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Understanding Complex Ecologies in a Changing World

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Engaging Educators in Representing Their Knowledge in Complex Ecologies and
Cultures of Inquiry

Abstract

This paper is a self study in which a university teacher educator studies her practice in
creating a space for alternate ways of representing knowledges from diverse cultural
backgrounds, including Indigenous, and for their accreditation in the Academy. As she
develops a way of thinking that is appropriate for getting closer to understanding
indigenous ways of knowing, there is a transformation in her own understandings.
Moving from reliance on print to the use of multi-media and artifacts to represent
knowledges in complex ecologies support the development of cultures of inquiry. In this
work, the meanings of the embodied energy-flowing values that educational researchers
use to explain their educational influences in their own learning and in the learning of
others, are made explicit. These meanings are shown to have epistemological significance
for educational knowledge.

Introduction

My self-study (Bullough & Pinnegar, 2004; Berry, 2004; Loughran, 2006) might well be
explained in terms of the embodied life-affirming energy that flows when I am with
others with diverse experiences in my quest to create cultures of inquiry.

My work has been primarily set in a large school district in Ontario, Canada where a
culture of inquiry (Delong, 2002) has been cultivated using Whitehead's living
educational theory approach (Whitehead, 1989; McNiff, 2007). This school district is
unique because it surrounds two First Nations Reserves, one of which is the largest First
Nation in Canada based on population. Its special nature is also evident in the two
master's cohorts that have been supported by the school district (and a third in process)
which have given added value to the culture of inquiry and inquiry-based leadership. The
benefits may include an increase in the knowledgebase of practitioner-research studies in
the academy, in programs that are responsive to diverse students' needs, in the use of
multi-media and artifacts to represent knowledge, and in my better understanding of
Indigenous and other complex ecologies as I study my learning from my students given
their diverse cultural backgrounds. In my 2009 AERA paper, I shared my learning about

First Nations' issues and how they were intended to help prepare me for the teaching of the Reflective Practice course in a Six Nations' master's cohort. The demise of that plan in my changing world is discussed with a view to the transformation in my sensitivity to diverse ecologies through reading, reflection and writing.

This paper includes an explanation of my educational influence in encouraging and supporting the informal and master's research programs of practitioner-researchers and an explanation of the embodied knowledges of educators from diverse backgrounds, experiences and ontologies being legitimated in the Academy with new relationally dynamic standards of judgment in relationally dynamic epistemologies: "My living educational values are dynamic and relational and are not adequately communicated through 'fixed' forms of representation" (Huxtable, 2009, p. 25). The explanation requires moving from reliance on print to the use of multi-media to show how the living standards of judgment flow with life-affirming energy and values. These values give meaning and purpose to our existence and it is a given that 'The consideration of ontology, of one's being in and toward the world, should be a central feature of any discussion of the value of self-study research' (Bullough & Pinnegar, 2004, p. 319). Alternative ways to represent knowledges in complex ecologies support the development of cultures of inquiry.

In this work, the meanings of the embodied energy-flowing values that educational researchers use to explain their educational influences in their own learning and in the learning of others, are made explicit. These meanings are shown to have epistemological significance for educational knowledge. The paper shows the effect of inspiring practitioners to see the significance of their embodied knowledge, the nature of their influence and their capacity to represent their knowledge using methodological inventiveness (Dadds & Hart, 2001) through their educational inquiries (Oihwi:yo Ehsrihwagwe:nih: It is certain you will accomplish it). The diverse contexts of the group and their embodied values is evident in Lee Nikiforuk's (2009) project:

> I have zigged and zagged over the last thirty years to where I am today. Through self- reflection, I have been able to peel back the layers of my life and come to an understanding of how I came to be at this point of my life. It is why I feel such passion about ensuring that my students are aware of themselves as learners and that they understand how they learn will impact on their lives. I do not want my students to find themselves not knowing how to take control of their lives as young adults. I don't want any of them to find themselves in the same situation that I found myself in as an undergraduate – not being able to think through how to make a change in their lives (p.15).

One of my purposes in encouraging and supporting the cohort model has been to create a critical mass of inquiry-based leaders in the school district. Of that first group of 15 graduates, 11 have exerted their values-based influence as current and retired school or school-system administrators and university leaders in the Grand Erie District School Board and other districts in Canada.

By asking and answering the question, 'How can I engage educators in representing their knowledge in complex ecologies and cultures of inquiry?', this work contributes to the critical mass of s-step research within the theme of the AERA 2010 Conference, *Understanding Complex Ecologies in a Changing World,* as a self study of a teacher-educator that addresses the conceptual, methodological, and practical challenges and opportunities inherent in understanding how and what people learn across time and space.

<u>I will tell you a story - Enkwakaratón:hahse (Van-Every-Albert, 2008, p. 41)</u>

Even before graduation, several of the graduates of the last Brantford masters' cohort (2007-2009) asked me about the options for completing a doctoral program on a part-time basis in a community of learners model like the one they had just experienced. Thinking that this would be an easy problem to solve (and one would think it should be), I immediately set to work making inquiries of my colleagues in Canada and abroad about the feasibility of starting a doctoral cohort. Response to queries at Brock University, partner in a three-University Ph.D. program, indicated that even if it were feasible it would take many years of application to be operational. A university in another province was approached with no response. Undaunted, I asked U.S.A colleagues at AERA in San Diego in April, 2009 and was given some encouragement but no specifics.

What started as expressed interest solely from graduates from the second Brantford cohort spread by word of mouth to others so that I was receiving messages from educators within and outside the school district that they, too, were interested in a doctoral cohort. At last count there were 12 names on the list.

Continuing my mission, Jack Whitehead was retiring from Bath University but moving to advisory positions at Bath and other UK universities, as well as in China, and so I asked him. With the tensions of getting the approval of Research Ethics Board at Brock (Suderman-Gladwell, 2001; McFarling, 2009), one of the benefits of following Jack was the inherent support of the living educational theory model of research that many of the students involved in the cohorts wanted to continue to use. He indicated that time would be required for a University such as Liverpool Hope that was just starting a doctoral program. His advice was to assist prospective students over a period of a few months to work with me on the formulation of a proposal for presentation for acceptance at Liverpool Hope or other institutions. Recently, I have been doing that with Tim Pugh. A year later, my mission continues with a contact from an Australian University and an Ontario University looking for expressions of interest (Delong, email records, 2009; 2010).

My purpose in telling this story is that it provides evidence to support my claim that I investigate every option and remove as many obstacles as possible for educators who wish to research and improve their practice and contribute to the knowledgebase of teaching and learning as practitioner-researchers. Herein lie some of "the conceptual, methodological, and practical challenges and opportunities inherent in understanding how and what people learn across time and space" (Lee & Rochon, 2009).

Framing the paper

This paper is part of an ongoing inquiry where values are expressed in different contexts with an energetic and dynamic response to creating individual and system spaces for learning and growth. My 2009 AERA paper begins with the transformatory nature of my learning as a superintendent and emerging scholar and the nature of my influence from 1995 to 2007. I have been concerned that educators' voices be heard loud and clear (Delong et al, 2001-2009) and to this mission was added that aboriginal teachers' voices be heard loud and clear. This was followed with the focus of my learning over the years, 2007-2009, with its emphasis on the growth in my educational knowledge with respect to my understanding of Indigenous ways of knowing, historical and current contexts, alternative ways of representing knowledge and how I might bring Indigenous ways of knowing into the Academy. As part of that learning, I analyze my learning and transformation as teacher of a Six Nations' student.

At the end of the paper, I wrote:

> The depth of my understanding will be tested during the Reflective Practice course for which I have tried to prepare. I will be journalling and writing my own reflective practice (Ghaye & Ghaye, 1998) during the period of the course. I will be asking the Masters' students in the Six Nations' Cohort to help me with my learning journey. It may be that part two for this study can be shared at AERA in 2010.

