

## **Editorial Foreword**

Jack Whitehead

### **Jack Whitehead**

*University of Cumbria, UK.*

### **Abstract**

My delight in accepting the invitation to write the Foreword for issue 9(2) of EJOLTS is grounded in the recognition of the original contributions to educational knowledge in the living-educational-theories of Marie Huxtable, Pip Bruce-Ferguson, Peter Mellett and Sadruddin Behadur Quotoshi. Their contributions are spreading the influence of values and understandings that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity. Each individual recognizes and responds to their existence as participating within both local and global communities as they seek to improve their practice and make their contributions to educational knowledge.

I am contextualizing this foreword in relation to the following statement in the 'Brief and Call to Participate' for the 1<sup>st</sup> Global Assembly for Knowledge Democracy to be held in Cartagena, Columbia on the 16<sup>th</sup> June 2017:

The keynote address at the Global Assembly will be given by Prof. Boaventura de Sousa Santos, a Professor of Sociology at the University of Coimbra (Portugal) and a Distinguished Legal Scholar at the University of Wisconsin – Madison. Among his many books in English are *Law and Globalization from Below: Towards a Cosmopolitan Legality*; *Epistemologies of the South: Justice Against Epistemicide*; and *Another Knowledge is Possible: Beyond Northern Epistemologies*. The framing of knowledge democracy, in the particular context of the work of Boaventura de Sousa Santos, indicates a commitment to deeply heterogeneous and emancipatory approaches to knowledge. The idea for an epistemology of the global south guides an understanding of a broader project of transformation, the empowerment of diverse knowledge communities

Copyright: © 2016 Whitehead.  
This is an open access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial License, which permits unrestricted non-commercial use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.

and knowledge systems critical to the long-term sustainment of people and the planet, which sits in the context of the (current) hegemony of West / neo-liberalist knowledge systems. “Cognitive justice,” another term used by Santos, indicates the project of making subaltern knowledges visible and legitimate in this neo-liberal context. (see <http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/arna/brief.pdf>)

This broader project of transformation will require individual Living Theorists to engage in collective enquiries into living more fully the values and understandings that carry hope for the flourishing of humanity. Each of the contributors to this issue of EJOLTS provides the point of view of an individual through which the collective organization and community of EJOLTS can be seen to be an ‘intrinsically fluid identity, not a fixed entity pushed and pulled about by external force.’ (Rayner 2016, personal communication).

My approach to this Foreword is to begin with a point from the conclusions of each of the contributors. I do this because in my experience writers almost always crystallise something of central significance in their writings in their conclusions. From each point from the conclusion I then focus on the contribution that each writer is making to Living Theory research as a social movement. I relate these contributions to the ideas of Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2014) in the review of his book *Epistemologies of the South: Justice against Epistemicide*. This review is followed by Sonia Hutchison’s review of Victor Frankl’s ‘Man’s Search for Meaning’ and the reviews of the Living Theory Doctoral Theses of Marie Huxtable on *How do I Evolve Living-Educational-Theory Praxis in Living-boundaries?* and Sadruddin Bahador Quotoshi on ‘Creating living-educational-theory: A journey towards transformative teacher education in Pakistan’.

In this Foreword I also wish to highlight the originality of the epistemologies of our EJOLTS community in establishing the academic legitimacy of using our embodied expressions of our ontological values as explanatory principles and standards of judgement. I am meaning our relationally dynamic, explanatory principles and living standards of judgment that we use to legitimate the validity of our contributions to educational knowledge.

I am thinking particularly of the use of visual data with the methods of empathetic resonance and empathetic validity to clarify and communicate the meanings of the embodied expressions of the ontological values we use as individuals as explanatory principles. In the Issue 8(2) of Arianna Briganti uses video clips with her daughter Salwa to show how a process of empathetic resonance helps to clarify her ontological values and connect them to a global social movement:

My living-theory here refers to my way of individually contributing to strengthen the global social movement, which aims at a fairer world.

In the conclusion of her contribution on **‘Integrating personal, political, and professional educational practice that gives meaning and purpose to my life and work’** Marie Huxtable asks:

Has anything here (no matter how microscopic or irritating) enabled you to develop your Living Theory research and enhanced your ability to recognize, value and research the integration of your personal, professional, and political educational practice to improve it and so live a more loving life that is satisfying, productive and worthwhile?

