Holistic Education Review

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Editorial

Encounter: Education for Meaning and Social Justice

Over the years the *Holistic Education Review* has provided a forum for spiritually grounded discussion of educational issues. It has attracted authors and a readership concerned with what might loosely be called a spiritual vision of education and of humanity itself. The journal has focused on essential questions of meaning, purpose, responsibility, and identity as they weave through educational policies and practices.

In keeping with this perspective, the *Review* has sought to create a forum where educators could speak and listen not only with their heads, but also with their hearts; not only with their intellect, but also their imaginations. In its own modest way, the *Review* with its emphasis on holism has attempted to redefine scholarship to allow for such discussion. And, in many respects, it has succeeded as we have focused on the often unrecognized issues questions of hope, love, the spiritual dimensions of the curriculum, the meaning of the term transformation, and the care of the soul, to name but a few.

However, the term *holism* still carries a stigma. Despite our best efforts, many educators continue to think of holism as a fringe movement appealing to the heart, to the *exclusion* of the head. There is a prevailing sense that holism is neither practical nor social, but rather affective and self-oriented. While none of these perceptions accurately represent either the term *holism* or the perspective of this journal, our present title, *Holistic Education Review*, continues to serve, in part, as a barrier. Although our name identifies our focus for contributors and our current readers, it nonetheless obscures the real nature of the journal in the educational mainstream.

In a number of previous editorials I have suggested that holistic education is a unique paradigm in that it embodies uniquely powerful metaphors for understanding and exploring educational issues. My position remains unchanged. However, holistic education can and does embrace many of the fundamental presuppositions of other educational paradigms, such as critical pedagogy and progressive education. Even as holism offers a spiritual foundation for education, the concept of the spiritual is not separated from the day-to-day exigencies of life or the application of theoretical rigor. Holistic education recognizes that the higher and more profound meaning of knowledge, learning, and human development — as well as social and ecological responsibility —are embedded in the flow of the actual, the lived. Thinking about the grand patterns that flow unnoticed in and through everything — from the curriculum to the presence of a teacher in her gaze — requires unparalleled imagination and intellectual discernment. It is a kind of thinking that does not use words or systems of ideas but delves into experience immediately and directly.

In this context, the spiritual cannot be grasped through intellect, through reason or logic. The prime requisite for understanding is *engagement*, active listening to the silence only later to be put in words. The thinker must be present as person — open, awake, responsive. C. S. Lewis once wrote that "a warm heart does not mean a soft head." Holism requires a warm heart and a hard head.

Given these considerations, the term *holism* with its rampant misinterpretations, may serve to separate us unnecessarily from educators concerned with pressing practical issues and the importance of clear thinking. There is too much suffering, poverty, violence, injustice, alienation, abuse — too much indifference, hatred, indulgence, self-interest, and short-term thinking to separate the work of holistic educators from those sharing such concerns. Ultimately, *Holistic Education Review* has not been, nor was it ever intended to be, a journal dedicated to Holism. Rather, the constant effort has been to illuminate the meaning and purpose of education in light of the dignity and sanctity of each human being. This focus has been constant whether the *Review* has addressed questions of policy or practice, institutions or individuals. And it is still needed not only for those committed to holism, but for all educators.

I have always been convinced that the question of spiritual meaning was inseparable from the day-to-day experience of life. I have never had the sense that the meaning and purpose of life could be quarantined off to a particular place, time, or group. If holistic education is to address what is hallowed and is sacred to each and all of us and in the world, it does so within the flow of immediate experience. It *begins* with encounter. The concept of encounter has been central to this journal from its very founding ten years ago and is particularly appropriate as our new title. In this context we need to define it further.

I recall reading in Martin Buber's *I, Thou* how his encounter with a tree enabled him to meet the tree in its totality. Buber explained that he did not meet the spirit of the tree but the concrete reality of the tree as a living entity. Buber's concept of encounter was so compelling, so vital to me that when I became a teacher, I made it my goal to encounter each of my students every day with a conscious appreciation of each of them as a human being. For me, this was not an abstraction — or at least I did not think so.

In my first year of teaching, one of the boys in my sixth grade class was an African-American. I made it my business to encounter him with every fibre of my being with as much love, openness, and inner discipline as with all the other children in the class. Some time around the middle of the year, his mother came in for a conference, and she asked me pointedly how I treated her son as an Afro-American. I answered with confidence derived from my reading of Buber, that I did not see her son as an African-American but as a growing human being. While the vast difference between Buber's meaning and my understanding was invisible to me, this concerned mother made it all too clear how abstract and removed my thinking was. She said "If you don't see that my son is black, you are blind." She continued to explain that much of his experience in the class and the world outside the classroom was very much a function of his race.

As she spoke, I realized that I had not encountered her son at all, but an abstract notion of her son as a human being. For all my attempts to be present and responsive, I was deceived by the misguided clarity of my own intellect. My relationship was more with my *concept* of my student than with my student, the whole person. Since that time I have regarded the profound and the profane, the sacred and the commonplace, the universal and the particular as intimately interwoven.

The problem goes deeper here than my being misguided though well-intentioned. It is widely known that Buber described two kinds of relations, basic modes of address to the other (others). In the **I-It** relationship, the other is an object, a thing. The "It" is always partial, that is, perceived in a context relative to what "I" wants. As such, the "It" is always a means subject to manipulation, never an end in itself. My relation with my student, for all my emotional commitment to the contrary, was such a relationship. He was an object, something I had abstracted, despite my desire and effort to encounter him fully. He was an object of *my* spiritual aspiration.

In the **I-Thou** encounter, I experience the other as I experience myself without preference to the needs of interests of one or the other. In the I-Thou there is only the call of the moment; there is only what we are asked to do. The "I" has but one choice to respond, bound in loving embrace. To opt for self-interest or the interest of the other is to dissolve encounter. The action the "I" takes in encounter may not be different in outer appearance from an action borne of cold indifference. Sentiment has no place here.

For all my altruism, I did not act with my full self in my relationship with this student. I did not act with the full realization of who he was, because my openness was blocked by my own desire. Admittedly, my desire was not selfish in that I wanted something for myself, but I was not fully present. Just as my student was an abstraction, so was my own concept of myself. I was so busy trying to act out of my "I," the divine universal spark at the center of *my* being, that I failed to respond as myself — the totality of myself, the universal and the particular woven together.

On one level, the meaning of the I-Thou encounter seems very personal and individualistic. One person encounters another in a wholesome psychological context, and that appears to be it. However, encounter is also universal and social. The moment I recognized the pain, the vulnerability, the sanctity, the beauty, the frailty, the mystery of my student, a doorway was opened to the infinite, to these qualities in all human beings and in the larger world. This encounter was like a spiritual sun illuminating not only the sacredness of all individuals, but of the bonds of spiritual responsibility which bind all of us together and with the earth. To encounter is to enter streams of meaning and responsibility that are present in immediate circumstances and, at the same time, serve as a foundation for our humanity. Once again, encounter does not lead to abstract conceptions, truth, justice, or moral value, but to a recognition of the need to act with compassion and transcendence. It is this perspective that this journal has sought to bring to education and it is a perspective it will continue to embrace.

The I-Thou encounter is fleeting. It lasts for a moment and is gone, but a single such encounter offers a lifetime of contemplation and moral opportunity, moral obligation. In this context, the notion of encounter embraces a recognition not only of meaning, but of social responsibility. In Jewish tradition, it is said that he who saves a single life is to be recognized as someone who has saved the whole world. So it is with the nature of encounter. He who recognizes the meaning and responsibility of an "I" for a "Thou" embraces the meaning which courses through all things and the responsibilities for social responsibility. To acknowledge this context and to avoid lingering misapplications of the word, *holistic*, the current title of this publication will be gradually transformed into *Encounter: Education for Meaning and Social Justice* over the next few issues until it becomes the official title at the start of 1998.

— Jeffrey Kane, Editor

Teaching as Enhancing Human Effectiveness

Six Evaluative Criteria

Erskine S. Dottin

Teaching is a quintessential human enterprise and *effective* teaching requires attention to those aspects of our humanity that make us most human.

Someone once said that "to tell a story is to distill a human experience and recreate it in a form understandable and enjoyable to others." The salient story throughout this presentation is that teaching is a human enterprise. While the contemporary schooling tenets of accountability, behavioral objectives, and competency-based programs seem bent on reducing teaching to mechanistic, predetermined acts, there is convincing evidence which suggests that teaching is really an expression of the human self (Boy and Pine 1971, 1977; van Manen 1991; Zehm and Kottler 1993).

My twenty years in teacher education classrooms at the university level have provided me with experiential and anecdotal evidence that teaching is a human enterprise. Of course, to speak of the human business of teaching presupposes some understanding of the phenomenological dimension of teaching, and of the inherent qualities that make us *human*. I would like to offer the proposition that it is the way we interact with other people that makes us *human*. Conversely, I am suggesting that it is the cruelty to and the destruction of other people that we label *inhumane*. On the other hand, to teach, to me, is to share oneself with others in different situations (academic, social, etc.) and circumstances (informal, formal, etc.) so that the interaction (the experience) enhances those persons who interact to know more about themselves. To treat others in inhumane ways is therefore antithetical to teaching.

van Manen (1991) captures the essence of the human event we experience as teaching this way:

> In its most elemental form we may make a distinction between pedagogical situations, pedagogical relations, and pedagogical actions. Pedagogical situations are those circumstances or conditions that constitute the site of pedagogical actions and that make pedagogical experiences between adults [teachers] and children [students] possible. Pedagogical situations in

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> turn are constituted by special affective pedagogical relations between adults [teachers] and children [students], to which both the adult [teacher] and the child [student] bring the necessary requisites. Pedagogical actions are the experiences between pedagogues [teachers] and children [students], in which both adults [teachers] and children [students] are actively and intentionally involved and through which a special influence flows from the adult [teacher] to the child [student]. (p. 71)

The foregoing description suggests that there are human qualities essential to good pedagogy. Again van Manen:

> A sense of vocation, love of and caring for children, a deep sense of responsibility, moral intuitiveness, self-critical openness, thoughtful maturity, tactful sensitivity toward the child's subjectivity, an interpretive intelligence, a pedagogical understanding of the child's needs, improvisational resoluteness in dealing with young people, a passion for knowing and learning the mysteries of the world, the moral fibre to stand up for something, a certain understanding of the world, active hope in the face of prevailing crises, and, not the least, humor and vitality. (p. 8)

The purpose of this paper is to: (1) lay out six evaluative qualities or criteria that may be used to judge teaching effectiveness, that is, teaching as a human enterprise, (2) suggest that what is going on in many classrooms today fall short of these qualities, (3) offer some ideas regarding what might be getting in the way, and (4) share, from my experience, an example of good teaching in light of the evaluative criteria.

Criteria for Judging Human Effectiveness/Good Teaching

Criterion One: Being a Subject

Marilyn Fergusson, author of *The Aquarian Conspiracy: Personal and Social Transformation in the 1980's* uses the words of the former chairman of the United States Security Council, Zbigniew Brzezinski, to point out that

> every human being wants to feel that there is some inner and deeper meaning to his/her existence than just being and consuming and once he/she begins to feel that way he wants his/her social organization to correspond to that feeling. (1980, p. 364)

This existential need for self-affirmation is a characteristic common to all human beings. However, to affirm one's true self in relation to other selves is contingent upon what Martin Buber refers to as "I-Thou Relationships." In other words, I must be treated as a subject and not an object by the other, and, conversely, I must not objectify the other. It is these interpersonal relationships that for Jean-Paul Sartre are "a perpetual struggle to assert the fluidity of our own existence against persistent attempts to objectify us by others." Persons who have not been allowed to experience themselves as continuously related to the world by moral action, may split themselves into two systems, a system of false selves presented as a mask to the world, and an inner self of authentic experience not revealed to others. This torment by mutual objectification is captured by Sartre in his play *No Exit* as a world where "hell is other people."

If teaching is a human business, then teachers must be in the business of facilitating for themselves and others the development of persons as subjects and not as objects. The need to enhance congruence between the public/private self is a vital aspect of teaching and learning.

We have been constantly warned about the deleterious nature of this tormented form, human existence *vis-à-vis* divided selves. For example, Ewens (1986) posits that

> Through spontaneous activities, persons both realize their own self-potentials [their real selves] and straightforwardly relate themselves to the outside world [their public selves]. (p. 26)

However, incongruence and/or disintegrative relationships between the real self and the public self enhances the creation of basic insecurity on the part of the individual, the abandonment of the real self, and in extreme cases, the divided public/private character of an accomplished fake (Ewens 1986). For Ewens,

> Social environments that constrain human development [and facilitate the private/public self duality] tend to be characterized by authoritarian relationships, while ... social environments that facilitate human development [and enhance the integration of the private/public self] tend to be characterized by democratic relationships. (p. 23)

In other words, social environments in any society whether in areas of economic production, government, schooling (i.e., teaching and learning), child rearing, relations between ethnic groups, relations between adults and children, and relations between men and women, that foster this personality split between the person's real self and public self is antithetical to the enhancement of human effectiveness.

Do you hear the private/public self split in the following voices. First, W.E.B. Dubois:

> It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels this twoness — an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder. (1970, p. 3)

Next, Ralph Ellison:

> I am an invisible man. No, I am not a spook like those who haunted Edgar Allen Poe; nor am I one of your Hollywood ectoplasms. I am a man of substance, of flesh and bone, fiber and liquids, and I might even be said to possess a mind. I am invisible, understand, simply because people refuse to see me. Like the bodiless heads you see sometimes in circus sideshows, it is as though I have been surrounded by mirrors of hard distorting glass. When they approach me they see only my surroundings, themselves, or figments of their imagination — indeed, every thing except me. Nor is my invisibility exactly a matter of biochemical accident to my epidermis. That invisibility to which I refer occurs because of a peculiar disposition of the eyes of those with whom I come into contact. A matter of construction of their inner eyes, those eyes with which they look through their physical eyes upon reality. (1947, p. 3)

Third, James Baldwin:

> ... any Negro who is born in this country and undergoes the American educational system runs the risk of becoming schizophrenic. On the one hand he is born in the shadow of the stars and stripes and he is assured it represents a nation which has never lost a war. He pledges allegiance to that flag which guarantees "liberty and justice for all." He is part of a country in which anyone can become president, and so forth. But on the other hand he is also assured by his country and his countrymen that he has never contributed anything to civilization — that his past is nothing more than a record of humiliations gladly endured. He is assumed by the republic that he, his father, his mother, and his ancestors were happy, shiftless, watermelon-eating darkies who loved Mr. Charlie and Miss Ann, that the value he has as a black man is proven by one thing only — his devotion to white people. (1988, pp. 4-5)

Are persons in the human enterprise of teaching concerned about letting humans be who they are? Are they concerned about being who they are: a subject and not an object? Dr. Carl Rogers, the humanistic psychologist, framed a 1987 talk to teachers, "Questions I Would Ask Myself If I Were A Teacher." He contended that two of the most salient questions teachers and/or other related professionals should ask themselves are: Am I promoting self-definition for myself and other humans by enhancing my intrinsic worth as well as that of others? Do I use labels and categories to stand for real persons or do I perceive humans to be more than the sum of their parts, categories or labels?

The pedagogical act nurtures and enhances (for both teacher and learner) the congruence between the private and public self. Teaching as it manifests itself in particular life circumstances contributes to wholeness and integration of the person within and the external world constructed without.

Criterion Two: Inside-Out Learning

One of my favorite authors, J. Krishnamurti, raises a very critical educational concern in his book, *Think on These Things*. He asks:

> Why do we go to school, why do we learn various subjects, why do we pass examinations and compete with each other for better grades? What does this so-called education mean, and what is it all about?. (1970, p. 9)

Like Krishnamurtu, I think this should be a critical concern for students, but more so for parents and for teachers. For if the purpose of education is, as Krishnamurti suggests, "to understand the vast expanse of life with all its subtleties, with its extraordinary beauty, its sorrows and joys" (1970, p. 9), then teaching should be facilitative of education from an inside-out perspective; a perspective in which teachers help students to discover the personal meaning of information they receive for their lives so that they might behave differently as a result. If education is seen as enhancing the acquisition of personal meaning, then a logical outcome of education should be to cultivate in us the intelligence to try and find the answers to life's problems.

Of course to some, the term intelligence conjures up either the Stanford-Binet formula of MA over CA times 100 (intelligence quotient/IQ), or Bell Curve proclivities à la Murray and Hernstein (1994), rather than the capacity to think freely without fear, without a formula, so that one begins to discover for oneself what is real, what is true (Krishnamurti 1970), à la the Howard

Gardner (1983), Daniel Goleman (1995) and Neil Postman (1996) propensity.

If teaching is a human business, then should it not engender inside-out learning for teacher and learner? Should it not be more closely aligned with the assumption that "each individual has an innate potential for thinking and learning whose boundaries defy quantification" (Clark 1988, p. 19)?

Teaching and learning from an inside-out perspective would facilitate teachers and learners exploring and discovering the personal meaning of events, information, and so forth, and teachers assisting learners to gain personal insight, for insight into the ordinary is a major part of education.

Criterion Three: Autonomy

The basis of a human community is the free association of autonomous individuals. Until persons are free, and accept responsibility for their lives, all attempts at a human community are foredoomed. Julius Nyerere, the notable African leader, has noted (in reference to aid for developing countries) that

> development means freedom and liberation. Development means people. But ... people cannot be developed, human beings can only develop themselves.

If human beings are the ones to develop themselves, then autonomy may be seen as the prerequisite of freedom from which springs independence and self-reliance, and without which liberty is impossible. In an educational context, autonomy means freedom to learn rather than to be taught. The late British statesman, Sir Winston Churchill, once commented that "he was always willing to learn, but not always willing to be taught."

Would successful teaching in this context not produce an individual who breaks loose and swings free of the teacher and becomes self-moving? Would successful teaching in this context not assist the learners' need to live with personal decisions, resist blind conformity, and be free from social role definitions of self?

Do we, in teaching, restrict the autonomy of individuals when we view them, not as unique, autonomous human beings, but in terms of segregated tribal, ethnic blocks?

Criterion Four: Being Responsible

According to Phil Gang (1993, p. 150), "Freedom without responsibility is anarchy; responsibility without freedom is despotism." There is a direct correlation between freedom and responsibility. A famous philosopher once said that "no man is free who is not master of himself." Responsibility implies that humans are accountable for their actions, and through their actions, they determine their fates.

To grow more responsible, therefore, is to enhance my ability to respond to events, to making decisions, and so on. It is the enhancement of a child's or adult learner's response-ability to life's events that is truly one of the salient elements of teaching. van Manen (1991, p. 65) suggests that there are three conditions so essential to pedagogy that without them pedagogical life might be impossible. He asserts that these essential conditions are: love and care, hope and trust, and responsibility.

Teaching by its very nature presupposes responsibility on the part of the teacher for "protecting, educating, and helping [students] grow" (van Manen 1991, p. 128). The growth in responsibility, however, on the part of the learner must be mediated between learner and teacher. The unequal teacher-learner relationship is such that it depends foremost on the "pedagogical authority" of the teacher. Such dependency if fostered in authoritarian context becomes inimical to the learner's sense of responsibility. Teaching as enhancing human effectiveness is a form of what van Manen (1991) calls "pedagogical tact." In this sense, teaching "... sponsors personal responsibility in young people for studying and learning" (p. 172).

> Strictly speaking the pedagogue tries to avoid directly influencing the child in the sense of making the child learn or do something because this denies the child any practice in self-control. Someone who says, "He made me do this!" has thereby refused to take responsibility for his or her actions. In contrast, pedagogy is the art of tactfully mediating the possible influences of the world so that the child is constantly encouraged to assume more self-responsibility for personal learning and growth. To teach is to influence the influences. The teacher uses the influence of the world pedagogically as a resource for tactfully influencing the child (van Manen 1991, p. 80).

Effective teaching strengthens the relation between freedom and responsibility. This relation is bound in the teacher's dual role of, on the one hand, actively guiding, and, on the other, letting the individual find his/her own direction. The "pedagogical thoughtfulness" involved in making a successful balance of this dual role is the salient key in enhancing the individual's response-ability to life's events and decisions.

According to Ron Dultz (1993, p. 75) pedagogical situations in which students walk into classrooms with the expectation of receiving information that is to be

absorbed, getting assignments, and taking tests usurp students' sense of responsibility, diminish students' decision-making opportunities, deprives students of their independence, and are disrespectful of the students' self-development. This is antithetical to teaching as enhancing human effectiveness. Teaching as enhancing human effectiveness encourages "personal choice in an atmosphere that holds children [learners] accountable for their activities" (Gang 1993, p. 150).

