



University
of Victoria

Graduate Studies

Notice of the Final Oral Examination
for the Degree of Master of Arts

of

JERRY FLEXER

B.A. (University of Victoria, 2016)
LL.B. (University of Manitoba, 1987)

**“Krishnamurti and the Dance of Dialogue: Instigating
Insight in Higher Education”**

Department of Pacific and Asian Studies

Wednesday, July 31, 2019
11:30 A.M.
Clearihue Building
Room B021

Supervisory Committee:

Dr. Martin Adam, Department of Pacific and Asian Studies, University of Victoria (Supervisor)
Dr. Michael Bodden, Department of Pacific and Asian Studies, UVic (Member)

External Examiner:

Dr. Hillary Rodrigues, Department of Religious Studies, University of Lethbridge

Chair of Oral Examination:

Dr. Tim Hopper, School of Exercise Science, Physical and Health Education, UVic

Abstract

This study examines the dialogic approach of the Indian-born educational philosopher Jiddu Krishnamurti (1895 – 1986), who had developed his own unique approach to dialogue with small groups. The research considered two questions. First, whether Krishnamurti's dialogic approach is one that could be described by specific strategies and techniques; and second, whether this approach and its strategies and techniques could be adapted, adopted, or emulated for use in higher education. In Chapter One of the paper, Krishnamurti's general philosophy and his specific philosophy of education are reviewed, with the aim of placing his dialogic approach within the context of his educational philosophy. The second chapter addresses the study's research questions by presenting a two-part analysis of a transcript of the one-hour dialogue that took place in California in 1981 between Krishnamurti and six American college students. First, even though he used no notes and no lesson plan, the thematic content analysis of this particular dialogue shows that relevant content had in fact been covered and learned, and that this content had emerged as a consequence of Krishnamurti's direction as a facilitator of learning. Second, specific strategies and techniques employed by Krishnamurti in this dialogue were identified and described, with specific examples as presented from the transcript.

The third chapter explores the context of Krishnamurti's approach within a recent developing trend in educational philosophy; a trend described as holistic and transformative, focused as it is on encouraging change in learners' thinking about concepts, rather than on transmitting knowledge from educators to learners. This exploration is done by describing several existing examples of holistic and transformative educational approaches. Some of these described existing approaches are expressly informed by Krishnamurti's educational philosophy, while others, though not expressly informed by Krishnamurti, are nonetheless consistent with his approach. In the final chapter, it is proposed that the analysis of the dialogue in Chapter Two and the comparative context analysis in Chapter Three show that Krishnamurti's dialogic approach both fits well within the general direction and nature of this existing and developing holistic and transformative trend in the philosophy of education, on the one hand, and is also uniquely distinguishable from existing approaches in meaningful ways, on the other. Chapter Four concludes, then, as a result, that Krishnamurti's approach can be adapted, emulated, or adopted for beneficial results in higher education.