

KRISHNAMURTI EDUCATION RESEARCH PROJECT

Summary

The project will fully catalogue and research the approximately 150 books worth of material pertaining to education that was left by J. Krishnamurti, and which has mostly remained unexamined. The project also aims to make the greatest possible contribution to those currently working in education as early as possible. To that end, an interactive website will be maintained throughout the project so that people involved in education can benefit from the project, and their questions and concerns can shape and enrich the research.

1. The Context

Failure rates in American public schools are between 30% and 50%, and many other developed countries are equally troubled. Concerned educators, education policy experts, politicians, and members of the public are increasingly asking fundamental questions about the nature and process of education.

A significant challenge for those interested in educational innovation is the exploration of assumptions and the conclusions that lie at the heart of the current system, and to envision alternatives. Just as past assumptions, like the benefit to learning of corporeal punishment and rote memorization, needed to be questioned and were found to be mistaken, so many present assumptions in education also need to be questioned. This is especially true in light of new technologies which so dominate the lives of young people and increasingly pervade our world—technologies that create and were created by radical re-thinking.

At a time when education needs new thinking, innovation, and insights, there is the extraordinarily rich resource of the work of visionary educator Jiddu Krishnamurti, the bulk of which remains unexamined. Krishnamurti wrote his first book on education in 1912. He was still addressing educators, students, and parents, and asking fundamental questions about the nature and practices of learning and education in 1986, the year he died. Many people feel that Krishnamurti's work on education is as original and influential as Jean-Jacques Rousseau's or John Dewey's, but Krishnamurti also started 10 schools on three continents, and he left a record of conversations with the teachers, students, and parents. This unprecedented 74 year examination of education is not only unusually long, it is unusually diverse; and it reveals the struggle of educators and students to actualize innovations over many years and in many different cultures. It is, therefore, a philosophical and sociological record that is unparalleled and of unique importance in our multicultural world.

1.1. Objectives of the Project

1. To conduct the first full searchable academic analysis of all of Krishnamurti's work on education.
2. To maintain an interactive website that will be an on-going presentation of the research findings, as well as receiving input, aimed at benefiting Teachers, Teacher Trainers/Education Professors, Education Policy Experts, those involved in Homeschooling, and parents of school-age children

(the Education Constituency). The interactive aspect of the website (as described in Section 6.3) will seek a dialogue with members of the Education Constituency to:

- a. ensure that as many questions as possible of the members of the Education Constituency are included within the scope of the research,
- b. ensure the Education Constituency can help shape the research, and
- c. ensure that from the earliest possible stage of the research, that it will be an invaluable resource to members of the Education Constituency.

1.2. Why This Project Matters

There are two principal reasons why this project is important: 1) Krishnamurti's insights and explorations into education are unusual and significant. Even though only a small portion of his work on education has been publicly available, it has been very influential. 2) The normal resources available to teachers tend to be prescriptive and are, therefore, limited. For example: if a teacher is having difficulties with motivation or discipline, there are a number of prescriptive resources advising the teacher to try this or that exercise or approach. However, there is no one exercise or approach that will work in all contexts or with all kinds of students, e.g., what works in a wealthy California suburb may not work in a Northeastern inner city. There are no readily available resources for a teacher to explore the nature of motivation or the nature of discipline per se; no materials exploring with students of different ages and ethnicities what differences exist between self-motivation and motivation from another or for a reward; no material with which they can look at the differences between self-discipline and being disciplined by another. These are the kinds of questions Krishnamurti explored with students and staff from around the world for more than 70 years. Such explorations can help teachers innovate for their particular circumstances and students.

To leave the work of Krishnamurti in various archives, when the world of education is in such need of innovation, is to squander an important resource at a time when it is much needed.

1.3. Krishnamurti

Over a period of more than 70 years, Krishnamurti founded 10 schools on three continents. He also lectured, discussed, and wrote about education for all ages in dozens of countries around the world. The few books that have been created from his vast opus on education are frequent topics in teacher education courses and in graduate courses in education. There are many graduate dissertations on his work on every continent, yet the source material for all this is only a tiny fragment of the whole of his work on education. The vast bulk of his work remains as unexamined transcripts in three archives (in the United States, England, and India), to which there is limited access.