Criterion Five: Caring

To care for someone is to love someone, and as Hampden-Turner, utilizing the words of Erich Fromm, reminds us that

> Loving is unified separateness. We can love others as equals only because they are different from us, not because they are the same. Equality is the balancing of differentiations and integration by which we grow. (1981, p. 50)

In fact, Hampden-Turner reminds us of Fromm's insistence that

> Loving contains four elements, care, responsibility, respect and knowledge: care is an active concern for the life and growth of the other; responsibility the desire (not duty) to respond to the other's needs; respect, from *respicere* "to look at" is to recognize the other's uniqueness; knowledge combines objective knowing with that which is revealed through participation and intimate identification. (1981, p. 50)

The recent literature, such as the Winter 1995 edition of *Holistic Education Review*, renews the call regarding our, for example, seeing the "teacher-as-loving-artist," or seeing "truth and love as related entities that are interdependent in the process of knowing."

Just as Fromm contends that one is incapable of loving if one has not overcome dependency, narcissistic omnipotence, the wish to exploit others, or to hoard (1956, p. 24), so too, it would seem, one is incapable of being a teacher who enhances human effectiveness if one does not, to coin Fromm, have "active concern for the life and growth of the other" (i.e., to care for the other).

Teaching and caring is given a phenomenological perspective in the work of Nel Noddings (1984; 1992; 1995). She brings to the fore two characteristics that emerge in all caring encounters:

> ... when we care, we receive what the other person conveys nonselectively. We do not lay on our own structures, nor do we assimilate what the other says as a mere bit of information. We feel what the other is going through.
>
> Second, as we receive what is there in the other, we feel our energy flowing toward the other's predicament or project. We want to relieve a burden, activate a dream, share a joy, or clear up a confusion. Temporarily, our own projects are put aside; we are caught up by an internal "I must" that pushes us to respond to the other. (1995, p. 67)

James Autry, a *Fortune 500* executive, writing in his book, *Love and Profit: The Art of Caring Leadership* (1991) highlights the inherent quality of caring and its relevance to the purpose of managing people in a business organization as that of the need for managers to create

> an environment for people, a caring environment that lets you manage business for personal growth as well as — and as a way to achieve — financial growth. (16)

Shouldn't the same exhortation made by Autry (1991) to managers, "If you don't care about people, get out of management before it's too late" (p. 17), be made to teachers *vis-à-vis* teaching? His words, while directed to managers about their workers, may be directed to teachers by substituting the word student for the word workers: " ... [students] want to know how much you care before they care how much you know" (Autry 1991, p. 17).

Criterion Six: Sharing

If teaching is construed as the personal expression of self, then it seems that to share with others, i.e., to teach others, is not simply an activity in which one looks out simply for oneself. Teaching from the perspective of personal expression of self, it would seem, would facilitate building relationships with others based on mutuality, recognizing the strengths and contributions of others, and contributing to the further development of others.

Rosa Pascual, writing in *Teaching as Enhancing Human Effectiveness* (1994), points out that

> As children we are constantly being told to share our things, our toys, our room, and so on. We are taught to put high values on our material possessions. Seldom are we asked to share our emotions, dreams, hopes or our thoughts. If we as teachers teach children only to share materially, children learn to value material things. They start to equate their value [with] the objects they possess. As a result, they place little value on who they actually are.

> As teachers, we can show children that sharing is not a matter of just sharing our material things, but is also a giving of self. To teach without sharing personal experiences, feelings, and thoughts is merely to transmit information. The transmission of information devoid of human meaning is simply a mechanical process. (p. 60)

The essence of teaching is sharing. However, Pascual reminds us that

> As teachers, we must be able to show children that sharing is not just a matter of sharing "Barbies" or "Turtles" but that sharing is a giving of the self: the whole self, the total self, the inner self.
>
> By sharing one's self we open the door for others to do the same. We learn from each other and we discover new insights. We learn how much we have in common and to appreciate our differences. By teaching as sharing of self, we learn that we are all *Human*. (1994, p. 64)

What's Going On and What's Getting In the Way

Someone once said, "Where there is no vision, the people perish." For teaching to enhance human effectiveness, there must be a vision of what education should look like. An example of this may be seen in the technical vision of *Goals 2000*. Education in the vision that is being pushed by President Clinton places priority on competition, standardization, "being first," objectivity, measurement, behavioral objectives, and heavy use of technology. Students, in this vision of education, are not seen as subjects, but instead as recipients to be filled with content. Learning, in this vision, is connected with outside-in learning instead of with inside-out learning. Knowledge, in this vision, is seen as a commodity, and notions of predictability and control are the common mainstays. What's getting in the way of teaching for human effectiveness is a way of looking at education in which the primary purpose of education is seen simply as enhancing economic and technological capacities of the nation so that it can compete with other nations and ultimately defeat them.

Teaching for human effectiveness cannot be tied to traditional paradigmatic assumptions about students, teaching, and learning, but instead must be grounded in new educational paradigms that enhance teaching as the drawing forth of human potentials and less as handing down prescribed facts and skills (Clark 1988).

Example of Teaching for Human Effectiveness

An example of teaching for human effectiveness may be gleaned from some unsolicited feedback I received from one of my undergraduate teacher education students:

> ... my relationship with [x teacher] will last until the class is over. You, on the other hand I will always think [of] as my friend because I can be myself and tell you what I think knowing that if you don't agree it won't matter because you still like me as a person. We can freely exchange ideas and there are no ... moral judgements on your part.
>
> We're humans first ... the labels of teacher/student do not apply although I still respect your wisdom because you don't have to be in control. I do not want to become a teacher [who] is always in control because I am afraid I will silence my students whether or not I realize this.

My teaching, for this student, had enabled her to arrive at a transformed conception of teaching and learning, a conception in which learning involves her deriving personal meaning from intense, complex, and multi-dimensional experiences. My teaching, for human effectiveness, gives direction to the kind of educational experience that occurs within a context of connections that are close, personal, gracious, compassionate, just, mutually beneficial, and intimate. It is, and was for this student, through full engagement in such a process that each individual's identity as a uniquely gifted self can and does emerge.

My teaching for human effectiveness is not directed, therefore, on seeing knowledge as commodity, but instead as seeing knowledge as a gift to be received, developed, and shared by teachers and learners.

Conclusion

Research in the area of teacher effectiveness has been unable to demonstrate that effectiveness is strictly a function of scholarship, certain personality traits, or that there are good or bad methods apart from the persons and purposes involved.

Teaching is not just a matter of possessing skills nor of being possessed by skills either. It is easy to hide behind skills and avoid relating to people. Effective teaching (i.e., enhancing human effectiveness) is the effective use of the teacher's own self: combining one's own knowledge and sensitivity with one's own unique ways of putting it into operation so as to be helpful to others.

Learning and teaching others to be human is not just learning a job, it is learning a new way of being oneself.

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"This Is What *We* Can Do!"

John Gust

Elementary school children under the guidance of a committed teacher show that they can move the bureaucracy and reclaim part of their community.

After leaving Los Angeles Unified School District two years ago, I swore I would never return. However, due to personal matters, I reluctantly accepted a teaching position at an elementary school in Watts, Los Angeles. I was adamantly opposed to the idea of teaching in the same manner that I had once taught. I didn't believe in the practice of focusing primarily on improving my students standardized test scores as the public school system heavily encourages. I no longer saw teaching as the transmission of subject matter, but rather as the active transformation of self and social environs (Miller and Seller 1985; Miller 1988).

So how did I plan to maintain my integrity and still keep my job? And what exactly was I called back into the public school system to accomplish? Well, I decided to engage my second-grade students in a participative process of designing our classroom, in an attempt to generate more responsible and fulfilled human beings capable of contributing positively to a democratic society. I chose to experiment with an idealized systems designing process (Ackoff 1981; Banathy 1991) by applying Goulet and Dolbec's (1989) Ends/Means Trajectory Systems Design Methodology to the democratic learning community within my classroom. This systems design methodology advocates that the principle protagonists (my students) who benefit from the designed human activity system, be actively involved in the design process through the services of a teacher who acts as a process facilitator rather than content expert. The specific methodology questions that would guide the principal protagonists in the design of this human activity system were, in this case, modified to accomodate the developmental levels of my seven-and eight-year-old students (Goulet and Gust 1994).

Now let me tell you what really happened. My class took an imaginary trip in our make-believe rocket ship (Remember the trajectory part of the methodology?) to our very own unique "Dream School." "Take off" consisted of a few open-ended guided imagery exercises in order to facilitate my students "jumping out" of the existing system to dream anew. Our school was still going to be right here in Watts, but when we landed it

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would now be our new, idealized school and surrounding environment. It could be absolutely any way we wanted it to be! We would learn and do anything we wanted. We were only limited by our own imaginations and the given constraints of the existing system that we were already learning within. It became my goal to help my students, as much as possible, to apply their vision to the learning that we were doing within our classroom. I wondered what would result if they were given the chance to dream!

The first series of questions employed by the Ends/Means Trajectory Systems Design Methodology addresses the mission, purpose, or "end" of our idealized school. It asks the question, "Why do we go to school?"

The magic began when I asked my little protagonists the first question. "If everybody in the community went to your school, what would you want people and the community around you to be like? What would families be like? What would other children be like? What would your friends be like? What would you be like?"

At first, the question went nowhere. I was getting a little frustrated. How could I help them realize how important this was? How could I motivate them to dream of, or idealize, something new? And then, once that happened, how could I help them move towards this new vision by making a difference in their own community? Their neighborhood is Watts for crying out loud! A place where children learn at too early an age about drive-by shootings, drug deals, and murders. How could I help them understand?

That's when I got real. "Hey, remember, this school that we're designing is your school. It's your 'Dream School.' You can do anything with it that you want. It can be anyway you want." I paused for a moment and then continued, "Let's imagine that everyone in Watts went to your school. How would they be? Would they be the same way that they are today? Think about it. Most people know Watts to be the worst neighborhood in Los Angeles! And it's your neighborhood! Do you like it this way? I mean come on! Look around! There's graffiti on the walls, trash everywhere, drug dealers all over the place, gangs, people getting into fights and arrested all the time, drive-by shootings! How many of you have heard gunshots in your neighborhood? How many of you have seen a drive-by?"

Everyone's hand went up. They all wanted to tell me about their experience. Most of them told me about all the gun shots that they heard on New Year's Eve. There must have been gunshots going off everywhere! James told us about all the bullet holes in the ground that he found. Some of them heard gunshots on Christmas Day. Christmas Day?! Natasha told us of the two gun shootings that she recently witnessed. Twice, while standing on her balcony, she saw a man get shot and killed. And Donnell told us about the time that he saw blood stains on the ground one morning near his home after a shooting.

I couldn't believe what I was hearing. I couldn't begin to imagine what these kids must experience on a day-to-day basis in their neighborhood. What is it doing to them? Then I asked the class, "Do you want it to stay this way? It doesn't have to, you know. You can help change it. Everyone, and I mean everyone, goes to school. Everyone in your neighborhood has gone to school at one time in their life. They may have dropped out, but they must have gone to school for a while at least. Now if they went to your school, well, how would they be? How would you be? How would you like your neighborhood to be?" Then the answers came:

- We would care about each other.
- People would be able to take care of themselves.
- People would be nice to each other.
- We would all be unique.
- We would keep the environment clean.
- People would be happy.
- We would be healthy.
- We would respect each other.
- We'd all be smart and intelligent.
- We would be special.
- There would be no smoking.
- Nobody would use drugs.
- There would be no violence.
- There would be no guns.
- There would be no pollution.

Now we were getting somewhere! We reached the educational moment that Miller (1995, p. 10) defines as "a child's (or a group of children's) emotional, psychological, and intellectual readiness, by an event ... that compels attention, by a topic of special interest sparked by someone's personal experience or urgent question, and by what is taking place in the community outside the school door."

After we completed answering the question, Danyell came up with an idea that helped to determine our purpose or "end" direction for the remainder of the year. She suggested that we turn their responses into posters and post them in the neighborhood. She wanted to hang posters on poles, on sides of buildings, everywhere. I was excited! Our mission was emerging right before us. As Rudolf Steiner (1979) said, "[o]ur highest endeavor must be to develop free human beings who of themselves are able to give purpose and direction to their lives." Could it be that starting with

the end in mind, did just that? In one sense, I guess, yes, we were purposeful human beings flying free in our little rocket ship on our path of trajectory out of the classroom, utilizing our social action means to manifest our idealized design of *their* community.

"Their" Community?

I kept asking myself why was it only *their* community? My students were supposed to make a difference in *their* community? Why not *our* community? If the perennial philosophy (Huxley 1970) holds the perception that "all phenomena are interconnected and part of a unified whole and that the individual is also part of this unity" (Miller and Seller 1985, p. 118), then why did I still perceive the Watts community as *their* community? And why, if I thought of myself as a holistic educator, was I living in a community other than Watts? Why was I limiting myself to being an external expert intervening Monday through Friday, 7:20 a.m. to 2:40 p.m.? Why did I perceive myself as not being intimately affected by the consequence of my actions?

I kept wondering if it was time to put the expert's talk into practice and become more of an equal member, active participant, and beneficiary of the community. Why not share its real-life experience as well as the outrage and joys it may involve? Why not become intimately engaged with the community? If Banathy (1991, p. 51) was correct when he explained that "systems design is most successful, it is most viable and most relevant to the community and the larger society, and commitment to implementing it most assured, when it is accomplished by those who serve the system, who use it, and who are affected by it," then why was I bothering to engage my students with the idealized design of our classroom system when I was not part of the system? Was my behavior unethical?

After hearing so much from the media about the terrible condition of Watts, maybe it would be best if I moved into the community to see what it was really like. I figured that by moving into the community, I could come to know and experience Watts and the people living there. I would understand what my students, and their families, go through everyday of their lives. Perhaps I could open up my house to both my students, and other members of the community, in order to have a "rubbing of elbows," so to speak, in my living room where everyone would be on equal ground.

One day as I was contemplating all this, I pulled Dewey's *Experience and Education* (1971) down from my shelf and read how he believed that the primary responsibility of the educator is to "know how to utilize the surroundings, physical and social, that exist so as to extract from them all that they have to contribute to building up experiences that are worthwhile" (p. 40). And even though I was still working within a traditional educational system, I was finally convinced when I read:

> Traditional education did not have to face this problem; it could systematically dodge this responsibility. The school environment of desks, blackboards, a small school yard, was supposed to suffice. There was no demand that the teacher should become intimately acquainted with the conditions of the local community, physical, historical, economic, occupational, etc., in order to utilize them as educational resources. A system of education based upon the necessary connection of education with experience must, on the contrary, if faithful to its principle, take these things constantly into account. (p. 40)

I didn't want to "dodge my responsibilities," so I moved into a three bedroom house, approximately three blocks from my school. Watts became "our" community.

Our Social Action Field Trip

Before starting off on our field trip around the neighborhood with our social action posters, we had a long conversation about what we were doing. We talked about how we would act, what we would say to people, and how we would keep safe considering the possible dangers we faced. The kids were concerned. James said that what we were doing, "putting posters up, telling people to stop using drugs and guns, to keep the environment clean, to love your neighbor is a total waste of time." It seemed that for James the problems he experienced daily were permanent and pervasive. In response, Danyell, the creative, hopeful little girl who generated the idea, put her hands on her hips, shook her head and yelled back at him, "Hey, it's a start! And it's better than just giving up and doing nothing!" I was a little concerned myself considering what had happened to James recently. He was almost shot by one of the local gangs — the Hacienda Village Boys. The way I saw it, I was afraid that he might become one of them. I remembered the gang sign that James had made along with Jobay when I took a picture of them, with the rest of my class, on the front porch of my new home.

A few days later, after the posters were finished and the field-trip permission slips were all signed, we set off out the front door of the school with our social action posters. We planned to post our artwork throughout the Hacienda Village Housing and Urban Development community right across the street from our school. I

was becoming accustomed to walking through Hacienda Village on my way to and from work every day.

The first thing that we noticed as we began our walk was all the fresh graffiti on the front wall of our school's auditorium. A "tagger" apparently climbed on top of the awning that extends over the front door of the auditorium to write a message across on the most prominent wall of our school. We decided to post Lakima's poster on the telephone pole directly in front of the tagged wall. It said, "Keep Our Environment Clean."

I led the class across the street and went directly into the busiest part of Hacienda Village. We wanted to distribute our posters throughout the entire housing community, so we restricted our posting to telephone poles. We were all over the place, posting our posters, greeting people, taking pictures, and having a great time. Karen wanted to hold my hand as we walked. I think she was a little scared.

After hanging quite a few posters, we walked to the westernmost end of Hacienda Village. This was a section that I had never been to before. Donnell informed me that this was where his uncle was shot. Unexpectedly, at least for me, we found a large playground there. I was in a generous mood so I suggested to my students that they romp on the playground equipment for a while. I was surprised when their reaction to my suggestion was less than positive, "Eeew no way. Not there!"

That's when I took a closer look. What I noticed was an old broken-down, litter-infested playground that looked like it hadn't been used in years. There was garbage and large piles of cut grass throughout. The play equipment was horrendous. The monkey bars were bent (apparently because a vehicle had plowed into it), there was a rusting slide ladder with no slide attached, the round-about was crooked and covered with graffitti, and the eight-seat swing set had only two working seats.

As I stood there looking at the dilapidated playground I thought of my friend and colleague Meghan McChesney. I knew that Meghan had a degree in architecture and also had experience designing and building children's playgrounds. We worked together on applying Banks's (1988) transformative and social action approaches towards multicultural education in a resource book that we were writing, but I knew that architecture was Ms. McChesney's true passion and specialty.

I stood there looking at our playground and started thinking of the possibility of teaming with Meghan to redesign and rebuild this playground. Simultaneously, I wanted to establish this as a student-generated social action project. How was I going to help my students become aware of the possibility of changing things right here in their community by completely renovating this playground? Heck, they were totally accustomed to run down, dilapidated playgrounds such as this. How could they envision something new and better if they've never been exposed to anything better? They may have never had an opportunity to see, let alone play on a playground with clean, shiny, new, functional equipment! And I was also wrestling with the dilemma that by exposing them to something better, I would be disclosing that what they had wasn't good enough. Fortunately, their original reaction prompted me to believe that they really weren't happy with the condition of the playground to begin with.

That's when I asked, "What do you think of this playground? Do you like it?" I was relieved to hear their answer, "NO!" Then I asked, "Do you think we ought to do something about it? Do you think we could make it better?" "Yes!" Thank goodness they were capable of wanting something better. We headed back to school considering the possibilities.

The mission that I personally was looking for, that of making a difference in the community, was determined. I was psyched! That afternoon I phoned Meghan and told her about the playground. She immediately signed on. Now all I had to do was figure out how and where to get funding for such a project and to convince the Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles (HACLA), which managed this housing community, to allow a group of elementary students to design and build a new playground.

Room for Rent

After living in Watts for approximately one month, I decided that it was time to invite other teachers or social workers to move in with me. I wanted to make a statement with my move, and I was hoping that other teachers would join in. That's when I went to Teach For America to search for two young, idealistic teachers to join me.

Teach For America (TFA) is a national teacher corps of talented, dedicated individuals from all academic majors and cultural backgrounds who commit a minimum of two years to teach in under-resourced urban and rural public schools. The corps members are typically young college graduates, looking to make a difference in education and children's lives. They are hard working, motivated men and women. I knew they would be a perfect fit for what I was hoping to accomplish in Watts.

I was encouraged by the TFA program director to write a short advertisement that would be included in their next newsletter. They informed me that the newsletter would reach an audience of about 300 corps members, so the chances of getting someone to move in with me were hopeful. Now I just had to find someone crazy, or idealistic and responsible enough to want to join me.

While I waited for the TFA/LA newsletter to be published, I spoke to Meghan who was a Teach For America teacher still in her first year of teaching. I asked her about the possibility of taking one of the spare rooms, but she was undecided. She was considerably afraid of the area. I was concerned that all TFA teachers would be too afraid to move into Watts. And I still had no idea how I was going to make the renovation of the playground happen. Needless to say, I was becoming slightly discouraged.

But then things started to change. You could say I found my very own good luck charm — a four leaf clover.

4-H For Sure!

The first day that the TFA/LA Newsletter came out, I was pleased to read my invitation to move into Watts in the Classified Section, but by far the best thing that I read was in the Resources For Educators section. It was there that Meghan discovered a grant possibility being offered by the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Apparently the government agency was appropriating $3.5 million dollars in funds for projects that develop 4-H after school programs for youths, ages 7 to 14, in public housing communities. Eligibility would be based on public housing authorities in partnership with local education agencies.

Perfect! It was clear that my work in the classroom would be limited by conventional standardized-test-driven instruction as dictated by the administration and the greater Los Angeles Unified School District. But the 4-H After School Activity Program at our school, in philosophy at least, nurtured the development of the whole child with their "hands, head, heart, and health" approach. It would be the perfect milieu to implement this particular social action project. The 4-H program was connected or housed at our school, several children from my classroom were enrolled, and a community service component was also a part of the curriculum. Based on the four "H"s, I could envision where humanities, intellectual, emotional, social, physical, creative/intuitive, aesthetic, and, if one looked close enough, spiritual domains existed on each leaf of the clover. Gang (1990) might say we were exploring the whole person and embracing our true nature by viewing humanity through nature.

