

**Contribution to BERA 2009 annual conference keynote symposium on
'Explicating A New Epistemology For Educational Knowledge With Educational
Responsibility' on the 3rd September 2009**

**How do I improve what I am doing in my professional practice and make an
original contribution to the knowledge-base of education?**

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Abstract

In my work as a senior educational psychologist in the Children's Services of an English Local Authority I have a systemic responsibility to improve the quality of the educational support for the development and creation of gifts and talents in education. A keystone to this work is the development of inclusive theory, practice and provision that improves the quality of educational relationships, spaces and opportunities supporting all learners to develop talents for creating and offering as gifts, knowledge of themselves, the world and themselves in the world.

This account explicates relationally dynamic standards of judgment used to validate and legitimate my embodied educational knowledge in the Academy and contributes to the evolution of a system of education fit for the 21st century. In doing this I focus on the energy-flowing values of loving recognition, respectful connectedness and educational responsibility. This self-study includes an explanation of my educational influences in my own learning, in the learning of others and social formations. I claim that this explanation of educational influence shows a more appropriate form of accountability to one that focuses only on the conformity to government regulations or to the 'delivery of key outcomes'.

My contribution to explicating a new epistemology for educational knowledge with educational responsibility is my living theory account, which is knowledge I have created through researching my educational practice employing a living educational theory methodology. It comprises a description and explanation of what I know (what is it I have done, how I have done it, why I have done it), how I have come to know and why I have come to know.

Introduction

I work as a psychologist. As a psychologist I am concerned with researching humans being human to enable each person to live the best life they can as a contributing member of a humane and sustainable world. As a psychologist I research by coming to understand by describing and theorising the intra and inter-relationally dynamic influences of individuals in their own learning and lives, that of others and of social formations.

I work as an educational psychologist. As an educational psychologist my practice is concerned with researching to improve learning that is not simply acquiring or perfecting skills and techniques. Heng (2003) illustrates what I mean by making the distinction between 'academic learning' and 'learning for life'. I have left the

quotation in its entirety as Heng is speaking from a different socio-cultural and socio-historical context to my own, she is in Singapore and I am in England, yet what she says resonates so closely with my own perspectives:

‘For too long, the dominant emphasis in education has been on achievement, on what the child is able to do rather than on who the child really is. Roeper (1995) cautions, “education has become a one-sided instrument. It relates to academic learning but does not stress the development and the growth of the self. Yet it is in this inner self, the unique self of each human being, that is the central point of their lives”(p.142). Roeper distinguishes between two philosophies of education: educating for success and educating for life. For the most part, she argues, schools have been guided by the philosophy of educating for success. In this model of education, the emphasis is on academic achievement and on perceiving education as a factory-style enterprise operating within the existing norms and expectations of society. The philosophy of educating for life, in contrast, is grounded in the concept of self-actualisation and individualisation; children are valued for their uniqueness, and the emphasis is on the “inner agenda” and passions of the child, within the larger context of the growth of self. (p.47)

Biesta (2006) makes the distinction between learning as acquisition and process and I agree with him when he says, ‘Something has been lost in the shift from the language of education to the language of learning.’ (p.14). I like his description of education, ‘...education is not just about the transmission of knowledge, skills and values, but is concerned with the individuality, subjectivity, or personhood of the student, with their “coming into the world” as unique, singular beings. (p. 27).

If education is to be educational then it must enable a person to learn to know themselves so they can “come into the world” as unique, singular beings’ attuned to the evolving world and their being in the world. Heng (ibid) makes this point in the conclusion to her chapter, *Beyond School in Search for Meaning*, in Borlands , *Rethinking Gifted Education*:

‘In closing, let me return to Frankl (1984), who, in his search for meaning after years in Nazi death camps, wrote, “man should not ask what the meaning of his life is, but rather he must recognise that it is *he* who is asked. In a word, each man is questioned by life; and he can only answer to life by *answering for* his own life; to life he can only respond by being responsible” (p.131). What is the real purpose of school? Should not educational integrity be about helping children develop a sense of connection between head and heart, mind and spirit, reason and conscience – and, in a broader sense, “individual fulfilment within a framework of moral purpose” (J. Gardner, 1961/1984, p.169)? (p.60)

White (2006) expresses this as an educational responsibility, which could guide educational practice and the questions that educators need to respond to in developing their practice:

...what schools are for – we quickly reach rock-bottom questions about what kind of society we want and what kind of life is best for the individual. The school curriculum is – or should be – a vehicle to enable young people not only to lead a fulfilled personal life, but also to help other people, as friends, parents, workers and as citizens, to lead as fulfilled a life as their own.

I imagine few would object to this. The difficulty is, we don’t all see eye to eye on *what it is* to lead a fulfilled life. (p.151)

I don’t see the individual understanding of what it is to live a fulfilled life as a difficulty. It is what I am about in my role as senior educational psychologist developing and coordinating inclusive gifted and talented educational theory, practice

and provision. My professional practice is that which contributes to improving educational contexts that enable learners of all ages to be educationally responsible, extend themselves a loving recognition and make respectful connections with others. The educational practice and provision I seek to identify, create, enhance and support is that which supports learners to emancipate themselves in their own learning and lives by enabling them to develop their understanding of their ontological values, what is that gives meaning and purpose to their life, and their ability to contribute to their own lives and learning, that of others and the social formations within which they live and work.

