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Editorial

Transformation

All holistic educators agree on the importance of nourishing the minds, opening the hearts, and enhancing the lives of students. We also know that people are profoundly shaped by larger contexts. As a result, we reject those aspects of our society that block personal wholeness, *humane* development, and mutually enhancing relationships. As holistic educators, we try to cultivate the respect, empathy, and compassion that make up what Bill Bigelow and Linda Christensen (1994) call the "social imagination." We take the causes and effects of oppressive social forces seriously, but these concerns are usually not central to our teaching efforts.

Within holistic education, however, there are those who make issues of social dominance, exclusion, and injustice central to their work. These educators believe that what Nel Noddings (1992) terms "the challenge to care" includes the challenge of "caring in an unjust society" (see book review). As part of their efforts to promote caring modes of being and relating, these educators encourage students to identify oppressive norms and relationships, to oppose unjust practices, and to work for a more equitable society. For these holistic educators, challenging injustice and fostering caring relationships are not opposed to one another. Rather, they are both equally important parts of what Koegel calls "the arts of partnership" — the social competencies needed to create relationships and institutions based on what Riane Eisler and David Loye (1990) refer to as "the partnership way." Nearly all of the authors in this special issue reflect this approach.

The papers in this issue invite holistic educators to help students face the challenge of living in a world that is often unjust, cruel, and violent. With few exceptions, the authors examine what Peggy McIntosh calls "the inner and outer politics of systemic oppression." Most of the authors analyze hierarchical social contexts that made them or others feel silenced, inadequate, and afraid. Yet rather than being depressing, these articles show how painful feelings and unjust relationships can become a rich source of personal growth and social change — if we have the courage to face them. By describing how we can, as Victoria Muñoz notes, transform *tripas* into *corazones* (pain into heart), the papers inspire people to challenge harmful practices and to create more equitable alternatives. Thus, what began as an invitation to share transformative moments became a collective text that provides maps for healing and models of transformation.

Given the authors' concern about social forces that diminish *humane* development, it makes sense that they focus on sexism, heterosexism, classism, and racism. Yet their emphasis on the damage caused by different forms of social dominance raises a question that is as important to ask as it is difficult to answer: Why is this commitment to understanding and challenging oppressive social forces not more central to the field of holistic education?

Consider the following example. Homophobia is as widespread as it is damaging. It exists in all grades levels. It is devastating to the millions of young people experiencing homosexual feelings or having gay and lesbian parents. And it pressures *all* children to conform to rigid sex-role behaviors (Gordon 1994). Yet Ken Sinclair is not alone when he notes, although "I never thought twice about calling someone a 'fag,' a 'homo,' a 'queer' or a 'pussy,' none of my teachers ever discussed homophobia until I was in college."

Why, then, do holistic educators not write about homophobia? What does this silence reveal about the social vision that shapes how and what we teach? Likewise, given the immensely destructive effects of sexism, racism, and classism, why do holistic educators not write more about such destructive patterns of being and relate them to the unjust structures they depend on? It is no secret that most school settings provide little room and even less support to explore the relation between privilege and oppression, power and powerless-

ness. Nevertheless, these aspects of students' lives are far too important to be left out of the holistic picture.

The articles in this issue remind us how hard it is to acknowledge that social injustice, social dominance, and oppression are built into our society. They also urge holistic educators to move these concerns toward the center of our work and our writings. Can holistic education be fully holistic if we do any less?

— Rob Koegel
in partnership with
Diana M. Feige

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A Word From the Editor

This issue began many, many months ago with the idea that our readers would like to read more about specific holistic educational initiatives. The goal was to portray the transformative power of holistic principles as well as the struggles involved in bringing them to life. Diana Feige and Rob Koegel, working with a wide variety of gifted educators, have achieved that goal and, in so doing, have brought greater clarity to the meaning of holistic education itself.

In a related matter, this issue is the last for which Diana will serve as the Associate Editor. Happily, she will continue to serve on our Editorial Board. I want to take this opportunity to thank Diana for her wisdom, grace, humor, and friendship. She is a holistic colleague of the highest order and all of us have been the beneficiaries of her efforts. I am indebted to her and know that she will continue to bring warmth and light wherever her path takes her.

— Jeffrey Kane

Conditioning

Wen Yen

when we were young
you read us stories
that began with
Once upon a time...
you dressed us like all the other children
and told us to join them in their games

when we were old enough for school
teacher gave us many colors of paint
told us to paint whatever we wanted
we liked to paint and painted until
The colors ran in muddy streaks
but teacher smiled
and told us it was pretty

teacher smiled more and her eyes sparkled
at the painting of the house and tree
the next day we painted a house and tree with
No streaks
teacher noticed and her eyes sparkled for us
it was beautiful she said
so we kept painting that same picture

we outgrew paints and crayons
now we are supposed to use words
to paint that picture
but now you could give us big
Angry red marks
on what you didn't like
so we learned to mold our work
to fit your rules your game

you told us
read this book write this way
we did
Exactly what you expected
because you made the rules
you gave out the grades
it was safe
To do what you wanted
be like everyone else

Would you try to be different?

how can you
Be upside down
from what you have lived breathed
and learned
all your life

It is very hard.

everyone likes to think of themselves as special
like those people dressed in black
drinking espresso in dark smoky cafes
You know who you are
you could be more different if you'd just
act normal
your ideas of individuality
are also being thought by so many other people
I can't count
how many people have tried to blend in
for far too long
they don't know how to stand alone
maybe they've forgotten

conditioning
has made them
Follow
straight lines painted on one road
perhaps it is time to go back
learn our lessons again
so that when facts are pushed in
imagination is not shoved out
teach us

Don't be afraid.

of red marks and bad grades
it is not a crime to rebel against convention
implore us to think our own thoughts
inspire us
Make us believe
our thoughts are not silly worthless wisps of trash
if you cannot teach us this

We can discover ourselves.

let wonder breathe
seeing the world with fresh eyes
sifting through the debris
finding hidden beneath useless facts
forgotten
our many selves

Imagine.

Wen Yen is a third-year student at Columbia Law School and a graduate of Pomona College.

Oppression and Education

The Need for Edgework

Rob Koegel

"I have slowly come to see that domination takes a steep toll. At first, I could only see how it hurts those who are dominated. I now realize that it hurts those who dominate as well."

During a class discussion about male privilege, an undergraduate sociology student admits, "There's no way I'd give up the power I have as a male. Why shouldn't I keep the privileges I have, even if it hurts others? If we're more equal, I'll lose power. What else will I lose? If things are fairer, who will I be and how will I live?"

As our class explores culturally conditioned ways of dealing with insecurity, a white student says, "I just realized why one of my friends is so prejudiced; she needs to be better than others and putting down blacks and Latinos makes her feel superior. She doesn't know how to live with herself, is uncomfortable treating others as equals, and is too afraid to learn how."

A young woman stands before our class on multiculturalism and says: "I want you to know that I'm bisexual. I've never told this to a group before and never thought I would. But this course convinced me that I had to speak out against oppression. I couldn't live with myself if I remained silent."[1]

When we were children and students, most of us did not have the chance to explore the causes and effects of oppression. Will we also deny our students this opportunity, or can we provide the safety and support that children as well as adults need to move into risky terrain? Examining how we accept that which harms us or how we benefit at the expense of others makes people feel vulnerable. As a result, we often stay in our comfort zones and do not challenge unjust norms, relationships, and institutions. It is hard to move toward what I call the "edge" of our experience, toward the scary space where our acceptance of the status quo ends and our willingness to question ourselves and to confront others begins. Our resistance to stepping to the "edge" of our psychic and social circle of comfort therefore makes sense: when we feel that our emotional security, social status, or material comfort is threatened, we fear that we are losing control and will be hurt. While we may wish that our edges do not exist — and may not even see them — we cannot eliminate our edges. And we have good cause to identify, to work with, and to transform them. What

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Daniel Kirkpatrick (1993) calls "edgework" is an indispensable source of personal learning, growth, and integrity. Equally important, since edgework helps us to challenge unjust group norms and unfair social practices, it plays a crucial role in the creation of a more equitable society.[2]

This paper will examine the edgework needed to oppose interlocking forms of *social dominance* (such as racism, sexism, heterosexism, and classism). Despite important differences, these inequitable social systems share two similarities: they provide the dominant group with more power, resources, and status at the expense of less institutionally powerful groups, and they foster patterns of behavior that lead people to be *both* dominant *and* subordinate.

Since they systematically injure people, all forms of institutionalized injustice must be challenged. We cannot eliminate oppressive structures, however, unless we *also* alter the destructive modes of being and relating these unjust structures promote. To do so, we need to transform those parts of the oppressor that are "planted deep within each of us, and which only know the oppressors' tactics, the oppressors' relationships" (Lorde 1984, 123). Yet it is hard to see how we use the "oppressors' tactics" and painful to admit that we may impose the "oppressors' relationships." Not surprisingly, our actions can support inequitable social patterns — even if, and especially when, we are not aware of how we do so. Therefore, while good intentions are important, they are not enough. It is crucial to identify, to challenge, and to transform oppressive dynamics ... on a personal *and* an institutional level.

This paper will describe a student's efforts to forego dominance, to resist injustice, and to create more equitable relations. There are several reasons that I use Gregory's story to explore the need for liberatory edgework. First, it shows how *we* may unknowingly perpetuate oppressive social patterns that hurt others and diminish ourselves. Second, Gregory's experiences underscore the difficulties, the possibilities, and the rewards of personal transformation. Third, my ongoing relationship with Gregory allowed him to give me feedback on this paper and to keep me informed about his latest efforts to live his vision.[3] Finally, by raising charged questions about racism, sexism, etc., Gregory pushed me to grapple with my identity, my experiences, and my impact as a white, male, heterosexual, middle-class educator. Hence, although this paper focuses on Gregory's journey, it reflects what I have learned and points to issues that I am still wrestling with.

Gregory's journey

Gregory knew that it was going to be hard to move from Trinidad to the U.S at the age of 14. However, the move was far more difficult than he imagined. Now a college student, he wrote, "I felt like many white people saw nothing but my black skin and heard nothing but my Caribbean accent. It really hurts when people don't respond to who you are, what you say, and how you behave." Over time, Gregory *selectively* eliminated his accent. "But I couldn't change the color of my skin. I felt as though my humanity was being violated and my sense of self was being attacked."[4] Gregory's initial shock soon turned into anger. As his pain from racism grew, so did his intolerance of it. Not surprisingly, white students who said that racism no longer exists enraged Gregory: "How can they possibly not see what I daily encounter? I know what they're doing," he told me after class. "They're trying to hide how our racist society benefits whites."[5] Gregory had little empathy and even less respect for white students who see racism but do not challenge it. "Whites have an obligation to confront attitudes and behaviors that support racism whenever and wherever they occur," he insists.

Two days later, these words came back to haunt him. As our first discussion about the relational, cultural, and institutional roots of sexism drew to a close,[6] I asked the males "Have you ever been around males who 'dissed' women by their words or actions." A young woman yelled out, "Get real. All of them have, and often." The males agreed, though only after some qualifications and much resistance. When I asked "How many of you interrupt or challenge sexism?" it soon became clear that few males do. After noting the differences between sexism and racism, I left the class with a final question: "Do you see any parallel between your refusal and/or inability to challenge sexism and how many whites respond to racism?" As soon as the class ended, Gregory rushed over to me and said, "We gotta talk. I'll phone you this weekend."

Gregory called two days later: "I'm a hypocrite," he said. "I've been mad at the white students in our class, busting their chops for what they don't see and won't do about racism. Yet, I'm no different than they are. Our last class showed me that I've been blind to sexism, that I took it for granted and didn't

question it at all. Worse yet, this realization didn't make any difference: When some of my friends 'dissed' women Friday night, I didn't say or do a thing." "Why not?" I asked. "I was afraid they would laugh at me. And I'm not sure I'll be able to act any differently the next time."

As a member of a group that our society subordinates and devalues, Gregory had no difficulty seeing how our society converts skin color into a source of "unearned advantages" for whites by oppressing people of color (McIntosh 1988). He easily identified whites' complicity with racial injustice, and he condemned whites for such acts, even when they did so unknowingly. Yet, as a member of a dominant group — in this case, males — Gregory did not (initially) perceive the inequitable nature of gender relations. Nor did Gregory see how he supports demeaning gender relations by his words, his deeds, and his refusal to challenge sexist behaviors. Even when Gregory became aware of sexist dynamics, he did not actively oppose them. Were Gregory's attitudes toward women and his behavior with his friends unusual? I think not.

Members of dominant groups rarely question their relations with subordinate groups (Young 1990). Rather, as Jean Baker Miller (1976) notes, since the dominant group "legitimizes the unequal relationship" by weaving it into society's general cultural outlook, it

> becomes "normal" to treat others destructively and to derogate them, to obscure the truth of what you are doing, by creating false explanations, and to oppose actions toward equality. In short, if one's identification is with the dominant group, it is "normal" to continue in this pattern. Even though most of us do not like to think of ourselves as either believing in, or engaging in, such domination, it is, in fact, difficult for a member of a dominant group to do otherwise. But to keep on doing these things, one need only behave "normally." (p. 8)

From this point of view, Gregory was merely acting "normally" in a male-dominated society.[7] Indeed, if Miller is correct, most males often accept, reinforce, and/or impose male dominance ... even when we don't intend to. I have — and far more often than I care to admit. I plan to write an article about a workshop experience where I reproduced male dominance by monopolizing our discussions. Even thinking about describing how I undermine gender equity makes me feel vulnerable. Likewise, I find it hard to admit how I support, accept, and overlook other forms of dominance such as heterosexism or racism. Since it is painful to acknowledge our complicity with oppressive dynamics and tempting to deny it, I suspect that many members of dominant groups are also reluctant to engage in this crucial form of edgework.[8] Yet as an educator, I do my best to model edgework and to develop a classroom climate that invites students to practice it.

Despite important differences, inequitable social systems share two similarities: they provide the dominant group with more power, resources, and status at the expense of less institutionally powerful groups, and they foster patterns of behavior that lead people to be both dominant and subordinate.

If Gregory was unnerved when he realized that he had unknowingly accepted sexist dynamics, he was appalled by his subsequent inability to challenge the sexist repartee that is "normal" for much of male culture. Again and again, Gregory kept asking, "How can I live with myself? And what can I do?" Although these new insights disturbed Gregory and made him feel vulnerable, they also provided a rich opening for personal transformation. Since learning about social dominance often raises charged issues, educators need to be aware of, and responsive to, the emotional dimensions of this process.

Like most educators, I am not trained as a therapist and sometimes feel ineffective when responding to the emotional turmoil of students. Nevertheless, I believe there are compelling reasons for educators to support students as they struggle with the pain, fear, anger, and shame that may be the cost of their survival. First, many students sorely need what Alice Miller (1988) calls "enlightened witnesses": adults who champion their efforts to come to terms with that which has wounded them or leads them to harm others. By providing what Judith Jordan (1990, 3) calls relational "en-couragement," this life-affirming support nourishes students' capacity to engage in edgework.[9] Second, responding to students' childhood injuries can encourage educators to address *our* own powerlessness, to heal *our* own wounds, and to recover *our* own possibilities (Koegel 1993).

I wanted this course on multiculturalism to foster the analytical skills, relational supports, and social activism that liberatory edgework requires. Needless to say, I was not surprised when the course only partly fulfilled these rather ambitious goals. Nevertheless, we did grapple with several key concerns. For example, we explored how systems of domination damage everyone, though in different ways (McIntosh 1988; Yeskel 1995). We used Riane Eisler's (1987, 1995) analysis of the partnership model of interaction to examine the patterns found in more mutual, caring, and equitable social relations. Students wrote about their responses to the domination and subordination they themselves experienced and/or witnessed. In ongoing journal entries that focused on "the textbooks of their own lives" (Style 1988), students analyzed the efficacy of their actions and imagined how they (and others) might have responded more effectively. Students also described how more egalitarian relations felt, examined what made these mutual interactions possible, and explored how this partnership-oriented mode of relating could be extended.[10] Students also designed a final project that would promote justice in an area of deeply felt concern. Time and again, we kept on returning to two crucial issues: namely, how can we resist injustice and why a more equitable society requires institutional transformation as well as personal change.

This class was by no means as smooth or as successful as I have made it sound. For instance, many students justified sexism and heterosexism. Similarly, many students celebrated our class-based society, did not want to explore its systemic problems, and rejected more equitable alternatives. In addition, our discussions on racism were often confrontational and left nearly everyone (myself included) feeling angry, tense, and/or vulnerable.[11]

Nevertheless, some students did experience breakthroughs over the course of the semester, though not without much conflict and even more resistance. I was their teacher, but several students taught each other — and me — a great deal about courage, healing, and transformation. Gregory was one such student.

Years of feeling inferior (in one way or another) to parents, teachers, male friends, adults, and whites convinced Gregory that life only offers two choices: develop the power needed to dominate others, or submit and become a loser. Gregory's espousal of this view is by no means unusual. Rather, since this belief is embedded in our culture and supported by our institutions, it is quite popular (Kreisberg 1992). Yet, as Gregory noted, his experience as a black male trying to survive in a hostile white culture reinforced this adversarial view: "I learned that violence, or the threat of it, can get you where you need to be, that being rough and mean to people is the best way of gaining their respect." Equating weakness with subordination and victimization, Gregory worked hard to become physically, intellectually, and socially powerful. By the time he entered college, Gregory had mastered karate and become adept at intimidating others: "I have been actively learning the skills of domination for the last ten years. By constantly honing my skill, I have become an expert." This culturally valued "expertise" gave Gregory what he long yearned for: "I became superior to most of the people that I envied for so long." Gregory found it hard to imagine that he could be whole unless he is "superior to" others (Kohn 1986). He is not alone.

Every society provides different mechanisms for people to deal with pain, fear, and insecurity. The *dominator logic* generated by our institutions and our culture trains us "to pass on our hurt and pain to those around us. We learn how to move out of powerlessness by relating to people who are less powerful" (Kivel 1992, 82). Despite the biblical injunction to "turn the other cheek," our culture makes Americans more likely to turn oppression *from* others into oppression *of* others. Despite our reputation for egalitarian ideals, our society fosters emotional and behavioral patterns that perpetuate interlocking forms of domination.[12] *All* of us are exposed to these patterns and, to varying degrees, internalize and reproduce them. Though he was initially not aware of it — after all, who is? — this is precisely what Gregory had learned and practiced.

By accepting and imposing sexism and heterosexism, Gregory unintentionally reinforced the racial injustices he despised. Simply put, distinct forms of social dominance support one another.[13] He was also invested in a force-backed, fear-based pattern of relating that enforces "privilege systems" (McIntosh 1988) and justifies a "dominator model" of social organization (Eisler 1987, 1995). This "dominator" model of interaction systematically bolsters *all* forms of social dominance by promoting two related dynamics. First, it fosters social arrangements that automatically convert social difference into dominance and subordination (Koegel 1995). Second, it supports emotional, cognitive, and behavioral pat-

terns based on what Gregory Bateson calls "dominance-submission." Rather than leading people to be solely dominant *or* subordinate, this complex pattern of feeling, thought, and perception prepares people to be *both*. As Bateson (1972) notes, "If we know that an individual is trained in overt expression of one half of one of these patterns, e.g., dominance behavior, we can predict that the seeds of the other half — submission — are simultaneously sown in his [sic] personality" (p. 92). In this sense, racism, sexism, heterosexism, and classism are mutually reinforcing parts of a larger pattern of social dominance, what Gregory Bateson (1972) calls "the pattern that connects" (p. 8).[14]

Once Gregory sensed that his relation toward sexism is the same as many whites' relations to racism, he had to make a crucial choice: either deny and justify this haunting contradiction or learn from this truth, as painful and threatening as it may be. Gregory chose the latter, though not without much ambivalence and even more fear — both of which he was able to express to me after class.

Rather than dismissing his fear of being ridiculed by other males, I invited Gregory to honor the power of fear, to examine its social-psychological roots, and to analyze its societal function.[15] We both talked openly about the internal and external pressures to prove our manhood and what I call "the wounds of masculinity" (Koegel 1994). With my encouragement, Gregory began the next class by describing his complicity with sexist dynamics, his fear of challenging his friends, and his enhanced understanding of, and empathy for, white students. Gregory was tempted to run from the intense vulnerability that engulfed him. But he did not. Instead, Gregory embraced his fears, stayed with his pain, and used these potentially incapacitating emotions as a pathway to growth. Gregory not only changed; he also acted in a way that encouraged others to question their attitudes, to be vulnerable, and to grow. The class applauded the openness and courage that enabled Gregory to take such a significant step. This step was the first of many.

Like many other educators, I fear that if I do not *invite* students to act on their new learning, I unwittingly teach them that it is their responsibility to uncover injustice rather than to do something about it.[16] With my support, Gregory did more than engage in edgework in class and in his journal. Gregory interviewed his friends about sexism. Though he was troubled by their resistance and hurt by their teasing, Gregory also learned much from this experience. He attended and spoke with great integrity in workshops I conducted with other students. With a few classmates, Gregory led a dormitory workshop that explored the relationship between racism, sexism, and domination — and once again grappled with the painful realization that change occurs much slower than he assumed it would.

There were other steps in Gregory's journey that upset him. At the beginning of the semester, a white student criticized black militancy for needlessly alienating whites. Many African-American students became enraged at the suggestion that they cause their own problems. For the next few classes, we struggled to build a safe space and to work through some of the anger. And we did agree on certain rules of behavior — or so I thought. Several weeks later, as we explored the difference between constructive and destructive conflict, Gregory turned to Jason and said, "I wanted to follow you out of class and kick your ass when you said 'blacks are biting the hands that feed you.'" "I'm ready whenever you are," Jason said in a voice that was vulnerable but challenging. Gregory appeared shocked and misunderstood — which he was, for his aim was not intimidation but reconciliation. Jason, however, felt Gregory was threatening him and responded in kind. Many white students looked as though their worst fears had been confirmed. All students were disturbed. So was I.

My mind knew what my heart feared: that I must help the class work with the anger and the threat of violence that I found deeply unsettling. I spoke with Gregory and Jason after class — first separately and then together. As a class, we explored how misunderstandings can fuel rage as well as the threat of violence. Although we discussed the need for a space where safety exists and respect prevails, this is hard to establish when many students are used to settling disputes by physical force and/or verbal putdowns. Once again, neither my students nor I could grow unless we stepped outside our comfort zones. And many but not all of us engage in edgework, though not without some fear, much effort, and highly uneven results.[17]

As so often occurs, I am painfully aware of my limitations and struggle with my edges. When I feel that it is helpful, I share my struggles with students in or outside of class. As William Kirkpatrick notes, "The edge forms a basic human link between teacher

and student, because we all encounter edges in our process of becoming ourselves" (1993, 123).

For more than a year, Gregory has been engaging in the painful but liberating process that Michael Kaufman calls "cracking the armor" (1993). Like many males, Gregory developed character "armor" to help him dominate rather than be dominated (Koegel 1994). Unlike most males, Gregory realized "how the dominator in us can hurt, if not destroy, the relations we have or want to develop." Gregory found himself resenting and resisting this new-found insight: "A certain part of me hates what I now know about domination. It was far easier to dominate when I was not aware of or disturbed by it. I now become troubled by some of my behaviors that I used to take pride in." Yet, despite his fear that a more humane stance would make him vulnerable to being victimized, Gregory's commitment to moving away from domination grew over time: "I have slowly come to see," he wrote in his final journal entry, "that domination takes a steep toll. At first, I could only see how it hurts those who are dominated. I now realize that it hurts those who dominate as well. I'm not willing to pay the price."

There are many ways that educators can nourish humane development, foster caring relations, and champion social justice. Educators can champion students' highest potentials is by inviting them to grapple with oppressive social forces and to foster more humane alternatives, to engage in personal change, and to push for institutional transformation.

Yet, once the semester ends, Gregory found that his struggle to continue his "edgework" became much harder: "It feels as though there's nothing in my life that's helping me to continue what I started," Gregory told me in a recent discussion. "When I was taking your class, I had a space where I could talk about issues that I rarely discuss anywhere else, a space where I got a lot of respect and support for thinking and acting differently than I had ever done before. I'm still questioning things and still want to change. But it's much more difficult to do now ... and I haven't changed as much as I hoped to. Sometimes I feel stuck." Without ongoing support, only so much transformation can occur in a one-semester class. This is why relational encouragement and what Sharon Welch (1985) calls "communities of resistance and solidarity" consistently play such a decisive role in both individual and societal change.

Conclusion

In an essay about dominance and subordination called "A Parable: The Ups and Downs," Robert Terry notes that "we're all both ups and downs" (1993, 61). As members of subordinate groups, *downs* tend to share similar experiences. We are routinely coerced, hurt, and dehumanized by *ups* in dominant groups. We hate the injustices, the violations, and the damage we suffer from. We see how the humanity of the *ups* is diminished and the quality of their lives is deformed. Equally important, our efforts to promote equity and to heal our wounds are usually thwarted by the *ups*, the institutions that enforce their dominance, and the prevailing culture that justifies the subordination of *downs* (Koegel 1995).

Like Terry, I used to believe that "when downs became ups they would carry over their insight from their downness to their upness." However, since our society systematically supports and justifies the dominance of *ups*, most Americans are often "smart down dumb up" (Terry 1993, 61). But most does not mean all, and often does not mean always. In fact, more Americans than ever before are realizing three key points: First, that despite their differences, inequitable social relations (such as racism and sexism) share an underlying social pattern based on force, fear, and oppression — that is, they are mutually reinforcing; second, that these unjust relations undermine all of our lives; and third, that there are far more humane, equitable, democratic, and life-affirming alternatives (Eisler and Koegel 1996).