We had it all worked out. Meghan would be the architect and content expert who would teach the kids how to design the playground, I would continue to be the process facilitator, and Compton Avenue Elementary School of LAUSD would be the educational agency that would sponsor the project. As we began talking of the possibilities, Meghan and I even imagined how the playground area could be shaped like a giant four leaf clover! Now all we had to do was convince 4-H that we had a great idea.

Are Our Scissors Sharp Enough?

The first thing I did was give the 4-H office in Los Angeles a call. I spoke with the youth development advisor and explained our idea. She was very supportive. She asked me to write a short proposal explaining the idea and then invited Meghan and me to attend a 4-H Vision Team meeting to give a brief presentation. The Vision Team, which is sponsored primarily by Unocal, was also supportive of our idea. However, as we found out, the grants that were being offered didn't directly affect Los Angeles and any new programs that might develop at the time. But we did learn that HACLA, which manages the housing developments in our city, was soon to begin a $35 million rehabilitation and modernization project of the city's 21 public housing developments, which included a special emphasis on playgrounds! We also learned that HACLA was to develop a submission package to be presented to HUD. And, this submission package was to be developed with the participation of, and in partnership with, the residents of the housing developments.

Many of the students at my school were residents of Hacienda Village and I hoped that their input could be included. But I doubted that the bureaucrats involved would want to include children in the design of the playgrounds. In a notice that went out to the residents of Hacienda Village, I discovered that a meeting would soon take place which would enable residents to participate meaningfully in the planning and implementation of the modernization project. In the notice it was stated that at the meeting residents would have an opportunity to help identify priority projects for modernization and provide community consensus and feedback about the implementation of the projects.

Even though we weren't residents of the housing community, Meghan and I went to the meeting to see what it was all about, to watch how consultants and officials from HACLA communicated with residents, and to see if we could convince them to allow the children to become involved in the design of our tar-

geted playground. Thinking about it now, in hindsight I wish I would have brought my students along to the meeting.

At the meeting we listened as it was explained that the money would be used to beef up security by installing more bars on doors and windows, to erect a tall fence around the community, to provide bulletproof lights and finally to start a community crime prevention group. We watched the nonparticipatory, outside consultants make a feeble attempt to gather input from the ten or so residents present. In this housing community there are approximately 200 residents! One very loud, angry man stood up to ask that the boards covering up his windows be replaced with glass. Very little was contributed by the other residents present. As we watched the consultants fulfill their obligation, and leave, I couldn't help but wonder if they went home thinking, like so many often do, that the residents wouldn't or couldn't generate very much input. I wondered if they considered, even for a brief second, that their techniques of facilitating productive discussion were ineffective. Certainly, in my opinion, there was no "meaningful participation" occurring on that day.

When the meeting was over, we were able to hand our proposal to HACLA's construction support supervisor. We also met the president of the Residents' Association who was very supportive. Personally, I went away from the meeting feeling positive about the possibilities, but also outraged with what I believed was the injustice of inadequately gathered input.

A week later, arrangements were made for Meghan and I to have an after school meeting with the construction support supervisor and his boss, the assistant director of housing maintenance. They liked our idea, said it was real good, but the time was too late, the plans had already been drawn up, there wasn't enough money, etc., etc. More red tape to cut through, and by this time our scissors were getting rather dull. We needed something a little more effective than a pair of scissors!

Powerful Petition

After playing phone tag with the Housing Authority for several weeks, another meeting was arranged. I was excited, but this time I wanted to be prepared. To demonstrate our commitment, we planned to gather the support of the residents with a petition. I wanted to plop the petition down in front of HACLA officials with two hundred signatures to see how they would respond.

In the petition we informed the residents about the problem: "The children and residents of Hacienda Village have not been given the opportunity to become 'adequately' involved in HACLA's current rehabilitation and modernization project as it applies specifically to the upgrade of the playgrounds and tot lots in Hacienda Village."

We also explained exactly what we wanted to do about the problem: "We want the children and residents of Hacienda Village to be given much more of an opportunity to be actively and adequately involved in HACLA's modernization project. We want the children and residents to participate in more meaningful activities in regards to the planning and completion of the upgrade of the playgrounds in Hacienda Village. We want to involve the children enrolled in the 4-H After School Program at Compton Avenue Elementary School in a community service project to help accomplish this task. These 4-H participants are some of the children that play in these playground areas. We believe that by enrolling these 'community members' in this project, as they work with other Hacienda Village residents, it will help to meet the needs of the community and children while promoting a sense of ownership, thus building a greater sense of responsibility for future upkeep and maintenance of the areas."

On a Friday after school, Murphy, my new roommate and VISTA volunteer, Tamika, the secretary of the Residents' Association, Tom, also a VISTA volunteer, Meghan, myself, and a few of the young teens just hanging out in the area, set off to get as many signatures as possible.

Just as we were to begin our petitioning along came my good friend Victor. Victor is the stepfather of Danyell — the student who first suggested we hang social action posters up in Hacienda Village. Victor, who lived in Hacienda Village all his life, helped me paint the entire inside of the house I was renting in Watts. I met Victor at the first parent-teacher conference of the year and we were friends ever since. Victor and I played basketball in Hacienda Village and went to the gym to workout several times. That afternoon, he was in the neighborhood visiting some of his old friends. Naturally, I had to ask him if he wanted to help. And naturally, because of his generous ways, Victor said, "If it's for the kids ... sure, no problem." That afternoon we acquired more than 130 signatures!

By Sunday I was ready to go out and get some more signatures. I dragged Murphy off the couch and we headed towards Hacienda Village. While out canvasing the community we came upon a jovial group of ladies sitting outside on their front porch drinking a few beers. They were laughing and having a great time. It was a hot day and I would've loved a beer, but they

didn't offer. We also met a woman sitting by her back door having dinner. When she found out what we were doing, she practically ripped the clipboard out of my hand saying, "Give me that petition." After she finished signing, she invited Murphy and I to join her for dinner. She was having ox-tails and greens. I told her, "My mother used to make ox-tail soup when I was younger. I loved it." I was getting kind of hungry too, but we still had a lot of signatures to get. Hoping not to offend her, I said no thanks and we went on our way. A few minutes later we encountered a man who answered the door holding a very large switchblade in his right hand. Murphy noticed it first. Apparently, the man didn't want any trouble. Once he discovered what we were doing, he folded the knife, put it in his pocket, and signed our petition. That afternoon we reached our mark. With Murphy's help, we picked up another 70-plus signatures. We reached our goal of 200!

The following week, I met Meghan in front of HACLA's office just in time for our second meeting with the construction managers. We went into the meeting armed with the petition ready to do whatever it took to get our project going. During the meeting it was our objective to make our intentions clear. I let them know about the petition with over 200 resident signatures; however, I didn't give it to them because I was saving it for higher authorities. I eventually sent the petition with a letter to the executive director of the HACLA.

In spite of all the uncertainty, Meghan and I walked away hopeful that we were going to have the opportunity to involve the kids enrolled in the 4-H After School Program in a very unique community service project. About a week after I sent the letter and petition to the executive director I gave him a call. He and his staff were very supportive of our project. It was a go!

Caution: Children At Work!

Meghan named our project "Caution: Children At Work!" It became the first project ever involving inner-city children in the design of a playground built in a Housing and Urban Development community. In fact, the $80,000 playground became the largest of any public housing development in Los Angeles.

To help the children through the process of designing their playground, we tried, as much as possible, to follow the premise of a student-directed curriculum. We had specific lessons to give and our own ideas as to what we would like to do, but we wanted to let things flow and emerge in whichever way they might.

The first thing I did was read the children's book *Miguel's Mountain* by Bill Binzen (1968). The book, which we used to introduce the 4-H'ers to our project, is about a little boy and his efforts to save the mound of dirt or "mountain" that he and his friends played on in the middle of his city park. One day while playing at the park Miguel learned that the mountain was going to be bulldozed. He was sad, and for the time being felt like there was nothing that he could do. Miguel, remaining awake in bed that night thought about the mountain for a long time. Finally, in a creative burst of energy he considered the idea of writing an authentic, purposeful, real-life letter to the mayor asking him to save the mountain which he and his friends so loved. The next morning, with his mother's help, Miguel wrote and mailed the letter. After a few days of waiting nervously, a city official visited Miguel at his home to deliver the good news, "The mountain will stay right where it is forever!" Needless to say Miguel was ecstatic. He and his friends, feeling listened to, empowered, important, and successful in their efforts, raced off to the park to celebrate on their mountain.

Once the 4-H'ers were excited about the possibility of making a difference in our community just like Miguel, we went off to visit the playground site. Just like real architects, we drew pictures of the playground, took photographs, measured it, and described what what we saw in journals.

> It's scummy. It smells and it's dirty. (Tory)
> It looks like a total mess. (Tyrice)
> I saw some monkey bars that are not working and polluted sand. The swings and the little horse are not painted. (Luciana)

When we returned to the classroom, we wanted to find out what the children knew about the 4-H tradition so that we could represent that tradition in our playground design. We brainstormed and clustered words that correspond with, or represent, the four "H" themes of the 4-H tradition: head, heart, hands, and health. Once the meaning or function of each of the four "H's" was gleaned, the children brainstormed what types of equipment or apparatuses would best compliment the established functions. For the head leaf which symbolizes clear thinking, the children thought it was important to include clover leaf shaped tables and surrounding benches for tutoring, homework, and mind-stimulating games. For the heart leaf which symbolizes sensitivity, the children wanted to place benches for adults to counsel and supervise small children. For the hands leaf, symbolizing helpfulness, the children wanted to place a garden to feed the hungry. They also wanted to beautify the playground with signs carrying anti-drug messages and trash cans to keep the area clean. And for

the health leaf, symbolizing vitality, the children thought it was important to include many different kinds of playground equipment and a physical fitness area for exercising.

Once we reached an agreement on what should be represented by each leaf, the children then worked in groups of two in order to design and draw with crayons their "ideal" four leaf clover shaped playground. With all of our idealized designs complete, we got down to the serious business of becoming real-life architects. Meghan taught the children how to read architectural drawings including roof plans, elevations, plans, and sections using an apple as a manipulative. This ground work enabled the children to work with the roof plans provided by the company that manufactured the playground equipment that was available to be installed.

As the children were becoming experienced in architectural design, we were visited by employees of HACLA so that they could show us what existing playgrounds at similar sites looked like and talk with us about practicalities of playground design. We learned that we couldn't use any tunnels in our designs because in the past it was discovered that homeless people would camp out in the tunnels which protected them from the elements. We also learned that we had to limit the amounts of chains that we used because in the past people would steal the chains to use them for various things such as towing cars. And we learned about the legal constraints for Public Playground Safety.

Once we understood our responsibilities, the children got down to the really challenging work. The 4-H'ers worked in small collaborative groups to create preliminary plans. Then one final design was created with the approval of all of the children. Instruction in architectural terms was secondary to a broader lesson about teamwork and consensus building. We were hoping that the resulting team spirit would be an insurance plan for shielding the new playground from the vandalism that ruined its predecessor. Working in progressively larger groups helped to promote consensus among participants.

With the lessons completed, on a hot summer afternoon, inside our school's stuffy auditorium, the children explained their architectural designs to HACLA, 4-H representatives, professors from UCLA, politicians, teachers, community members, and the press at a final presentation. The presentation included photographs and drawings of the process, the final design, a slide show, certificates of completion, and a question and answer session. HACLA then, with the recommendations of the children, went back to their drawing boards, considered legal/regulatory constraints and completed the design of the community playground area. HACLA later presented the modifications to the children and with the children's and community's approval began construction.

Darin Goes to Washington

As the playground was under construction, I received a message explaining that Darin, our talented fifth-grade leader who did an excellent job explaining our work to the executive director of the Housing Authority and the rest of the dignitaries in our school's auditorium, was going to be flown to Washington to explain the Caution: Children at Work! program to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Henry G. Cisneros.

We were excited. What a great opportunity for Darin! Darin's trip was planned to celebrate the success and accomplishments of 4-H After School Program in Los Angeles. Los Angeles, and now Kansas City, Oakland, and Philadelphia were to share in the $3.5 million HUD grant that I read about in the Teach for America newsletter when we first made contact with 4-H.

Meghan (who, by this time, had found the courage to move into our home in Watts) and I put together a portfolio and helped prepare Darin for his presentation. Darin was sharp and it was easy to prepare him for the presentation. He was excited about the opportunity to go to Washington. You could see it in his eyes! We went through the portfolio and reviewed all the things that we had done. Darin remembered everything. I showed him the articles from the newspapers. He already knew about the article from the *Los Angeles Times*, in fact he could show me the exact locations in the article where his name was mentioned and recite verbatim what he was quoted as saying, "A lot of kids our age are dying. We don't want that to happen. So we decided to make it safe," and "The gangbangers may try and take it down again. But if they do ... I hope we can have the same fun to build it up again."

After Darin was adequately prepared, I shook his hand, congratulated him, told him how proud I was of him, wished him well, told him to have fun but behave himself, and sent him on his way. With the portfolio safely tucked away in his backpack, Darin left my classroom and headed straight for the 4-H After School Activity Program.

Upon his return, I found Darin at the 4-H After School Activity Program. He told me all about his trip. Yes, he did get to speak with Cisneros. Actually, he met with Cisneros at a press conference. He explained our project and was also interviewed by reporters from CBS and ABC. He showed Cisneros the portfolio and told

him all about the project and pictures. Darin said that Cisneros was a very nice man who had to leave early in order to attend his son's soccer game. During his speech to the press, Mr. Cisneros was quoted saying, "The accomplishments of the 4-H After School Program in Los Angeles have inspired us to help it expand. The unprecedented collective effort of individuals, government, public education, and business has made a difference in the lives of the nearly 1,200 children this program has touched so far in Los Angeles alone. I anticipate that as the 4-H After School Program is developed in Oakland, Kansas City, and Philadelphia, leaders from other cities will look at them and Los Angeles as models for success." Way to go, 4-H!

While in Washington, Darin also had the opportunity to take in the sights. He saw the Capital, the White House, the Washington Monument, the Lincoln Memorial, and the grave of the Unknown Soldier. He saw Clinton as he was walking towards his limosine. Darin told me that he shouted out to him but the President just kept on walking. Another busy day in Washington I guess. I told him that with the way he was going, he might have Mr. Clinton calling on him before too long.

Dear 4-H'er

Darin had been home from his trip to Washington for about a month, the construction of the playground was still underway, and we were waiting to begin the beautification and landscaping. During this time, Darin received a couple of very important letters. The first one came directly to the school. The return address on the manila envelope said it was from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. I knew it had to be important so I pulled Darin off the playground and brought him to the office so that he could open the letter in the presence of our principal.

When Darin opened the letter, he knew right away who it was from. Proudly, he read the letter to us: "I am pleased and honored to have this opportunity to send my personal greetings and thanks to you for your contribution to the 'Caution: Children at Work!' program. You have demonstrated a remarkable commitment to improve yourself and the community. You are part of an exemplary educational and civic partnership which inspires and motivates students to succeed in life. Our nation needs your talents and I wish you all the best of luck in everything you do. Sincerely, Henry Cisneros."

At the end of the letter in his personal handwriting Mr. Cisneros also wrote Darin a note: "I enjoyed meeting you in Washington and want to encourage you in your community involvements. We need all your talents for the future of our country."

A few weeks later, after we had already dug holes for the eighteen bareroot rose bushes that were donated to our playground, Darin received another letter. The return address on the manila colored envelope said, "The White House." This time Darin read the letter to all the other 4-H'ers present. The letter thanked the group for the project and the example it sets in how young people can make a difference. "Young people like you represent the future of our nation.... Best wishes for a wonderful new year. Sincerely, Bill Clinton."

After Darin finished reading the letter and we offered our congratulations, he looked at us with his glistening eyes and said, "See?! This is what kids can do!" Feeling like a kid myself, filled with the joy of making a difference and being vicariously acknowledged by the President of the United States of America, I knew Darin was right ... this is what we holistic educators can do!

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Ecological Consciousness and Responsible Stewardship

An Anthropocentric Contradiction

G. Thomas Ray

How we as educators approach ecological issues with our students depends in large measure on our own frame of reference.

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Much of the discourse of environmental education is framed within two complementary arguments.

First, to a significant extent our current circumstances of ecological disarray are a consequence of humans' estrangement from the Earth — from concrete experience of its rhythms, touches and smells, and life-giving and sustaining capabilities, for example. And second, by recovering a sense of human-Earth interconnectedness, peoples' behaviors would become more environmentally sensitive. In this view, ably and sensibly articulated by Wendell Berry (1986, 1990), Madhu Prakash (1994a, 1994b, 1995), Gregory Smith (1992), Kilpatrick Sale (1985), and others, it is an absence of intimate knowledge and concrete experience of the land that contributes to a mindset of the Earth as a resource to be exploited — or at best well managed — for human use, something separate from humans, subordinate to their needs, and abstract from their immediate experience. Understood this way, sustainable practices emerge as a consequence of humans' intimate contact with the land. From this perspective, one of our responsibilities as educators is to examine curricula, teaching methods, school policies, and the like for how they may contribute to students' sense of alienation from the land, and to work toward forms of schooling that support and reinforce traditions which facilitate more concrete connections.

Understanding this way of thinking, however, requires something more than a thoughtful and reflective recognition of environmental problems and responses that this discourse brings into high relief. It is a commonplace that when we take on a project or set ourselves to some task or problem, how we go about the task, as well as how we conceived of it in the first place, is a consequence of our particular consciousness. But recognizing what that consciousness is, where it comes from, the cultural traditions that are framed within it, competing or alternative forms of consciousness that

might exist outside of it — this is a difficult if not impossible task, assuming that one bothers to think about it at all. Thus, the possibility exists that when we set about to solve some problem, the approaches we might take and solutions we might discover are embedded in the same cultural frame of mind as the one from which the problem emerged in the first place, and may as a consequence have an exacerbating effect. As Gregory Bateson warns,

> We, too, are creatures of a civilization which certainly since the Renaissance and possibly for a much longer time has cherished such irrational principles as reductionism, the conceptual division between mind and body, and the belief that ends justify means. It [is] therefore probable that any plan of action we might devise would itself be based upon these erroneous premises. (1991, p. 254)

Accordingly, when we think about human-Earth relationships and the environmental deterioration we are currently experiencing — and particularly when as educators we take on part of the responsibility for doing something about it — it should not be taken as sufficient that we recognize problems and devise plausible solutions. Rather, we must critically examine the thought and discourse of environmental diagnosis and prescription, and in doing so, consider the possibility that our best intentions may in the long term contribute to those same problems we seek to ameliorate.

The purpose of this essay is to examine this discourse of responsible environmental stewardship as articulated principally by Berry, but also by others whose work in this area reflects a bioregional approach to environmental education. In doing so, I argue that this approach to environmentally responsible behavior is set in a conceptual framework that reinforces a hierarchical relationship in which the environment is subordinate to human agency. I further argue that by focusing on intimate knowledge of a relatively small and local terrain, the discourse puts out of focus the interconnectedness of the entire biotic community and thus submerges the necessity of a global moral imperative regarding the condition of the Earth and our relationships with it. As a consequence, the possibility emerges that this way of thinking may carry adverse consequences for a stable and sustainable biotic community.

It is important to note explicitly from the outset that the intent here is not to reject the valuable contributions that these speakers have provided. Rather, it is to examine carefully the conceptual framework within which these contributions are embedded for unintended and unexpected consequences, and to consider how this work may privilege certain ways of thinking at the expense of others that might better contribute to a sustainable environmental relationship.

The paper proceeds in this way. First, I provide a brief overview of important points in the discourse of responsible stewardship. Second, by drawing on Gregory Bateson's ecological or holistic epistemology, I argue that an environmental ethos of intimate knowledge and responsible care contains an implicit dimension of anthropocentric and linear control, which in Bateson's view cannot be the situation if an ecological system is to remain stable. Finally, by following Berry's lead in distinguishing between natural and unnatural moral restraint, and by drawing on Clifford Geertz's discussion of symbol and religion, I articulate a way of thinking about consciousness that may contribute to a more effective moral tendency regarding environmental matters as well as a sense of global interconnectedness and responsibility.