I believe a person's ability to be educationally responsible for them self is enhanced by helping them learn to research to create knowledge as living educational theory researcher (Whitehead, 1989). There is research to create knowledge of the world, research to create knowledge of self, and research to create knowledge of self in the world living a fulfilled life with moral purpose. Through living educational theory research I create knowledge of my self in practice (my values, passions, motivations, aspirations, aptitudes, talents, my embodied knowledge...) as I am and want to be in the world living a fulfilled, worthwhile life. Singh-Punia expresses the distinction between this form of research and the traditional very clearly:

Action research generally answers the question, 'how do I improve what I am doing' and produces shared professional knowledge. It took me a long time to understand that in living educational theory form of action research emphasis is on why do I improve what I am doing. It is not the study of the task; it is the study of the (I)/ researcher who is exploring his/her values embedded in his/her actions...

How questions deal with our technical competence and why questions deal with our being /invisible part of us often hidden in our actions. Living educational theory form of action research aims to make it explicit. It is the study of our living standards of judgment, which are made of very complex mix of our values, interests, wants and technical know-how. (Ram Sing-Punia, EJOLTs <http://ejolts.net/moodle/mod/forum/discuss.php?d=36>
Re: Submission- How can I encourage multi-stakeholder narrative and reflection on the use of ICT in Teacher Professional Development in Rwanda?
by [Ram Singh-Punia](#) - Saturday, 8 August 2009, 12:20 PM)

This demands a new form of scholarship and what knowledge is legitimated by the Academy. Schön (1995) recognised new forms of scholarship demand new epistemologies. Through this paper I respond to his call by enhancing the educational knowledge-base of practitioner research. I do this using a living theory methodology (Whitehead, 2008) and show how the use of this methodology contributes to an epistemology for educational research with educational responsibility.

In contributing to educational knowledge I go beyond the challenge that Snow made in her 2001 Presidential Address to the American Educational Research Association,

'The... challenge is to enhance the value of personal knowledge and personal experience for practice. Good teachers possess a wealth of programs. And having standards for the systematization of personal knowledge would provide a basis for rejecting personal anecdotes as a basis for either policy or practice.' (Snow, 2001 p.9)

I do not offer a basis for rejecting personal anecdote but rather offer an account of personal knowledge made public which is recognised as a valid and legitimate form of knowledge.

My research is conducted in the socio-cultural, historical, political context of a national government, which make demands of teachers, schools and local authorities through an increasing raft of strategies. Noffke (1997) criticises living theory on the grounds that, 'The process of personal transformation through the examination of practice and self-reflection may be a necessary part of social change, especially in education; it is however, not sufficient.' (p.329)

The transformational influence a person has through their way of being, on others and on social formations is however far more complex than Noffke suggests, as Fowler and Christakis (2008) paper on the demonstrates.

'More generally, conceptions of health and concerns for the wellbeing of both individuals and populations are increasingly broadening to include diverse "quality of life" attributes, including happiness. Most important from our perspective is the recognition that people are embedded in social networks and that the health and wellbeing of one person affects the health and wellbeing of others. This fundamental fact of existence provides a conceptual justification for the specialty of public health. Human happiness is not merely the province of isolated individuals.' (p.8)

Through my enquiry I explicitly engage with government and local authority policies and agendas to create responses with generative and transformational possibilities. I do so from within an inclusional perspective,

Changing our perception of space from 'emptiness to openness' and accepting that we inhabit fluid boundaries transforms our way of relating to the world and one another. It removes the hard, imaginary dividing lines that bring opposition and conflict, and opens us up to the possibility of loving, creative, protective and compassionate relationship. (Rayner, 2008. posting on practitioner-researcher list, BERA e-seminar 5th December 2008)

My work can be seen as a contribution to answering the criticism of Noffke by strengthening the knowledge-base of living educational theories in relation to explaining the educational influence in the learning of the socio-cultural formations within which I work.

In this account I am offering my ontological values of a loving recognition, respectful connectedness and educational responsibility as explanatory principles and standards of judgment of my practice. In the process of communicating and testing the validity of the evidence with you, I am improving my understanding of my practice, which informs my future plans; a form of productive evaluation in the complex ecology (Lee & Rochon, 2009) of improving educational practice. I am seeking to validate and make my account public as a contribution to the knowledge base of educational knowledge with educational responsibility.

I employ a living educational theory methodology to research to create knowledge and this account of my practice. It comprises a description and explanation of what I know (what is it I have done, how I have done it, why I have done it), how I have come to know and why I have come to know.

Contexts

National

My practice is developed in the context of the raft of current national strategies and agendas amongst which are the gifted and talented education, inclusion, personalization of learning, wellbeing, learning beyond school and standards.

The key message of the White Paper, 'Your Child, your schools, our future: Building a 21st century schools system', provides an indication of the beliefs and values underpinning government strategies and initiatives:

'... ensure that every school develops and extends the potential and talents of every child and young person to give them the broad skills they need for the future, so that every child can enjoy growing up and achieve high standards.'
(White Paper 2009 p.96)

In the various national strategies expressions of underpinning values are often confused and there is no consistent underlying theory, which results in many recommended practices being mutually contradictory, as expanded on in Hymer, Whitehead and Huxtable (2009).

