

**An interactive symposium paper for the CARN/ALARA Conference 17-19 October 2019 in Split, Croatia with the theme: 'Imagine Tomorrow: Practitioner Learning for the Future'.**

**Imagining tomorrow in the generation of living-educational-theories with learning for the future.**

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with

Marie Huxtable, Swaroop Rawal, and Jack Whitehead.

**Overall aims of the session**

This session documents our research into sustaining local and global educational conversations about extending the influence of knowledge and education in practitioner learning for the future.

We understand that it is hard to remain hopeful about the future of humanity and essential to resist the pull towards apathy and inaction. In this proposed contribution to 'Imagine Tomorrow: Practitioner Learning for the Future' we provide explanations of our educational influences in learning from within our local and global sites of practice. We use digital technologies to generate explanations of educational influence that include our ontological and relational values of love, creativity, justice, hope and life-affirming energy as explanatory principles. Whilst we use the same value-words the meanings of our constellation of values are unique to each individual.

In our post-doctoral enquiries we are using these values as explanatory principles in our explanations of educational influences in our own learning, the learning of others and in the learning of the social formations that influence practice and explanations. In legitimating and extending our contributions to knowledge within Universities and other global contexts we include our understandings of the power relations that influence what counts as knowledge. These understandings take account of the differences in power relations associated with legitimating the epistemologies of the South in Global Academies.

We understand the demoralisation and devaluation that can accompany the globalising influences of neo-liberal economic policies and agree with Zuber-Skerritt:

... I have argued that we need to shift away from the mindset of neoliberalism and reductionism dominating our present society and driving its obsession with consumerism, power and control. Instead we need a collaborative, participative and inclusive paradigm built on love and working through local and global action to connect us with each other as human beings and with nature. Society needs to be renewed by making a shift from the negative energy of fear, competition, control and war to the positive energy of faith, love, hope and creativity. Clearly, we need to conceptualize and practice not just learning conferences but Loving Learning Conferences. (Zuber-Skerritt, 2017, p. 224).

We show how educational conversations, grounded in values that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity, can contribute to overcoming such demoralisation and devaluation in hopeful and loving processes of social transformation with these values. We show how we are using digital visual data from multi-screen Skype conversations, conferences - as sites of learning and development, and digital technologies in living-posters and a Living Theory Wiki. We demonstrate how we are using these technologies to sustain and evolve our global educational conversations as we deepen and extend the educational influences of our practitioner learning for the future in contributing to Living Theory research as a social movement.

Jacqueline Delong's contribution to the session as described above:

## **Jacqueline Delong – International Consultant**

### **Abstract**

The research analyses the ontological importance of educational conversations in my educational relationship. It includes educational conversations as a research method. The conversations are embodied in my dialogic way of being. I highlight the importance of digital visual data in developing appropriate forms of representation in dialogic educational research. The analysis includes educational influences in building educational relationships within a living culture of inquiry as I encourage and support practitioner-researchers to create their own living-theories in contributing to practitioner learning for the future. The contexts of this encouragement include workshops and presentations at previous CARN, ALARA and ARNA conferences as sites of learning and development.

Highlighting the importance of digital visual data in developing appropriate forms of representation, I will cover my values as explanatory principles as identified in the abstract:

- Part A. My dialogic way of being and loving educational conversations
- Part B. A living culture of inquiry
- Part C. Loved into learning

I will also address the larger themes of the session including explanations of my educational influences in practitioner learning for the future, individual and shared ontological and relational values as explanatory principles, the power relations that influence what counts as knowledge, a commitment to "Loving Learning Conferences" (Zuber-Skerritt, 2017), the significance of educational conversations grounded in values that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity, and the use of digital visual data from multi-screen Skype conversations to sustain and evolve our global educational conversations in contributing to Living Theory research as a social movement.

I begin with some context for the paper.