That intent was truncated and I will discuss this in Part Two. Consequently, this paper has taken that changing world and those experiences as a means to reflect on my learning and its application to "the complex ecologies of peoples' lives". In my experience, progress is on a broken front, runs into obstacles and is rarely steady as it moves forward. I have faith that there will be a better world if we each make improvement in the 15% (Morgan, 1993) where we have a circle of influence (Covey, 1989).

I intend this paper to be a narrative of my own learning as my values of social justice push me to support and recognize multiple ways of knowing, in developing inclusional open spaces and embracing "complex ecologies which include people's participation within and across multiple settings, from families to peer and intergenerational social networks, to schools and a variety of community organizations; and participation within and across these settings may be either physical or virtual" (Lee & Rochon, 2009). This work is significant because of my expanded understandings of multi-media and alternative ways of representing and generating knowledge in the complex ecologies of people's lives and the implications for accreditation of that knowledge.

This paper is in four parts. Part One is a summary of my longitudinal learning; in Part Two, I describe and explain the pervasive and transformative influence of learning about indigenous epistemologies and ways of knowing; in Part Three I convey my influence in encouraging multi-media ways of generating knowledge in the diverse ecologies of

master's cohort communities; Part Four includes my findings concerning that learning, my conclusions from the study and what might be my next steps.

I use *First Nations, aboriginal and Indigenous* interchangeably. I'm unsure as to the accuracy of this, except that all three words appear in the literature and in dialogue with Six Nations' people.

With my own work and with that of the students, I draw on the criteria of social validity from Habermas (1976) in terms of comprehensibility, truth, rightness, authenticity (p. 2-3). In addition, validation groups for personal and social validity, to enhance the validity of interpretations and the rigour of data collection are invaluable. Whitehead in Tidwell (2009) defines these criteria:

> Within comprehensibility I include the logic of the explanation "as a mode of thought that is appropriate for comprehending the real as rational" (Marcuse, 1964, p. 105). Within truthfulness I include the evidence for justifying the assertions I make in my claims to knowledge. Within rightness I include an awareness of the normative assumptions I am making in the values that inform my claims to knowledge. Within authenticity I include the evidence of interaction over time that I am truly committed to living the values I explicitly espouse.

Self-study is a collaborative process, "a commitment to checking data and interpretations with others" (Loughran & Northfield in Hamilton, 1998, p.12). With this in mind, I have asked my validation group to read and critique my paper with the following questions in mind:

Is it comprehensible? Is the explanation clear and logical?
Is it true? Is there sufficient evidence to justify the claims I am making?
Is it right? Are the data and findings presented according to my values without harm to another? Is there awareness of cultural assumptions and complex ecologies?
Is it authentic? Am I true to myself?

I am setting these standards of judgment upfront in the paper as these constitute a large measure of what it is I are trying to live up to. Creating the standards of judgment by which you want anything you do in education to be judged is an integral part of living theorists' work (Laidlaw, 1996). "It involves seeking to monitor how what I do relates to what I espouse, and to review this explicitly, possibly in collaboration with others, if there seems to be a mismatch" (Marshall, 1999).

In the first part of this paper, I write a summary of my longitudinal learning. First I summarize my work as a practitioner researcher studying my practice as a superintendent of schools and at the same time encouraging and supporting other action researchers to describe, explain and share their knowledge of teaching and learning. This work is significant because of the systemic influence in a large school system (30,000 students) of building a culture of inquiry through reflective practice (Ghaye & Ghaye, 1998). The many influences of academic writings are woven throughout the writing.

Part One. Summary of Longitudinal Learning

Living educational theories are the explanations that individuals produce for their educational influences in their learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of the social formations in which they live and work using social and personal validation. One of the many virtues of living educational theory is that it is not restricted by changes or increased complexity in one's life experiences but, in fact, embraces them in a values-based inquiry which is focused on the all-encompassing question, 'How can I improve?' It seems that my investigations embrace the directions of the AERA 2010 conference theme:

> We further encourage submissions that examine learning within and across complex social and cultural ecologies from a historical perspective and that examine policy implications for improving learning in formal and informal settings in ways that take into account the complex ecological factors that help to shape opportunities to learn. We also highly encourage submissions that address the methodological challenges of studies that address this kind of complexity (Lee & Rochon, 2009).

My doctoral and post-doctoral research has been a self-study of my life as a Superintendent of Education from 1995 to 2007. From 2007 to 2009, my study concerned improving my practice as a teacher of Master of Education courses focusing on my learning of aboriginal issues. This current year I examine the complex ecologies in which my students and I study and write. Fifteen years of my life have been devoted to supporting and encouraging a new epistemology of education (Whitehead, 1989; 2008d) and building a culture of inquiry. Because I believe in the democratic, non-hierarchical nature of living, learning and knowing, I have committed myself to transforming our understandings of how individuals, groups and systems can bring about improvement in our world. In particular, I have encouraged and supported early childhood, elementary and secondary educators, and graduate students to conduct practitioner inquiry and create their own living educational theories. I have exhorted them not to allow others to speak for them but to speak with their own voices, loud and clear. The purposes of these inquiries are always the same: to improve student learning by improving our practice and our social order and to contribute to the knowledgebase of teaching and learning.

My learning in building a culture of inquiry in a school system - 1995 to 2007.

Evidence of an educational influence in encouraging and supporting informal action research communities as well as tutoring and supervising the Master's research programs of other practitioner-researchers resides in eight volumes of Passion In Professional Practice (Delong, J., Black, C., & Knill-Griesser, H. (2002-2006); Delong, J., 2001, 2007; Delong, J., Kennedy, L., Nikiforuk L., & Polodian, B., 2009) which I have edited in concert with my colleagues. It resides as well in a guidebook to action research, Action Research: For Teaching Excellence written with colleagues (Delong, J., Black, C.,

Wideman, R., 2005). In the eight volumes, the informal, that is, not-for-credit, action research varies in rigour from narratives and stories to Master of Education-level research. All of the embodied knowledge of the professional educators in the Grand Erie District School Board is valued for its contribution to improving the world. The meanings of the embodied values, that educational researchers use to explain their educational influences in their own learning and in the learning of others, is evident in all of the writing (http://schools.gedsb.net/ar/).

By encouraging and supporting practitioners to research their lives as practitioners in pre-school, elementary and secondary classrooms, as school administrators and as system support staff, with their "I" at the centre of the investigation, a culture of inquiry has been built that recognizes the embodied knowledges of professional educators. They have been recognized in the school district and legitimated in the Academy with new relationally dynamic standards of judgment, standards that are based on values lived everyday as professional educators with life-affirming energy. The explanation requires multi-media and alternative representations to show how the living (Laidlaw, 1996) standards of judgment flow with life-affirming energy (McFarling, 2009; Mills, 2009; Pugh, 2007; Adler-Collins, 2007; Farren, 2005).

In this body of research, we, my fellow living theorists- colleagues, teachers, students-have addressed Donald Schön's (1995) direction for a new knowledge created by, criticized by and fostered by practitioners:

> " We should ask not only how practitioners can better apply the results of academic research, but what kinds of knowing are already embedded in competent practice (p. 29). .. In order to legitimatize the new scholarship, higher education institutions will have to learn organizationally to open up the prevailing epistemology so as to foster new forms of reflective action research. This, in turn, requires building up communities of inquiry capable of criticizing such research and fostering its development (p. 34)."

My mission in building a culture of inquiry takes Boyer's (1990) thinking that "Theory surely leads to practice. But practice also leads to theory. And teaching at its best shapes both research and practice" one step further and, as Schön (1995) predicted, "challenges" technical rational views of scholarship (p.27).

