-educational-theory and Living Theory research. Living-educational-theories are the

explanations that individuals produce to explain their educational influences in their own learning in the learning of others and in the learning of the social formations that influence practice and understanding. Living Theory research is the conceptual framework that enables individual practitioner-researchers to locate their enquiries within this research approach (see https://www.actionresearch.net/writings/arsup/livingtheorymethodologies.pdf).

It is important to understand that no living-educational-theory can be generated from the conceptual framework of Living Theory research. Each living-educational-theory is unique to the individual. It is distinguished by the unique constellation of values that the individual uses as explanatory principles in their explanation of their educational influence in learning. In traditional theories, the behaviour of an individual is explained through a process of deduction from the general concepts of the theory to the individual case that is subsumed by the theory. In Living Theory research, the individual generates their own unique explanation rather than deducing it from the conceptual abstractions of a general theory. In relation to the generation of a living-theory-methodology it is important to recognise that such a methodology is generated in the course of producing a living-educational-theory, rather than being pre-defined at the beginning of an enquiry.

The 2019 hypertext links below, in each of the headings from the six sections of the 1989 text, are used to fulfil my purpose of sharing my present understanding of Living Theory research. This includes a global social movement with values of human flourishing.

In the 1989 paper, the contents under each heading at https://www.actionresearch.net/writings/livtheory.html distinguished my meaning of generating a living-educational-theory from questions of the kind, 'How do I improve what I am doing?, in my professional practice in education. The foci of 'I', practice and context were bounded by my professional context of being an educator and educational researcher in Higher Education. This 2019 paper shows my present thinking on the nature of Living Educational Theory research. In this paper, for the sake of brevity, I shorten Living Educational Theory research to Living Theory research. The foci of 'I', practice and context currently includes my professional context as a visiting professor in education at the University of Cumbria with supervisions of Living Theory research programmes. They also include an extension and transformation of my personal and professional boundaries where 'I' locate myself as a global citizen in the sense that my practice and theory transcend geographical and political boundaries. I also recognise the freedom to choose what I do is influenced by my economic security. This is provided by a pension from 40 years full-time employment in education. With this economic security I can choose what I do, outside the boundaries of Higher Education institutions, as I seek to contribute to enhancing the influence of Living Theory research as a global social movement.

The structure of this paper follows the same structure as the 1989 paper:

1. 'How do I improve my practice?' – a question of methodology.
2. A question of acknowledging one's existence as a living contradiction.
3. How do we show our values in action?
4. How do we know that what the researcher says is true? – a question of validity.
5. How can we move from the individual to the universal? – a question of generalisability.

6. Which power relations influence the academic legitimacy of a living educational theory? – a question of the politics of truth, with the addition of:
7. Looking back 30 years and looking forward 30 years to 2049 to the influences of Living Theory research in contributing to human flourishing.

1) 'How do I improve my practice?' – a question of methodology.

In 1989, I focused on the inclusion of 'I" as a living contradiction in the research methodology and the use of action reflection cycles in the enquiry, 'How do I improve my practice?' In 2019, I continue to include 'I' and action research cycles in my living-theory-methodology. This methodology has now been extended to include insights from other methodological approaches such as Narrative Inquiry, Phenomenology, Case Study, Action Research, Grounded Theory, Ethnography and Autoethnography (see https://www.actionresearch.net/writings/arsup/livingtheorymethodologies.pdf). I think that it is worth repeating the point above that a living-theory-methodology is generated in the process of creating a living-educational-theory, rather than pre-defined as a methodology to apply to the enquiry.

The question of methodology in the generation of a living-educational-theory is comprehensively answered in two papers from 2008:

Whitehead, J. (2008) Using a living theory methodology in improving practice and generating educational knowledge in living theories. *EJOLTS,* 1(1); 103-126, https://ejolts.net/node/80.

Whitehead, J. (2009) *How Do I Influence The Generation Of Living Educational Theories For Personal And Social Accountability in Improving Practice? Using A Living Theory Methodology In Improving Educational Practice*. Last draft before publication in Tidwell, D., Heston, M. & Fitzgerald, L. (Ed) (2009) Research Methods for the Self-Study of Practice. Dordrecht, Springer (see https://www.actionresearch.net/writings/jack/jwLTM080508.pdf).

Living Theory researchers who are registering for a higher degree are often faced with a request or requirement that they pre-specify the methodology that is going to be applied in the enquiry. Most research committees in institution of Higher Education are not used to the idea that a living-theory-methodology emerges in the course of generating a valid, evidence-base explanation of educational influence in learning. To help overcome the problem of pre-specifying a research methodology to be applied in the research, I have justified the generation of a living-theory-methodology in the creation of a living-educational-theory in relation to a range of methodologies (see https://www.actionresearch.net/writings/arsup/livingtheorymethodologies.pdf). It is wise, in an initial proposal, to clarify the question that the research is designed to answer, whilst recognising the question and methodology may evolve in the course of the research.