### **Context**

In this article, I explore my educational relationships and conversations in my dialogic way of being, explicate my value of being "loved into learning" (Campbell, 2011) as I support others to create their own living-educational-theories in living cultures of inquiry. Just to be clear, by Living Theory I am meaning,

"...the distinguishing qualities of a living theory methodology that include 'I' as a living contradiction, the use of action-reflection cycles, the use of procedures of personal and social validation and the inclusion of a life-affirming energy with values as explanatory principles of educational influence." (Whitehead, 2009, p. 182)

In his individual paper for this conference, Whitehead (2019) further defines living educational theory and Living Theory:

...I distinguish between a living-educational-theory and Living Theory research to emphasise the difference. A living-educational-theory is an individual's explanation of their educational influence in their own learning, in the learning of

others and in the learning of the social formations that influence practice and understandings. Living Theory research refers to the conceptual understandings of a research approach that is constituted by conceptual understandings of the living-educational-theories of individual. The distinction is important because in Living Theory research it is not possible, as it is in traditional theorizing, to **deduce** an explanation of an individual's educational influence from the general conceptual framework of the theory. In Living Theory research, the individual **generates** their own explanation of their educational influence in learning, rather than deduces it from a previously existing conceptual framework. Because of the importance in this paper of the meaning of what is educational and of distinguishing learning from what is educational, these meanings will be clarified.

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As a senior administrator in a school district, I studied the literature and attended the conferences on leadership. It seemed to me to come down to some kind of checklist of attributes that one just needed to acquire somehow miraculously. I had shelves of books telling me how to be the "authentic leader" or the "servant leader" or the "good leader" and it was simply a matter of following the prescription, ticking the boxes or applying it like a topical cream. The problem was that nothing changed internally. When I came to realize that the only avenue was through self-examination, thorough understanding of my values, and holding myself publicly accountable for living according to those values, I was fortunate to be introduced to Living Theory in 1995 and to be invited to conduct part-time doctoral research with Jack Whitehead at Bath University.

When I began my doctoral work, I had several reasons for I choosing the Living Theory methodology for my research. One is that Living Theory recognized my embodied knowledge: I had had a variety of experiences in education and in other fields and felt that I had knowledge to share. Two, I needed my research to be practical, to help me be a better person and do a better job, not fit into someone's theory disconnected from my life. Three, values are used as explanatory principles and standards of judgment to assess the nature of my educational influence.

I embraced the inherent commitment in Living Theory research to account for myself, to be a better person. By that I mean, I felt the need to understand myself and my influence better: whether I really was the person I thought I was; whether I lived according to values that I claimed I held; whether I could bring a more reflective, inquiry-based culture into the curriculum and pedagogy of my school system. Those were the questions that underpinned my doctoral research and post-doctoral research which continues to this day.

Improvement is a value that I hold. I am a professional educator and have been my entire adult life. It seems to me that education involves improving ourselves and helping others to do the same. In terms of employment, I have had a range of roles from classroom teacher to senior school district leader. My focus has always been on doing a better job. Given that, when I came to a point in my life in 1995 where I wanted to conduct doctoral research, I was introduced to a self-study action research methodology called Living Theory (Whitehead, 1989) whose basic question is, "How do I improve what I am doing?" So, my research question was: "How can I improve my practice as a superintendent of schools and create my own living educational theory?" By studying myself, I experienced a transformation as a leader and as a person in the development of my own living-educational-theory (DeLong, 2002).

In my role in Professional Development, I was responsible for thousands of hours of workshops, conferences and presentations that teachers and administrators were expected to attend and learn ways to improve. There is a phrase to describe most of these events: 'spray and pray'. The intention was that educators would be sprayed with the latest in pedagogy and leadership and the Ministry of Education would pray that it would improve the attainment levels and test scores. It rarely did. And thousands of hours of time and energy had been wasted!

It was then that I made the link to a more professional form of professional development as I created a culture of inquiry in the school district where teachers were supported to study their own classroom and administrative practices. Over a 12-year period, teachers across the system were guided through the process of improvement asking their own living theory questions. They were provided with time, resources, encouragement and support as well as comfortable stages on which to share their learning and be held accountable for their claims to have improved. There were 8 volumes of self-study action research published over that 12-year period as well as a book, a kit, annual district conferences and provincial and national presentations.