There is, of course, no one best way of educating about the costs of domination, the benefits of partnership, and the need for personal edgework as well as structural transformation. On the contrary, there are many ways that educators can nourish *humane* development, foster caring relations, and champion social justice. One way that educators can champion

students' highest potentials is by inviting them to grapple with oppressive social forces and to foster more humane alternatives, to engage in personal change and to push for institutional transformation. This entails liberating edgework for them — and for us. Those of us who engage in this work always find it challenging and often find it painful. Yet liberatory edgework is also inherently rewarding — indeed, I believe that it makes an invaluable difference for our students, ourselves, and the world we live in. Making this difference in our and others' lives is an indispensable part of the personal growth and societal transformation that we so desperately need.

Notes

1. These discussions took place in undergraduate sociology courses that I teach at SUNY Farmingdale.

2. While I draw on Kirkpatrick's concept of edgework, I use it quite differently. While Kirkpatrick discusses the personal challenge of moving outside our comfort zones, I explore the difficulty of confronting how we accept and/or impose social dominance. For a discussion of why we cannot grow unless we take some risks, see David Viscott's *Risking* (1977) and Susan Jeffers's *Feel the Fear and Do It Anyway* (1987). For a politicized approach to edgework, see bell hooks *Sisters of the Yam: Black Women and Self-Recovery* (1993).

3. I asked for and received Gregory's permission to write about him before I began this article. His comments on earlier versions of this paper led me to revise my interpretations when they differed from his. Most of the quotes come from the journal that he, like all students, kept for this course. Like all other student assignments, these journals are confidential. I have also changed Gregory's name to protect his anonymity.

4. As Barry Adam has shown in *The Survival of Domination: Inferiorization and Everyday Life* (1978), these feelings are not unusual. Subordinate groups must deal with oppressive social forces that breed vulnerability, despair, outrage, and a sense of inadequacy.

5. Many whites insist that since they are not prejudiced, they neither support racism nor gain from it. This individualistic analysis of racism ignores three crucial points: First, that institutional racism benefits all whites — even those who are not prejudiced — at the expense of people of color. Second, that the institutionalization of racism is not caused by prejudice and exists independent of individual prejudice. Third, few whites are aware of institutional racism and even less actively oppose it. For a detailed discussion of the crucial differences between institutionalized racism and individual prejudices as well as the often invisible nature of "white privilege," see Kivel (1995), McIntosh (1988), and Wellman (1993).

6. Our first reading about sexism was Peggy Orenstein's (1994) *Schoolgirls: Young Women, Self-Esteem, and the Confidence Gap*. We then read Michael Kaufman's (1993) *Cracking the Armor: Power, Pain, and the Lives of Men* and Rob Koegel's (1994) "Healing the Wounds of Masculinity: A Crucial Role for Educators." Finally, we saw the video on women and advertising "Still Killing Us Softly" (this can be rented or purchased by calling 617-354-3677).

7. Many people — women as well as men — insist that the women's movement has succeeded and that gender equity now exists in the U.S. I agree that much progress has occurred in the last few decades. However, I also believe that much of that which reproduces male dominance has not changed. For example, major institutions of power are still primarily occupied and controlled by men. The instrumental masculine world is still valued far more than the nurturing tasks and expressive traits society considers feminine. And violence against women (rape, battering, etc.) still occurs with terrifying regularity. Furthermore, while many people are convinced that gender equity is simply a matter of time, the ongoing "backlash" (Faludi 1991) of a powerful, well-organized reactionary movement makes me less confident. In this sense, we cannot assume that progress will automatically take place. Rather, if progress occurs, it will be the result of a collective struggle for institutional change. Simply put, personal change is important, but it is not enough. We need institutional change as well.

8. For a suggestive discussion of male resistance to acknowledging, challenging, and eliminating sexism, see Charles Derry's "Male Bashing" (1996). For a brilliant analysis of white resistance to confronting racism, see Peggy McIntosh's (1988) "White Privilege and Male Privilege: A Personal Account of Coming to See Correspondences Through Work in Women's Studies." For an exploration of heterosexual resistance to addressing homophobia, see Suzanne Pharr's (1988) *Homophobia: A Weapon of Sexism*. For a detailed discussion of the widespread resistance to confronting classism in our society, see Sam Pizzigati's *The Maximum Wage: A Prescription for Revitalizing America by Taxing the Very Rich* (1992). For information about the newsletter *Too Much: A Quarterly Commentary on Capping Excessive Income and Wealth* (which is edited by Pizzigati), call 800-316-2739.

9. As Judith Jordan notes, "courage is ordinarily depicted as a characteristic of the lone, separate person who defies vulnerability and fear." By emphasizing the "contextual, relational nature of courage," Jordan invites us to foster relationships that nourish what she calls "courage in connection" (1990, 1). For a rich collection of essays that further develop this "relational model," see *Women's Growth in Connection: Writings from the Stone Center* (Jordan, Kaplan, Miller, Stiver, and Surrey 1991).

10. For a detailed historical analysis of partnership-oriented societies, see Eisler (1987, 1995). For several applications to education, see Koegel (1994, 1995, forthcoming).

11. As Bill Bigelow notes, "those of us who write about classroom practice need to get much better at not merely describing our goals and successes, but also the specific forms of student resistance we encounter, and how we deal with those resistances." Otherwise, the descriptions of "ideal classrooms that we sometimes create in our writing can become very disempowering when encountered by others" (personal communication). It is far easier to describe our "successes" than the resistance we encounter and/or generate as well as the mistakes we make. Likewise, it is quite hard to find a balance, a middle ground.

12. The complexity of this crucial issue deserves fuller exposition than I can provide here. Many theorists (myself included) have noted that males are taught that sexuality, power, and male identity are connected to imposing one's will and inflicting pain on others (Koegel 1994). Females, in sharp contrast, are encouraged to take care of others. These gender-related distinctions, however, are woven into a social tapestry that has many intertwined strands. For example, Alice Miller (1988) describes how children's repressed pain can later lead them to control and dominate their children. Her work suggests that this dynamic occurs with fathers *and* mothers. Seth Kreisberg (1992) shows how educators who grow up amid a culture of domination often exert coercive, destructive "power-over" their students (regardless of their gender). bell hooks (1993) shows how the ongoing violations imposed by racism can lead black mothers to dominate their children. For further development of the sources and dynamics of what I call "dominator intelligence," see "Partnership Intelligence and Dominator Intelligence: Their Social Roots, Patterns, and Consequences" (Koegel forthcoming).

13. Space limitations prevent me from exploring the mutually supportive modes of being and relating that oppressive systems generate. However, the following definitions from Audre Lorde (1984) capture the underlying dynamic that all forms of social dominance both share and reinforce: "Racism, the belief in the inherent superiority of one race over all others and thereby the right to dominance. Sexism, the belief in the inherent superiority of one sex over the other and thereby the right to dominance. Ageism. Heterosexism. Elitism. Classism" (p. 115).

14. For works that analyze destructive "patterns of power," explore ways of "breaking old patterns, weaving new ties," and provide practical tools for developing organizational contexts that are mutual, inclusive, and collaborative, see Margo Adair and Sharon Howell (1988, 1990) and Adair (1993). These pamphlets can be obtained by calling (800) 99-TOOLS. For a provocative discussion of how the structure of this society supports a sadomasochistic social psychology, see Lynn Chancer's *Sadomasochism in Everyday Life: The Dynamics of Power and Powerlessness* (1992).

15. In a recent discussion, Harry Levine suggested that this emphasis on the social determinants of our feelings, thoughts, and behaviors can offer what he calls "sociological therapy."

16. For a moving description of one educator's efforts to turn his history classes in an Oregon public high school into what he calls "communities of resistance and courage, hope, and possibilities," see Bill Bigelow's "Talking Back to Columbus: Teaching for Justice and Hope" (1991, 38). See also the excellent special issue of *Rethinking Schools* called *Rethinking Our Classrooms: Teaching for Equity and Justice* (1994). *Rethinking Schools* consistently publishes articles that are both accessible and insightful. For information, call (414) 964-9646.

17. Space limitations prevent me from fully developing the complexity of the history that led up to this incident and the complex responses it provoked.

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How I Became Aware of My Homophobia And Why I Began to Change

Ken Sinclair

The first step in removing prejudice is to recognize the power of social conditioning.

There is no doubt in my mind that heterosexism is where I most needed to begin my edgework. In the past, I have often engaged in this type of social dominance. I never thought twice about calling someone a "fag," a "homo," a "queer," or a "pussy." I not only disliked the way of life that gays and lesbians led; I also felt that they didn't even have the right to be homosexual. Until recently, everything about it seemed to bother me — and I didn't even know why. No homosexual has ever done anything to me that should have bothered me at all.

I'm still amazed that conditioning could play such a major role in my life that I disliked a whole group of people and had no idea why. As I grew up, the whole world seemed to be against gays: my family, my religion, television, my friends ... everything. Unable to see past my own culturally induced hang-ups, I was unable to see that they were just people.

I barely realized how deep these feelings ran until I took Introduction to Sociology with Rob Koegel two years ago. We did not spend much time exploring homosexuality in that course, but the one class discussion we had really bothered me — though I soon forgot about it when class was over. In the second sociology course I took with Koegel, Social Issues and Institutions, we discussed sexual orientation at length. During our heated discussions, many people spoke openly about their views and their feelings. Being exposed to this type of give-and-take pushed me to rethink some of my long-held assumptions and beliefs. I suspect that I was more open to these discussions in class because I was gradually finding out, much to my surprise, that some people I knew were gay.

We had many discussions about homosexuality that semester. When I later thought about some of the things that I said in Koegel's class, I realized that I strongly disagreed with some of my own feelings and statements. I was confused and my mind was in turmoil. I

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often felt like a hypocrite for engaging in heterosexism while opposing domination in other forms. Looking back, I can see that I felt very conflicted. But at that time, all I knew was that I felt threatened. Maybe this is why I tried to hide behind the cloak of religion, of decency, and the argument that even animals do not engage in homosexual behavior. As time went by, however, I began to question my views and to change them. Listening to other students' stories helped me see that people are just people — regardless of their sexual orientation. This was a major insight for me, one that I initially fought against, but eventually accepted.

Since that time I have done much of what Koegel would consider "edgework." All of this work was internal at first. But having a safe space to talk about these charged issues in his classroom helped me to engage in edgework. Over time, my feelings, my thoughts, and my responses to homosexuality have truly changed. Today I even have a few gay friends who, I am proud to say, were not afraid to tell me that they are gay after they saw me stop making derogatory statements about people with alternate sexual lifestyles. When they saw me change, these friends felt safe enough to reveal a part of themselves that, until then, they knew I would reject. On some deep level, I also see that I have changed and it has been for the better: I now realize that to enjoy my life I have to accept everything for what it is rather than impose my ideas of what is right on others.

Koegel's classes helped me see the need for this edgework. Without them, I doubt if I would have changed. I would not have seen the need to change, let alone found a way to change because everyone around me always seemed to agree with the prejudices I had learned from what educators call "the societal curriculum" (my family, my schooling, the media, religion).

Koegel asked us to think about what enabled us to engage in edgework. For me, the answer is quite simple: my conscience pushed me to change. More often than not, I found myself fighting and resisting what we discussed in class. I would say something that I believed, but then do the exact opposite. For example, when I was in class I would argue that it was wrong to make fun of the sexual orientation of other people — and I really believed this. Yet when I was with my friends, I would engage in the very actions that I had condemned in class. My beliefs were in the process of changing. And when I was in a supportive environment such as class, I could act differently. However, despite my desire to act differently, when I was at home or with my friends, I was unable to "walk my talk." Even though my beliefs had changed, there was still a lot of pressure to act as I had before — and the pressure was more than I could deal with. My awareness of this contradiction — and my growing discomfort with it — marked the beginning of my edgework.

At some point, I came to a crucial realization: that I had been systematically conditioned to think and relate in ways that I did not want to, and that the only way to overcome this conditioning was through edgework. At that time, that's not what I would have called it, but I know that's what I did. It was really hard because there was nothing pushing me to change except myself — and there was a whole lifetime of conditioning fighting against me. But I know that I did the right thing and, given my new understandings, I would have been quite unhappy if I had continued to act as I had before. It's strange how I feel more at peace with who I am than I did before. I now know that I act on the strength of *my* convictions rather than because others pressure me to act a certain way.

My social life made it hard to change, however. My friends and family were all very much like me. We did whatever we wanted when it came to making fun of "homos" and "queers." We never stopped to think if we were hurting someone's feelings. While I always disagreed with the idea of "gay bashing," I never cared about their feelings. Although I never would have participated in or tolerated physical abuse just because someone was gay, for some reason I didn't care about emotional and verbal abuse or even see it as such.

Being able to put these things together was one of the most important parts of my edgework. I decided that it was no more acceptable to treat someone who is homosexual poorly than it was to treat someone of a different race poorly. This was an important realization for me. After years of feeling that it was okay to do this, I finally saw that it was not. I now see what many people I know do not accept: that people have a right to live whatever type of lifestyle they wish. This, of course, has always been true. But it took a long time for me to understand it. Every person has and should have the right to their views, opinions, and feelings. And, as long as they do not force them upon others, they should be respected.

At first, my close friends were shocked when I let them know I was uncomfortable with their homophobic jokes. Their shock was understandable; it had not been too long before that I also had been making those jokes. However, with time, they began to accept that I've changed and have stopped making those jokes around me. It feels good to know that I have changed. The edgework was painful at times, but it was clearly worth it: I am a better person for it. And my personal changes have had a positive impact on others as well. If everyone engaged in the type of edgework that helps us to oppose all forms of social dominance, the world would be a much nicer place to live in.

Miss Muffet Asks A Systemic Question and Frightens Herself Away

Peggy McIntosh

Questions like "Why did the serfs stand for it" stand at the threshold of systemic thinking.

This is a story of a transforming moment in my formal education whose effects continue to this day. Forty-five years ago in a college class I blurted out something I hadn't meant to say at all. It came, I thought, from "nowhere." The memory of my outburst humiliated me for five years, and haunted me for another twenty, but now, the episode seems filled with relevance for much of the work in education I have chosen to do for the past two decades.

The humiliating outburst occurred six weeks into my first year at Radcliffe College in the early 1950s. I hadn't said a word in class until that point for, frankly, I was lost. I had signed up for a Harvard course which had a large component on "The Church in the Western World." My previous schooling was such that I had no idea which church that might be (Presbyterian, Methodist?), nor how far west (Montana?). Bewildered by finding that the lectures were on European bishops and kings, I crept away to the library to try to fathom the subject, including "Church" and "West." There, in the readings in the Reserve Room, I came across the dim shape of what I felt was a weird enormity of injustices called the feudal system.

Back in the weekly discussion class, the "section man," a graduate student, was leading a discussion on fine points of theology and heresy, and on the "governance" of bishops and kings. In this conversation with him were two dazzling first-year students who had been speaking freely each week; one was the son of an American theologian, who seemed to know all the fine points of heresy; the other, a tall, dark, handsome man, who, despite the impression I got from his deep tan, tennis racket, and cream-colored V-necked cable sweater with two blue and red stripes, also seemed to know all kinds of things about medieval European theology. I couldn't understand anything in their conversation. In the middle of the discussion between these three men, I blurted out: "I don't see why the serfs stood for it."

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We hadn't even been talking about the serfs. No one had said a word about them in this course. You can imagine the dilemma of the instructor, hearing what must have seemed to him an utterly ignorant and irrelevant comment coming from a first-year student who hadn't said anything before. There was a dreadful silence in the room. Then he said gently, but in a very deep voice, "I think you had better see me in office hours." I was far too embarrassed to go see him in office hours. I was afraid of those in authority, and I had hoped that none of the professors would notice me. I was humiliated by my comment. From the silence, I assumed that the others in the class understood how the feudal system worked, and that I was the only one who didn't understand "why the serfs stood for it."

I went through four years thinking that was the stupidest thing I ever said in college, and my ears burned at the memory of it. I resolved not to let anything like it escape me again. Where had it come from, anyway? But after quite a few years of teaching, I began to think maybe it was the smartest thing I ever said in college. It veered, in very unseemly fashion, into what I subsequently named "the evaded curriculum," which included, among other subjects, power, submission, stories, feelings, manual labor, farming, provisioning, and daily life.

I was astonished by the feudal system; it was incomprehensible to me how the serfs remained serfs, and I was groping for their views of their lives. I think that as a mystified and disoriented first-year female student I also probably meant, Where am I in all this? Why am I standing for this picture that leaves me out, and this class discussion that leaves me out? — leaves me out as a female, and perhaps also as a student who had felt intelligent in high school months before, and now was at a loss. Just as the content of the class ignored the political and material existences of people in the agricultural classes, I think I felt ignored in the discussion, as a couple of brilliant men formed a triangle of commentary with the instructor. I do not think of Harvard-Radcliffe students as serfs now. But as I try to reconstruct the feelings that led to my outburst, I think that I made a connection between the serfs being subordinated, devalued, unheard in the discourse of their superiors, and what I was experiencing in the classroom.

Uncontrolled though that comment was, it was based on key questions about power which hadn't been raised in that course, nor in me, for on the one hand I did not want professors to notice me, yet on the other hand I think I wanted their approval. So I must have been angry. I know that I was missing a domestic sense of where medieval churches fitted into the daily lives of ordinary people. We never studied a peasant woman on her knees in Chartres; we only studied Peter Abelard in the streets of Paris and discussed what various clerics and power-holders were saying. And the discussion in class itself was only among the power-holders: the classroom dynamics were feudal in themselves.

I empathize with the teacher of the class, especially since I later became what Harvard called a "section man" and "Teaching Fellow" myself. We had no training in seeing systemically, and we were not taught to seize an impassioned, naive question and find in it a "teachable moment." If my teacher had been trained to think and teach about power, he would have been able to fill me in on a number of facts that would have shed light on the stability of pyramidal feudal systems. He could have mentioned the psychological theory of identification with authority; there was more in it for the serfs to identify upward with the apparent protector than to identify laterally with serfs on the adjacent manor who probably couldn't help them. He could have mentioned, gently, that before the Industrial Revolution serfs didn't have telephones, newsletters, or political movements to allow them to work for revolution. He could have described the clerics' roles in getting serfs to identify their humble state with entry into the Kingdom of Heaven. And so on. I now know that I would not have been the only person to be enlightened by a beginner course on some of the inner and outer dynamics that kept the feudal system stable.

But he could not teach about these dynamics. Nor could I, for many years thereafter, when I taught at several colleges and universities. What prevented us from addressing the inner and outer politics of systemic oppression still exists today: we were taught to isolate and specialize in fragmented bits of knowledge, so that neither large political nor poignant personal pictures could be accessed for teaching purposes. I think that the result was that both we and our students were kept confused about, and oblivious to, the larger systems that hold people and structures in place. Until that class, I was obediently oblivious myself. Having been raised on the American assumption that the individual is the unit of society, I naively thought that there were no social

systems anywhere, and so I couldn't imagine why a serf wouldn't assert the God-given gift of individuality and make a way out of what I considered to be "the bottom," in the first social system I had ever noticed.

This autobiographical vignette is important to me now, though it shamed me and gnawed at me for years at college and beyond. The inchoate and uncontrolled outburst of a young woman about feudal politics and against a top-down mode of doing scholarship and education came from a voice that spoke on behalf of people and functions of personality which I was being trained to disregard, deprecate, and suppress. It rushed out like a *dybbuk*. The voice that spoke out of me and against my conscious will came from a psychic place I was not meant to own. It came from a position of admitted ignorance ("I don't see"); it pried open a question ("why"); it was based on new and taboo knowledge that I had picked up and could relate to ("the serfs stood for it"). And I hear in it also a quaint foot-stamping indignation that was all I, trained as a good girl, could utter of anger then.

I imagine that I identified with the serfs' plight, as a female, a lowly person, and a laborer behind the scenes, who knew at an intuitive level that she would do a lot of work in the society without getting the rewards or "getting ahead" according to the ideal of public progress I had been taught. But the serfs kept standing for it, as I probably felt I was doing and would do in the future. It would be two decades before I began to write theoretical essays that describe the tasks of "making and mending the fabrics of society" as the basis of civilization, and as "lateral" work that has in the U.S. been undervalued as a component of both psyche and society relative to the "vertical" propensities found in psyche and society. In writing those papers and developing programs that drew on them, I also came to see the political positioning of myself relative to others who were assigned far more of the making and mending than I was.

Postmodern and feminist studies offer many words, including voice, internalized oppression, transgression, and subversion, to analyze what was going on in my outburst, but I would like to move on to some of the outcomes. The more I taught, the more I felt impelled to look behind the scenes for what was being left out. In English, I wanted to teach a course on a daily newspaper, which my department would not allow, but I did get permission to teach courses on editorial policies, advertisements, cartoons, covers, fiction, and nonfiction of the New Yorker magazine. Filling in more of the picture, I moved to American Studies to team-teach courses on historical periods in which we invited students to explore many aspects of daily life, and then to analyze the politics of knowledge-making that had excluded such study. After co-founding The Rocky Mountain Women's Institute, and broadening out into Women's Studies and then Multicultural and Gender Studies, I began to write theoretical work and organize the teacher-led seminars that indeed do allow the question of "why the serfs stood for it," and that shed light on some of the dynamics of serf systems today.

Now I spend much of my time on the project that I founded and have co-led with Emily Style for almost 11 years: the National SEED (Seeking Educational Equity and Diversity) Project on Inclusive Curriculum. It is a professional development program for teachers that establishes year-long teacher-led seminars in schools. The aim, in extroverted terms, is to make curriculum, teaching methods, and school climates more gender-fair and multicultural. As teachers read and discuss formal scholarship, they are invited to remember all kinds of aspects of their inner and outer schooling, including humiliating moments and pleasurable ones, and strong memories about schools, teachers, and students, as keys to some of what went on in school for them and perhaps goes on in their students, for better or worse. The seminar group supplies a matrix in which they may feel able to remember some of the puzzles and deadends that they encountered in schooling and were encouraged to forget. I now elicit from myself and others many untutored and apparently naive inquiries starting with words such as I used for the serfs' behavior: "I don't see why such and such happens."

The vehemence or quaintness or vulnerability of such comments can be helpful, and revealing. Now I am not so afraid of sounding silly or out of place. In fact, it seems to me now that I am most original *after I have been out of place*. The hardest experiences to put into words, the most embarrassing and humiliating ones, are crucial to my understanding of the worlds I am in and that are in me. Often, the questions I want to explore are not approved in the conceptual curricula that I, like most teachers at all grade levels, encounter. Although the schools and colleges may avow an interest in such questions, they get pushed to the margins, where they may be permitted but do

not get widespread attention. How many curricula actually support students to follow the much-quoted dictum Know Thyself? In what group situations does schooling allow and encourage this to happen?

To get to what feel like my own perceptions, I usually need to leave an accustomed place, turn a corner, go into a land beyond the mapped, fenced, or walled territory, and then look back toward that territory. By getting outside and looking back from a different angle, I see familiar places reconfigured and in different alignments. The conceptual diagrams I draw then, the sketches and inferences I make from the travels, are sometimes useful as maps to others and to me, finding and making our ways between the conventional givens and the perspectives from which they have not been named or publicly mapped. Even the blurt-out, in which I turned the corner into seeing the shape of feudalism, then saw the class discussion as a feudal system in itself and made a futile upstart rebellion, may have been useful over time (who knows?) to one or two other serfs sitting in silence, absorbing the understanding that serfs do not exist. To be of use in that way I had, to use a medieval expression, to go beyond the pale, i.e., the fenced enclosure.

I would like to help others avoid some of the pain of feeling stupid and isolated when their unauthorized questions tumble out. As I suggest in my two papers on Feeling Like a Fraud (1985, 1989), many feelings of fraudulence are deeply wise recognitions that we customarily have to act in the midst of many fraudulent forms. In school, lessening the pain of feeling stupid requires creating different educational environments that foreground processes of learning, by us all. The processes of learning make us all into "bodies in the body of the world" (LeRoy Moore) of teaching and learning; teachers are not the masters of knowledge. This is not to say that one cannot learn anything from feudalistic teaching. My instructor's helplessness shed a certain light on the enormity of the question I asked, even though I thought my stupidity was the enormity, at the time. I hope that my own likely embodiment of such helplessness later, when I was a fairly conventional teacher, still allowed students to divine something of the evaded curriculum as well as the explicit one. One does not need to have great teaching to learn a lot about the evaded curriculum from a moment of fraught silence in a class.

I am intrigued by the mystery of how I, or anyone, refuses to obey/believe/go along when others do. Even my own letters to a high school friend written at the time of that class were full of quite other claims: I was honored to be at Radcliffe and Harvard where we were getting excellent teaching from instructors who took their valuable time to help us learn "the basics." I believe these letters were sincere. But my alternative sense insisted nevertheless on finding its voice, momentarily disrupting the class and sinking my sense of control, decorum, and belonging. I rushed into an unexpected rebellion and then, in the official silence, felt humiliation.

In terms of my theory of Interactive Phases of Curricular and Personal Re-Vision (1983, 1990), I went from being tucked under the wing of authority in Phase One, as an invisible dependent woman, to being a Phase Three disrupter, raising Issues that were part of the evaded curriculum, but not really knowing what I was doing — stumbling into Phase Three for emotional reasons, and humiliated that my first contribution to class was not a Phase Two assimilator's success, worthy of the female valedictorian I had been.

Now I try to co-create climates for learning that avoid these polarized extremes of rebellion and humiliation. When group participants can discuss their ignorance, probe taboo subjects, and state what they feel they do know, as in the components of "I don't see ... why ... the serfs stood for it," they may be able to replace rebellion and humiliation with a different pair of experiences that both Emily Style and I have identified as key to the SEED Project which we co-direct: authority and humility — authority on one's own experience and humility with respect to what one does not know. The conversation can then include, without humiliation, the bold but ignorant beginner. I wish I had been able to say, " We are talking about the popes trying to control the heretics, but there weren't many popes or heretics, and what I want to know is what was it like for the serfs all this time? They grew all the food and hardly got anything. I just don't understand why they put up with their lives." The student/serf can be recognized to bring the authority of her or his own experience, but as *contingent* authority balanced by the humility that comes from knowing one's experience is *partial*. If discussions run on this nonpolarizing base and if all voices count, no one is excluded, and no topic is necessarily forbidden by epistemological and pedagogical taboos, so the chances of eruption and silencing are lessened.

