

## **Combining Voices In Living Educational Theories That Are Freely Given In Teacher Research**

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Also accessible from

<http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/aerict08/jwictr08key.htm>

A video of the presentation can be accessed from:



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g4kL1Ek6dJk>

### **Abstract**

In this keynote I want to share four ideas that may be helpful in combining our voices as teacher-researchers in order to extend our educational influence.

The first idea is that multi-media forms of representation are enabling teacher-researchers to represent and understand qualities of recognition in their educational relationships with their students. I am thinking of educational relationships that flow with a life affirming energy and a relationally dynamic awareness that tend to be masked or omitted from much writing on education and about educational research.

The second idea is that we can generate our living educational theories as explanations of 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 and offer them as gifts to others.

The third idea is that we can combine our voices in enhancing our educational influence through producing and communicating our educational theories in the living boundaries of cultures in resistance.

The fourth idea is that while we live with the relationally dynamic awareness of space and boundaries that Rayner (2004) refers to as inclusionality, our present ways of representing our educational knowledge in the propositional and dialectical theories legitimated in the Academy and in established and renowned internationally refereed journals tend to mask this relationally dynamic awareness. They also mask or omit the educational significance of our flows of life-affirming energy.

Multi-media narratives of living educational theories are shown to reveal the meanings of such flows of energy and values. When combined in the living boundaries of cultures in resistance they can be a transformatory influence in educational change.

### **Introduction:**

I want to begin by thanking the organising committee of the 2008 ICTR conference for this opportunity to explore some implications of ideas on combining voices in living educational theories, in teacher-research.

Since beginning my first teacher-research into my classroom practice for my masters degree in 1970 and attending my first ICTR conference in San Francisco in 1992 I have been delighted by the global growth of the influence of teacher-research as a form of professional development and as a way of helping pupils and students to improve their learning. I have also been most impressed by the contributions to educational knowledge generated by teacher-researchers. I am thinking here of contributions to transforming understandings of educational theory and to generating the new epistemology for educational knowledge as advocated by Donald Schon (1995). I am also grateful for this opportunity to develop further the ideas in the 2005 Keynote at ICTR at McGill University on '*How Can We Improve The Educational Influences Of Our Teacher-Researcher Quests?*' (<http://www.jackwhitehead.com/ictr05/jwictr05key.htm> )

In this 2008 keynote I want to emphasise the importance of teacher-research for improving educational practices, for improving the social contexts in which the educational practices are located and for contributing to educational knowledge. I believe that everyone is here today because of a desire to enhance their understandings and to share their ideas on how teacher- research can help to improve the educational experiences of students and contribute to the creation of a better world. The focus of my own research programme for the last 35 years has been to find ways of bringing the embodied knowledge of professional educators into the Academy for accreditation and academic legitimation at the highest level possible. This has involved engaging with issues of appropriate value-laden standards of judgment, appropriate methodologies, the politics of educational knowledge and appropriate forms of representation for explanations of educational influences in learning. I shall explore these issues in relation to the four ideas below.

### **1) Multi-media forms of representation of recognition, flows of life-affirming energy and a relationally dynamic awareness of space and boundaries.**

I'd like to begin with three video-clips from classrooms to show the qualities in educational relationships that I want to see lived more fully in the world and that I want to see expressed and represented in our combined voices as teacher-researchers. The first clip is from a classroom in China, the second from a classroom in Canada and the third from a classroom in the UK. As I move the cursor quickly along the first two clips I would like you to focus on the expression of mutual recognition between pupils and teacher, the flow of life-affirming energy between them and the relational dynamics in the space and living boundaries of these educational spaces. It is these

qualities that I am saying are masked or omitted from most established and renowned internationally refereed journals.



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z1jEOhxDGno>



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rvLyxLU1o3U>

When I look at writings about education and teacher-research in the academic research journals I am struck by the gap between the relationally dynamic and energy flowing values shown through the video-clips and the meanings that can be carried in words on pages of paper. What I think the video-clips highlight, are the relationally dynamic awarenesses of space and boundaries that we can all recognise as living relationships in the educational spaces we create with our students.

This next clip is some four minutes long. It shows three six year olds and a teacher reflecting on the use of the TASC wheel to help their learning. The TASC wheel (Thinking Actively in a Social Context) emerged from Belle Wallace's (2000) original research over some 19 years in Zwa Zulu Natal. It includes the action reflection cycles used by action researchers.