My writing over the last 25 years demonstrates my sustained commitment to building educational relationships as I encourage and support practitioner-researchers to create their own living-theories within a living culture of inquiry (DeLong, 2013). I am dialogic by nature and value and I am intentional about living my value of loving others into learning; and, I have both created and researched living cultures of inquiry where practitioner-researchers know that they are in a safe place for sharing their vulnerabilities. Brown (2012) states that "Not only can we not deeply love, we cannot know the truth of who we are without experiencing vulnerability" (p. 32). My living-culture-of-inquiry shares commonalities with Huxtable's (2012) 'living boundaries'. She describes a living-boundary as a trustworthy, co-creative, multidimensional, relationally dynamic space (Huxtable, 2012). I also feel a connection to Robyn Pound's concept of 'alongsideness' (Pound, 2003). Robyn sees that:

Values of alongsideness act as explanatory principles and standards of practice and evaluation. As an epistemology, alongsideness employs Living Theory (Whitehead, 1989). Accessibility for participants unfamiliar with this research is increased by calling the developmental process 'enquiring collaboratively'. (Pound, 2014, Abstract)

The next three parts are concerned with three of my values as standards of practice and explanatory principals for explaining the nature of my influence on myself, on others and on the social formations where I live and work. I am holding myself publicly accountable for these living these values.

#### Part A. My dialogic way of being and loving educational conversations

In this part, I explore the close relationship between my dialogic way of being and loving educational conversations. My ontological values are clarified as the explanatory principles that I use to give meaning and purpose to my life and these explanatory principles are epistemologically significant in providing the living standards of judgment that can be used to evaluate the validity of my contribution to educational knowledge. I find that being able to analyse dialogic research data using the ontological values that I bring into the conversations has epistemological importance in helping me to live my values as fully as possible and in working to improve myself and the world around me. The conversations are embodied in my dialogic way of being and I will highlight the

importance of digital visual data in developing appropriate forms of representation in dialogic educational research.

I found that I was not able to write this paper until I found a way of sharing ideas with another person so I came up with the idea of an imaginary educational dialogue with Máirín Glenn which I explore in my individual paper for this conference, "Living Theory Research Contributes to Improving Ourselves and the World". The other trigger for writing for me is the visual. So, I started inserting some visuals that resonated with the claims I was making. So, dialogic and visual is both my way of being and my meaning-making. I should remember this because it was clearly evident in my doctoral research except that 25 years ago, video data and technology were in its infancy and I had to use still photographs and "Letters from Paris" (DeLong, 2002).

This research analyses the ontological importance of educational conversations in my educational relationships using dialogue as a research method for data collection and even a research method in itself. What do I mean by dialogue as a research method? I believe that we can create a kinder, safer, more loving future by developing our educational conversations. Gadamer (1989) discusses the form of human interaction through dialogue:

"...To conduct a dialogue requires first of all that the partners do not talk at cross purposes. Hence it necessarily has the structure of question and answer. The first condition of the art of conversation is ensuring that the other person is with us. ... To conduct a conversation means to allow oneself to be conducted by the subject matter to which the partners in the dialogue are oriented." p. 367

He tells us that conversation as an art form means that we do not talk at cross purposes and thus use a question and answer format. We need to ensure that we are on the same wave-length as our colleague and that the matter at hand is paramount.

The art of testing and the art of questioning require the same skills of openness and, I would say lack of prior judgement, domination and fixed opinions. Gadamer advises that a thinking person will search for everything in favour of an opinion, not for the weaknesses. (Gadamer, 1975, p. 367)

When I am coaching/mentoring others in creating their living theories, I make use of questions that I think will help them move on in their thinking. I take care that the questions be small steps that encourage deeper thinking and yet not too long a stride so that they lose what they have accomplished or become afraid to take the next step. Researcher Michelle Vaughan has called it 'just in time' assistance:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fzawRc48YgQ&feature=youtu.be>. January 27, 2019, 12:35 to 13:04:

I said [to Jean] I don't know if Jackie knew that she was going to tell me to do all these things along the way but it felt like she had the next step for me planned and was just waiting for me to get somewhere so that I could take the next step. Because had she told me everything up front, I might have been overwhelmed about the process but it was a very nice scaffolding. And I said it really felt like the writing was a journey of self-discovery...

and Judy McBride wondered if I knew what she was thinking when I made responses to her writing (reference). I am claiming that this is evidence of my value of loving and relational educational conversations.

In her session proposal, Máirín Glenn writes of “the seemingly contradictory and conflicting elements” of this form of research but continues to say, “The power of utilising contradictions and tensions to engage in dialogue so as to forge a way forward for educational research cannot be underestimated. It may also inform our thinking in the socially unsettling times in which we now live as we work towards engaging in learning for the flourishing of humanity (Whitehead 2018).”