My answer to Huxtable is that her ideas are helping me to enhance my contribution to Living Theory research as a social movement. I am thinking in particular of her understanding of 'educational' as learning that helps with the living of a loving life that is satisfying, productive and worthwhile. I have also learnt to include the personal values of loving recognition, respectful connectedness, educational responsibility and the social values of inclusion, equality and emancipation, in my comprehension of her living-educational-theory and to spread the influence of these values and understanding as they carry hope for the flourishing of humanity. I can also show (Whitehead, 2016) how Huxtable's (2015) ideas on creating and sharing 'living posters' (see:

<http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/posters/homepage061115.pdf> ) have become part of my contribution to Living Theory research as a social movement.

In answering her question, How can I contribute to the flourishing of humanity as I live a loving life that is satisfying, productive and worthwhile? Huxtable shows how she evolved her understanding of collaboration and educational practice. This understanding of collaboration includes multidimensional and relationally-dynamic expressions of meaning. It includes an Ubuntu way of being that is expressed as 'i am because we are' together with Huxtable's original contribution of 'we are because i am' that, taken together, Huxtable represents as *i~we~i* (Huxtable & Whitehead, 2016). Huxtable has also contributed to the development of my understanding of Living Theory research as an integration of personal, professional, political educational practice.

In the conclusion to her contribution on '**The influence of action research and Living Educational Theory on my life's work as an educator**', Pip Bruce Ferguson writes:

I commenced this paper, in the abstract, talking about the position of universities as 'critics and consciences of society'. I hope I have demonstrated through my life experience as a teacher, through my developing awareness as an educator, through the increasingly political and systemic ways I am operating, and the expansion of my own teaching philosophy, how I strive to critique my own work, and to encourage others to do likewise. I have demonstrated how I have moved from living less reflectively, through learning in various ways, to leading where I can do so to improve practice. One of my favourite 'sayings' which I share regularly with new teachers, is the expression 'We do the best we know how, and when we know better, we do better'. I suspect I shall continue striving to 'do better' throughout my life.

Pip Bruce Ferguson embodies the spirit of our EJOLTS community in her willingness to focus on her life's work as an educator and practitioner-researcher as she continuously 'strives to do better'. Each living-educational-theory helps to constitute a 'Living Legacy' (Forester, 2014) and Bruce Ferguson includes in her paper an examination her work at e Wānanga o Aotearoa. This is a [wānanga](#) (an indigenous [tertiary education](#) provider) in [New Zealand](#). It is a Māori-led organisation grounded in Māori values. Bruce Ferguson's contribution to this Wānanga is consistent with Santos' (2014) call for 'Justice against Epistemicide' in recognizing the value of and making public the embodied knowledges of indigenous peoples. Bruce Ferguson also examines her contributions to the EJOLTS community and the Network Educational Action Research Ireland (NEARI) in which she helps NEARI to create and share a 'living-poster' (Huxtable, 2016) with a global community of action researchers.

In the conclusion of his contribution on '**A living-theory pedagogy for postgraduate distance learning education**' Peter Mellett writes:

My aim in writing this paper has been to give you a sense of who I am in terms of the values that I live by and the way in which those values have informed my educational endeavours. Those endeavours range from family interactions and experiences to formal educational settings, the subject of this paper being an M.Sc. distance-learning programme. The details about my family history may seem extraneous to some, but my intention is to be as explicit as possible about a human attribute that is implicit by its very nature. We can see the footprints left by values in action; but values are *noumenons*, as contrasted with *phenomena*, which can be apprehended by the senses. In this way, I hope that the details of my life will speak for my values, and that the nature of my educational endeavours may be seen as expressions of those values – as I have attempted to make a claim to have developed a living-theory pedagogy for distance-learning education.

In sharing his understanding of 'how I live my life', Mellett identifies two overarching values of *freedom* and *justice*. He also identifies *care* and *love* as providing the energy or impetus for the practical expression of his values. Whilst one of the foci of Mellett's paper communicates his meaning of a living-theory pedagogy for postgraduate distance learning education, another foci is the communication of a living-educational-theory of how he lives his life with embodied expressions of freedom, justice, care and love. Mellett clarifies the emergence of these energy-flowing values through 'An archeology of my values' and his 'personal history'. The archeology and history enabled this reader to comprehend the meanings of the expression of embodied values in relation to their emergence through the influences of, personal, familial, sociohistorical and sociocultural contexts.