Working with their teacher, Joy Mounter, the six year olds in video-clip explain their use of the TASC wheel and then offer suggestions for modifying the model so that it becomes a 3D and dynamic model to represent their learning. Whilst working on a masters unit on understanding learners and learning at the University of Bath Joy explained to her pupils what she was doing at the University. She was surprised by their responses as they wanted to know how she could do such a thing without involving them as the learners. Joy agreed with her pupils and worked with them in developing their understandings of learners and learning. Here is a video-clip included in Joy's answer, with her pupils, to the question, 'Can children carry out action research about learning, creating their own learning theory?' (see <http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/tuesdayma/joymounterull.htm>)



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ti4syOrIDdY>

Joy has combined her voice with her pupils in answering the question, 'Can children carry out action research about learning, creating their own learning theory?' In answering this question Joy has also combined with her pupils in understanding the action reflection cycles in the TASC wheel and in making creative responses to the ideas of others.

In showing you what teacher and pupil researchers are capable of I am aware of a danger of engaging with you in sustaining what Bernstein (2000) calls a mythological discourse. This is a kind of discourse that might appear to be educationally transformatory but is actually serving to reproduce existing social formations. It is reproductive because it does not transform the power relations that are keeping in place existing hierarchical arrangements in society.

I now need to introduce the idea of cultures in resistance to focus on the transformative and reproductive influences of teacher-research.

I want to consider the possibility that we are conducting our teacher-research in the living boundaries between a professional culture that can recognise the educational qualities in the above clips and an academic culture that omits these qualities in its forms of representation and theories.

I draw my understanding of culture from Said (1993) when he writes:

*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* (Said, p. xii1993).

*"By the 'living boundaries of cultures in resistance' I am meaning that that there is something expressed in the boundary sustained by one culture that is a direct challenge to something in the other culture. For example, in education there is a political culture that has been imposing a regime of testing in schools. There is a professional culture that has been stressing the importance of creativity. There continues to be tensions in the boundaries of these cultures..."* (Whitehead, 2008a).

I was first attracted to the idea of the teacher as researcher during my classroom research into the growth of my pupils' scientific understanding, for my masters dissertation (Whitehead, 1972). This introduction to the idea of the teacher as researcher coincided with my recognition that the dominant culture of educational theory was mistaken. The view in the dominant culture, known as the disciplines approach, held that the explanations I gave for my educational influences in learning were *at best pragmatic maxims having a first crude and superficial justification in practice that in any rationally developed theory would be replaced by principles with more fundamental theoretical justification* (Hirst, 1983, p. 18).

I just want to focus on the idea '**would be replaced**'. What I find outrageous in the above statement is that the explanations we produce as teacher-researchers from our practical experience, and that we justify in terms of the results of our individual activities and practices, **would be replaced** by principles with more theoretical justifications from abstract forms of rationality in the theories of traditional disciplines of education.

I believe that many of you will have experienced the power relations in universities that support the above move to replace your practical principles by those of abstract rationality. I am thinking of the power relations that support only abstract forms of conceptual reasoning in what counts as educational knowledge. You can see these forms of reasoning in the 2007 special issue of the International Journal of Research and Method in Education:

*"The analysis of what is scientific continues in Wilf Carr's article. He argues that the assumption that educational research should be seen as a form of social science is flawed and that it should be seen rather as a species of practical science. Like Oancea, he draws on Aristotelian concepts to argue that a practitioner acts educationally by acquiring an ethical disposition to act in an educationally principled way. He suggests that Gadamer's philosophy can guide us here by providing a model of 'science' which is less reliant, or not reliant at all, on notions of method. For practical science, reflectivity amongst practitioners is the key and it leads to a conception of educational research starting from an understanding of what education is (rather than what research is). Carr suggests that this kind of research would no longer produce social scientific knowledge 'on' or 'about' education but would develop self-knowledge amongst practitioners, enabling them 'to evaluate their practice on the basis of a coherent and clearly articulated educational point of view'. Quality criteria for this kind of educational research 'will not be the outcome of an abstract theoretical discussion about the criteria themselves', but will be forged through an understanding of what constitutes 'excellence' in educational research."* (Thomas and Gorard, p. 239, 2007).