The approach taken to evaluating improvement in educational contexts to support children growing up is in practice simplistic and actuarial. It relies on a statistical analysis and collation of crude responses to outcome indicators, as can be seen in the emphasis placed in the OFSTED inspection on attainments in English and Mathematics the Census and the proposed School Report Card. A recent report from a House of Lords (2009) Committee identifies that such forms of accountability that have been imposed on us through such government regulations are inappropriate in terms of improving practice.

'Able, brilliant and skilled professionals do not thrive in an environment where much of their energies are absorbed by the need to comply with a raft of detailed requirements...' (House of Lords, 2009, p.15)

The accumulation and interrogation of quantitative data can be very helpful in monitoring but it has been elevated to the position of evaluation and values based evidence of improving practice has been relegated in importance to a contextualizing footnote of attainment scores.

A more appropriate way of evaluating the quality of the educational experiences of children and young people that informs developing educational practice and provision is needed. Multimedia narratives that explicate energy flowing values and understandings that constitute explanatory principles of educational influences offer one form of educational evaluation that informs the future rather than merely judging the past. I am not saying I have the answer, or even an answer, only that I recognize the need and offer here one of many possible paths of exploration that I have found more fruitful in my desire to productively account to myself, my community, my employer and the national government as I develop my practice.

Local

My educational practice is located in an English Local Authority with the vision:

‘We want all Children and Young People to do better in life than they ever thought they could. We will give children and young people the help that they need to do this’ (Bath and North East Somerset Local Authority, 2005)

I began to develop APEX (ALL pupils are Able Pupils Extending Opportunities) during the 1990s, before gifted and talented education became a national strategy. The imperative of APEX is currently communicated in a statement of my belief that all children and young people are capable of surprising us and themselves as they work on developing and enhancing talents to create, value and offer their gifts.

A brief word about what I understand educationally by ‘talents’ and ‘gifts’, both values laden word. :

I understand gifts and talents inclusionally, not as the defining categories of traditional theory and practice but as living educational concepts: dynamic, evolving, inter-relational and based on values... (Huxtable, 2008)

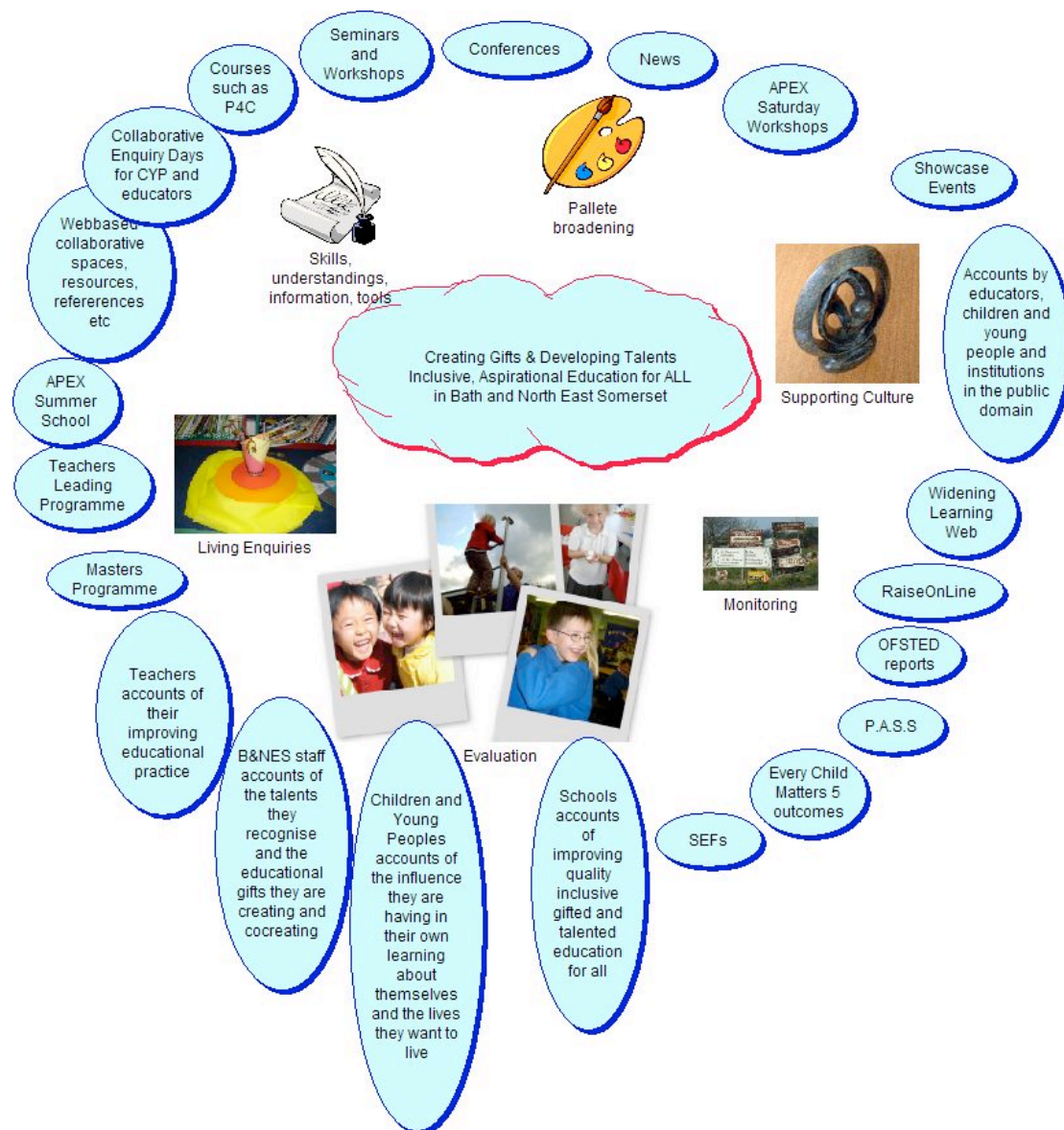
I am using ‘talents’ to point to skills, abilities, understandings, know-how, sensitivities, dispositions, qualities, approaches... an individual develops to create, offer and accept contributions intended to enhance wellbeing and wellbecoming. Such life-enhancing contributions freely offered I am describing as gifts. Talents and gifts are not discrete categories. An embodied talent made public is a gift. ‘Gifts’ and ‘talents’ communicate notions of what is good, desirable, life-affirming and life-enhancing and that have been highly developed. It is in that development I see the direct implications for my practice as an educator:

I see my educational responsibility towards the other as enabling them to afford themselves a loving recognition, to develop their talents to create gifts they value and to offer them, without ‘fear or veneer’ (thanks to Belle Wallace for this phrase) and to be open to those of others. (Huxtable, 2008)

Through developing my understandings through my living theory research I now go further and say that in my practice I seek to enhance the possibility of individuals affording them self a loving recognition, make respectful connections and express their educational responsibility for themselves and towards others (Huxtable, 2008). I have come to realize I do this by inviting into, and supporting persons in educational relationships, spaces and opportunities I create or identify. I live and work in a complex ecology (Lee & Rochon, 2009):

‘Opportunities to learn within and across both formal and informal settings occur in the complex ecologies of peoples’ lives, not isolated in a single setting such as a school or family. These complex ecologies 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.... Opportunities to participate in multiple settings and the norms for participation are influenced by larger cultural, political, and economic forces and institutions.’

The diagram below gives an indication of some of the educational relationships, spaces and opportunities comprising my activities.



It is noteworthy that I originally had lines connecting ‘activities’ to the organizing principles but a group of 7 year olds advised me that as the activities could not be organized by discrete categories I should take them out. They were right. They demonstrated a better grasp of the expression of the inclusional nature of my practice than I had at the time. I am working with Rayner’s (2005) notion of inclusionality as a relationally dynamic awareness of space and boundaries as receptive, responsive and co-creational.

The following two ‘activities’ serve to illustrate the multidimensional, relationally dynamic inter-connections:

The Masters group

The Masters group tutored by Jack Whitehead, that I was instrumental in re-establishing, is an example of the educational relationships, spaces and opportunities that I create and identify for teachers and support them in. I asked Jack to re-establish a Masters programme when I had understood enough of living educational theory and his pedagogical practice to believe this would provide an opportunity for teachers to

experience educational practice, research and learning. I believed that the educational relationships, space and opportunity that he would create would help the teachers to recognize themselves as learners, be educators they wanted to be and experience the learning they wanted their pupils to experience. I believed that by bringing them to understand living educational theory through researching to improve their practice Jack would be able to help them create and offer valued and valuable knowledge through a transformational form of CPD (Continuing Professional Development) legitimated by the university. I was particularly concerned that they gained an accredited award because teaching is moving to being a Masters profession.

The educational influence of these teachers researching to improve their practice is amplified by making their successful accounts public on <http://www.actionresearch.net> and <http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/apex> . They offer the knowledge they create as a gift to the knowledge base of educational knowledge with educational responsibility.

There is other evidence of the spread of educational influence of this work. One member of the Masters group, Sally Cartwright, brought her understandings into developing her pilot AS Extended Project group in school. Sally arranged for Jack and myself to work with her, her colleague and students to experience working together as a research group at the university as Sally had experienced herself in the Masters group. They continued to develop what they had experienced in school.

Sally's students have subsequently shared with peers and senior school managers what they have learnt from that experience. There is now a third group starting on their AS Extended Projects in the school; other schools are taking up the programme and their learning is influencing the thinking of those introducing the new diplomas. Their 40 minute presentation about their learning to the meeting of local managers (senior staff from the local secondary schools) of the national 14-19 strategy can be accessed from YouTube starting with <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GK1uLrb7aAs> . In that clip Sally's influence and the connection with, and the influence of, the Masters group tutored by Jack and supported by myself is clearly acknowledged.

Collaborative creative enquiries; an opportunity for pupils and educators to learn together as experts developing their expertise together.

I have run collaborative creative enquiry sessions over years for teachers and young people from primary and secondary schools wanting to learn together to enhance their expertise with an expert in the field, such as creative writers; mathematicians; scientists; choreographers... I have more recently run them with Jack Whitehead for those wanting to develop their living educational theory research skills. A few of Sally's latest AS Extended Project group contributed to the day that other students and teacher from her school and a local college participated in.