<https://www.actionresearch.net/writings/carnalara2019/carnalara2019forweb.pdf>

While ‘loving and educational conversations’ might be viewed as part and parcel of being loved into learning, I think it is separate because I live this value in conversations when the focus is not so much on learning as on building relationships, on what Jerome Gumedde and Peter Mellett (2019) call a “good-quality conversation.” They see a ‘good-quality conversation’ as one that is undertaken with respect, and careful listening..” It is my experience that the art of listening is the key. We need to listen and consider the other person’s opinion without preparing our response or arguing our position in advance. Stephen Covey’s (19-- ) advice to see first to understand before being understood still resonates with me. In order to be responsive to the other whether in a classroom or with a friend or colleague, the time committed is priceless for the formation of lasting loving educational relationships built on shared stories, shared experiences and shared values.

When our post-doctoral community meet on SKYPE on Sundays, we share an update of what is happening in our research worlds and sometimes in our personal lives, what is working and what is presenting us with problems. Just listening and consoling is valued but so are strategies for moving on. Very frequently, we find solutions to the problems presented or at the least, provide directions to be considered. I look forward to those conversations every Sunday morning even though it is at 8:00 in the morning. Because of my dialogic way of being these meetings allow me to share my thinking, provide me with constructive criticism to improve my research and writing and give me new ideas to ponder. You hear everyone saying, “how can I help?”

The visual digital recordings have been seminal to the development of my thinking and reflexivity because I have been able to review and review the educational conversations recordings stored on YouTube. When I am viewing and listening to the conversations, I can see and hear the nature of the relationship, whether I am living my espoused values and/or what might be involved in improving myself or the relationship.

In this ARNA 2019 clip you hear me sharing the significance of video data:



ARNA 2019 Workshop: Jackie explaining the significance of video data:  
<https://youtu.be/dUZiYWtSGXU>

I find that visual data not only brings life to the writing but also deepens the understanding of educational relationships and learning. The visual narrative is, at the same time, raw data and an explanation of empathetic resonance and life-affirming energy. This means that, in the moment of conversation and while reviewing the video, I am mindful of the dynamics of our interactions, including the times when my ideas are resonating and there is a building of excitement in the educational conversation as new knowledge is created and I recognize our shared values. But, I am also aware of the tensions -- the times when my meaning is not resonating with others or when I feel I am not clear or not understanding or being understood. In these cases, more dialogue and/or reflection is needed to uncover the source of the tension.

While recording, selecting clips and transcribing video data is time-consuming, I find such love, hope and joy (Liz's values that I share) in experiencing again the empathetic resonance in the conversations. I found that there was a plethora of raw data that requires editing and, in that process, I experience the art of finding themes in a personal inquiry as Marshall (1999) describes:

“Images, phrases, concepts and questions around which I organise my sense of inquiring can arise from a variety of sources, but when they ‘appear’ they can have an intensity which makes me recognise them as powerful, or invest them with such power. They have an evocative quality for me, repeatedly catch my attention, and/or are rich phrases (often with ambiguous or multiple meanings) which echo in different areas of my life. They serve as organizing frames for my self-reflection and for taking issues further conceptually and in practice. Typically they have been repeated in more than one setting. Sometimes I will be encouraged because they have resonance for other people as well as me, but sometimes this is unimportant (Marshall, 1999, p.4).

Sharing my dialogic way of being, my way of knowing I intend to make a contribution to educational theory and knowledge. I am highlighting the methodological importance of this ontological way of being and through my educational conversations and dialogues I am clarifying the ontological values which are the standards of judgment that I use as explanatory principles in my educational relationships with my colleagues, Cathy Griffin, Liz Campbell and Michelle Vaughan. These three live in totally different contexts, are very different individuals, and yet each generated their own Living Theory accounts with deep insights.

Next, my living culture of inquiry. I share my rationale for creating a culture of inquiry, the experiences of some of my students/mentees and some of the tensions that can be resolved with it.