For me, the problem with this form of reasoning is not that I do not agree with Carr's suggestion that we need to develop self-knowledge as practitioners and to forge our quality criteria for educational research from what constitutes 'excellence' in educational research. The problem is that the above form of reasoning that dominates this special issue, and most Journals of Education, is trapped within abstract relationships between concepts in a way that omits the life-affirming energy and relationally dynamic understandings of living educational relationships as shown in the above video-clips. My point is that they are serving a reproductive function of a mythological discourse in sustaining forms of academic knowledge that are excluding the flows of life-affirming energy, and embodied expressions of the values-laden educational knowledge of educators, from their representations of educational knowledge.

What I want to offer today is a form of living educational theorising that is grounded in what educators and students are doing and that draws insights from the theories of abstract rationality without being replaced by them.

## **2) Creating our own living educational theories and offering them freely to others.**

I first proposed the idea of living educational theory to make a distinction. This is the distinction between the explanations of education, derived from theories in the disciplines of education characterised by abstract rationality, and the explanations produced by individuals for their educational influences in learning. I am thinking of the latter explanations in terms of our values-laden and energised practical principles

together with insights from theories from the traditional disciplines of education.

In the late 1970s I was greatly influenced by the work of the logician Evard Ilyenkov (1977, p. 312) and the question he asked about representing 'living contradictions':

*'If an object exists as a living contradiction what must the thought be (statement about the object) that expresses it?'*

I experienced myself, my 'I', as a living contradiction in 1971, when watching a video-tape of my classroom practice. I could see myself holding my commitment to enquiry learning with my pupils together with my denial of enquiry learning in my practice. Until I saw the video tape of my classroom I believed that I had established enquiry learning with my pupils. The video showed that I was actually giving the pupils 'their' questions and organising the learning resources in terms of pre-set answers. As soon as I saw myself as this living contradiction my imagination began to create possibilities for moving my practice in the direction of living my values and beliefs more fully in my practice.

I first began to formulate an understanding of action reflection cycles as I acted on a chosen possibility, and evaluated the influences of my actions in my pupils learning and produced an account of my professional learning (Whitehead, 1972, 1976). The idea that we teacher-researchers could generate our living educational theories (Whitehead, 1989, Whitehead & McNiff, 2006) as explanations for our educational influences in learning emerged from enquiries into improving learning with pupils. This idea has been used in many educational enquiries throughout the world to distinguish the unique living theories of teacher-researchers as they make their own original contributions to educational knowledge. I want to draw your attention to five doctoral theses from teacher researchers in Ireland that have been legitimated at the University of Limerick over the past two years with the supervision of Jean McNiff. They can be accessed from Jean's website at

<http://www.jeanmcniff.com/papers/reports.html>

Mairin Glenn (2006) *Working With Collaborative Projects: My Living Theory Of A Holistic Educational Practice*.

Caitriona McDonagh (2007) *My Living Theory Of Learning To Teach For Social Justice: How Do I Enable Primary School Children With Specific Learning Disability (Dyslexia) And Myself As Their Teacher To Realize Our Learning Potentials?*

Mary Roche (2007) *Towards A Living Theory Of Caring Pedagogy: Interrogating My Practice To Nurture A Critical, Emancipatory And Just Community Of Enquiry* .

Bernie Sullivan (2006) *A Living Theory Of A Practice Of Social Justice: Realizing The Right Of Traveler Children To Educational Equality* .

Margaret Cahill (2007) *My Living Educational Theory Of Inclusional Practice* .

There are several distinguishing features of living educational theories. The first is a tension or contradiction between the values and understandings the individual uses to give meaning and purpose to their life, and experiences in which these values and

understandings are not being lived as fully as the individual believes to be possible. I am associating such values with the experience of a life-affirming energy whose representation seems to be missing from explanations derived from abstract rationality. The most recent living theory doctorate to be legitimated in the Academy with the explicit recognition of flows of energy is that of Adler-Collins (2007) for his enquiry:

*Developing an inclusional pedagogy of the unique: How do I clarify, live and explain my educational influences in my learning as I pedagogise my healing nurse curriculum in a Japanese University?*

His original contribution includes an energy-flowing, living standard of inclusionality:

*An energy-flowing, living standard of inclusionality as a space creator for engaged listening and informed learning is offered as an original contribution to knowledge.* (Adler-Collins, 2007. (For the Abstract see <http://www.actionresearch.net/living/jekan.shtml>)