My passion and commitment for creating my own living educational theory of my educational practices as a Superintendent of Schools can be understood as a response to hearing David Clark (1997) advocating for the importance of practitioners being encouraged to research their own knowledge in order to contribute to the knowledge base of educational administration in the Academy. The evidential body of research produced over fourteen years addresses Catherine Snow's (2001) desire to systematize and provide "procedures for accumulating such knowledge and making it public, for connecting it to bodies of knowledge established through other methods, and for vetting it for correctness and consistency". It is a contribution to the necessary evidential base of research by

practising educational researchers as I conducted my own research on my practice as a superintendent and supported others to do the same in an emerging culture of inquiry, reflection and scholarship.

Since 1995 I have disagreed with Susan Noffke's (1997) position as she argued that action research processes, and in particular, the "living educational theory", (Whitehead, 1989, 1999) do not influence social justice, social theory and power relations. The results of my research and work go far beyond simply "personal transformation" and affect entire systems through policy and procedures implemented over long periods of time. Eight volumes of research and three Master's cohorts provide evidence to demonstrate that committed individuals and groups researching their practice with questions like "How can I improve?" (Whitehead, 1989) are indeed capable "of addressing social issues in terms of the interconnections between personal identity and the claim of experiential knowledge, as well as power and privilege in society"(Dolby, 1995; Noffke, 1991) (p. 327). In addition, I can cite any one of the action research projects but referring to the work of Ruth Mills (2009) as she lived and researched the Roots of Empathy (ROE) (Gordon, 2005) program as part of her question, 'How can I create a peaceful school?' we find a stellar example of influencing social justice and power relations. I'll return to this work in Part Three.

The process of systematizing my knowledge is focused on the transformation of my embodied values into educational standards of judgment that can be used to test the validity of my knowledge-claims. Professional educational values are embodied in what educators do. The meanings of these embodied values are transformed into my standards of practice as they are clarified in the course of their emergence in the practice of my educative relations (Whitehead, 1999). I am using Stenhouse's (1967) definition of *standard* - "criteria which lie behind consistent patterns of judgment of the quality and value of the work" (Kushner, 2001, p.70). The meanings which constitute the standards are carried through my stories and include value-laden statements: i) valuing the other in my professional practice; ii) building a culture of inquiry, reflection and scholarship; iii) creating knowledge (Delong, 2002, p. 8).

Teachers embody myriad ways of knowing about teaching and relating and responding to students that may not be found in education research. "By *embodiment* we mean the integration of the physical and biological body and the phenomenon or experiential body (Varela, Thompson, and Rosch 1991, xvi). For us, as for other contributors, embodiment suggests a seamless though often elusive matrix of bodymind-world, a web that integrates thinking, being, doing and interacting within worlds" (Hocking, Haskell & Hinds, p. xvii). Bodymind learning includes learning from our bodies and spirits as well as our intellectual minds and learning more about relationships of body, mind and spirit.

My first and often most challenging task in guiding teachers in their research is to enable them see the embodied knowledges that they already have which they do not see as remarkable. Then the process that I use is to encourage and support them to research their teaching practice systematically in order to theorize about their lives as professional educators and to share their knowledge (Delong, Black and Wideman, 2005). For most

of us, the traditional research training has been to negate this subjective and "I" centred knowledge (Delong, 2002; Whitehead, 2008a, 2008d).

In order to capture the creativity and innate knowing of practitioner-researchers, this living educational theory model of action research embraces methodological inventiveness and accepting that we are fallible knowers (Thayer-Bacon, 2003), then there is an open space for methodological inventiveness:

> If our aim is to create conditions that facilitate methodological inventiveness, we need to ensure as far as possible that our pedagogical approaches match the message that we seek to communicate. More important than adhering to any specific methodological approach, be it that of traditional social science or traditional action research may be the willingness and courage of practitioners – and those who support them – to create enquiry approaches that enable new, valid understandings to develop; understandings that empower practitioners to improve their work for the beneficiaries in their care. Practitioner research methodologies are with us to serve professional practices. So what genuinely matters are the purposes of practice which the research seeks to serve, and the integrity with which the practitioner researcher makes methodological choices about ways of achieving those purposes. No methodology is, or should be, cast in stone, if we accept that professional intention should be informing research processes, not pre-set ideas about methods or techniques (Dadds & Hart, 2001, p. 169).

That essential inventiveness is stimulated in the availability of a variety of qualitative methods described by Cresswell (2007, pp. 53-58), including, narrative research, grounded theory, phenomenological research, case study or ethnographic research. His definition of narrative research shows that it can be a useful tool for living theorists given that their research includes an explanation of the educational influences of the researcher in their own learning and the learning of others. All narratives are not living theories but all living theories are narratives (Whitehead, 2008):

> Writers have provided ways for analyzing and understanding the stories lived and told. I will define it here in terms of a specific type of qualitative design in which 'narrative is understood as a spoken or written text giving an account of an event/action or series of events/actions, chronologically connected' (Czarniawska, 2004, p.17) (p.2).

We have been inspired by Clandinin and colleagues:
> As we reflect on our conceptual cartography of narrative inquiry, we are struck by the energy generated by those interested in studying people's lives. This rush to narrative inquiry and the willingness to move into the borderlands with narrative inquiry suggests an eagerness to understand in more complex and nuanced ways the storied experiences of individuals as they compose storied lives on storied landscapes (Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007, pp. 70-71).

The recent dialogue in the November issue of Educational Researcher highlights

the 'Discourse on Narrative Research'. It seems to me that the topics 'Literary elements in narrative research' (Coulter & Smith, 2009), 'Narrative researchers as witnesses of injustice and agents of social change?' (Barone, 2009) and 'Relational ontological commitments in narrative research' (Clandinin & Murphy, 2009) are scholarly and about 'education' but do not include the explanation of an educational researcher's educational responsibility to constitute their research as 'educational'. There is no mention of 'educational' in the abstracts: (Coulter & Smith, 2009, p. 577; Barone, 2009, p. 591) Clandinin & Murphy, 2009, p. 598).

I found the issues of agents of change and social justice (Barone, 2009, p. 591) and colonizing the story (Clandinin and Murphy, 2009, p. 585) thoughtful; what I found disturbing was the presentation of narrative research as stressing the story format, the role of the omniscient narrator (Coulter & Smith, 2009, 581) and no mention of the need for research to be educational, merely about education. The dissection of narrative research seems to be lacking the passion which is inherent in the work of the master's students with whom I have been privileged work (McFarling, 2009; Mills, 2009; McDougald, 2009; Nikiforuk, 2009; Kennedy, 2009; Wootton-Proulx, 2009).

Marshall's (1999) living life as inquiry engages me to attempt to understand complex ecologies by "… attempting to open to continual question what I know, feel, do and want, and finding ways to engage actively in this questioning and process its stages. It involves seeking to maintain curiosity, through inner and outer arcs of attention, about what is happening and what part I am playing in creating and sustaining patterns of action, interaction and non-action" (p.155).

In this second part, I review the process of preparing myself to teach courses in the Six Nations' Master of Education cohort; I assess my starting point in my knowledge of aboriginal issues and track my growth in understanding aboriginal issues through local connections and academic reading.

Part Two. My learning about indigenous epistemologies and ways of knowing

In my two-year study of my own understandings, I reflected on and wrote about my increased learning about Indigenous ways of knowing and the overwhelming complexity of colonization and its effects on the First Nations' peoples. In my "mindfulness practice" (Bai, p. 91, 92), I know that I am not on the inside (in fact, I am the 'other') but I am getting closer to understanding Indigenous ways of knowing towards the development of thinking that is appropriate for opening up space in the Academy for their knowledge. I experienced a transformation in my educational knowledge in the nature of colonization and in developing an inclusional (Rayner, 2004) space for the development of an epistemology (Delong, 2009). One Six Nations' student that I have worked with in one course, Data-Based Decision Making in the spring of 2008 and as supervisor of her proposal course over the last year, Deneen Montour (2008), has helped me immeasureably.