#### Part B. Living culture of inquiry

Much of my doctoral research was completed on line in the early years of the internet as I lived in Paris, Ontario, Canada, an hour and a half west of Toronto. My supervisor, Jack Whitehead, whom I had met at an action research conference in Toronto in 1995, lived across the Atlantic several time zones away from me but he convinced me that it could be done. I did not have a research community but I did have the most responsive supervisor you could have. My space for learning was responsive and loving but often very isolated. As I supported others as they created their living theories, I worked to create a space and community where they would feel encouraged and supported. Creating my own living-theory was transformative; I think I experienced what Tillich called a “transcending experience”:

Faith is not a theoretical affirmation of something uncertain, it is the existential acceptance of something transcending ordinary experience. Faith is not an opinion but a state. It is the state of being grasped by the power of being which transcends everything that is and in which everything that is participates. He who is grasped by this power is able to affirm himself because he knows that he is affirmed by the power of being-itself. In this point mystical experience and personal encounter are identical. In both of them faith is the basis of the courage to be. (Tillich, 1962, p,168)

I wanted everyone I worked with to have that same transcending experience. I have been exhibiting that sustained commitment with individuals like Liz Campbell. She wrote the following in her PhD: “What I ended up doing, thanks to Jackie DeLong and her introduction to Whitehead’s (1989) Living Educational Theory, was realizing that I did not need academia to validate my own lived experiences.” This reflection makes me feel that my influence has been experienced in the most positive way possible.

A living culture of inquiry is a safe, supportive space wherein practitioner-researchers are enabled to share their vulnerabilities, to make explicit their values, and to hold themselves accountable for living according to those values. They learn to recognize when they are not living according to their espoused values and are what Jack Whitehead (1989) calls “living contradictions.”

Experiencing values such as loving kindness and being loved into learning within this democratic, non-hierarchical environment, and, the recognition of their embodied knowledge enables individuals to improve their lives and practice by creating their own living-theories which includes ‘I’ as a living contradiction, the use of action reflection cycles, the use of procedures of personal and social validation and the inclusion of a life-affirming energy with values as explanatory principles of educational influence.” (Whitehead, 2009, p. 182) It is a democratic space where individuals are loved into

learning, where they feel supported and encouraged to share their embodied knowledge and their vulnerabilities, where educational conversations contribute to each one creating their own living-educational-theory creating their own methods and methodologies with what Dadds and Hart (2001) call “methodological inventiveness”.

I have found that creating a non-hierarchical space develops almost immediately when the individuals come to recognize their own embodied knowledge, a knowledge that only they have and others do not. They may know less than the teacher/mentor about a discipline or a process but much more about their knowing and ways of knowing. The only obstacle I have had to overcome is the humility of the Canadian researchers with whom I have worked. Jack Whitehead recognized this when he met via SKYPE in 2009 with the Bluewater Masters cohort students.

Removing hierarchies is challenging and simply saying there is none is not acceptable. I found that in time and with trust, it developed but a significant strategy I found was committing myself to democratic evaluation.



Figure 4. Democratic Evaluation: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SShZFMETpkk>

When the individuals in the group see me being vulnerable, they are more willing to share their vulnerabilities, insecurities and values. After seeing me in this vulnerable democratic evaluation, Cathy Griffin (Griffin, 2011) told her narrative of her negative childhood experience.

Michelle Vaughan, fellow living theorist, described culture of inquiry as a protective cone: insert

As with any methodology there are tensions but a living culture of inquiry provides the environment for resolving or accepting them. The tensions strengthen the process of creating your own living theory and, indeed, provide data to strengthen the rigour of the research. As with any research methodology, claims to know require data to provide evidence. However, what is different about Living Theory is that there is no requirement to fit oneself and one's research into a methodology: it is incumbent on the

practitioner-researcher to create her own methodology. Dadds and Hart (2001) describe it as “methodological inventiveness”. This opening to create your own methodology could be seen as a tension or, as I view it, an opportunity wherein I not only create my own original theory of my life but also the means of making that meaningful and comprehensible.