1.4. Our Unique Advantages for this Project

There are several factors that make our organization uniquely well suited for undertaking the Krishnamurti Education Research Project:

1. We are the only organization outside of the Krishnamurti Foundation Archives to have access to all the needed material.
2. The Project Director, Dr. Scott H. Forbes, had a personal and working relationship with Krishnamurti, and so has a longstanding familiarity with Krishnamurti's work.

3. Dr. Forbes, a scholar of education and author, has doctoral training from The University of Oxford in the kinds of research this project requires.
4. Two able, highly educated, and deeply interested research assistants have been found, and one has already started working on this project on a volunteer basis.

2. Keys to Success – Project Phases

To ensure the usefulness and logical progression of the project, and to make it more manageable, the project will be approached in 3 distinct phases.

2.1. Phase One

The principal concern of Phase One will be to create an index of the contents for all the material (approximately 150 books worth). This “first pass” content analysis will be of immense value for everyone wishing to find discussions or writings on specific topics. At the moment, events are identified only by date and, sometimes, by place as well. No one currently even knows if an event was a discussion between Krishnamurti and students, teachers, school trustees, parents, or some combination of these.

The creation and the beginning of the interactive website will also occur during Phase One.

2.2. Phase Two

Phase Two will identify any change, evolution, or development in the way the topics identified in Phase One were viewed over time or for different audiences. For instance, were questions of discipline discussed in the same way from the 1920s to the 1980s; and if there were changes, what were they? Similarly, in any single period were questions of discipline discussed differently with different audiences? Krishnamurti was renowned for his responsiveness to audiences or discussants, as well as current events; and a great deal of anecdotal evidence exists of these affecting his talks (e.g., the terms in which “freedom” is discussed in India in the period of Indian Independence are very different to the terms in which “freedom” is discussed in America in the 1960’s). Can sense of these differences be made so that we might best see the relevance of the thinking behind them for education in the 21st century?

2.3. Phase Three

While the first two phases would mainly use the tools of the methodology of content analysis, Phase Three would mostly involve the tools of discourse analysis. Phase Three is the transition from research in “what” Krishnamurti said to “how” he said it—a distinction that most teachers know marks out a good/successful/inspiring teacher from one who simply tries to transmit information. Especially in his discussions with the teachers of his schools with whom he met frequently, Krishnamurti “worked” his teachers; he often said he was “cooking” them. What is clear is that in many of these discussions, there was little to no content he tried to convey. Rather, he wanted to involve the teachers in a process of questioning, or reflecting, or “looking” that he indicated could provide insights in the everyday problems these teachers faced; these were lessons for teachers in using a process whereby they could find their own answers.

3. Organization Summary

The Krishnamurti Education Research Project is an activity of Holistic Education, Inc., an Oregon nonprofit. The mission of Holistic Education is to "explore, promote, research, and engage in holistic education," of which Krishnamurti is a well-known proponent.

3.1. Legal Entity

Holistic Education, Inc. is a 501 (c) 3 non-profit registered in Multnomah County, Oregon. It is governed by a Board consisting of a President, a Secretary, and a Treasurer. The Board Members were chosen for their support of the original mission, goals, and philosophy of Holistic Education, Inc.. Their principal responsibility is to maintain the integrity of the intention of the organization. The Director is Scott H. Forbes, who assumes all responsibility for daily operations.

3.2. Start-up Summary

There are no start-up expenses for the Krishnamurti Education Research Project as all of the normal start-up expenses that would have been expected (e.g. legal expenses for the creation of a nonprofit, initial setup of an office, etc.) have already been borne by Holistic Education, Inc.

The start-up assets already in hand extend beyond normal office expenses, and are considerable. In exchange for personal materials held in Scott H. Forbes' personal archives, the Archives of The Krishnamurti Foundation of America has given a legal guarantee to Scott H. Forbes that he can have copies of all the material needed for this project; and copies of all the transcripts needed have already been acquired. Also, two able, qualified, and interested assistants have been identified, and one has already started working in a way that not only moves the project forward, but also constitutes the period of training needed for the specific requirements of this project. Scott H. Forbes and the two assistants will use the existing office equipment to support the early stages of this project.