In the early days of registering Living Theory research proposals for Higher degrees with questions of the kind, 'How do I improve what I am doing?', it was not unusual for a University Research Committee to request that the 'I' was removed from the title of the enquiry, because personal pronouns were not acceptable in research titles. In one example,

a headteacher's research proposal included the question, 'How do I improve my practice?' The removal of 'I' from the research question clearly makes nonsense of the question, and this opposition to the inclusion of the personal pronoun in a research question has largely been overcome. The generation of a living-educational-theory requires, as in self-studies of teacher-education practices research, the first-person voice of the practitioner researcher as I explain in:

> Whitehead, J. (2015) *The Practice of Helping Students to Find Their First Person Voice in Creating Living-Theories for Education*, pp. 247-255 in Bradbury, H. (Ed) (2015) The SAGE Handbook of Action Research, Third Edition, London; Sage. Copy before final corrections because of copyright restrictions (see https://www.actionresearch.net/writings/jack/jwBRADBURY-Chp24.pdf).

2) A question of acknowledging one's existence as a living contradiction.

In 1989 I distinguished my rationality as dialectical with its nucleus of contradiction. The recognition of oneself as a living contradiction continues to be important in the generation of living-educational-theories. Experiencing oneself as a living contradiction is the experience of holding together one's values and their negation. I continue to experience myself as a living contradiction. I value the response of my imagination to this experience in creating an imagined future that seeks to resolve the contradiction in living more fully the values that I use to give meaning and purpose to my life and professional practice in education. This enables me to explore the possibility of moving my practice in the direction of living my values more fully. However, in Whitehead and Rayner (2006), and in Whitehead (2013), I distinguished my rationality with a form of living logic of inclusion that is distinguished by relationally-dynamic values as explanatory principles in explanations of educational influences in learning. Because of the importance of clarifying the logic that defines one's rationality in Living Theory research I distinguish between propositional, dialectical and living logics.

You might find useful, in understanding relationships between formal or propositional logic, dialectical logic and living logic, to access the following paper:

> Whitehead, J. (2013) *A Living Logic For Educational Research.* A presentation at the 2013 Annual Conference of the British Educational Research Association, University of Sussex 3-5 September 2013. Retrieved 20 November 2019 from: https://www.actionresearch.net/writings/bera13/jwbera13phil010913.pdf

> "The transformations in logic described below, include the transformation from the use of propositional logic to structure the explanations in my masters dissertation on a preliminary investigation of the growth of scientific understanding in adolescents, (Whitehead, 1972). I moved to the dialectical logic that structured my doctoral thesis 'How do I improve my practice? Creating a discipline of education through educational enquiry' (Whitehead 1999). This was followed by the move to the living logic that structures my explanations of my educational influences in my own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of the social formations in which I live, work and research (Whitehead, 2008, p.3)".

My transformation from dialectics to inclusionality, drawing on the original work of Alan Rayner, has been analysed in:

Whitehead, J. & Rayner, A. (2009) *From Dialectics to Inclusionality: A naturally inclusive approach to educational accountability*. Retrieved 20 November 2019 from: https://www.actionresearch.net/writings/jack/arjwdialtoIncl061109.pdf.

The main educational transformation in the rationality of Living Theory research between the 1989 paper below and this 2019 contribution, is in the transformation from a dialectical rationality into an inclusional rationality with its living logic (Whitehead, 2013). In 1989, I focused on dialectical logic with its nucleus of contradiction. In 2019, my rationality is informed by relationally dynamic awareness of space and boundaries that are reflexive, connective and co-created. Alan Rayner introduced me to this understanding of self, existing within relationally dynamic relationships rather than focusing on being a living contradiction. The following 5-minute video marks this transformation in my rationality. I think that the visual data shows Alan Rayner's embodied expressions of his meanings of inclusionality, boundaries and space. As I experienced these expressions my rationality moved from my propositional and dialectical reasoning into a form of inclusionality. The image below at 1:01 minutes into the 5-minute clip focused my attention on Rayner's communication of the nature of relationally dynamic boundaries.

Video 2: Alan Rayner on inclusionality, boundaries and space
https://youtu.be/yVa7FUIA3W8

This is not to deny the value of a dialectical logic in recognising the importance of responding to the experience of a living contradiction. I now emphasise the importance, as explanatory principles, of each individual's unique constellation of relationally dynamic values that constitute the explanatory principles in an explanation of educational influences in learning. My relationally dynamic values now include living global citizenship in human flourishing.