I think my next paper will be called “In opposition to ‘fitting oneself into’... In Montreal at ARNA in June, as I listened to graduate students sharing their writing on the frustration of finding the perfect method, methodology, epistemology “to fit themselves into”, I wanted to jump up and scream, “There is no such entity! Create your own“. As Dadds and Hart (2001) express:

‘No methodology is, or should be, cast in stone, if we accept that professional intention should be informing research processes, not pre-set ideas about methods of techniques.’ (p. 169)

In the ARNA 2019 workshop, Liz Campbell in response to Rachel’s question about how did we deal with the REB, she said,

I encountered a lot of pushback so in the end I didn’t use any (visual data from my classrooms) in my PH.D dissertation, but I certainly used it to inform my thinking and my actions and I found it very hard to write about in my thesis so I used some ‘methodological inventiveness’ and used poetry and art to get on the inside of the feeling and the gap between where the words were. In my Masters, we just re-submitted and re-submitted and re-submitted and Jackie was tenacious and we got through in the end. It’s just a matter of tweaking.



Other tensions in supporting teachers and other professionals to undertake improving their work and lives, lay in the way that old models of pressure and control no longer influence them. They take control of their own lives and learning requirements and will no longer allow a superior to tell them what they need to do to improve. They had researched some aspect of their teaching practice and have the data that provides

evidence of whether they are living their values, of what is working in their classrooms or not, of what they need to do next to continue the improvement process. This is evident in the volumes of *Passion In Professional Practice* (DeLong et al, 2001-2007).

Another tension or opportunity of Living Theory is the unrelenting pressure to improve: a better person, a better teacher, a better writer. I recognize in some like the NEARi group, that you take some umbrance with the word “improve” and in your book you suggest using the word, “enhance” as a more positive notion. (McDonagh, C., Roche, M., Sullivan, B., & Glenn, M. (2019).

I prefer the concept of ‘improvement’ because it does carry the critical aspect that connotes not only a willingness to be vulnerable and share my weaknesses but also the personal obligation that I feel, even though I often fail to attain it, of improving myself and encouraging and supporting others to do the same. Presenting at this conference is an example of self-improvement. I act as a Living Theory researcher in my endeavours to make a difference in communities and organisations in continuing local and global educational conversations. As Ortrun Zuber-Skerritt puts it: ...

Society needs to be renewed by making a shift from the negative energy of fear, competition, control and war to the positive energy of faith, love, hope and creativity. Clearly, we need to conceptualize and practice not just learning conferences but Loving Learning Conferences. (Zuber-Skerritt, 2017, p. 224).

In an email (150619), Cathy Griffin, a former student and long-term friend, described a living culture of inquiry perfectly:

“A Skype session with you is a reflective, research space for me. I automatically prepare for a conversation by returning to my values and examining what I am doing in my work and my life. I enter the conversation knowing that you will be a loving listener with concern for my health and well-being above all. I also enter the conversation knowing that, as an astute LET (Living Educational Theory) researcher, you will help me identify and clarify important points in my journey to improving what I am doing and will validate or question the claims I make about my practice. That sounds so technical and 'researchy'. But the reality is much different than that because of the love that underpins the relationship and because of the loving actions you make in line with your values. For example, in the clip above, you honour my time more than once by checking if my household is getting up and needs my attention and by suggesting a next meeting time that suits my schedule which may be more complicated. You voice concern that I don't spend my weekend looking for a video clip for you but take time to relax. You voice your love at the end of each email and voice call. It may seem trite to an onlooker, but it is foundational to the work we do together. The unconditional love is an example of your values in action (ontology) and your intentional creation of a space in which it is safe to do Living Educational Theory action research.”

When I coach others to create their own living theory, I build a culture of inquiry where it is safe and loving and we journey together in a non-hierarchical, non-judgmental democratic and trusting space where we are free to be vulnerable. The people that I have taught or mentored, are now working with others in similar ways, living according to their values and improving the worlds around them. Michelle Vaughan has introduced Living Theory into her doctoral curriculum; Liz Campbell is teaching Living

Theory to her Masters students at UPEI; Cathy Griffin is supporting teachers in the school where she is principal as well as her fellow principals to create their own living-theories and contribute to the flourishing of humanity.

Next I write about what it means to be 'loved into learning' coined by Liz Campbell as my way of teaching.

### Part C. Loved into learning

I claim that Living Theory contributes to improving the world. One way of improving the world is by improving ourselves and then assisting others to do the same by asking the question, How do I improve what I am doing and live my values more fully? The cumulative effect of each of us asking this question can be the creation of a world where values such as love, joy, democracy and justice prevail. The data that I provide lies in the nature of my influence on myself, others and social formations. My "loving my students into learning" which is clearly a value that I hold as attested by my former students like Liz Campbell who coined the phrase for my way of being. Many others (students and colleagues like Cathy Griffin; Tim Pugh; Michelle Vaughan) have seen me live this value as a living standard of practice. These people, in turn, have brought the value of loved into learning into their classrooms and lives.

