

Re-imagining Education through a new discipline of educational enquiry.

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Extending Eisner's work on Re-imagining Schools, I explain how Education can be re-imagined through a disciplined approach to educational enquiry. This approach rests on an understanding of a discipline of educational enquiry and what is educational in an educational conversation that includes explanations of learning with values that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity. Data, including digital visual data from educational practice, are used to clarify the embodied expressions of meanings of these values. These data are used as evidence in explanations of educational influences in learning in which the values are used as explanatory principles. The values are related to the 2030 goals of UNESCO in contributing to a humanistic vision of education. The explanations include a distinction between the imposition of a given curriculum and the emancipatory experience of generating a living curriculum. This discipline of educational enquiry has emerged from a self-study of my educational development as a teacher of science, a lecturer in education, an educational researcher, a supervisor of doctoral research programs and a global citizen. Evidence is offered to demonstrate how this discipline has been legitimated globally in Living Theory theses in different Universities

Introduction

What I have in mind when I claim to be extending Eisner's work on Re-imagining Schools, through a disciplined approach to educational enquiry, is a response to ideas in his text on Reimagining Schools (Eisner, 2005). I am thinking here of ideas from The Art of Educational Evaluation (1985); The Primacy of Experience and the Politics of Method (1988); Forms of Understanding and the Future of Educational Research; The Promise and Perils of Alternative Forms of Data Representation. (1997). All of these texts have been useful to me in my educational enquiries because they helped me to understand some of the problems I faced in seeking academic legitimation for an explanation of my educational influence in my own learning, in the learning of other and in the learning of the social formations that influenced my practice and understandings. Eisner encouraged the recognition of seeing educational evaluation as a form of art. He explained the political influences around the choice of research method and some of the tensions an educational research could expect to encounter in developing alternative forms of data representation.

The extension rests on an understanding of a discipline of educational enquiry and what is educational in an educational conversation as including explanations of educational influences in learning with values that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity.

In this paper I first clarify what I am meaning by a discipline of educational enquiry. I then distinguish an educational conversation with explanations of educational influences in learning with values that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity. Data, including digital visual data from educational practice, are used to clarify the embodied expressions of meanings of these values. These data are used as evidence in explanations of educational influences in learning in which the values are used as explanatory principles.

The explanations include a tension between the imposition of a given curriculum and the emancipatory experience of generating a living curriculum, understood as the course of one's life, through a disciplined form of educational enquiry.

Finally, I offer access to a data archive of over 50 years (Whitehead, 2018), as evidence of a self-study of my educational development as a teacher of science, a lecturer in education, an educational researcher, a supervisor of doctoral research programs and a global citizen to explain the emergence of the discipline of educational enquiry and of how this discipline has been legitimated in different Universities in a global context.

A discipline of educational enquiry

My introduction to the idea of a discipline of educational enquiry came between 1968-1970 in the Academic Diploma Course at the Institute of Education of the University of London. The guiding principle of this course was known as the Disciplines Approach to Educational Theory. In this approach educational theory was held to be constituted by the disciplines of the philosophy, psychology, sociology and history of education. The disciplines were distinguished by their conceptual frameworks and methods of validation. I began to question this approach towards the end of my MA in the psychology of education (1970-72)

as I was working on my dissertation on 'A preliminary investigation of the process through which adolescents acquire scientific understanding?' (Whitehead, 1972). Following the guidance of my tutors I used a controlled experimental design with the random allocation of 81 pupils to three groups to see if I could distinguish the effects on learning of guided instruction and enquiry learning. The main reason for studying for my masters in education was because I wanted to enhance my professionalism as teacher, through enhancing my educational knowledge on how to improve my educational influences in my own learning and in the learning of my pupils. My interest, which is continuing, in contributing to a new discipline of educational enquiry developed as I began to understand that none of the existing disciplines of education, individually or in any combination could produce a valid explanation of my educational influence in my own learning and in the learning of my pupils in my enquiry, 'How do I improve my educational practice here?' As well as questioning the fundamental principle of the disciplines approach to education, I began to question my positivist scientific approach to my enquiry. Whilst conducting the enquiry for my masters dissertation I began to appreciate that what I was doing was testing the validity of Piaget's cognitive stage theory and Bloom's taxonomy rather than evaluating the effectiveness of my actions and understandings in improving my educational influences in my own and my pupils' learning. I also came to understand that my methodology of apply a positivist science, controlled experience design was inappropriate in my enquiry into improving my practice, as I needed a methodology that was appropriate to the generation of a valid, evidence-based explanation of my educational influences in my own learning and in the learning of my pupils.