In continuing to explore the implications of asking, researching and answering my question, 'How do I improve what I am doing?' with the generation of a living-educational-theory, my 'I' exists as a living contradiction and as a relationally dynamic 'I'. By this I mean that I exist within an ecology of relationships and knowledges. I want to stress that I continue to recognise the importance of responding to experiences of being a living contradiction. In my 1989 paper I experienced these contradictions as largely internal to myself, in the sense of negated values such as academic freedom. I explored the implications

of this contradiction in Whitehead (1993). In 2019 I see such contradictions as having a connection with influences on human flourishing, such as poverty and globalisation. You can access my analyses of these issues in relation to Living Theory research in two presentations at the University of Central Florida in 2015 and 2016:

Whitehead, J. (2015) *Living-educational-theories of holistic approaches to poverty, globalisation and schooling: A Living Theory approach.* A virtual presentation to the 'International Conference on Poverty Globalisation and Schooling: A holistic approach at the University of Central Florida on the 26-28 February 2015. https://www.actionresearch.net/writings/jack/jwucfpaper260115.pdf.

And in:

Whitehead, J. (2016) *Developments in living-educational-theories of holistic approaches to poverty, globalisation and schooling: A Living Theory research approach.* A virtual presentation to the 'International Conference on Poverty Globalisation and Schooling: A holistic approach' at the University of Central Florida on the 20 February 2016. Retrieved 22 November 2019 from https://www.actionresearch.net/writings/florida/jwucfpaper170216.pdf.

On the 10th December 2018 I presented the following ideas to a seminar at the University of Cumbria that focused on six different contexts with Living Theory researchers who are contributing to a global social movement: *How can i~we enhance my~our contribution to Living Theory research as a global social movement with values that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity?*
https://www.actionresearch.net/writings/jack/jwltglobal101218.pdf

3) How do we show our values in action?

In 1989 I highlighted the importance of values in forming explanatory principles in explanations of educational influences in learning. Following Feyerabend (1975) I believed that I could clarify the meanings of my values in the course of their emergence in practice. In 2019 I continue to believe this. However, following an insight shared by Laidlaw in 1996, as I supervised her doctoral research programme, I now stress the importance of understanding that the values themselves are living and capable of evolving. I also now understand the importance of the relationally dynamic nature of values as they exist and interact with other values in an individual's unique constellation of the values that they use as explanatory principles in explanations of educational influences in learning. I shall clarify my meaning of relationally dynamic values. In 1989 I was aware of the importance of visual data in clarifying the meanings of values. Advances in digital technology have enabled me to use a process of empathetic resonance (Sardello, 2008) with digital visual data, to clarify and communicate the meanings of embodied expressions of values as explanatory principles. These advances also enabled me to understand better some of the limitations of print-based media for communicating the meanings of these values.

In 1989 I had not encountered Vasilyuk's (1991) ideas on the energy paradigm with his point about relationships, between energy and motivation, energy and meaning and energy and values, not being well understood:

"Conceptions involving energy are very current in psychology, but they have been very poorly worked out from the methodological standpoint. It is not clear to what extent these conceptions are merely models of our understanding and to what extent they can be given ontological status. Equally problematic are the conceptual links between energy and motivation, energy and meaning, energy and value, although it is obvious that in fact there are certain links: we know how 'energetically' a person can act when positively motivated, we know that the meaningfulness of a project lends additional strength to the people engaged in it, but we have very little idea of how to link up into one whole the physiological theory of activation, the psychology of motivation, and the ideas of energy which have been elaborated mainly in the field of physics." (pp. 63-64)

Clarifying and communicating the meanings of flows of life-affirming energy, with values of human flourishing, as explanatory principles, are fundamental in generating valid explanations of educational influences in learning. These meanings are contributing to the clarity of relationships between energy and motivation, energy and meaning and energy and values. My meanings of values as explanatory principles include a flow of life-affirming energy that continues to motivate my work and research in education. These values are the ones I use to give meaning and purpose to my life in education. I believe that we all have a unique constellation of such values that are in a relationally dynamic flow of influence in our lives and that we can use as the explanatory principles in our explanations of educational influence in learning. My values have an embodied expression in what I am doing in my educational practices. I clarify their meanings, in the course of their emergence in practice, with the help of value-words such as life-affirming energy, freedom, justice, love and truth.

I continue to believe in the validity of the ideas in Section 3 of the 1989 paper on 'How do we show our values in action?' The ideas stress the importance of values as explanatory principles. From this belief, my ideas about showing our values in action have evolved and transformed. They have evolved through a number of influences. The first influence was Moira Laidlaw's (1996) insight that simply clarifying the meanings of values in the course of their emergence in practice was too limited, because the values themselves should be seen to be living, evolving and transforming.