Intimate Knowledge and Kindly Use

In the bioregional view, environmental problems are not of a scientific or technological origin. That is, the problems we find ourselves surrounded by should not be understood as having been caused — and therefore can be cured — by technological innovation. For example, while Berry's (1986) criticism of this in matters of agricultural "efficiency" is well taken, he makes it clear that it is not the technology of agribusiness but the cultural mindset behind it that is at the root of the problem. Accordingly, it is not scientific technique that will provide solutions — alternative energy sources, biodegradable disposables, or such farfetched ideas, noted by Jerry Mander (1991) with appropriate snideness, as "shoot[ing] ozone bullets directly into the stratosphere, where they would melt and replenish the depleted ozone" (p. 180). Rather, the problem is deeply rooted in the consciousness of a culture group disconnected from the Earth and in other ways separated from a sense of place.

When humans do not have an intimate knowledge and responsiveness to the land, a tendency for exploitive behavior emerges, which Berry distinguishes from nurturance:

> The standard of the exploiter is efficiency; the standard of the nurturer is care. The exploiter's goal is money, profit; the nurturer's goal is health — his land's health, his own, his family's, his community's, his country's. Whereas the exploiter asks of a piece of land only how much and how quickly it can be made to produce, the nurturer asks ... how much can be

> taken from it without diminishing it? What can it produce *dependably* for an indefinite time? (1986, p. 7)

In this view, human-as-nurturer is a generative metaphor for guiding our moral obligation in this relationship. What this requires is a "human intelligence of the earth" (Berry 1986, p. 43), one that emerges from an intimate relationship with the land that allows us to understand our "inescapable bonds" (p. 43) to it, which "can grow only among a people soundly established upon the land..." (p. 43). Such an intelligence recognizes an interdependence between humans and land, a relationship that is obscured when our posture toward the environment is that of a transient and disconnected user.

Consistent with Berry, Prakash (1994b) is critical of the slogan "Think globally, act locally," arguing that it is not possible to "think" in a global scale and that it is dangerous to act on the presumption that we can:

> Since none of us can ever know the planet earth, global thinking is at its best only an illusion, and at its worst the grounds for the kinds of destructive and dangerous actions perpetrated by global think tanks like the World Bank and the more benign watchdogs in the global environmental movement. (p. 51)

Instead, she argues, we should focus on what we *can* attend to, thinking "on a scale that humans can really know and understand [so as] to take care of the consequences of their actions and decisions upon others" (p. 52). In the same vein, Kilpatrick Sale (1985) notes that

> the only way people will apply "right behavior" and behave in a responsible way is if they have been persuaded to see the problem concretely and to understand their own connections to it directly — and this can be done only at a limited scale. (p. 53)

One way of thinking about this situation is that it is the multiplicity of civilization's technology and conveniences that have disconnected us from the Earth, reduced our knowledge of it, and truncated our sense of obligation to it. Our food is pre-cooked, pre-packaged, and grown and harvested outside of our experience. Likewise our clothes, furniture, tools, toys, and entertainment — they come to us from without, from somewhere else. We have no clue (or very little) as to their origins, and no experience of their making:

> The industrial eater is, in fact, one who does not know that eating is an agricultural act, who no longer knows or imagines the connections between eating and the land.... When food, in the minds of eaters, is no longer associated with farming and the land, then the eaters are suffering a kind of cultural amnesia that is misleading and dangerous. (Berry 1990, p. 146)

The point here is that "intimate knowledge" of the Earth and of one's place and responsibility to it cannot be acquired when ways of living and consuming make the Earth an abstraction. And in turn, a sense of the world as abstract and separate does not facilitate a moral obligation that would contribute to a sustainable biotic community. Rather, it contributes to a cultural mindset that privileges exploitive relationships and that views the Earth, as C. A. Bowers (1993, p. 135) critically notes, "from the perspective of humans; that is, it is to be valued, understood, and utilized in terms of human needs."

Berry argues:

> In any biological system the first principle is restraint — that is, the natural or moral checks that maintain a balance between use and continuity. The life of one year must not be allowed to diminish the life of the next; nothing must live at the expense of the source.... In agriculture these natural checks are removed and therefore must be replaced by the skills of responsibility. (1986, p. 93)

This is a central feature in this way of thinking, for it is a lack of restraint, facilitated by an absence of contextualized and intimate knowledge of the Earth, in humans' use of the land, that has brought us to the edge of ecological collapse. Thus, responsible stewardship of the land involves conscious moral restraint, grounded in intimate knowledge and intelligence, and with an eye toward the viability of future generations.

However attractive this critique and prescription may be — and, once again, it is eminently sensible — it also privileges a form of consciousness that may in the long term contribute to, rather than alleviate, environmentally deleterious practices. Turning to the work of Gregory Bateson, this potentiality can be brought into high relief.

An Ecology of Relationship

Bringing Bateson to bear on this subject involves understanding two of his fundamental ideas. One is that objects do not exist in isolation, discretely bounded by their physical perimeter, but instead are situated in an ecology of relationship, an interconnected network of objects in the world. A second idea is that such systems in which objects exist relationally are systems of communication:

> The total self-corrective unit which processes information, or, as I say, "thinks" and "acts" and "decides,"

> is a *system* whose boundaries do not at all coincide with the boundaries either of the body or of what is popularly called the "self" or "consciousness." (Bateson 1972, p. 319)

His example of a person chopping a tree illustrates both concepts:

> Each stroke of the axe is modified or corrected, according to the shape of the cut face of the tree left by the previous stroke. This self-corrective (*i.e.* mental) process is brought about by a total system, tree-eyes-brain-muscles-axe-stroke-tree; and it is this total system that has the characteristics of immanent mind. (1972, p. 317)

Here, Bateson observes that the tree is not a passive object of an autonomous subject. Rather, differences in the shape of the cut face lead to differences in subsequent strokes of the axe, thus illustrating a circular and communicative process in this action. Accordingly, the chopping is not simply a unidirectionally linear function of the mental intention of an autonomous axe handler. And because of the reciprocal communication involved in this activity, mentation is not a function of an individual organism but something that inheres in the system as a whole. As Bateson explains:

> The "mental" system involved in cutting a tree is not a mind *in* a man who cuts a tree but a mind which includes differences in other characteristics in the tree, the behavior of the ax, and so on, all around a circuit which in essence is a completed circuit. (1991, p. 165)

Berry understands this clearly, and one of his arguments is that in our having become estranged from the Earth, we have lost a sense of interdependence and interconnectedness:

> Obvious distinctions can be made between body and soul, one body and other bodies, body and world, etc. But these things that appear to be distinct are nevertheless caught in a network of mutual dependence and influence that is the substantiation of their unity. Body, soul (or mind or spirit), community, and world are all susceptible to each other's influence, and they are conductors of each other's influence. (1986, p. 110)

As noted earlier, Berry connects environmental deterioration with our failure to apprehend this interdependence, and Bateson understands this as well:

> You decide that you want to get rid of the by-products of human life and that Lake Erie will be a good place to put them. You forget that the eco-mental system called Lake Erie is part of *your* wider eco-mental system — and that if Lake Erie is driven insane, its insanity is incorporated in the larger system of *your* thought and experience. (1972, p. 484)

Gregory Smith (1992) also shares this perspective, arguing that it is the modern worldview that has "detached us from the reality of our embeddedness in the natural environment" (p. 40) and that "it may be this form of detachment, and the pride that lies behind it, which is most dangerous and damaging to the natural and human communities that surround us" (p. 41). And both Smith and Berry would likely agree with Bateson that our pathological relationship with the environment might easily be taken as a form of insanity.

But in his view of mental ecology, Bateson makes it clear that "no part of such an internally interactive system can have unilateral control over the remainder or over any other part" (1972, p. 315), and if a mental system is to be in long-term sustainable balance, there must be a mutuality of control and communication among the system's parts. Otherwise, the system will eventually go out of balance and destroy itself:

> The stability of the system (*i.e.*, whether it will act self-correctively or oscillate or go into runaway) depends upon the relation between the operational product of all the transformations of difference around the circuit and upon this characteristic time. (1972, p. 316)

From Bateson's perspective a system is "sane" — that is, in balance — when there is a mutuality and reciprocity of control, but this does not seem to be the case with this discourse of local knowledge and care. Although Berry fully articulates the discourse of interdependence and reciprocity, his language of responsible use, stewardship, and restraint suggests a form of consciousness that privileges human action, linear and unidirectional, toward the land:

> "A moral energy that will define and enforce *responsible use* [emphasis added]...." (1986, p. 26).
>
> "The world can be preserved in health only by the *forbearance and care* [emphasis added] of a multitude of persons" (1986, p. 26).
>
> "[The modern specialist] has escaped any order that might imply *restraints* [emphasis added] or impose limits" (1986, p. 53).
>
> "Are we, or are we not, going to *take proper care* [emphasis added] of our land...." (1986, p. viii).

In a human-Earth relationship of stewardship, we are to act responsibly toward the environment — to

behave with care and nurturance so that the land will be healthy. There is of course a reciprocity of communication in that the Earth tells us — those of us, anyway, who trouble to pay attention — of its health and sanity, and Berry and Prakash are clear that intimate knowledge of place enables us to apprehend those messages. But systemic communication patterns notwithstanding, this relationship of care is one of anthropocentric hierarchy. To be sure, it is one of benevolence and sensitivity; but it is nonetheless a unilateral control of precisely that sort that Bateson cautions against.

The point here is *not* that we should avoid consciously restraining our inclination for environmental abusiveness, or that we shouldn't consciously act in the world in appropriately sustainable ways. Rather, the point is to question the appropriateness of a form of consciousness that this work privileges for achieving these purposes. My argument here is that conscious moral restraint is merely the reverse of conscious progress. To put it another way, abuse and restraint are opposites on the same continuum of a form of consciousness that is at the root of the problem — that is, one that privileges a view of relationships as more linear and hierarchical than ecological. Thus, Bateson's question, "whether the information processed through consciousness is adequate and appropriate for the task of human adaptation" (cited in M. Bateson 1972/1991, p. 13), is particularly apt with regard to living in a sustainable ecology of relationship with other members of the biotic community.

Toward an Environmentally Sustainable Consciousness

The problem, as I see it, lies in Berry's distinction between natural and moral restraint (1986, p. 93). Where the former has to do with checks and balances within the natural environment, the latter refers to checks that are applied by humans to their behavior; the former occur without purposive consciousness, and the latter require it. This is problematic because, to use Berry's words, "the length of our vision is our moral boundary" (1986, pp. 83-84), and, once again, our vision is constrained by the form of consciousness that informs it. Bateson notes:

> In the natural history of the living human being, ontology and epistemology cannot be separated. His (commonly unconscious) beliefs about what sort of world it is will determine how he sees it and acts within it, and his ways of perceiving and acting will determine his beliefs about its nature. (1972, p. 314)

From this perspective, the possibility emerges that there may be a "natural" consciousness, one that is distinct from Berry's purposive moral consciousness and which would better integrate humans within the biotic community in balanced and sustaining ways — that is, a state of mind that is less self-aware, less consciously purposive and intentional, and thus more responsive to natural checks that impose themselves upon the human mind, slowly, subtly, and perhaps subliminally. As John Livingston argues, "Conventional moral philosophy and ethics are, I believe, prosthetic devices.... [What we need instead is an] extended consciousness which transcends mere self.... I see this extended sense of belonging as a fundamental biological (and thus human) imperative" (cited in Fox 1990, p. 228).

Clifford Geertz's (1973) discussion of religion and symbol is useful here. "Sacred symbols function to synthesize a people's ethos — the tone, character, and quality of their life, its moral and aesthetic style and mood...." (p. 89), and they serve to "establish powerful, pervasive, and long-lasting moods and motivations in men" (p. 90). Setting aside their spiritual dimension, such symbols are significant in that a person's apprehension and experience of them is a consequence of their membership in the cultural group that gives legitimacy to the symbols and derives its cohesiveness from them. In this way, although a symbol may be recognized and understood by anyone, the *experience* of it involves a much different form of consciousness — perhaps intuitive (Arnheim 1985), perhaps aesthetic (Eisner 1985; Bruner 1962, pp. 59-74; Dissanayake 1988). And it is important to repeat that the individual *cannot* have this sort of experience of a symbol except by virtue of his or her participation in the group that shares it. It is not a matter of conscious choice that a symbol is experienced in this way, but a matter of culturally grounded imperative.

If, for example, we take seriously arguments that suggest an American Civil Religion (cf., Herberg 1974; Lewellen 1983, ch. 4; Warner 1974), we can understand Washington DC in terms of its shrines (the Supreme Court Building and the Lincoln Memorial), its holy documents (the United States Constitution and the Declaration of Independence), and its spiritual leaders (George Washington and Thomas Jefferson). And we can understand as well that an experience of these "sacred" icons will be considerably different for persons whose knowledge of them was acquired through a process of cultural induction that was facilitated by various songs and stories of the national mythology

than for those whose knowledge was acquired in more academic or abstract ways.

Berry ably argues that moral bearing is a cultural matter, and he is also clear that norms, beneficial and otherwise, are embedded in cultural infrastructure, often at implicit and taken-for-granted levels. Thus, it is possible that what he is asking us to do, in addition to becoming aware of cultural practices and ways of thinking that are environmentally damaging and modifying them through moral restraint, is to permit new ways of thinking to submerge in a set of cultural symbols that informs our understanding of the world and the moral ethos surrounding our relationship with it. Or, if he isn't asking explicitly for this, perhaps he is implicitly hoping for it to happen over time.

But an emphasis on intimate knowledge of place as critical for a responsive land ethic seems to stipulate that one cannot "know" the entire biotic community in a responsible way. This is correct, but only within a certain conception of knowledge. When we make an epistemological shift to a knowability grounded in symbol — in Geertz's sense of the word — a much different form of experience becomes possible, and "knowing" the world seems not only possible but necessary. Or, to put it another way, the experience we have of knowing symbolically provides an intuitive or holistic experience that can accommodate an apprehension of the biotic gestalt, and with it an ethical imperative more "powerful and pervasive" than moral consciousness.

The problem can be understood this way. To know, in a bioregionalist sense, separates knower from knowable, or subject from object. By distinguishing the knowing subject from the to-be-known, it becomes difficult for human knowers to see themselves as embedded in an ecology of mental relationship; rather, it creates a conceptual framework of separation and objective distance. As a consequence the potential emerges for knowers to understand themselves as hierarchically situated in relation to an object, which sets a framework for potential abuse. As Bateson puts it, if

> you arrogate all mind to yourself, you will see the world around you as mindless and therefore not entitled to moral or ethical consideration. The environment will seem to be yours to exploit. Your survival unit will be you and your folks or conspecifics against the environment of other social units, other races and the brutes and the vegetables. (1972, p. 462)

And whether the hierarchy contributes to abuse or care, it is one of unidirectional anthropocentric control, which for Bateson will eventually result in systemic failure.

On the other hand, to "know" symbolically — what for Highwater (1994) might involve the "language of vision," which situates moral meaning in metaphor and myth — allows for a more holistic apprehension of phenomena, and thus a global awareness of the sort that Prakash argues is unworkable. It is difficult to conceive of forms of schooling that might lead in this direction. It is even more difficult to imagine myths and metaphors that would serve this purpose since traditions of this sort tend not to be consciously created, but emerge as part of a group's cultural landscape. What is important to understand, however, is the moral force that inheres in a consciousness informed by such traditions. Rituals, as Ellen Dissanayake (1988) suggests, "convert the arbitrary into the necessary, thus certifying practices and dogmas that are of vital interest to the group" (p. 87). And they accomplish this because of their symbolic effect, an encoding of myth and metaphor so that what might otherwise be ordinary "acquire[s] the potency of standing for extraordinary things" (p. 89).

As educators, we can understand the contradiction in this way. When we assist students in developing the capacity for apprehending the Earth intimately and concretely and to care for it responsibly, we are also reinforcing an anthropocentric and linear relationship and limiting the scope of their vision. If however students' view of things can be made global — an ecology of relationship in the largest possible sense — and imbued with a moral force grounded in symbol, myth, and ritual, their ability to "know" the land in the sense of responsible stewardship is diminished. But with the latter, what is "known" is apprehended in a way that facilitates a consciousness of the world more consistent with a stable and sustainable biotic relationship.

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Fractals

Achieving Congruence and Integrity in Learning Organizations

Joseph M. Saban, Arthur L. Costa, and Thomas P. Wensch

Learning organizations express their goals and core values in different ways, but all exhibit an internally consistent fractal quality.

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As a youngster I used to watch my mother knit. She would sit for hours watching TV, listening to the radio, or having conversation with family about our needs, while her tools, those gleaming silver needles that sat in the basket with the colorful balls of yarn, deftly chattered at astounding speeds producing the fabric of her labor. Even at my mother's urgings to learn, I wasn't interested in acquiring the skill of knitting. I was, however, always interested in what she was making.

As I grew older, I began to marvel at the diversity of her production and to appreciate the contribution her knitting made to our family's way of life. I became keenly observant of the motions of her hands as well as her shiny silver needle tools. While her tools and hand movements were simple and varied only slightly from project to project, the ultimate material outcomes as well as their applicability to family life varied enormously. Sometimes Mom spun an afghan for the sofa, or a sweater for my brother. Sometimes she produced house slippers for herself, or winter stockings for Dad. Sometimes a warm muffler for Sis, a hot pad for the kitchen, a baby blanket for a gift, and even my favorite stocking cap. I discovered that she employed a single type of stitch to produce what seemed to be an endless variety of products. To her greater credit, Mom constantly searched for new and more complex ways to vary that single stitch to benefit a continually changing family with its many faceted needs.

Only recently have I been truly appreciative of the mastery of her hands and her thinking. I now recognize that the beautiful array of the products of her labors were realized via the convergence of a reasonably simple mental process model with her values and a vision of what was to be. Mom, I'm sure, had never heard of organizational theorists Peter Senge or Margaret Wheatley, yet her craft is illustrative of their thoughts and theories on learning organizations. Mom demon-

strated solid organizational theory across task and function and through multiple levels of complexity.

Learning Organizations

"The most successful organizations of the 1990s will be learning organizations, which have the ability to learn and change faster than their competitors" (Senge 1990). Senge proposes that both individually and collectively members of these learning organizations will exhibit or employ five disciplines:

- Systems Thinking: The discipline to integrate the thinking of others, and to fuse those thoughts into a coherent body of theory and practice.
- Mental Models: The ability to recognize internal patterns in our world, to scrutinize those patterns, and to make them open to the influence of others.
- Shared Vision: The creativity to unearth shared "pictures of the future" that foster genuine commitment.
- Personal Mastery: The willingness to clarify and to deepen our skills toward improved practices.
- Team Learning: The capacity to "think together," which is gained by mastering the practice of dialogue and discussion.

Systems thinking is defined as "a conceptual framework, a body of knowledge and tools to make patterns, directions, and relationships clear. This is both analytical and intuitive" (Senge 1990). System thinkers harness mental models to pursue personal mastery which Senge defines as the process of continually clarifying and deepening our personal vision, of focusing our energy and pursuing reality. The models used in this pursuit are practical process tools supported by research, attuned to relationships among multiple factors, flexible in application, attentive to detail, while being global in scope. Leaders of learning organizations use these models interactively to construct shared vision and to facilitate continual team learning. These mental models are applied in every function and interaction of the organization from public relations to personnel to finance.

Fractal Qualities In Learning Organizations

In the past two decades the fabric of our public schools has begun to unravel. Schools across the nation have faced ever increasing pressures to undergo complex systemic changes, i.e., to alter "the cut of their cloth." Among others, pedagogical, organizational, and societal forces are influencing schools to change. Yet these issues and influences are secondary to our school's capability to forge meaningful change in the face of need. With the expiration of the Industrial Age, the methods of scientific management theory have given way to the methods of systems thinking theory. In contrast to cause-and-effect reductionism or micromanagement techniques found in scientific methodology, systems theory employs an integrated, process-centered, holistic approach to change. Current thinking on organizational development indicates that lasting progress for educational entities can be sustained via the thoughtful application of systems theory. School organizations on the cutting edge of systems thinking consciously employ mental models to assist in change.

The very best organizations have a fractal quality to them. An observer of such an organization can tell what the organization's values and ways of doing business are by watching anyone, whether it be a production floor employee or a senior manager. There is consistency and predictability to the quality of behavior. No matter where we look in these organizations, self-similarity is found in its people, in spite of the complex range of roles and levels (Wheatley 1992).

A culture is a system of attitudes, actions, and artifacts that endures over time and that operates to produce among its members a relatively unique common psychology (Vaill 1989). When an organization develops a well-defined culture, members of the organization can consistently describe the essential aspects of the culture (Collins and Porras 1994). Their behaviors and interactions are aligned with their descriptions. This alignment builds the foundation for organizational productivity and satisfaction in the workplace (Sheetz and Benson 1994).