I believe that everyone here understands that we cannot do anything without energy. I associate a life-affirming energy with the educational relationships and influences of teacher-researchers. Such energy is usually affirmed with religious and spiritual expressions. Through my bodily expressions today, in being present with you, I hope that you can feel the flow the life-affirming energy I express in my educational relationships. I bring this energy into my explanations of educational influences in learning with the help of visual narratives. These narratives include video of my practice. If you access the following url using a web-browser you can see how I integrate video-evidence into a visual narrative:

*Generating Educational Theories That Can Explain Educational Influences In Learning: living logics, units of appraisal, standards of judgment.* <http://www.leeds.ac.uk/educol/documents/166811.htm>

To show what I am meaning by life-affirming energy I would like you, if time permits, to talk to the person next to you for a couple of minutes each about what really matters to you in your life in education. I'm thinking of what you care about in your practice and that you are probably working on to improve so that you can live your values and understandings more fully in your practice.

I am thinking of living educational theories as gifts that we offer freely to others. Many social theories tend to focus on economic relations where what we produce through our labour we exchange for money. I like Sen's (1999) economic theory of human capability where he resists the reduction of human capabilities to human capital and stresses the importance of freedom. I like the ideas of Yunus Mohammed (2007) who along with the Grameen Bank won the 2006 Nobel Peace Prize for ideas about microfinance and social business. What I want to suggest is that the majority of people present today have access to sufficient economic, cultural, symbolic and narrative capital (Watts, 2008) that we can offer freely our educational theories as gifts to others, not in an exchange relationship but in a relationship in which an

individual can freely offer this gift with no expectation of a return.

I now want to focus on the idea of combining our living educational theories from our teacher-research in the living boundaries of cultures in resistance.

### **3) Combining our voices in living educational theories in the living boundaries of cultures in resistance.**

In this section I want to introduce the idea of the 'living boundaries of cultures in resistance' and summarise the points I made in a presentation to a recent conference (18-20 March 2008) on Cultures in Resistance in the UK on:

*How are living educational theories being produced and legitimated in the boundaries of cultures in resistance?*

<http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/jack/jwmanchester170308.htm>

The main reason that I am engaging with the experience of living in the boundaries of cultures in resistance is that I think we could combine our voices as teacher researchers in extending the influence of living educational theories in the creation of a world of educational quality. The living educational theories that are created within a particular context can only have a significant influence in the education of social formations through a cultural influence in the lives of others.

All of the teacher-researchers I work with in Bath have talked about tensions they feel between the testing culture they are subjected to through government agencies and their desire to engage creatively with their pupils as they develop a personalized learning agenda with them. The accounts of Amy Skuse and Ros Hurford record their creative responses to such tensions:

*Amy Skuse: How have my experiences of Year 2 SAT's influenced my perceptions of assessment in teaching and learning?*

<http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/tuesdayma/amyskuseeeoct07.htm>

*Ros Hurford: How does the writing of a new gifted and talented policy enable me to reflect upon and evaluate my personal values about gifts and talents? In what ways am I living my values in this area?*

<http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/tuesdayma/roshurfordee2.htm>

I am placing an emphasis on the importance of the communication potential of web-technology for combining our voices in creating and sharing our living educational theories in the living boundaries of cultures in resistance. I think that we can help each other to sustain our flows of life-affirming energy in extending our educational influences through the explicit recognition of the value we have found in each others' narratives. This is what I am meaning by combining our voices in living educational theories. While we might sometimes feel an energy-sapping lack of recognition or open hostility to extending the influence of our ideas in our workplaces, we can also feel the life-affirming energy in seeing our ideas being of value to others in the creation of their living theories.

In Claire Formby's enquiry into How do I sustain a loving, receptively responsive

educational relationship with my pupils which will motivate them in their learning and encourage me in my teaching? (see <http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/tuesdayma/formbyEE300907.htm>)

Claire integrates video-clips from a streamed server to explain her meanings of a 'loving, receptively responsive educational relationship' and acknowledges the value of some of the above ideas in her own living theory.

The global influence of combining voices in generating, sharing and communicating living educational theories can also be seen in South Africa (Wood, Morar, & Mostert, 2007) in China (Laidlaw, 2006; Tian and Laidlaw, 2006), Canada (DeLong, 2002; DeLong, Black, & Wideman, 2005; DeLong, Black, & Knill-Griesser, 2005), the UK (Laidlaw, 1996; Smith, 2003; McNiff & Whitehead, 2006) and Japan (Adler-Collins, 2007).

I now want to look at the importance of our relationally dynamic awareness of space and boundaries in combining voices in living educational theories in teacher research.