In addition to living educational theory methodology resonating with my ontology and epistemology, so too I feel that it would be a useful way of expressing Indigenous ways of knowing and create a space in the academy for the oral tradition of the Indigenous peoples. I anticipate that it will not only be an "enthusiasm for narrative ways of understanding knowledge and identity that cuts across disciplines and professions" (Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007, pp. 70-71) but also an enthusiasm that cuts across nations.

During 2007-2009 when I was involved in the recruitment of students for a Six Nations' cohort, I made it my mission to prepare myself for the teaching of a course in the program in the summer of 2009. Politics interfered because I am a part-time staff member and do not have the right to choose courses to teach until full-time unionized staff have made their selections. I did not get to teach the Reflective Practice course although I had been scheduled for it. I felt anger, frustration and disappointment. When I presented my 2009 AERA paper, I had just been informed of the decision so I presented with a heavy heart and stoical acceptance. Gradually I came to acceptance that my learning about the issues of indigenous peoples and the need for alternative ways of presenting their knowledge was one of the most worthwhile experiences that I had had and that there were valuable and broad implications for my improved practice.

Because of my raised sensitivity, I began seeing these Six Nations' issues all around me and now had a much greater interest in what was portrayed in the media and how it was presented. I re-created myself in a process of improvisatory self-realization (Winter, 1989) using the art of the dialectician, in which I hold together "in a process of question and answer, [my] capacities for analysis with [my] capacities for synthesis".

As with most Canadians I do not think of myself as racist but there is evidence of apartheid in our country. As Stó:lō writer Lee Maracle (quoted in Grant 1990, p. 129) explains, "Racism is for us, no ideology in the abstract, but a very real and practical part of our lives – the pain, the effect, the shame are all real." (Dion, 2009, p. 47). An Ontario publication by Diane Miller and colleagues explains a tension particular to aboriginals, ethnostress and anomie: "Ethnostress occurs when the cultural beliefs or joyful identity of a people are disrupted" (Antone, Miller & Myers, 1986, p. 6). Evidence of this stress affects self-concept and identity:

> Under the weight of outside influence, we question our original forms of existence, and the entire civilization enters a state of "anomie". The concept of "anomie" denotes a people's loss of faith and belief in their own institutions, values, and existence. It is perhaps the one word that best describes the state of indigenous existence in the western world during times of real powerlessness and hopelessness (Antone, Miller & Myers, 1986, p. 13).

Reading Decolonizing Methodologies (Smith, 1999) was an earth-shaker for me to try to see the world through completely different eyes (Delong email, Dec 13, 2008). While I found the book to be an angry treatise that succumbed to a Western way of presenting knowledge, I tried to walk in her shoes. She confronts their devalued centuries of knowledge:

> Every issue has been approached by Indigenous peoples with a view to *re*writing and *re*righting our position in history. Indigenous peoples want to tell our own stories, write our own versions, in our own ways, for our own purposes. It is not simply about giving an oral account or a genealogical naming of the land and the events which raged over it, but a very powerful need to give testimony to and restore a spirit, to bring back into existence a world fragmented and dying (p. 28).

Smith's critique of colonization challenged my assumptions and changed my views; it is unfortunate that she uses the same form of representation as the colonizing methodology. I am in agreement with her description of colonizing methodologies as she expresses a view consistent with Whitehead's work (2008b) and my choice of the living educational theory method of research:

> Academic knowledges are organized around the idea of disciplines and fields of knowledge. These are deeply implicated in each other and share genealogical foundations in various classical and Enlightenment philosophies. Most of the 'traditional' disciplines are grounded in cultural worldviews which are antagonistic to other belief systems or have no methodology for dealing with other knowledge systems. Underpinning all of what is taught at universities is the belief in the concept of science as the all-embracing method for gaining an understanding of the world (p. 65).

It has been difficult to recognize that my early education that had formed my childhood view of Indigenous peoples came from the racialised, white supremacist world in the textbooks (Montgomery, 2008, p. 285). While I cannot be an 'insider', I do wish to be an empathic 'other' with insights into the Western Academy and its limitations, seeking to get closer to understanding Indigenous ways of knowing and opening a space for Indigenous knowledge. This "pedagogical chaos" (Simon, 1992 in Hocking, Haskell & Linds, 2001) is disturbing when preconceptions are challenged; however,

> Too much comfort and safety and predictability are anaesthetizing: You cannot sleepwalk through the pedagogical experience. The pedagogical dance is a wild and chaotic process, a struggle that is sometimes joyful, sometimes, painful. Simon (1992) calls the agony of pedagogy "Disorganization." ...When students step into this space of pedagogical chaos, they risk the 'destruction of their ability to return to a safer, more certain place" (p. 71).

While my learning was not applied to Six Nations' cohort program, it has helped with the supervision role with my Six Nations' student. In addition, the increased knowledge has triggered a deep understanding of diversity and the importance of searching for alternative ways of representing knowledge. It has heightened my appreciation for diverse background and experiences that adult learners bring to post-graduate research as well as the pressures that they experience given full time, demanding jobs as well as personal, social and family obligations. They may not be dealing with the scourge of Aids in Africa as Joan Conolly's students are but they may have equivalent pressures:

I know that the students need the award of their senior degree for which they have worked for a very long time. I know that the longer it takes to complete the degree, the harder it gets to maintain the momentum and commitment. I know that the families and communities of students of senior degrees have to make considerable sacrifices for success: senior degrees are not individual accomplishments, but family and community accomplishments. I know that the university needs reasonable throughput in a reasonable time. I know all these things (Conolly, 2009, p.14).

With each of the students I teach, I attempt to influence them to look for alternate ways of representing and generating their knowledges given diverse cultural backgrounds, including Indigenous, and to submit their work for accreditation in the Academy. In Part Three, I give examples of teacher researchers moving from reliance on print to the use of multi-media and artifacts to represent knowledges in complex ecologies. I also try to model using multi-media to transmit learning. In this work, the meanings of the embodied energy-flowing values that educational researchers use to explain their educational influences in their own learning and in the learning of others are made explicit.

Part Three. Alternative and Multi-media Ways of Generating Knowledge in Diverse Ecologies

Digital technologies are enabling educational researchers to produce visual narratives of explanations of educational influences in learning. The academic legitimation of these new forms of representation is increasingly being recognized in the Academy. University regulations are being changed to permit the submission of e-media and multi-media accounts of educational influences in learning (Farren, 2008). To show my influence in encouraging practitioner-researchers to use multi-media to describe and explain their knowledge and validate their claims to know, four video-clips demonstrate the knowledges resident in complex ecologies.

Multi-media are also being accepted in addition to and in lieu of print reports and being legitimated in professional development learning that influences local and provincial systems (Pugh). There is also the question of how each new setting is organized to facilitate or constrain our recruitment of what and how we have learned in other settings. It is in this sense that learning entails cultural navigations (Lee & Rochon, 2009). Within the various settings where I encourage and support action research/living educational theory, technologies are providing opportunities for communication of educators' emerging theorizing and implicit and explicit knowledge. The print form seems limited in conveying the meanings of the embodied energy-flowing values that educational researchers use to explain their educational influences in their own learning and in the learning of others. These knowledges are more exactly portrayed with multi-media so that they contribute to the knowledgebase of teaching and learning as an evidential critical mass of practitioner research.

When Boyer (1990) called for a new scholarship of teaching and Schön (1995) called for a new epistemology for the new scholarship, digital technologies such as multi-media web-based accounts of educational practices and performance arts were in their infancy. Recent developments in video-conferencing educational video-resources and alternative forms of representation are helping to extend the forms of representation open to educational researchers.

> Ubiquitous technologies empower and encourage all forms of communication and movement within and across all kinds of borders; transnational border crossing is increasingly common throughout the world. Different settings demand different norms for participation and, as a consequence, require that we recruit what and how we have learned in other settings of our lives as resources to help us make sense of new tasks and the new settings in which these tasks are carried out (Lee & Rochon, 2009).

