

Accounting for educational influences in improving practice for the Public Good.

A paper to be presented on the 11th April at the 2011 Annual Conference of the American Educational Research Association in New Orleans USA with the theme of Inciting the Social Imagination for the Public Good

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Introduction

The Idea of a University (Newman, 1987) is continuously being revisited as researchers seek to uphold the values of education in the face of the pressures of economic rationalism. For example, The International Conference at Liverpool Hope University on The Idea of a University – Revisited (16-19 September 2010) commemorated the Beatification of John Henry Cardinal Newman whose ‘Idea of a University’ continues to inspire the exercise of the social imagination for the public good. In this presentation we are following McGettrick’s lead in articulating the following principles that have emerged through our research and to which we hold ourselves accountable:

- 1 We should allow the values of the individual to be a voice that is heard, but it should never be exclusive, personal or contrary to the common good.*
- 2 When that voice is heard it ought to be clear, unambiguous, and conscious of the value system being promulgated.*
- 3 It needs to sit alongside a clear system of democratic discussion and debate, and be able to be modified or altered in and through that debate.*
- 4 It should always be open to challenge and to adjustment in the light of changing circumstances, including the changing nature of the institution.*
- 5 At all times this voice should be clearly proclaiming what is being done in the public good. That is always and unreservedly a guiding principle. (McGettrick, 2011)*

This paper will build on validated explanations of the educational influences of ourselves, as three academics who are seeking to improve our practice and to generate educational knowledge for the public good through our research and mutual influences. Our explanatory principles include faith, hope and love and the energy-flowing values used by the practitioner researchers to give meaning and purpose to their lives in ways that carry hope for the future of humanity and for their own.

Professor Bart McGettrick is the Dean of the Faculty of Education of Liverpool Hope University. McGettrick shares his understandings with which he influences the educational space of the Faculty of Education. These understandings include the guiding vision and orientation of the Faculty which is to *develop educational thought*

and practices which promote education as a humanising influence on each person and on society locally, nationally and internationally . We share McGettrick's purpose to contribute to the development of knowledge and understanding in all fields of education, characterising all work with values arising from hope and love.
(McGettrick, 2010)

Dr. Joan Walton is the Director of the Centre for the Child and Family at Liverpool Hope University. Walton acknowledges McGettrick's influence in sustaining and evolving an educational space at Liverpool Hope University in which she can express her creativity as she seeks to live her values as fully as possible and make original contributions to educational knowledge. This influence can be seen in Walton's guiding vision and orientation of her work in the Centre in researching and creating knowledge which *contributes to the evolution of a world in which humanity can flourish, through living values that have a humanising influence on children, families and wider society* (Walton, 2010). Walton characterises all her work with values arising from love and hope, as do McGettrick and Whitehead.

Professor Jack Whitehead supports the research within the Centre for the Child and Family, in the creative space opened up for him by Walton and McGettrick through his appointment as Adjunct Professor at Liverpool Hope University. This is enabling him to continue his research programme (Whitehead, 2006, 2011) into the creation and dissemination of educational theories that carry hope for the future of humanity and into the living standards of judgment that can reconstitute what counts as educational knowledge in the Academy.

The contributions to educational knowledge in this presentation are focused on:

- 1) The generation of a new epistemology for educational knowledge. This includes; the units of appraisal of the explanations produced by individuals for their educational influences in learning; the energy-flowing values in explanatory principles and living standards of judgment; the living logics of the living theories that include propositional, dialectical and inclusional logics.
- 2) The explication of a living theory methodology for making public the embodied knowledge of professional practitioners who are researching to enhance the public good.
- 3) Understanding inciting social imagination for the public good within an understanding of educational theory as the explanations that individuals produce for their educational influences in learning.
- 4) The use of an original approach to empathetic resonance using visual narrative for the communication of shared meanings in explanations of educational influence

The primary focus of the paper is on evaluating the validity of the epistemology for educational knowledge, with educational responsibility, that has emerged from this

co-operative enquiry. The paper sets out the units of appraisal, standards of judgment and living logics of this educational epistemology.

The units of appraisal are the explanations that individuals produce for their educational influences in learning.

The standards of judgment relate to the theme of the conference in understanding meanings of inciting social imagination for the public good. What does it mean to 'incite social imagination for the public good'? This understanding emerges in the paper through the generation of explanations of educational influences in learning.

The standards of judgment are shown to be recognizable in an understanding of the public good that is informed by the relationally dynamic awareness of space and boundaries of inclusionality (Rayner, 2009, 2010). In this awareness individuals can understand themselves as existing within the mutual influences of space, place, energy and others.

The living logics of the educational epistemology are important because these are the modes of thought that individuals use as appropriate for comprehending the real as rational (Marcuse, 1964, p. 105). These living logics include insights from propositional, dialectical and inclusional logics. The significance of the living logics is that they are not oppositional to propositional or dialectical logics, or exclude the rationality of each other, but acknowledge the partial truths of each.

The presentation is organized under the headings, Bart McGettrick's reflections as a Dean. Joan Walton's reflections as a Director of a Research Centre and Jack Whitehead's reflections under the headings in the successful proposal of Purposes; Theoretical Frameworks; Research Methods; Data Sources and Evidence; Institutional Impact; Substantiated Conclusions.

Bart McGettrick - Reflecting on my work as Dean of the Faculty of Education of Liverpool Hope University.