The educational influence in learning can be gauged by the presentations of the AS psychology students who subsequently presented their research at the end of term. This is illustrated by one student, Jenny Harbour, who had a substantial influence in the school when pupils engaged with enthusiasm in what, some said, was the best lunch time they had had, and raised the profile of psychology amongst the student body.



Jenny's presentation (11:22 long) can be accessed from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=enBOlcGicX4> and <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZAHkhaKxQYs>

And 'The Wellsway Dance Experiment – Official Video' (2:59 long) to which she refers is accessed from

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tyHSyU6Zs1k>

Jenny refers to the 'psychology day', which was the collaborative enquiry day referred to here and the use of journals and documenting learning journeys to which she also refers was introduced on the day by Andrew Henon.

Andrew is a socially engaged artist and educator with whom I had previously worked. He had successfully submitted a living theory Masters dissertation at the University of the West of England having become acquainted with Jack's work and recognized how it could enhance his own. I will not go further into what, how and why Andrew and I have been developing enquiry together to leave a tantalizing thread hanging which points towards the multidimensional interconnections and inclusional nature of my developing practice in a complex ecology, which I do not have the space to extend into here.

In this paper I will focus on the Masters group I was instrumental in establishing and supporting and provide a multi-media narrative to explicate my values based practice and an evolving ecological evaluation. The explanation of my educational influence in my own learning, the learning of others and the systemic influence in the learning of the socio-cultural formation in which I live and work will be made with reference to ontological energy flowing values of a loving recognition, respectful connectedness and an educational responsibility, that constitute values laden practical explanatory principles of my educational influences.

A multi-media narrative to explicate the meanings of the energy flowing values and understandings that constitute explanatory principles of my educational influences.

My concerns

CPD is delivered to teachers in the same way that teachers then deliver 'learning' to their pupils. While training is an appropriate pedagogical approach to introduce, or establish the use of, specific skills and techniques it is not appropriate for higher levels of even quite simple skill development. I felt the established CPD, even at the level of professional Masters or Doctorates, were merely training teachers not creating an educational context in which they were supported to extend their thinking, appreciate and theorize their own knowledge and practice, and research to create and offer new knowledge of improving educational practice. There is increasing reference to teachers improving their practice through action research in national strategies but

the form of action research is often of the traditional social science form with teachers describing but not theorizing their practice.

Why I am concerned

The quality of the educational experience of children and young people in schools is directly related to the quality of the teachers they experience as educators. If teachers do not appreciate the difference in their roles as instructors and educators and make efforts to understand the educational processes from the inside, they will school but not educate their pupils. The result is already evident with young people leaving school with high qualifications but with little understanding of themselves as the person they are and want to be, and the contribution they might make to the evolution of a humane and sustainable world as they live a satisfying, worthwhile and productive life.

The Masters group tutored by Jack Whitehead as an imagined possibility,

Living theory research offers the educator a rational, valid and communicable approach to improving and evaluating their practice through researching their educational influence in their own learning, the learning of others and the learning of social formations (Whitehead, 1989). The researcher's 'I' is not eliminated or treated as a contaminant as it is in much social science research. By 'I' I am meaning that real, personal, living person inside that includes a persons embodied values, beliefs and knowledge which is expressed through their practice and way of being in the world. The 'I' I am responding to when I talk of a 'loving recognition'.

In living theory research the individual is recognized as having valuable embodied knowledge and an ability to create and offer theory to explain why they do what they do. In making their accounts public people can enhance their own learning and that of others and the socio-cultural formations in which they live and work. Their values, ontological and societal, are recognized as forming their explanatory principles and living standards by which they understand and communicate their improving educational practice. I relate educational practice with contributing to the evolution of a humane and sustainable world.

I believe I should walk my own talk and so when the group started I registered and worked on an accredited Educational Enquiry myself (Huxtable, 2006). I have continued to work with living theory to research to improve my practice and make public accounts on my learning journey. At BERA 2008 I finally understood ontological values as forming explanatory principles of what I do and the living standards by which I judge and inform my developing practice (Huxtable 2008). It was there that I first began to work with a loving recognition, respectful connectedness and educational responsibility as expressions of my ontological values and I will extend my understandings using those three phrases here.

I had experience of Jack working in different settings and recognized the educational qualities of an educator that I wanted spread more widely. I didn't recognize it then but now I would say that I recognized and valued his expressions of, in my language, a loving recognition, respectful connectedness and educational responsibility towards others. I am not saying I am replacing his values with my own. Rather that what I experience of his values expressed resonates with my own. I also appreciated his skill

and pedagogy as an educator. I believed he would offer the sort of transformational CPD with an academic and scholarship that I had not seen offered before.

I knew he had supported groups of teachers working on their professional Masters for many years and asked him to establish one for local teachers in September 2005. Some people come regularly, others come infrequently but still access the emails notes and online resources, others meet with us individually. All have access to a developing on-line resource and are able to have email conversations and support individually if they choose. Each person is researching to improve their practice focused on their own personal question, through the lens of the unit of their choice ('Understanding Learners and Learning', 'Gifts, Talents and Education', 'Research Methods', and 'Educational Enquiries') or their dissertation, at a rate and in a manner according to their personal circumstances. You can access teacher's writings on these Masters units at <http://www.actionresearch.net/mastermod.shtml> .