Our understanding of the nature of educational knowledge through different forms of representation can potentially fulfill what Pip Bruce Ferguson proposes:

> [to] validate forms of research that can convey knowledge not easily encapsulated just within pages of written text and work to overcome those whose knowledge and skills have been, in the past, inappropriately excluded (Ferguson, 2009).

Expanding use of digital technologies to represent educational knowledge confronts academic publications to make change. Huxtable (2009) writes about the need for new forms of representations:

> I agree with Whitehead (RI105) in responding to Bruce Ferguson (RI102), Laidlaw (RI104) and Adler-Colins (RI104) that enhanced by the diversity of global cultures, what counts as educational knowledge in the Western Academy is gradually transforming. I also agree that, '… the forms of representations used in BERJ are too limited to communicate the energy flowing, explanatory principles that can explain educational influences in learning' (Whitehead, 2008a, p.29); new forms are needed which can help us to communicate our understandings and contribute to an educational knowledge base (p. 25).

In a response to Jack Whitehead's article on the lack of capacity of Research Intelligence to use multi-media, Marie Huxtable demonstrates how to use the video to communicate embodied meanings:

> What follows is part of a video narrative in which I try ostensively to clarify the meanings of my educational values of, a loving recognition, a respectful connectedness, and an educational responsibility, as an example. The context is a day when children and teachers have come together for a day as co-learners, facilitated by a mathematician and an educator, to experience what it is to enquire as a mathematician.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Ck_ECxcaEc

In the article, she encourages the use of the cursor as (Whitehead, 2008a, p.29) has developed to examine the nature of life-affirming energy between teachers and students and the true meanings of educational values in human relationships http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/huxtable/mh2009beraRI107.pdf

In explaining my influence I shall use three ideas that may be unfamiliar to you: empathetic resonance, empathetic validity and inclusionality.

First, for Sardello (2008), *empathetic resonance*, is the resonance of the individual soul coming into resonance with the Soul of the World (p. 13). I am using *empathetic resonance* to communicate a feeling of the immediate presence of the other in communicating the living values that the other experiences as giving meaning and purpose to their life.

Second, for Dadds (2008) empathetic validity is the potential of practitioner research in its processes and outcomes to transform the emotional dispositions of people towards each other, such that greater empathy and regard are created. Dadds distinguishes between internal empathetic validity as that which changes the practitioner researcher and research beneficiaries and external empathetic validity as that which influences audiences with whom the practitioner research is shared (p. 279).

Third, the idea of inclusionality (Rayner, 2006) is important in the generation of cultures of inquiry because it is grounded in a relationally dynamic awareness of space and boundaries as connective, continuous, reflective and co-created.

In the visual narratives below I describe and explain my influence and that of other living educational theorists in generating educational knowledge in complex ecologies that support the development of cultures of inquiry. At the heart of the explanations in these seven videoclips are the explanatory principles of the energy flowing values of: Indigenous ways of knowing and life-affirming energy as a living standard of judgment; Teaching empathy; Building a culture of inquiry; Building professional relationships; and Students as researchers.

One. Indigenous ways of knowing and life-affirming energy as a living standard of judgment

Here are two video-clips to show the expression of such a loving life-affirming energy in the recognition of the other as a living standard of judgment in my understanding of an educational relationship. The first two clips are my own and the first time I used the technology independently (with some editing help from my friend, Tim Pugh). Deneen Montour and I talked and taped a two-hour conversation and I pulled these two short clips to demonstrate the life affirming energy between us, her indigenous knowledge generated through artifacts and her desire to improve the lives of Six Nations' students.

These clips also demonstrate my education in Indigenous ways of knowing and being. In the first of the clips, Deneen describes and explains the symbols and stories within two First Nations' blankets.

Video 1.

I felt as I listened to Deneen that "in every case the storyteller is a man [sic] who has counsel for his readers. The storyteller takes what he tells from experience – his own or that reported by others. And he in turn makes it the experience of those who are listening to his tale." (Benjamin, 1969, 87 in Dion, 2009, p. 18). I felt that I was experiencing her journey. This issue of recognizing and accrediting the oral story is also part of the work in South Africa (Conolly, 2008).

In her description of the two blankets, Deneen says that they are pieces of artwork with a story. The tree of peace on the blanket represents the commitment of the First Nations to live in peace, love and righteousness. Her knowledge is evident as she describes and explains the meanings in the blanket. There is much that we can learn from the aboriginal peoples. In an interview Drew Hayden Taylor, an award-winning Ojibway playwright living on Curve Lake reserve in Ontario, is asked, "What brought you to the theatre?" He says:

> I think one of the reasons I became involved in writing through film and television and theatre is [that] I come from an oral culture where everything is passed on through voice, through speaking and listening. From a cultural perspective, I know how to tell a story orally (Barber, 2010, p. R3).

The second in sequence concerns our growing understanding of the nature of Indigenous knowledge.

Video 2.

In the clip, I say to Deneen that I love to hear her stories and that I want her to share her knowledge, which she recognizes as Indigenous knowledge. She goes on to talk about the search for a definition of Indigenous knowledge and the political issues inherent in that process. My consciousness continues to be raised that as an Indigenous person, scholar and researcher Deneen may share Claudine VanEvery-Albert's (2008) view that

> *Education was not about learning information, but learning skills to survive in this world as Kanyen'kehaada people. Furthmore, education included a spiritual aspect as our language and ceremonies, the spiritual elements to our lives are connected to the world around us, and so should be our education* (p. 44).

The video, I think, is essential to comprehending the flow of relationship within an educational space. The visual images help convey my meanings of a loving, life-affirming energy in "valuing the other" (Delong, 2002). I use such meanings as standards of judgment in my own recognition of an educational relationship.

The visual narrative that follows portrays a leader working to create a school where empathy, caring and peace are strongly-held values.

Two. Teaching empathy

Ruth Mills (2009), a member of the Brantford II cohort rigorously studied the Roots of Empathy (Gordon, 2005) program as part of her question, 'How can I create a peaceful school?' in which we see her influencing social justice and power relations.

> Roots of Empathy is an award winning program that has shown dramatic effect in reducing levels of aggression among children by increasing empathy and social competence. The program is designed to reach elementary schoolchildren from Kindergarten to Grade 8. The foundation of the program is a neighbourhood infant and parent who visit the classroom every three weeks over the school year. A trained ROE Instructor teaches the students to observe the baby's development and to identify the baby's feelings. The baby becomes the "Teacher" helping children to identify and reflect on their own feelings and the feelings of others. When children are more skilled in understanding their own feelings and the feelings of others (empathy) there is less bullying and aggression and more kindness and compassion both in the classroom and on the playground. (http://www.rootsofempathy.org/ProgDesc.html)

In addition to thousands of photos, many included in the her final project, Ruth took many hours of videotaping of her work in classrooms, with special care to include children's voices as co-researchers and to overcome any writing limitations with the younger students:

> All students and teachers who participated in the program this year were given a flashback questionnaire that asked how they thought Roots of Empathy had changed the school and how it could change the world. Due to their writing

limitations, the grade three students were also interviewed using video. The student flashback questionnaires and video taping were done in the students' classrooms during the regular classroom time. (Chapter 6, p. 7)

The children's voices have been captured during interviews and in my journal during or after lessons. I interviewed the grade three students using video. I then transcribed their responses for coding and analysis. I gave the students the questions in written format first so that they could have time to think about their answers and record any thoughts before I interviewed them. I collected the responses from the grade seven students in written format only as I knew they had better skills for writing their thoughts down and that they might feel more comfortable with writing their responses than they would being video taped. During the interviews I asked the children:
What have you learned from Roots of Empathy?
How can Roots of Empathy change the world?
Could Roots of Empathy change a school? (p. 81)

"It teaches us that we can talk about our feelings without feeling embarrassed"
(Student A1, flashback questionnaire, June 11, 2009).