Liverpool Hope University is a Christian ecumenical university residing within the state system of higher education in England. It is a public institution and the greater proportion of its funding currently comes from the state. This situation will alter in 2012 when higher education in England will be funded from the fees of students. This contribution comes from my role as Dean of the Faculty of Education, responsible for developing the policies and the practices which guide and inform the academic activities of the Faculty. The Faculty currently has 2411 full-time equivalent students studying in all aspects of education. The Faculty also has 5 research centres and is committed to considerable outreach and professional development of teachers and others engaged in education in all its forms. On reflecting on the development of the policies and practices there is an interesting link between the living personal knowledge held by the individuals who influence and create policies, and the nature of these policies that underpin practices in a

public organisation such as a university. This is a professional ethical issue, and one which ought to be explored with openness and integrity. Of course it ought to be made clear that the policies which are developed in public institutions should always be subject to formation, review and scrutiny by democratically appointed or elected groups in and beyond the institution. It is not the prerogative of the Dean or any other individual to determine policy and practices without reference to other people. Also when policies are created or corporate decisions taken it is the responsibility of the Dean and other senior staff to implement these. It is not the role of the Dean to pursue an agenda of personalised values and ideals untrammelled by the views or opinions of others.

This raises the issue of *the institutional intellect* and how it is formed through the values and aspirations of those who form the institution. It would be naïve to believe that the personal preferences and values of individuals do not enter the policies of institutions, albeit mediated through the democratic structures and debates of the institution.

The "I", the "us" and the institution

In describing the development of the Faculty and its policies, it would be possible to attribute these to myself as Dean. However, there is a very clear set of processes and procedures which move the responsibility for ideas and values from the self to the other, or at least from the self to "us." There is a corporate engagement which moves responsibility for policies and decisions beyond the self. As Dean I am certainly included in what is claimed here, and therefore I see the institution as "us" or "we."

As with all knowledge there are three kinds of knowledge that impact on an institution and on that collective or corporate institutional intellect. There may be value in separating the kinds of knowledge which influence an institution in a very direct way. These will be considered briefly here, although they are vital to the ways in which the Faculty operates and forms its thoughts and ideas.

1. Academic Knowledge

Essentially knowledge which derives from research, discussion, and rational thought and is often based on evidence. This is, of course, not without its own value base, since the very selection of knowledge is itself often based on personal values and ideas. Generally speaking these values are formed in the relationships which we have with other people whom we hold in respect and trust. We are, each of us, prisoners of our own history and experiences – and especially our relationships. That is what creates us as unique and different.

2. Professional Knowledge

Professional knowledge derives from our unique and particular experiences and practices, often context specific, and fluid and difficult to codify. The experiences we

have in life will have a profound effect on our professional knowledge. These experiences may have been from the institution itself or taken from other places, and even other cultures. In my case the impact of working with Bethlehem University in Palestine has had a formative impact, not only because the value base is consistent with my own, but because of the fairly extreme circumstances in that part of the world.

3. Personal Knowledge

Personalised knowledge is the knowledge that contains and incorporates the values, ideals, aspirations and dreams of the individual person. These often derive from relationships which have influenced thinking and our being. These kinds of values often relate to our personal life experiences, including the influences of family, religion, peers, and those with whom we have special relationships – personal and/or professional.

The Institutional Intellect

Each of these different kinds of knowledge interact with each other, influence our thinking, and create the institutional intellect. This represents a complex set of relationships and influences on thinking and plans. In different contexts one of these may become more dominant than the other two. Generally, however, all three are present in how an institution expresses its values and mission and how it subsequently behaves. Of course it is in this behaviour, rather than by its rhetoric, that it shows its true values and its ethical principles.

An institution organised and run more or less exclusively on “Academic Knowledge” will be hyper-rational and formulaic in its general orientation. It is likely to pay limited attention to the needs of the people in the institution, seeing evidence as more important than relationships. (Of course these are not and should not be considered to be alternatives.)

An institution which is largely focused on “Professional Knowledge” will look at experiences and traditions. It may well run the risk of doing what has always been done rather than looking to evidence and to the values that impact, or ought to impact, on policies and practices.

An institution which is orientated to “Personal Knowledge” raises the question as to whether it is legitimate for personal knowledge to “intrude” on a public institution?

One argument would be to suggest that to deny this is to reduce an institution to a form of political correctness in which there is an aridity of spirit and an absence of passion or even conviction. The other argument is to suggest that great caution is needed otherwise the institution becomes an extension of the personal interests of an individual. Of course taken to extremes this is a danger... the danger of the idiosyncratic ideas of one person, or an influential few, becoming so dominant that they deny a democratic ideal.

Towards Some Principles

There seems an inevitable conclusion that in any institution it is the weaving together of these three kinds of knowledge which is critical in shaping or forming the institutional intellect. None of them on their own will be adequate in developing a balanced institution or community.

Through experience and the principles which I have arrived would be:

- a) We should allow the values of the individual to be a voice that is heard, but it should never be exclusive, personal or contrary to the common good.
- b) When that voice is heard it ought to be clear, unambiguous, and conscious of the value system being promulgated.
- c) It needs to sit alongside a clear system of democratic discussion and debate, and be able to be modified or altered in and through that debate.
- d) It should always be open to challenge and to adjustment in the light of changing circumstances, including the changing nature of the institution.
- e) At all times this voice should be clearly proclaiming what is being done in the public good. That is always and unreservedly a guiding principle.

The issue of the public good needs to distinguish this from a private good and a merit good. A private good will focus on the benefits to a private person or persons. This may include those who have enough funding to benefit from a decision or a policy. Education, however, might more constructively be thought of as a “merit good.” That is to say it is a good held in trust by individuals for the benefit of all. It is, in that sense, a cultural resource, and not a trading commodity to be bought and sold through some market-style economy.