I wonder why I was in a position to ask "why the

serfs stood for it" when no one else in the class did. Did it come from a flash of insight anyone could have had? Did it come from factors in my past that allowed me to ask the question, or in the pasts of others, that encouraged them not to? Did my lack of sophistication mean that book learning, language, and democratic ideals were not yet deadened for me — so that once I read about what was to me the colossally looming feudal system, I couldn't imagine how we could relevantly talk about other things, like the emperor's papal clothes, in class?

How important was it for us to discuss, in that Harvard class, what held the feudal system together? For students then or now, I would say it is important to identify some of the ways in which power works, in us and outside of us. Otherwise, one is at risk in inner and outer ways of being taken over without knowing or naming it, kept under without knowing it or being able to do anything about it, or using energy to keep our or others' valid life under, without awareness of that use of energy or status. The lofty discourse about the Church and the Western World going on over my head held, for me at the bottom of the cliff, no handholds, no grabbing places, no purchase, no paths indicating how I might get up there or that "up there" was worth it, or inherently superior to "down here," down with the serfs in the daily labor of making and mending the agricultural, domestic, and material fabric of society, which I intuited I too had been assigned. Those assumptions were not, according to my recollection, explored, and in most classrooms today they are still not explored. Questions about who will hold the society together, and whether or how the caretaking, lateral functions of psyche and society are recognized and rewarded, remain part of the evaded curriculum. Menial, manual, and agricultural labor, and taking care of people, and the stories of how students and other people carry out any of these fundamental kinds of life work, are still kept marginal in most schooling.

This is where holistic education can be of service with regard to both content and processes in education. Class is still a taboo subject in most U.S. schooling. Attention in history courses is still largely directed to the functions of management, government and activity among public power holders. Psychological identification with those who manage and govern is still implicitly taught in most history classes. Phrases that are false universals such as "The Church" and "The Western World" still abound in introductory course offerings. "Class discussions" still mainly feature the few most outspoken students because the structure of discussion activities has not been seen or reimagined. And *what it is like for people* is not yet a thoroughly explored subject in scholarship or in studies of students' daily experience. Most teachers still couldn't begin to discuss "why the serfs stood for it."

So what has it been like, what is it like, for people to live their lives — in body, heart, mind, and spirit — with regard to the structures and dynamics of their psychic and public lives, and their lives in groups? A challenge for holistic education today is to publish more work about, with, and *by* those whose voices are rarely formally heard outside of and within educational systems, including students and the "lowliest" of staff members. When education is holistic, the whole community is invested and all are witnesses to the experience. I think that if proponents of holistic education make themselves more gender-aware and culturally inclusive, useful insights as to "why the serfs stood for it" will become more obvious in writing, teaching, and publication by holistic educators. I look forward to a time when such questions will be raised not chiefly by white women, and men and women of color, for every observer ought to be able to see multiple systems of stratification embedded in education and enter into discussion about their effects on individuals and groups in schools and the wider society. And such issues need to be moved toward the center of holistic education itself if it is to be worthy of the name.

I welcome the opportunity to contribute this piece on a transformative moment, which first transformed me into thinking I was ridiculous, stupid, and out of control. Years later it transformed me into thinking I was intelligent in a way I had not been taught to be. Now I think I was being intelligent in a way I had been taught *not* to be, veering toward systemic questions about being constrained in class structures, and also in academic structures of course content and teaching methods, which in that case felt so strong that I had to "bust out all over" to say what was on my mind. My outburst was about the politics of medieval Europe and also the politics of knowledge-making and the politics of participation in education. I have worked to devise more open structures and dynamics through which people can better know and recognize the politics of knowledge-making and participation in the midst of many other processes of learning, teaching, being, and knowing. In teaching less traditionally than I was taught, I try

to remember also the historical reality of those college letters to a friend, in which I wrote as the enthralled, respectful, student who was grateful to her teachers. This reminds me that I and others who are truly enthusiastic and grateful participants in educational programs of any kind may at the same time be feeling deeply alienated, deeply unattended to, and that these feelings may have very sure ground that a wider definition of education would allow people to farm, map, explore, cultivate and gather from. Isn't a wider, deeper grounding of our work one of the central aims of holistic education?

The title of this piece refers to my self-censorship after the serf comment. In the Mother Goose rhyme, "Along came a spider / And sat down beside her / And frightened Miss Muffet away." The serf outburst appeared suddenly, lika a dangerous enemy to my identity, "not really me." Now, the spider seems to me like a valid interior creature: web-making, patterning, making connections, and getting sustenance. In the serf comment, I was beginning to make connections, see patterns, put it all together. In the ensuing silence I became scared of the consequences of putting it all together, spider-fashion, and "frightened myself away" from using that capacity for years afterward.

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Again, Palimpsest!

Anne Hayes Wilson

A reflection on social domination and suppression that arose from a classroom discussion on the meaning of *palimpsest*.

A poet with very dark skin and penetrating eyes once wrote a poem about me. Its essence was about my spirit upon which he believed he could see traces of many disappointments and much love. To him, my disappointment at failed relationships was the outer, and prevailing, layer through which traces of love shimmered. The poem was called, "Palimpsest."

Years later, another man, equally dark and also of brilliant perception, intimated something similar. He said what he found most attractive in me was the traces of joy he could see even under the worst of circumstances. He called this vision the truth of black folks' survival. This man is a serious student of history who has spent many years tracking how Europeans repeatedly revise historical events to suit their particular ends.

These seemingly disparate events came to mind recently during a writing workshop at Empire State College. (As part of the State University of New York, Empire State College offers independent and small group studies to students who are primarily working adults.) There are four of us. All women. Two of the women are of European descent. The other two of us are of African descent. We are discussing the ways a dominant culture will suppress the culture of another people in order to control them and take ownership of their achievements. We all also liken this suppression to that which occurs between men and women.

Sometime later in the discussion, the word "palimpsest" comes up in connection with a short piece written (and read) by one of the white women. As we discuss the validity of attaching this definition to her writing, both white women are adamant that my understanding that a palimpsest is a piece of Egyptian papyrus upon which words have been written, erased (or scraped off), and then rewritten is incorrect. In their view, palimpsest is a way of writing and rewriting that allows traces of earlier writings to show through — a writing technique or "practice" they believe is illustrated by Gore Vidal in his recounting of tales about his mother. In their explana-

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tion, this "practice" is not the same as, but is not entirely dissimilar from, pentimento where the artist paints over an earlier painting and the emerging traces or strokes from the first painting are changed by the later work.

The continued teaching that the armless statuaries of Greek culture mark the beginning of civilization, coupled with our teachers' out-of-hand dismissal of the contributions of older civilizations, is real arrogance. It is also the real failing of Western education, as this assumption is consciously and unconsciously built into the very foundation of our learning.

Despite the fact that I state several times my certainty that palimpsest refers to the medium and not the writing itself, neither woman is deterred from offering more illustrations of the "practice" of palimpsest. When I, or the other black woman, attempt to participate in their discussion, whether at the level of inquiry or of proof, our comments are dismissed with *a quick wave of the hand*. They continue their conversation as if we are not there. By the end of the workshop, I am frustrated at being ignored and angry that my assertion is not considered. I leave the room feeling devalued and silenced.

This is not the first time I have faced this kind of experience. A similar one occurred when I was a junior high school student. I recall questioning Columbus's "discovery" of America and remember how my history teacher, a white male, barely tolerated the interruption and then resumed his lesson with a strained smile to the class and a wave of his hand to me.

Earlier in my education, there is what I call the toilet tissue incident. The social studies teacher (again, male; again, white) decides to test our fourth-grade awareness of symbols. He holds up three blank note cards arranged so that two of them form a semicircle against the third which is straight and in the middle. The resultant figure looks like a backward c, a lower-case l and a forward-facing c, all shoved together to form one letter. He asks if we know what it is. In an instant, my voice rings out, loud and clear. "It's the Kimberly-Clark symbol, the one on the toilet paper!" The silence in the room is deafening. It is as if I have not spoken. With a pinched smile, the teacher tosses the cards in the wastebasket. Lesson over. I leave the room feeling as if I have done something wrong.

Over the years, I have come to realize that much of what I was taught in school — that most holy of places for a student of any age — was a lie whose function was to allow whites to continue to feel superior and to maintain what Peggy McIntosh (1988) calls "unearned advantages." These lies have the same effect regardless of whether the teacher is aware of their inaccuracies.

My most important learnings have usually taken place as a result of discussions like the one in elementary and junior high school and, more recently, at Empire State College. More often than not, these kinds of discussions are accompanied by a peculiar facial expression that conveys a strained patience with me — a kind of humoring — and a dismissal. In these situations, I am expected to accept what I am being told without question and then go away — quietly. White educators continually require my complicity in the suppression of my own history, expression, and/or intellect. Such incidents are not limited to school, and it doesn't only happen to me. I, with most other non-white people, am required to comply in other areas as well. Thus, the search for the truth has become increasingly important to me. In the case of palimpsest, I went in search of definition.

Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary defines palimpsest this way:

> (fr. Gk. palimpsestos, scraped again. Fr. Palin + psen to rub, scrape—more at sand) (1661): writing material (as a parchment or tablet) used one or more times after earlier writing has been erased.

Interestingly, the *American Heritage College Dictionary*, 3rd edition, takes the definition a bit further and describes it as:

> 1) A manuscript, usually of papyrus or parchment, written on more than once with the earlier writing incompletely erased and often legible.
> 2) An object, place or area that reflects its history.
> (Fr. Palimpsestus, Latin or palimpseston, Gk: palim, again.)

It is curious to me that though both dictionaries recognize that palimpsest is a material rather than a practice or technique and that the *American Heritage* describes the material as papyrus or parchment, neither work attributes palimpsest to the Egyptians. Is it accidental that both works give credit to the Latins or the Greeks? Probably not. This kind of Eurocentric bias is typical of the arrogance of Western educational practices of which most blacks — but few whites — are aware.

To learn more about early Egyptian writing practices, I visited the Brooklyn Museum's Wilbour Library of Egyptology and was led to the *Lexicon of Egyptology*, an encyclopedic work that provides many examples of palimpsest.

Two are: "Papyrus, Berlin, 3024, Lebens Muder: Here the author writes again and again about being tired of life." and "Papyrus, Berlin, 3038, Medical Papers: On-going treatments and prognoses for various patients" (Harrassowitz 1982).

The librarian also reminded me of how much the Greeks had learned from the Egyptians, who were Negroid and African in ancient Egypt — a crucial point ignored by today's revisionist racial definition that suggests any race north of the Sahara is not just African, but Caucasian. I was also referred to *Paper and Books in Ancient Egypt* (Cerny 1952), which documents that the use of papyrus as a writing material (by the Egyptians) predates the use of parchment (by the Greeks) by thousands of years.

Why is all of this so important to me?

First, it is the recognition that though we, a group of educated and enlightened women, had just discussed the patterns of domination and suppression of "others," it was being practiced right here in the classroom, whether consciously or subconsciously. I believe it was unintentional in this case, but the realization did not make it any less painful.

Second, but equally important, my concerns about and interest in finding the truth is not so much to correct the perceptions of my colleagues — they obviously have been as duped by Western revisionist history as the rest of us — or to reconfirm the brilliance of the two black men who first introduced me to palimpsest — they obviously know their stuff. It was more that I needed to, once again, affirm my own knowlege and reclaim another part of my culture which has been concealed, co-opted, and distorted by the U.S. educational system in the name of civilization.

This continued teaching that the armless statuaries of Greek culture mark the beginning of civilization, coupled with our teachers' out-of-hand dismissal of the contributions of older civilizations, is real arrogance. It is also the real failing of Western education, as this assumption is consciously and unconsciously built into the very foundation of our learning. This "practice" is one that assaults the black American's psyche every day from birth to grave. Whether at work, in school, while reading a newspaper or a novel, or simply sitting on the couch watching television, we are confronted with the task of filtering through and critically deconstructing information in order to identify, name, challenge, and, when necessary, transform the content within our own minds — again and again.

Ah, palimpsest!

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Voices from the Margins Speak Out

Don Murphy

For students to make empathetic connections with the sufferings of other peoples, they must first move through their *own* anger and free up mental space for reflection.

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For two years, I worked with black and Latino 7th and 8th graders at a Brooklyn public school in a classroom project to explore how students construct their notion of self, particularly their racial and ethnic definition of self and others. Because my students were working-class children of color, many of them Caribbean immigrants, "others," in this case, meant white people. They looked at the world from the standpoint of the dispossessed — those whom history, or the European-based scientific and technological revolution, had relegated to the margins of society.

This exploration generated three volumes of poetry, essays, and autobiographical narratives, more than 200 photographs, and 100 drawings. Selections from this project, titled "Voices from the Margins," was displayed at the UFT Educational Center in New York.

The project was quite controversial at the school where it originated. Black racism and anti-Semitism were some of the charges leveled against the students' work, particularly the graphics. As will be elaborated later, the students used powerful images like swastikas but in a context where they were deploring the Nazi Holocaust against Jews and likening it to the suffering of their own peoples.

Locating ourselves in history

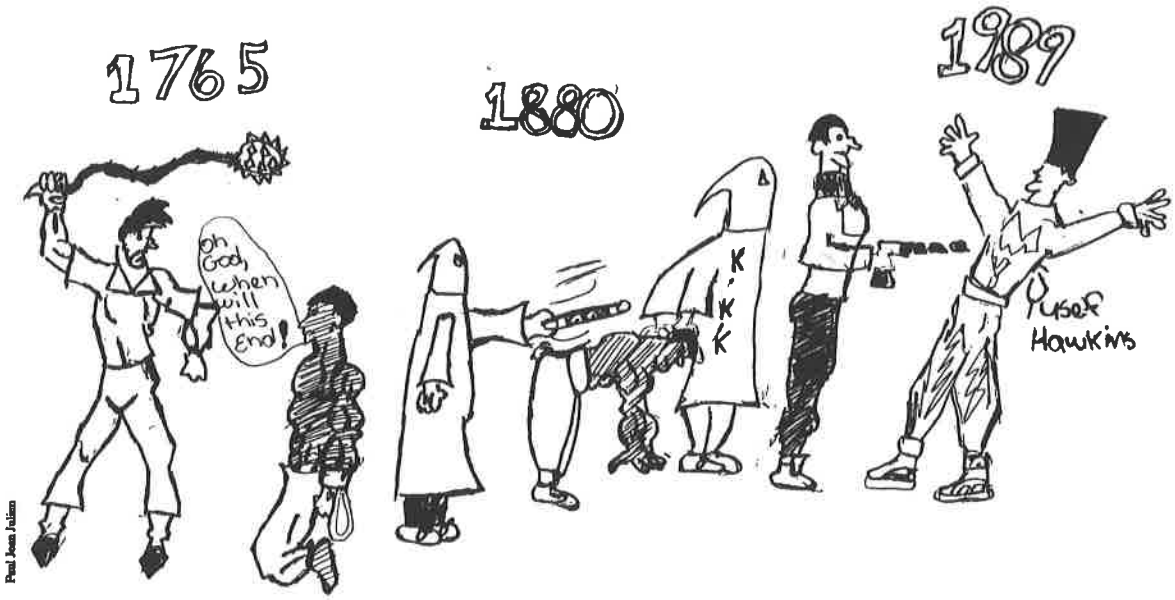
History is usually thought of as an objective process in which things happen to people. It is portrayed as the gradual forward march of progress not as a tempestuous process of racial, ethnic, class, religious, and gender conflict. Subjectivity is left out, and there is no room for people's intentions, will, and desires. Therefore, the conventional way of studying history doesn't help students locate themselves. In particular, it gives black and Latino students no tools to answer the following questions: Who am I? Who were my ancestors? Where have they been? Where am I going? What does it mean to be black or Latino, male or female in contemporary America?

Malcolm X, in describing his search for identity while in prison, eloquently explained why, for him,

education only became meaningful in the context of his struggle to locate himself and his people in history:

> "My home education gave me, with every additional book that I read, a little more sensitivity to the deafness, dumbness and blindness that was afflicting the black race in America....You will never catch me with a free 15 minutes in which I'm not studying something I feel might be able to help the black man."
>
> *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*

For my students, our study of history had to begin with the black and Latino experience. We had to begin with our personal encounters with racism in day-to-day life. Why? Because for many blacks in U.S. society today, racism is the organizing principle of social existence, determining experiences, role assignments, life chances, and patterns of interaction. It is the starting point for examining self and society.



Why so many drawings?

> Those who have been denied their primordial rights to speak their own words must first reclaim that right.
>
> Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*

The students who carried out this project started out as a 6th grade class of 31. The following year, I made it a 7th-8th grade class and had 37 students ranging in age from 10 to 15. Though I had begun to implement an open classroom in my first year of teaching, I initially confiscated the comic books that I caught my students reading during class. After a few weeks, I gave up the practice, because the stacks of comic books were taking over my corner of the classroom. More importantly, I began to notice that there were a number of students who had great difficulty in writing even a simple sentence but who used graphics to express complex and controversial political ideas.

It was then that I made an agreement with a number of students who were comic book aficionados, mainly boys, that they could submit graphics and comic strips in lieu of writing assignments. My struggle for the next several months was to cajole them into writing in the course of elaborating the concepts represented in the drawings. For these students, drawings were a first attempt to read and write the world, and constituted not only a critique but an active form of knowledge construction.

I then decided, for Black History Month, to ask the whole class to produce graphics on race, racism, and history. The students blossomed amazingly and everyone was actively involved. The majority of the drawings are collective products, with concepts and basic images cooperatively developed.

Context for the project

During the two years that I worked with my class, a discourse on race and racism pervaded the media and mass consciousness. We spent a great deal of time looking at movies, textbooks, and visual images of people from different races and classes. We traveled the city and observed different social milieus: homeless people in Tompkins Square Park, the white upper-class on the Upper East Side, Wall Street's

financial centers, the chess games in Greenwich Village parks. Many students had never been to these places. At that time, the city seemed to be living on the edge of an explosion. There was the Tawana Brawley rape trial, the murders of Michael Griffith in Howard Beach and Yusuf Hawkins in Bensonhurst, the rape of a white female jogger in Central Park, Jesse Jackson's second run for the Democratic presidential nomination and the mayoral race. There were charges that both Dinkins and Jackson were harboring anti-Semites and racists in their campaign staff.

Immediately following the election of Dinkins as mayor came the black boycott of the Korean grocery store on Brooklyn's Flatbush Avenue.

Although many teachers, in private and among their own ethnic groups, had volumes to say about these events, rarely did black and white teachers speak to each other about them, much less talk to students and their parents. Teachers are supposed to be implementing a multicultural curriculum, but we seldom acknowledge these conflicts among ethnic groups and the strong emotions and responses that all staff have. Or, we may talk about black and white individual prejudices as unfortunate aberrations without acknowledging and examining social structures of domination. We may allude to oppression as a recurring theme throughout the ages, without specifically studying how oppression operates now. Therefore, these topics never get talked about, and raising them is sometimes considered divisive and inappropriate for the classroom.

Fortunately, when given some space to express their reactions, students do not exhibit such hypocritical politeness because they have not learned what are "appropriate" and "inappropriate"questions to discuss in the classroom.

One of my students wrote:

> Now I am afraid to walk in a white neighborhood, such as Bensonhurst. I thought that in the constitution black and whites have the same Rights. But when you read the Newspapers and watch the news, it Doesn't seem as if "we are all Created Equal." The murder of Yusuf Hawkins is a Continuation of segregation and Racism! A black teenager wandered in a White neighborhood and went six Feet under just because they Couldn't stand the sight of his Color. If more blacks and whites lived Among each other maybe Yusuf Hawkins would not have been killed.

Students of color and discourse on racism

Integrating students' voices into the discourse on race and racism can be disconcerting to many teachers, regardless of their ethnic background. But the real concerns of students must become a means for systematically exploring race in American class society, and for helping students make connections between their lived experiences and the past. This is heavy stuff.

For example, I asked my students to examine where their negative feelings toward white people came from. Most had very few interactions with white people. Since the whites they saw most regularly were their teachers, who they acknowledged treated them reasonably well, what caused these negative responses? These young people were watched like criminals the moment they walked into the Kings Plaza Mall, even when I was with them. They saw whites move to the other end of a subway car when they entered it. For my students, white people seemed to have everything going for them in the society. They could do what they wanted, could live in nice houses and travel where they pleased.

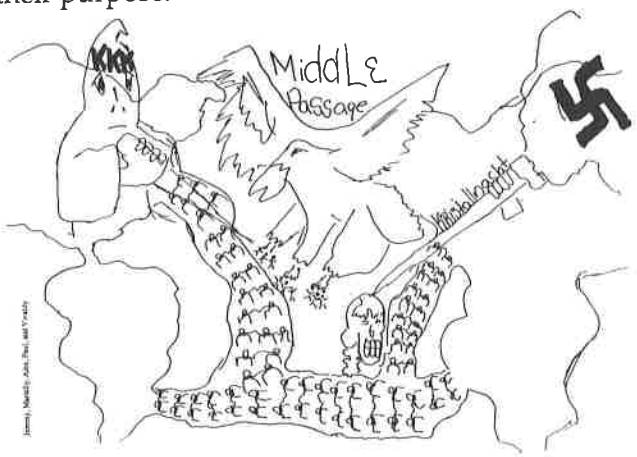
Let's enslave white people!

One of our most profound discussions began after a couple of sessions spent viewing and discussing *Roots* and other videos, pictures, and articles about slavery and lynching. At one point, I asked that we go around the room and imagine what a society without racism would look like. Several of the black males refused to do this. They said, "We don't wanna talk about that. We don't think it's possible. What we need to do is enslave white people so that they can suffer for 400 years the way we've suffered."

I could have explained that two wrongs don't make a right and squashed this comment. But that would have cut off the students' authentic exploration process to preserve my comfort. It would have prevented them from genuinely working through the issue on their own. I could have given a moralizing argument and shut up a little brother. But he'd still feel the same way inside, conclude that "Murphy's just one of them chumps," and decide I wasn't worth talking to. Instead, by following the path of their thinking and feeling, I could raise questions and challenge them. I could also talk about my experiences and what I felt when I was their age, and why I see things the way I see them now.

So I asked the students to construct a plan to enslave white people. After they spent some time working out the capture, I said, "That's the easy part. Figure out how we maintain our rule." I asked them to tell me how to rewrite textbooks to distort white people's contributions, how to reconstruct advertis-

ing and television programs so that white was identified with inferior, ugly, and lazy, or to invent other caricatures of whites. They said, "We'll steal what they did and lie and say that we invented it." But actually they had enormous moral revulsion to lying and began to realize that they would feel terrible about themselves if they stole and lied. So it defeated their purpose.



In this process, I prodded them to critically interrogate their own statements and the way they constructed their notion of white people. They began to realize that even though a person has been wronged, it doesn't mean that everything that person says is automatically right. We also examined other ideologies of domination, including sexism and heterosexism, and the ways they marginalize people. I raised the fact that there are different perceptions and even prejudices among various peoples of color: blacks versus Latinos, Jamaicans versus Haitians, Dominicans versus Puerto Ricans, blacks and Latinos versus Asians, and then we examined these differences. As we worked through this exhaustive process for about a month, spelling out all aspects of oppression and how they affect both the oppressors and the oppressed, students' interest turned more and more to the experiences of other groups in society.

The middle passage and the Holocaust

We focused on the Holocaust because I wanted students to examine the history of oppression and resistance by other groups. Newspapers and television news were emphasizing the crisis in Black-Jewish relations and the charges of anti-Semitism and black racism leveled at the Jackson and Dinkins campaigns. The students wanted to know, why were Jews so upset at Jackson's comments? This discussion and the students' negative experiences with Jews in the Crown Heights section of Brooklyn, generated many questions for them. For all these reasons, Jews became a logical group for us to focus on. Determined to confront this issue in more than a superficial way, I presented material that described the lived experience of a group with whom most students had little nonstereotyped contact. I told them about the Holocaust and showed them the Channel 13 four-part documentary about it. We read the Diary of Ann Frank, looked at pictures of concentration camps and saw the PBS video called Genocide. We examined many picture books of Jewish ghettos in Europe.

Several of the most powerful drawings represent students' attempts to grapple with this material, emotionally and intellectually: Kristallnacht, The Triangle Trade, Scale of the World: Black World/White World, The Other Side of Liberty, and On Guard: the Concentration Camp and the Slave Ship.

One student wrote in his journal:

> I've experienced racism once, when I was going to the shopping mall. When I was ready to go home, I was walking to the bus stop and this station wagon pulled up. There was three white kids and they called out, "Nigger go back, get out of our neighborhood" And I replied, "F— you, you honkies, leave me alone." Then the car pulled back as if it were coming straight at me. Then it just left.
>
> That's when I started thinking about all of the things I used to say around my neighborhood. I used to say, "Heil Hitler" to the Jews and now I know what it feels like.

The dynamic of anger and compassion

In finding similarities between the concentration camp and the slave ship, these young people were developing compassion toward the suffering of others, and a universal humanist perspective. What made this possible was the support they had received to articulate and honor their own personal experience, and to situate themselves historically. They also had the chance to respond emotionally to that history in a safe and guided environment. This entailed the right to express legitimate anger, a natural and healthy human response to the suffering that the system of white privilege has inflicted on them and their ancestors. If I had prematurely preached about harmony and togetherness and tried to skip over this stage of anger, the learning process would have been stifled.

Working through the anger, freeing up mental space for reflection, the students became ready to make empathic connections to the suffering of other peoples. Thus, the graphics link the holocausts suf-

fered by Africans and Jews and the hatred and prejudice promulgated by the Nazis and the Ku Klux Klan in a collective statement against domination in all its forms.

Some reflections for educators

These are some of the principles I derived from the experience of Voices from the Margins:

1. Emotional pain gets in the way of learning and hampers cognitive processes. Students who have suffered oppression must be helped to name it, to elaborate its mechanisms and its effects on their lives. As shown by my students' growing willingness and ability to write and their burgeoning capacity for graphic expression, breaking the silence frees up intellectual curiosity, creativity, and self-expression.