Thus, organizational integrity and congruence can be developed and enhanced by the repetition of familiar mental process models on many different levels of organizational complexity. When these models are set in motion throughout the organization, they can be said to have a fractal quality, i.e., "they repeat a similar pattern or design at ever-changing levels of scale. No matter where we look, the same pattern will be evident. In any fractal we are viewing a simple organizing structure that creates unending complexity" (Wheatley 1992). At the same time, any one part of the organization will provide a lens into the whole organization. For example, in many natural systems there is a fractal quality; that is, they share similar details on many different scales and levels (Briggs 1992). Consider the endless duplication of the patterns of a cauliflower, or the repetitions in the shape of a fern. Focusing on any part of the system reveals a reproduction of the system itself.

We propose that what makes schools as learning organizations truly elegant is their internal consistency. Within these organizations, systems thinking, personal

mastery, building shared vision, and team learning are valued and act as measures of an organization's integrity (i.e., its character, honesty, sincerity, and uprightness). Furthermore, the thoughtful application of mental process models — models which have been debated, accepted, and internalized by the organization's staff — contribute to an organization's congruence (i.e., its internal operating harmony, agreeability, predictability, and appropriateness). Simply stated, elegant learning organizations develop, share, and practice mental process models in all team tasks, functions, and decisions. Elegant learning organizations have integrity, are congruent, identify visions, master their models, and then "stick to their knitting!"

We believe that when mental process models operate consistently in truly elegant learning organizations they possess a fractal quality. They manifest themselves in a multitude of functional ways across all levels of organizational complexity much the same way as the knitting process model produces afghans, sweaters, or hot pads. The models are tools which enable us to work among the threads of an organization's needs, and when intertwined with the threads of vision, assist us in weaving the elegant fabric of meaningful change so valued by high functioning learning organizations. Moreover, when staff members find inconsistencies in practice between various segments of the organization, incredulity or doubt tears at the fabric of the organization's integrity.

Assessment may be one illustrative example of a fractal quality within an organization. In a holonomous learning organization, all units are interactive with each other and therefore no assessment of one unit can occur without a corresponding assessment of its effect on every other unit. Every unit within the system is a participant in assessment. Each unit within an organization engages in goal setting and clarification, experimenting and taking action to achieve the goals, gathering assessment and feedback data , reflecting on and interpreting the data, and then taking any further action (See Figure 1, Costa and Kallick, in press).

Only as these attributes become consistent throughout the entire organization — self, classroom, school, district, and eventually the community — will it become a congruent learning organization. All units in the system are in a constant state of self-assessing, self-learning, and self-modification (Costa and Garmston 1994).

For example, a system may think of a new assessment, such as portfolios, at the level of individual students by asking: "What constitutes evidence of outcomes achieved at the student level?" At the level of classroom teachers: "What might a teacher's portfolio contain?" At the school level: "What artifacts would go in a school's portfolio to show evidence of growth and change as a learning organization?" At the central office level: "How might administrators use portfolio assessment to demonstrate their growth? At the superintendent's level: "How might the use of portfolios demonstrate accomplishments to the Board of Trustees?" In hiring practices and policies: "Do incoming candidates being considered for employment present their portfolios upon application?"

We see this one example of fractal quality in practice at each level of the organization. We believe that what enhances organizational integrity is the congruence of practice (the fractal quality), so that examining the value practiced in one segment communicates what the entire organization values.

Theory in Practice

Are there any school districts striving to employ systems thinking and fractal mental models? While the numbers are increasing, two can serve as brief examples here: Carrollton-Farmers Branch Independent School District in Carrollton, Texas; and Community High School District 155, in Crystal Lake, Illinois.

The Carrollton-Farmers Branch School District in Plano, Texas, asked itself if a means of self-valuation could serve as the cornerstone for progressive change. By harnessing salient factors within and creating shared mental models forged from the arenas of TQM, cognitive coaching, and meaningful goal setting, the district set about creating a means for a high quality

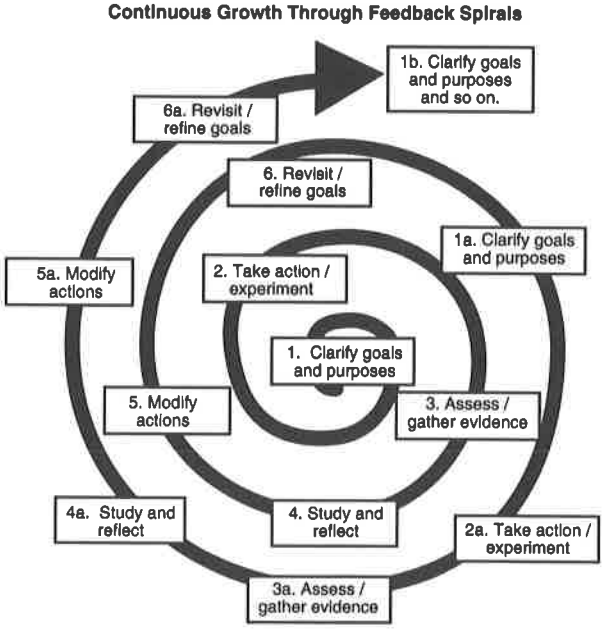

Figure 1

professional evaluation system. Through effective communication, shared visioning, and personal mastery over the skills found in the cognitive coaching model, the staff in Carrollton were able, on every organizational level, to weave a fabric for meaningful professional growth. The task required systems thinking and fractal applications of their mental process model. These fractals included, but were not limited to, the use of their model in fostering changes in: the teachers' view of professional development, administration attitudes towards the abdication of evaluation control, Board of Education and community support , and the State Board of Education's stance regarding the State of Texas Teacher Appraisal System. Carrollton's success in causing these changes can be attributed to systems thinking, effective communication, shared visioning, and the fractal use of mental models.

We believe that Carrollton's conceptualization of assessment is an example of a fractal quality within an organization. Each unit within the organization engages in (a) goal setting and clarification, (b) experimenting and taking action to achieve the goals, (c) gathering assessment and feedback data, (d) reflecting on and interpreting the data, and (e) taking further action. All units are interactive with each other and are participants in the same form of assessment. As these attributes become congruent throughout the entire organization — self, classroom, school, district, and eventually the community — Carrollton-Farmers Branch Independent School District will become an ever more elegant learning community.

Another example of a school system stretching for meaningful change through shared vision, systems thinking, and the fractal use of mental models is Community High School District 155, Crystal Lake, Illinois. The staff of this school district jointly created and communicated throughout the organization a mental model for change. The model is based in the research and writings of Michael Fullan (1990), Chris Argyris (1982), Stephen Covey (1989, 1991), Peter Senge (1990), Donald Schon (1987), Art Costa and Bob Garmston (1994), Art Costa and Bena Kallick (1995), Laura Lipton (1991) and others. This district's model synthesizes knowledge in the fields of change, reflective practice, feedback spirals, core values, organizational development and cognitive coaching. (See Figure 2 for a visual representation of the model.)

Currently the model is being applied by faculty and community teams for planning the construction of a fourth high school, assisting the thought process in curriculum development proposals, prioritizing building maintenance projects, redesigning the new teacher induction process, revaluating student discipline procedures, and guiding the implementation of an entirely new supervisory process for teachers and administration. While the uses of the model vary, the mental

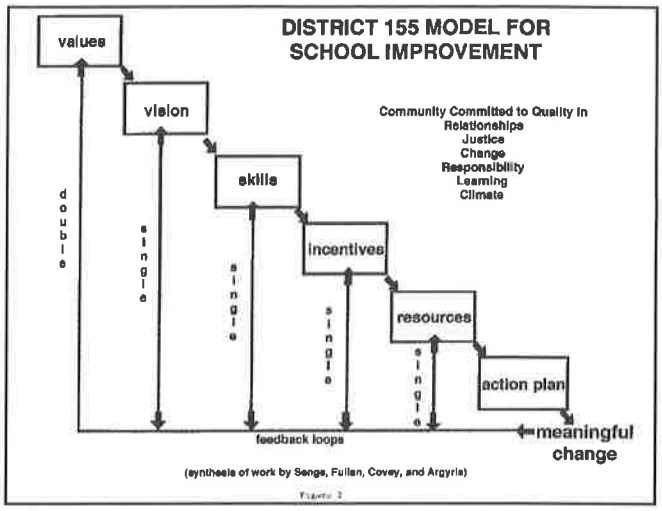

Figure 2. District 155 Model for School Improvement (adapted from Senge, Fullan, Covey, and Argyris)

processes and sequences embodied within the model remain the same in all applications. These processes when coupled with feedback loops insure that a common thread weaves through all aspects of the organization.

The "District 155 Model" has been engaged to thread together various levels of the organization. The model's feedback loops allow staff to spiral within and among differing district needs while holding focus on the common underlying fractal quality of district core values (Mom's knit artifacts exhibit the same fractal quality if we magnify any part of her fabric and reveal the basic component stitches). A salient example of this can be found in maintenance project grids developed by the director of buildings and grounds for the district.

The grids were developed to determine whether or not a proposed maintenance project would be consistent with the district's core values. As the district's model indicates, an evaluative feedback loop designed to align action with core values is termed "double loop feedback" (Argyris 1982). Whenever a maintenance project is being analyzed for merit, it must in some way filter through the district's value system. This feedback loop insures that maintenance projects represent what is important to the district.

The maintenance project grids are a summary of a three step decision-making process. In the first step, a master list of potential maintenance projects is generated by combining the prioritized needs submitted by each building in the district. The projects on this master list are assigned a time frame, a budget price, and a

classification. In the second step, worthy projects culled from the master list can be evaluated according to criteria defined within a database framework. Each district core value is defined by descriptors, and for every project each descriptor is subject to a positive (plus one), a negative (minus one), or neutral (zero) rating. In the final step, the results of the evaluation are transferred from the database to the master project list for analysis, discussion, and ultimate recommendation.

The recommendation for adding lockers to a school can be traced through three steps. In step 1, the lockers are added to the master list and assigned a time frame (TF), a classification (C) , and a budget ($$). In step two, the locker project is evaluated for alignment with the district's core values within the framework of a database. The database serves as an independent file for the project and generates a numerical assessment of the project's linkage to the district's value system. In the last step, the pertinent information from the database for the locker project is transferred to the master list so that the locker project can be compared and analyzed as part of the entire project list.

To illustrate: When considering the locker project it was determined that the project scored an overall rating of 19. The number 19 was generated from a core value analysis where individual descriptors of each core value were reflected upon in the context of the importance of the locker project. The descriptors within each core value were individually weighted numerically from minus one to plus one with zero being neutral. As an example, the core descriptor "equity" within the core value category of Justice was rated positive one, since the locker project would bring locker room facility parity among boy's and girl's athletics. Another example would be the overall core value rating of zero for the value of Learning. Each descriptor under this value was rated zero as it was determined that lockers were not contributory or detrimental to academic learning. Every core value's rating was determined by adding the weightings of each descriptor within the core value categorization. This process was repeated for each of the six core values. The grand total of the six value ratings (a weighting of 19 in the case of the locker project) determined the weighting of the project within the context of other possible projects and within the district's value system.

The weighting process described above ensures that every building and grounds project is considered and reflected upon within the context of the district's values through a feedback loop. In this way, the thread of values is woven in a fractal way throughout this level of the organization. As mentioned earlier, similar feedback loops have been developed that guarantee the district's values are visited in decision making at varying levels of organizational complexity and in multiple organizational contexts. Through time, the district has been infusing its values in a fractal manner throughout its complex structure. The district also provides that all levels of its varied structure are linked via a common set of core values.

The maintenance grid illustrates the fractal quality evident in District 155. Consider the mental models consciously employed when "knitting" the maintenance project grid and how those mental models are an integral part of the district's model. In creating the grid, the director of buildings and grounds used the core value model in establishing the framework for evaluating the projects, the feedback loop model in checking the feasibility of the projects, and the reflective model to discern patterns from an egocentric, allocentric, and macrocentric point of view (Saban, Killion, and Green 1994).

Whether maintenance issues, curricular issues, discipline issues or supervision issues, the mental process model relates decisions and action plans to a common set of core values. Thus we see a fractal quality at play in many levels of the organization.

Schools of the Future as Learning Organizations

Akin to the knitting of Mom's various projects, the staff of these two school districts apply mental models to differing organizational needs for change. In Carrollton's example their mental models were employed sequentially to cause systemic change around a shared vision for evaluation, while in Crystal Lake's example the models were used concurrently across a number of levels of organizational need. In both examples the school districts' teams exhibited similar behaviors and learnings on every level while in pursuit of commonly held visions and exercising commonly shared mental models. In both school districts, ready tools (the mental models) and pro-systems thinking attitudes converged to assist the districts in weaving a new fabric for change. The persuasiveness of systems thinking and of fractal process models caused individuals (and teams) to explore deeper levels of understanding about each other and the organization. Promoting conversation around common visions, values, and plans for action fostered shared understandings about the need for change in these school systems. These understandings are the essence of organizational congruence and resultant integrity. They become benchmarks in elegant learning organizations.

The products of Mom's knitting still grace my home and those of my siblings — simplistic yet lasting artifacts of the power and flexibility of systems thinking and simple mental process models applied around a vision. Just as her artifacts have endured in my family, so surely will the products of systems thinking and fractally applied mental models endure in true learning organizations.

In weaving common organizational and individual understandings, schools possessing internal congruence and integrity will prevail in the face of change. School leaders are encouraged to engage their staffs in the excitement of systems thinking, assessment, personal mastery, shared visioning, team learning, and the use of fractal mental process models.

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Further Fragmentation

Computer Technology in the Classroom

Gretchen Schwarz

In our rush to embrace technology in education, we may be creating the opposite effect from what we intend. We need to pause and ask about technology's effect on the whole child.

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The U.S. Department of Education has been developing a national technology plan, and everyone seems on the bandwagon. Wise (1995, p. 1), for example, observes of NCATE Standards that "Teacher leaders, teacher educators, and policymakers agreed that schools of education should be held accountable for providing teacher candidates with a working knowledge of computers and related technologies...." Plans for and rhetoric about computer/digital technology in the schools continue to ever higher levels with the support of President Clinton as well as school administrators nationwide. It seems that Negroponte (1995, p. 229) is right when he exclaims in his bestseller, *Being Digital*, "Like a force of nature, the digital age cannot be denied or stopped." Such rhetoric, however, should cause us to pause and examine the human implications of this technology. Technology is, after all, never neutral, and its effects often unintended. The digital age is undeniably here, but we should make informed decisions about the place of technology in the classroom — especially as we consider the whole child. I argue in this paper that the prevailing viewpoints on educational technology leave significant human issues out of current conversation.

Acknowledging the history of the technology helps us step back from the utopian rhetoric about its place in school. Computers were first developed as calculating machines. For example, the Hollerith machine, which dates back to the 1890s, was a data processing device that used punch cards to tabulate demographic statistics. Today's sophisticated computer still depends on symbolic or formal logic and mathematical precision, enabling the computer to do some things very well and others not at all. The computer cannot, for instance, duplicate human compassion or intuition. Moreover, those bastions of behaviorism/positivism and utilitarianism, big business and the military, have been key to the development of computer technology. UNIVAC, the first stored-program computer, grew out of military research during World War II. The Internet grew out of

ARPANET, the military network developed in the 1970s. The influences of IBM, Apple, and Microsoft are legendary in our culture and considerable in our schools. Roszak (1994, p. xxxv) declares, "The computer is inherently a Cartesian device embedded in the assumptions of a single intellectual style within a single culture of the modern world. The very metaphors that surround it bespeak a conception of the mind as logical machinery; the constant references to the 'productivity' that the computer promises endorse the values of the marketplace and the western ethos of progress."

Given this background, it is not surprising that advocates hail computer technology in school for its efficiency and accuracy in record keeping and bureaucratic management, especially in such areas as grading and evaluation; individualized information delivery, especially through CAI (computer-assisted instruction); storage and organization of data; and the teaching of job skills for the good of the economy. Technology can indeed be beneficial, offering better methods for keeping track of absenteeism in large schools; allowing desktop publishing for student newspapers, yearbooks, and other collections of student work; speeding up calculations of all kinds; and giving access to a multitude of databases and sources of information worldwide. A CD-ROM encyclopedia is an engaging source of basic information for students and teachers. Students can spend more time learning advanced mathematical concepts when they can spend less time on calculations. Revising written work is certainly less discouraging for children with the aid of technology. Efficiency, speed, and direct instruction all have a place in education. However, we also need to challenge utilitarian assumptions or themes in education. Three in particular relate to educational technology: the assumption that information equals learning, the assumption that correct procedure and control are central, and the assumption that education and job training, are or ought to be, the same thing.

In the new product section in one of many 1996 technology magazines flashes the title "Forget the Little Red Schoolhouse." The announcement continues, "Stanford Testing Systems (Spokane, Wash.) has announced the beta availability of its Internet-based training authoring system IBTauthor, which allows full-featured interactive training courses on any subject to be created, published on, and conducted across the Web without requiring special software.... Full multimedia, including graphics, audio, and video, is supported" (p. 62).

The belief that facts, more of them with pictures and sounds, lead to knowledge and that training equals educating, is mistaken. The notion that any subject can be learned on the Internet, or any knowledge analyzed and stored on a computer disk, diminishes what most teachers and learners know about learning in all its dimensions. Roszak (1994, p. 88) argues, "The mind thinks with ideas, not with information." Ideas grow from daily human experience, face-to-face interaction, reflection, and personal purpose, none of which technology provides. Pepi and Scheurman (1996, p. 234) suggest that "we must not assume a basic compatibility between computer technology and the education of children. At best and by its very nature, education of the young must be as concrete and caringly inefficient as a loving parent." Individual feelings, relationships, meaningful inquiry, and prior experiences are all part of learning. Suber (1991, p. 70) reminds us, "The ultimate question in education ... has never been access to information; it has always been wisdom or the capacity to judge information and build knowledge and action from it."

Stoll (1995, p. 147) warns of technology's unquestioned centrality in the curriculum by asking, "What exactly is being taught using computers?... Kids learn to stare at a monitor for hours on end. How to accept what a machine says without arguing. That the world is a passive, preprogrammed place, where one click on the mouse gets the right answer. They're learning transitory and shallow relationships from instant e-mail." Likewise, most educational software remains "interactive" only to the extent that the user has several prepackaged types of information to choose from — whether or not to look up key words in the middle of a lecture (with pictures and sound) on the short story, for example. The focus for educational software remains on skills and drills. This tendency to avoid ambiguity, reduce complexity, and provide instant feedback works against the ideal of education many of us hold. Education, creating ideas and engaging in activities of personal significance, depends on human interactions that cannot be quantified or surely and swiftly "delivered."

For example, Sanders (1994, pp. 127-128), while acknowledging the no-nonsense appeal of technology to "every school administrator and every politician" who wants to be seen fixing literacy problems, says that "calling in more computer power will only exacerbate the problem; locking students onto a screen, especially in the name of having them appreciate language's potential for power and play, destroys their literacy by robbing them of the internalized text as psychosocial frame of reference. In the end the computer moves them closer and closer to illiteracy. It breaks the human connection...." Birkerts (1994, p. 146) adds, computer

technology does not offer the experience of "*deep reading*: the slow and meditative possession of a book." Neither does technology offer the experience of a day on a nature trail or a local artist's visit. Information is not knowledge and not wisdom. The human mind is more than a logical data processing machine that provides the right answers.

The hope for a "mathematical model of absolute certainty" — the desire for control and predictability — is reflected in Roszak's (1994, p. 113) statement that, "We are told that a computer can do anything for which an 'effective procedure' is given." Procedure itself takes on magical properties as technology comes to drive curriculum and instruction. Advocates praise the use of computers for record keeping, statistical reports, and evaluation. The will to shape and judge behavior through "hard data" is a behaviorist-positivist temptation that presents a danger: the danger of mistaking order, procedure, and measurable behavior for "effective schooling" or genuine learning.

A kind of certainty can be achieved when technology becomes a tool for the control of teachers and students. The Hollerith Machine was used during World War II by the SS to "manage the huge number of prisoners shipped in and out of concentration camps" (Berenbaum 1993, p. 43). When social engineers perceive one, single, best way of learning, the computer can help implement "correct procedures" and keep tabs on people. (For comments about the computer as modern Benthamite Panopticon, a mechanism for total social control, see Rheingold1993; Turkle 1995; and Dery 1996. See also, Rothfeder 1992.) Likewise, in the behaviorist-positivist tradition of educational research, the phrase "research (meaning statistical results) shows" has long been used by professors and administrators to tell teachers the "right" way to teach. The aura of hard-headed scientific certainty, the authority of technology easily contributes to top-down, "one-way" thinking. As Roszak (1994, p. 233) expresses it, "The bureaucratic managers ... are able to make good use of computerized data to obfuscate, mystify, intimidate, and control."

Probably the most common cliche about technology in the schools is that it is vital to our nation's economic interests. The utilitarian values of the marketplace require computer training in schools. Two problems emerge; not everyone benefits, and, in holistic education, economic utility is not the sole or primary purpose of school. The root of the word "educate" means to "lead out," not to reinforce the status quo and serve big business.