As I read the last comment from a male student I am reminded of the day that I was in Julie Drekic's class during a family visit. The children were sitting around the green blanket and baby Myles was exploring some of the ROE toys. Some of the boys were playing with the toys too as they often did on these visits. Myles was just beginning to crawl and as he tried to get to a toy he fell forward onto his face and started to cry. Without hesitation, student A1, who was playing close by gasped, got onto his knees and scooped up Myles into his arms to comfort him. "Poor Myles", he cooed. "Are you OK?" Myles of course reached in the direction of his mother and as A1 handed Myles to his mother he said, "I feel sorry for him". Here was a 13 year old boy showing that he was not embarrassed to feel sorry for an injured baby and not embarrassed to show empathy to another human being. injured baby and not embarrassed to show empathy to another human being.

Grade 7 student A1 spontaneously scoops up baby Myles to comfort him

Another nice part to this story is that not one of the students in the class who witnessed this act of caring and compassion said a negative word. There was no teasing or laughter, just caring remarks for Myles as his mother took him.

It is important to note here that despite the fact that Ruth had written parental permission to use names and photos of her and the children in the Roots of Empathy classrooms, the Research Ethics Board insisted that she anonymize the children's names and destroy the photos and videos once the project was completed. In the following videoclip, you will see Ruth describing and explaining with her life-affirming energy the variety of activities that she has created in order to answer her question, 'How can I create a peaceful school?'

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WpcVF7mkSzw
Video 3.

In the next video, is an example of my work with Master of Education students encouraging their dialogue and intending to limit my invasion into their thoughtful discussion. I try to insert my comments only for the purpose of guiding or emphasizing significant ideas.

Three. Building a culture of inquiry

I try always to be in relation with my students as described by Martin Buber as the humility of the educator (1947, p. 122). In my doctoral work I talk about 'having faith in the other' (p. 50) and I try to live that value as a living standard of judgment in that complex ecology of the "relational and responsive" (Rayner, 2004).
With each cohort that I engage in recruiting, facilitating, supporting and teaching, new norms for participation and new tasks in new settings require new ways of facilitating their knowing, representing and creating. Like Low and McKay (2001),

> We understand the process of education to be ecological-not linear-in its openness to dynamic opportunities and disturbing tensions incited by the constant interplay of relations between learners and teachers, between educating and being educated. ..In this heavy work, education is not a sterile passing back and forth of self-contained units of the "said". Instead, for us, education is realized in the humus of human interaction – sites of mis/dis/re-connecting inter-actions between the said and the unsaid. …within unexpected dynamic and precarious moments of telling and tearing, "genuine conversations" are invoked. It is the students' conversations with us – (e)merging and (con)verging with tensions-that challenge us to educate

and be educated midst the unexpected, and to dwell there with them with our experience and our humanity (In Hocking, Haskell & Linds, p.65).

Like Pille Bunnell and Kathleen Forsythe in their chapter "The Chain of Hearts: Practical Biology for Intelligent Behaviour," I experience love as a biological dynamic. They relate their influence on leading teachers to their own understanding of the emotional basis of our humanity in the biology of love:

> "Living in love constitutes well-being, as one lives in a fluid dynamic congruence with one's circumstances, whatever they are. In the absence of love an organism lives the continuous breakdown of those systematic coherences. In us humans this happens as we live in various other relational dynamics and the concomitant configurations of bodyhood--namely the emotions of mistrust, expectation, fear, uncertainty, envy, ambition or competition" (in Hocking, Haskell & Linds, p. 157).

Life-affirming energy is the love for what we do in education" (Whitehead, 2008, p. 14).

Each member of the supervisory group included an autobiography so that the readers could see the diverse ecologies from which each of them came. Greatness in teaching, (too), requires a serious encounter with autobiography (Ayers, 2001, p. 124). It's interesting that four of the Brantford II group had worked in First Nations' communities in Northern Ontario and Quebec in their early years and each talked about the positive influence of that experience on them. "It was my first introduction to traditional native ways and the beginning of my attempts to understand and appreciate a culture that is so rich in its history that was so important to the development of this country and yet has been so misunderstood and oppressed" (Nikiforuk, 2009, p.12).

As Eisner (2005) said:

> Human beings are, after all, sentient beings whose lives are pervaded by complex and subtle forms of affect. To try to comprehend the ways in which people function and the meanings the events in their lives have for them and to neglect either seeing or portraying those events and meanings is to distort and limit what can be known about them. (p. 116)

The dynamic of the learning community of the cohort reflects Belenky's discussion of 'connected learning' (Belenky et al., 1986, 1997): all voices in the group are valued; goals and activities are intended to be responsive to their needs. Belenky writes that this tradition:
> . . . rejects dualistic constructs that presume feelings and thoughts are separate and opposing processes. Instead it envisions hearts and minds developing in tandem. It understands that emotions can spur the development of thought and thought clarifies and nourishes emotional life (Belenky, 1997, p. 16).

Individually, they became more knowledgeable and more confident professionals;

collectively, they solidified their social bonds and became a tightly connected discourse community and a deeply committed community of learners. The process motivated and supported ongoing growth and development for both the individuals and the group (Freidus, 2002; Freidus et al., 2004, 2006; Little, 2007; Lyons & LaBoskey, 2002 In Clift, 2009, p.184).

My understanding and use of a dialectical and dialogical epistemology developed between 1995-2001 as audio-tapes of my supporting role as Superintendent of Schools revealed my 'I' as a living contradiction (Whitehead, 1989) in my inquiry, 'How can I improve my practice as a superintendent of schools and create my own living educational theory (http://www.actionresearch.net). The transcribed tapes of the meetings with school administrators revealed that while I believed that I had established the conditions to support communities of learners in my family of schools, I was actually talking far too much and not creating a climate for inquiry so that they might learn from each other (Delong, 2002).

That learning has been incorporated into my practice so that the master's students share their knowledge in a culture of inquiry. In the following two clips, I show the meaning in practice of 'a culture of inquiry'. In the first, the actual conversation is not the most important and I encourage you to ignore the words and just move the cursor to see the intense listening and supporting of each other that is evident.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BubRWfVUrV0
Video 4.

The videoclip that follows is representative of the group discussions when the group met at my house during their project-writing course. I think that you can sense the *empathetic resonance* (Sardello, 2008, p. 13) as the individuals communicate a feeling of the immediate presence of the other in communicating the living values that the other experiences as giving meaning and purpose to their life. You will also see and hear internal and external empathetic validity (Dadds, 2008). Dadds distinguishes between internal empathetic validity as that which changes the practitioner researcher and research beneficiaries and external empathetic validity as that which influences audiences with whom the practitioner research is shared (p. 279). Inclusionality (Rayner, 2006) is important in the generation of cultures of inquiry because it is grounded in a relationally dynamic awareness of space and boundaries as connective, continuous, reflective and co-created.

As I communicate that valuing the other, the I-You relationship is extremely important in accomplishing what I-We do in that "he will be guided by the recognition of values which is in his glance as an educator" (Buber, 1947, p. 122). In reviewing videotaping of my work in the cohort, I am listening and watching to see that I am acting with the intent to listen and encourage and support the practitioner-researchers. In the second of these, you will see that I am behind the camera just inserting myself into the conversation when I feel that a point needs to be made to capture the significance of the dialogue. I move into the conversation to make connections from their practice to theorizing about their living educational theories.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JvFgcbKrmdY
Video 5.

You will see also the embodied life-affirming energy exhibited by Ruth, Theresa and Carolyn. Lee Nikiforuk (2009) refers to my support as "The authentic understanding I have today about my living educational theory is because of the passion and commitment that Jackie has for her students as she lives her educational theory." The next videoclip show Theresa interviewing Deb in her quest to understand the nature of her influence and her desire to build caring professional relationships.