Another major influence in my understanding of the importance of multi-media texts, for clarifying and communicating the meanings of relationally dynamic values in action, together with my understandings of constraints of purely printed text communications of these meanings, occurred at the 6th World Congress of ALARPM in 2006 in Groningen in the Netherlands. You can access the multi-media presentation at:

Whitehead, J. & Huxtable, M. (2006a) *How Are We Co-Creating Living Standards Of Judgement In Action-Researching Our Professional Practices*? Multi-media text presented at the World Congress of ALARPM and PAR 21-24 August 2006 in Groningen. Retrieved 22 November 2019 from:
https://www.actionresearch.net/writings/jack/jwmh06ALARPMmulti.pdf.

However, the instructions for publications to be accepted in the Proceedings for the Congress insisted that only print-based texts would be acceptable. These restrictions, on the forms of representation acceptable for publication, seriously distorted or omitted the embodied expression of meanings communicated in the multi-media presentation as demonstrated in the purely print-based paper submitted for publication in the Congress proceedings:

> Whitehead, J. & Huxtable, M. (2006b) How Are We Co-Creating Living Standards Of Judgement In Action-Researching Our Professional Practices? Printed text in the Conference Proceedings of the World Congress of ALARPM and PAR 21-24 August 2006 in Groningen. Retrieved 22 November 2019 from https://www.actionresearch.net/writings/jack/jwmhalarpmtext06.pdf.

The above paper by Whitehead and Huxtable (2006a) uses processes of empathetic resonance (Sardello, 2008, p. 13) and empathetic validity (Dadds, 2008, p. 279) to clarify and communicate the meanings of the embodied expressions of the ontological values that are used as explanatory principles in the explanations of educational influences in learning that constitute a living-educational-theory.

Since 1989 my values have been extended through Delong's (2002, *et al.,* 2013) influence on developing a culture of inquiry:

> Delong, J., Campbell, E., Whitehead, J. & Griffin, C. (2013) How are we creating cultures of inquiry with self-studies that transcend constraints of poverty on empathetic learning? Presented at the 2013 American Educational Research Association Conference in San Francisco with the Theme: Education and Poverty: Theory, Research, Policy and Praxis. https://www.actionresearch.net/writings/aera13/lcjdcgaera13jwopt.pdf.

They have also been extended through Pott's (2012) influence in living global citizenship:

> Potts, M., Coombs, S. & Whitehead, J. (2013*) Developing Cultural Empathy And The Living Global Citizenship Agenda: The Social Role And Impact Of Technology In Supporting Global Partnerships.* A presentation at the 2013 Annual Conference of the British Educational Research Association, University of Sussex, 5th September. https://www.actionresearch.net/writings/bera13/markstevejackbera010913.pdf.

I use the word, 'culture' following Said (1993). For Said, culture means two things in particular:

> "First of all it means all those practices, like the arts of description, communication, and representation, that have relative autonomy from the economic, social, and political realms and that often exist in aesthetic forms, one of whose principal aims is pleasure. Included, of course, are both the popular stock of lore about distant parts of the world and specialized knowledge available in such learned disciplines as ethnography, historiography, philology, sociology, and literary history…

Second, and almost imperceptible, culture is a concept that includes a refining and elevating element, each society's reservoir of the best that has been known and thought. As Matthew Arnold put it in the 1860s…. In time, culture comes to be associated, often aggressively, with the nation of the state; this differentiates 'us' from 'them', almost always with some degree of xenophobia. Culture in this sense is a source of identity, and a rather combative one at that, as we see in recent 'returns' to culture and tradition." (Said, pp. xii-xiv, 1993)

4) How do we know that what the researcher says is true? – a question of validity.

In 1989 I believed it to be important to strengthen the validity of a living-educational-theory by subjecting drafts to the mutual rational controls of critical discussion (Popper, 1975) in a validation group of some 3-8 peers. I advocated the use of four questions, see below, that I derived from the work of Habermas (1976) on four criteria of social validity concerning, comprehensibility, evidence, sociohistorical and sociocultural understanding and authenticity to help to strengthen the validity of explanations of educational influences in learning. I continue to hold firmly to this belief. I also advocated the application of six criteria, listed below, from the work of Richard Winter (1989) to enhance the rigour of data gathered in the research.

I continue to be committed to the importance of establishing the validity of a claim to knowledge as an explanation of educational influence in learning. Whilst being introduced to the importance of validity in my initial research as a positivist scientist, following my first degree in science in 1965, I continued to value the importance of validity in my dialectical claims to knowledge and the importance continues in my use of values as explanatory principles and as educational standards of judgement. I also continue to be influenced by Popper's (1975) point about the importance of the idea of mutual rational control by critical discussion and use this as a principle of communication in the use of validation groups.