4. The Project Beneficiaries

If this project were a commercial venture, the beneficiaries would be thought of as the project's "market"—those who are expected to be interested in acquiring what the project produces.

4.1. Beneficiary Segmentation

It is important to distinguish the different segments of project beneficiaries because they often have different (and even conflicting) agendas. For the Research Project to be as useful as possible, the concerns of each segment must be appreciated. There are five general members of the Education Constituency which the Krishnamurti Education Research Project aims to benefit.

1. **Educators** - This group includes all the teachers, school administrators, adult education instructors, out-of-school instructors, education psychologists, etc.

2. **Education Policy Experts** - This group consists of all those making decisions at the federal, state, and local levels, as well as the various groups of advisors, consultants, researchers and other experts who work with these decision makers.
3. **Teacher Trainers/Education Professors** - This group includes all those who train or educate those in group 1 and group 2.
4. **Home Schoolers** - This group consists of all those involved in home schooling, including those in public education who are concerned with Individual Education Plans (a legally accepted and publicly funded alternative to attending school).
5. **Parents** - With the growth in influence of parent-teacher associations, and the promotion of parents as "partners in education," parents are no longer simply the vicarious consumers of education which they were in the past. They are a vital and often determining voice in what schools do and how they do it.

4.2. Outreach Strategy

The Krishnamurti Education Research Project will produce more than a final research conclusion. The educational community will be included from the start: they will be invited to collaborate, criticize, and make contributions through the website as soon as the project gets under way. Interim reports on the research will also be made to professional bodies at their annual conferences (e.g., The American Education Research Association).

As there have been for many years a steady stream of doctoral students from around the world seeking collaboration with Scott H. Forbes on subjects related to this project, it is expected that when the Krishnamurti Education Research Project becomes active and known, there will be many more. This will make the work of the Project more widely known in the universities these doctoral students attend, and should produce a wide audience for the research. This will, in turn, provide opportunities for collaboration with scholars and universities that no one can currently envisage.

Since the various Krishnamurti Foundations around the world are actively engaged in furthering the already extensive interest in Krishnamurti's work, and have tens of thousands of members, they will no doubt want to keep their members apprised of the progress of the Krishnamurti Education Research Project. This will further publicize the project and help the intended beneficiaries reach the project.

5. Alternatives

Most research of the kind proposed by the Krishnamurti Education Research Project would be associated with a university, or with an institute which has an affiliated mandate (e.g., research on Carl Jung's work done by the Carl Jung Institute, etc.). The Krishnamurti Education Research project is unusually large because of the volume of material (exceeding by many times the collected works of Jung, for example) and it will necessarily take a correspondingly long time to complete. Consequently, this project is an unattractive proposition for most universities as their funding streams will not usually stretch to such length. Also, as universities must necessarily take a large percentage of all research grants to cover their overheads, the costs of such a long research project with the universities' added percentage would be prohibitive.

6. Implementation Summary

A great deal that has not required funding or that could be done with voluntary labor has been done, and continues to be done. The project has reached a stage where full-time work is now required, and so a reliable funding base is needed. Funding will allow the website to be created, and the voluntary personnel to become full-time.

The personnel will initially form details of the research strategy which they will share with professional bodies of the research for feedback. The personnel will also begin articulating overviews of the material to a few representatives of the intended beneficiaries, and begin eliciting their feedback.

6.1. Research Methodology

As outlined in Section 2, there are two principal subjects, and these mirror the two principal topics of education: the content of what Krishnamurti said about education, and the way in which he communicated it, requiring the implementation of both content analysis and discourse analysis.

6.2. Fundraising

While it would be possible to fundraise annually to meet the expenses, that would not ensure the sustainability the project requires. The training of assistants is too long and difficult to risk losing them in a bad fundraising year. It is, therefore, hoped that an endowment, or at least a reliable income stream, can be created before the work begins fulltime.