Four. Building professional relationships

One of the Brantford Cohort II, Theresa McDougald (2009) had used photos to represent her knowledge in two other action research projects (2006, 2008) but this was new - the use of videotaping. Her question, 'What Is the Nature of My Influence as an Educator and How Can I Influence Teachers to Use Assistive Technology in Daily Practice?' shows that she has made the connect between teaching teachers to use technology to help student learning and her own practice as she too uses technology in her research. "The use of videotape is a new procedure in my action research methods. Previously, I have used only the spoken or written word as data in my research" (p. 63). In addition, I think you will see the life –affirming energy of both Deb and Theresa that I submit would be difficult to capture in print only.

Video 6.

Theresa showed the videotaped interviews with the teachers to her validation group to validate her claims to know the nature of her influence:

> *Validators' perspectives*. My validation group provided further evidence that I had influenced other educators by building professional relationships. The following comments from my validation group indicate that they noticed evidence in the videotaped interviews of strongly built relationships: "there was an obvious comfort level… encouraging, positive comments" (Janet McCutchen); "all the interviews reflected a collaborative relationship" (Karin Mertins); "the teachers show a level of trust that is amazing when we see at what level they are at as learners" (Dale McManis); "When viewing the videos the body language and the in-depth comments illustrate the great amount of respect Theresa evokes from her participants (Margot Kneale) (p.81).

Theresa refers here to her capacity to build a culture of inquiry which may signify my influence as I worked to do the same in their group meetings.

> *Observation of and Reaction to Student Change and Growth (or Lack Thereof)*
> One of the most enjoyable aspects of the collaborative work that occurred between the participants and myself was the opportunity to observe, dialogue about, and assess student change and growth in literacy using the Premier program. This represented a significant change in the process of my action research from my first two studies. Because I was co-teaching with my participants it gave us plenty of opportunities to observe the students and to have professional conversations about whether the technology was helping or not, assessing change and growth in motivation, reading comprehension skills, and increased accuracy and output in written work. In a sense we had built a culture of inquiry that previously had been the domain of me and other system learning resource teachers and psycho-educational consultants who were heavily involved in training and implementing assistive technology (p. 98).

In the next section, we look at working with grade 7 students as a research team in a action research project presented in DVD format.

Five. Students as researchers

A colleague and fellow action researcher, Tim Pugh, not only uses technology to generate

and represent his own learning, he has taken on the challenge of moving an entire school system to improve student learning and teacher practice. What triggered his missionary zeal in this focus? He says that it was anger at seeing a whole lab of computers sitting idle in 2003. In an email April 4, 2010, he says: It wasn't just the room of "unused computers"...it was more the fact that there was a whole room of computers that people were trying to use but 80-90% of the links were broken and programs would not work.

He further expresses his concern:

> I am troubled to think that students, who come to school with a diversity of computer-based skills and capacities, often cannot capitalize upon nor further develop these skills due to site, hardware, software, and knowledge-based restrictions. It is my belief that these restrictions form a real impediment to the solid development of literacy skills amongst students. While disturbing, this very dichotomy has birthed in me a personal working theory that students' mastery of key literacy concepts would be more effective if a main vehicle of this process was a student-delineated, fully integrated approach to computer-related learning at the school site. I further believe that students' subsequent understanding and ownership of personal computer literacy skill development is a key ingredient in the recipe for the making of a truly "literate student". Indeed, I have become so convinced of this reality that computer-related issues have been central to my personal framework of research and study throughout my Master of Education program (Pugh, 2005b) (Pugh, 2005a).

His joint action research project research (Pugh & Kilpatrick, 2007) was the first one in the series of Passion In Professional Practice publications that was submitted in CD form, appropriate since the subject of the project was the use of technology to improve student learning. Tim's question was: "How can I use the Virtual GrandE project to further develop the theoretical concept of Communication Literacy?" and Lynda's question was: "How can I use the Virtual GrandE project to impact the implementation of curriculum content and the development of teacher best practice?"

Virtual GrandE is Tim's brain-child with the focus of questions like:

- How does one ensure that the learning accomplished through the integration of technology into the classroom is authentic in nature and meaningful for both students and teachers alike?
- How does one nurture the empowerment of student voice through technology-based activities?
- How does one allow teachers' best Information Communication Technology (ICT) practices to be impacted and to be informed by students' knowledge and experience within the digital age?

Virtual GrandE is a cross-curricular, cross-grade, intra-school elementary literacy project created by classroom lead-learners and rooted within Grand Erie District School Board. Through the use of video-conferencing technology, SmartBoards, video cameras, laptops, and integrated webcams, student-learners and lead learners from all academic streams and groupings create mutually-authentic forums for the exchange of ideas, the exploration of perceptions, and the creation of novel educational opportunities within a framework of Communication Literacy (Pugh, 2005).

We have some wonderful examples, albeit too few, of students as researchers. One of them is "Pupils as action researchers: Improving something important in our lives." in the 2008 issue of the Educational Journal of Living Theories (http://ejolts.net/node/82) (Bognar & Zovko, 2008).). Another is in the work of Claude Poudrier, research teacher and teacher trainer at the Commissionscolaire du Chemin-du-Roy in Trois- Rivières, Quebec. He has used the action research model with students to teach citizenship:

The AR:CPS [Action Research for Community Problem Solving] approach advocates a citizenship education learning strategy that leads actors of all ages to:

•Identify a problem of concern to them in their community.
•Analyze the problem by considering its different issues.
•Identify potential solutions.
•Select the one that best fits the situation.
•Develop and implement an action plan.
•Evaluate the process and its outcome.

As was mentioned previously, the AR:CPS model leads students to take concrete actions in their communities, given that the strategy is geared toward having them solve a real problem by developing and then implementing an action plan. It is also worth noting that students explicitly take part in decisions, since they themselves choose the local issue they will work on. Step by step, they make their way through a democratic process by remaining the lead- ers of their project.
http://www.claudepoudrier.com

The following is another great example as Tim engages students as co-researchers in a culture of inquiry. In unscripted answers to Tim's questions, we see the reflective nature of the grade 7 students.

Video 7.

One of Tim Pugh's concerns is that lack of connection between pedagogy and technology in the schools and in the systems. In his current position in the Grand Erie District School Board as Coordinator of Technology he finds that Ministry of Education reports on the effectiveness of technology grants are not expected to be in multi-media format and in a SKYPE conversation he says:

> I will be one of the only people in this TLLP [Teaching Leading Learning Program] cohort who will be submitting a 100% media-based report to the Ministry They encourage paper-based reports but I asked the question... and got raised eyebrows [20/03/10 11:39:04 AM].

In the fourth section of this paper, I consider the extent and nature of my learning in this self-study and consider next steps.

Part Four. Findings Concerning My Learning, Conclusions from the Study and Next Steps.

Findings concerning my learning

In the informal action research projects published in Passion In Professional Practice, all of the projects included photos, even if only in the biography, and most included many photos to represent their knowledge. In the first master's cohort, some students used photos as I had encouraged and demonstrated for them (Black, 2001; Knill-Griesser, 2001 http://schools.gedsb.net/ar/theses/index.html). The second cohort included photos to represent their knowledge and many also learned to use the video camera as demonstrated above.

While that group used video primarily as a data-collection vehicle, many used the media to represent their knowing at the Sharing Our Knowledge conference, January 29-30, 2010. Theresa McDougald (2009) videotaped the teachers to assess her influence. Ruth Mills (2009) videotaped the students so that their voices would be heard and to overcome their writing limitations. Tara McFarling (2009) filmed her students as they improved their skills through the use of the Smartboard technology.

There are still obstacles to multi-media generating knowledge: university and school district constraints and my limited proficiency in understanding and using the technology. One of these is the privacy regulations imposed by universities and school boards. Even with permission from parents, the master's researchers were advised to anonymize names and throw out personal data as soon as the project had been accepted. I may try a letter to the committees on Privacy and Research Ethics asking if a letter from the student supported by the parent to the effect that the student wants to represent himself, (the individual's right for self-identification) would settle the issues of uploading that

student's role as researcher to the net.