As my research continues, into a discipline of educational enquiry, I am recognizing the importance of educational conversations, explanations of educational influences in learning and the use of digital visual data with empathetic resonance for clarifying the meanings of the values that are used as explanatory principles in the explanations of educational influence in learning.

My meaning of an educational conversation

I identify with Gadamer's meaning of a conversation (Gadamer, 1975, p. 367) when he writes that the first condition of the art of conversation is ensuring that the other person is with us. One does not try to argue the other person down but really considers the weight of the other's opinion. I agree with Gadamer that a conversation is the art of testing in the sense of questioning. Questioning is against the fixity of opinions. It makes the object of the conversation and all the possibilities fluid. This prevents questions being suppressed by the dominant opinion. A person who possesses this art of questioning in a conversation will search for everything in favour of an opinion. Rather than trying to discover the weakness of what is said a conversation also seeks to bring out its real strength. A conversation is not the art of arguing, which can make a strong case out of a weak one, but is the art of thinking in a way which can strengthen objections by referring to the subject matter.

What I mean by an educational conversation can be **partially** understood through purely lexical definitions in which words are defined in terms of other words. It includes learning to live the values and understanding that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity and a willingness to share explanations of this learning.

What I mean by an educational conversation can also be understood through the ostensive expressions of meaning in digital visual data of conversations in which individuals are expressing their life-affirming energy with explanations of their learning with the values that give meaning and purpose to their lives.

For example, the four minute video clip below includes from left to right, Marie Huxtable, Joy Mounter, Jack Whitehead and Jason Hocknell-Nickels. Joy is the MA and Leadership Course Leader and PGCE Lead at the Learning Institute in Cornwall. Joy's doctoral enquiry at the University of Cumbria is 'How can I contribute to the creation and enhancement of the educational influences of a community of learners, supporting each other and their own development?' Jason's doctoral enquiry at the University of Cumbria is on, 'Coaching digital cultural transformation within a UK Government Agency: My living-theory account.' Marie is a member of Jason's supervisory team and Jack is a member of Joy's supervisory team.

The video extract begins with Joy Mounter talking about The Learning Institute having become a Centre of the Chartered Management Institute. Joy is talking about an innovative apprentice qualification in leadership and management together with a qualification of Chartered Management Institute Centre, that are being offered by the Learning Institute. I then bring into the conversation a question about what we are doing now in relation to educational conversations. I also then bring into the conversation a presentation that Jason is giving on the 7th June 2019 on 'How have my embodied values of loving kindness and creativity helped inform my living epistemology?' I then say that we are each learning something about each other and I'm curious about how do we live our values more fully in our practice. Jason explains how he has brought Joy's idea of i~we~us relationships (see Joy's web-site at <http://www.spanglefish.com/allicanbe/>) into his work and goes on to suggest that Joy shares her ideas in a workshop that Jason is organizing. Joy responds that this sounds exciting. The date and time for Joy to contribute has been fixed.

What I think is being shown through the embodied expressions on the video are the living meanings of the words in which individuals are contributing to an educational space that includes a flow of life-affirming energy with explanations of their learning as they live as fully as possible the values that give meaning and purpose to their lives.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dMCKPe83Nao>

As I show below after the section on explanations of educational influences, data, including digital visual data from educational practice, are used to clarify the embodied expressions of meanings of these values. These data are used as evidence in explanations of educational influences in learning in which the values are used as explanatory principles.

Explanations of educational influences in learning

Most of my professional life as an educational researcher rests on the belief that enhancing professionalism rests on contributions to the knowledge-base of education. I see this knowledge-base as being constituted by information gathering and theory generation and testing. At the heart of theory generation and testing are explanations of educational influences in learning. I owe my focus on influence to the following insight from Said's writings on the idea of influence in the work of the poet Valéry:

No word comes easier or oftener to the critic's pen than the word influence, and no vaguer notion can be found among all the vague notions that compose the phantom armory of aesthetics. Yet there is nothing in the critical field that should be of greater philosophical interest or prove more rewarding to analysis than the progressive modification of one mind by the work of another. (Said, 1997, p.15)

I use influence rather than effect because of my recognition that no matter what I do to another learner I do not have a direct causal effect in their learning. This is because the other's imagination in engaging with what I do, influences their own learning.