Segal (1996, p. 44), contending that all do not benefit equally, says,

> A nation that still worships successful businessmen like Ross Perot and in many quarters expects them to run its governments more efficiently has no hesitation about imploring them to do the same for its schools. After all, American schools have long been treated as the appropriate recipients of "trickle-down" dollars, technologies, and wisdom from major corporations seeking properly trained future employees....
>
> The fact that access to these high-tech educational panaceas will surely vary with the economic, social, and political power of those individuals and institutions seeking them is conveniently overlooked.

The wisdom of major corporations ignores not only the growing gap between the technological haves and have nots in American society, but other economic realities like low-paying jobs in high-tech industry and the actual loss of jobs to computerization. Furthermore, as Henwood (1995, p. 164) relates, we cannot or should not "ignore the teenage women going blind from soldering circuits in the Philippines, the poisoned groundwater in Silicon Valley, the tumors arising in the livers of chip factory workers, the reporters and data-entry clerks paralyzed by repetitive strain injury, and the banalization and cheapening of countless occupations." Transnational corporations may benefit more from technology in schools than students or educators.

The most important question is — should it be the major task of the schools to prepare workers for jobs? Can computer technology prepare students to be thinking, inquiring, lifelong learners who have the motivation to contribute to a vital democracy? Will students be able to challenge current vested interests and imagine other, perhaps better, ways of life than that of today's consumer society? Will children's own needs as human beings be considered? As Kane (1996, pp. 3-4) comments, "When children are abstracted and reduced into a mass of intellectual capital, there is no place for their actual educational needs and the fundamental ethical responsibilities of educators."

Most discussion of computers in the classroom seldom goes beyond the "how-to's." Yet, the issues run deeper. "Educational technology is almost universally discussed in terms of method," notes Kerr (1996, p. 7), but the "alternative would be to try to identify essential human concerns, make these the focus of the educational system, and make decisions within the framework of these concerns. In this kind of educational system, the primary focus of the schools, and therefore of instruction, would be on human values, not eco-

nomic utility." Interestingly, some advocates of educational technology believe that computers can foster creativity and individual growth and can liberate users from the status quo.

New voices can be heard advocating technology in the classroom as a liberating power. These voices remain part of a subculture in education, but their influence is growing. According to Dery (1996, p. 22) this subculture "reconciles the transcendentalist impulses of sixties counterculture with the infomania of the nineties. As well, it nods in passing to the seventies from which it borrows the millenarian mysticism of the New Age and the ... self-absorption of the human potential movement." These advocates hail educational technology for its liberating and empowering potential especially through the manipulation of data in hypertext, the creation of worlds in virtual reality, and access to information and creation of democratic community through the Internet.

The technology does bring benefits to schools: new communication abilities for handicapped students, visual representations of abstract concepts and experiments, access to diverse ideas and cultures, scholarly collaboration, and quick and engaging attainment of large amounts of information. Some students are imaginatively designing their own computer programs and games for the classroom. Many students can more easily collaborate on school projects with access to networking technologies. Young artists and musicians can create new kinds of art and music with computers. Benefits for the whole child do exist. Nevertheless, we should also challenge at least three other assumptions or themes related to technology in the classroom: the notion that all hierarchies should be demolished; the assumption that all the world is a text open to interpretation, that in Slouka's (1995, p. 34) words, the " 'texts' of history ... and culture as a whole ... [are] unreliable ... and indeterminate to a fault;" and the assumption that there exists no central self because identity, too, is a text, a kind of fiction.

Calling on the work of Barthes, Derrida, and Foucault, Landow (1992, p. 4) discusses hypertext technology as demonstrating in practice concerns of contemporary critical theory, particularly the anti-hierarchical potential of the technology. Hypertext, a term coined by Nelson in the 1960s, is defined by Landow as "text composed of blocks of text ... and the electronic links that join them. *Hypermedia* simply extends the notion of text in hypertext by including visual information, sound, animation, and other forms of data." Hypertext here includes hypermedia. An example is a CD-ROM program on Chaucer in which a student can at various points in the text of *The Canterbury Tales* bring up pictures of medieval dress, play examples of medieval music, call up critical commentaries, or make notes. Hypertext allows the user or student to control the direction and organization of information based on personal interest. Hypertext is associative, open-ended, and non-linear. Landow captures the celebration of such technology:

> Hypertext emphasizes that the marginal has as much to offer.... In hypertext, centrality, like beauty and relevance, resides in the mind of the beholder. Like Andy Warhol's modern person's fifteen minutes of fame, centrality in hypertext exists only as a matter of evanescence ... experience of text, information, and control, which moves the boundary of power away from the author in the direction of the reader, models such a postmodern, antihierarchical medium of information, text, philosophy, and society. (p. 70)

One could object that hypertext is not truly open-ended and under the control of the "interactive" user. The designers of software decide what information to include, determine the possible links or branchings, and tell the user how to access information. As Solnit (1995, p. 230) says, "To live inside a mechanical world is to live inside plotted possibility, what has already been imagined; and so the technologies that are supposed to open up the future instead narrow it." In any case, the liberation hypertext does offer is not an unadulterated good.

"Evanescence" is not necessarily a desirable characteristic of texts or learning experiences for those of us who see learning as reflective, sometimes difficult, lifelong, even permanently life-changing. Birkerts (1994, p. 27) warns of a "loss of the so-called duration experience, that depth phenomenon we associate with reverie ... and a reduced attention span and general impatience with sustained inquiry." We may already be disturbed by many members of the MTV generation with their quick boredom and facile arguments. Postman (1992, p. 70) also cautions against the effects of a hypertextual "peek-a-boo world, where now this event, now that, pops into view for a moment, then vanishes again." A shallowness as well as leveling characterizes hypertext, a dismissal of any kind of authority and a distraction from ideas carefully wrought over time. Hypertext is posthistorical; all time becomes the "now" of the glitzy screen. Heim (1993, p. 40) contends, "In skipping through hypertexts, we undergo a felt acceleration of time. If computers cause impatience with finite human experience, then the term *hyper* in hypertext starts to remind us of another one of its cognate meanings ...

'agitated' or 'pathological....' We can only hope that the postmodern hyperflood will not erode the gravity of experience behind the symbols, the patient, painstaking ear and eye for meaning."

Depthlessness also comes from the concept that all paths, texts, and ideas are equal. The very notions of wisdom, of poorer or better arguments, of striving to achieve the understanding of experienced, learned master teachers, disappear in the deconstructionism of hypertext, where any student can rearrange text, insert his or her own text, speed on to something new, or make it all disappear in the flip of a switch. Birkerts (1994, pp. 162-163) asserts that not only does the "hypertext environment, the ever-present awareness of possibility and the need to either make or refuse choice ... preempt my creating any meditative space ... " but until now, "domination by the author has been the *point* of writing and reading." He continues, "The author masters the resources of language to create a vision that will engage and in some ways overpower the reader; the reader goes to the work to be subjected to the creative will of another. The premise behind the textual interchange is that the author possesses wisdom, an insight, a way of looking at experience that the reader wants." Whether or not the reader/student agrees, a new way of thinking has been explored. The reader is not on the same level as the writer; the student does not already know all that should be learned. Some authority in educating is appropriate.

Virtual reality also presents other problems. Virtual reality can be a program showing an animated version of a chemical reaction or a flight simulator used to train airline pilots; it includes MUDs (Multi-User Dungeons or Multi-User Domains), Internet-available role-playing games. Turkle (1995, p. 235), examining the positive potential of technology, also admonishes us to be careful of virtual reality, the seductions and distractions of the "culture of simulation," a way of life which includes Disneyland, shopping malls, and television. The idea that the world is a text characterized by arbitrary and unstable meanings, that "the search for depth ... is futile, and that it is more realistic to explore the world of shifting surfaces than to embark on a search for origins and structure," the idea that virtual reality is as meaningful as real reality — might be a bad idea (p. 36). Three hazards come to mind: the danger of being distracted from real issues, the possibility of gullibility followed by cynicism, and a potential deadening of the educational experience.

The glut of information and its powerful presence through virtual reality can distract students from real problem solving. For instance, we have probably all encountered students who turn in information they have downloaded from the Internet and they call that research. It is easier to express opinions on an Internet bulletin board or to play a game like SimCity, in which players can design public policies, than to argue a case before an actual school board meeting. Virtual reality is fast, fun, and relatively tidy. Whatever is available in virtual reality will certainly be accessed by students in schools, too, whether it is discussions with famous writers or "meetings" with Hollywood stars. Nevertheless, Roszak (1994, p. 70) gives the following example of how virtual reality, well intended, can teach the wrong thing. He is discussing a computer simulation of a classic Mendelian breeding experiment:

> A simulation can be run which rapidly displays the predicted outcome of the theory over many generations. Obviously, this saves a great deal of time. But it also goes a long way toward falsifying real science. Because this is *not* an experiment; it is the *simulation* of an experiment, and thus a severe reduction of reality. The experiment, after all, already edits reality for purposes of focus and control; the simulation now edits the experiment by eliminating the real scientific work involved: the careful arrangement of apparatus, the manipulation of materials, the false starts and pitfalls, the watchful, often boring waiting, the painstaking discriminations among results. But even worse, it neatly eliminates the risk, which is the whole point of experimentation.

Reality exists outside the human mind — a reality more intractable than that mediated by technology, but a reality with which humans must grapple.

Another risk of virtual reality is the danger of making students cynical, especially in the area of citizenship. Virtual reality manipulates data from the real world, often in the interests of business or some other special group. Channel One in the schools already serves as an example of the substitution of thoughtful exploration of current events with sound bites interspersed with advertisements. Technology advocate Rheingold (1993, p. 297) notes:

> [Some see] the use of communications technologies as a route to the total replacement of the natural world and social order with a technologically mediated hyper-reality, a "society of spectacle" in which we are not aware that we work all day to earn money to pay for entertainment media that tell us what to desire and which brand to consume and which politician to believe ... [leading to] the disappearance and subtle replacement of true democracy — and everything

> that used to be authentic, from nature to human relationships — with a simulated, commercial version.

When students cease to believe everything on Channel One or the Internet, they may come to believe nothing. This conclusion is not, however, liberating. Slouka (1995, pp. 124-125) states:

> By flooding the culture with digitally manipulated images ... we risk devaluing *all* visual representations and, by extension, the reality they pretend to depict ... our willingness to believe in the information made available to us is relatively harmless ... only as long as the information presented is, by and large, truthful. When it no longer is, our faith becomes the anchor that drags us down. What we risk *then* is nothing less that the kind of institutionalized cynicism found under authoritarian regimes.

Ellul (1965, p. 250) goes even farther, arguing that "the growth of information inevitably leads to the need for propaganda." Ellul maintains that the glut of information is only bearable when propaganda gives citizens a way of making sense of it all. Given the political cynicism reported in polls nationwide, schools need to offer students more than mere loads of information, entertaining simulations, and advertising.

Too much virtual reality can lead to an impoverished, narcissistic kind of learning. Students who are addicted to computer worlds may be less inclined to go to museums, libraries, and labs. Schools that invest in technology will be unable to buy books or to support art programs and field trips. Turkle (1995, pp. 23-24) examines our coming to "take things at interface value." She continues, "We are moving toward a culture of simulation in which people are increasingly comfortable with substituting representations of reality for the real. We use a Macintosh-style 'desktop' as well as one on four legs.... In the culture of simulation, if it works for you, it has all the reality it needs." How varied, rich, personal, connected to the real world around them will education be for children if technology dominates? What about real smells, tastes, sights; real problems of racism, violence, pollution? Besser (1995, pp. 67-68) notes:

> As individuals look at more and more cultural objects on their workstation screens, it is likely that they will begin to confuse the representations with the original objects they represent ... not unlike viewing a video and equating that experience with watching a film in the theater — or eating at McDonald's and calling it a meal. Although in an on-line system more people gain greater access to a certain range of cultural objects, this kind of access eliminates a richness and depth of experience ... "

Clicking one's way through a CD-ROM on *Hamlet* is not the same as reading the play and picturing it in the imagination nor experiencing a live performance. Virtual reality is limiting.

In addition, learning with computer technology can be self-referential and inward-turning. Turkle (1995, p. 30) says, "[In] a new variant on the story of Narcissus, people are able to fall in love with the artificial worlds that they have created or that have been built for them by others. People are able to see themselves in the computer. The machine can seem a second self. ... " At a time when students, especially adolescents, need to be reaching out in order to grow up and become participants in society, spending more time inside their own heads as projected on-screen is hazardous. The effects of virtual reality and on-line interaction with others may recapitulate the effects of television. Instead of increased awareness of and empathy for others, hours of viewing, endless exposure to violence, poverty, disease, a glut of information on human tragedies and disasters may produce desensitization. Like the main character played by Peter Sellers in *Being There*, students may come to think that trouble can be made to vanish by aiming and pushing the remote control.

On the Internet a student can be anyone, and others' identities are likewise fluid. Turkle (1995, p. 178) explores the role playing and identity creation capacity of computers, especially through MUDs, and she links the technology to postmodernist thought:

> In the work of Jacques Lacan ... the complex chains of associations that constitute meaning for each individual lead to no final endpoint or core self.... Lacan insisted that the ego is an illusion.... He joins psychoanalysis to the postmodern attempt to portray the self as a realm of discourse rather than as a real thing or a permanent structure of the mind.... [C]omputer science has contributed to this [with] ... bottom-up, distributed, parallel, and emergent models of mind....

As Turkle shows, the ability to experiment with identity can be good and bad. A student may learn through the Internet or role-playing games how it feels to be treated in different ways and to interact with others who are different. Simulation can lead to consciousness-raising. Positive ends can be achieved. On the other hand, what happens to the concept of responsibility if the self is all smoke and mirrors? Already, the Internet offers cybersex, cyberpunks amuse themselves breaking into others' systems and planting computer viruses, and "flame wars" (insult exchanges) rage on.

Emotionally distressed users, many of them high school and college students, spend hours every day escaping their daily identities on-line. Moreover, at the fringes of cyberculture work those seeking escape of the embodied self altogether.

Rushkoff (1994, p. 48), for example, hails the possibilities of "smart drugs," Timothy Leary's life on-line, and virtual reality which casts "further doubt on the existence of any objective physical reality. In Cyberia at least, reality is directly dependent on our ability to actively participate in its creation." The multiple self can be free of all constraints including the body. Dery (1996, p. 248) summarizes, "The belief that the body is a vestigial appendage no longer needed ... is not uncommon among obsessive programers, outlaw hackers, video game junkies, and netsurfers.... " These may be fringe ideas, but what happens outside the school influences the inside. Computer technology is seductive. It offers power or the illusion of power even over the parameters of the self, in both metaphysical and physical senses. Turkle (1995, pp. 178, 180) then asks these key questions:

> What will computer-mediated communication do to our commitment to other people? Will it satisfy our needs for connection and social participation, or will it further undermine fragile relationships? What kind of responsibility and accountability will we assume for our virtual actions? ... Do our real-life selves learn lessons from our virtual personae? ... Why are we doing this?... Is it an expression of an identity crisis of the sort we traditionally associate with adolescence?

Holistic education respects diversity and multiplicity. But, if being enrapt with virtual reality and the Internet means seeing the self as nothing but masks, then how will students develop the purpose, abilities, and perseverance to pursue any meaningful collective, democratic purpose? What happens to real individuals and real community? Liberation for liberation's sake is escapism.

Little current conversation about educational technology seems to take into account the whole student; the human being with a mind and a heart; capable of logic and passion, of reason and faith; a knower and a doer; an individual and a community member; one who acts on reality but on whom reality also acts. Present purposes for educational technology seem largely utilitarian or utopian. Whether we view technology as a mere tool or see technology as having its own weight and influence as writers like Postman and Ellul (especially in *The Technological Society*, 1964) do, we must recognize that computers in the classroom offer dangers as well as benefits. We need the whole picture. The conversation about computers in the classroom needs to grow, include more educators and varied philosophical approaches. The quality of human life in society and in school subject to new technologies must be questioned. It is time to move beyond glorious pronouncements about the Information Age and think carefully about the role of technology in education.

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Tell Me 'Bout the Good Old Days

Local Studies Projects Change the Relationship Between Schools and Communities

Michael Umphrey

Heritage education is making personal connections with one's surroundings; it is a community paying attention to itself by paying attention to its children.

> The recovery of historical consciousness is not merely an intellectual matter, a matter of rereading the great books and reemphasizing the roots of American order.... It is also a very concrete matter, a matter of taking stock of the way we live, of what our pastimes and pleasures, our families and our marriages, our habits and our aspirations all say about our sense of connection to the past — and, therefore, about ourselves.
>
> —*Wilfred M. McClay*

> It is through hearing stories about wicked stepmothers, lost children, good but misguided kings, wolves that suckle twin boys, youngest sons who receive no inheritance but must make their own way in the world and eldest sons who waste their inheritance on riotous living and go into exile to live with the swine, that children learn or mislearn both what a child is and what a parent is, what the cast of characters may be in the drama into which they are born and what the ways of the world are. Deprive children of stories and you leave them unscripted, anxious stutterers in their actions as in their words.
>
> —*Alasdair MacIntyre*

To establish a personal connection with the work she was asking them to do, English teacher Marta Brooks took her high school students on a walk through town, looking at various places, encouraging reverie. As they walked, she asked them to remember things that they knew had happened in those places. This led to each student researching a topic related to the town's history. They were to include citations from both texts and interviews. By the end of the nine-week project, each student had a resource file and a 10-page research paper, and the community had the beginnings of a historical archives. They had practiced a host of traditional academic skills: library research, note-taking, interviewing, and writing — all of which are important.

This essay is from *A Teacher's Faith.*

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However, other things were happening as well. On the night the students were to present their research findings back to the community, winter storm warnings forced some agency representatives from the state capital to cancel their plans to attend. Marta worried that the frigid weather would keep people at home. As it turned out, the high school library was warm and bright and crowded to standing room only. People who had not been in the school for decades showed up. In the formal presentations, but also informally in the halls, the community's stories moved from teller to listener. A neighborhood's memory lives only when its stories are being told, and it achieves continuity only in the association of the old with the young. Many people mentioned that the evening was not only educational, it was downright entertaining. The mood was one of celebration. At its simplest level, heritage education is a community paying attention to itself by paying attention to its children.

The elders in the community were moved that their stories had been honored by being carefully researched and recorded. The young people found themselves a little surprised by the way their work had moved the community. When the community itself, how it came to be and how it works, becomes the subject of study, all the adults in town are transformed, to one extent or another, into authorities. And when young people come asking to understand, the reservations that some adults have about young people these days are relaxed. They become collaborators.

One boy who had resisted the project when Marta suggested it, came to class with tears in his eyes a few days after the community presentation. He had just heard that one of the men he had interviewed had died. The boy had the old man's stories on tape; the last recordings of his voice. Through the project, several students become keenly aware that they weren't just recording history, they were making it. The conversations they had were themselves historical events which often turned out to have personal importance, and many events — talks between youth and their elders, between daughters and fathers, between teenagers and grandparents — would never have happened without the catalyst of the school assignment. Student Angela Posivio noted that several elders told her, "These projects evoked the memories that had been set aside and forgotten." In dozens of ways, students heard from the adults in their world that the work they were doing was real and that it mattered. The students seemed to believe it.

A good life, a good school year, and a good lesson have this in common with a good community: They are made of and they make good stories. All complex lores, such as teaching, farming, hunting, but also building and sustaining communities or operating democratic governments, live in their histories. People learn these histories by learning the stories. It isn't the ordinary events that everyone knows about that become the source of these stories, but the extraordinary ones, in which the unexpected occurred or something unusual was tried. In hearing these tales, a person gains the broad experience that we call education. They learn how the world works, what the rules of life are, what character traits are necessary, what roles are available, how to react to crises, and, most important, what is worth wanting.

Educators are relearning this ancient wisdom as contemporary problems lead them to see that neglecting the narrative environment of children turns out to be as educationally unsound as ignoring the bacterial environment is medically unsound. Doctors once went without washing, carrying blood and body fluids, from patient to patient. Patients were put into the beds where sick people had just died without anyone changing the linen. Everyone was paying attention to other things.

While grown-ups have paid attention to other things, such as national standards and school board policies, they haven't talked nearly enough about the stories that are loose among their kids. Stories capture our minds. They turn us into the creatures we become. Traditional societies understood that the right stories were as important as axes or horses. Through them people remember what to admire, what to forbid, what to work toward, and what to celebrate.

Many young people now are growing up in a narrative environment dominated outside of school by corporate storytellers-for-profit who have found that violence and sex sell, and within the school by therapists who teach that the self and its desires are the ultimate reality and final authority.