This raises issues of how the democratic intellect generates a vision that is in the public interest. This is always a matter of judgement - and judgement should be a matter of applying justice to particular situations. In the Faculty of Education at Liverpool Hope University it has been possible to operate within the founding ethos of the institution so that the three kinds of knowledge sit comfortably with institutional and even social or community expectations.

In Liverpool Hope University one of the ways of describing the values and see them ripple through the policies and practices of the Faculty is to prepare a “concept map.” This shows clearly what the values are impact on the Faculty and inspire its work. It also demonstrates where they impact on the curriculum and professional activities of the Faculty. It is a kind of moral compass for the Faculty. It does not determine what is done or what might be achieved, but it does give direction, guidance and purpose to the myriad activities of the Faculty. It provides coherence and certainly offers a document which allows colleagues to discuss and debate the academic and professional direction of the work of the Faculty. The central point is that it is unreservedly based on the values that derive from hope and love. These

tend not to be part of the language of accountability and modern planning, but they represent a base of professional practice that can get ignored – the centrality of quality relationships as a basis for educational thought and practices. Whether it is possible to attribute love and hope to some kind of institutional intellect is a significant matter. This contribution suggests that this is indeed possible otherwise the Faculty would be based on concepts of “it” or “they” and not on the authentic values which inspire the daily living knowledge.

Joan Walton: Reflecting on my work as Director of the Centre for the Child and Family in the Faculty of Education of Liverpool Hope University.

Prior to coming to Liverpool Hope University, my experience of most senior managers was that they would freely discuss the values and vision of their organisation, but would reveal very little of their own personal values. The unspoken assumption appeared to be that personal values were part of one’s private life not to be shared within a professional context. Therefore it was an interesting experience to join the Education Faculty, where the Dean not only thoughtfully and explicitly reflected on the relationship between the personal values, professional practice, and academic thinking in creating an ‘institutional intellect’; but in the strategic map of the faculty was prepared to propose an ethos underpinning the ‘institutional intellect’ which was to say that education should be about ‘humanising the individual and society, and should be based on values deriving from hope and love’. This is very radical thinking in a public sector organisation and certainly generated considerable discussion. In particular, use of the word ‘love’ in a professional context raised a number of lively debates on what was meant by this emotive word in a professional context.

McGettrick was not, as he emphasises clearly in his contribution above, seeking to impose his ideas and values on the faculty, but rather to propose them as a basis for dialogue. In developing the Centre for the Child and Family this was a useful conversation to have. The aim of the centre is to develop a more dynamically and mutually informing relationship between all professionals providing a service for children and families; and the meta-research question being explored is: *“How do we integrate research and practice, across disciplines and professions, to demonstrably improve the wellbeing of children?”* Any issue related to the wellbeing of children inevitably includes the values of the researchers and practitioners involved, including the very definition of ‘wellbeing’ itself. However this term is defined, though, no comprehensive discussion of a child’s wellbeing can omit their need to love and be loved. Further, if the focus is on taking an action research approach to improving their wellbeing, then within that ‘professional’ context, the issue of a wide range of emotions including love and hope become central to the dialogue.

One of the main activities in the centre is a long term collaborative inquiry (CI) involving practitioners and managers from early years settings who were inquiring into how they could improve their practice in their daily work with children. (Walton, 2011). Within the CI each individual is being encouraged to develop their

own living theory (Walton, 2008; Whitehead, 1989). The starting point for any person developing a living theory is that they identify what matters to them in their work, what the values are that motivate them, and how they improve their practice so that there is a greater resonance rather than contradiction between their values and practice. From the outset, practitioners would talk about 'loving what they did'; and the importance of relating to children in a way that communicated this kind of feeling. In other words the concept and experience of 'love' was central to their role; and it would not have been possible to engage in the inquiry without acknowledging this.

However practitioners working at a grassroots level with children often feel that their role is devalued; and can see themselves as very separate from the distant world of 'senior management' who are perceived as focusing on issues such as finance, performance management and corporate decision-making all taking place within a technocratic world of bureaucracy which is in general unfeeling, impersonal and uncaring. Hence when practitioners were made aware of the Faculty's strategic map written and supported by the Dean, which was underpinned by values arising out of hope and love, their surprise and pleasure were in equal measure. It had a liberating impact. It was as though they had been given permission to talk about what motivated and sustained them in the work that they did in a way that previously they had thought was professionally not very acceptable. At the same time working with Jack Whitehead, a Professor at the University, who quite openly spoke of such values within a living theory approach to research, confirmed their sense that they could explore these issues in a proper acceptable context.

A strategic map has now been written for the Centre which reflects and builds on the faculty map. The guiding vision is to "research and create knowledge which contributes to the evolution of a world in which humanity can flourish, through living values that have a humanising influence on children, families and wider society", and an underpinning theme is identified to be 'living as fully as we can values deriving from hope and love'.

The conversations emerging from a university faculty and a research centre that promote this ethos are in their early stages. However already the distinctiveness of such an approach is being recognised, and is generating a response from many outside of the university. Given its commitment to engaging in research that is grounded in practice, and which aims to 'make the world a better place', the Centre for the Child and Family is establishing itself as a forum for those who have a similar mission; who want to make a difference in the world, but want to do so in a way that is grounded in knowledge that evidence-based and be accountable for what they do.

In this respect, then, we return to McGettrick's contention of the need to integrate the personal, professional and academic in the university. Taking a living theory approach to action research within a collaborative inquiry context allows for this principle to be put into practice; it does this by encouraging qualities such as hope

and love to be acknowledged within a professional context where academic and practitioner research is undertaken to create knowledge that will help make the world a better place.