"Now I hold that scientific theories are never fully justifiable or verifiable, but that they are nevertheless testable. I shall therefore say that objectivity of scientific statements lies in the fact that they can be inter-subjectively tested. The word 'subjective' is applied by Kant to our feelings of conviction (of varying degrees)…… I have since generalized this formulation; for inter-subjective *testing* is merely a very important aspect of the more general idea of inter-subjective *criticism*, or in other words, of the idea of mutual rational control by critical discussion." (Popper, 1975, p. 44)

In considering the validity of a claim to knowledge, a standard of judgement is used to evaluate the validity of the claim. In developing an epistemology for educational knowledge, it is important to clarify the nature of the standards of judgment that are appropriate for evaluating the validity of the claim as I have done in:

Whitehead, J. (2011) *Developing A Relationally Dynamic Epistemology For Educational Knowledge* – Presentation at the British Educational Research Association Conference, 7th September 2011. Retrieved 20 November 2019 from https://www.actionresearch.net/writings/jack/jwbera11dr040911opt.pdf.

I continue to advocate the use of the questions I derived from Habermas' (1976, pp. 2-3) four criteria of social validity, in validation groups of some 3-8 peers that are established to subject draft explanations of educational influences in learning to the mutual rational controls of critical discussion.

i. How do I improve the comprehensibility of my explanation of educational influence in learning?

ii. How do I strengthen the evidence I use to justify the claim to knowledge I make in an explanation of educational influence in learning?

iii. How do I deepen and/or extend my sociohistorical and sociocultural understandings of their influences in my explanations of educational influence in learning?

iv. How do I enhance the authenticity of my explanation, in the sense of showing that I am living the ontological values I claim to hold as fully as possible?

Some researchers, such as Winter (1989), prefer to focus on rigour rather than validity. In 1995 a group of my doctoral researcher supervisions encouraged me to produce what they called The Advanced Bluffers Guide For Educational Action Researchers, For Improving The Quality Of Professional Practice And Creating Living Educational Theories For Cultural Renewal. You can access this at: https://www.actionresearch.net/writings/jack/95contents.pdf. In the third cycle of Action Research, Relevance, Rigour And Validity, Peggy Kok (1995, pp. 76-82) explains how to improve the rigour of her research into improving her practice by drawing on Winter's six criteria of rigour (see https://www.actionresearch.net/writings/jack/cycle3.pdf) on dialectical critique, reflexive critique, plural structure, multiple resource, risk, theory practice transformation.

My ideas on validity continue to be influenced by Collingwood's insight:

"Whether a given proposition is true or false, significant or meaningless, depends on what question it was meant to answer; and anyone who wishes to know whether a given proposition is true or false, significant or meaningless, must first find out what question it was meant to answer". (Collingwood, 1991, p. 39)

Questions of the kind, 'How do I improve my practice?' can rightly be seen to require an answer to 'how' questions in terms of methodology and/or methods. In Living Theory research, the answer also includes an explanation of educational influence in learning. This is because, in Living Theory research, the 'how' is related to 'why'. In answering 'how' questions, Living Theory researchers improve their practice by drawing on insights from their explanations of educational influence.

In helping to strengthen the validity of a living-educational-theory, I often focus on the data that is used as evidence to justify a claim to have influenced the educational learning of others. I find the question, 'What evidence is there that shows and explains the educational influence a Living Theory researcher is having in the learning of others?' a useful question to ask in helping to strengthen the validity of the explanation. Another question I find useful is, 'what evidence is there that shows and explains the educational influence a Living Theory researcher is having in the learning of a social formation?'

In 1989, I understood that a Living Theory doctorate had to conform to the criteria for awarding a Ph.D. These included making an original contribution to knowledge within the fields of educational research and educational practice. Because I now see the importance of the use of an individual's unique constellation of values as explanatory principles, I want to be clear about the difference between the meanings of the words 'original' and 'unique'. I am thinking of the difference between an original contribution to knowledge and the use of a unique constellation of values as explanatory principles in an explanation of educational influence in learning. The originality of a contribution to knowledge in Living Theory research can include an educational knowledgebase, a health visitors professional knowledgebase, and international development professional practitioner's knowleddgebase, amongst others. They usually focuses on three issues in epistemology of the unit of appraisal, the standards of judgement and the logic that determines the rationality of the contribution to knowledge. The unit of appraisal is an individual's explanation of their educational influences in learning. The standards of judgement are the criteria used to evaluate the validity of the knowledge claims. The logic is the mode of thought that is appropriate for comprehending the explanation as rational. The standards of judgement in a living-educational-theory include the unique constellation of values that are used in the generation of the explanation of educational influences in learning.

5) How can we move from the individual to the universal? – a question of generalisability.