What I understand by an explanation as distinct from a description is that an explanation provides reasons for why something behaves as it does and the reasons for how what is done influences something else. In the case of education I believe an educational explanation gives the reasons for why an educational practitioner acts in the way she or he does and gives the reasons for how a practitioner influences, educationally, the learning of themselves and others (and perhaps the learning of the social formations that influence the practitioner's actions and understandings).

The reasons are the explanatory principles in an explanation of educational influence in learning. Because education is a values-laden practical activity I understand these principles to be the ontological values that an individual uses to give meaning and purpose to their life in education. Hence at the heart of my educational research and discipline of educational enquiry are the methods and processes I use to clarify the meanings of these values as explanatory principles.

Using digital visual data from educational practice to clarify explanatory principles as embodied expressions of meanings of ontological values with empathetic resonance.

I have provided elsewhere (Whitehead, 2012) details of the method of empathetic resonance with digital visual data to clarify and communicate the embodied expressions of the meanings of ontological values and their use as explanatory principles in explanations of educational influences in learning. The details include the following:

The use of a method of empathetic resonance is central to the original contribution of this presentation of educational knowledge. The method is used below with visual data and digital technology to communicate meanings of a 'relationally dynamic awareness' and 'energy-flowing values' in explanatory principles for explaining educational influences in learning.

You can see more evidence of the educational influence and scholarly significance of this approach in another presentation to AERA 2012 on *The educational significance of a teaching model for the creation of a culture of inquiry* (DeLong and Whitehead, 2012). Part of this evidence is drawn from visual data on the evolution of relational dynamic understandings of love, hope and wisdom in educational conversations between Liz Campbell, Cathy Griffin, Jacqueline DeLong and Jack Whitehead.



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VHAxuNe5vVw>

I am not suggesting that you watch all the 25:15 minutes of the conversation. I am suggesting that you watch the last 19 seconds leading up to the frame above to experience an empathetic resonance with the life-affirming energy that is being 'pooled' at the end of this conversation with the values we use to give meaning and purpose to our lives in education, including love, hope and wisdom.

I am suggesting that as you watch the last 19 seconds at:

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

you move the cursor backwards and forwards so that you can see if you feel a resonance around 16 seconds with a 'pooling of energy with values'. As we, as participants in the conversation, watch these 19 seconds of video and pause at 16 seconds, the participants in the conversation experience an empathetic resonance with our life-affirming energy that is being 'pooled' at the end of this conversation with the values we use to give meaning and purpose to our lives in education, including love, hope and wisdom. The scholarly significance of this experience will, to a large extent, depend on you and others sharing and extending this awareness of a pooling of life-affirming energy with values that carry hope for the future of humanity:

We need a new approach: recognising the importance of values and frames; taking into account how the things we call for or do can help strengthen or weaken them; and making sure that, in doing so, we are all pulling together

across different sectors. The need for trade-offs and compromises will remain – but we should make them in light of the bigger picture: an understanding of the values that will be essential to securing lasting change. (Common Cause, 2012)

I know that each individual will experience what they recognise as love, hope, wisdom and their other ontological values in their unique way. If you do watch the 25:15 minute clip above you will hear a conversation in which the participants acknowledge that they are sharing their embodied meanings of love, hope and wisdom.

Such values are at the heart of establishing a new discipline of educational enquiry.

Distinguishing a new discipline of educational enquiry through educational conversations

The new discipline I have in mind includes the following framing and rationale for a disciplined form educational enquiry in Living Theory research.

Issue / Question	Response
What really matters to me? What do I care passionately about? What kind of difference do I want to make in the world?	
What are my values and why?	
What is my concern?	
Why am I concerned?	
What kind of experiences can I describe to show the reasons for my concerns?	
What can I do about it?	
What will I do about it?	

How do I evaluate the educational influences of my actions?	
How do I demonstrate the validity of the account of my educational influence in learning?	
How do I modify my concerns, ideas and actions in the light of my evaluation?	

The new discipline includes the generation of validated explanations of educational influences in one's own learning, the learning of others and in the learning of social formations. It includes the following introduction to living global citizenship as a value and explanatory principle in re-imagining education through a new discipline of educational enquiry.