Data

How do you know what data to collect before you have collected it? In the beginning the only data I knew that I needed to collect was that of the accredited accounts of the teachers as they were, by their very nature, evidence of the learning of the teachers and their educational influence in their own learning and the contribution they made to the knowledge base of improving values based practice in education.

Because of Jack's own research developing multimedia living theory research narratives we often had the video running and so I have video footage to draw on, which enables me to show you what I am meaning by educational relationships, spaces and opportunities that are expressions of my energy flowing values of a loving recognition, respectful connectedness and educational responsibility as explanations my educational influence.

As my enthusiasm and appreciation of the potential that video has for communicating energy flowing values has grown I have encouraged others and as a result have data from the Masters group, supporting Sally in her work with her AS Extended Project students and the Collaborative Creative Enquiry events to draw on.

Jack has developed forms of analysis of the data, which are appropriate for understanding the relational dynamic qualities of the educational spaces, relationships and opportunities whose influence I have wanted to spread more widely. I have described those forms of analysis (Huxtable, 2009) and will describe them more fully later to communicate the educational influence I have had.

Evaluating the influence of my actions in a complex ecology

The snippets of narratives that follow are offered for validation as evidence-based explanations of the spread of my educational influence. I am showing where I am recognizing my ontological values expressed in the educational relationships, spaces and opportunities I create and work with, which I am claiming contribute to improving inclusive gifted and talented educational theory, practice and provision.

I want to be clear that I am not claiming that others share my values or that they are universal standards I wish or intend to impose on others. Neither do I want to claim a

simple cause-and-effect relationship between what I do and improving the educational experiences of children and young people. I want to give an explanation of my educational influence, which enables me understand how to improve my practice within the complex ecology of national and local initiatives, expectations and demands. I want the explanation to constitute a form of accountability that expresses the learning of the individual as educator on a lifelong learning journey of contributing to and benefitting from the learning of others, and to generate a contribution to the knowledge-base of education.

I also want to show a form of evaluation that feels more productive than presenting accumulated numbers or checklists. The visual narrative contributes to the evaluation of my work where I am creating, supporting and inviting teachers and other educators into the educational relationships, space and opportunity of the Masters group. I want to account for myself in relation to my intentions to help them to recognize themselves as learners, the educators they want to be, able to create and offer valued and valuable knowledge. I want to contribute to the processes of having their embodied knowledge legitimated by the university and to gain an accredited award, which is recognized as contributing to their professional development and contribution to educational knowledge.

Modifications of concerns, ideas and actions in the light of the evaluations in the ecology of my practice

To accommodate those who could not make Tuesday evening Master group meetings we began to run sessions on Thursdays as well. We now support teachers from all school Key Stages, university staff and other educators from the local area and from 'across the borders' who wish to join us.

The on-line resources are being developed to support those wanting to work on living theory Masters and Doctorate programmes locally, nationally and internationally.

Many teachers could not video their practice for a number of reasons. Jack and I went to their schools to do that for them on occasions but this is not a sustainable solution. I was introduced to small, affordable video cameras by an influential colleague, Zoe Elder (Adviser in North Somerset, a neighboring authority) and bought and distributed them to members of the Masters group, amongst others, to experiment with using a video camera and developing multimedia narratives.

To extend ideas of documentation I brought Andrew Henon (referred to above) into the events where we were supporting the development of living theory research with educators and on the Collaborative Creative Enquiry day and the APEX Summer Opportunities. This is the journal that Jenny refers to above.

The teachers of the new diplomas need to develop a new pedagogy, which supports the educational development of young people. I am contributing by introducing the 14-19 Strategy Adviser I work with to the possibility the Masters programme offers of enabling the teachers to develop their pedagogy by experiencing the learning they want to develop for their students and researching to improve their practice through a living theory approach.

The Masters programme has also been integrated into the programme to support the teachers leading improving gifted and talented education in their school. I worked with Jack and the Director of Studies at the University of Bath, to add 'Gifts, Talents and Education' to the Masters programme, so that teachers could work on and share their developing understandings and knowledge of inclusive gifted and talented education in practice. These accounts have been drawn on in regional meetings associated with the national gifted and talented education strategy. Teachers who had completed Educational Enquiries, Understanding Learners and Research Methods with the Masters group wanted to complete the whole of their Masters programme with Jack to continue developing their expertise as living theory researchers through this transformational form of CPD. The unit of Gifts, Talents and Education allowed them to do that.

An explanation of my educational influence in my own learning the learning of others and the learning of the social formations within the complex ecology I live and work in.

I want to remind you of what I said at the beginning.

'I asked Jack to tutor a Masters programme as I had understood enough of living educational theory and his pedagogical practice to believe this would provide an opportunity for teachers to experience a different way of understanding educational practice, research and learning. I also believed that the educational relationships, space and opportunity that he would create would help the teachers to recognize themselves as learners, the educator they wanted to be, able to create and offer valued and valuable knowledge, to have the knowledge they created legitimated by the university and to gain an accredited award, which was recognized as contributing to their professional development.'

I participate in the sessions in order to develop my own learning and to support those working with the Masters programme as well as actively encouraging the participation of other teachers. Through my other activities and contacts I make the programme accessible to other teachers and educators and actively encourage those who I believe might want to improve their educational practice through developing values based research. I will give you one brief example to illustrate the complex ecology in which I live and work, before offering a multimedia narrative drawing on data from the Masters group to offer a relationally dynamic, values based explanation of my educational influence.