#### **4) A relationally dynamic awareness of space and boundaries: inclusionality.**

I began this presentation with three video clips that I moved through in seconds to communicate my meaning of an educational space that is distinguished by a relationally dynamic awareness of space and boundaries. What I think the speeded up clips show clearly is a relational dynamic in the movements between the participants in the space. Individuals are receptively responding to each other in the co-creation of their living boundaries in the educational space. As teacher-researchers I am assuming that we have all experienced the complexity of responding to the diverse needs of our pupils and students. I am assuming that we are still curious about how to represent our educational relationships in valid explanations of our educational influences in learning.

What I am suggesting is that we are all living with the kind of relationally dynamic awareness of space and boundaries as shown in the above videos. However, I am claiming that the dominating forms of representation used in Universities for explaining educational practices and influences in learning, remove the energy we express in our embodied educational knowledges and do not express adequately, in standards of judgment in academic texts, the expression of the embodied values we use to give meaning and purpose to our lives in education. I believe that the reason for this lies in the continuing tendency of academic theories to replace the practical principles used by individual to explain their lives, by principles with justifications in abstract rationality. What I am saying we should be creating are different forms of academic theories from a perspective of inclusionality:

*At the heart of inclusionality... is a simple shift in the way we frame reality, from absolutely fixed to relationally dynamic. This shift arises from perceiving space and boundaries as connective, reflective and co-creative, rather than severing, in their vital role of producing heterogeneous form and local identity...*

*To make this shift does not depend on new scientific knowledge or conjecture about supernatural forces, extraterrestrial life or whatever. All it requires is awareness and*

*assimilation into understanding of the spatial possibility that permeates within, around and through natural features from sub-atomic to Universal in scale. We can then see through the illusion of 'solidity' that has made us prone to regard 'matter' as 'everything' and 'space' as 'nothing', and hence get caught in the conceptual addiction and affliction of 'either/or' 'dualism'. An addiction that so powerfully and insidiously restricts our philosophical horizons and undermines our compassionate human spirit and creativity. (Rayner, 2004)*

I want to highlight the importance of understanding that from a perspective of inclusionality we are all included in the dynamics of a common living-space that flows with life-affirming energy. As Ted Lumley, one of the originators of the idea of inclusionality, points about about the importance of recognizing a 'pooling-of-consciousness'.

*"...an inspiring pooling-of-consciousness that seems to include and connect all within all in unifying dynamical communion.... The concreteness of 'local object being'... allows us to understand the dynamics of the common living-space in which we are all ineluctably included participants." (Lumley, 2008, p.3)*

Working with such a relationally dynamic awareness of space and boundaries does not mean that everything is to be included. The living boundaries of cultures in resistance sometimes include the need for protection against damaging influences, especially those involving a lack of recognition.

In learning how to combine our voices as teacher-researchers in the generation and testing of living educational theories I am aware of the importance of including some narrative wreckage in the story of a life well-lived. I am thinking of the kind of narrative wreckage that involves a lack of recognition. A smooth story of self might (Maclure, 1996, p. 282) initially feel comfortable to a listener, but without the acknowledgment of what has been involved in persisting in the face of pressure, a story can lack authenticity. In a contribution to the conference tomorrow with Jacqueline Delong (Whitehead & Delong, 2008) we are focusing on 'Persisting In The Face Of Pressures' to emphasise the importance of including one's responses to difficult and painful experiences in one's living educational theory.

Here is the extract from the paper with Jacqueline that serves to highlight the need for recognition and for developing protective boundaries, in the face of violations, that can continue to be open to the flow of life-affirming energy and values that carry hope for the future of humanity.

*" Human beings seek recognition of their own worth, or of the people, things, or principles that they invest with worth. The desire for recognition, and the accompanying emotions of anger, shame and pride, are parts of the human personality critical to political life. According to Hegel, they are what drives the whole historical process. (Fukuyama, 1992, p. xvii)*

It was the denial of such recognition by a suicide bomber that cost Gill Hicks her legs and others their lives on July 7<sup>th</sup> 2005. On this day Gill Hicks was on the London underground pulling out of King's Cross Station when Abdullah Shaheed Jamal detonated the bomb that injured Gill. Gill writes:

*"It – I didn't matter...*

*I wish he had made the effort to know me before he detonated his bomb. I wish I could have looked at him in the eyes and had the opportunity to say – I am not your enemy, I wish you no harm, I am not the enemy.*

*I am a person, a human being – just like you, just like you." (pp. 2-3)"*

Hence my emphasis on the significance of the recognitions in the three video-clips above. In overcoming and circumventing obstacles to the flow of values of humanity I feel that two affirmations have been most significant in my practitioner-research.