The results can be disheartening. Not long ago, while teaching a class of high school students, I made a routine classroom request. A 15-year-old boy exploded with anger and began shouting obscenities. He threw his desk at me, screaming violent threats. Eventually, I had to restrain him and drag him from the class. Later, other staff members and I met with him. He had stopped swearing and begun crying. "It's your fault," he said. "You're supposed to fix me — " he pushed out his lower lip — "and I'm still like this."

No doubt the kid had problems. "Needs," he'd been taught to call them. His worst problem was that without the rudiments of historical consciousness or access to a civilizing community of memory, he was trapped

in the moment and in his moods. His emotional strategies came from movies and the streets. This was a failure of his home rather than of the school, but school had done little to help. He had encountered student-centered teaching all his life. From the student point of view, it's important to remember that "student-centered" means "self-centered." The boy was a young barbarian.

He *was* searching, albeit ineffectively, for something beyond the self. He covered his notebooks and forearms with gang insignia, dreaming of belonging to a group that would provide an identity. I wish the sort of problems he faced were rare, but the truth is that most teachers face at least some young people like him. Some teachers face a great many of them every day — kids who come from homes where pessimism, violence, fickleness, and rage are normal, and who have learned little of the arts of community. The testimony of countless experienced teachers indicates that his demand to be catered to, expressed in an extreme form, is becoming a widespread demand, already present in a milder form among many youth. The question needs to be faced: How should civil society respond to the demands of such young people?

Teachers participating in the Heritage Project in several Montana communities are acting on the belief that their communities can invite them into better stories. According to the teachers, the heritage approach is powerful for three closely related reasons: it is narrative-based; it is project-framed; and it is community-centered. First, students are immersed in the defining narratives of their communities through engagement in history and literature. Next, the learning is framed in projects that result in final products so that the educational enterprise itself becomes a story. Finally, the teachers balance student-centered strategies with community-centered approaches, encouraging young people to join adults in the work of building and sustaining their communities. All three change both the internal cultures of schools and the relationship between those schools and the communities within which they are embedded. These are the changes that many people have been trying to bring about since a spate of studies painting dismal pictures of the nation's high schools was published in the early 1980s.[1] These studies focused on the culture of schools and concluded that the schools we had built were dismal institutions, succeeding at neither encouraging sound character nor academic proficiency.

To understand the culture of our schools, a person needs to follow the narrative of how they came to be. An important part of that narrative unfolded when a group of philosophers who called themselves "logical positivists" got carried away by the success of science and began to think that other ways of knowing were without value. They felt that people had gone down too many deadend roads relying on revelation, inspiration, and speculation. They wanted hard data, by which they meant measurements. The positivists said things like, "Everything that exists must exist in some quantity, and therefore can in theory be measured," and, "Only statements that can be verified by sensory data are true." Other ways of knowing were, to use their word, "nonsense."

It wasn't long, of course, until critics pointed out that the statement, "Only statements that can be verified by sensory data are true," was itself a statement that could not be verified by sensory data. The positivists were enthroned for a season, but the debate moved on. It's a fun game that philosophers play. Unfortunately, teachers got tangled in the game even though most of them were more interested in other things. In the late forties and early fifties, when positivism was most influential in graduate schools, education professors were a relatively new presence at universities. They had doctorates, but they didn't have a respectable body of knowledge to profess, in the way that physicians and physicists did. Though the intellectual foundations of education lie in the grand narratives of history, religion, philosophy, and literature, the new professors didn't want stories; they wanted science.

They latched onto positivism, the faith in measurements, as the method by which they hoped to create a science of education. Though most classroom teachers are forced by their work to be pragmatists and few were converted to positivism, the schools in which they work have for some decades now been governed by positivist principles. The academic world quickly passed positivism by, but it remained alive and well in many graduate schools of education, busily devising elaborate dogmas, rituals, and pieties.

The results of this faith have been a staggering proliferation of research data that is to a comic extent ignored by classroom teachers, and, at the same time, a systematic refusal by decision makers to pay much heed to the testimony of experienced practitioners. Teachers who thought their work might be manifest in what a student said at a community meeting 20 years in the future, or in how a young person expressed her character in a crisis far from the classroom, were often dismissed as vague and platitudinous. Those who walked the halls of power preferred crisp reports with footnotes and tables that noted how applying certain techniques in a particular time and place, with a care-

fully described population, had resulted in precisely calculated percentage increases in retention of bits of data as measured by impressive-sounding instruments a few days or a few weeks later. One critic said of the education research industry that it often amounted to "strange people studying strange activities in strange settings for the briefest possible period of time." Unfortunately, most such research is blind to large-scale, slow-moving information, such as whatever silent transformation may lead a young person to want to emulate examples of competence, courage, and devotion that he or she may encounter along the way to growing up. Just as a caterpillar eating a single leaf on a single tree has a life cycle too brief to perceive that the forest is dying of a multi-year drought, so educational researchers, focused on transient phenomena, were unable to see, let alone explain, large-scale changes occurring around them.

Schools organized along positivist principles have institutionalized a distrust of human judgment, a compulsion to translate all human experience into numbers, a contempt for the common sense of ordinary folks, and a tacit hostility toward the cognitive excellences to be found in such disciplines as art, literature, and history. A truism of management is that you need to be careful what you evaluate, because what you choose to evaluate will tend to drive the whole system. Schools have, at the official level, chosen to evaluate how well students retain fragments of information that are unrelated to any real work they are trying to accomplish. The result has been a relentless narrowing of instruction.

Even more harmful than the trivialization of instruction was a related weakening of the authority of teachers. The positivist culture of schools elevated objectivity and rationality as primary virtues at the same time those schools were encountering increasing political tension over their governance. The nonsectarian Protestant faith upon which Horace Mann built his dream of a common school was under attack by postmodernist arguments from multiculturalists, feminists, and gays who hoped to shift power relationships by delegitimizing established authority. Their attacks often took the form of accusing educators of being "judgmental" and "teaching their values." Thus, teachers were pressured to retreat from explicit concern with the character and beliefs of students by both theorists in their own profession and by critics from without.

Most teachers continued to teach a public morality by practicing judgment moment to moment, day after day, because their work demanded it. A student handed in a piece of writing that fell far short of a standard which was within his reach and the teacher judged it as lacking and held him to the standard. One student harmed another and they both appeared at the teacher's desk pleading that someone had done something wrong and that he must be held to a higher standard and the teacher listened and decided. But teachers judged with far less confidence as time went on because it became increasingly probable that enforcing standards would lead to the teacher being put on trial by angry critics.

Yet the work of schools was with young people who still needed to learn the basics of civility, including not to steal, not to lie, not to fight, and not to cheat. And beyond these, it remained true that nothing difficult or complex could be learned without absorbing a rudimentary morality. To master either difficult content or complex skills, we need to obey masters, we need to put our personal problems aside, we need to persevere, we need to accept criticism, we need to do many things we do not particularly feel like doing, including homework. Malcolm Cowley once commented that "No complete son-of-a-bitch ever wrote a good sentence." Unsurprisingly, as schools became less willing to judge, misbehavior increased and learning decreased. School boards and administrators felt pressure both to deal with problem students and to avoid judgment.

Enter the therapists. Therapy thrived in the bureaucratic culture of schools because it provided promises of administratively simple solutions to the vexing problems that come with people. Therapists, by translating personal difficulties into language that sounded impersonal, objective, and rational, projected a welcome appearance of competence, a sense that someone understood what was happening and that therefore things were under control. Administrators soon learned they could "address" even the most tangled messes by recommending that someone get counseling. It was seldom necessary to discuss what, exactly, a counselor might do or whether it would actually work. Many students learned quite quickly that they did not have to submit to the demands of schooling, but that they could blame their failure on a system that had not provided the right service. Many parents were coached by an expanding corps of nonteaching service professionals, who won control of the public discourse of education, to think of every misbehavior as a sign of an "unmet need."

The language comes from Abraham Maslow.[2] Nearly every teacher in America has been taught Maslow's "hierarchy of needs." His language was widely adopted by teacher education programs because he promised to provide a scientific basis for the study of motivation, and at the same time promised welcome

liberation from what many felt were stifling orthodoxies.

Maslow argued that the old "regime" with its concern for "discipline," should be replaced with a new therapeutic regime: "If therapy means a pressure toward breaking controls and inhibitions, then our new key words must be spontaneity, release, naturalness, self-acceptance, impulse awareness, gratification, permissiveness." He described an ideal "self-actualizing" person as the superior human that the new therapeutic regime would foster. This new type would be "healthy." People with "unmet needs" were "unhealthy." He used "needs" to refer to everything from the body's dependence on oxygen, to the soul's desire for a mate, to the addict's desire for a cigarette. In his thought, anything that anyone might desire became a need.

Maslow's method was to select people who exhibited a high degree of the syndrome he was looking for as well as a group who showed little evidence of it, so that he could study these two groups to arrive at a "clinical definition" based on contrasting the groups. His "scientific method" consisted of "the slow development of a global or holistic impression of the sort that we form of our friends and acquaintances" through "contacts [that] were fortuitous and of the ordinary social sort." Unsurprisingly, he "found" traits of "the most striking superiorities" in the superior people with whom he socialized.

This convinced him that he was on to something. First, "it slowly became apparent that ... in art and music, in things of the intellect, in scientific matters, in politics and public affairs, they seemed as a group to be able to see concealed or confused realities more swiftly and more correctly than others." This was not a value judgment, Maslow insisted, but "a partial basis for a true science of values," because those that he selected and conversed with did not just have Maslow's values, they were "cognitively correct in an absolute sense." He didn't say how he knew this, but he *knew* it. What Maslow made of all this cocktail party "science" was that, "a firm foundation for a value system is automatically furnished to the self-actualizer by his philosophic acceptance of the nature of his self." And that with this value system in place, all religious or moral disciplines could be dismissed as "sick-man-created" gratuities.

If a person was truly superior, i.e., healthy, doing what he wanted made all the sense that needed to be made. "Education, civilization, rationality, religion, law, government, have all been interpreted by most as being primarily instinct-restraining and suppressing forces. But if our contention is correct that instincts have more to fear from civilization than civilization from instincts, perhaps it ought to be the other way about ... perhaps it should be at least one function of education, law, religion, etc., to safeguard, foster, and encourage the expression and gratification of the instinctoid needs."

Maslow admitted that the superior people he identified did have a few flaws, including "superficial vanity," "temper outbursts," "extraordinary and unexpected ruthlessness," but he urged us not to take such foibles too seriously because they resulted from superior power, and hence, were manifestations of their essential "health," which he equated with goodness.

The tale Maslow told ended up being little more than a theory of selfishness. For him, the "self-actualizing human" was at the apex of creation, and love was a mid-level appetite. He seemed puzzled by what other writers said about love. He mocked Erich Fromm for saying that love implies "responsibility, care, respect, and knowledge," because "this sounds more like a pact or a partnership of some kind rather than a spontaneous sportiveness." Healthy lovers, he urged us to believe, "can be extremely close together and yet go apart quite easily."

Civilization should exist to encourage the gratification of instincts. Education should serve the appetite. Healthy people are "lusty animals" who don't make commitments. It was a small step from such beliefs to the faith that all social and personal problems stemmed from insufficient catering to the desires of the self. In the cover story of the Summer 1996 issue of *American Educator*, the official publication of the American Federation of Teachers, psychologist Barbara Lerner argued that the "post-modern psychology" that "swallowed up modern psychology and most of education too" in the 1970s, "reduced every problem in life to question of self-esteem or the lack of it, blurring the boundaries between therapy and school, diluting both, and making education a subservient profession." In doing so, "it made a relentless focus on the self the order of the day in classrooms across the land."

Psychology professor Roy E. Baumeister, in the same issue of *American Educator*, insisted that in spite of all the passionate rhetoric about the positive effects of high self-esteem, the evidence that has been mustered indicates that "self-esteem doesn't have much impact" on all the personal and social ills that believers have associated with it. Nevertheless, making schools responsible for improving student self-esteem had far-reaching consequences. "The results," according to Lerner, "were dismal — kids learned less, respect for teachers declined, disorder and violence and unhappiness in-

creased, and a lot of Americans lost faith in schools and respect for teachers."

Consider again my troubled student. The poor boy had heard all his life about our responsibilities toward him, but he had heard far too little about his responsibilities to the other students in that class, to the teacher who had come prepared to teach, and to the community that surrounded him. He had been in therapy nearly his entire life and was literally screaming at us that he felt enslaved to moods and appetites, and that he needed to escape from the prison of self. His normal adolescent egocentricism, which a sensible family or school would contradict as a matter of course, had instead been nurtured. We were supposed to care about him, but we were confronting him about his bad behavior. We were supposed to improve his self-esteem, but he still didn't feel good about himself. We were supposed to make school fun, but he still felt miserable. What could he possibly think?

With scanty historical consciousness, he understood no adequate rules of conduct, no power to constrain his passions, no understanding of the linkage between action and consequence. He had no sense of the future because he had not glimpsed how steady, long-term work comes to fruition. He had no understanding of the sacred or of devotion because he knew nothing of unseen powers. He knew something was wrong, and he was begging us to fix it.

We can do better. Heritage teacher Bob Malyevac from Libby, Montana, said that the best of America's heritage is represented by the beliefs that "are still here and can still be saved." The 34-year classroom veteran said he settled in Libby because he found the same beliefs there that he learned while growing up in a working-class neighborhood in Butte. "Perseverance and the work ethic" still matter to people, he said. Also, many people still make large-scale commitments to projects that advance more slowly than a solitary person's career. By "having faith that the younger generation can do better than the previous generation," some families teach young people to accept bonds of obligation beyond the self, to their parents and grandparents as well as their children and grandchildren. These children easily come to see their lives as parts of a larger story, including civic, moral, and historical realities. The rudiments of historical consciousness are taught early and deeply in these homes, along with such fundamentals as brushing teeth or sharing cookies. The support and guidance of such families is the foundation of community-centered teaching.

Can schools build on this foundation, seeing their work as supporting high levels of academic achievement while teaching the disciplines necessary to civil society by joining and enhancing living communities? Can this work take the form of an invitation to all students and adults to join? Heritage teachers think the answer is "yes." By explicit statement and by their personal commitments, such teachers say that community matters. They send young people into their own communities to learn from the experts, the people with experience of the world, what it might take to build community and sustain it. Of course, all of the arts and sciences have light to shed on such questions, so teachers from every discipline can use the approach. All that is needed is faith that young people's cultural heritage is passed on to them by developing their historical consciousness.

Historical consciousness may not be quite the same as the historical knowledge that academic historians pursue, though the work of academic historians is invaluable in helping students to understand and consider what they are hearing. According to Wilfred McClay, historical consciousness is

> learning to appropriate into our own moral imagination, and learning to be guided by, the distilled memories of others, the stories of things we never experienced firsthand. It means learning to make these things our own, learning to look out at the world we experience through their filter, learning to feel the living presence of the past inhering in the seeming inertness of the world as it is given to us.[3]

As a person develops such a historical consciousness, McClay goes on, he learns that

> he is one of many people who remember what happened in that place, and in some way he is connected to all of them, to all who are bound together by remembrance of that story. In the end, communities and nation-states are constituted and sustained by such shared memories — by stories of foundation, conflict, and perseverance. The leap of imagination and faith, from the thinness and unreliability of our individual memory to the richness of collective memory, that is the leap of civilized life; and the discipline of collective memory is the task not only of the historian, but of every one of us. Historical consciousness draws us out of a narrow preoccupation with the present and with our "selves," and ushers us into another, larger world — a public world that "cultures" us, in all the senses of that word.

This broadening of student minds is a primary goal of teachers in the Heritage Project. More than thirty citizens in Libby, including the mayor, a Forest Service

archeologist, church and business leaders, and a city council member, joined forces with high school seniors in the evenings to conduct an intensive ten-week community self-study following the model Baker Brownell and Joe Howard created for the Montana Study in the 1940s.

Libby's economy has been devastated in recent years by the loss of timber industry jobs. So, each meeting combined historical reports co-researched by adults and students on such topics as the history of the logging mills in the area, and the town's relationship to the timber industry, with discussions about the town's past, its present, and its future. This was not simply another school assignment. In fact, the students who participated received neither grades nor credit. They were motivated by their hunger for meaning and community. The grown-ups tackled the real problems that they faced including the economic future of their town and how it fit into state, national, and global trends. What was most unusual about this work was that the adults shared it with their youth. Senior Sarah Fisher said that she joined the project because she'd read the minutes of the 1947 study. "I was amazed at what they did," she said, "and I wondered if we could do it again."

One of the community members was businessman Paul Rumelhart. Though he had a degree in philosophy, for years he hadn't had much occasion to use that education. He'd been busy with his retail petroleum business, and after some bad political experiences, he had quit paying attention to public life in general and the schools in particular. "This was an amazing experience," he said of the New Montana Study. "I learned a lot about Libby and its history, but it wasn't what we learned that was most important. It was the attitude that developed." In the course of the study the group developed an "insight statement" that summarized that attitude: "If we lose faith in each other and in our institutions, we become a collection of individuals surviving in same space, but if we grow in our faith in each other and in our institutions, we become a community of people thriving in the same place."

Senior Mark Harmon commented that he learned, "Not just about government, but also about the principles of founding a community." Sarah Fisher agreed. "This wasn't just about education," she said. "It was about civic duties and dealing with people."

Of course, if local studies were only about provincial concerns, their value might be quite limiting. But they are not. They are points of entry into the largest of stories. The community that exists in Libby is self-consciously aware that its story goes back not only to eighteenth-century Virginia, but also to Athens and Jerusalem. The cultural heritage of young people in a rural corner of the vast American west can include an even more vast sense of continuity, a broad and capacious view that reminds them that our current difficulties can be faced in the context of a powerful, living civilization that has developed in spite of, and sometimes because of, crises as bad as anything they are likely to meet. At the end of the study, teacher Jeff Gruber, who organized the project, commented, "I'll be doing heritage teaching in one form or another for the rest of my career."

When what happens in school is not part of the student's story, as he or she understands it, school seems lifeless and inert. The school reform movement that began in the early 1980s was triggered largely by researchers going into actual classrooms to see what was happening. What they found, over and over, was that students were not listening. They were docile and unexcited, passively enduring school. Information that we do not need for any work we are attempting tends to be filtered out as noise. While the curriculum was being delivered to students in the form of an endless stream of information unrelated to any work that they understood was theirs, the youngsters daydreamed, ignoring the class talk and running stories through their heads.

So many theorists have issued pronouncements about narratives lately that we risk losing the simple truth in a mystical complexity of words. The basic elements of narrative are pretty much what people were taught in seventh-grade English: There is a protagonist who cares about something, there are events that touch on what he cares about, and there arrives a moment in which things become more clear — character, plot, and theme. Cognitive scientists have shown that children from a very young age recognize when a story is a story.[4] A sequence of events doesn't make a story any more than a random heap of words makes a sentence. There must be emotion, challenge, and meaning.

Emotion, challenge, and meaning, it so happens, *are* the defining experiences of learning. Ask anyone what their most significant learning has been, and they'll tell you a story. Luckily for teachers, to build narrative power into their teaching is not much more complicated than to engage students in projects aimed at accomplishing real work. As students invest energy toward reaching a goal, their work inevitably becomes a story. As they formulate felt questions, they become protagonists in their own story, characters with hopes, fears, and desires. As they begin the search for answers, conflict begins and the plot unfolds. They meet obstructions and difficulties, they find help and encourage-

ment, they reach deadends and epiphanies. As they formulate their conclusions into final products, they transform information into knowledge. They find a theme in what they are doing. In at least small ways, they are changed. That is, they learn.

A town or neighborhood does not become a community until enough people see that they need each other and begin inventing some means of providing for themselves what they need. Community-centered teaching is founded on the realization that people cannot fulfill themselves intellectually, artistically, or socially without others, and that the arts of living together can and must be taught. The bright and the dull, the wealthy and the poor, the sure and the halting help each other to balance their excesses. The old benefit from the young, drawing them into the learning they need, just as surely as the young benefit from the perspective of the old. Young parents learn much of what they need to know from their babies, who demand that they keep trying until they get it right. This pattern, the young and old getting what they most need from each other, continues throughout life.

This is the basic insight behind the work of Erik Erikson,[5] who saw that the way individuals develop, both young and old, is deeply connected to the way generations succeed themselves. Human survival, Erikson said, depends on "vital virtues which develop in the interplay of successive and overlapping generations, living together." This meant that the creation of a strong human community was necessary for quality education. Erikson suggested that one of America's educational problems might be our poor understanding of the life cycle. We don't know what the work of old age might be because we have imagined life as a trajectory toward and into success, followed by oblivion. He suggested that career success was not nearly fulfilling enough, and that one generation can conclude its life's work only in the succeeding generation. "Where identity formation is relatively successful in youth ... development leads through the fulfillment of adult phases to a final integrity, the possession of a few principles which though gleaned from changing experience yet prove unchangeable in essence. Without old people in possession of such integrity, young people in need of an identity can neither rebel nor obey."