This last cohort group also had to struggle with the personnel overseeing the publication of their projects. When they submitted their work to the university, the photos were integrated into the text. They were instructed to remove the photos or put one photo on a single page. This apparently simple change dramatically changes the impact of the photo connected to the text as data to support a claim. I, too, experienced their pedagogical chaos (Simon, 1992 in Hocking, Haskell & Linds, 2001, p. 71) through the ethical review process and the publication changes. How can I remove these obstacles?

While I am progressing in my own increasing knowledge of taping and editing videoclips, I am often overwhelmed by what I don't know. My capacity has grown and improved to the degree that I am confident enough to assist students to use them once I have mastered the editing and uploading of clips of my own learning. Loughran (2006) says: Modeling 'is inherent in all that we do in teacher education. Intended and unintended learning about teaching occurs through our modeling whether we are conscious of our actions or not' (p. 95). What I've learned is that integrating video into the text is problematic unless one has a website or steamed server available. In this paper, I initially wrote:

> "YouTube is one location that is free but school systems are opposed to any use of YouTube because of the mishaps that have occurred where information has fallen into the wrong hands and been misused. I have used this location because only consenting adults have been involved. I am working on using free websites such as Spanglefish so that I can locate my clips and so can my students but I am still cautious of uploading student data on public platforms." (March 21, 2010)

I have since learned that TeacherTube is available for these purposes:
http://www.teachertube.com. As I said to Jack Whitehead in our SKYPE conversation on March 22, I am feeling a disconnect between espousing the use of video to represent their knowledge to my students and not being able to remove the obstacles to do that."

Another obstacle that I encountered in this paper was that different cameras use different programs, different formats reject downloading and if I don't have the particular program, I can't access the video. After struggling to try to download the videoclips on a DVD from Theresa McDougald and getting nowhere, Tim Pugh informed me that I had to go back to the original footage. Fortunately, Theresa gave me the raw footage that she had fortunately retained. Maybe that's what gets in the way – every media activity seems to take twice as long as seems necessary!

Being accountable for one's claims to know and sharing that knowledge in a public forum is endemic to action research. It therefore becomes a moral responsibility to offer such an account, an explanation for how and why we do the things we do. (McNiff, 2008). Despite the fact that this Brantford cohort II had graduated, those of the cohort who felt comfortable sharing on this stage presented their research on January 29-30 at the 'Sharing our Knowledge' conference in Brantford. Noteworthy is the fact that all but

one of them used some form of media to represent their knowledge in their projects. The technology ranged from powerpoint to videotape to smartboard with video. Unfortunately, I was very sick and couldn't take video footage of the event. I do, however, have copies of the presentations that I plan to upload on my website in the spring of 2010.

Conclusions from the study

Because I believe that the expression of our embodied knowledges as professional educators is highly significant in our educational influence with our students, I work to enable this knowledge to be legitimated in the Academy as master of education degrees. Whenever I am present with professional educators I am aware of feeling the significance of the knowledge embodied in each one of us. I am thinking particularly of the life-affirming and energy-flowing values that form explanatory principles in why we do what we do in our educational relationships. I believe that the embodied knowledge and energy-flowing values are evident in the videoclips in a way that print alone could not convey.

The significance of this paper lies in its contribution to understanding the living standards of judgment that can be used to assess the quality of practice-based research and self-studies of teacher-education practice. The significance of the importance of developing agreed-upon procedures for transforming knowledge based on personal experiences of practice into 'public' knowledge has been highlighted by Snow. Insights from the traditional disciplines of education are included within the living educational theories generated by practitioner-researchers in their educational inquiries, 'How do I improve my practice?'

The educational significance of the study can also be understood in relation to Snow's call to systematize the personal knowledge of practitioners in the generation of educational knowledge with educational responsibility. A living theory methodology for improving practice and generating knowledge shows how the embodied knowledge of professional practitioners can be made public and legitimated as academic knowledge.

The scientific significance of the study lies in the claim that academic research can embrace the knowledges of First Nations embodied in alternative forms to embrace creative and performance arts as well as multi-media representations. It also engages with the necessity of finding new ways to generate, represent and evaluate knowledges in complex ecologies so that diverse voices can be heard and recognized.

The living theory methodology, formed into epistemological standards of judgment in explanations of educational influence, embraces alternative forms of representation.

Many obstacles have been overcome or circumvented to build "communities of inquiry capable of criticizing such research and fostering its development". Because of social, political, economic and spiritual forces, the progress of implementation has been and continues on a broken front and has varied in pace and strength over the years.   In spite

of these negative forces both inside and outside of systems, a belief in the democratic, non-hierarchical nature of living, learning and knowing, and commitment to transforming understandings of how individuals, groups and systems can bring about improvement in our world sustains the self-study. *If we allow oppressive messages to shape beliefs about ourselves that do not support our cultural identity then we prevent our own liberation* (Antone, Miller & Myers, p. 26). Spiritual resilience incorporates those qualities of the human spirit that carry hope for the future of humanity.

Moving from reliance on print to the use of multi-media and artifacts to represent knowledges in complex ecologies to support the development of cultures of inquiry is a work in process. I believe strongly that the videoclips that I have inserted in this work demonstrates the meanings of the embodied energy-flowing values that educational researchers use to explain their educational influences in their own learning and in the learning of others. These meanings have epistemological significance for educational knowledge that require alternative ways of generating and representing knowledge. Like Lee and Rochon (2009) my hope is that my submission for the 2010 Annual Meeting will stimulate new conversations and collaborations that fundamentally expand our understanding of the richness of the diversity of the human experience and enable us to use that knowledge to enrich and expand opportunities to learn for all.

Next steps

I am feeling more valued by my institution as I have been appointed coordinator of the cohort and adjunct professor in the winter of 2010. At the time of writing, I am coordinating the recruitment of the Brantford Cohort III and need 20 students to start in July 2010. The new program has changed from the expectation of the completion of a major research paper (MRP) to 10 courses with the option to complete a MRP with 3 fewer courses. The focus continues to be Educational Inquiry. If Brantford cohort III comes to reality, I hope to teach one or two of the courses and use my influence to create a culture of inquiry in which practitioners can generate knowledge.

I ask and work to answer the question, "How do I improve my practice" daily, weekly and yearly. The challenge of representing different ways of knowing demands that I become more proficient in my use of multi-media to generate knowledge and expand the capacity of the academy to accredit other forms of knowledge. Some progress has been made in my own capacity to use the video camera, edit the clips, upload them to a server and insert them into print text. I am dissatisfied with still having to ask for help and intend to become independent so that I can be more helpful with my master's students.

With the next cohort, I intend to encourage and support them to use multi-media to generate knowledge and to represent their knowledge **within** their papers as urls of videodata and as DVD's. With my new position, I may have an entry into the pathways in the university where I can travel to bring about more understanding and acceptance of alternative and multi-media ways of generating knowledge in diverse ecologies.

In a 72 year longitudinal study of 268 men, asking the question 'Is there a formula for a good life?' the director of the study, George Vaillant, in an interview in the March 2008 newsletter to the Grant Study subjects, was asked, "What have you learned from the Grant Study men?" Vaillant's response was, "That the only thing that really matters in life are your relationships to other people" (Shenk, 2009). It is my belief that improving the world in even a small way means becoming a better person, living according to my values by building relationships and valuing the other in a culture of inquiry. I concur with Jean McNiff (2008) as she writes in the Educational Journal of Living Theories, an outstanding vehicle for sharing our knowledge electronically:

> It is up to each one of us to live our lives in a way of which we may feel proud. It is up to us to speak our own truths, with humility and commitment, to show how we hold ourselves accountable for ourselves, that we do not lock ourselves into the comfortable prisons of existing knowledge and established ways of doing things, but fully engage our limitless imaginations in the quest for finding ways of living lives that are life-affirming for all. (http://ejolts.net/node/86)

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