The first is the experience of an energy that I feel is flowing through the cosmos. This energy is life-affirming for me and I associate this energy with the state of *being affirming by the power of being itself*. When I read these words in Paul Tillich's work on *The Courage To Be* (1968, p.168), I understood that this referred to theistic experience. Having no theistic desires myself I use the words to communicate my experience of a flow of life-affirming energy.

The second affirmation is in relationships with others who recognize who I feel myself to be. These two affirmations are enabling me to overcome and circumvent the following episodes of a lack of recognition of my contribution to educational knowledge. I do not want to minimize the emotions of anger, rage, humiliation and embarrassment I felt on experiencing the lack of recognition in the following judgments. What I do want to emphasize is the importance of responding to the lack of recognition, embedded in institutional power relations, by keeping open the channels that flow with life-affirming energy, pleasure and humour.

As I present the judgments I hope that you feel my spiritual resilience as I seek to strengthen the educational influences in my own learning through creative responses to the following judgments made on behalf of the University of Bath and carrying the disciplinary power of the organization.

Without these judgments I am certain that I would not have exercised and expressed my creativity in the way that I have done in my original contributions to educational knowledge. I don't want to be understood as thanking those who contributed to these judgments. However I do want to recognize the part that they have played in my finding a creative way of preventing their damage through re-channelling the energy in my feelings of rage, anger, disgust, humiliation and embarrassment. I am thinking here of the importance of making creative responses with humour, that can re-channel the energy into the loving pleasure of my generation of educational knowledge with my teaching and educational research.

I am hoping that you will help me to understand the extent to which I can successfully re-channel the energy, through humour, into this loving pleasure. I imagine that I am expressing myself with this pleasure here with you now as I recount experiences that at the time included the passion of the above emotions. I think your responses will help me to see the extent to which I am doing what I believe that I am doing.

I imagine that everyone would like to see some evidence that they are influencing their institution in some systemic way. Here are two judgments that provide evidence of my own systemic influence. The first is in a 1976 judgment, approved by the University Senate, that clearly asserts that I have influenced the School of Education. Given a desire to enhance my educational influence, a desire I think we might all share about the work we do, I can imagine you might experience yourself, as I did, a living contradiction on being informed of the following influence in the whole School of Education:

**1976** Grounds for recommending that a tenured appointment should not be offered, from the Academic Staff Committee, approved by Senate:

*You have not given satisfaction in the teaching of prescribed courses.*

*There is an absence of evidence to suggest that you have pursued research of sufficient quality for the assessors to be assured of your ability to perform adequately the duties of a University Lecturer.*

*You have exhibited forms of behavior which have harmed the good order and morale of the School of Education.*

Many voices combined in protecting my employment at the University of Bath from these judgments and in 1977 I accepted a tenured appointment until August 2009.

My desire to extend my educational influence remained undiminished and I received the following evidence that my influence was now extending to the whole University but not in the way I was intending!

**1987** Following complaints about my activities and writings from two Professors of Education a disciplinary meeting was held which included the University Solicitor and I was informed in writing by the University Registrar that:

*Your activities and writings are a challenge to the present and proper organisation of the University and not consistent with the duties the university wish you to pursue in your teaching and research.... You must be loyal to your employer.*

These judgments came after the following rejections that contribute to my stories of narrative wreckage as I felt the power relations that refused me permission to question the judgments of examiners of research degrees, in any circumstances.

**1980/82** Following two rejections of doctoral submissions I could not, within the university regulations of the time, question the competence of my examiners' judgements. The letter from the Secretary and Registrar of the University informing me that I was not permitted to question these judgements, under any circumstances, stated:

*Once the examiners have been appointed, their competence cannot in any circumstances be questioned.*

**1991** The letter of 1987 from the Registrar containing the above statement was used

as evidence in 1990 by a Board of Studies in a recommendation to Senate that there was prima facie evidence of a breach of my academic freedom. Senate established a working party on a matter of academic freedom. They reported in 1991:

*The working party did not find that... his academic freedom had actually been breached. This was however, because of Mr Whitehead's persistence in the face of pressure; a less determined individual might well of have been discouraged and therefore constrained.*