Living Global Citizenship as a value and explanatory principle

We (Coombs, Potts and Whitehead, 2014) came to coin the phrase Living Global Citizenship as a result of transformations in our thinking over a number of years as we discussed the nature of citizenship and learning from international educational partnerships. We made a distinction between the general theoretical concept of Living Global Citizenship and the unique personal act of meaning that an individual is seeking to live as fully as possible in living-global-citizenship. Mark Potts introduced me to global citizenship in his doctoral research.

My interest in citizenship education had been sparked by Bernard Crick's (1998) report which led to the introduction of citizenship education to the UK curriculum "designed to enhance the political literacy of all young people and counter rising levels of democratic apathy" (Weinberg and Flinders, 2018). As Deputy Head in a comprehensive school in one of the most deprived communities in Wiltshire, I had worked with others to establish a partnership between my own school and Nqabakazulu School, in the black township of Kwamashu, Durban, South Africa. This partnership was based on shared values of social justice, equality, democracy and ubuntu, an African value that roughly translates as togetherness. In my PhD (Potts, 2012) I had used a living educational theory approach to study the transformation in my own learning as a result of the partnership, the learning of others involved in the partnership and the influence that we had had on social formations. Our intention in establishing the partnership had always been to deliver citizenship education which fitted in the justice-orientated category of active citizenship.

In my educational conversations I also distinguish between a given curriculum and a living curriculum.

Generating a discipline of educational enquiry from a self-study of a life of enquiry with Living Theory research

As part of my re-imagining education, through a new discipline of educational enquiry, I offer a self-study of my educational development as a teacher of science, a lecturer in education, an educational researcher, a supervisor of doctoral research programs and a global citizen to demonstrate how an epistemology for educational knowledge has been legitimated in different Universities in a global context.

I have shown above one of the benefits of technology with digital visual data and applications that allow the use of empathetic resonance for clarifying the meanings of embodied values. Another use is the use of the communication potential of the internet with hyperlinks to give unprecedented access to data archives and other resources.

In the Jack Whitehead's writings section of <http://www.actionresearch.net> you can access most of my writings between 1976-2019. These writings document the growth of my educational knowledge for over 40 years. Here are the most recent:

Format	Description
pdf	Whitehead, J. (2019) Action Research for Self-study and Living-Educational-Theories. DRAFT before publication in Zuber-Skeritt, O., Wood, L. (2019) Action Learning and Action Research: Genres and Approaches. Bingley; Emerald
pdf	Whitehead, J. (2019) The underlying importance of context and voice in action research. In: Mertler, Craig A., (ed.) The Wiley handbook of action research in education. Wiley handbooks in education . Wiley Blackwell, Oxford, UK, pp. 207-228. (Final draft before publication)
pdf	Stringer, Ernest (Ernie) , Dick, Bob and Whitehead, Jack (2019) Worldwide perspectives on action research in education. In: Mertler, Craig A. , (ed.) The Wiley handbook of action research in education. Wiley handbooks in education . Wiley Blackwell, Oxford, UK, pp. 97-113. (Final draft before publication)
pdf	Whitehead, J., Delong, J., Huxtable, M., Campbell, L., Griffin, C. & Mounter, J. (2019) Self-Study in Elementary and Secondary Teaching: A Living Theory Approach. Second edition of the International Handbook of Self-Study of Teaching and Teacher Education. Dordrecht; Springer (in press).
pdf	Mounter, J., Huxtable, M. & Whitehead, J. (2019) Using TASC and Spirals in Living Theory research in explanations of educational influences in a global social movement. Gifted Education International, 35(2); 91-109
pdf	Wood, L., McAteer, M. & Whitehead, J. (2019) How are Action Researchers Contributing to Knowledge Democracy? A Global Perspective. Educational Action Research 27(1); 7-21.
pdf	Whitehead, J. (2018) 'Emancipation and Epistemicide : Two approaches to professing higher educational research', a paper presented at the conference of the European Association of Research on Learning and Instruction (EARLI) on 'Dialogue between ontology and epistemology: New perspectives on theory and methodology in research on learning and education', 27 August 2018, Homerton College, Cambridge.
pdf	Whitehead, J. (2018) Presentation on Evidence-based practice and pedagogic research, at the SOLSTICE e-learning and CLT Conference at Edge Hill University on the 8th June 2018
pdf	Whitehead, J. (2018) Notes to support Jack Whitehead's keynote to the 10th World Congress of ALARA on 18 June 2018 in Norwich University, Vermont, USA

[pdf](#) A workshop at the 10th ALARA World Congress at Norwich University, Vermont, USA on the 19th June 2018 on "Where do we go from here in contributing to 'The Action Learning and Action Research Legacy for Transforming Social Change?'" Delong, Whitehead & Huxtable.