While I have been a teacher-mentor many individuals, including Cathy Griffin, Liz Campbell and Michelle Vaughan, I hold an educational responsibility to express the special humanity of the educator "for whom the life and particular being of all his [her] students is the decisive factor to which his 'hierarchical recognition is subordinated'". (Buber, 1947, p. 122). Liz Campbell coined the language of "loved into learning" as she described my way of being with the Master's group:

"One of the key findings in my Master's Research Project (MRP) was my ability to reveal, clarify, and explicate my embodied expression of being "loved into learning" (Campbell, 2012, p. 69). Jacqueline Delong, one of my course instructors in the Master's program and who eventually became my supervisor, stood in front of the entire class and told us she loved us. Delong's actions aligned with her values and this inspired me to believe in myself, to realize that I had something significant to contribute and that I could live more fully according to my values. In addition, I felt trusted and respected which enabled me to continue my research with more confidence and authenticity. Recognizing that I had something of value to contribute enabled me to read the theories of others with a more critical lens which enhanced my learning journey. I refer to this process as loved into learning." (Campbell, 2019, p. 14)

Michelle Vaughan described my way of loving into learning as 'leaving ego at the door':



Figure 3: Loved into learning and leaving ego at the door  
<https://youtu.be/wjm13drYVQc>

When I shared with Michelle the “loved into learning” language, Michelle responded by describing my way of being that encouraged her research as “leaving my ego at the door”:

“I think that’s accurate. It’s something about you not bringing your ego into it which I think allows the love to flow through. I think to be able to show genuine love and also having your ego: they don’t play well together in the sandbox. So, if you really want to have somebody feel that emotion, I think you approach a lot of these relationships without ego and that is, in my experience, rare in higher education...It feels like everybody needs two chairs; one for your body and one for your ego.”

I find conferences places of learning and so in recent presentations at ARNA 2019 in Montreal, I learned a great deal from those sessions. In the workshop that Michelle Vaughan conducted, we had several examples of digital recordings that clearly showed the process as it emerges and the nature of our relationship. When we got into the room, the technology wouldn’t work no matter how much Michelle and several other people tried, including a technician who you see in the video-recording going in and out 3 times and finally leaving in disgust! And the look on Michelle’s face was just tragic. I finally recognized that this was useless and started the group on the values exercise where they have 4-5 minutes to share what matters to them with a partner. That started to turn the flat session around but when Liz shared the values that she heard Rachel share, a culture of inquiry pulled us into that space where we could have educational relational conversations and be loved into learning.



ARNA 2019: Liz Campbell loving into learning while creating a culture of inquiry  
[https://youtu.be/Kcy\\_aRE7\\_mU](https://youtu.be/Kcy_aRE7_mU)

Liz creates a culture of inquiry where Rachel feels listened to, loved, respected. The space is then open for Rachel to share her concerns, asking “How am I processing your question of the alignment of value and practice. Misalignment with administrative table and my values fraught. Discussion follows that involves many of the group around power and values and the issue of alignment.



<https://youtu.be/zl-4AncxM0s>

The educational conversation turns several directions with Jack interjecting about Barry McDonald's (date) "creative compliance" which helps them arrive at the conclusion that your values need not align in all parts of your life and as Liz says, "Dissonance can be healthy and coexist and you can still live according to your values".

This culture of inquiry space that Liz opened up, I believe, fulfilled the need for... a collaborative, participative and inclusive paradigm built on love and working through local and global action to connect us with each other as human beings and with nature.

By loving us into learning, it filled us with the...positive energy of faith, love, hope and creativity... to move us toward Loving Learning Conferences. (Zuber-Skerritt, 2017, p. 224).

I have analysed educational influences, as living-educational-theories are created in living cultures of inquiry. My ongoing encouragement and support of practitioner-researchers, as I love them into learning, contributes to practitioner learning for the future, the educational knowledge-base and the flourishing of humanity. Educational influences in learning are distinguished by learning with values that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity as Living Theory researchers generate and share their explanation (their own living-educational-theory) of their educational influences in their own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of the social formations that influence practice and understandings.