In his living-theory pedagogy for postgraduate distance learning education Mellett describes and explains his educational influence in the inclusion of a *Consolidating Theory and Practice Unit* in the distance-learning curriculum. The educational intention of the CTP unit is 'for students to show how they are working as reflective practitioners, integrating insights from their academic studies into their professional practice in order to improve its quality.' I do hope that readers will explore the possibilities of including, where appropriate, such a unit within the curriculum of their own contexts.

In the conclusion of his contribution on **Creating my own living-educational-theory: An Auto/ethnographic-Soulful Inquiry** Sadruddin Bahadur Qutoshi writes:

On the whole, Transformative Teacher Education Program is an inclusive-holistic way of transforming the target learners for the purpose of ensuring social transformation through education. This inclusive-holistic approach reminds me of Iqbal, the national poet of Pakistan, who gave the images through the following verses that inclusive-holistic way of transforming the self and others may emancipate the self, which is the ultimate purpose of my life.

I did no borrow eyes from others  
But preferred to look at the world with my own  
When the self is strengthen by the power of love  
It becomes the undisputed sovereign of self  
(Iqbal, poet of the East)  
Praise to be Allah, the Lords of the Worlds

Congratulations to Sadruddin Bahadur Qutoshi of Karakorum International University, Pakistan, and his doctoral supervisor Bal Chandra Luitel of Kathmandu University, Nepal for the academic legitimization of the doctoral thesis *Creating Living-Educational-Theory: A Journey Towards Transformative Teacher Education In Pakistan*, on which this paper in EJOLTS was based. This academic legitimization of a living-theory thesis by Kathmandu University, Nepal, is a contribution to the EJOLT Community in Living Theory research as a social movement.

Sadruddin Bahadur Qutoshi clarifies the meaning of his embodied values of intention, humility for humanity, care of self and others with ecological consciousness, love and peace as he envisions a transformative teacher education programme and research practice for Pakistan. As a student, teacher, vice/principal, teacher educator, and research supervisor Sadruddin Bahadur Qutoshi bears witness to his experience of the culturally disempowering nature of teacher education and research practices in the context of Pakistan. His response to the experience of disempowerment is to embrace and contribute to a transformative research paradigm in which, as he says, he engages with making meaning of his lived experiences:

...through imaginative, innovative and creative ways of re/constructions of past and present epiphanies, and envisioned a transformative teacher education and research practice for Pakistan.

In creating a living-educational-theory through an auto/ethnographic-soulful inquiry Qutoshi is open about his spiritual faith in Islam and his understanding of his soulful inquiry as being grounded in this faith. What I found inclusive in Qutoshi's writings is its invitational, rather than impositional quality. I feel invited into an inclusion public space to share insights into his struggle to offer a transformational educational programme and research in the face of disempowering pressures that I think will resonate with the experiences of many readers and contributors to EJOLTS.

## References:

- Briganti, A. (2015). Generating my own living-theory: An interim report. *Educational Journal of Living Theories*, 8(2), 76-99. Retrieved 30 November 2016 from [http://ejolts.net/files/Briganti8%282%29\\_0.pdf](http://ejolts.net/files/Briganti8%282%29_0.pdf)
- Forester, C. A. M. (2015). *Living Legacies: Valuing Lives of Service. How can educational influence continue beyond practitioners within a culture which privileges the external world over the Internal*. Doctor of Education Thesis, Liverpool Hope University.
- Huxtable, M. (2016). Marie's Site; Making a Difference. Retrieved 2 December 2016 from <http://www.spanglefish.com/MariesSite/>
- Lohr, E. (2016). Teaching with love: how may I continue to improve my practice as I get older? *Educational Journal of Living Theories*, 9(1), 112-130. Retrieved 30 November 2016 from [http://ejolts.net/files/274\\_0.pdf](http://ejolts.net/files/274_0.pdf)
- Lohr, E. (2006). *Love at Work*. Doctoral Thesis, University of Bath, 2006. Retrieved May 2, 2016, from <http://www.actionresearch.net/living/lohr.shtml>

Whitehead, J. (2016). *How am I integrating the personal and political in improving professional practice and generating educational knowledge with collaborative/cooperative action research?* A paper presented at the CARN 2016 Conference at Bishop Grosseteste University in Lincoln, UK, 10-13 November, with the theme of 'Integrating the Personal and Political in Professional Practice.' Retrieved 30 November 2016 from <http://www.actionresearch.net/writings/carn/jwCARNindividual121116.pdf>