[pdf](#) Whitehead, J. (2018) Living Theory Research As A Way Of Life. Bath; Brown Dog Books

[pdf](#) Whitehead, J. (2017) Jack Whitehead's review of Dawn Garbett & Alan Ovens (Ed) (2017) Being Self-Study Researchers in a Digital World. Switzerland; Springer International Publishing.

[pdf](#) Whitehead, J. (2017) A Living Theory Approach To Changing Perspectives In Contemporary Teaching. Association for Teacher Education in Europe (ATEE) Conference in Dobrovnik, Croatia, 23-25 October 2017

[pdf](#) Whitehead, J. (2017) The Education Of Global Citizens In Living Theory Research With An Alternative Globalization. Presentation on the 2nd July 2017 at the Department of Education of the University of Bath, 50th Anniversary Conference

In the Living Theory theses and masters dissertation section at:

<https://www.actionresearch.net/living/living.shtml> you can access the Living Theory accounts that have been judged as making contributions and original contributions to educational knowledge in different universities in a global context. Here are the most recent graduations:

Ph.D.

[Elizabeth Campbell's doctorate on - How has love influenced me as a teacher researcher, and learner? A narrative inquiry into a teacher's abrupt awakenings. Nipissing University, Canada, 2018](#)

Ph.D.

[Anne Keizer-Remmer's doctorate on - Underneath The Surface Of Cosmopolitanism: Searching For Cosmopolitanism In Higher Education. University of Humanistic Studies, Utrecht, the Netherlands, 2017.](#)

Ph.D.

[Bruce Damon's doctorate on - A Collaboratively Constructed Process Model For Understanding And Supporting The Work Of The Community Volunteer In A Community School. 2017 Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, South Africa.](#)

In generating this discipline I distinguish between a given curriculum and a living curriculum

Distinguishing a given curriculum from a living curriculum

Throughout my 50 years of professional practice as an educator and educational researcher I have experienced a tension between the imposition of a given curriculum and the

emancipatory experience of generating a living curriculum, understood as the course of one's life, through a disciplined form of educational enquiry. In this enquiry I have explored the implications of asking, researching and answering my question, 'How do I improve what I am doing in my educational practice?'

You can access the evidence that shows the generation of a living curriculum in relation to a given curriculum in the programme and video data from a one day workshop on *Participatory Action Research: A Living Theory approach* on the 5th June 2019 at the Qualitative Research Summer School at Dublin City University, at:

<https://www.actionresearch.net/writings/jack/jwdcuworkshop5june2019.pdf>

Interim Conclusion

In this presentation, on re-imagining education through a new discipline of educational enquiry, I have focused on the meaning of an educational conversation that provides the basis for this discipline of educational enquiry. At the heart of an educational conversation is both learning, with values that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity, and an explanation of an individual's educational influence in their own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of the social formation that influences practice and understanding.

I demonstrated how digital visual data from educational practice, together with empathetic resonance, can be used to clarify the embodied expressions of meanings of the ontological values that give meaning and purpose to the individual's life. These data are used as evidence in explanations of educational influences in learning. The values are used as explanatory principles.

Throughout my life as an educator and educational researcher I have engaged with a tension between the imposition of a given curriculum and the emancipatory experience of generating a living curriculum through educational conversations. I have provided evidence from a workshop in Ireland in which the given curriculum I provided was engaged with creativity by myself and participants in the creation of the participants' living curriculum.

So that I can be seen to be living myself, the re-imagining education through a new discipline of educational enquiry, I have provided access to over 50 years of my self-study of my life of educational enquiry in my educational development as a teacher of science, a lecturer in education, an educational researcher, a supervisor of doctoral research programs and a global citizen. The evidence demonstrates that original contributions to educational knowledge from this discipline of educational enquiry have been legitimated from Living Theory research in different Universities in a global context.

I shall conclude with the following insight from Ortrun Zuber-Skerritt (2017)

... 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).

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