Review of Sean Warren's and Stephen Bigger's, 'Living Contradictions: A Teacher's Examination of Tension and Disruption in Schools, in Classrooms and in Self', by Sean Warren and Stephen Bigger. Carmarthen: Crown House Publishing Limited.

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What I like most about this book is its collaborative nature and its honesty. Sean Warren and Stephen Bigger exemplify a collaborative educational relationship. Bigger, as a doctoral supervisor, has enabled Warren to make explicit and evolve his embodied knowledge as a professional educator whilst sharing, without imposition, his own insights. These include insights from Critical Theory. The honesty is in Warren's educational journey, from his steadfast adherence to institutional standards and expectations, to his recognition that he was losing something of himself in the process of imposing these external standards and expectations. His journey continues with his creative and critical responses to these contradictions in living his values as fully as he can. I believe that Warren's journey will resonate with your own experiences of the imposition of institutional power-relations and captivate your imaginations in Warren's inspirational honesty and with his critical and creative responses.

Following a prologue, preface and introduction, the book is organized into five parts with an epilogue: Power Over; Methodological Considerations; Degrees of Resistance: Low Level Disruptions; Power With; Working with Colleagues. The autobiographical writings embrace Warren's experience of being a 'living contradiction' and his analysis of his educational influences in his own learning and he seeks to resolve the contradictions.

The book also shows how Bigger shared with Warren his understandings of Critical Theory. He encouraged Warren to see that autobiographical writings could produce a valid and academically legitimate contribution to educational knowledge in the generation of a living-educational-theory. The living-theory explains both Warren's and Bigger's educational influences in their own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of the social formations that influence their practice and understandings. Hence the direct relevance of this book to the Educational Journal of Living Theories.

Their contribution, whilst grounded in their embodied knowledges as educators, also integrates insights from the most advanced social theories of the day:

> We drew on critical pedagogy which encourages social critique (Darder et al. 2008; Giroux 2011). These essays cover three decades: of these we point especially to 'Rethinking education as the practice of freedom: Paulo Freire and the promise of critical pedagogy' (Giroux 2011: 152–166) and Pauline Lipman's 'Beyond accountability: towards schools that create new people for a new way of life' (in Darder et al. 2008: 363–383). Giroux, following Freire, presents pedagogy as a social and political awareness-raising enterprise – that is, encouraging pupils to become active contributors rather than passive consumers, understanding their rights and responsibilities within a democratic community. By this we mean not so much the limited right to vote every few years, but involvement in a community that discusses needs and actions constantly to achieve fair and just solutions. This is John Dewey's social involvement on a democratic school. Dewey is the enemy of systems schooling and a promoter of process education – pragmatism in action.

Warren and Bigger point out the importance of distinguishing between *authoritative* and *authoritarian*. They use the distinction that 'authoritative' means exercising authority which is based on expertise, whilst 'authoritarian' implies an emphasis on power to control.

I believe this book will be of great value on initial and continuing professional development-programmes in education, and to all professionals in a wide range of workplace-contexts, who are facing their own contradictions in living their values as fully as they can. I am thinking particularly of social contexts in which we have experienced the imposition of 'Power Over' whilst valuing the expression of 'Power With'.