2. Racial harmony is only a Hallmark card sentiment if it's not based on a deep, emotional understanding of the lived experience of other ethnic groups. This process can only start with an exploration of the history and experience of one's self and one's own ethnic group.

3. The work that my black and Latino students did in ethnic history and construction of self would probably have been impossible if the class had included white students. It would have been much too explosive and not constructive for either group. Black students would not have felt safe in revealing themselves, and white 7th graders could not be expected to hear the rage of their black peers against whites without feeling personally attacked. (It's hard enough for adults to do this, even when we have special training in group dynamics, emotional work, and conflict resolution.) Also, there would be too great a gap between perceptions and taken-for-granted assumptions about the world to find a common basis for discussion. Therefore, I ask that we educators think about incorporating into schooling some opportunity for students to explore who they are in groups organized around some significant shared identities, probably race and gender. It's important to note that in my class, the girls also met separately as a group. (For white students, this should probably involve moving beyond the generic white, which really means only, "someone who has the right to dominate non-whites," to recover the histories of their parents and ancestors. At the same time, they must be challenged to acknowledge the privileges from which they, as whites, benefit, as well as forms of exploitation or suffering that they may share with people of color.)

In practical terms, there is plenty of opportunity to do this because so many of our classrooms are de facto segregated due to the income stratification and housing patterns of the city. But if they weren't, and if classrooms were more genuinely multiethnic, I would still urge that we provide opportunities for the self-exploration and understanding that are the basis for intergroup tolerance and compassion, probably through ongoing pullouts from regular classes.

4. On the other hand, I want to emphasize that I believe it is possible, though not easy, for white teachers to work with students of color in the way that I did. It would require that teachers educate themselves about the histories and cultures of black, Latino, Asian, and other communities; be willing to analyze racism as structured, institutional domination, not merely individual prejudices; be open to hearing the lived experiences of their students with compassion; and be very tuned in to their own gut responses about the issues raised.

5. Attacks on Eurocentric history leave many people of European descent, even those who recognize and oppose the injustices suffered by people of color, feeling that they are left with no identity and history to hold on to. Therefore, a multicultural curriculum must incorporate the pro-equality, antiracist traditions (the Quakers, John Brown) that are an integral part of the history of Europeans in the Americas. We as African Americans who have been marginalized and excluded must be sensitive to those who are in solidarity with us.

Criticisms and response

At the school, a number of teachers from various ethnic backgrounds were disturbed by the drawings, the learning methodology of this project, and its focus on construction of the ethnic sense of self. I would like to conclude by addressing their major concerns.

This approach stirs up anger, passion, and resentment and makes students feel they can't overcome racism.

None of my students became more passive or hopeless as a result of the project. Quite the opposite. Many have attended conferences on education and spoken about the project at various public events. They still call me to talk about school and the world. They're active in their high schools and see themselves as community leaders. They are far more ar-

ticulate in expressing their needs and negotiating with individuals in authority.

It doesn't focus on academic excellence, which is what will really build self-esteem, and which students need to succeed in this society.

I accepted into my class students who hadn't succeeded in other classes, some of whom were considered to be behavior problems. From nonwriters and infrequent readers, they grew intellectually to produce both drawings and at least 200 pages of writing a year per student. Their reading scores compared favorably with the school's other classes, though I didn't teach to the test.

There's no more institutional racism since the Supreme Court anti-segregation decisions and the Civil Rights movement. What we have to focus on now is individual prejudice.

It's hard to believe that there's no institutional racism when, in New York City, only one out of four black men makes it to the age of 25 without becoming involved with criminal justice institutions; when men in Bangladesh have a longer life expectancy than black men in Harlem; when black women high-school graduates have incomes significantly lower than white women high-school graduates.

The graphics are negative, violent, and one-sided and don't show progress and the positive side of American culture.

The graphics show real injustices, inequalities, and hypocrisy that the students perceived. The society we live in, especially in the face it shows to poor black and Latino youth, is often violent and negative. In their writings and drawings, the students tried to hold the government and the American people to their stated values of democracy and equality. They showed appreciation for free discussion, for the search for knowledge. They affirmed, in their intellectual and ethical journey, the capacity of the people at the bottom to reclaim their history, to connect with the sufferings of others, to make their voices heard, and in the words of African-American feminist bell hooks, to move "from margin to center."

De tripas, corazones Reflections on Transforming *nuestras vidas*

Victoria I. Muñoz

Transformation is not a linear process that follows clear sequential steps. These stories of change and identity raise questions about learning, teaching, and theory-making as well as how we understand who we are and how we change.

I am listening
in that fine space
between desire and always
the grave stillness
before choice. (Lorde 1993)

I have been eagerly thinking about writing this essay for several months. Finally, with the end of the semester I am able to write; student commencement marking my own beginning of this project. I was surprised that while reflecting on my experiences of transformation in education the stories that told themselves did not happen within classrooms. Perhaps this is because I am a new professor still learning how to teach. Instead, I listened to two stories that "harassed"[1] me and would not go away. I tell them here by way of sharing my thoughts about the fascinating, if not enigmatic, process of transformation.

They are stories of love. These are also stories about learning: About how we learn to be ourselves, how we construct our identities. The stories are about women and they are about culture, sexuality, violence. My aim in telling and analyzing these stories is to inspire you, the reader, to recall the moments of transformation that you have experienced, call these forth, and think about them in light of the issues raised here. To listen for what Audre Lorde calls "that fine space between desire and always the grave stillness before choice."

Boston

In a few days *mi amiga* of many years will give birth for the first time. She is big and uncomfortable. It is June and muggy in the South End of Boston. The Boricua, African-American, and white communities living side by side along and between Massachusetts, Tremont, and Columbus Avenues walk the pavement sweating. In Villa Victoria *los compañeros*

The expression "De tripas, corazones" in Puerto Rico is used to say how one makes the best out of what one is given. The literal translation is, "From guts, hearts." This essay is dedicated to Amalia Martine.

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and *las compañeras* are getting ready for *El Festival Betances* to commemorate Ramón Emeterio Betances (1827-1898) who initiated the movement in Puerto Rico to free African slaves. For this he was exiled and his life threatened many times by the Spanish rulers (del Rosario, Melón de Díaz, Martínez Masdeu 1976). Colonial rule is never far away from any story about Boricuas.

Mi amiga gets up early to see her partner off to work. He is doing a woodworking job 45 minutes away. He is worried that he will miss the birth. It is his first, too. At night the breeze tries to cool the brownstones but only the top floors get caressed enough to let the sleepers dream. They sleep in the basement where it is cool but damp. She has asked me to be at the birthing and then to stay for a few days afterward.

She has told me, and he has told only his brother, that the baby is a girl. To everyone else they still say, "she or he" or, "whatever it is." But that the baby is a girl is significant to me because I teach at a women's college in upstate New York. The girl will grow up to be a young woman. *Mi amiga's* daughter could go to Wells College. I know that sounds simplistic: Girl is born, girl goes to college. But I have to tell you a story my best friend told me.

Mi amiga grew up in Puerto Rico and went to elementary school there. In first grade it became clear to her Mamá that she was not learning to read or write. Her Mamá went to speak with the teacher who informed her that her daughter was mentally deficient and that she was going to be held back because she could not learn. But her Mamá knew that this was not true since her daughter had begun speaking in almost complete sentences by the age of six months. Her Mamá called a psychologist who specialized in learning disabilities. After testing her, the psychologist diagnosed her with severe dyslexia.

She went to *terapia* with the psychologist to learn to decode the black ink spots that moved and skipped on the surface of paper. She began to read and write but with great difficulty. She preferred watching television to reading a book. She preferred running over to Doña Rosa's house next door to eat cookies. She preferred getting dressed up in her Ma's clothes and walking around like a nymph in the forest. Anything but a book. But as her reading improved, a strange thing happened: Her teacher grew to dislike her more and more. It was as if the more literacy she learned, the clearer it became that the teacher had been wrong. The teacher did not like that.

By the end of the year she was still not at the first-grade reading level but her Mamá realized that to keep her with this teacher was to guarantee failure. She went to the principal and pleaded with her to let her daughter progress to second grade and to a new teacher. The principal, in a decision that was critical, said "Yes," though technically she was not "ready" for second grade. The principal's decision to listen to the mother, to believe a parent, made it possible for *mi amiga* to continue on through elementary school.

Ten years later, on July 4, 1988, after completing her sophomore year, *mi amiga* was assaulted and raped by an unknown male (who remains unknown) while on her way home. At knife-point, her life was threatened. Afterward, out of breath, she ran so fast her legs ached. Ran to a building, found a phone, called her boyfriend, called the police. When September came, she was still traumatized and could not sit in a classroom, could not concentrate. She could see no other choice but to leave. The girl who could speak before she could walk could not find the words for her experience. But now she could walk. And she did. *The grave stillness before choice* that Lorde contemplates, enveloped her a certain way, ushered her into silence and its corresponding exit.[2] This time, she did not find anyone at school who would or perhaps could listen to her still unformed words, to her fragmented heart.

During these past several years *mi amiga* has been working as a model, a waitress, and in retail. She is vibrant and beautiful, full of life; she looks forward to the child she is expecting. I have finished graduate school where I studied human development. But it is *mi amiga* who has taught me more than any textbook about human development because of what she has survived and how she has transformed *tripas* into *corazones*.

I think of Dorothy Allison's words, written more than 30 years after being raped — words that mark her transformation out of silence. She writes (1995):

> All the things I can say about sexual abuse — about rape — none of them are reasons. The words do not explain. Explanations almost drove me crazy, other people's explanations and my own. Explanations, justifications, and theories. I've got my own theory. My theory is that rape goes on happening all the time. My theory is that everything said about that act is assumed to say something about me, as if that thing I never wanted to happen and did not know how to stop is the only thing that can be said about my life.

> My theory is that talking about it makes a difference — being a woman who can stand up anywhere and say, I was five and the man was big. So let me say it. (p. 44)

Why does it take so long to say it? In the texts in graduate school there were "cases." Yet I knew that there were no cases; only people who have value, who are worth loving, women who have theories about our lives because we live them. Why is this truth too often missing from theory? And when theory is lacking so is practice because what and how we live — how I teach — is informed by what and how we think and know. Transformative teaching lifts up all our voices so that we can listen to each other and learn about our rage, our courage, our hard-earned survival. This kind of teaching requires a generosity of spirit that questions "the explanations" and "the cases" found in textbooks and listens carefully to the stories told at home on the front stoop or on the porch, in the communities, and in the neighborhoods we share. Perhaps it is the work of transformative teaching to listen in that fine space that Lorde writes of — the space where words are being formed but are still unspeakable.

Lake Ontario

Seven years ago, I went to Lake Ontario with a lover. It was beautiful. The spring sun was beginning to burn. We walked the rim of that huge body of water, wondering what secrets had sunk to the bottom. As I looked out over the lake, which was calm and flat that day, I was struck by how there are *bodies* in bodies of water; that the truths of things are not on the surface. It was an uncanny thought. I diverted my attention and kept on walking. We were away from Boston for a few days to try to grasp what was changing in our lives. The calm lake disguised the turbulence that skimmed underneath our own surfaces.

We spoke and listened to one another, told and heard hard words, individual truths that did not blend into a harmonious one: "Don't change your life for me," she said, "Don't change for me." Transformations are not always wanted because they carry responsibility; we are accountable for the changes we cause to happen, we are responsible for what we have "tamed."[3] Sometimes we keep ourselves and one another from becoming who we are ready to be because we are afraid of risking what we have in hand. As we held hands, this became clear as the day: Transformation is also about loss and mourning. To deny the pain of change is to risk psychological numbness; transformation brings anger, chaos, vulnerability, fragility. To know and understand another is to risk the plunge into their center while refusing to let the heart sink.

When she talked about her passions, her deepest desires, her voice told me that she was still afraid. I watched her eyes as she searched for a place to go that was free of that fear. She looked out over the lake and then reached for pieces of wood, feathers, string that were scattered along the shore. She was collecting herself because she knew she had to change, knew she was ready — but she remained afraid to tell her truths and stopped, turned to me, and said, "I can't go any faster." I knew she was braver than that: *I was listening in that fine space.* Our words sounded like blue fins off the Cape; *te quiero y te amo* swimming over, *Darling, sweet thing, I love you.*

In her years in the closet my lover learned how to keep silent about her passions out of fear and dread of what could happen to her if others knew. The silence turned into a wall where the exit signs became too vague to see. Her gaze had become fixed on that constant fear of being despised, the fear of the violence that accompanies hatred. But she was looking for another way. At Lake Ontario, I chose to climb over the wall to her and try (with the extra pair of eyes) to find the exits together.

Underneath the surface there is homophobia and heterosexism. When we reach out to each other if we are holding these in our hands the connection fails, it falls apart. Until heterosexism and homophobia are transformed we will all live in fear of what we desire. And to fear one form of love is to fear love itself just as to fear a person because of their ethnicity is to fear humanity. It is only through interdependence and our diverse ways of being that new possibilities are to be found. As Vera Whisman (1996), in a study she conducted through interviews with gay men and lesbians, concludes:

> One person arrives there because of a deeply felt physical desire for others of the same sex, another for a desire that is more emotional than physical. One woman arrives there because her feminist understanding tells her that is the best choice for her. Another woman has felt different all her life, more masculine than feminine. One man has always been sexually interested in both men and women, and finds queer worlds more to his liking than straight ones. There is no essential Gay Man, no timeless Lesbian, but instead gay men, lesbians, bisexuals, and others, who collectively and individually widen the range of possibilities. (p. 125)

How do we listen to and speak with each other in ways that transform our lives? What is needed to speak our body's knowledge without fear? grow together and change what divides us? Where is "that fine space between de-

sire"? How do we arrive there? I think about the responsibility of changing one's life for another person — how we are accountable for what we change. I ask students to question what they know, maybe even to change their minds. Transformative education involves the willingness to change one's life. It also requires awareness of and responsibility for the changes caused in others. Transformation demands courage.

Geographies of change

Smoothing out *that fine space* as if it were cloth wanting to be patterned, I am searching for the pieces that enable transformation: risk, vulnerability, love, listening, passion, desire. But there are also pieces composed of horrible exits, useless violence, rage, abrupt tearing apart. I am looking for what widens the range of possibilities of who we can be. As if transformation could somehow be understood as a series of pieces, sewn together. This is what I am trying to say: Transformation is not linear and does not follow predictable steps. Human life is too complex, diverse, and fragmented for any easy pattern. Reflecting on revolution Adrienne Rich (1993) writes:

> Raya Dunayevskaya wrote of revolution that while, "great divides in epochs, in cognition, in personality, are crucial," we need to understand the moment of discontinuity — the break in the pattern — itself as part of a continuity, for it to become a turning point in human history. (p. 234)

What this tells me about transformation is that moments of change are parts of a larger social history and ought not be mistaken for something completely new; rather, all transformations are radical continuations that rest uneasily on what came before. This means that all transformations have a history and that to understand our own we need to look back and reconstruct what has changed us.

This is the place where Lorde is *listening*. When learning about ourselves, families, lovers, communities, or students, it is the *choice* to go through with a transformation in thinking, feeling, action that is critical because we can turn away from the new at any point — refuse to change. Even in our most intimate relationships there is fear of change, of transforming old despairs into new *esperanzas*. It is hard to move into the unknown, to find the silent spaces. It involves risking the vulnerability of voice and engaging with the unsettling and shifting relations that accompany all human change. It means learning something new.

When we reflect upon what enables change in education we might begin by looking at how we change in our most intimate places; in our families, with our lovers, and friends. How we act and feel in private cannot easily be separated from how we act and feel in public if what we desire is integrity and wholeness.[4] A separation of the two entails what is routinely called denial, and it has its roots in the avoidance of profound pain. Change *is* often painful because it wrenches us out of familiar ways. And that is why transformation requires us to gather courage to act upon new knowledge to move forward to a different place. This is the space Gloria Anzaldúa (1990) calls "the interface":

> In sewing terms, "interfacing" means sewing a piece of material between two pieces of fabric to provide support and stability to collar, cuff, yoke. Between the masks we've internalized, one on top of another, are our interfaces. The masks are already steeped with self-hatred and other internalized oppressions. However, it is the place — the interface — between the masks that provides the space from which we can thrust out and crack the masks. (pp. xv-xvi)

It is here, at this new place where we face each other and ourselves — where we interface — that we arrive at a pedagogy of listening, intuition, desire, passion, and love and of contradiction, ambiguity, and resistance. From here we can activate what the Nobel Laureate and geneticist Barbara McClintock (1983) called, "A feeling for the organism." This is a pedagogy that includes our whole being, engages us deeply in observation, in the search for "the hidden complexity" (p. 206) of any system whether it be biological, psychological, political. A place where our broken yet still beautiful *corazones* are ready, always willing, to take action in new ways. Ready to transform and be transformed *in that fine space*.[5]

Notes

1. I use "harassed" here in the sense Adrienne Rich (1993) uses it when she writes, "Poetry will go on harassing the poet until, and unless, it is driven away" (p. 234). I did not want to drive these stories away because I felt they had something very important to teach me and perhaps others as well.

2. In "Exit-Voice Dilemmas in Adolescent Development," Carol Gilligan writes how speaking one's truth or giving voice to one's own experience is to risk heartbreak because to speak and be known is to make oneself vulnerable to others. But that to exit in silence does not risk heartbreak because one does not speak and therefore one's experience cannot be known and one will not be hurt. Gilligan places this dialectic as a critical developmental moment during youth. This essay was published in *Development, Democracy and the Art of Trespassing: Essays in Honor of Albert O. Hirschman* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1986).

3. In May 1996, at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology the Community Fellows Program, which is part of the Department of Urban Studies and Planning, held a conference called, " The Power of

Love in Research, Planning, and Education." The conference was held in honor of Mel King and his retirement after 25 years at MIT. A quote from *The Little Prince* was included as a central idea for the conference: "It is only with the heart that one can see rightly; what is essential is invisible to the eye." As a thank you for having given a workshop for this conference, Mel King sent me a copy of the book (Antoine de Saint-Exupéry; *The Little Prince*; San Diego: Harcourt Brace, 1943). I include the idea of taming here as a tribute to his lifelong work in community building and transformative education.

4. I use the term, "wholeness" here in the Eriksonian sense: "Wholeness seems to connote an assembly of parts, even quite diversified parts, that enter into fruitful association and organization. This concept is most strikingly expressed in such terms as wholeheartedness, wholemindedness, wholesomeness, and the like. As a *Gestalt* then, wholeness emphasizes a sound, organic, progressive mutuality between diversified parts within an entirety, the boundaries of which are open and fluent" (Erik Erikson 1964, p. 92).

5. *Mi amiga's* baby girl was born July 4.

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The Process of Knowing and Learning

An Academic and Cultural Awakening

Brenda Collins

Genuine learning cannot avoid the discovery of the "truth" and reality of one's self and one's culture.

The old people say being Indian today is like having your feet in two canoes. One foot in one canoe, one foot in another; one foot in one world, one foot in another. Trying to balance both canoes at the same time while the water underneath is constantly changing; trying to live in two worlds, while the rules are constantly changing. This is what it is like for my students of color, as well as for me. Trying to live in the Western world, while trying desperately to hold on to our cultural world of difference. Trying to hold on to a language that is not acknowledged as legitimate by the dominant culture, trying to hold on to traditions that appear irrelevant to the Western mind, and trying desperately to hold on to an identity that can become so easily consumed by Levi jeans, TV, and Big Macs. So, I try to integrate my world into my teaching methods. I try to build bridges between worlds, instead of trying to exchange one for the other. I try to help my students feel pride in where they come from so that they don't feel ashamed of who they are or who they want to be. As I encourage them, I become encouraged. As I lift them up, they lift me up. As I believe in them, they believe in me. As they become transformed, I become transformed.

My students come from diverse backgrounds. Many identify themselves as Mexican American, others Mexican, some Latino, still others Chicano. There are Asian Americans, more specifically identified as Japanese, Korean, Filipino, and Southeast Asian Americans. Also represented are African Americans, Africans, American Indians, East Indians and Puerto Ricans. Included in this diverse representation are Euro-Americans, Jewish Americans, and gay and lesbian persons. Although all groups are not identified in every class, the classes do tend to be diverse regarding race, class, gender, and sexual orientation. Even with this diversity, the group most representative is Euro-American.

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I teach a variety of courses in psychology at a community college with a focus on race, class, and gender issues. These courses include: Psychological Principles of Racism and Sexism, Social and Ethnic Relations, Psychology of Identity, Introduction to Psychology, and Human Sexuality. As I see it, there are no curriculum boundaries when addressing issues of race, class, and gender. Indeed, for some students the process of understanding and knowing begins in one class and continues in another. The issues, and the knowing, thread across specific courses. In the Western world this is referred to as the academic journey; in my world it is called the continuous circle or the life hoop.

The old people say "you come in from the spirit world with all the answers to any question that could be put before you while you are here." This is a pretty good job I have being a teacher, I tell my students. I come to class, present some ideas, guide some discussion about those ideas, and collect my paycheck on the first of every month. "I teach you nothing," I tell my students. "I only facilitate bringing forth that which you already know." Many of them look at me in amazement, "What's she talking about?" Others look at me with a sigh of relief, as if they can't believe their ears; as if they've been waiting for a teacher to say this all their lives. As if they already knew, but had never had it validated. Regardless of the students' initial reaction, within a short 17 weeks many come to believe they do have the answers. Many begin to believe in themselves.

Let me provide some images of these 17 remarkable weeks. In the beginning of the semester, students file into the classroom ready to be entertained or "talked at" or told what to think and do. No teachers, or only a few, have ever told them that what they think is important. I tell them to "think for themselves." Again, they look at me as if I don't know what I'm talking about, yet they are intently listening to every word that falls out of my mouth. They watch me just as intently as I walk across the room and speak directly to them. I wonder privately to myself, how few people in their lives, perhaps, have spoken this truth to them. I ask for their honest participation: "If you don't learn anything else in my class, I want you to learn to think for yourself." This is much more difficult than it sounds, much easier to say than do, I warn. Why? "Because most of you are still living in the shadow of others' voices. You are manifesting what your parents, coaches, priests, peers want you to think. Many of you just become an extension of their voice. Today and for the next 17 weeks you will take that journey on your own. You will journey into your own thoughts, your own opinions, your own questioning. You will challenge me, your peers, and yourself ... and you will awaken those voices within yourself that identify you."

This journey may appear at first to be inevitable, easy, automatic, but it is not. To the traveler, it is an individual awakening. For some students, it is so validating to hear a women of color present such cultural thinking that they begin to respond almost immediately to their own voices. Other students respond more slowly, cautiously, even reluctantly. Their Western cultural experience does not invite them easily into the journey.

I continue to provoke my students: "You must know where you come from in order to know who you are today, in order for you to know where you are going tomorrow. We're talking about identity. Whom or what do you identify with? Where are your roots?" I share my birth story with them, that I am here because of a dream my grandmother had, that there is a prophecy that came with my birth, that I come from a group of stars called the Pleiades. Again, they listen intently, even some of the students who don't want to listen because listening is not what they usually do, as listening is not honored in the Western world. But most of them listen and much of the time they want more than class time will allow. When this begins to occur I am reminded of sitting in the round house for hours or days listening to the old ones speak. I never thought of leaving the round house or questioning the old people, "When are they going to be through?" Although the young ones might not have understood all that was said, we knew the stories were important. This is the challenge of a "teacher" in the Western world — to make the subject matter important by bringing the stories, the voices to life.

To get the students started on their journey of self-discovery, I assign them Jamaica Kincaids's "Girl" from *At the Bottom of the River.* I ask them to write their own girl/boy piece based on voices from their past. When they return to class, we put our chairs in a circle and they read their girl/boy piece. This provides an opportunity for me to learn about each of them, but the true revelation is what they learn about themselves as they read aloud their pieces and hear the voices of their pasts come to life. They are amazed at the similarities of the voices in the circle. It is a time of beginning, a time of reflec-

tion, a time of pondering. I am moved when they read their pieces, often to tears. Many read through their own tears and on occasion some choose not to read because it is just too moving for them. We finish the readings, I collect their pieces and keep them until the end of the semester.

When we return for the next class I have a box of crayons and a color assortment of paper awaiting. The students are instructed to take a sheet of paper and as many crayons as needed to create a large name tag. They may be as creative as they wish. They may use their entire name, nicknames, or only their preferred name. It's always fascinating to watch students respond to this exercise. There are those who go to work immediately drawing and coloring, while others sit and ponder, "Just what is the psychological purpose of this exercise?" Still, there are others who look at what others are doing, as if to see if they are "doing it right." It confirms for me the restriction that many students feel in relationship to who they are. For many they just want to "do it right." They are unfamiliar with their creative side, and find it difficult to relax and be in the moment with their self. Many just want the exercise to end and for me to "just lecture" to them. They want to be with the familiar. When the students finish, we once again form a circle and I instruct them to hold their name tags and share their names and any information about their names and/or name tags. The responses are varied, from comments about generations of a namesake to apologies for "that's just what they (parents) named me." Their names have no special meaning.

With this exercise I continue to get a sense of the person behind the name. The spirit behind the eyes continues to be revealed. More importantly, it is revealing to the individual student as he/she sits in the circle and listens to the stories behind "a name." They recognize they all have their stories, their own voices; no one, though, has ever taken the time to ask them about their stories. No one has told them they could be proud to be called Roberto instead of Robert, or Maria instead of Marie, or Naoko instead of Nikki, or Ekaterina instead of Katia, or Ezgiamen instead of Amen. The transformation begins for many as they begin the journey of discovering who they are behind the mask of a name — their name, a name that has been changed in spelling and pronunciation to accommodate those who can't or don't want to take the time to pronounce it correctly. And the transformation begins for yet others who now question their own participation in the changing of another's name, or lack of participation in keeping their own name.

As I encourage my students, I become encouraged. As I lift them up, they lift me up. As I believe in them, they believe in me. As they become transformed, I become transformed.