To finish, I make some conclusions and share some next steps.

#### Conclusion and next steps

I see myself as a social activist, part of a Living Theory movement (Whitehead, 2009) for social transformation for the flourishing of humanity. I am making a contribution to a global social movement of practitioner-researchers who are creating a future with hope and love, as part of the Living Theory community. The evidence that justifies that claim can be seen in the video recordings of:

- The EJOLTs board Skype meetings on Sundays at 1:00 UK time.
- My writings, article reviews and book reviews in EJOLTs
- My encouragement and support of individuals around the globe creating their own living- educational-theories
- My papers and presentations at conferences intended to encourage participants to join the movement and offering and providing my support

As part of this Living Theory community, I hope that I can convey this through an educational conversation where we are all influencing each other in what I understand to be a 'global social movement. The nature of the relationships among us, Marie, Swaroop, Jack, is based on love, respect, encouragement, support and also, critique. While I stress the importance of the individual 'I', an autonomous researcher in creating my own living-educational-theory, I am trying to engage with the i~we~us relationships that Joy Mounter (date) has developed. In a relational dynamic awareness, we manage to retain the individual integrity of each of us but at the same time recognize the life-affirming energy, hope and love that I feel when we are working together.

The visual data has been part of our research methodology since the technology became more accessible around 2010. When I taught the Bluewater Masters Cohort Programme (2009-11), I videotaped their presentations of their research and gave them the DVD for their research data. At first, they were reluctant but as they saw me using the camera and a few early adaptors like Liz Campbell and Cathy Griffin, they saw the value in it for generating data and for another set of eyes in their presentations and then in their classrooms. In several of the classrooms, the teachers gave the students the cameras for their own research.

In her Master's project, Liz Campbell wrote:

"Also, I want to thank Jackie DeLong for video recording our presentations and conversations during the two courses she facilitated in the Master's program (in spite of the reluctance and resistance of many of us) and encouraging us to view the footage to look for evidence of our claims. The trusting relationship that developed with my peers and my instructors is what enabled me to become a reflective practitioner. We (myself and the other students in my class) have many reasons to justify our lack of ready willingness to use video, but fortunately for me, I was able to overcome my initial reluctance." (Campbell, 2011, p. 95)

It is still amazing to me that the video-recordings are not used more commonly. I understand that there is "push-back" by some Universities and school districts, but in my experience, there has been support and encouragement for the tool to improve our teaching and learning.

Further, I am hoping that you can see and indeed feel my passion, commitment and life-affirming energy for encouraging and supporting others through the transformative experience of creating their own living-educational-theories. My intention is that this and further reflection will enable me see to what extent my reflexivity can further clarify the values I use as your explanatory principles in my explanations of my educational influences in learning.

While this paper is incomplete, it is my hope that the conversation among the four of us and then with the whole group here will help we strengthen and complete it. I invite the participants in the interactive symposium to contribute to strengthening the validity and rigour of this paper using drawing on Habermas' (1976) four questions:

- i) How could I improve the comprehensibility of my explanation?
- ii) How could I strengthen the evidence I use to justify the assertions I make?
- iii) How could I extend and deepen my socio-historical and sociocultural awareness of the ecological complexities that influence my practice and my explanation?
- iv) How could I enhance the authenticity of my explanation in showing over time and interaction that I am living my espoused values as fully as I can?

Going forward my next steps include:

- Continuing my commitment to the Living Theory community and EJOLTs
- Encouraging and supporting new living theorists to create their living-educational-theories
- Reflecting on my learning at CARNALARA and critically engaging with the ideas of others.

The world is not decided by action alone. It is decided more by consciousness and spirit; they are the secret sources of all action and behavior. The spirit of a time is an incredibly subtle, yet hugely powerful force. And it is comprised of the mentality and spirit of all individuals together. Therefore, the way you look at things is not simply a private matter. Your outlook actually and concretely affects what goes on. When you give in to helplessness, you collude with despair and add to it. When you take back your power and choose to see the possibilities for healing and transformation, your creativity awakens and flows to become an active force of renewal and encouragement in the world. In this way, even in your own hidden life, you can become a powerful agent of transformation (O'Donohue, 2019).

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