Professor Jack Whitehead: Reflecting on the ontological, epistemological and methodological significance of explaining educational influences in improving practice for the Public Good in living educational theories in the Centre for the Child and Family of the Faculty of Education of Liverpool Hope University.

The great attractor which moved me into the educational space created by Walton and McGettrick, in the Centre for the Child and Family, included Walton's passion to develop research into enhancing the well-being of children through generating *living theory which offers 'spiritual resilience gained through connection with a loving dynamic energy' as an original standard of judgment* (Walton, 2008). I am assuming that enhancing the flow of loving dynamic energy makes the world a better place to be. This attraction has strengthened with Walton's expression of a 'responsibility for the well-being of all'. Of all the values that incites my social imagination for the public good it is 'a responsibility for the well-being of all'.

The attraction also included McGettrick's expression of a desire to create an institutional intellect that acknowledged the relational dynamic between personal, professional and academic knowledge whilst distinguishing the development of knowledge and understanding with values arising from love and hope and democratic principles.

Here are some reflections on accounting for educational influences in improving practice for the Public Good in terms of the headings of the successful proposal on: *Purposes; Theoretical Frameworks; Research Methods; Data Sources and Evidence; Institutional Impact; Substantiated Conclusions.*

Purposes

There has been much discussion in AERA about the nature of appropriate standards of judgment for evaluating the quality and validity of the educational knowledge generated by practitioner-researchers in different cultural settings. Schön (1995) called for the development of a new epistemology for the scholarship of teaching and Snow (2001) called for the development of methodologies for making public the professional knowledge of teachers. In the 2011 AERA call for papers there is an encouragement of submissions that employ situated perspectives and dynamic conceptions of institutions and communities. This presentation is consistent with fulfilling this call.

The purposes are fulfilled in answering the following questions in relation to understanding meanings of inciting social imagination for the public good:

i) Do the explanations produced by individual action researchers, to explain their

educational influences in learning, contribute to a new epistemology for educational knowledge?

What we are suggesting is that a new epistemology for educational knowledge is being created by educational researchers who are explaining their educational influences with educational principles that include expressions of love, hope with democratic principles in the dynamic relationships between personal, professional and academic knowledge. We are offering explanations of our educational influences in learning that include these relationships, values and understandings. You can access one of the most significant evidence-based archives for our suggestion at: <http://www.actionresearch.net/living/living.shtml>

ii) Can a living theory methodology, using visual narratives with empathetic resonance and validity, help to make public the meanings of the embodied values that distinguish a university?

iii) What are the logics of the explanations that individuals produce for their educational influences in their own learning, the learning of others and the learning of a social formation of a university?

In our understanding of logic we following Marcuse's view that *logic is the mode of thought appropriate for comprehending the real as rational* (Marcuse, 2964, p. 105).

We are also agreeing with Gadamer's point about the need for a logic of question and answer. Gadamer refers to dialectic as the art of conducting a real conversation.

*"To conduct a conversation requires first of all that the partners to it do not talk at cross purposes. Hence its necessary structure is that of question and answer. The first condition of the art of conversation is to ensure that the other person is with us.... To conduct a conversation.... requires that one does not try to out-argue the other person, but that one really considers the weight of the other's opinion. Hence it is an art of testing. But the art of testing is the art of questioning. For we have seen that to question means to lay open, to place in the open. As against the solidity of opinions, questioning makes the object and all its possibilities fluid. A person who possesses the 'art' of questioning is a person who is able to prevent the suppression of questions by the dominant opinion.... **Thus the meaning of a sentence is relative to the question to which it is a reply** (our emphasis), i.e. it necessarily goes beyond what is said in it. The logic of the human sciences is, then, as appears from what we have said a logic of the question. Despite Plato we are not very ready for such a logic." (pp. 330-333)*

What we are suggesting is that the proposition and dialectical logics that dominate what counts as knowledge in the global Academy, should make space for the relationally dynamic or fluid logic of questions and answers that are focused on both improving practice and generating knowledge such as, 'Can I find a way of knowing that satisfies my search for meaning?' (Walton 2008)

iv) Which living standards of judgment can be used to evaluate the validity of explanations of educational influences in learning that incite social imagination for the public good?

It will be in your responses to this presentation that will tell us if we have incited your social imaginations for the public good. In relation to our influences with each other we continue to account for our educational influences in learning with each other and others, with values and understandings arising from love and hope. We are holding ourselves to account in our explanations of educational influence in learning with relationally dynamic explanatory principles that include our personal, professional and academic knowledge with expressions of our values emerging from love and hope with democratic principles. In creating and sharing living educational theories with values, as explanatory principles, that carry hope for the future of humanity we wish to incite your social imaginations for the public good by stimulating your desire to create and share your own living educational theories.

Theoretical frameworks

The generation of living theories draws insights from a range of theoretical frameworks. Here are some of these insights.

Polanyi's (1958) idea in personal knowledge that an individual can choose to understand the world from their own point of view as a person claiming originality and exercising judgment, responsibly, with universal intent.

Schön's (1995) idea about the need for new epistemologies in new scholarships and that this new epistemology will emerge through action research.

Adler-Collins' (2000) idea on the creation of a safe space for learning.

Bernstein's (2000) idea of a mythological discourse that separates the hierarchical relations of power external to an organization from the internal dialogues within the organization. Living educational theorists take care to avoid this separation.