Many traditional theories explain behaviour and events in terms of general, linguistic concepts that apply to all the behaviours and events that are subsumed by the theory. This kind of theory has generalisability in that it applies to all. In 1989 a common criticism of a living-educational-theory, as an explanation of an individual's educational influence in learning, was that it was anecdotal, subjective and could not be generalised in the sense of applying to all. To meet this criticism, I pointed out that what I later referred to as Living Theory research was, in Bassey's (2001) terms, relatable, rather than generalisable. In promoting the value of relatability Bassey argues that the merit of a study of singularities lies in the extent to which individuals can relate the study to their practice. I use the idea of relatability of a living-educational-theory to refer to its connection to others, not from within a general linguistic concept of 'all'. In Living Theory research, relatability refers to other individuals who are generating their own living-educational-theories, using their unique constellation of values as explanatory principles and who are drawing insights from traditional theories.

You can access the evidence below that supports, beyond reasonable doubt, the claim that above sense of the relatability of Living Theory research is being fulfilled at https://www.actionresearch.net/living/living.shtml. This evidence includes over 40 Living Theory doctorates that have been legitimated in a range of universities around the world.

6) Which power relations influence the academic legitimacy of a living educational theory? – a question of the politics of truth.

In 1989 my understanding of power relations and the politics of truth was mainly influenced by the ideas of Michel Foucault on power/knowledge. In 2019 my understanding

has been deepened and extended by de Sousa Santos' (2014) ideas on epistemicide. These ideas implicate my own contribution, as a Western Academic, for a failure to recognise the contribution of some indigenous knowledges to a global knowledge-base with values of human flourishing.

In relation to the politics of truth I continue to support the legitimation of practitioner-knowledge, with values of human flourishing as explanatory principles, as a contribution to the spreading influence of Living Theory research as a social movement. In relation to power/knowledge I engaged with three problems.

First, the problem of speaking truth to power. I successfully argued, along with many others that, on principle, the power of truth is served by permitting a challenge in relation to an examiner's judgement, rather than denying such a challenge through seeing competence to be a procedural matter of appointment. As a consequence many university regulations were changed.   I have analysed this problem in detail from the ground of personal experience (Whitehead, 1993).

The second problem concerned the problem of self-identification in texts for publication in high-status refereed Journals. This is still a problem. The problem follows from a central point in this 2019 paper that is identical to the point in the 1989 paper. The point is that academics and practitioners who are generating their own living-educational-theories should identify themselves in their work context and, at some point in their research, offer for public criticism a claim to know their own educational development, without being eliminated from peer-reviewed journals on the grounds that they have identified themselves in their texts.

The third problem continues to be that the power relations in the academic community continue to support the truth of power against power of truth. I have recently provided an analysis of the continuing nature of this problem in a paper on emancipation and epistemicide: two approaches to professing higher education research (Whitehead, 2018).

Since 1989 my understanding of these power relations, through the work of Foucault, has been augmented by the recognition that the work of some education researchers such as Whitty (2008) are continuing to be used to undermine the influence of educational researchers by replacing educational research with education research. By education researchers I am meaning researchers who are contributing their explanations to the forms and fields of education knowledge such as philosophy, sociology, psychology, history, politics, economics, leadership and management of education. By educational researchers I am including researchers who are contributing their explanations of educational influences in their own learning, the learning of others and the learning of the social formations that influence practice and understandings, to the professional and academic knowledge-base of educational practice. It is important to bring together insights from both education and educational researchers in generating explanations of educational influences in learning with values of human flourishing. I have analysed such power relations in:

Whitehead, J. (2014) How Does The Constraining Power Of Education Researchers Influence The Emergence Of Educational Knowledge And Theory? A presentation at

the 2014 Annual Conference of the American Educational Research Association, Philadelphia, April, 2014. Retrieved 22 November 2019 from
https://www.actionresearch.net/writings/aera14/jwaera2014indiv110314.pdf

My understanding has also been augmented by de Sousa Santos' (2014) ideas on epistemicide with his claim that the exercise of power relations through Western Academies is serving to 'kill off' the recognition and legitimation of indigenous knowledges that are contributing to human flourishing. See:

Whitehead, J. (2016) *Review of: de Sousa Santos*, B. (2014) Epistemologies of the South: Justice against Epistemicide. London; Paradigm Publishers. Published in a 2016 issue of the Educational Journal of Living Theories 9(2), 87-98. Retrieved 22 November 2019 from
https://www.actionresearch.net/writings/jack/jwreviewdesantos2016.pdf

In my most recent engagement with the literature on power/knowledge in education I have been influenced by John White's (2019) suggestion, in relation to the concept of 'powerful knowledge', that it would be helpful to abandon the term 'powerful knowledge' and use language more suitable to impartial scholarly investigations (p. 429). I have accepted this criticism that using language from marketing is not appropriate in academic realms of discourse. Hence it is important to check that the use of our language taken from one realm of discourse doesn't inadvertently make the same mistake.

