

**LOVE AT WORK: WHAT IS MY LIVED EXPERIENCE OF
LOVE, AND HOW MAY I BECOME AN INSTRUMENT OF
LOVE'S PURPOSE?**

Eleanor Lohr

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MAY I BECOME AN INSTRUMENT OF LOVE'S PURPOSE?**

Abstract of PhD Submission to the University of Bath 2006

Eleanor Lohr

This is a first person action research account in which I immerse myself in my embodied experience of love. My aim is to learn through love how my practice, as a Director in social housing, and as a teacher of yoga, might be improved by giving primacy to a value laden theorising of my lived experience.

I combine journalling and spiritual practice to bring an intimate and non-verbal experience of love into professional practice. I bring this inner felt experience into language taking a phenomenological and hermeneutical approach. I immerse myself in the relation between physical, emotional and spiritual knowledge. I analyse the movement of knowledge between the personal and the social in the language of inclusionality (Rayner 2004), and show how social relations mediate my inner non-verbal experience.

I situate my method within the action research paradigm and my philosophy within a holistic and subjectivist frame. As I write I realise my knowledge in the relation between thinking and the act of writing. My knowledge and its production are deliberately value-laden. I cultivate reasoned emotion in order to influence my thought process. My claim to originality of mind emerges from this subjective experience as I show how I bring my ontological values of love into practice through a 'pedagogy of presence' that is integral to my action.

I judge the worth of my action and its loving dimension in silent reflective spiritual practice. I also judge the worth of my action and its loving dimension in the feedback I get from others. I set criteria that focus on seeking harmony and wholeness, and which do not ignore challenge and difference. I argue that the creative dynamism arising from difference is an important component of love at work.

I provide evidence for my claim in an account of current practice, through pictures, drawings and a video clip, and it is further evidenced by the coherence of my writing and the rigorous application of my own criteria against which I judge the worth of my actions. My claim to truth can also be substantiated by my application of method, and by situating my inquiry firmly within a post-modern narrative.

CONTENTS

Prologue	page x
Introduction	page 1
PART ONE: THEORY	
CHAPTER ONE: Meanings of love	page 10
The transformational nature of love	page 12
Clarifying the meanings of love	page 15
The transmission of love	page 23
CHAPTER TWO: Propositional Framing	page 27
Feminist Theories	page 28
Modern and post modern philosophy	page 39
The ordering principles of language	page 51
Example of Reflective Writing	page 51
Religious constructions of self	page 55
Ontology and the structures of being	page 59
Inclusional space and the Complex Self	page 65
Bernstein's theories of pedagogy	page 70
CHAPTER THREE: Action Research Models and Method	page 76
How is this Inquiry and how is this action research?	page 76
Extended epistemology and claims to truth	page 79
Action research models and spiritual practices	page 81
Engagement with others	page 83
The dialogic relation	page 85
Case Example One	page 87
Developing living theory	page 95
Peer review processes	page 97

Applying action research models	page 99
CHAPTER FOUR: Inclusional Methodology	page 100
Action Account	page 100
First Iteration	page 105
Developing a sense of the aesthetic	
Second Iteration	page 109
My inclusional methodology	
Third Iteration	page 112
The inclusional space and ordering principles	
Summary	page 116

PART TWO: EXPERIENCE

CHAPTER FIVE: Experiencing love	page 117
Stories	page 117
The experiential meaning of love	page 127
Reflective writing	page 131
Language	page 146
Growth through love	page 153
Loving practices	page 166
CHAPTER SIX: Embodied Knowing	page 170
Action account	
Practising and learning yoga	page 170
First iteration	
Contemplating the links between body and mind	page 172
Second iteration	
The relation of yoga to (e)pistemology	page 177

Third iteration		
At the boundaries of the inner and outer world	page	180
Case Example Two	page	182
Evaluating the teaching of embodied knowledge	page	187
Summary	page	189

PART THREE: PRACTICE

CHAPTER SEVEN: Eros and Organisation	page	190
Action account	page	190
Leadership Practice in WHHA		
First iteration	page	195
The embodied resonances of eros		
Moving towards wholeness:		
Idealism and vision in organisation	page	196
Eros and vision in WHHA	page	198
Desire and contradiction	page	201
Case Example Three	page	203
Second iteration		
On models of leadership	page	208
The skills of leadership	page	212
Torbert's model of leadership development	page	217
Third iteration		
On pleasure	page	223
Summary	page	224
CHAPTER EIGHT: Agape and Organisation	page	226
Action Account:		
A critical incident and the dynamic of contradiction	page	226
First iteration:		
Embodied resonances	page	233
Second iteration:		
Emotional landscapes of interaction	page	235
Emotional authenticity in conversation	page	237
Case Example Four	page	241

Third Iteration:

The emergence of organisational form	page 243
How do I know that this is a good thing to do?	page 245
Systems and structure in organisation	page 247

Fourth Iteration:

Connecting the emotional landscapes of interaction with spiritual practice	page 250
Summary	page 255

CHAPTER NINE: A Pedagogy of Presence page 257

Letting love show me the way	page 257
Pedagogy	page 260
The recontextualising field	page 260
How do I know that tacit pedagogy is ethically sound?	page 262
Pedagogy of presence	page 263
My embodied living educational theory	page 265

CHAPTER TEN: Divine Love in Organisation page 266

Action Account:

Witnessing	page 267
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First Iteration:

Reflections on silence	page 268
Case Example Five	page 268

Second Iteration:

The discourse of presence in organisation	page 272
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Summary	page 274
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PART FOUR: FINDINGS

CHAPTER ELEVEN: Evaluating Practice	page 275
Summarising my findings	page 275
Case Example Six	page 276
Evaluating practice against my standards of judgement	page 283
Evaluating ‘a pedagogy of presence’	page 286
Evaluating the noumenal qualities of love at work	page 286
The truth of the method	page 290
Evaluating this thesis against my standards	page 291
CHAPTER TWELVE: Relational Epistemology and the Academic Audience	page 293
Relational epistemology and the audience	
The action research audience	page 293
The wider academic audience	page 304
The audience beyond academia	page 309
Epilogue	page 310
The examiners’ challenges	page 310
Experience, theory and practice	page 312
Critical subjectivity	page 316
Evaluating my learning rewriting the thesis	page 317
Bibliography	page 319

PICTURES

Eros at the heart of action	page 16
The dynamic of contradiction	page 17
Mapping a critical incident	page 18
The practices of love	page 19
Practising headstand	page 20
CD-ROM attached pocket	page 328

EXAMPLES OF REFLECTIVE WRITING

Love's Logic	page 57
Touching the piano	page 131
Losing stamina	page 314

CASE EXAMPLES OF RELATIONAL PRACTICE

Case Example One	
Working with Contradiction in an Inquiry Group	page 87
Case Example Two:	
Transmitting Embodied Knowledge	page 182
Feedback from Students	page 186-7
Case Example Three	
The Risk Appraisal Panel	page 203
Case Example Four	
The Breakfasts	page 241
Case Example Five	
Silent Practice Influencing Action	page 268
Case Example Six	
Chairing the Board at NHH	page 276