Staff employed directly by the local authority Children's Services, meet weekly for an hour in the 'Improving Practice Conversation Café'. One member of the group, Chris Jones, has successfully completed her Masters with a living theory dissertation graduating from Bath Spa University this year (Jones, 2009, <http://www.jackwhitehead.com/cjmaok/cjma.htm>), presented papers at two BERA conferences on her inclusional practice (Jones and Huxtable, 2006, and Jones, 2008) and is discussant at the keynote symposium BERA 2009. Another, Kate Kemp, has registered for the Masters programme and has so far successfully completed two units (Kemp, 2008a <http://www.jackwhitehead.com/tuesdayma/kkee181108.htm> and Kemp, 2008b <http://www.jackwhitehead.com/tuesdayma/kkgtunit2008.htm>) and has contributed to a poster for BERA 2009. Another member, Nigel Harrison, is

presenting a paper to the BERA 2009 conference (Harrison, 2009) and two members are working on proposals for doctoral programmes. All the accounts concern improving values based educational practice.

I believe that in engaging with these accounts you will recognize evidence of the educational influence of many, me amongst them, in the learning of those who create and offer the accounts of their learning in seeking to improve their practice and as gifts to the knowledge base of education. I believe that I have had the influence I want to have because I have sought to enable the other to recognize the educator they want to be and how to improve their practice through engaging as living theory researchers. I have enabled them to do that by bringing them together into that space with Jack and supporting them to develop and make public their knowledge.

I want to move on now to the Masters group. The evening sessions and day events are offered as an opportunity to enjoy educational relationships and physical spaces that are energizing, convivial, collegiate and productive. Again the accounts created by members of the Masters group (which can be accessed from <http://www.actionresearch.net/mastermod.shtml>) contain evidence of the educational influence in the learning of the creators of many, including mine. For instance they would not have produced these accounts of their developing values based practice accredited at Masters level, if I had not asked Jack to set up the programme and actively supported and encouraged participation. However, I want to give you an explanation of my influence that communicates more clearly the energy flowing values that form and inform my practice.

First let me set the scene by giving you a flavour of the relationships, space and opportunity that the Masters group sessions offer. They follow a fairly recognizable format, with some variation in detail depending on the numbers and the nature of the event, which enables each person to contribute to and benefit from their own learning and the learning of others. I will just give an example of a typical evening session to give you a sense of what is experienced.

The evening session, in the university with web access, starts 5.15pm with refreshments available for people to help themselves to. We begin with who-ever is present going round with each person having an invitation to catch up and share anything they choose since they were last with us. People who arrive later have an opportunity to 'check in' with us all when a natural space in the conversation occurs. We check out where each person is with their work and any issues, thinking, writing, video or images they want the group to engage with and respond to.

As the conversation develops Jack draws the attention of the group to references, material, resources, the latest publications and topical government and other communications that are particularly pertinent to a person's enquiry or educational needs, or are of more general relevance to the 'Understanding Learners and Learning', 'Gifts, Talents and Education' or 'Research Methods' units. With direct web access he shows them where they can access resources.

In tutoring the programme Jack walks his own talk; attending to each person's contribution, valuing the knowledge and questions they offer, facilitating the engagement of the group to support an individual's thinking and critical productive

reflection on their learning and improving their values based practice and offering invitationally his own learning and research programme drafts for critical educational engagement, with a life-affirming and life-enhancing energy and good humour. While many arrive tired at the end of a busy day they inevitably leave energized and buzzing from the conversations, often a good hour after the 'finishing' time.

The quality of educational influence of the educators in their own learning to improve their educational practice can be evaluated by the accounts of the educators legitimated by the university. These can be accessed under 'Master Educators Programmes' (<http://www.actionresearch.net/mastermod.shtml>), *Making Public the Embodied Knowledge of Master Educators* on <http://actionresearch.net/> and under 'Accounts of Transformational Practice and Learning' on <http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/apex>.

These educators have had a recognized educational influence in the learning of others. For example, their accounts have been accessed by other who show they have found them useful; one of the group, Joy Mounter, (all of Joy's work can be accessed from <http://actionresearch.net/mastermod.shtml>) was asked to submit a paper for an American journal by the editor. The group values the knowledge that others offer them, for instance the reference in Claire Formby's paper (Formby, 2007, <http://www.jackwhitehead.com/tuesdayma/formbyEE300907.htm>) to Louise Cripps.



We often have the video camera running and occasionally clips subsequently are found to be useful. This is one of Sally Cartwright (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=heAS9ajaxZI> or click on the picture) talking spontaneously about her educational values.

Through working with the Masters group I helped create and support Sally has engaged with living theory research and is being more of the educator she wants to be. I believe that the evidence I helped to generate, of Sally recognizing and having an influence she values in the learning of her students, which is recognized and valued by the students, is evidence of my having the educational influence I want to have. In sharing her research narrative she is contributing to the educational knowledge base of values based practice and to the evidence I need to produce an evidence-based account of my own educational influence.