7) Looking back 30 years and looking forward 30 years to 2049 to the influences of Living Theory research in contributing to human flourishing.

30 years on from 1989

In 1973, I moved from my position as Head of Science at Erkenwald Comprehensive School in London to the position as Lecturer in Education at the University of Bath with the intention of contributing to the generation of a form of educational theory that could explain the educational influences in learning of professional educators. My intention was to contribute to the generation of an educational knowledgebase that could be used by professional educators to improve their educational influences in the learning of themselves and their students and pupils. My 1989 paper on creating living-educational-theories explained how I believed that this educational knowledgebase could be generated. I continue to believe that professional educators should engage in intellectual and scholarly discourse, with values of human flourishing, as an important part of an individual's educational development. I continue to believe that deepening and extending such discourses have a humanising influence in the world.

The evidence in this 2019 paper shows beyond reasonable doubt that I have accomplished what I intended in 1989. Practitioner researchers have been enabled to bring their embodied knowledge into the academy and have it recognised as making an original contribution to educational knowledge. The evidence at
https://www.actionresearch.net/living/living.shtml demonstrates that engaging in Living Theory research necessarily requires the practitioner to critically and creatively engage with

academic, educational and practitioner knowledge (their own and other people's) to improve their practice and provide an account of their research that is valid and rigorous, and can contribute to knowledge.

In the 30 years research from 1989 I recognise the educational influences in my learning of many other researchers. I have acknowledged how Moira Laidlaw transformed my understanding of values with her insight that values themselves are living and evolving. I have acknowledged how Jacqueline Delong transformed my understanding of Living Theory research as a social movement with her insights into the significance of generating and evolving cultures of inquiry in supporting the creation of living-educational-theories. Without my collaboration with Jean McNiff, with her outstanding abilities for communicating ideas through writing, I doubt that my later work on Living Theory research would have reached a wider global readership. For example, here is the list of writings that show Jean's influence in my own learning on communicating ideas through writing initially about Action Research and then into my own focus on Living Educational Theory research.

McNiff, J., Whitehead, J. & Laidlaw, M. (1992) *Creating A Good Social Order Through Action Research.* Bournemouth: Hyde.

Whitehead, J. (1993) *The Growth of Educational Knowledge: Creating Your Own Living Educational Theories – Collected Papers*. Bournemouth: Hyde.

McNiff, J. & Whitehead, J. (2002) *Action Research Principles and Practice*, 2nd Edition. London: RoutledgeFalmer.

McNiff, J. & Whitehead, J. (2006) *All You Need To Know About Action Research*. London: Sage.

McNiff, J. & Whitehead, J. (2009) *Doing And Writing Action Research*. London: Sage.

Whitehead, J. & McNiff, J. (2006*) Action Research: Living Theory*. London: Sage.

McNiff, J. & Whitehead, J. (2010) *You And Your Action Research Project*, 3rd Edition. London: Routledge.

Whitehead, J. (2018) *Living Theory Research As A Way Of Life*. Bath: Brown Dog Book

30 years on from 2019 to 2049

In 2019, living-educational-theories and Living Theory research are now beginning to make a contribution to a global social movement for the flourishing of humanity. In 30 years' time, in 2049, I will no longer be an active researcher! I say this to emphasise that it will be necessary for others to contribute to Living Theory research as a global social movement, if this movement is to continue to evolve and support the generation of living-educational-theories with values that offer hope for human flourishing. I believe that the key to the spreading global influence of Living Theory research over the next 30 years is grounded in the decision by individuals to understand the world (and themselves) from their own point of view as individuals claiming originality and exercising judgment, responsible, with universal intent. (Polanyi, 1958, p. 327). I am thinking of others contributing to this social movement through following through on personal decisions such as the following:

On 1 Dec 2019, at 18:51, X wrote:

"I have made a decision! I know what I want to achieve – to spread knowledge of Living Theory research in a way that it influences action across space (global) and time (for future as well as present generations). The standards by which I will evaluate success – people of whatever age, stage and interest engaged in Living Theory research. It would be great if everyone produced valid accounts of their living-theory research but if people even started on the process by taking responsibility for what they do, recognising and questioning the values that give meaning to their life, testing them in practice... and inch towards creating an account of their living-theory research (Living Theory research as a way of life) then I won't be satisfied but at least I will feel the last years of my life had been spent doing something productive and worthwhile."

On request, I have anonymised the quotation.

