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Why write about our educational practice, and why publish? These are rhetorical questions, because it seems plain to me that so many of us who are involved in the daily processes of providing higher education find immense intrinsic value in writing and reading about our own and each other's work, experiences, and professional wisdom. Through JADE at Keele, and likewise through my own institution's equivalent publication at Manchester Metropolitan (Learning and Teaching in Action: <http://www.celt.mmu.ac.uk/ltia/index.php>) we record, explore, evaluate and share our educational practices. I think it is worth looking beyond the intuitive rationale that has led both our institutions, and many others around the world, to publish our accounts in this way. After all, most of us do not necessarily have the Research Excellence Framework in mind when we set down an account of some innovation in curriculum design, or the difficulties of embedding the theme of sustainability, or how we understand the challenge of inclusion in the classroom, or whatever our theme may be.

As we get a clearer view over the next couple of years of the emerging 'Frankenstein's monster' that is the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF), we may well find that our writing serves our institutional purposes by reinforcing our official stories of quality and enhancement. However, we were writing about and sharing our practices before the TEF was conceived, and as individuals most of us are not (yet!) motivated to write as an explicit *measure* of teaching excellence. Having said that, of course, the observations of our peers are central to our efforts to enhance the value of the higher education that we provide. The articles we write for JADE or LTiA represent both our reflections on our professional experiences, frequently informed very explicitly by our engagement with our peers, and an invitation to those peers to respond to our reflections after the event. There is nothing more gratifying than a new connection that starts with an email from a colleague beginning "I just read your article in..."!

Reading the articles in JADE, and LTiA (and others: the scale of the free resource that is available from a relatively simple internet search is astounding), another common yet essential feature is obvious. Most of this writing is intrinsically scholarly, and yet I know from discussions with some of the colleagues who have written excellent pieces for our own journal that they don't necessarily think of themselves as particularly scholarly people! At the risk of stereotyping, a contributor from the Philosophy department, whose day job is to produce internationally significant research papers, may be steeped in a very clear disciplinary notion of scholarship. The next article, however, may be written by a part-time lecturer in Accountancy or Physiotherapy, whose professional identity has never been particularly troubled by the need for such definitions. However, I think it is useful to consider the idea of scholarship more closely, because it is what binds these very different contributions and contributors in a way that allows us to produce coherent, worthwhile publications like JADE and LTiA.

Ron Barnett informally defined 'being scholarly' as reading, writing, thinking and sharing on a regular basis<sup>1</sup>. I've referred to this as the 'scholarship of the everyday', and it's important to all of us. Producing a scholarly output may contribute to knowledge, certainly, but it also supports the development, or the 'becoming' of the person who engages with it in this way (Barnett, 2009; Dall'Alba and Barnacle, 2007). It contributes to the formation and coherence of professional identities and of academic communities (those groups of people with whom the scholarly 'sharing'

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<sup>1</sup> Paraphrased from notes taken at a presentation at Glasgow Caledonian University, December 2011.

takes place). Significantly, then, scholarship is about the development of scholars, and the development of scholarly communities. A publication like JADE represents a manifestation of such a community, and significantly, it doesn't simply replicate existing academic communities within Keele, its parent institution. The articles in the sixth edition, for example, include contributions from: the Management School; a multidisciplinary team from the George Washington University, the University of Pittsburgh and the American University of Beirut; the School of Medicine; the School of Life Sciences; the School of Computing and Mathematics; the Department of Student Learning; the Department of information Technology; the School of Psychology; the Language Learning Unit; and the School of Pharmacy. What brings them all together in a journal such as this is a sense of scholarship, and in publishing them side by side a new and very real community of readers and writers is formed and developed.

One of the most rewarding aspects of seeing a new issue take shape is the conversations that the process engenders. Behind every polished, published piece is a series of discussions and explorations about what matters – to the writer, the reader, and to the higher education community that provides the 'growing medium' for our scholarly produce. That gardening metaphor may have some traction if it allows us to see our scholarship and its products as a continuing, nurturing and rewarding cycle of community activity and production. Happy reading, and happy writing!

Barnett, R. 2009. Knowing and becoming in the higher education curriculum. *Studies in Higher Education*, 34:4, 429-440

Dall'Alba, G. and Barnacle, R. 2007. An ontological turn for higher education. *Studies in Higher Education*, 32:6, 679-691