

**A proposal for a Round Table at the Inaugural Conference of the Action Research
Network of the Americas
Fort Mason, San Francisco 1-2 May 2013-02-03**

On

**Creativity And Criticism In The Growth Of Educational Knowledge From Researching
One's Own Practice.**

with

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Joan Walton, Centre for the Child, Family and Society, Liverpool Hope University, UK.

Jack Whitehead, Liverpool Hope University & the University of Cumbria, UK.

Background and Assumptions

All the above participants are researching their own practice in action research programmes with the intention of both improving it and generating knowledge that enhances the flow of values that carry hope for the future of humanity. We believe that how each individual behaves, and the explanation given for that behaviour, will be influenced by a unique constellation of life experiences, values and beliefs and the social and cultural contexts in which we live. We also recognise the following dangers of economic globalisation leading to de-valuation and demoralisation:

Nevertheless, the new 'economic rationalism' is a worldwide phenomena which 'guides' not only the conduct of transnational corporations, but governments and their agencies as well. It does so with increasing efficacy and pervasiveness. I use the term 'guides' here in quotes to make a particular point. Economic rationalism is not merely a term which suggests the primacy of economic values. It expresses commitment to those values in order to serve particular sets of interests ahead of others. Furthermore, it disguises that commitment in a discourse of 'economic necessity' defined by its economic models. We have moved beyond the reductionism which leads all questions to be discussed as if they were economic ones (de-valuation) to a situation where moral questions are denied completely (de-moralisation) in a cult of economic inevitability (as if greed had nothing to do with it). Broudy (1981) has described 'de-valuation' and de-moralization' in the following way:

De-valuation refers to diminishing or denying the relevance of all but one type of value to an issue; de-moralization denies the relevance of moral questions. The reduction of all values – intellectual, civic, health, among others – to a money value would be an example of de-valuation; the slogan 'business' is business' is an example of de-moralization (Broudy, 1981: 99) (McTaggart, 1992, p. 50).

Purpose

The purpose of the Round Table discussion is to bring people together who are interested in sharing ideas about this approach to research, and who, through their masters and doctoral degrees, have contributed to the academic credibility of this approach. We shall be exploring how the sharing of individual stories and experiences, whilst working with collaborative/co-operative values in contexts influenced by economic rationalism, can create knowledge that enables us to improve practice in contributing to human flourishing.

Data

Our data are the explanations already produced by participants. These will inform the conversation in the Round Table on our intentions to create a future which is not yet realised in practice and which we are committed to exploring.

Here are some of the data we shall be drawing on:

Barry, B. (2012) Challenging the status quo meaning of educational quality: Introducing Transformational Quality (TQ) Theory © Educational Journal of Living Theories, 5(1); pp. 1-26. Retrieved 3 February 2013 from <http://ejolts.net/node/191>.

William Barry's Ph.D. Research – a youtube video at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S7HVfxq4l-8>.

Campbell, E. (2011) Journey to the Otherway: How Can I Improve My Practice By Living My Values Of Love And Joy More Fully? MA Dissertation, Brock University, Canada. Retrieved 12 March 2012 from <http://www.spanglefish.com/ActionResearchCanada>

Griffin, C. (2011) How can I improve my Practice by Living my Values of Love, Trust and Authenticity more fully? M.Ed Project, Brock University. Retrieved 12 March 2012 from <http://www.spanglefish.com/ActionResearchCanada>

DeLong, J., Campbell, E. & Whitehead, J. (2013) How are we creating cultures of inquiry with self-studies that transcend constraints of poverty on learning? Presentation at the 2013 American Educational Research Association Conference in San Francisco with the Theme: Education and Poverty: Theory, Research, Policy and Praxis

DeLong, J. (2002) How Can I Improve My Practice As A Superintendent of Schools and Create My Own Living Educational Theory. Ph.D. Thesis, University of Bath. Retrieved 14 July 2011 from <http://www.actionresearch.net/delong.shtml>.

Hutchison, S. (2012) My gift of authenticity as a leader. MA unit on Gifts and Talents in Education, Liverpool Hope University. Retrieved 20 February, 2012 from <http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/module/shmastersgiftsandtalents.pdf>

Walton, J. (2011a) A living theory approach to teaching in higher education, *Educational Action Research*, 19: 4, 567-578.

Walton, J. (2011b) A collaborative inquiry: How do we improve our practice with children? *Educational Action Research*, 19:3, 297-311.

Walton, J. (2011c) How do we, individually and collectively, integrate research and practice to improve the wellbeing of children? Action Research, Action Learning Journal, Vol 17, No. 1, pp. 65-91.

Walton, J.(2008) Thesis, Ways of Knowing: Can I find a way of knowing that satisfies my search for meaning? Ph.D. Thesis, University of Bath. Retrieved 3 February 2013 from <http://www.actionresearch.net/living/walton.shtml> .

Whitehead, J. (1999) How Do I Improve My Practice? Creating A Discipline Of Education Through Educational Enquiry. Ph.D. Thesis, University of Bath. Retrieved 3 February 2013 from <http://www.actionresearch.net/living/jackwhitehead2.shtml> .

The contents of Volumes 1-5 of the Educational Journal of Living Theories (see <http://ejolts.net/archive>) with an analysis provided by Sigrid Gjotterud of the Norwegian University of Life Sciences.

Contribution to knowledge

The stimulus for this round-table is to produce an edited text of a similar significance for the Growth of Educational Knowledge to the 1970 edited text on Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge from a 1965 Symposium on the work of Thomas Kuhn. It will be shown how both Creativity and Criticism are included in the Growth of Educational Knowledge from researching one's own practice that is intended to enhance the flow of values that carry hope for the future of humanity. The above data, brought to the Panel, will be analysed to show how researching one's own practice can advance knowledge of education, promote scholarly enquiry related to education, encourage the use of research to improve practice and to serve the public good. In particular the analysis of the data will draw a clear distinction between education and educational research. The analysis will include some educational implications of recent pressures in both the American and Educational Research Associations to strengthen the presence of education researchers.

Additional Reference

McTaggart, R. (1992) Reductionism and Action Research: Technology versus convivial forms of life, pp. 47-61 in Bruce, C. S. & Russell, A. L. (1992) Transforming Tomorrow Today. Brisbane, University of Queensland, Australia.