On the 9th December 2019 I was present, as a non-participant observer, at Arianna Briganti's doctoral viva on the thesis on her living-theory of international development. The originality focused on the relationally dynamic values of empathy, social and gender justice, outrage, responsibility, love for and faith in humanity which are conducive to dignity. The values were used as explanatory principles in Briganti's explanation of her educational influences in my own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of the social formations that influence her practice and understandings. Briganti is young enough to be able to look back in 2049 to 30 years of a productive life in international development and I am looking forward to sharing some of these years of supporting each other in our productive lives. Giulia Carozzi (2019), is another Living Theory researcher in the community of Living Theory researchers who is young enough to be able to look back in 2049 to a productive life. Carozzi (2019) states, in her self-enquiry on 'Towards the development of my living-educational-theory research' in this issue of EJOLTS**:**

"This article is intended as an account of my educational journey that led me from being a passive learner to become the researcher of my own learning processes. I explore two of my relationally-dynamic values (Laidlaw, 2018a) for which I wish my work to be held accountable: hope and responsibility… I see the values of hope and responsibility as central in the development of my self-enquiry, which is contributing to the development of my own living-educational-theory research. This offers me the opportunity to consider values as explanatory principles in the explanation of the meanings of my actions; it also requires me to engage in a central Living Theory research question "how can I improve my practice?"

You can see some other implications of making this kind of personal decision in exercising a responsibility to influence the curriculum of programmes in Higher Education so that it is influenced by Living Theory research. In 1989 I had no idea about the technological innovations such as the internet, digital video and applications such as wiki technology that are now being used in 2019 to generate living-educational-theories and to spread the global influence of Living Theory research. I am thinking here of the on-line Educational Journal of Living Theories at https://ejolts.net/ , the Living Theory wiki at http://ejolts-wiki.mattrink.co.uk/index.php/Main_Page and the communication of Living Theory research in Professional Development in video presentations such as those in the TEDx talk at the University of Bolton on the 24 October 2019 at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jf1kFHLdiPY and at the International Professional Development Association Conference at Aston University on the 30th November 2019 at https://studio.youtube.com/video/TLjIAiXBsZw/edit . Over the next 30 years I feel sure that

it will be important to understand how new technological innovations that have yet to be invented can be used to enhance the educational influences of Living Theory research as a global social movement.

I have shared my research into the question*, How can i~we enhance my~our contribution to Living Theory research as a global social movement with values that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity?* in my 2018 paper at https://www.actionresearch.net/writings/jack/jwltglobal101218.pdf

The conversational space of the weekly Post-doctoral Living Theory groups is a significant context in which I am continuing to share my own ideas and the ideas of others about how we could enhance the spreading educational influence of Living Theory research as a global social movement. Some possibilities that are currently being explored in that group and elsewhere include:

i. Collaborating to produce a text on the supervision of Living Theory research programmes for masters, doctoral research and non-accredited enquiries.
ii. Developing SKYPE support groups for those supporting masters, doctoral research and non-accredited enquiries.
iii. Developing new SKYPE groups to support those engaged in masters, doctoral Living Theory research and non-accredited enquiries.
iv. Creating self-study texts for different ages and stages who want to engage in Living Theory research.
v. Exploring the possibilities of on-line courses to support students and supervisors in Living Theory research.
vi. Exploring the possibility of organising a MOOC on Living Theory research.
vii. Exploring online master-classes and webinars.
viii. Extending the impact of EJOLTs.
ix. Promoting the use of social media, such as the Living Theory Facebook page begun by Joy Mounter, and Twitter.

Over the next 30 years I believe that masters programmes on professional development drawing on a Living Theory approach will do much to spread the global influence and to evolve Living Theory research. The first such programme has been validated by Newman University (see http://www.spanglefish.com/allicanbe/mavalues-ledleadership.asp). It includes a rationale produced by Joy Mounter at the Learning Institute in Cornwall (see pages 2-14 of the Validation Document at https://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/s3.spanglefish.com/s/23878/documents/post-validation-ma-values-led-leadership-documentation-final.pdf)

I do hope that you will connect with me at jack@livingtheory.org or preferably with other Living Theory researchers who are contributing to Living Theory research as a global social movement, in order to share your own thoughts on how to enhance the energy-flowing values and understandings that carry hope for human flourishing.

My 1989 paper was focused on the legitimation of living-educational-theories. This 2019 paper continues to recognise the importance of gaining academic legitimation for living-educational-theories in Universities around the world. My own focus now includes, as a priority, enhancing the influence of Living Theory research as a global social movement with values of human flourishing. Such a movement is strategic, political and at a higher level than the individual in stressing the contribution of communities of Living Theory researchers. I am hopeful that we can work and research together to strengthen these global educational influences with our values of human flourishing.

Acknowledgements

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