6.2.1. Funding Forecast

The costs of the project are salaries and associated costs for four people, and limited office expenditures, totaling approximately \$300,000 in the first year and rising with inflation. An endowment would ideally cover the intended 10 to 12 years of the project. A complete financial forecast is available on request.

6.3. Web Plan Summary

The general intentions for the website are:

- To offer information about the Project and its methodology.
- To detail the progress of the Project.
- To present interim materials from the Project's research, which will consist of at least:
 1. Conference papers and published papers
 2. Teacher materials generated by the project
 3. Teacher training materials generated by the project
- To provide an online space where the Education Constituencies can:
 1. Ask questions about the Project's research.
 2. Make suggestions for the Project's research.
 3. Contribute their own findings and expertise on the subjects of the Project's research.
 4. Discuss the Project's findings, and related matters.

6.3.1. Website - Architecture

Several aspects of the website are unknowable at this point; most importantly, how much participation there will be from the Education Constituencies, and how much of the interim findings they would want presented. Therefore, the development of the website will be handled in stages with regular re-evaluation. The basic website will start with a page layout, look, and feel, which emphasizes clarity of presentation and flexibility to allow for development and expansion. The website will likely include a beta phase with a beta group enlisted to assist, consisting of volunteers from the Education Constituencies.

The elements of the information architecture currently envisioned are:

- **Home page** - A gateway page to the site as a whole, offering a brief overview of the nature of the site, and highlighting key features.
- **About** - This section would contain sub-pages providing information about the Project and its aims, its methodology, Krishnamurti and his work, etc.
- **Findings** - In this section, the research team will post interim findings. These will be presented by date, with links to view previous entries by month. Each entry will have a comments section where visitors may post responses, and a link to the forum. An RSS feed will be available.
- **Papers** - In this section, the research team will post any conference papers or articles they present. As there may not be any papers at the start of the project, it will be possible to disable this link until required, and make it visible at a later date when the section has content. As with “Findings,” visitors will be able to comment on each paper. An RSS feed will also be available.
- **Community** - This section will contain two key areas of interactivity:
 1. **Forum** - A forum where the Education Constituencies will be able to discuss the project and its findings, ask questions, and make proposals to the Research Team.
 2. **Wiki** - A place where the Education Constituencies can pool their own knowledge.
 3. **Blog** – Where the Research Team can post their own thoughts and experiences as the Project progresses. This will help create a sense of community between the Team and the Constituencies, and provide a place to announce any updates or events of note. Comments may be enabled if desired. RSS will be available.
- **FAQ** - A section of frequently asked questions.
- **Contact** - a contact form which will email messages to the Research Team. The form will include spam protection.
- **Search feature** - Each page on the core site will have a search box to help users find content. The wiki and the forum will also have their own search features.
- **Breadcrumb** - Each page on the core site will have a breadcrumb link above the content, to help users stay orientated.
- **Link blocks** - Each article will have a link block to encourage visitors to share them with others. This will contain buttons to create links to the article on bookmarking sites.
- **Sitemap** - Linked to at the bottom of every page. A sitemap is especially useful on large sites, and is also helpful to search engines.

- **Custom error page** - If visitors follow a broken link, this page will offer options to help them find what they were looking for.

7. Management Summary

The initial management team consists of the Director and two Research Assistants. There will eventually need be a third Research Assistant for the discourse analysis part of the project (Phase Three) as this involves a great deal of coding, and cross checking of coding.

From time to time there will need to be some “brainstorming” with outside experts both in the fields of research methodology and in Krishnamurti's work. Several good candidates for such intellectual collaboration are already known to the Director, and many more will be included when the Project goes on-stream and becomes known.

7.1. Personnel Plan

The Principal Researcher and Assistant Researcher #1 and #2 are evident. The Assistant Researcher #3's salary for the first year will be divided between two individuals. In the first part of the year, the salary will go to a web developer, since web presentation of the ongoing research (with opportunities for collaboration) is an important part of the strategy for impacting the intended beneficiaries of the Krishnamurti Education Research Project. Only when that web development is complete will the salary be directed to a third Assistant researcher. This has the added benefit of allowing the first two researchers to establish the fundamentals of the research methodology, procedures, and protocols and then bringing the third person on-stream.