I too make a name tag and share the story of my name, Brenda Suzanne Eaglewoman Flies With Hawks Collins. I too taste what it is to become more culturally aware — awake — each time I tell my story. I am released from the Western world and planted more deeply into the roots of my world as an Indian woman. Each time I share my name with my students I am reminded of who I am and where I come from. It is important that I model this for my students. Although I am teacher, I too am student. But my students do not see themselves as teachers. Is this the consequence of a silenced voice, of being "talked at" and not to? I am concerned for them. In the Western world they call it low self-esteem or lack of confidence. In my world the voice (teacher) within us all is acknowledged, respected, and nurtured. Our name is a reflection of who we are and where we come from. I liken the awakening of my students' souls during this exercise to that of an eagle taking flight from her nest for the very first time, feeling the wind move and carry her to heights she has never dreamed.

I arrange the classroom seating into a circle as often as possible throughout our time together. The talking circle is a concept that is foreign to many Western students. Often they feel awkward, exposed, or self-conscious. However, the more they participate in the circle the more they expect and look forward to the seating arrangement. I explain to my students that the circle represents honesty, respect, and equality. We are all equal when we come to the circle and we respect each other's voices. The circle also allows us to look at the spirit of another instead of the back of another. This creates and encourages respect for others and their differences. The circle is a safe place where students begin to be honest with themselves, thus allowing them to be

honest with others. Indeed, a cultural acknowledgment begins to take place, almost silently, as we begin to trust the process of the dialogue and see one another as peers rather than as competitors fighting for a grade. The circle is also inclusive in that the students begin to recognize that their voice is important. It encourages even the most silent student to participate. I sit in awe as I watch the simplicity — and power — of respect give voice to those students who dared not speak in class prior to the talking circle.

The more we talk, the more we explore and question the power culture has in shaping us, the more we discover who we are, and who we hope to be.

The conversation progresses and we talk about expectations and their influence on our identities. In the Western world, the world of the majority of my students, a person is expected to graduate from high school by age 18, graduate from college with a Bachelor of Arts, then graduate from graduate school with a Master of Arts. Why? Because "everyone else has their B.A.," and by the time they get their M.A. they realize that an M.A. and 25 cents will get them a cup of coffee anywhere, so ... they get a Ph.D.! At the same time, my students are expected to fall in love, get married, have 2.5 children, make $75,000 a year, and oh yes ... be happy. There persists this ever so gentle yet forceful boot out of their home into the "real world" to be on their own and "grow up." It's amazing to me that any of my students survive these pressures eloquently disguised as expectations. Again, I am concerned.

I share with my students that in my world an 18-year-old is not expected to leave home. Indeed, we are never encouraged to leave, rather we are encouraged to stay as long as we like, even into old age. We bury the umbilical cord of our children with the bones of their ancestors because we believe that no matter where their journey in life takes them, this assures us that they will always come home. Telling this story to my students invites them to discuss their needs, desires, and hopes for the future. The journey into their own identities continues; a sense of home, family, culture, and education as they visualize it is respected. They do not have to surrender who they are in order to live in the Western world. They do not have to change their names, stop speaking their language, or pretend to be something they are not. What they do have to do, or so I plead with them, is be awake to how culture has shaped them and then decide for themselves where they stand in the midst of those forces. Our time together is this awakening process. It is a wonder to be a part of it.

In my world, I continue to share in the talking circle, a person is not considered an adult until they are 51 years of age. We believe it takes this long for a person to understand the mysteries that live within each of us. We are not expected to have our "acts together," to be adult at the age of 21. I share this part of my world with my students with the hope of freeing them from the bondage of unquestioned expectations — that everything must be accomplished by a certain age in life. The sharing also reminds my students that everyone learns at a different pace. It offers support and encouragement to the re-entry students who are often struggling to feel comfortable in a classroom of students that are half their age. Again, the talking circle is about building respect and trust. The more we talk, the more we explore and question the power culture has in shaping us, the more we discover who we are, and who we hope to be.

Allow me to open one more window into my classroom by sharing a dramatic experience that occurred during a discussion on discrimination. After showing the film *Los Mineros*, based on Mexican American miners' early 1900s struggle in the Southwest for equal pay and benefits, students, including some of the Mexican Americans, expressed shock and disbelief. This was a history that had been kept from them. They were ignorant of the degree to which Mexican Americans had been discriminated against; blind to the historical roots of this discrimination. They became angry. I used this as an opportunity to challenge the ignorance forced upon them by an unexamined education. I wanted them to know they never had to be duped — or seduced — again, by schools or society at large. I asked them, "How many of you want to be free?" They looked at me hesitantly, not sure where I was going with this question. I elaborated: "How many of you want to be free from prejudicial attitudes, stereotypical thinking, discriminatory behavior, inequality?!" As I expected, they unanimously raised their hands. As I had not expected, they were sitting on the edge of their seats, leaning forward, anticipating with hungry looks on their faces, waiting for what seemed to be the answer of a lifetime. I was moved beyond

words, and said spontaneously, with fire under my belt, "READ!!" Read everything you can get your hands on. Read about your people by your people. Find and open the hidden books. Read with your critical eyes. Question, search, challenge the words. I wrote READ in bold letters on the board. I watched them write the word READ in their notebooks. It was as if the entire class was lifted above the floor. They got it! Indeed, they had been offered a challenge they couldn't refuse.

They had been set free from past, unquestioned untruths. Free to find their own truths. I told them that no one could take away what they had just learned. No one could dupe them again. To read critically and not mindlessly, with piercing personal questions, was the secret to uncovering how they may have been silenced in their previous years of schooling, of listening to the mass media, and, generally, of surviving in a Western culture. Now, I told them, no one could take away the stories, the voices, the truth that reading with a searching, questioning heart could give them.

Over the next several weeks, many students rose to the challenge and discovered that the words on the written page, once read with passion and conviction, began to mirror their own voices. As they questioned and dug into their histories, their cultural identities took form. The written word and their inner voices journeyed together. The match, like the eagle in flight, set them free.

After this incident, we returned to the customary final class exercise. During the last week of class we revisit Kincaids's "Girl." However, now I ask the students to write their own girl/boy piece based on voices from the past 17 weeks, specifically, voices they have heard in regards to race, class, and gender. This assignment confirms for me that during this difficult process of self-discovery and attending to our hidden voices something sacred has occurred. In the Western world this is called "learning." In my world the old people say that the answers that traveled with us from the spirit world have been revealed and true "knowing" has taken place.

Kicking Maurice Out of School

Linda Christensen

"I have come to believe that for the sake of the class and even for the trouble-making student, I needed to claim the territory of the classroom for teaching."

I'm not sure which event made me realize that Maurice could no longer stay in my class. Perhaps it was the day he barricaded the class and me in the computer lab. It might have been the morning I brought Howard Fast's novel *Freedom Road* to class on a cart, and he hijacked it from the room and locked the novels in his locker while the rest of the students filled out reading cards.

I had been warned by Maurice's sister that he was the "devil." I was amused by her description because she had been one of the most difficult and brightest students in my 20-year career. Maurice stories circulated through the teachers' cafeteria. But when he came to my door and begged me to let him into my too-full class, my ego and my belief that *I* would teach him, wouldn't let me refuse. He was going to be a challenge, but I was sure my curriculum, teaching style, and untracked class would bring him around. When I let him in, I didn't realize that he would make me examine my beliefs about kicking kids out of class and school.

For most of the first quarter he was delightful. Bright and enthusiastic, he pushed the class. He was often the first to see the "big picture" and articulate it. He could discuss, for example, how Columbus's voyage to the "New World" set the stage for the colonization of Africa. He was quick to find connections between units. He tied together Andrew Jackson's speech justifying the removal of the Cherokees and the current policies around California's new immigration laws. He was very race-conscious.

He was also a passionate writer — unafraid of the truth. His stark portrayals of daily life and events both amused us and forced us to look at the politics of race in our community. During the entire time he was in class, he made useful observations about other people's work, often encouraging a quiet student into the fold. He joked with the Vietnamese students, remembering events from their stories and retelling their stories again and again, bringing solidarity to the room. For ten weeks, he demonstrated the impact a charismatic and bright student could make on a class.

Note: The names of students have been changed.

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It's not like things changed overnight — one day he was good; the next day he was bad. There were little things along the way. He liked to challenge my authority, question facts, argue. I like that. It demonstrates individual thinking and pushes the rest of the class to examine ideas more clearly. But then the challenges began to be about work. He didn't want to write essays or read novels, even though I'd taught students to manipulate the writing topic so they could "find their passion." He didn't want to sit in the circle. He began hovering around the edge of the circle, lighting on the front of one or more desks, or taking the stool and sitting between the desks or in front of the desks. By the third quarter, he wanted to lay across the work table in the middle of the room. In addition, he started coming to class later and later.

As I write this, I can hear people clicking their tongues and shaking their heads. "That boy needed to be told what was what...." I agree. I did that. He was on a contract. I called whichever home he was currently living in. He moved in with a different friend's family or a different relative's family each quarter. A responsible adult at his new home and I would come to terms about his behavior and privileges. This would last for a few weeks each term, then he'd get worse than before. He failed every class and stopped attending most after the third or fourth week of each term. If he wasn't in the halls, he was in one or more of my classes where he would drop in and sit in the back of the class writing poetry, raps, stories.

My observation of trouble-making students is that they either are not challenged enough in class or they are given a curriculum that insults them. "Bad" students are offended by school; they don't see themselves in the curriculum — as women, people of color, gay/lesbian students — or they don't see school as offering them anything they need or are interested in. Michelle Fine (1991) explains that recent dropouts are significantly less depressed and more likely to blame their education problems on poverty or racism. They are more critical of their schooling, but after a few years, they turn their criticism on themselves. In addition to the lower economic state they inhabit, they feel like failures and lose that critical edge that turned them from school in the first place. This poses a dilemma for me. I don't want to lose those critical students, like Maurice, but neither do I want to lose the rest of my class. I've talked with students who didn't succeed. I asked questions: What was missing? How did I fail you in this class? Did our racial or cultural differences impede your learning? Part of my strategy has been to be more inclusive in my curriculum, to deal upfront with issues of race and gender inequality. I put students' lives front and center in each unit. If we are studying about men and women in literature and history, they write about growing up male and female, dating, date rape, spousal abuse, inequality in relationships, homosexuality — what's happening for them today regarding these issues. They can choose to share their pieces with the class, debate, argue, rethink their positions. We deal with issues that affect their daily lives, and my goal is to teach them to read, write, and think.

But this curriculum did not work with Maurice. He liked the class. He liked to discuss the issues, and he even liked to write some of the assignments, but he was turning each day into a nightmare. Instead of becoming integrated into the class, he was tearing it apart. Justin Morris, a black male, wrote a slightly fictionalized account about Maurice:

> Maurice was obnoxious. If you wanna get down to it, he was a guy's guy.... You know the type: He'd call a girl a bitch in the blink of an eye, and he'd cuss you out if you looked at him the wrong way. Most of all he never — I mean he never ever — showed any kind of emotion. Every school has a Maurice. He comes in different shapes, colors, sizes.
>
> I could tell that Maurice was putting up a front. I'm not gonna speak for everybody when I assume a lot of people knew exactly what Maurice was all about. Nothin'. I mean, playing the role of a tough guy seemed so natural to him, you just knew there had to be a compassionate side hidden inside. Somewhere. Just think about some of the guys that you see, or know, in high school who act so tough. You just know they're so full of it. Something was going on inside of them to keep them so alive with distrust and vulgarity.
>
> He stood almost six feet tall, he was mixed (he looked it), he sported close cut curly hair that was covered by a baseball cap facing forward. He was one of those skinny dudes who wore baggy clothes, and he always had his signature headphones that were either glued to his ears or permanently draped over his neck, cranked up at the loudest volume imaginable. You never saw Maurice without his walkman.
>
> He was the reason why I went to third period English. He was the reason many people went to third period, I think. Not because it was an easy class (it wasn't) and not because it was fun (it had its moments). It was because Maurice never sat on a desk like the rest of us. Sometimes he'd arrive ten, twenty, even forty minutes late. On top of that, it would take him the remaining class period to get settled down.
>
> Our teacher wasn't the least bit intimidated by Maurice. In fact, I think that she was the reason he even bothered showing up to class. She'd often lean

> back in her chair while Maurice was standing somewhere running his mouth. She wasn't being passive, in fact, she was letting Maurice have his outlet. He had so much built up energy, she made a choice to allow him to vent some of it in class. It was either that or let him fight it out.
>
> Maurice and our teacher, Mrs. ___ played off of each other like a comedy team. They were Grumpy Old Men except one of them was a woman. She treated him like an old friend, not the way some of the other teachers treated him. I had a class with him last year. Mr. Marx, Global Studies, would give Maurice referrals everyday.
>
> "Go to the Dean's," he'd say.
>
> "Go ___ yourself, man," Maurice would reply. I always liked the way Maurice talked. He talked like he walked; kinda slow, but you knew he was getting somewhere.

About the time I read Justin's story, a few students said they were tired of Maurice consuming time in our class. Other students felt that my willingness to work through Maurice's problems demonstrated the kind of compassion and commitment to struggle I'd encouraged them to engage in. I wasn't sure. I began to feel that I could either teach Maurice or I could teach the rest of the class, but I couldn't teach both.

The day Maurice locked us in the computer lab, I realized that he was not getting better, and he was taking my time away from working with other students. Because my class is untracked, I spend a lot of time working one-on-one with students during our once-a-week computer lab days, during lunch, and after school. Students who haven't learned the language or formats of academic work need time to catch up. This class had a number of mainstreamed ESL students who needed some extra attention as well. After spending too much of the period dealing with Maurice, I looked up as the bell rang. I watched the students I hadn't had an opportunity to work with that day gather their books and bags: Trina, who wanted to be a writer, spent every lunch hour with me to get extra help; Tuan, who immigrated from Vietnam three years earlier, wanted to learn the language, to go over each paper so he wouldn't make the same mistakes every time; Tim, who was our big-hearted Christian, helped others when I couldn't get to them during class.

After I had my lunchtime cry and my share of greasy french fries and chicken nuggets, I thought about kicking Maurice out of class. I firmly believed in the saying "Kids don't fail; teachers fail." I talked my decision over with Michele Stemler, the Spanish teacher who started at Jefferson the same year I had. She is an outstanding, compassionate teacher who also had attempted to teach Maurice. I talked with the dean, his counselor, and the neighborhood counseling staff. Everyone was in agreement: Maurice was not making it at Jefferson.

I asked for a formal meeting with Maurice's parents, a vice principal, deans, and counselors. I had kept them informed of Maurice's lack of progress throughout the year. I had also monitored his attendance and grades in his other classes. It was the fourth quarter and he was failing everything and attending sporadically. After hearing my report, the vice principal requested that Maurice find an alternative school for the remainder of the year. If he made progress and gained some credits, he could return to Jefferson in September. He was barred from Jefferson — except for after-school events. Both Maurice and his mother were angry.

Maurice's mother was angry at me for not calling her. I'd had two of her older children. I knew her. Why hadn't I called? I agreed I should have. I explained that I had called the homes Maurice was living in at the time. "But I'm his mother," she said. She was right. The vice principal noted that progress reports, grades, and referrals were sent home. I hadn't known what prompted Maurice to leave his home, so I'd been hesitant to call her. Maurice's position was denial. Yes, he'd failed some classes, but if he started attending regularly he could pass. He thought the teachers and administration were against him. He had gotten sick, and he hadn't received make-up work, so he fell behind. Of course, there was some truth in what he said, but he never took any responsibility for making up time or work. (He had experienced negative treatment in school; this semester, we'd tried hard to get him in with the best teachers — great in terms of the content of their classes as well as their willingness to work with students who didn't follow tradition.)

I felt terrible. I felt guilty. I didn't believe that students should be excluded from school; yet, I also witnessed how Maurice was keeping the rest of the students from learning. I kept remembering the refrain, "Kids don't drop out; they're pushed out."

The class was quieter; kids were more productive without Maurice, but it was also duller. While the lack of tension and time-consuming antics gave us more time to work, his spark and conscience were also missing. I knew I'd made the right decision, but I didn't feel good about it.

I end each year with a celebration where students select the name of another student and write a poem about the person. We read the poems, eat cake, and

talk about the class. I got approval for Maurice to come back for our celebration. One of Maurice's classmates and I wrote a poem about him, trying to capture both his antics as well as his heart:

How can you forget Maurice,
the boy whose mind trotted the globe,
bright, brilliant, and baaaad.

You can't forget Maurice,
the boy who stole the cart of books
and hid them so we wouldn't have to read.

How can we forget Maurice,
the way he talked, cracked jokes
with everyone in class,
teasing Tri about setting off firecrackers
in his school in Vietman...

Remember how quiet
and sad the days became
when he left us?

Remember Maurice:
the boy who acted bad,
but had a heart bigger than Alaska?

His classmates were happy to see him and many made a point to stop and talk with him and sign his class book. He was quiet after we read the poem. In fact, he was quiet for most of the 90 minutes. When his friend arrived, he left before the final bell rang.

The day after school was over, I still had a trickle of students finishing books of their writing, their last essay, or their evaluations. Maurice rode in on his bike.

"Hey, Linda. I want to make up my credits."

"You want to make up one quarter?"

"I'll start with that. I want to make up the year."

I was skeptical. I didn't want to turn him away when he wanted to work, but I was tired. I really didn't want to spend my summer break teaching. "Get a book off the bookshelf."

"You know I hate to read. I haven't read a book since I've been in high school." I made him get off the bike. His small circles in the middle of the room were making me dizzy.

"If you don't read a book, I won't work with you."

He rooted through the shelves and brought back *Always Running* by Luis Rodriguez. We set a day and time for him to come to my house to begin the tutoring session.

Instead of my calling him to remind him about our session, he called me. "I have ten more pages to read. I don't really like the book though. I suppose I have to write an essay." He had to be tough.

It's still summer. We're still meeting — either on the phone or in person. He's still doing the work. Also, because he is working with me, the neighborhood program which also dropped him at the end of the year agreed to let him attend their summer school where he is reported to be the class leader. His teacher has commented on his outstanding writing.

Working with him this summer hasn't been without mishap. A couple of times we've scheduled meetings that he's missed without calling. He was having a hard time keeping up with his summer classes and my work, too. But instead of calling me, he just didn't show up. I want my summer vacation, too, so these "absent-without-excuse days" burn me. When he does come, our work is smoother. Maurice likes lots of attention — from me and from his classmates. Without an audience, he's quieter and more focused. He's still resistant about revising. He doesn't want to revise his essay to include documentation from the novel; he doesn't see how it wanders off in new directions. He doesn't want to be wrong. Even when I show him my many drafts of articles, he shrugs and says, "That's you. That's not how I write."

But he's doing far more than the original class outline — and far less because he lost the discussions, debates, and role plays he'd experience in class. He's still prickly and argumentative, but he's reading books, writing personal stories and essays, and revising them. He may be able to graduate on time with these credits. When I asked him about a fellow class student who is also in his summer program, he said, "She hasn't read the book, and she's missed too many days. If she doesn't finish the novel by this weekend, she'll fail." He said it so self-righteously that I wondered if he'd remembered when he didn't read novels or show up.

I have come to believe that for the sake of the class and even for the trouble-making student, I needed to claim the territory of the classroom for teaching. I was doing all of my students a disservice, including Maurice, by not providing a space where teaching and learning could happen. Admittedly, Maurice was an extreme case, but I still believe that as teachers we need to scrutinize our decisions carefully because too often the bright and challenging students who read the social text of schools most clearly are the targets. I also believe that students need to know that they are welcome to return. As my friend Marcie says, "Don't push them so far out that they can't find their way back."

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Transformative Moments in Education

From "Feeling Stupid" to the "Reclamation of Intelligence"

Mayra Bloom

"Feeling stupid" is a widespread experience that has personal, educational, cultural and political roots.

I'm not sure when I first noticed that "feeling stupid" was a chronic and sometimes debilitating phenomenon among learners of all ages. As a mentor at SUNY/Empire State College, I constantly meet students who are convinced they are incapable of learning. Some are so positive that they cannot do math that they will give up educational or professional goals rather than attempt it. Others are convinced that they cannot learn history, because they cannot remember dates. Some are terrified of science. Others cannot speak in groups. Many suffer from intransigent writing blocks. These students all "feel stupid."

Perhaps I was able to recognize "feeling stupid" because it is something I suffer from myself. Some personal examples:

> A colleague looks over a syllabus for a course I'm designing and asks whether I've neglected to provide some important readings. I feel that I am not sufficiently well read to give the course and that my advanced degrees are worthless.
>
> The husband of an old friend leans over at a restaurant table and asks, "Just what exactly is it that you teach at that nontraditional college of yours?" Suddenly I cannot remember what I teach.
>
> A friend tells me she has been homeschooling her child. She describes the wonderful learning activities she has designed, and I feel that her children surely have a more intelligent (and therefore better) mother than mine do.

I also "feel stupid" when I know less than other people. I "feel stupid" when I make mistakes; when I feel flustered or attacked; when I cannot do arithmetic quickly — especially in front of other people. For me, as for many others, "feeling stupid" includes a sense of fraudulence, shame, vulnerability, and intellectual intimidation. It is an example of what Aaron Beck calls an "automatic" or "autonomous" thought — an undercurrent of cognitive disturbance that can contribute to anxiety, depression, and other

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emotional disorders (Beck 1976). In Martin Seligman's terms, "feeling stupid" is a component of learned helplessness and pessimism — a personal, pervasive, and permanent way of explaining the world to oneself, even when it is in obvious conflict with reality (Seligman 1990, 128).

In *The Evolving Self*, Robert Kegan proposes that the central motion of human development is from "embeddedness in" to "relationship to." In his view, it is only when one emerges from unconscious embeddedness in a culture, a belief, or a feeling, one can enter into a critical, potentially transformative relationship to it. For me, this process began when I started to look more closely at "feeling stupid" and realized it was not merely a personal reaction. Could my "soft" courses have bolstered my colleague's professional ego? Perhaps the intimidating student was having problems in her own life and needed to assert her competence and success at the expense of other people. Perhaps the friend who was homeschooling her child needed to reassure herself about staying home long after most of her friends had returned to work.

These and other observations began to convince me that "feeling stupid" is a widespread phenomenon that affects many people, arises in many settings, and has social as well as personal roots. I also realized that "feeling stupid" can reinforce what Paolo Freire calls "limit situations."

> Limit situations imply the existence of persons who are directly or indirectly served by these situations, and who are negated and curbed by them (Freire 1970, 93).

For example, I know a college teacher who, despite her vast knowledge and excellent student evaluations, is the lowest paid member of the faculty. She often "feels stupid" at faculty meetings and dreads them. Recently, however, it occurred to her that her colleagues might be maintaining an unfair status quo — as well as their sense of superiority — by undermining her sense of intellectual competence. In this and other situations, "feeling stupid" turns out to be a zero-sum game in which one party benefits from another's loss.

The question then becomes, Who benefits? And the answer is that oppressors of every kind benefit because when people feel stupid, they are less likely to ask questions. They are less likely to challenge authority. They don't think they have good ideas. They don't know if they can trust their senses. They think that only other people can be experts. They don't think they can understand situations well enough to change them. "Feeling stupid" leads people to believe that they have neither the right nor the capacity to change their lives.

Michael Lerner (1986) describes the results of self-blaming in terms of workers' decreasing militancy.

> Once crippled by self-blaming and internalized anger, most workers don't feel that they have the right to demand substantial structural changes in the work world.... People begin to feel that at some deep level they really deserve their jobs and they don't have the right to fight for something different. (p. 33)

Indeed, I began to think that if my goal were to oppress people, I would rely chiefly on two means of control — state terror and "feeling stupid." And of the two, inducing people to feel stupid may be the more effective, since it leads people to control and limit themselves.

As I began to notice and understand the crucial but often unseen contributions made to "feeling stupid" by our culture (Kohn 1986; Sennett and Cobb 1973). I reached the conclusion that as an educator, I had a responsibility to help learners — children as well as adults — to "reclaim their intelligence."

The reclamation of intelligence

According to Webster's New Third International Dictionary, "reclamation" is: 1. The act of making a claim or protest. 2. The act or process of reforming or rehabilitating; 3. the act or process of restoring to cultivation or use.

An image of reclamation that has resonance for me is of land that has been unnaturally flooded or appropriated by rapacious neighbors. Like a tidal pool or wetland, it is fragile and complex. In my mind's eye, the land is being salvaged by a crew of burly workers with hard hats and dredging equipment — reclamation can be hard and dirty work. There are other ways to reclaim land as well. People argue, squat, organize, revolt. They take down dams, they irrigate, they sue. They recultivate, rebuild, retrieve. To undo "feeling stupid," they must reconceptualize intelligence itself.

As Elizabeth Minnich (1990) points out in *Transforming Knowledge*, intelligence is a "mystified concept." She writes:

> People of all ages believe that their intelligence is being tested when they take IQ tests — as if we knew all that intelligence might be. Intelligence ... is a mystified concept. It is by no means a neutral, universal concept. Our belief in it, as it has been defined and given power through the use of devices such as IQ tests, works to maintain the dominant system. (pp. 111-113)

Undoing "feeling stupid" and "reclaiming our intelligence" is a process of conceptual development. It requires that we look closely at our concepts of intelligence — particularly and precisely at the moments we "feel stupid," because what is often looming at these moments is the specter of IQ.

For example, students often "feel stupid" when they think "too slowly." In berating themselves for not being fast enough, they are accepting what the testers tell them: that intelligence correlates to quick rather than measured responses. There is simply no place in this notion of intelligence for the consideration of different points of view, for multiple explanations, for the reconciliation of contradictions. When speed is equated with intelligence, what often results is a shallow, incomplete — and often misleading — soundbite that passes for knowledge or informed opinion. What also happens is that people who work slowly may come to think of themselves as stupid.