Here is my re-enactment of a meeting with the working party where I had been invited to respond to a draft report in which the conclusion was that my academic freedom had not been breached; a conclusion I agreed with (Thanks to Sarah Fletcher for taking the clip). What I did not agree with was that there was no recognition of the pressure to which I had been subjected to while sustaining my academic freedom. In the clip I think you will feel the energy in my passion for academic freedom and academic responsibility. Following my meeting with the working party the report that went to Senate acknowledged that the reason my academic freedom had not been breached was because of my persistence in the face of pressure. This phrase, 'persistence in the face of pressure' is a phrase I continue to use in combining voices in teacher research.



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MBTLfyjkFh0>

The most recent creative and energised response, to a lack of recognition, is my response in the here and now to a judgment about my contribution to knowledge. In 2006 this contribution was judged by the Academic Staff Committee at the University in response to my application for a promotion from a Lecturer to a Readership. The UK differs from the US in having a series of promotions from Lecturer to Senior Lecturer to Reader to Professor. I had not previously applied for promotion because a new contract would have meant that I had to give up my tenured contract. So many individuals had freely given their time, energy and talents to making sure that the judgment in 1976, that I was not to be offered a tenured contract, did not stand, that I did not feel comfortable, until 2005, with applying for a promotion with a new contract that would have removed tenure. It wasn't anything to do with the economic security of a tenured position. It was the knowledge of the political and ethical integrity of those who, in 1976 had worked for me to be offered a tenured appointment. The main reason that I gave way to the urges of some colleagues to apply for a Readership was that I thought the institutional recognition of my original ideas in the generation of living educational theories, as a contribution to educational knowledge worthy of at least a Readership, would help to spread the influence of the ideas. I still feel sure that this recognition by the University of Bath would help to spread this influence.

As you read the judgment do please bear in mind the point I have been making for years that the forms of representation in the established and renowned international refereed journals, when they restrict contributions to words or still images on paper, do not permit the communication of my meanings of life-affirming energy or values-laden, relationally dynamic standards of judgment:

**2006** An application for a Readership was rejected by the Academic Staff Committee on the grounds that:

*For a promotion to Reader, the Committee needs to establish that a candidate has made an outstanding contribution to the advancement of knowledge. In this regard the Committee considered that the case for this level of contribution was not yet made and in order to develop the case further it will be necessary for you to focus on producing articles which can be disseminated via established and renowned international refereed journals.*

In meeting the 2006 obstacle to the recognition of what I claim to be a contribution to educational knowledge, worthy at least of a Readership at the University of Bath, I want to find a way of circumventing the obstacle rather than overcoming it. I am now feeling that the public understanding of why the University of Bath did not recognize, in 2006, my contribution to educational knowledge as a contribution appropriate for a Readership, will do more to enhance the influence of living educational theories than the acknowledgment of this recognition in the offering of a Readership.

What I am hoping that I have been able to do in this presentation is to include some of the narrative wreckage that breaks into a smooth story of self in the creation of a living educational theory. I hope that I have been able to do this in a way that is authentic in not shying away from critical incidents, yet also prevents a possible pathologising influence. I am thinking of pathologies that can develop if passionate expressions in emotions such as rage, shame, humiliation and embarrassment are not re-channelled into the pleasurable energy of contributions to educational knowledge (Cho, 2005). I am thinking of contributions that flow with the pleasure of a loving life-affirming energy in educational relationships that I hope you are experiencing me expressing with you now.

I want to finish with the idea that we can all help each other, whatever age, to create our own living educational theories in which we account to ourselves for living our values and understandings as fully as we can. You can see at:

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

and at:

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

the living theories of master and doctor educators that have been freely given for sharing through the internet, in the hope that they will contribute ideas that may be of

value in the generation of your living theories as we combine our voices in enhancing our educational influences in improving our local and global contexts. To conclude I return to the images of educational relationships from the video-clips as a reminder of the importance of the flows of loving energy in our educational relationships, of the importance of communicating the continuously moving dynamic of educational relationships and of making sure that these are represented appropriately in explanations of educational influences in learning.



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z1jEOhxDGno>



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rvLyxLU1o3U>



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ti4syOrIDdY>

Thank you once again for enabling me to share ideas with you. I always feel inspired by the love for what we are doing in education and that we show that we are willing to share in tomorrow's programme at ICTR.

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