I can hear (can you?) the convivial humour of the group encouraging Sally to start, shortly after she had arrived. The flow of such humour is common in these, and other meetings, where we are focusing together on improving our values based practice. It communicates something of the energy that flows in and from the meetings. That she is prepared to talk about her values and what has influenced them without preparation and do so with a gentle ease and confidence is an example of the ease within the space

where I experience the expression of a respectful connectedness, a loving recognition and educational responsibility expressed by each to themselves and to each other.



You can hear and see Sally, in my language, extending herself a loving recognition, as she reflects on where her ontological values come from. As I run the cursor slowly back and forth across the two minute clip and I get a sense of the flow of a loving energy. This is one instant (1:31 minutes) amongst many of that flow frozen in time.

Sally is not often directly connecting with others in the room but appears to me to be focusing on her internal experiences and feelings with a peaceful pleasure, as she recalls the influence of her father and his father and the man she met in Kashmir (Cartwright,) in her love of learning and education and what she want her pupils to experience of her in the classroom. In my language I think Sally is wanting to allow her pupils a loving recognition of her – to experience something of the person she is, living her embodied ontological values – which is contributing to the quality of the educational relationships, spaces and opportunities she creates for her pupils where she says at the end:

‘... deep down the value of education, not in the sense where it can be measured but in the sense that it actually enhances how you look out on life way beyond what school offers but I hope sometime that a little bit of that comes out of me in the classroom and that’s what keeps me going.’

In this brief video of Sally sharing a story of her values and hope for her students experience of her is the expression of these values in Sally’s own influence in her own learning. Simon, one of her students, offers her validation of the influence she has in his learning when he is part of a group presenting what they have learnt from the research group Sally set up to support the group of students to work on their AS Extended Project (40 mins in four videos in a play list on YouTube starting with <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GK1uLrb7aAs>). I believe it is a validation by one of her students that she does enable students the opportunity to experience her in the way she wants to be recognized.



Sally arrived just when we have gone round ‘catching up’ and were sharing expressions of values. The clip starts with the sounds of the good natured encouragement of the group and I feel there is a respectful connectedness with the others in the group as she shares what are personal experiences that have had a profound influence on her. This is an instance where she connects with others in the group. 1:50 (she momentarily makes similar eye contact with one of the group members at 0:24 1:04 1:54)

What she says at another meeting shows she knows the boundaries between what she holds as personal and private will not be breached and she is offering to others in a way that respects their boundaries – to be given unsolicited private information can be

experienced as an unwelcome imposition. There is also an expression of her educational responsibility for herself and towards us as she offers us an insight into her values that influence her practice which enhances her own learning and ours.

Sally is articulating her reflections in the moment, as an expression of her educational responsibility for herself and towards the group. By this I mean that her intention is to come to know more about her best intent as an educator and by being generous and sharing that with us helps us to evoke influential moments in our own histories.

These are some of the qualities of the educational relationships, space and opportunity that I wanted the Masters group to offer and in my analysis of this brief clip I believe that I am showing you the evidence of my educational influence in living my ontological values of a loving recognition, respectful connectedness and educational responsibility.

I ask you to watch and listen to the clip again now you have understood something of what I am seeing and hearing. It is less than two minutes long but I don't think you will appreciate the qualities of the space and relationships in the group that are the context of what Sally is saying or the values that I am wanting to communicate simply by reading a transcript. As you watch and listen I ask you to hold in mind 'a loving recognition', 'respectful connectedness' and 'educational responsibility' and be aware of the meanings and feelings these words evoke in you, intellectually, emotionally and physically, and your 'empathetic resonance' (Whitehead, 2009) at moments you hesitate. As you move the cursor back and forth do you experience as I do something of the flow of a loving energy? I recognize something of Sally as the person within, I feel a connectedness with her living values and our learning is enhanced by my engagement of her story.

Conclusion

As St. Pierre (2006) wrote in an American context:

'The federal government is reinstalling an old regime of truth, one that almost caused a revolution in this country 40 years ago, in order to maintain its conservative agenda, and education is an easy target. Foucault (1984/1988) said, "I believe too much in truth not to suppose that there are different truths and different ways of speaking the truth" (p. 5t). The science I value acknowledges that there are different truths (but not that "anything goes") and that our task as scientists should be "to produce different knowledge and produce knowledge differently" (St.Pierre, 1997, p. 175) in order to enlarge our understanding of those issues about which we care deeply.'(p.259)

She acknowledges the intricate interconnection between epistemology, methodology and ontology. I care deeply about education and to improve it I believe that it is necessary to enlarge our understanding of what constitutes educational knowledge, how we understand knowledge imbued with energy flowing values, and knowledge of why; the knowledge of why the knowledge we create is important is clarified as we research our practice and we come to understand more about our ontological and societal values as explanatory principles and living standards of judgment of our educational practice.

In this account I have tried to communicate a description and explanation of what I know of my educational practice (what is it I have done, how I have done it, why I have done it), how I have come to know and why I have come to know.

Have I:

- Communicated my relationally dynamic ontological values of a loving recognition, respectful connectedness and educational responsibility as explanatory principles and living standards of judgment of my practice.
- Through this multimedia narrative account of one aspect of my practice, offered a form of accountability of educational influence in a complex ecology, which enables me to account for my work to others and myself in a way that informs my evolving practice.
- Contributed to a new epistemology for educational knowledge with educational responsibility.

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