Biesta's (2006) idea that whilst we have a well developed language of learning we do not as yet have a well developed language of education. In the creation of a living educational theory an individual exercises his or her responsibility for generating a language of education through producing an explanation of educational influence in learning.

Bourdieu's (2000) ideas of habitus and social formation are useful in developing an awareness that some influences in the evolution of a social formation are those of the 'automatons' of the habitus, and do not emerge from the conscious intentions of actors.

Buber's (1947) idea of the relation in education being one of trust with the special humility of the educator subordinating the hierarchical views of the educator to the particular being of the student.

Charles' (2007) idea of guiltless recognition and societal reidentification in moving beyond postcolonialism in the well-being of individuals within a social formation.

Delong's (2002) idea of a culture of inquiry in a leader's influence in forming and

sustaining improvements in practice and generating knowledge.

Farren's (2005) ideas of a pedagogy of the unique and web of betweenness in expressing one's responsibility as an educator in establishing the environment in which the voices of students can be expressed and develop.

Farren's, Whitehead's and Bognar's (2011, Ed) ideas on action research in the educational workplace.

Gadamer, H.G. (1975) *Truth and Method*, p. 333. London; Sheed and Ward.

Habermas' (1976, 1987, 2002) ideas of social validity, learning and the inclusion of the other in enhancing the validity of interpretations by focusing on comprehensibility, truth, rightness and authenticity; in focusing on learning and in focusing on the relationship between the well-being of all citizens in relation to one's own.

Hymer's (2007) idea of giftedness helps to emphasise the importance of articulating the emergence of the value-laden concept of generative-transformational giftedness in which each individual is capable of developing their own giftedness.

Ilyenkov's (1977) idea of dialectical logic helps to emphasise the importance of finding appropriate ways of representing the life of a living contradiction in enquiries of the kind, 'How do I improve what I am doing?'

Laidlaw's (1996) idea of living standards of judgment to emphasise that it is not only a matter of clarify the meanings of values-flowing standards of judgement and explanatory principles, it is a matter of appreciating that the values, principles and standards are themselves living and evolving

Lohr's (2006) idea of love at work helps to sustain a commitment to authenticity in recognizing and acknowledging the significance of including one's ontological values as explanatory principles in explanations of educational influence.

Marcuse, H. (1964) *One Dimensional Man*, London; Routledge and Kegan Paul.

McNiff's (2006) idea of my story is my living educational theory, helps to retain a focus on the explanatory qualities of a living theory within a narrative expression of meaning.

McGettrick's (2010) Strategic Map 2010-11 for the Faculty of Education of Liverpool Hope University.

Merleau-Ponty's (1972) idea of embodiment helps to give a focus on the importance of finding appropriate forms of representation to make public the expression of the embodied knowledge of practitioners as they explore the implications of asking, researching and answering questions of the kind, 'How do I improve what I am doing?'

Naidoo's (2005) idea of a passion for compassion helps to focus on the use of a multi-media narrative, with ostensive expressions of meaning using video, to communicate the embodied expressions of meaning.

Rayner's (2006, 2009, 2010) idea of inclusionality helps to articulate the significance of space and energy in the relationally dynamic nature of values-flowing explanatory principles and living standards of judgment.

Sardello's (2008) idea of empathetic resonance helps to focus on the use of an idea of empathetic resonance that includes an energy-flowing and values based response to visual data that shows the other seeking to live their ontological values as fully as they can.

Vasilyuk's (1996) idea in his psychology of experiencing of the importance of finding appropriate ways of representing flows of energy with values in explanations of practice.

Walton's (2008) idea of spiritual resilience gained through the experience of a loving dynamic energy helps to focus on the significance of including a loving dynamic energy in explanatory principles.

Whitehead's (1989, 2006, 2008a&b) ideas on a new scholarship of educational knowledge, living educational theories and living theory methodologies help to emphasise the importance of each individual generating their own living theory and having a faith in their own creative capacities as knowledge-creators to generate their own living theory methodology.

Winter's (1989) idea of principles of rigor involving dialectical and dialectical critique, risk, plural structure, multiple resource and theory, practice transformation, help to strengthen the rigor of enquiries into questions of the kind, 'How do I improve what I am doing?'

Wood's (2010) idea of living theory approach to social transformation in the context of the aids pandemic in Africa, help to stress the importance of contextualizing one's own enquiry within the socio-cultural influences that can affect the generation of one's own living educational theory.

Research methods

The appropriateness of the action reflection cycles used in the generation and development of living educational theories rests in showing their usefulness in clarifying the meanings of ontological values in educational relationships and in forming these values into living epistemological standards of judgment. The educational relationships are contextualized as inclusional (Rayner, 2009) in relation to the mixed methods research. A living theory approach to visual narratives is used in multi-media explanations of educational influences in learning.

The methods for enhancing the robustness of the validity and rigor of the explanations include the use of Habermas' (1976) four criteria of social validity and Winter's (1989) six criteria for enhancing rigour. Lather's (1991) catalytic validity is used to justify claims about the educational influence of the ideas generated in one context for individuals working and researching in different contexts in the UK, Ireland, Canada, Croatia, India, China, Japan, Australia, South Africa and Nigeria.

A method developed from Sardello's, (2008) idea of empathetic resonance, together with visual narratives and the approach to validity described above, is used to develop a shared understanding of energy-flowing values in explanations of educational influences in a university (Huxtable, 2009).