Another example: people often "feel too stupid" to participate in discussions or debates. They do not believe that they know enough of the facts (or of the "factoids" that too often pass for knowledge) to make or defend their case. Beneath this conviction lies a conflation between intelligence and knowledge that is reinforced by repeated exposure to standardized tests and educational tracking systems. Eventually it becomes difficult, if not impossible, for children in particular, to distinguish between knowledge and intelligence. Faced with someone who has more, or more privileged kinds of knowledge, one may "feel stupid" rather than simply "less knowledgeable."

A final example. Students often "feel stupid," diminished, and confused when they read material that is difficult to follow. Obviously, there are texts that require more time, patience, or technical background than the reader possesses. These may be difficult, if not impossible, to grasp. On the other hand, implicit in this feeling is the assumption that it is the material which is clear and that the reader is deficient. Students do not necessarily consider that this lofty material may be poorly written, deliberately obfuscating, or directed to a particular audience. They rarely pause to think that the authors whom they find abstruse and difficult might be very poor writers or that they might be bidding for admission to higher circles of the Academy by demonstrating intellectual superiority over "ordinary" readers. Instead, they have been led throughout their school years to believe that if they are confused by what they read, it is because the "reading level" of the passage is beyond them. Since reading level is assumed to be indicative of intelligence, it seems logical and appropriate to "feel stupid."

The thinking that results in (and supports) "feeling stupid" is often subtly but stubbornly contradictory. For example, a student recently described a job interview in which she was asked about her "skills." She immediately froze and lost all confidence in her ability to do the job or to succeed in the interview She felt that she was an imposter; she had the sudden impression that "there was no one inside her power suit." I asked if she could have responded by asking a clarifying question, such as "What skills are you referring to." She was shocked to realize that it had not occurred to her because asking a question would have revealed her stupidity. She then saw that she had been placed in a double bind for surely the ability to ask questions is a sign of intelligence, not stupidity. Paradoxically, an indication of intelligence confirmed her self-diagnosis of stupidity. Gregory Bateson (1972) points out in *Steps to an Ecology of Mind* that people who are placed in double binds have a tendency to go crazy. Perhaps "feeling stupid" while demonstrating intelligence represents one kind of culturally induced insanity (p. 201 ff). Conversely, becoming aware of conflation, paradoxes, and circular thinking is itself part of the reclamation process. It opens up the psychic space and "disembeddedness" that Kegan describes.

If, at the moment of "feeling stupid," many people may invoke implicit, culturally conditioned definitions of intelligence, I have found that in more supportive settings, they tend to produce definitions that have little to do with speed, rote learning, or trivia recall. In these situations, people may define intelligence in terms of flexibility, creativity, knowledge and appreciation of nature; intuition; problem finding and solving; imagination; curiosity; the ability to make connections; compassion; clarity; gratitude. I recall with particular pleasure the difference between two brainstorming sessions that a group of Empire students had on the topic "feeling stupid." The first session produced a colorless litany of low self-esteem and vulnerability. The second, which took place after a series of discussions and "reclamation activities," reflected a complex, coherent, dynamic, humor-filled, and slightly pugnacious defense of a larger definition.

The process of redefinition is powerfully assisted by the work of Howard Gardner and others (Gard-

ner 1985; Sternberg 1989) who are elaborating theories of "multiple intelligences." Gardner postulates that it is meaningless and misleading to assign a single number to IQ; that there is no "g" or general intelligence factor. Rather, he has identified at least seven intelligences, each with its own developmental pattern, memory system, and relative independence. (Obviously, all of the intelligences must work together synergistically and interdependently as well.) Gardner proposes that the verbal, logical-mathematical, spatial, kinesthetic, musical, and interpersonal and intrapersonal domains each comprises "an intelligence." Gardner's work is compelling because it replaces the notion of a single executive "dominator" intelligence (Koegel 1996) with a more pluralistic, inclusive image. In a sense, he permits the establishment of an internal democracy, an inclusive cooperative/collaborative effort. From this vantage point, it is meaningless to rank people or arrange them according to "how much" intelligence they have. Rather, it becomes possible to help students understand and appreciate their own "intelligence profiles" — unique combinations of endowments and potentials that can be developed in a myriad of ways, depending on life experience, cultural demands and values, and personal choice. This typically requires what James Moffett calls "deconditioning" or "unlearning" old, culturally enforced definitions (Moffett 1994, ch. 3).

Gardner's work often provides students with what Sylvia Ashton-Warner (1961) calls a "one-look" understanding. That is, no sooner do they encounter the concept of multiple intelligences than they begin to rethink their general concept of intelligence and to reassess their personal struggles as well.

Once this process is underway, I encouraged students to design and carry out further "reclamation activities" or projects that challenge and expand their notions of their own intelligence. One student, for example, concluded a women's studies contract by taking up tools and producing wooden sculpture for the first time. Another challenged himself to learn to use a calculator. Another recalled that she had stopped sewing — a craft she enjoyed —because she was convinced she could not sew in a zipper. She discovered that she did, indeed, have the mechanical intelligence and the manual dexterity to complete a daunting task. By engaging in activities they were convinced they were "too stupid" to do, their concept of their own intelligence, and of intelligence itself, developed.

Conclusion

What I draw from these inquiries and observations is that for many learners, "feeling stupid" needs to be taken into consideration in the design, implementation, and evaluation of educational programs and curricula. The "reclamation of intelligence" needs to be studied as a process with transformative personal, educational, cultural, and political implications. More study is needed to determine the extent to which — and the ways and situations in which — people do, in fact, "feel stupid," and to understand the dimensions, textures, origins, and development of their experience. Further inquiry is needed into the relationships among "feeling stupid" and shame, learned helplessness, and low self-esteem. More work needs to be done to understand people's experience of standardized testing and its relationship to intellectual self-esteem. Relationships between "feeling stupid" and race, class, gender, and age need to be examined in depth.

If "feeling stupid" is as widespread as I believe it to be, then educators at all levels have good cause to address it and to promote the "reclamation of intelligence." What emerges will be transformative indeed for the students' as well ourselves.

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Facing Myself

The Struggle for Authentic Pedagogy

Michael O'Loughlin

Authentic pedagogy of engagement requires trust, self-disclosure, and a very conscious awareness on the teacher's part of the need to name and negotiate institutional power relations with students.

This article is dedicated to the memories of Patrick Buckheister and John Nicholls. Both were exemplary college professors. Both understood where I was stuck, and they struggled mightily to share their insights into pedagogy with me. I owe them much for the insights presented here.

After seven years in the Department of Curriculum and Teaching, Michael O'Loughlin has joined the Reading Department at Hofstra University, where he co-directs the doctoral program in Reading, Language and Cognition. His interests include urban literacy issues and education for social justice. Reprint requests should be sent to him at the Reading Department, Mason Hall, 124 Hofstra University, Hempstead, NY 11550.

All the way through school, and even into college, I was taught not to trust my instincts. I was taught that head rules over heart, knowledge rules over emotion, experts have answers. Nobody ever pulled me aside and advised me to follow my heart, trust my instincts, value my own judgments and opinions, make sense of the world from my perspective. When I became a classroom teacher I had trouble connecting with my inner self. After many years of detached and impersonal schooling the authoritarian cloak fit all too comfortably. Unconsciously I drew on my own experience of school as a model for my way of being in the classroom. I was not all that I might be as a nurturing, caring teacher. It had never entered my head that teaching might be about the transformative possibilities of human conversations.

In graduate school in the 1980s the message from most of my professors, once again, was to deny myself and my roots. Use the passive voice when writing, I was told. Avoid personal language and anecdotes. Don't use the Irish spellings of English words because they are distracting to readers who are used to American English. Be scientific! Be rational! Don't be emotional! Don't be angry! Don't show your passions! Be detached.... Be invisible.... My journey beyond those crippling messages has been slow and tortuous, a teetering walk between my desire to offer caring and enabling experiences to my students, and a sometimes paralyzing fear of self-disclosure and loss of control.

My journey has not been exclusively intellectual. I read Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1972/1989) for the first time close to 20 years ago, and since then I have been committed in principle to notions of democratic and empowering education. Moving from theory to critical praxis proved difficult, and I found Freire's abstract writing wanting. I have, in essence, had to come face to face with myself. I have had to confront the ambivalences inher-

ent in my autobiography. I grew up in a working class family in rural Ireland. Just as Valerie Walkerdine recounts so poignantly in *Schoolgirl Fictions* (1990), for me, too, teaching represented a chance to "get out," to "move up." Was it then my job as a teacher to teach other people's children how to get out and move up too? Just like Walkerdine, I too worried that people would "find out that I am only a teacher" (p. 83), and I experienced first hand, as all teachers do, the ambivalence many societies harbor toward teachers. A Ph.D. in developmental psychology from Teachers College brought me into the academy where I found that I did not fit very well. Just as I was seeking to recover my roots I entered an academic community where everybody appeared to masquerade as upper class: Was I the only professor of working-class origin? Why was it taboo to speak your mind? Why did people seem uncomfortable when I raised issues of poverty, equity, and racial justice? Why were there no student voices included in our curricular and planning meetings? Valerie Walkerdine's choice of the term "coming out" to describe her naming of her working class origins is testimony to the silent and silencing power of the academy within which many of us work.[1]

Understanding my autobiography is key to understanding my teaching. In teaching I necessarily teach myself. How else but through engaging my life story can my students or I make sense of my deep belief in the possibility of education as a vehicle of personal transformation and social change? How else can my students or I understand the dialectic tension between equipping students to access the "culture of power," as Lisa Delpit (1988) terms it, and validating children's socially and culturally constituted identities so that they feel affirmed, except through understanding the erasure I suffered at the hands of teachers and texts? How else can I step out of the dehumanizing cage provided for me by university apparatuses of regulation and surveillance, except through being available to students so that I can bring my life stories into conversation with theirs, and with the life stories of others we may encounter, so that we can mutually enrich each other's understanding of human possibility? Like the Cowardly Lion in the *Wizard of Oz*, I have been in search of courage — the courage to be existentially present to my students. I want to be honest, and I want to enable my students, too, to gain the courage to engage with the ambivalences that their entry into the opportunities provided by higher education, juxtaposed with their life histories, promises to provide.

When I started teaching education courses about ten years ago I considered myself a rather fast learner. Within two years I had abandoned textbooks in favor of trade books, I had given up lecturing for the most part, and I had begun to experiment with a variety of progressive-looking assignments such as journal entries and informal writings. Most important, I had become conscious of the need for students to find their voices, and my classes provide a wide range of opportunities for students to engage in small-group and large-group discussions. My students were generally happy, and I was happy too. I got compliments often enough to feel that I was engaging in transformative teaching. And perhaps I was. However, there always seemed to be a few pesky students who "resisted" my progressive approaches. It always amuses me how we, liberal pedagogues, deride traditional teachers for their impositional teaching methods. Yet, when students resist *our* grand plans for them, we rationalize their dissent as resistance, and thereby delegitimize it! The students are at fault, not ourselves. Sociologist Basil Bernstein reminds us in *The Structure of Pedagogic Discourse* (1990) that the velvet gloves of progressive pedagogies, with their invisible rules of discourse, are not necessarily less repressive than the iron fists of traditional visibly authoritarian pedagogies. On the contrary, Bernstein argues, by presenting a benevolent face to students while failing to change the underlying rules of pedagogic discourse, progressive pedagogies may be potentially *more* disempowering for students because they mask the workings of oppression and hence make it harder for students to name and usurp it.

I fell into this trap in my early attempts at developing a more empowering pedagogy. There can be no empowerment unless the teacher acknowledges the power relationships that are inherent in *all* formal teaching contexts and actively renegotiates as much of that power as possible with students. In my earlier years I took Paulo Freire at his word and thought that by sheer dint of goodwill I could create a relation of equality in which my students and I were on the same plane. I thought that my assurances to students would be sufficient to reassure them that they were on an equal footing with me. I always found discussions of grading, for example, irksome and embarrassing. The more fixated students were on grades and grading criteria, the more

purposely vague my answers became. I believed that by providing specific grading criteria I was focusing them on product rather than success. My attitude could be summed up as, "Trust me. If you are sincere and do the work you will have nothing to worry about. This is about learning, not grades." Students, for the most part, went along with cheery bravado, though I have to admit that occasionally a disgruntled student complained to me that others who had done well in my class had been known to boast that they knew how to play my game. This caused me some niggling worry, but I rationalized it away as the words of cynics. You cannot protect yourself from an occasional cynic, after all, can you?

Carol finally cured me. Carol was a graduate student in what was easily the most difficult and frustrating class that I have ever taught. I experienced the class as difficult and frustrating because the students refused to go along with my bland assurances that everything would be all right. Astute at reading the power relations of the university, these mature and worldly wise students decided not to confront me. After some early unsuccessful probings to get me to lay out clear and specific criteria for the class, they took refuge in a concerted strategy of passive resistance. Convinced that they were trying to maneuver me into a traditional didactic role so that they could become passive consumers of knowledge, I refused to give the specific directives they sought. We soon reached a stalemate in the classroom. I claimed ultimate victory, however, when, just as students had anticipated, I retreated to my office once the class was over and graded their performance.

Although many of the students corresponded with me through their journals, Carol expressed most clearly the hypocrisy of my position. In an entry headed with the word "TRUST" in inch-tall letters, she wrote: "Michael said to trust him, but he looked a lot like Nixon when he said 'I am not a crook.'" Carol then went on to explain to me that, my assurances to the contrary, they *knew* how the university worked, grades *did* matter and as long as they mattered, students would be driven primarily by grade-related concerns. They simply could not trust me. Carol was telling me that grade anxiety is not a pathology within students but a product of inequitable power relations within the system. My failure to acknowledge this had negated my well-intentioned efforts at developing a collaborative pedagogy in the class. Her remarks made it clear that I had failed my students. They also raised the terrifying specter that despite overt signs of happiness in my classes generally, I might be failing all of my other students too. What if all of my students were merely playing my game? Even if they were sincere, what harmful messages was I sending? Was my success a delusion? It was the wrenching anxiety that this prospect produced, coupled with Carol's memorable tutelage, that finally forced me to face myself.

Seven years later I have grown more honest. I know that everything that occurs in my classroom is governed by institutional power relations, as well as by choices I make long before I meet my students. There are many aspects of existing reality I cannot change. However, I now try to make as many of these power relations as possible explicit to my students, and hence available for naming and negotiation. Instead of feel-good assurances and vague grading criteria, for example, I now provide detailed, explicit, and negotiable rationales. I also suggest assignments in a wide range of modalities [e.g., oral presentations, formal and informal writings, collaborative and individual activities; performance pieces] and I encourage students to experiment with different modalities and to choose those that best allow them to express their learnings. All students present some form of self-evaluation essay or portfolio toward the end of the semester, and its scope and content is negotiated in relation to their contribution to other assignments during the semester. Finally, we hold one-on-one grading conferences in which we exchange views on how the class was taught, and in what ways they and I have experienced growth. I make a pledge to my students that there will be no surprises when the final grades are announced. This pledge keeps me honest. I have had to develop the courage to look students in the eye and give them an honest appraisal of their work. I can no longer take refuge in my office and exercise my power in private. My new teaching philosophy does not lead to equitable relations with my students. Given race, class, gender, age, and educational differences between my students and I, not to mention the institutional obligations of my role as professor and their roles as students, a truly equitable relationship is a chimera. We can, however, begin to work together to explore some of the limits and possibilities of our situation.

My understanding of other aspects of my teaching has also changed as a result of these insights. Early on, for instance, I rushed to embrace journal writing. Then came autobiographical sharing and the writing of life histories. My early attempts to use these ap-

proaches were insufficiently sensitive to ethical dilemmas such work poses. Given the power relations of schooling and the institutional authority of the teacher, however well hidden, any invitation to students to share their lives is vulnerable to being interpreted as a demand for self-revelation. Such requests pose grave dangers of invasion of privacy, and risk placing the teacher in the role of voyeur. I now take time to explore with my students the ethical implications of all requests for private information, whether written or oral, public or private. We explore the privacy issues and the meaning of informed consent, and I take care to detach this kind of introspective work from any kind of evaluation mechanisms. In addition, I have found that autobiographical work that is not mutual is inherently exploitative. If I hold a belief that autobiographical explorations and sharing are intrinsically beneficial for my students, then I must hold myself to the same standard and be willing to take the same disclosure risks with them that I expect them to take with me. Genuine mutuality is prerequisite to such work.

These concerns have not diminished my belief in the value of the transformative possibilities that emerge from sharing our life stories. I have found Robert Coles's (1989) *The Call for Stories* enormously helpful in enabling me to think through the power of such sharing. For too long I think I was in a hurry. Influenced by the discourses of critical pedagogy and my own impatience for social change, I tried to rush my students into gaining the kinds of critical insights I believed were good for them. I wanted my students to intellectualize issues and develop critical reasoning skills. Now, however, I am much more conscious of the narrative structure of human experience. I believe that autobiographical work is a crucial first step in grounding curriculum in students' lives and experiences. By telling our stories we become conscious of the storied nature of our lives, and, as Freire taught us, once we can name our experience the possibility of changing appears. Through mutual engagement with our life stories we come to name those aspects of cultural socialization we hold in common, as well as to recognize how the unique aspects of our sociocultural and autobiographical experiences have shaped our worldviews. The possibilities for widening these conversations are greatly increased, as Robert Coles teaches us, by engagement with diverse life stories through exploration of diverse fiction, poetry, movies, guest speakers, community action projects, and so on. In my work I refer to this widening as movement from a grounded pedagogy to a pedagogy of multiple discourses.[2]

All of the foregoing is subsumed within a broad notion of political literacy that assumes that my role is to provide opportunities for students to name their world and explore other imaginable worlds, so that they might act to change their worlds. Just as surely as those of us who are teachers mediate culture and knowledges for our students, so too can we provide opportunities for the usurpation of the status quo and the legitimation of dissent and moral possibility. I realize, however, that the pathway to that destination must begin with autobiography and human connection.

Most of all, I have learned to be honest. I have lost patience with professors who, from the safety of their tenured positions in academia, exhort their students to stand up to entrenched power structures. If I cannot find the courage within myself to stand up for what I believe, and to share my struggles as openly as I can so that others may question me and in turn question themselves, I really see no point in teaching. I am grateful to the students and colleagues who have helped me understand this lesson.

Notes

1. For additional discussion of race, class, and identity from autobiographical perspectives see Dews and Law (1995) and Thompson and Tyagi (1996).

2. For details see O'Loughlin (1995).

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Honoring Shared Pathways

Wendy Goulston

Roles have a way of occasionally reversing in the best student/teacher relationships. But there are also times when the spark is not there and the best a teacher can do is simply acknowledge and accept.

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Faculty at Empire State College (ESC, SUNY) foster alternative learning. Known as mentors, we primarily work individually with undergraduate students, facilitating independent learning. To me this means helping students engage with ideas and materials that excite them, that challenge and speak to them deeply; it means that the work we do together addresses what is most important in their lives and continues to yield pleasure and meaning as they read, write, interpret on their own. Although the writing and literature courses I teach have conventional titles (such as Advanced Writing, Women and Literature, The Family in Literature), ESC's valuing of individuality allows each student and teacher to design a uniquely tailored study that is intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually significant. Consequently, the conversations between mentor and student can bring academic and personal pathways together in ways that are transformational.

Accessible routes

It is 1981, and I am a new mentor at Empire. I am pregnant, in my mid-thirties. An art major student named Barbara calls me, saying that her art teacher thinks we should do a literature course together. Fear colors her voice. I ask if she wants to do this and she confesses "Well, I've always been hopeless in English." I assure her that she may be pleasantly surprised and ask what early experiences gave her that sense of hopelessness. She tells how she has dreaded literature courses since fifth grade when her teacher scornfully read her interpretation of a poem to the class.

I have heard many such stories from adult students. For me it was math and science. My muscles, stomach, and skin still remember my teachers' sneering impatience. Public humiliation in elementary school closes off these subjects as a source of pleasure, insight, challenge. For Barbara the very idea of English class evokes shame and anxiety. Now a fine artist in her early fifties, she arrives flushed and tense to our first meeting. When I ask her what kind

of literature she would like to study, she says that she does not think she can pass a college literature course; that she has never been able to understand or talk about poetry and novels; that she fears writing; that she is a visual, not a verbal person. I am pleased she feels free to tell me all this.

I ask her about her artwork and we talk about design. We look at the Picasso poster on my wall. She points out its organization of color and line, its play of symmetry and asymmetry. I enjoy her acute comments as we discuss its "meaning," its use of humor, its appeal. I have my antennae up, screening her words and body language for clues to her intellectual style, half consciously noting what excites, what reassures her, and where our meeting places might be. Finally, I explain that she can use the same well-developed analytical skills and responsiveness to human meanings when responding to literature.

Barbara is amazed to hear that poems, novels, and plays are artworks. Her eyes widen as she hears that literature has organizational patterns that she may see more clearly than others because of her already strong design sense. I suggest that her sophisticated analytical skills, heretofore applied to visual art only, will serve her well in her literature study; that her working, visceral responsiveness to form will enable her to engage more deeply with the literature now; that her experience as a reader will be fuller than it could have been when she was young, because she has been grappling with the very life stuff that literature explores: the whole gamut of human feelings, values, and ideas; the mystery that lies at the heart of all experience; what is knowable and unknowable. As I speak I sense her whole body listening to and embracing this assurance.

Thinking a thematic study will be most satisfying, and provide ready analogies to art, I begin to help Barbara choose a course focus. I ask her what in her life she feels most passionately about. She tells of her art and her children. By now we are relaxed enough to acknowledge the physical assertiveness of my bulging belly. Here we stumble on a second subject about which she knows much more than I do. She has borne and raised five children. She tells me some stories about her children as babies and the shifts in family alliances as they grow older. I suggest she might enjoy studying the family in literature, or mothers and daughters in fiction; perhaps at some later stage, female creativity in art and literature. Gladly she chooses the first. Energy and hope color her voice as she writes down some titles.

As we say good-bye she asks wistfully about my due date. I joke about my fears and appeal to her for reassurance. After all, she has survived this seemingly impossible experience five times. Despite knowing the physiology and anatomy of it, I simply cannot imagine, I tell her, how this already big baby is going to come out of such a small opening. My fears of childbirth are as palpable as hers about literature study. Suddenly she is the teacher; I am the student. The shift in our roles is subtle and startling. She sits down again and quietly meets my eyes for a few sweet moments. She speaks to me briefly, with palpable fellow female feeling and nurturing intent. Her body language offers timeless wisdom, older woman to younger woman.

As our connection deepens, we are both humbled, exhilarated, and empowered by the unusual freedom to learn from and teach each other, to give and receive.

I don't remember what she murmurs. But I do remember shifting to my own raw emotional need for mentoring, for knowledge and support. Safe in this woman's solid presence, I breathe in the knowledge that my body and the birth of my child are essentially outside everyone else's experience, even my husband's. I must do this alone. And yet, I learn here in a new way that I am entering an experience faced by women for millennium. I knew this before, of course, but this woman who has just been so vulnerable in my presence has suddenly offered me what I sense I have given her: an assurance that I already have the wherewithal to make the journey; that the journey has intellectual, emotional, mythic challenges that are the means to growth, that one is both alone and supported by those who have gone before.

For all its everyday look of an ordinary exchange between ESC mentor and student, the moment has a mythic dimension for me. I receive something from her, some kind of knowledge rarely encountered in the classroom. It is not information she imparts; it is more an affirmation and an experience of connection and support. It gives me confidence that I will get through what is momentous, and the encourage-

ment that mother-people are at my side. I realize that she may have felt similarly about our earlier conversation, that we have mentored each other in a deeply helpful way. Together we have established a trusting two-way bond between us, as we both now look to each other for support and information while undergoing a path of learning we know we have to travel alone.

In the next half year we meet fortnightly to discuss novels, poetry, and art. Rich resources for understanding the literature, our own experiences as women in the family and society interweave with analytical interpretations. Barbara starts to talk about her sadness and lack of social cushioning as she goes through menopause. We are at opposite ends of the childbirth journey; I am headed her way. We can vividly appreciate the social construction of women's physical changes and their effects on experience and the literature that illuminates that experience. I learn a great deal about the fluidity of disciplinary boundaries as we explore form and content in the literature and our lives and culture. We explore the body's clear forms, discovering that the meanings of physical change are rich, usually paradoxical, shaped by context and point of view. Her menopause is hidden, its meaning private, shrouded in disappointment and shame, while my pregnancy is public and celebrated. We see in the literature the same social and psychological forces that give meaning to our own experience, and discover how the design and style of the works, along with the readers' experience and culture, shape readers' sense of meaning and their feelings toward character and event.

We speak woman to woman and teacher to student, easily flowing from areas of her authority and expertise to mine. That exchange about childbirth on our first day of meeting had collapsed the power vise that elevates the teacher and diminishes the student. As our connection deepens, we are both humbled, exhilarated, and empowered by the unusual freedom to learn from and teach each other, to give and receive.

Such deeply personal and intellectual exchanges can be encouraged in groups as well as one-to-one. When teacher/student roles become more fluid, we can all teach, listen, and learn from each other. Paradoxically, the dissolving of barriers happens when the teacher is best able to offer students what they need: respect, structure and clear goals, discipline, and freedom. Sometimes, however, neither student nor teacher can provide what is needed. Then a painfully unsuccessful teaching experience can take us into the shadows we would rather not enter, confronting us with barriers to learning and teaching we hate to acknowledge. Learning to grapple with, even to acknowledge these difficult substructures in our teaching journeys can be as transformative as our successes.

More difficult pathways

About six years ago, a young man named Bill enters my office after canceling several appointments. In his early twenties, he appears sullen and unhappy to be there. My intuition tells me he comes from a working class background, dislikes school, and is being coerced by forces outside his control to complete a college degree. Staring at the table leg he mutters, "They say I have to do a literature course. What do you want me to do?"

I ask what he is interested in doing, what kind of stories might appeal to him. Tense silence. "What interests you most in your own life?" Another long silence. I feel mounting frustration. How can one build a contract with a student who won't participate? What or who does he see sitting in my chair? Danger, for sure. Power that will give him trouble, probably. The deeply familiar power of authority, from way back, the sum of all his bad experiences with teachers, parents, the others he has learned to distrust. Can I do anything to change that? How can I reassure him? What might convince him that he has a say in what he learns, that we can walk together?