For example, we have a video clip shows us - Bart McGettrick, Joan Walton and Jack Whitehead - talking about what really matters to us. The language focuses on values. We have another video-clip in which Linda Rush, a Vice-dean in the Faculty of

Education is with Bart McGettrick, the Dean in a Performance Appraisal Interview. The language is formal in the sense that it conforms to the language used to appraise staff in terms of expectations such as the number of journal articles to be published in a particular time. There is no recognition, in the language used, of the values expressed early in informal conversations about what really matters. The pressure of cultural expectation within the Institution tends to dominate the language used.

Image from video-clip One on a conversation on values:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nW_Q-kw7g2A



Image from video-clip Two on a formal appraisal at:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D63-2-oi31M>



In relation to inciting social imagination for public good the significance of this omission can be understood in relation to the explicit commitment of the Faculty in terms of its vision and purpose which includes a commitment to develop educational thought and practices which promote education as a humanising influence on each person and on society locally, nationally and internationally. The statements of purpose include a commitment to contribute to the development of knowledge and understanding in all fields of education, characterising all work with values arising from hope and love.

A social imagination for the public good has been used in stating a commitment to promote a humanizing influence and in characterizing all work with values arising from hope and love. However, cultural pressures appear to work to eliminate this values-laden language in a performance appraisal. We continue to work on the actions that need to follow the expressions of the social imagination so that the values are lived more fully in our practice.

Another example of how cultural pressures can serve to stifle the social imagination for the public good can be seen in a difference of opinion between Walton and Whitehead in establishing the policy statements for the Centre for the Child and Family at Liverpool Hope University. Whitehead did not believe that the radical

policy statement produced by Walton, could be negotiated through the steering committee of the Centre. His belief was based on past experiences of the inertia in University Committees to responding openly to radical change. Walton persisted in the exercise of her social imagination for the public good in gaining acceptance for the policy document by the Steering Committee.

Data sources and Evidence

The data and evidential sources on inciting social imagination for the public good includes living theory doctoral theses legitimated in the Academy over the past 14 years from research carried out in the UK, the Republic of Ireland, Canada, the USA and Japan.

The data sources are focused on the explanations that individual action researchers have produced to explain their educational influences in their own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of the social formations in which they live and work; their living educational theories (Whitehead & McNiff, 2006).

Walton (2008) for example has explained her educational influences in her own learning in her doctoral thesis on *Ways of Knowing: Can I find a way of knowing that satisfies my search for meaning?* Walton's enquiry started when she experienced the suffering of young people in care, and realizes that she did not have the knowledge to help them. Her thesis records her search for a way of knowing that enabled her to find meaning in a world where such suffering is possible. Walton developed a meditative and journaling practice which connected her to a sense of a loving dynamic energy with limitless creative potential. She realised that over time, through being 'true to myself', her connection with this source provides her with a spiritual resilience which enables her to retain equanimity within life's challenges. Through telling her personal story, Walton offers an emergent methodology that included both narrative inquiry and action research. She generated a living theory which offered 'spiritual resilience gained through connection with a loving dynamic energy' as an original standard of judgment. (see - <http://www.actionresearch.net/living/walton.shtml>)

Whitehead (1993, 1999, 2010) has explained his educational influences in his own learning and in the learning of others. He has focused on establishing energy flowing values as explanatory principles and as living standards of judgment for evaluating the validity of the claims to educational knowledge in living educational theories. He continues to make public (Whitehead, 2011) his ideas on living educational theories and to encourage the critical evaluations of others in order to strengthen the validity of his interpretations through the mutual rational controls of critical discussion (Popper, 1975, p. 44).

In September 2010 Jack Whitehead gave this lecture to the Pestalozzi conference in Bergen, Norway. Whitehead talks about action research, self study and living theory

and focuses on the validity of multi-media explanations of educational influence. The conference was hosted by Bergen University College:



Click on http://www.youtube.com/view_play_list?p=29909A5B26B374C0

It is argued that the evidence from the above data sources is sufficient to establish standards of judgment for legitimating educational knowledge that can be comprehended and agreed across a range of cultural boundaries in communicating meanings of the public good. The agreement rests on a process of empathetic resonance in which visual data is used to establish a shared recognition of energy-flowing values from different cultural contexts. These energy-flowing values are included in the explanatory principles that individuals use to explain their educational influences in learning.

Institutional impact

Any system which is based on values is ultimately based on relationships. A pedagogy and theory of research will thrive in an environment in which the driving principles reinforce the aspirations of research. There is a relational synergy to be achieved as to how research serves its objectives and purposes. Research serves the purposes of the university in distinctive ways, and is at the service of the university.

The research paradigms therefore serve the needs of the university as an organisation. The methodologies and research strategies are intrinsically part of the institution and its objectives. Where a university or faculty expresses its objectives as 'humanising individuals and society through education' and its particular commitment to education as a means of 'humanising society and facilitating the flourishing of humanity', (Liverpool Hope University, 2010) it has a responsibility to demonstrate what this means in practice.

For example Walton is holding herself to account in terms of her responsibility to both incite her imagination for the public good and to live as fully as she can the implications of holding true to her values. In relation to the evidence of the institutional impact of the exercise of this responsibility you can see this in the Appendix on the *Constitution of the Centre for the Child and Family, Liverpool Hope University of September 2010*. We are thinking particularly of section III:2 of the constitution which states that:

The members of the steering group also understand that it (and they) are an integral part of a participatory action research process, and as such, an evaluation of the role that they play will be included in the research writings that are produced in relation to the development of the centre.

This is how the University is using a research paradigm of participatory action research as an influence to provide direction and support for an emerging principled way of developing research.