I am uneasy with this one-way conversation. The long silences seem to magnify the opposition of our hierarchical roles, mocking my efforts to engage him as a co-designer of his syllabus. Bill shrugs his shoulders whenever I make a suggestion. He does not or will not meet my eyes. I cannot tell if he is shy, miserable, defiant, totally unfamiliar with ESC practices, sly. He simply refuses to engage with me in any way I can think of, though I draw on all my 20 years of undergraduate teaching experience. I feel acutely the narrowness of my repertoire of verbal skills with this person (was there some light touch, some joking bridge, that might break the wall of tension?) and my lack of psychological insight. This young man might be clinically depressed and/or might simply be extremely uncomfortable with my style and approach, and my gender. Or all these, and much else.

After 45 minutes of strained effort — his in sitting mainly silent, eyes averted, mine in a fruitless gamut of approaches that all fail to raise a flicker of respon-

siveness — we end where we began. I say our time is up; he must decide on a course of study. "Just tell me what you want me to do," he sputters.

A work relationship with such a student is extremely challenging for me. At our next meeting, when we begin discussing stories, his minimal responses are concrete and nonanalytical; his papers likewise. I dread his visits and his written work. I recoil from the ambushed, hurt, angry feelings that I sense in him. I recognize his stance from my teenage years. I now feel fed up and trapped. I am all too aware of the double bind. If I end our contract I will be using my authority to cut him off without credit (a likely outcome, one way or another), confirming his distrust of authority figures. If I keep trying to work with him, we will both be caught in useless, painful power struggles. I feel as if this path goes nowhere.

I discuss the student with the Center Director. She wants me to persist, to give him a minimally satisfactory grade at the end. I wonder if he should be counseled out of the college, but other instructors have given him satisfactory, if unenthusiastic evaluations and awarded him credit. Bill will be swept on through his degree by the current culture of "getting people through" with "minimal" grades. His cynicism will have been strengthened. He will have missed out on the crucial educational experiences of discovering his interests, savoring his strengths, and working on his weaknesses. His sense of self and the world will be mired in the miasma of indirect innuendo and the pretense of getting by. How might a caring, progressive, privileged educator handle this distressing situation?

The question has pedagogical and personal aspects. The personal has to be attended to first. This experience is undermining my confidence as a teacher/mentor and filling me with abject fury. I must ask myself how this student reminds me of myself, that hated, helpless self I thought I had left behind in adolescence. He does remind me of childhood pain. I reluctantly acknowledge that childhood problems with authority, power, and powerlessness do not conveniently disappear altogether.

An intellectual Jew in an anti-religious, anti-intellectual, chauvinistic Australia, and a "good little girl" all my childhood, I still know what it feels like to hide panic and invisibility behind a mask. Although my mask is quite different from Bill's, I can appreciate the experience of masking.

I remember mouthing the Lord's Prayer under the teachers' surveillance at my Presbyterian school, my mind and soul bracing for Divine retribution. In the classroom I sit meekly behind my desk, silently shrieking at the injustice of a teacher's attack on an innocent student, willing myself into anonymity, fearing I might be next. Aching to fit in, I lie to friends about my good grades, pretending disgust for schoolwork, while working hard to impress teachers. At home, when my father grimaces at my feeble attempts to voice an opposing view, sullen hopelessness floods me, as does a fierce needy love for those with the power to judge, label, and seduce me into learning the tricks to succeed in other people's eyes. To excel at home and at school I sacrifice parts of myself in order to "do well."

What feels initially like a deadend may become a pathway for growth.

Although all this seems far away and long ago, my rejected bits of self apparently remain, with their own mysterious potency. I would like to think that Bill is the obstruction on a path I walk freely; but difficult introspection reveals that we share a pathway that is not easygoing for either of us.

I am humbled. I do not know how to change my interactions with Bill, but I am less apt to dump all the blame on him. In the remaining weeks of the contract I work less hard to "change him"; I accept my limits and his approach to our work; I evaluate it at the end as minimally acceptable. Over the next few years I dedicate myself to learning how to stay grounded and clear-thinking during interactions with people whose behavior, like Bill's, infuriates and paralyzes me.

The pedagogical aspects of work with someone like Bill are as discomforting as the personal, and are often less amenable to change. I have to learn again to accept not-knowing and not-succeeding. Given him and me, the grading system and time frame, and our roles in the institution, there is no magical key to a satisfying work relationship. Perhaps our interactions will make a difference to him in the future. However, I see no evidence that Bill has learned anything since or feels differently from our first meeting. It is unpleasant to acknowledge that I cannot be an effective teacher for him and some others.

For a long time his failure and mine seem inseparable. I would like to say: "He is unteachable in this setting; he does not belong in college. He is not my problem or my responsibility." These statements feel true but taste bad; they smell of privileged power. My ego is sickened and my politics affronted by what is murky, what I cannot change. Yet I must let go, move on, and to the extent possible, learn from that which hurts.

Having painfully, increasingly, come to know the "Bill" in me, when I find myself with such students now, I can sometimes better honor our shared dilemmas and tolerate the feelings that arise. I am more separate, less angry with him and more with the system. I have learned that when I am unduly affected by a student in an unmanageable way, it is freeing to clarify what I imagine I have in common with that student, particularly the underlying emotions and the power structure of which we are both an interrelated part. Sometimes I nonjudgmentally discuss the problem with the student. Sometimes this seems unnecessary. I think my body language has changed, reflecting more openness, patience, and interest. Although I thought that my ability and wish to listen to Bill were genuine (if strained), I am open about my mixed feelings and their sources now. This can lead to our exploring what gets in our way, and bring us to literature study as authentic exchange. But not always.

Thus what feels initially like a deadend may become a pathway for growth. Experiences of this kind can teach us to own our anger, disappointment, and guilt. We can help students work as best they can when we do not burden them with our projections and impose on them our unresolved issues. Discovering what we share with those we teach and learn from helps us to accept the limits of institutions, of students, and of ourselves. We appreciate more fully the joyful satisfactions that come with students and colleagues we can deeply work and grow with.

We travel pathways and carry burdens with both the students we love to journey with and those who seem to slow us down and grind us to a halt. At these stopping places we might open our eyes, take stock, and painfully acknowledge common ground and differences. Whoever our students are, wherever we take each other, we meet ourselves and the Other on the road. We never know what we might learn and how we might move forward.

The Art of Transformation

Jazz as a Metaphor for Education

Alfonso Montuori

Real education and jazz have much in common: creativity, learning, collaboration, improvization, and social organization.

The author wishes to thank Rob Koegel for invaluable editorial assistance in the development of this paper.

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Is the classroom more like a battlefield, a factory, an orchestra, or a jam session? Is a teacher more like a military officer, a manager, an orchestra conductor, or a big-band leader? The choice of metaphor is not inconsequential. My experiences as a professional musician and record producer suggest that metaphors drawn from music and jazz can provide rich insights about learning, creativity, and transformation.

In this article I first discuss briefly the role of metaphor in shaping the way we think about education and organizations. I then compare the hierarchical organization of a classical symphony orchestra with the industrial Machine Age factory/office system and the educational system that arose along with it. I contrast this with the organization of a small jazz band. The educational implications of the jazz metaphor for education are discussed in relation to creativity, learning, collaboration, improvisation, and social organization.

The need for new metaphors

Traditional educational systems groom us for rote, repetitive, blue-collar factory work or white-collar office work. Today, management philosophers like Charles Handy (1989), Peter Drucker (1992), and others argue that the workforce of the future will consist of self-employed knowledge workers with a "portfolio" of different interests and capacities. The shift, we are told, is from brawn to brain, and from repetition to creativity. If flexibility, innovation, and ongoing learning are some of the basic capacities we need to develop, does our present educational system prepare us for the workplace of tomorrow? Most researchers would argue not. Indeed the deeply embedded guiding metaphors for education still draw on the regimented factory or the hierarchical office, and the metaphors guiding industry are still very much drawn from war and the military (Montuori and Conti 1993; Morgan 1986). I believe our meta-

phors should be expanded for an education that prepares us to work in the 21st century and also shows us, as Mary Catherine Bateson (1990) put it, how to "compose a life."

Organization past and present: The lessons from music

The evolution of social organization is prefigured in the organizational innovations of musical ensembles (Attali 1985). There is a remarkable similarity between the way two traditional bureaucratic organizations, a school and a classical symphony orchestra, are structured. There is the same pyramidal structure, the same top-down chain of command-and-control. There are also similarities between the types of skills required. Classical musicians need to learn to play their instruments in such a way as to reproduce, note for note, the music presented to them on their score. In nearly all cases, no deviation from the score is allowed. By stressing control and predictability, our industrial, Machine Age perspective on classical music has removed the unpredictability of innovation and self-determination (previous to around 1800 musicians were allowed greater improvisational liberties) (Attali 1985).

Our educational system prepares us for repetitive work in factories and offices by imposing the hierarchical organization of human enterprise and accepting it as the only possible model. The segmented, fragmented organization of education into small compartments, each engaged in the study of a rigidly defined discipline, leads to blinkered, assembly-line over-specialization (Morin 1994; Ray 1994). The adage of divide and rule captures the effects of this overspecialization and compartmentalization on the human mind in the context of rigidly hierarchical organizational structures. If creativity and innovation are partly the result of making new connections, then the traditional organizational hierarchy, whether in schools or business, is its eternal enemy.

In jazz music the situation is quite different. Most jazz musicians are more like Handy's self-employed knowledge workers with a portfolio of capacities and interests than symphonic players with a steady union gig. Jazz musicians typically work briefly, in "virtual teams," on a project-by-project basis, for a recording, a concert, or concert series. They are comfortable with the need to learn to collaborate quickly, size up situations, and deal with the insecurity of not having a steady team and a steady job.

Frequently, jazz is performed by musicians who have never or rarely played together (pick-up bands). These groups nevertheless manage to sound "tight" and "swinging." The music is typically not entirely written out. Some parts may be, but generally the "chart" provides the musicians with the bare bones of a melody and the chord progression. If a musician calls a tune for the band to perform, with or without sheet music, the melody and the chord progression are the constraints the band works with — which in turn create possibilities. What can we do with an old chestnut like "Satin Doll?" There is a shared knowledge and language — a culture — that unites the musicians: the tradition, the repertoire, the great players, the mastery of the instrument, the ability to work under trying circumstances and yet perform as a creative group.

Unpredictability is a crucial ingredient in the music. In most cases, unless we're dealing with a big band, musicians are given a degree of latitude in their performance that is not totally in the bandleader's control: jazz cannot be micromanaged. Improvising during jazz performances is a process of on-the-spot composition. This requires a very strong awareness of one's musical environment, as well as the ability to handle the unexpected and to *create* the unexpected.

A very important contribution jazz makes is its focus on improvisation, and the *learning* of improvisation. Despite popular opinion to the contrary, improvisation has to be learned: it is by no means a process of "anything goes." The word improvisation can be traced to the Latin word "improvisus," which means "unforeseen." At its best, collective improvisation requires a mixture of trust and risk-taking. There has to be enough trust in one's own capacities and in those of one's fellow musicians to feel secure. But there also has to be a willingness to take risks, explore uncharted territories, and create excitement as one pushes one's own capacities.

One of the most profound lessons I have learned from music is about collaboration, learning, improvisation, and creativity, or social creativity, as I now refer to it (Montuori and Purser 1996). Collective improvisation requires an ongoing process of attention, awareness, and sensitivity to those around us: It is a process of ongoing learning the likes of which is rarely found elsewhere. As Mary Catherine Bateson has shown, the ability to improvise becomes crucial in a culture where change has become a constant. Jazz musicians perform in a context created by their fellow musicians which is at once challenging and familiar. Musicians push each other to perform

better in a spirit of mutual support, trust, and partnership. The music is an emergent property of the whole band. As such, both the individual parts and the end results are quite unpredictable. In this sense, innovation is "built-in" to this organizational model — always within the context of a set of specific constraints, themselves decided upon by the group.

Beyond individualism and collectivism

At this time, one of the most pressing societal problems, felt particularly strongly in the United States, is the relationship between individual and community (Bellah, et al. 1985; Slater 1991). Ray (1994) has argued that despite much talk about collaboration, for instance, schools are still essentially structured in such a way as to exclusively reward individuals. The same is true for academics, who are often actively penalized for having co-authored papers in their efforts to get tenure, on the assumption that collaboration lessens, rather than enhances, individual merit.

Jazz musicians show how it is possible to transcend the typical oppositional group/individual dichotomy that is so often set up in our culture. Good jazz musicians learn how to solo — how to stand out from the rest of the band, and also how to "comp," how to back someone else up. This is particularly vital for rhythm section players — the drums, bass, and piano. They are called upon to provide a *creative and supportive* background for other soloists — and for each other. Their role is to make other people sound better. For instance, the piano player plays pretty harmonies on ballads, or the drummer may give fiery support on up-tempo tunes. Jazz provides a much needed example of collaborative, *social* creativity — a phenomenon that is not widely understood in our individualist culture (Montuori and Purser 1996).

My colleague Ron Purser and I have developed an exercise for group-learning where a group listens to a performance by Miles Davis ("Freddy Freeloader," from the classic album *Kind of Blue*), and then tries to embody the qualities, skills, and characteristics they imagine the musicians to have (Purser and Montuor 1995). One of the most important learnings for most participants is how closely the musicians in the group listen to each other — despite the fact they are also playing and at times, soloing. Listening, which is typically viewed as a "passive" activity, occurs at the same time as the "active" playing of one's instrument, one of the seemingly paradoxical phenomena of creativity (Barron 1990, 1995). Tellingly, one of the biggest compliments one can pay a jazz musician is "you have big ears." This exercise has been quite successful in introducing jazz as a "generative metaphor" that shows how it is possible to be a team player without losing one's individuality, how to move to a place where both/and replace the cultural either/or of follower/leader, creative/conforming.

The jazz metaphor suggests a different way of conceptualizing supportive roles. We are culturally conditioned to hear only the soloist and ignore the important role of the players supporting the soloist. Indeed, we typically fail to see that the soloist is in fact engaged in a dialogue with the players who are at that point in a supportive role — the piano player playing appropriate chords, the drummer adding rhythmic support, and so forth. In our individualist culture, supporting roles are viewed as inferior. In jazz, they are vital and constantly changing — at some points, everybody is supporting everybody else! We therefore typically ignore the ground in favor of the figure, and relegate the former to an inferior role in a hierarchy: our thinking tends to be dichotomizing, decontextualizing, and ranking (Eisler 1987; Montuori 1989; Morin 1994).

As Purser and I argue elsewhere (Montuori and Purser 1996), our culture's emphasis on individualism and the methodological reductionism in our thinking create cultural "blind spots" that prevent us from understanding a systemic, interactive process such as social creativity. Anybody who has ever heard a Miles Davis, John Coltrane, Bill Evans, or Chet Baker ballad knows the degree of sensitivity and vulnerability that is involved in such a performance. What is even more remarkable is that this is generally done in the context of a group effort. This degree of vulnerability is achieved in discourse with others — wordless, to be sure, but audible for anybody with ears to hear. The other musicians are providing a context in which the soloist can speak, become open and vulnerable. The amount of trust required is substantial, and crucial for this process (cf. Mezirow 1991). I should point out that jazz musicians are not always successful at creating such partnership relations off the band stand. Musicians in bands argue and fight like everybody else. But jazz musicians have created a model that I believe can be transferred to other social systems and settings. If we are to benefit from the jazz metaphor, we need to study the qualities musicians embody during performance, learn from them, and apply them to other

contexts. We must learn how to translate musical performance into everyday life and nonmusical interaction. The jazz metaphor illustrates how creativity can be an emergent property that results from the relations between members of a system and their environment. It invites us to think systemically, contextually, and relationally. Riane Eisler's notion of partnership is the second touchstone necessary in order to understand social creativity.

Reflecting on jazz, learning, and transformation

Eisler (1987, 1995) and Koegel (1995) have pointed out that much of our educational system is still based on what Eisler calls a *dominator* system: it is rigidly hierarchical, male-dominated, and in many cases marked by a high degree of violence (see also Edelsky 1992, p. 324). It is still very much a fear-based system, rather than a trust-based, polycentric, gender-holistic *partnership* system.

And if, as Eisler (1987) suggests, our culture is basically a dominator culture, then social creativity and transformative learning will be undermined precisely because the dominator system sets up an opposition between self and other, part and whole. Mutually beneficial, "partnership" relationships are hard to envision and to create in such a culture. Vulnerability, the relinquishment of stereotypical roles — whether strong *or* weak — and the generation of radical alternatives is very hard, unless the possibility of partnership is considered a foundation for relation.

Koegel (1995, p. 9) wrote that "Nearly all of the teenage students in my sociology courses, and most of the graduate students in my education courses, agree on two key points: first, that students of all ages desperately need a place to explore the causes of domination, the potential of resistance, and the promise of partnership; and second, that this rarely occurs in the classroom." This is a crucial point. To engage in this work, we must learn to build the kind of supportive, safe spaces musicians create for each other when they perform.

This kind of space is not readily available in a dominator system. Consider the typical classroom: it is fear-based; hyper-individualism is valued above collaboration, and power-over is ubiquitous (Kreisberg 1992). To the extent that such classrooms are the norm, we cannot create partnership, social justice, and an educational system that nourishes transformation. If, on the other hand, we show that it is possible to collaborate *and* be creative, that one can have power *with* others, in partnership, then we may begin to overcome some of the barely conscious obstacles to partnership.

Koegel (1995, p. 10), citing the work of Freire (1994), states that "establishing a classroom climate that supports the risks involved in 'edgework' is an 'essential step' in creating a 'pedagogy of hope.'" Once we establish the need for a generative context, a space where we can open up, let go, challenge the dynamics of domination, and envision alternatives, we have to ask: What might the characteristics of such a space be? Does the context have the capacity to hold greater and greater degrees of heterogeneity, of diversity? Does it embrace difference? Or does it move toward homogeneity and the suppression of differences? Does it tolerate ambiguity, uncertainty, complexity? Is independence of judgment (Barron 1990) encouraged or rejected as mere stupidity, hubris? Is the group capable of creating trust, caring, and support? These characteristics are not necessarily thought of as creative products. Nor do we think of them as the product of a transformation. But the creation of a trusting, supportive, caring environment in which students can take personal risks, express fears and hopes, critique structures of domination, and envision alternatives is a creative act. Such a supportive context is built on trust, mutual respect, and ongoing cooperation. This supportive social environment nourishes creativity in a way that is truly creative. In this sense, building a generative, supportive context creates what I, following Eisler (1987), refer to as a partnership system. And given our present deep-seated cultural and institutional orientation toward domination, patterns of partnership are not readily forthcoming: in a dominator-oriented system, a trust-based, supportive, generative social context does not "just happen." But as some of my experiences as a student and as a teacher suggest, such partnership-oriented developments can occur.

Remembering/Creating

Some of my own most joyful experiences of learning were in Greece, at the little Italian primary school where our headmaster creatively blurred the boundaries between learning and playing. This gifted teacher converted what are notoriously tedious subjects — such as the multiplication table and a veritable horror of Italian language education, "analisi logica" — into exciting journeys of collective exploration. We were all looking for patterns in the tables, playing games with the numbers, and ac-

tively discovering rather than mechanically learning. My Italian teacher had shown us how to improvise with ideas, how to engage in what I now think of as "mind-jazz."

The mind-jazz he supported involved an enormous playfulness with ideas, the freedom to take a theme — an idea, a mathematical or other problem — and look at it in a number of different ways. Our teacher invited us to learn in the same way that a musician might explore a melody and chord structure in improvisation by approaching it with different harmonic, rhythmic, and melodic perspectives. Time and again he showed us it was okay to make mistakes. Indeed, he showed us mistakes were a source of learning, not of shame, in the same way that a musician may cleverly use a "bum" note to build a whole new phrase, incorporating it within the larger body of melodic development. We were playing together, not against each other. I never remember competing *to beat* somebody with my answer or my essay. But I do remember being spurred on by somebody else's work in the same way that I would later be spurred on by the soloist before me on stage. As with jazz, the point is not to "beat" the previous soloist, but to be challenged by the power of their performance to get a great performance out of your own playing. After all, since the sound of the band is the sound of everybody onstage, it's in everyone's interest that *everybody* should sound great. Truly great jazz musicians like Miles Davis owe part of their greatness to the fact that they surrounded themselves with the best musicians, so as to be continuously challenged.

Not all challenges involve making "boring" material fun, clearly. Some material can be painful, profound, and disturbing. Edgework of the kind Koegel speaks of requires that razor's edge of challenge and security, of risk and trust. Such trust is rare, but I have encountered it while teaching adult doctorate students in an on-line program, offered by the School for Transformative Learning at the California Institute of Integral Studies in San Francisco. Here, students find a safe space to explore various issues through the use of on-line personal journals and asynchronous virtual classrooms. As a result, students feel that they can discuss how their learning affects them, and how their personal experiences affect their learning. It helps them to both integrate their learnings on a personal level and participate in the integration with their colleagues and with faculty. Like musicians backing up a soulful, vulnerable solo, our on-line collaborations often provide quiet assent and supportive words for that which a particular student has shared. They also contain beautifully placed chords and different harmonies that allow students to explore the melody from a different perspective. Participating in this kind of interaction can be quite healing. Students often tell me that it can play a crucial role in their own transformation. Although I rarely use the term, I do believe that this has become a "sacred space" for students.

I know there have been several cases of significant personal transformation — Aha!-type insights that have truly transformed the students and the instructors. As important as such insights are, I'm far more concerned about the degree of trust and openness that enables students to handle these issues and to live with their differences. And most students agree that the development of a learning community that can hold differences and disagreements, and that not only remains civil but caring, is itself a remarkable transformative process.

I believe that transformative learning does more than change us. We can be changed by education when we learn a new skill or trade. Transformation, in sharp contrast, involves the whole person: feelings, beliefs, everything. By bringing in our own journals (in the case of this on-line program), and by thoroughly linking theory and praxis, we bring the whole person into the educational process. This works particularly well since the students remain in their own communities, and can therefore test and apply their learnings in their own communities and workplaces. Hence, much like music-making at its best, we bring in technical expertise, as well as our own feelings and interpretations of the world. As a result, we communicate more fully and we learn more fully.

Conclusion

What can we learn from jazz, and how can we create the mind-jazz of learning and transformation on a different stage? In order to reflect on the process of collective improvisation and social creativity, three fundamental capacities are required: the capacity to engage in thinking that is contextual, conjunctive, and systemic rather than reductive, disjunctive, and abstract (Morin 1994, forthcoming); the capacity to understand and embody the notion of partnership, of mutually beneficial collaboration (in contrast to domination); and the capacity to understand one's own creative process and that of others. These

three "capacities" interact in such a way that creativity, for example, is understood within the context of a systemic, partnership approach. This means that creativity is viewed relationally and contextually, as interaction occurring within a system that exists in an environment in time and space, and where the observing system must be understood along with the observed system. Such a view replaces the traditional polarization between the individual and her or his environment by situating the individual within a potentially synergistic and supportive environment. The language of both/and complements the language of either/or. A partnership approach to creativity means, among other things, viewing within a gender-holistic framework, paying attention to the way in which women have historically embodied creativity, and an awareness of the moral implications of creative acts (Montuori and Purser 1995).

An education that nurtures our own creativity in partnership with others and gives us the conceptual tools of systems theory to break free of the stranglehold of dichotomizing and decontextualizing reductionism provides the capacities needed to create our lives together. As I have shown elsewhere (Montuori 1989, 1991; Montuori and Conti 1993), these are what I believe to be the three vital cornerstones for a curriculum that fosters the capacities needed to collaborate on the process of transformation.

The new metaphors still need further development. And jazz is by no means the only metaphor I would propose, though I do believe it is a very generative one. If used with the knowledge that they are indeed metaphors of transformation, a plurality of metaphors for learning, creating, and organizing can create a rich, diverse theoretical base for our thinking. I hope the ensuing dialogue among metaphors and among educators will be conducted in the spirit of partnership.

Note

1. The most cogent and thorough development of an alternative paradigm that allows us to think beyond the individual/community opposition has been developed, in my opinion, by the leading French sociologist Edgar Morin (1994, forthcoming) with his "complex thought," an approach drawing on systems theory and the human sciences. Morin's work provides a touchstone of the conceptual framework needed to make the jazz metaphor explicit and conceptually feasible.

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One Teacher's Journey

Perspectives on Change

Devin G. Thornburg

The author reflects on how his teaching has been changed by the realization that the personal histories of his students affect how they experience his classes.

I have always been an avid student of human change and growth. As a teacher, my most transformative experiences have involved shifts in my beliefs about what changes are possible, which are important, and how they occur within educational relationships. These shifts have occurred because of what Dewey (1933) described as "reflective action," namely: "active, persistent and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in light of the grounds that support it and the further consequences to which it leads...." (p. 9). The process of active reflection has not always been easy, at times even painful, yet it in itself has been transformative — one more venue for change, one more opportunity for professional and personal growth.

As I write and begin this reflective process, contrasting yet intertwining images pervade. One image conjures up continuity. To paraphrase the novelist Willa Cather (1918), people do not change as they get older; rather, they become more like themselves. A co-existing image of discontinuity comes from the poetry of Matthew Arnold (1867), who depicted change as a sudden development — a "twinkling" — that is both unexpected and irrevocable. A third image situates these other two within relative terms: the relationship between canvas and viewer as portrayed in Monet's impressionistic studies of light. Here, shapes and forms emerge, dematerialize, and re-emerge in the ongoing flux of translucence and shadow.

Together, these images stand as metaphors for my experiences of change as a teacher. All are equally valid and equally determined by my current views and interests. As Riegel (1978) points out, the recollection of significant events in one's own history is dialectically related to the construction of meaning within current experience. In this sense, current experience serves as an everchanging prism for looking back in one's personal history. And, as I was reminded during this reflective process, the personal

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histories of my students are very much a part of how they experience my teaching. The present informs how I (we) make meaning of the past, the past informs the experience of the present. Recognizing that dynamic has been critical in redefining my teaching conceptually and in practice.