Whitehead is also concerned with the institutional impact of the exercise of his responsibility to incite a social imagination for the public good. One of his foci has been to support the academic legitimation of living educational theories in different cultural contexts, through the dissemination of ideas from his research programme. This has involved the legitimation in different Universities of the living theories of individuals. You can see the evidence of this legitimation in McGill University, the University of Kwa Zulu-Natal, Limerick University, Glamorgan University and Bath University at <http://www.actionresearch.net/living/living.shtml> and <http://www.jeanmcniff.com/theses.asp>

Substantiated conclusions

In substantiating the validity of the living theory methodology the evidence is drawn from living theory, action research doctoral theses that have been judged as original contributions to knowledge in demonstrating originality of mind and critical judgment (see <http://www.actionresearch.net/living/living.shtml>).

What is original in this paper is the evidence-based claim that a new epistemology for educational knowledge with educational responsibility has been established by this legitimated knowledge-base for education. The standards of judgment in this epistemology include meanings of the public good that involve responsibility, love hope and humanizing influence.

The substantiated conclusions also focus on the nature of the practical principles that can be used to explain educational influences in learning that incite social imagination for the public good. The meanings of these practical principles, including 'hope', and 'loving what we are doing', are clarified in the course of their emergence through action reflection cycles as each individual asks, researches and answers questions of the kind, 'How do I improve what I am doing?'

These conclusions include the evidence that visual narratives can be used to develop a shared recognition of the meanings of love and hope and the energy-flowing values that constitute explanatory principles in explanations of educational influence in enhancing the public good.

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I **CONSTITUTION OF THE CENTRE FOR THE CHILD AND FAMILY, LIVERPOOL HOPE UNIVERSITY, September 2010**

1. **Background information**

The idea that a Centre for the Child and Family should be established at Liverpool Hope University has been the subject of intermittent discussion for over two years. However, little progress was made in the development of the idea until May 2009, when a discussion document was produced, proposing a rationale, mission, aims, outline development plan, and critical success factors. Essential information was extracted and presented in a short paper to Senate in June 2009, who gave full approval for the setting up of the Centre.

A major principle identified in the initial discussion document was that the development of the Centre should be a collaborative venture between academics and practitioners having a commitment to improving the well-being of children and young people. This was based on an assumption that the provision of effective children's services requires a much closer and more mutually informing relationship between research and practice than currently exists. There was also a recognition that, although in professional circles there is generally an acceptance of the need for multi-disciplinary and inter-professional practice, there needs to be considerable work undertaken to gain the knowledge and skills required to achieve this in practice. There is no context where this occurs in a way that provides a model of good practice that can be emulated; hence how to achieve this needs to be the focus of a research enquiry in its own right. The development of the Centre seeks to constitute that research enquiry, as well as providing a stimulating and participatory forum for professionals and academics who wish to engage in their own distinctive but connected research activities.

2. **Reporting Procedure**

The Steering Group will present four-monthly reports to the Education Faculty Research Committee, which will present the report to the University Research Committee, and then

onto Senate.

3. Aims of Centre

To be seen as distinctive in giving equal importance to world class research, and to the learning and teaching of students, and to integrate these two activities in the Centre.

To develop its role in creating, advancing and disseminating knowledge to enhance the wellbeing of children locally, nationally and globally.

To develop as a research project in its own right, exploring the question: “How do we develop a research and teaching centre, which supports professionals in their aim to continuously improve their ability to enhance the wellbeing of children, families and communities, through inter-professional and multi-disciplinary work, based on values of equality, participation and social justice?”

To deliver excellent and inspirational learning and teaching, and to translate excellence in research and scholarship into learning opportunities for (undergraduates?ⁱ), postgraduates and continuing professional development.

To become the best externally recognised experts in the field of research with children and families, with a reputation for delivery and professionalism.

To develop strategic partnerships with other successful organisations, locally and globally, that will add significant value and will deliver long-term mutual benefits.

To promote inter-professional working, and actively research ways in which different professionals can work together in the best interests of children, families and wider society.

To promote multi-disciplinary working, actively researching how different disciplines can connect with and inform each other, to develop a knowledge base that is holistic, integrated and dynamic.

To actively grow research income, and develop additional sources of profitable income to invest in the continuing

growth of the Centre.

To ensure effective communication and ownership of values and strategy amongst all stakeholders in the Centre, and create a participatory developmental process which includes representation from all stakeholders.

4. Foundation Principles / Values

The Centre reflects a similar ethos to that identified in the EdD Learning and Teaching Strategy – that is, it aims to facilitate the development of a holistic, interdisciplinary approach to the problems people have in their professional lives, and to support them in attaining their intentions and aspirations.

Building on the work of Professor Whitehead, and on that of a growing number of academics and practitioners around the world, the Centre also seeks to encourage (though does not require) researchers to incorporate into their research a living theory approach to their own professional practice (see Appendix ‘Creating a Living Theory’).

This research would be integrated into the meta-research enquiry that is the development of the Centre.

II REMIT

1. EdD

To contribute to the development of the EdD programme, by providing an elective for doctoral students interested in exploring ways of creating a dynamic and mutually informing relationship between the research they undertake, and their professional practice, through an action research approach to learning.

2. PhD

To develop a cohort of PhD students, who will take a less structured approach to achieving a doctorate than is provided by the EdD; but will still be offered opportunities to meet and support other doctoral students, and engage with the wider activities of the Centre.

To explicitly seek to attract PhD students who were interested in the aims, ethos and research process which is informing the development of the Centreⁱ.

3. Masters

To develop a masters programme that encourages students to engage in postgraduate enquiries relevant to developing inter-professional and multi-disciplinary practice; with a particular emphasis on practitioner-research projects.