I once believed that the knowledge I taught within the social sciences merely represented larger systems of thought that students could learn and use in their lives as educators.

My students are preservice and inservice teachers; I teach psychology courses at the graduate and undergraduate level. The transformative experiences I have encountered as a teacher fit into three general and overlapping categories, each involving changes in my beliefs about: the abstracted knowledge I teach, the pedagogical strategies I use, and my various roles within the classroom.

Immediately I am struck by how rare and vivid the moments are that I can recall in regard to the first category, the abstracted knowledge I teach. I once believed that the knowledge I taught within the social sciences merely represented larger systems of thought that students could learn and use in their lives as educators. I now believe, instead, that this knowledge both represents and is organized within larger, historically informed discourses about power and ethics in contemporary life. As students learn this historically-bounded knowledge, they are also engaging and evaluating these discourses, developing their own perspective.

One incident several years ago ultimately led to this reconceptualization. It was a landmark, an invitation to defining a central question within cognitive theories of development that has occupied me ever since. During a summer institute for teachers, I was attempting to model instructional strategies for low-achieving students based on a Vygotskian perspective. We were discussing the use of "scaffolding." This involves the support offered by the teacher on those aspects of the task the student cannot independently accomplish. It is done by, for example, modeling the steps that remain to complete the task, reformulating a question about a topic too complex for the student to answer, or explicitly revealing the assumptions made by the teacher in the previous statement or action (Stone 1989). One participant — a veteran teacher with more than 20 years of classroom experience — commented that this approach appeared to "assume that the teacher and student trust one another."

Her point left me silent. Several thoughts simultaneously fell into place, inviting me to think about fundamental questions about the knowledge I teach: Can the process of learning be studied apart from the motivation to learn? Should a paradigm of theory and research be used that integrates cognitive and affective dimensions? Would such a paradigm involve inclusion of the learning relationship itself and its historical formation? Clearly, the question raised by this teacher precipitated a shift in my role from teacher to learner, was experienced by me as an unexpected insight, and resulted in a critical reexamination of the assumptions organizing my own knowledge. The teacher's years of experience and her interest in continuing to learn and grow represented a role shift that paralleled my own.

Within the second category, change in my beliefs about pedagogical strategies, there are considerably more moments I recall as significant. As a whole, these moments represent a shift in my pedagogy from a vision of the "learner-as-student" to one that requires the learner to take another perspective: either as a teacher or a "student" of one's own teaching. Instead of using strategies that emphasize transmission of knowledge, I now believe that students of education learn most effectively when creating and using knowledge through activity that supports thinking like a teacher. Those with teaching experience learn by using strategies that encourage them to become more analytical and reflective about their knowledge and work in the classroom.

These changes in my beliefs about effective pedagogy, in contrast to the first category, have been more conscious, incremental, and inductive. Over the years, I have purposely sought to evaluate the effectiveness of these strategies by monitoring students' understanding and application of knowledge as well as by soliciting their reflective evaluations of the various activities I have implemented. Through this fairly deliberative process, I have modified my teaching methods. I now, for example, emphasize repeated application of knowledge to realistic class-

room problems, peer discussion of solutions, and ongoing examination of personal values in relation to this knowledge. These strategies help prospective and current teachers master and evaluate what they have met in my classes. They are, in other words, presently effective strategies; if I remain true to my conviction in ongoing self-reflection, I am sure to keep modifying them time and time again.

Several experiences illustrate the change in my beliefs about pedagogy with teachers. Compared to the previously described incident, these experiences act more as mirrors or illustrations of change rather than as catalysts; they in themselves did not initiate change, but, rather, they illustrate it. A relatively straightforward example is my use in the classroom of a number of case studies of children with whom I have worked. I do this in order to highlight the connections between theory and practice. I offer an abstracted, formal presentation of theory with a subsequent discussion of a case to exemplify (or contrast) the theory and to encourage students to make these connections. In one graduate cognition course for preservice teachers, I was suddenly faced with a wall of blank stares. I stopped and reflected aloud on why this approach "wasn't working." Several students suggested that it would help to discuss the case first so that I could link the discussion of theory back to points made.

It proved to be a useful modification of my strategy for these students. I believe that it is their prior experience as students that made them passively resist knowledge rather than challenge its meaningfulness or my authority to teach it. By asking the students at that moment to take the perspective of experts about their own learning process, I shifted in my own role from teacher to "collaborator." In a fundamental way, they could not change their role until I changed mine. Their past informed their experience of the present and until I redefined the present — provided them with a different experience of who the teacher *and* student can be — they could not redefine their roles.

Far more complex a concern for me, though, in relation to my instructional strategies, is what motivates students — how are pedagogical strategies and student motivation intertwined? For years, I believed that students would become more intrinsically interested in learning if, rather than using external incentives, I offered them choices on projects, alternative assignments, and opportunities to revise their work. Although students have often responded with appreciation, there are countless instances in which their overriding concern has been the final grade. This response is not surprising. The culture of schools — and the students' enculturation within them — is organized around outcomes rather than processes and peer competition rather than individual mastery.

I now believe, instead, that this knowledge both represents and is organized within larger, historically informed discourses about power and ethics in contemporary life.

A similar dynamic often occurs with school-based workshops with current teachers. My efforts to encourage a collaborative and open relationship is often superseded by the instrumental motivation of obtaining inservice credits for participation. Over time, I have come to believe that a student's or workshop participant's motivation at any one time is a multileveled, somewhat unpredictable, and highly contextualized state that instructional strategies will only partially address. As with the previous example, I have purposely asked teachers to collaborate with me in examining their motivational states and, with encouragement, they have offered candid responses. I now believe that the collaboration necessary to do this depends upon teachers' experiences with their administrators in relation to decision-making as well as on the role consultants have previously played in their schools. If, for example, teachers perceive those in authority as coercive and unresponsive, the invitation to collaborate is rejected. If they perceive those in authority as responsive, the invitation to collaborate is welcomed. The same is true with students. The power of their educational biographies is one variable in many in understanding the complex dynamics of what motivates them to learn; it is one variable in many in understanding how productive modified instructional strategies may be.

This motivational issue is not unrelated to my third category, change in beliefs about myself as a teacher. As with the first category, my recollections here are vivid and yet relatively infrequent. Because of the convictions I have described (and perhaps

because of that mysterious entity known as "character"), I believe that I am open and accessible to students. One incident, though, dramatically shifted my perception of myself as a teacher. A semester not too long ago, a very bright and facile student enrolled in my undergraduate course. It was clear to me that his primary motivation was to receive the highest mark for the course while doing the minimum necessary to obtain it. We developed an easy rapport and I enjoyed our conversations. When final exams were graded and calculated, the student did not receive the highest grade. He confronted me, arguing that it was an unfair evaluation of his work. After we looked over and discussed his work, he finally agreed with my judgment. I asked if there were other issues that might have led him to conclude that I was unfair. He was silent, then stated, "you're so nice we think you'll be an easy grader."

"Forced" to look at myself at that moment from another's perspective, I saw that there was some contradiction in the meaning of my behavior. I had believed that my tendency to be interpersonally supportive and my efforts to be academically challenging would increase student motivation. But I was confronted with another view of my role based upon this student's prior school experiences. I now perceive this incident as a point of personal "crisis" that has led to my current belief that students have a wide range of responses to my personality that are related to their own expectations of classroom learning. Again, educational biographies proved to be very present, ubiquitous, influencing students' expectations and perceptions.

Another more painful incident also merits telling. Years ago, I began teaching a workshop on cultural diversity within the classroom to current teachers. As one component, we addressed classroom behavior of cultural groups through role plays and simulations. I believed this to be a positive and powerful experience for the teachers. Upon reading one of their journals, I was shocked to discover that one participant viewed this focus of the workshop as evidence of my racism. I was initially both outraged and disoriented by the accusation, particularly as I had no previous indication of the teacher's response to the workshop activities or my values. I immediately wrote a diatribe in response, defensive and unthinking. Upon completion and rereading what I had written, however, I reflected more carefully on what she had written and began to consider what prompted her opinions. Although I could not understand how she saw me as racist, I was even more puzzled by her choice to write about it in this manner in a journal entry. Perhaps it was an invitation for dialogue, a dialogue I needed to pursue. It then occurred to me that there may be very little I could do to change her view. Although I was confused and troubled by her perception of me, I was able to accept a newly articulated belief that I could not control how those I taught responded to me personally. In this situation, my role as the teacher was superseded by her perception of me as a moral agent.

This was the perspective I took when I approached her about the journal entry after the next class. With a mixture of trepidation and anxiety, I asked her what in my behavior or words had made her feel that I was racist. In essence, she responded that I appeared to treat cultural difference as something "trendy" and depicted certain groups in ways that denied any individual variation. When I asked for an example, she became very quiet and finally said, "I don't think you have the right to talk about discrimination and social oppression as a white, privileged male." Attempting to respond to this in a helpful way, I asked why she felt that I did not have the right, adding, "and isn't that, itself, a stereotype?" She appeared to struggle for a response, finally saying, "I don't feel comfortable discussing it because you are the instructor of the course."

In retrospect, I realize now that her honesty opened up the possibility for further dialogue. She felt oppressed by me by virtue of my authority as the teacher — a white, male teacher — and I needed to respond knowing that this was her experience of me. At the time, however, I felt that she was asking to close down the conversation; that she felt at immediate risk. I did not know how to transcend her experience of me or her perception of teachers and power relations in schools in order to continue the interchange. I felt helpless, trapped in my white, male status. It was, ultimately, a painful but valuable lesson: as teachers, we need to engage with students in terms of where they are and the perceptual frameworks they bring. We need to meet these perceptions as honestly as possible if we are to transform the assumptions that shape and mold classroom cultures.

These three categories of change in my beliefs have very different origins, functions, and dynamics, which leads me to wonder about another very different arena, that of educational research. If the experience of change described by teachers in the profes-

sional literature involves several intricately related levels, then efforts should be made by researchers to differentiate those levels in considering the implications for teacher education. In all three categories, however, I experienced shifts in perspective — on the students' and my own part — allowing me to view my professional work in another light. Out of this insight I offer another suggestion, or query, concerning research on teacher change: that the "object" of study might best be the relationship between teacher and student and the socially and historically informed perspectives they bring to their encounters with each other. This type of research might allow educators a more comprehensive and useful understanding of how to effect change within classroom settings rather than the traditional reliance on decontextualized aspects of, for example, behavior or instructional strategies.

This recognition of the power or vitality of context is much of what I have learned through this reflective process. Writing these reflections has been difficult — indeed, it is the most challenging writing I have ever encountered. I felt inarticulate and unable to sort out my ideas, even though I knew the terrain I wanted to cover. I intentionally stayed away from current theory or research on educational change as I was concerned that I would use other writers' voices rather than my own. It was only through the process of writing it, however, that I clearly organized and evaluated my beliefs about teaching. Again, the reflective practice was in itself transformative, opening, at times hesitantly, windows into my convictions about teaching, and more personally about myself as teacher.

The writing — and accompanying reflective process — also reminded me that reflection and subsequent change are social processes. When I received comments from reviewers, I was initially unable to take their perspective and their own historically informed discourse to evaluate my work. As I began to consider each editorial suggestion, I realized that what seemed like simple grammatical changes often implied different meanings that challenged me to examine my own implicit beliefs. For example, I tended to use a passive voice in describing the changes I had experienced whereas the reviewers repeatedly suggested that I use a more active construction. More than stylistic, they were proposing that the changes in beliefs I experienced were more under my personal control than the original draft portrayed.

Another vivid example is the editing of the eleventh paragraph of these reflections. One reviewer suggested that I add a final sentence to extend the point that I changed my role from teacher to collaborator by adding, "in a fundamental way, they could not change their role until I changed mine." I wrestled with the inclusion of this sentence without understanding why I was wrestling with it. After much thought I finally understood that the sentence implied a difference in power between myself and my students that required a change on my part first. I intended to imply that change was more synchronous, denying the element of power. And yet perhaps the element of power was critical, hidden from my eyes. That possibility existed and, although admittedly a bit reluctantly, I took it seriously. In the end, I included the sentence and continue to reflect on my beliefs about it in relation to the reviewer's own perspective. One perspective feeds the other. Change, it seems, is a never ending process.

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Book Reviews

Where "Something Catches" Work, Love and Identity in Youth

by Victoria I. Muñoz

Published by SUNY Press (Albany, NY), 1995.

Reviewed by Barbara Miller

In the nineties, youth development research is shifting from a focus on deficits — alienation, economic and social deprivation, teen pregnancy, and dysfunctional families — toward topics and questions that help us understand the resiliency and potential of youth. By focusing on the skills, dreams, and capacities of individual youth rather than generational stereotypes, educators should be able to develop a broader commitment to youth. For those interested in understanding how and why youth thrive and grow — or at least survive when confronted with a wide range of negative environmental circumstances, Victoria Muñoz offers a qualitative research model that is striking both for its perspective and its methodology.

Her perspective, firmly grounded by democratic ideals and commitments to social justice, is complex in its expression: "When I think of an education for freedom, justice, and peace, I yearn to connect love and work; to transform through this connection an oppressive society; to understand what it takes psychologically to bring forth the genius, the passion, the joy. And I yearn for places where wholeness can develop instead of violence; places of work and love" (pp. 38-39). As a reflection of deeply held beliefs, Victoria Muñoz has conducted a search for not only the intersection between an occupation and identity but also an understanding of the critical developmental moments among youth in her native land of Puerto Rico. While her study is clearly set in a political context and gives insight into the economy and social system of Puerto Rico, Muñoz is asking and responding to basic questions that are of interest to youth in all cultures and nations — particularly the question — "How can I become something more?"

Where Something Catches successfully gives voice to youth who have been silenced by their circumstances. The volume presents vivid portraits — narratives and photographs of 56 Puerto Rican youth who are preparing to meet the challenges of assuming adult roles and responsibilities. Collectively, their stories, as gathered through interviews at four school/training sites including a music conservatory, a Jesuit seminary, a government military academy, and a Catholic-sponsored community school, provide an opportunity to consider how work and love come to be aligned in a variety of ways. At the heart of this study are important questions about how the youth understand and experience love and work and how this understanding shapes their identity.

At each site, Ms. Muñoz conducted an open-ended semiclinical interview, each lasting from 15 to 90 minutes, using an 11-question protocol. Rather than asking youth about their problems and their needs, she framed questions to learn about their abilities, knowledge, and goals. She began with conceptual questions — For you, what is work? How do you define it? What meaning does it have for you? What work do you have love for? Do you feel you are part of a community? — and ended with a question that allowed each youth to tell their personal story — Could you tell me the story of how you arrived at this work? Because the interviews were conducted as a mutually constructed dialectic, each youth could tell a personal story. The need for taking a broader look at youth development is documented by the fact that she found the things that youth cared about were rarely connected with schoolwork.

For those interested in what the youth in this study do care about, Chapters 6 through 11 are devoted to a discussion of the themes that emerged from Muñoz's careful and deliberate reading of all the narratives. In these chapters, the reader will find that the voices of the youth who were interviewed and the author are introduced and highlighted with relevant quotations from the literature of Norman MacLean, Alice Walker, and Toni Morrison; the poetry of Gloria Anzaldua, Jorie Graham, and Denise Levertov, and the essays of Paulo Friere and Maxine Greene. In this way, the author, the youth, and some of the finest thinkers of our times work interactively to provide the reader with an understanding of the relationships between work and gender, work and genius, work, independence, and trauma; work,

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creativity, and illness; and work and individual and social change. Generally speaking, the youth featured in this work are approaching adulthood from very different perspectives — some were preparing to work at something about which they felt strongly or from the prism of pursuing work they loved. The stories of these youth are balanced with others for whom the search continues or who struggle with illness and trauma.

In constructing her study about the ways work, love, and identity come together for youth, Muñoz purposely looked beyond the traditional notions of psychological theory and research. One reason for her effort to develop a culturally sensitive story comes from her own life experiences in which she saw how Eurocentric theories can actually work as a "border patrol" when applied to youth of color. One of the ways in which she moved beyond the traditional boundaries of research was implemented at the suggestion of her advisors at Harvard University. Before conducting interviews of youth, she turned her research questions inward to provide her readers with "post cards from her memory." These illustrations of significant coming of age experiences explain how her adult identity connects with the work that she loves. The "album" that results from this exercise provides the reader and the author with the opportunity to ponder how questions of work, love, and identity shaped and sharpened her interest in psychology and education.

A second way that she broadened her research is through the use of photography to document context. Building on a childhood fascination with the lens as a way of interacting with the world, she captured an understanding of the youth she met through photographs, explaining that it is through this medium that the setting and the perspective of the researcher are revealed: "Photographs provide another approach to knowledge that literally brings me face to face with my questions and their answers" (p. 61). By placing the photographs that she gathered during her interviews around the room in which she wrote, she brought additional insights to her work and illustrations to her book.

Where Something Catches provided me with inspiration and a concrete strategy for listening more carefully to youth. In considering the lessons reflected in the methodology, several questions came to mind: Are structured interviews a promising practice that should be used more frequently to help youth and adults find common ground? Are they a strategy for insuring that youth perspectives are considered in the design of programs that are both comprehensive and individualized? Can ethnographic studies support individuals in taking action once something has been expressed and understood in a new way?

This study presents compelling evidence that ethnographic studies can actually spark youth to view themselves, their accomplishments, and their future in new ways. One of the interviewees wrote "If the book reaches P.R. and if it's in Spanish because I speak it more than English I would be very happy that there is a book with interviews of youths and then see if the adults understand the youths a little more and don't blame us for everything that happens on the streets, etc..." (p. 249). Muñoz also felt the power of asking a good question when she observed that the interview changed one youth from "a child that doesn't talk to a young woman who wants to tell her story" (p. 173). While it is highly unlikely that a short interview will transform a life, the compelling message of the book is that if we want to tap into the potential of youth, we must recognize the power of their stories and build on the role that stories can play in shaping our personal and cultural identity. The stories shared by youth in this study reveal important cultural truths and values. Hopefully, adults will learn from them and choose to be as good a listener as Victoria Muñoz.

Caring in An Unjust World: Negotiating Borders and Barriers in Schools

Edited by Deborah Eaker-Rich and Jane Van Galen

Published by SUNY Press (Albany, NY), 1996

Reviewed by Ruthmary Powers

In an age in which values and virtues in education are often debated, school as a place of "caring" is the subject of the new book edited by Eaker-Rich and Van Galen. Each of the ten chapters uses Nell Noddings's (1984, 1992) and, at times, Carol Gilligan's (1982) concept of care to examine how different types of "caring" are expressed in classrooms and embedded in schools. The title of the book, *Caring in an Unjust World: Negotiating Borders and Barriers in Schools*, reminds us of the need to explore how racism, classism, sexism, and heterosexism create forms of schooling that are neither

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"just" nor "caring." Can well-meaning educators create learning environments that support the needs of the whole child if we do not knowledgeably address these borders and barriers? This books suggests not.

The five chapters in Part One address the Dilemmas of Caregivers. The "caring" role of women in the position of superintendent is the focus of the first chapter. Blount shows, in this chapter, that the success of these women is rooted in their ability to build relationships that produce what Belenky et al. (1986) call "connected knowing" about their constituents. This, in turn, makes possible a type of decision making that is based on a personal knowledge of both the people and the situation. I believe that the "caring" aspect of leadership requires much more exploration. Like Blount, I question superintendents' ability to care for large groups of students or teachers with whom they have little or no contact in the manner that Noddings says is both desirable or possible.

Streitmatter (Chapter 2) discusses the pedagogical implications of gender equity by asking if justice or caring should be the basis for a teacher's treatment of students in her/his classroom. Examining the justice perspective, Streitmatter states, "The essence or specific needs of the individual are not part of the rationale, rather a generalized notion of individual rights and needs define this orientation. The voice advocates equality, reciprocity, autonomy, obeying rules, and upholding principles" (p. 32). On the other hand, "the caring perspective emphasizes responsibility to humans rather than to more abstract ideas and holds as most important the concern for connectedness to others and the maintenance of relationships" (p. 33). She concludes, "What does appear obvious is that a caring orientation to decision making provides an opportunity for girls' voices to be heard and for them to establish greater faith in their abilities" (p. 45).

Chapters 3 (King) and 4 (Kissen) focus on issues that arise when sexual orientation and societal gender expectations collide with societal norms. King finds that males who teach primary children are often questioned and devalued because this choice is not the "norm" in our society. This chapter and the next point up the heterosexist attitudes entrenched in our society.

Kissen (Chapter 4) interviews 22 teachers who identified themselves as gay, lesbian, or bisexual. Authenticity and dialogue are two elements that Noddings identifies as essential to "caring." This places a gay or lesbian teacher in a quandary for, to disclose who he or she is to the students could jeopardize his or her employment status. This chapter clearly shows that "caring" is no simple matter. As Kissen concludes, "Only when gay teachers and students are free to stop hiding will schools become places where all teachers and students can care and be cared for in safety" (p. 83).

The last chapter in Part One, "Understanding Caring in Context: Negotiating Borders and Barriers," is written by a research team evaluating their interaction with the subjects of their research (Webb-Dempsey, Wilson, Corbett and Mordecai-Phillips). In interviewing parents, students, and teachers about their definitions of caring, the team found widely disparate views described by the same term. When it came to reporting the data back to those interviewed, the researchers were surprised that some of the stakeholders interpreted their report negatively. They concluded that, "Caring means nothing unless it means something to both, or all, parties involved in the action" (p. 108). From their work the reader comes to understand that definitions of "caring" will differ and cannot be assumed.

This chapter serves as an introduction to Part Two, which looks at the Dilemmas of Creating Schools as Centers of Care. Chapters 6 (Dempsey and Noblit) and 7 (Siddle Walker) examine the effects of integration on two African-American schools and their constituents. After the court-ordered desegregation ruling in the 1950s, integrating schools became a major educational goal of the last several decades. What was not understood was the importance of the school in an African-American community. One result of a monocultural environment is that there were values and goals of education held by a community of people who had a shared vision of the importance of education. Schools in these settings were not only supported by the African-American community, but they were also part of the fabric that held the community together. The school and the community were organically linked to one another so that in disrupting one, the other also began to unravel.

These two chapters challenge us to investigate our assumptions and to recognize what is "good" in an educational setting before dismantling it. Caring in a homogenous community is much easier, but the bonds that hold both the school and the community together may be invisible to the external eye. Justice and caring appear to be in opposition, for while deploring the injustice of segregation, unmindful desegregation can create damage, the depths of which are still to be plumbed.

Another example of a homogenous group struggling with diversity is found in the next chapter. In investigating a Catholic high school whose stated mission is to create a community of caring, Van Galen found that caring can be restrictive rather than empowering. The student body of this particular high school includes both genders, different races, and different classes.

When interviewed, the faculty described itself as "caring." The students and parents also described the faculty as caring. What Van Galen came to discover in her research is that "caring" often kept women and minority students in "their place." This was never blatant or even intentional, but students were either visible or invisible by the type of recognition they received or the humor directed toward them. When women were addressed with humor it was usually about some "female" trait. Van Galen reports that "While jokes involving white males communicated to the student and to the class at large that the teacher found interest in his life beyond the classroom, the jokes directed at African-American males rarely indicated any understanding of the students beyond the boundaries of the school" (p. 159). She reminds us that "the caring that Noddings describes would appear to require a careful reading of the cultural, economic, and social lives of students to appreciate the 'reality of their lives' though which schooling is interpreted" (p. 150). Caring in parochial schools is both a mission and a goal. It is also a lens through which all aspects of school life can be evaluated. This kind of critical reflection that by necessity should include the participants will not be an easy task, but it is one that makes the fulfillment of the mission possible.

The last two chapters look at situations that include diversity as a way to both analyze the problems and create the solutions. Beck and Newman directly address the problems of diversity in Chapter 9 when they examine an urban high school in Watts, a neighborhood in south central Los Angeles. They stress that creating a "caring" school environment amid much diversity requires a willingness to view actions and behaviors with a critical eye (or the eye of "the other"). Caring, in this situation, involves accepting confrontation, respecting differences, and embracing a variety of viewpoints. Schools that are inclusive immerse students in a rich learning environment, both for academic learning and for life.

The final chapter (Chapter 10) is based on a collaborative-intervention research model (Moll and Diaz, 1987) used to promote inquiry-based learning in a sixth-grade classroom. Carmen Mercado, the primary investigator, worked with the sixth-grade class of Marcelline Torres. One result of their project was to involve — what the author calls empower — the sixth graders in their own learning process. The researchers state, "Our work demonstrates that affective concerns are inseparable from academic concerns and that each has an influence on the other" (p. 227).

Finally, the conclusion of the book (Eaker-Rich, Van Galen, Timothy) develops themes that emerge from the chapters in the text. The first is the importance of caring in all of the school environments, despite their considerable diversity. The second theme is that caring does not always work, is not always recognized, and can be opposed to how the stakeholders define "caring." Noddings suggests that "caring" requires continuity. Similarly the authors suggest that "Caring relationships seem more possible in homologous groups where the caregivers are embedded in the community or culture...." (p. 232) The third major theme is "a requirement, summoned by diversity, that *sentimental caring* necessarily be distinguished from the *practice* of caring" (p. 233). Sentimental caring must be replaced by the kind of critical awareness of the multiple lens through which education is viewed.

Therefore, dialogue and the need to be informed by a critical consciousness are two final themes elucidated in this chapter. The most important stakeholders are those students, parents, teachers, and administrators whose lives are most affected by an educational environment. But there is a more important consideration raised by this book: What should be the product of our educational system? What kind of system will bring about an end result of caring through all parts of the institution? This book provides a tool for those who would desire to be caring educators. It offers a lens for self-examination as well as an examination for the institution, its policies and practices. Most of all, it tells us that the end result of caring may not look the way we first thought it would. It tells us that there are many paths to a caring, learning community, but it is a path we must take together.

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