4. Research Seminars

To organise a programme of regular research seminars to enable a sharing and dissemination of research being undertaken. External speakers would be invited on an occasional basis to give a presentation on their area of interest / expertise.

5. Conferences

To arrange an annual / biannual conference, focusing on an area of interest that was of current relevance to the work of the centre.

To present the research and work of the Centre in high profile academic conferences and other external events.

To actively seek to present work at conferences that are aimed at professional managers and practitioners from any setting providing services to children, young people and families, as a means of communicating to them the research that is going on in the university, and encourage them to engage with it either in person, or through accessing journal publications.

To encourage postgraduate (and other) students to present their work at conferences, and write up for publication.

6. Development of external partnerships

Local

To actively seek to develop a local network of professionals interested in engaging with the Centre. This would include expanding the notion of partnership with schools as it is currently understood and practised at the university.

National

To develop a national network of academics and professionals from children's services, and others interested in promoting the wellbeing of children.ⁱⁱⁱ

International

To develop connections and joint research projects with academic institutions and professional groups in different international settings^{iv}.

7. CPD

To create a CPD programme which could be offered out to different agencies involved in any area of children and families work. A CPD programme that focused on practitioner research within children's services could be created as a specific option.

8. Publications

To prioritise the publication in peer reviewed journals of research activities taking place within the centre which will contribute to the REF exercise; and to encourage the writing of books, book chapters, and book reviews.

To seek publication in professional journals, to provide a means of 'marketing' what is being offered at Liverpool Hope in the way of practitioner research, as a means of attracting potential students who might be particularly interested in this approach to improving and developing their practice.

9. Funding bids

To write or contribute to the writing of funding bids to support the work of the centre.

III TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. The purpose of the steering group is to play an advisory role in relation to the strategic direction to the project.
2. The members of the steering group also understand that it (and they) are an integral part of a participatory action research process, and as such, an evaluation of the role that they play will be included in the research writings that are produced in relation to the development of the centre.
3. The steering group membership will consist of 6 academic colleagues in the education faculty, 3 academic colleagues from other faculties, 1 member of the Centre for Cultural Disabilities, 3 external professionals, 3 students, and Professor Jack Whitehead. There may be other co-opted members as the centre develops.
4. The steering group will meet three times a year to consider reports to be submitted to the Education Faculty research committee, and to discuss the progress and further development of the Centre.

5. The steering group will also contribute, receive and respond to the research findings that are produced as a result of the development of the centre being seen as a research enquiry in its own right.
6. The steering group will report any concerns it has to the Education Faculty management group.

APPENDIX

Creating a 'living theory'

A living educational theory is an explanation produced by an individual to explain their educational influences in their own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of the sociocultural contexts in which we live and work.

Asking, researching and answering the following action reflection questions are often used in the creation of a living theory:

- What are my values?
- What can I do to live my values more fully in practice, and in so doing, improve my practice?
- In the process, what 'living contradictions' do I notice (i.e. the gap between my values, and how I actually behave) – and what action do I take to improve the congruence between my values and practice?
- What literature and other sources of information do I use to inform the process of reflection and decisions made about action?
- What are the factors that both help and hinder the process of 'improving practice' – and how do I enhance the helping factors, and reduce the hindering factors?
- What is the learning that emerges from engaging with this process?
- What account can I give of the educational influences on my own learning, and of my influence on the learning of others, and on the sociocultural contexts in which I live and work?
- What is distinctive about the knowledge that I create in this process?
- How do I communicate that knowledge to others?
- What methods of validation do I use to evidence the claim to knowledge creation?

Notes

ⁱ There could be an interesting debate concerning whether it would be of value to create an undergraduate programme that would sit within the Centre, with a title such as BA (Hons) Integrated Children's Services, or Inter-professional Practice with

Children, Young People and Families. The degree would focus on giving students grounding in a range of children's services, and would explicitly encourage them to explore ways of 'actively participating in their own learning' from the outset. My experience of teaching second year students this year would suggest that we can introduced an enquiry based mode of learning at an early stage of their development, and (as long as they had placements or other practical experiences) could learn to focus on questions related to the self-study of their own development as an integral part of the degree process. The degree could be created so that students would be equipped to move into postgraduate professional training in a number of professional arenas.

ⁱⁱ An aim would be to actively attract doctoral students who were interested in incorporating a self-study of their own practice into their research (though this would not be a requirement; others interested in registering for a PhD within the centre would still be eligible for acceptance). Nigel Harrison is the first PhD student to register with the University because of his interest in the development of the Centre. There are several others also expressing a potential interest; if their applications were to progress, active ways would be planned for them to mutually support each other in their self-study approaches.

ⁱⁱⁱ This process has been started with the CARN Study Day, and an ongoing e-seminar that takes place on a BERA email listing. Relationships developed in this way could be a means of providing a list of already interested people to invite to research seminars, conferences, and other organised group events. Jack Whitehead is in the process of setting up a group of doctoral and postdoctoral enquirers in the Bath area, with whom he is going to explore ways in which they could support each other in their individual enquiries "in a way that could contribute to the distinctive nature of the CfCF". If this group proves successful and productive, similar groups could be developed around the country as the Centre progresses.

^{iv} A number of these connections have already been made. Jack Whitehead has developed a strong international reputation, and is keen to build on the work that he is already doing in international settings through any research and self-study work that is undertaken in the Centre. The CARN Study Day, and other papers sent out outlining the principles and proposed aims of the Centre have generated a widespread and enthusiastic response, which can be fostered and built on.