English teacher Renee Rasmussen in Chester, Montana, worked with Pat Ludwig, President of the Liberty County Genealogical Society, to bring young and old together. She asked her class to research the history of the oldest buildings in town, keeping a focus on learning what this said about what the people in town cared about. Meanwhile, Pat began teaching autobiographical writing classes at the senior citizen center. So as the young went looking for the history of their place, their elders were invited to bring that history to the fore. The meaning of events doesn't often come immediately or without reflection, and it may be in response to the needs of the young that the older find in their histories what is needed, for both parties.

Elementary principal Vi Hills saw what was happening and put her energies behind the project. She organized a community Heritage Fair at which the students could report their research back to their community. Before she was finished the Fair included dozens of events and activities: storytelling sessions by elders, demonstrations of arts and crafts, oral histories of the hospital and other community agencies, presentations of cultural artifacts brought to town by European migrants, rides in horse-drawn wagons and vintage automobiles, old time music and dancing, samples of quilts and other crafts, chances to make ice cream, butter, and wooden hay forks. School was canceled for the day and over five hundred people came to town to share their heritage.

"It was like no class that I have had," commented junior Michael Nelson. The writing which the students produced was first-rate, according to writer and research historian Dave Walter. The writing not only captured the histories of the buildings, but it brought that history to life "by putting real people in those buildings." And beyond the academic skills lay other realities: "One of the things that will never leave my mind," said David Jensen, "were the expressions of joy and youthfulness of the older generation. I remember walking into the nursing home and listening to the never-ending stories of when they were my age. Those stories are what makes this community what it really is."

The heritage approach to education includes dozens of ways to teach all the academic skills that young people these days need to learn, but it also includes dozens of ways to educate their hearts. Until all children have heard the most hopeful, most powerful, and most challenging stories their community can tell, they have not received their truest and best heritage. They are not free to choose the better unless they hear about it. Making sure students hear, so they are truly free to choose — this is the work not just of our public school teachers, but of all who believe that the continuing saga that is America includes much that is good, much that is worthy of preservation.

Keith Basso spent years observing the Apaches in Arizona, and he noted the way their community, through its stories, shaped its young people. This is what one of the elders told him:

> This is what we know about our stories. They go to work on your mind and make you think about your life. Maybe you're not acting right. Maybe you've been stingy. Maybe you've been chasing after women. Maybe you've been trying to act like a Whiteman. People don't *like* it! So someone goes hunting for you — maybe your grandmother, your grandfather, your uncle. It doesn't matter. Anyone can do it. So someone stalks you and tells a story about what happened long ago. It doesn't matter if other people are around — you're going to know he's aiming that story at you. All of a sudden it *hits* you! It's like an arrow, they say ... then you feel weak, real weak, like you are sick. You don't want to eat or talk to anyone. That story is working on you now. You keep thinking about it. That story is changing now, making you want to live right. That story is making you want to replace yourself.... It's hard to keep living right. Many things jump out at you and block your way. But you won't forget that story.[6]

It isn't just Apaches who surround their children with webs of stories that teach them what matters, what to believe, and therefore who to be. All communities do the same thing. America is a web of such stories. All our children are surrounded by them every moment of every day. Some of the stories are foolish and some are wise. The faith of the Montana Study in the 1940s was that although the times were troubled, the wisdom and virtue needed for the survival of free society still lived in our communities, and that the best communities could, through the faith and effort of concerned members, become education-centered, valuing learning and teaching as their most important activities. It's a story that might be true.

What we know for sure is that however we decide to act and whatever narrative we choose to tell, our young will be watching and listening.

Notes

1. These are the most notable: Boyer, E. L. *High School. New York: Harper & Row, 1983; Goodlad, J. A Place Called School.* New York: McGraw-Hill, 1984; National Commission on Excellence in Education, *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform.* Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1983. Sizer, T. R. *Horace's Compromise: The Dilemma of the American High School.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1984.

2. Maslow, A. H. *Motivation and Personality.* New York: Harper & Brothers, 1954.

3. McClay, Wilfred M. "The Mystic Chords of Memory: Reclaiming American History," Russel Kirk Memorial Lectures, Delivered to the Heritage Foundation, December 13, 1995.

4. Mandler, Jean Matter. *Stories, Scripts, and Scenes: Aspects of Schema Theory.* New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1984.

5. Erikson, Erik H. *Insight and Responsibility: Lectures on the Ethical Implications of Psychoanalytic Insight.* New York: W. W. Norton, 1964.

6. Basso, Keith H. "Stalking with Stories: Names, Places, and Moral Narratives Among the Western Apaches," *Antaeus*, 57, Autumn, 1986; pp. 111-112.

Discovering History in History Classrooms

Daniel Jamsa

Discovery learning is an active process that engages students directly where the teacher's role is to be a guide and provide data.

Discovery learning is simply allowing students to find their own answers to carefully selected questions. The process of discovery learning is well articulated by Dale Schunk (1991, 224-225): "In this method, the teacher poses a problem for students, such as 'Why does metal sink in water but metal ships float?' Rather than telling students how to solve the problem, the teacher provides materials and encourages students to formulate hypotheses and test them as they work on the task." Discovery learning can and should be used more in today's secondary history classrooms.

Synonymous with discovery learning is inquiry learning or inductive learning. According to the model described by Suchman (1962) as reproduced in Joyce and Weil (1996), there are five steps. First, the teacher presents the problem that needs to be solved. Second, students gather and verify data about the problem. The third step involves students hypothesizing a solution and experimenting with the relevant variables. In the fourth step, students organize the data, and possible explanations are discussed. In the last step, the students' cognitive processes from the first four steps are reviewed.

Discovery learning was originally developed for the sciences, although any topic that can be formulated as a question can be instructed this way (Joyce and Weil 1996). Upon reflection, the prospect of "discovering the past" in history classes initially seems backward. A historical event is already completed. How is it possible to discover something that has already happened? However,

> if, as Alan Nevins maintains, the act of history involves the continued reinterpretation in the light of new evidence and changing values, students' most important acquisitions from their history classes should be an appreciation of the value and nature of historical truth and the intellectual skills that allow them to engage in its pursuit. Assertions such as those above are not new. In the late 1960's to mid 1970's they were repeatedly proposed by a chorus of historians

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> and history educators including Richard Brown, Robert Burns, Edwin Fenton, Mark Krug, and Charles Sellers. These proponents of a 'New History' intended nothing less than a fundamental reorganization of the history curriculum in the nation's schools. Their vision included training students to follow the examples of professional historians as they 'do' history. (Copeland 1985, 189)

The discovery method should play a more central role in the pedagogy of today's secondary history classes. Many prominent philosophers of education, including Jerome Brunner, John Dewey, and Jean Piaget, advocated discovery learning. The philosophical discussion in this article is based on the thoughts of two of the most important education philosophers of the 20th century, Myles Horton and Paulo Freire, in their book *We Make the Road by Walking*. Current research as well as some of the available educational tools utilizing discovery learning are included. The discussion closes with a brief sketch of how the discovery method was central in the development of the Citizenship Schools which were one of the engines driving the Civil Rights movements in the 1950s and 1960s.

Foundations

Education is becoming process-oriented. Teaching students how to think, not just what to think is now the order of the day. Upper level thinking skills such as having students ascertain what the most important causal factors in Hitler's rise to power in Nazi Germany were, are at least as important as declarative knowledge such as dates, places, and events during the same time period. If it is true that the amount of knowledge humankind possesses is doubling every *six months*, then it is not possible to teach students all of the facts. Furthermore, as history continues to be reexamined from a multitude of cultural perspectives, it too will change. Students need to know how to interpret the new information they encounter everyday.

Declarative knowledge often does not transfer out of the classroom. How many of the endless battles and cultural tidbits that a student learns in history class do they actually need to recall in real life? If a need does arise, how often can the information actually be confidently recalled in a real-life context? Information of any kind is much more available now then it was when the typical "facts first" history curriculum was developed. Answers to factual historical question can be easily found from almost any computer terminal. Why learn to memorize simple facts when learning how to use information is so much more relevant to real-life situations.

Myles Horton and his comrades founded Highlander in 1932. Their intent was to train future area leaders and to help maintain and enrich the local culture. They were not sure of the means to obtain these ends. From Highlander in the 1950s spun off what was known as the Citizenship Schools. These schools trained people to pass the voter registration exam. Afterwards, they helped them learn how to use their vote more intelligently and prepared them to run for public office.

Horton discusses some of the ways his group at Highlander tackled the social problem of illiteracy in communities near the Appalachian Mountains. He demonstrates the futility encountered during the early years as they attempted to teach the literacy instructors how to do their job. "Sometimes we put fifty people to be trained in how to teach illiterates, and we spend fourteen days speaking about different theories and matters, and the teachers cannot *experience* it. Then the last day we have a lunch together, and the next day the teachers meet the illiterates and don't know how to work" (Horton and Freire 1990, 78). This was an example of teachers actually being trained for an authentic assignment but still not being prepared for the exam of real life.

Finding answers lies at the heart of the discovery method. The teacher cannot solve the problem for the student. The teacher's role is to be a guide and provide data. When Horton was summoned to help a group with a particular issue, he stated that "We won't go in anybody's community or organization as an expert, but we will come in and try to help you with your problem" (Horton and Freire 1970, 68). Some of the groups resisted this approach. They brought in the expert so that they would not have to think for themselves. Horton explained that

> they were getting desperate. They said "Well, now you've had more experience than we have. You've got to tell us what to do. You're the expert." I said "No, let's talk about it a little bit more. In the first place, I don't know what to do, and if I did know what to do I wouldn't tell you because if I had to tell you today then I'd have to tell you tomorrow, and when I'm gone you'd have to get somebody else to tell you." (p. 126)

Teachers are charged with preparing their students for life. If the student cannot interpret and evaluate history without the crutch of the instructor, then what was the authentic purpose of the class?

Many people initially think of history as something static and unchangeable. On closer examination this is

not the case. The dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima was seen as the obvious best choice for the United States until the last decade; now the issue is being contested. The overall value of the welfare and Medicare system in the United States is suddenly in question as long-term problems are exposed. Even the arrival of Columbus in the New World, an event so important to the United States that there is a national holiday to commemorate it, is now being reexamined in a more critical light. Freire comments that "if the act of knowing has historicity, then today's knowledge about something is not necessarily the same tomorrow. Knowledge is changed to the extent that reality also moves and changes" (Horton and Freire 1970, 101). Some of the facts taught in history classes today are tomorrow's myths.

History presents varied problems that can be explored and "discovered." What caused the fall of the Roman Empire? Why did the English colonies rebel? What caused the rise and fall of the Berlin Wall? The data needed to answer these and countless other questions consists of the lower level facts that are the substance of most of today's history classes. Instead of students simply being presented dates and places to memorize, during a discovery lesson they would use this information to help solve a problem. Furthermore, because they elaborate and use the facts on different cognitive levels, the students will be better able to recall these simple facts later.

Being able to "do history" will have authentic value for citizens in a participatory democracy. Which political candidate makes a better case that he or she can solve the given issue? Looking at existing models, what are some ways that the welfare system can really be modified so as not to endanger the health of the nation's children? How can we better motivate and treat with respect the students in the literacy classes? With the development of higher-level thinking skills, citizens will be better prepared to engage these very real questions of life.

After being presented with the question, the next step in the model is to struggle with the problem. The teacher provides the students with data to help them form and test hypotheses. According to Muessig (1981), the data for history classes can come from a multitude of sources: interviews with community residents, libraries, schools, museums, churches, places of employment, retirement villages, textbooks, and recreational sites. The students are now in a position to do history. They can experience what they are studying. Horton affirms that "the one thing they know is their own experience" (Horton and Freire 1990, 167).

When students struggle during this process, it is tempting to give them answers, but then they do not develop their own skills. Freire states that "one of the important tasks we should have as teachers should be not to have the experience on behalf of the students. We cannot do that" (Horton and Freire 1970, 36). There is a tremendous difference between being spoon fed ideas and forming one's own hypothesis. When the teacher robs students of the opportunity to try and succeed or fail, students have lost yet another chance to find out who they are and how they think. Freire here speaks of the benefits for individuals and society: "The more people participate in the process of their own education, the more the people participate in the process of defining what kind of production to produce, and for what and why, the more the people participate in the development of their selves. The more the people become themselves, the better the democracy" (Horton and Freire 1970, 145).

Research

A growing body of research suggests the positive effects of discovery learning on the cognitive abilities of students. Though the studies are predominately from science-based classrooms, there is reason to think the findings would transfer to other subjects. In history as in science, discovery learning involves finding information, hypothesizing answers, and forming conclusions.

Here are some samples of relevant research. Lott (1983) performed a meta-analysis of 39 studies which compared the benefits of inductive versus deductive teaching methods. The study concluded that the inductive approach showed more positive effects, especially when the students needed to perform upper level thinking. Shymansky, Kyle, and Alport (1983) performed another meta-analysis of 105 studies comparing the virtues of the new versus the old science curricula. The former included the scientific process such as forming and testing hypotheses. They concluded that "there is a substantial body of research literature which collectively points to the new science curriculum as a successful attempt to improve science education" (p. 402).

Pilburn and Baker (1990) taught a scientific literary course to 450 ninth-grade students. The course was designed to teach skills such as testing hypotheses, isolating variables, and observing data. They later checked the effectiveness of the course by interviewing tenth-grade biology teachers. They were told that the students who took the course better understood the nature of science, were better at laboratory and process-

ing skills and analyzing data. The intermediate and advanced students in the study were also more willing to take risks and engage in hypothetical thinking.

Adey and Shayer (1993) supplemented a middle school science course with special lessons for approximately 25% of the class time. These sessions were designed to teach cognitive conflict, metacognition, and other formal reasoning skills. Two years later, a comparison with a carefully selected control group showed that the students who had taken the special lessons scored better in mathematics, science, and English.

Perkins and Salomon (1989) report that students are more likely to develop wide ranging thinking skills if they are encouraged to think about their own thinking. Recall that the last step of the discovery method calls for a class review of the cognitive processes during the lesson. Derry and Murphy (1990) state that it is not easy to teach metacognition; this skill emerges gradually over time under conditions which support its acquisition (like during discovery lessons). It is helpful to foster metacognition while studying regular subject matter rather than trying to teach it as a separate lesson. Furthermore, ample time and opportunities to practice are also beneficial.

Leonard, Cavana, & Lowery (1981) found that high school students instructed with a method similar to the discovery method showed increased learning of scientific concepts and process. Students who practiced upper level thinking skills actually learned the lower level declarative knowledge better than students in the regular classrooms. When a similar study was done on the collegiate level (Leonard 1988), the amount of material learned by the discovery students was equal to that of their peers in the regular science courses. It should come as no surprise that a teacher does not have to sacrifice factual content when using the discovery method. In a memory model developed by Mastropieri and Scruggs (1991), they identified ways students can better encode material into long-term memory. Many of these steps, like organizing, rehearsing, and linking information to associated material, occur naturally as students do discovery lessons.

Changes

Changing the way history is taught in the classroom will not be simple. There is very little research focusing on history curricula to date to help guide the way. Many people will claim that if you take the time to teach students how to "do" history, then there will not be time to teach them the "essential" dates and events so critical to the students' knowledge base. Again, it should be noted that to teach students to think is not to do so at the expense of the core facts. Joyce and Weil (1996, 142) capture well the trap into which teachers fall:

> Now, when any but the fullest education will deprive our children of important parts of the achievements of this new worldwide civilization, we must put away the luxury of dichotomous thinking. The skills of reading, the study of values, the analytic tools of scholars, and the nurture of intuition are compatible, and we can and should teach them simultaneously. As we enter this period of renewed emphasis on the teaching of thinking, let us not pit the cultivation of the mind against the acquisition of skills and knowledge as if these goals were adversaries.

Copeland (1985) researched why the discovery method never caught on as a tool for history teachers despite the tremendous excitement generated in the 1960s. Classroom management is one of the two major challenges facing history teachers using this model. The other obstacle is the constant demand for teachers to supply the data necessary to form good hypotheses. This leaves the teacher with little or no time to interact with the students in a substantive manner. A project at the University of California, Santa Barbara, solved this problem by supplying two computers for each class of thirty students. The computers provided the necessary data and contained a structure which helped to guide the entire process thus helping with classroom predictability.

There are other excellent models to help guide the history teacher, some of which are listed in the reference section (Andel 1990; Lawson 1988; Oregon State Office of the Secretary of State 1987; Patton 1982). Edwin Fenton (1966) wrote a social studies textbook based on the discovery method of learning. Many secondary methods textbooks now have entire sections and chapters devoted to the discovery method. A number of journal articles have been written for history teachers. The video *The Truth About Teachers* (Fleisher 1989) demonstrates an exciting example of discovery learning. One of the teachers highlighted instructs a unit on the Civil War. Students actually take an overnight field trip into the countryside and attempt to act out one of the battles of the war.

If we want students to be prepared to confront the real world, then we must find a way to teach upper level thinking skills. Horton speaks of the process: "First, it's a matter of conviction that that's the way you should deal with people, that you should respect them and let them develop their own thinking without you trying to think for them. But how do you do that? You have to practice till you find out you know how to do

it, and then it's like anything else" (Horton and Freire 1990, 149-150). It will require time to master a new and challenging teaching model. Again according to Horton, change is not easy: "I just think most people can't think outside the socially approved way of doing things and consequently don't open up their minds to making any kind of discoveries. I think you have to think outside the conventional frameworks" (Horton and Freire 1990, 44).

Model

Horton and his team at Highlander encountered a problem. The literacy programs designed to help people on Johns Island prepare to take the voter registration exam were ineffective. People joined and then quickly dropped out. Federal grants went unused. After some investigation, it became obvious that the literacy programs were not treating the people with respect, and thus the people did not want to stay in the programs. The next question became how to develop a program that was effective and treated people with respect.

The group decided not to use certified teachers since they were accustomed to working with children. The majority of the island population was Black, so they proceeded to look for Black instructors to avoid the tendency of White people to dominate Black people. Finally, they realized that the people needed to quickly learn how to read large words.

They approached a niece of one of their crew and asked her to do the job. She was young and bright, although she was not yet through high school. What was key for Horton was her love for the people. They let Bernice begin her assignment essentially on her own. They wanted to let her own creative process work. She told the class at the beginning that she was not a teacher and that she was there to learn with them.

Bernice began in January of 1957 focusing the class on a poster, the Declaration of Human Rights. The final exam was the voter registration exam. Eighty percent of the first group passed. The popularity of the class skyrocketed; requests for other Citizenship Schools sprouted up all over the area. The classes were done on average two nights a week for three months, and the success rate was 75%. Bernice was put in charge of training other instructors. By 1961, over four hundred teachers had been trained and thousands of people had registered to vote. Eventually the program became so big that Highlander spun off the coordination of the Citizenship Schools to the Southern Christian Leadership Conference which was interested in its potential to aid the Civil Rights Movement. By trusting the people and Bernice to find their way, they quite literally changed the world.

Conclusion

It is time to discover history in history classrooms. Students need to be taught not only the events but how to think about the events. History is something that is happening everyday, and the history of yesteryear is not dead and unchanging. The discovery method offers one excellent model that history teachers can use to help reach the goal of students learning higher-level thinking skills. Teachers need to commit themselves to the time and practice needed as well as develop and maintain faith in the students' cognitive abilities. Joe Ryan, featured in *The Truth About Teachers,* puts it well when he says,

> You have to overcome student apathy, and it takes some work, but it can be overcome because they just don't want to sit there and be lumps. They really don't. We might just have to look at students a little differently and try and create some things that are fun for us as well.... Living history does have an effect on their attitude towards social studies. Where it shows up is the way they think and feel about history and realize there is a human side to history: not just printed words on a page. (Fleisher 1989)

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"The Drowned and The Saved"

The Transformative Pedagogy of Testimony and Witness

Ray Wolpow

To speak, to share personal trauma is necessary for personal healing and can have a profound effect on a teacher's relations with their students.

The title of this article is derived from survivor Primo Levi's 1986 book, *The Drowned and the Saved*.

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Children of today will be among the last to witness testimony from living human beings with numbers tattooed on their arms and irreparable sadness burned into their souls. However, the trauma experienced by the survivors of the Holocaust is not unique. Many of today's children, parents, and teachers have experienced pervasive trauma themselves. Like the millions of Holocaust victims who were murdered unmercifully, the "drowned" must never be forgotten; and the "saved," those who have survived unspeakable trauma, need our love and support to heal the wounds inflicted by abhorrent neighbors, family, and other authority figures (Browne and Finkelhorn 1986; Courtois 1994; Gardner 1971; Pynoos and Nader 1990; Terr 1990; van der Kolk, Perry, and Herman 1991). This paper will present the results of five years of qualitative research into how three extraordinary teacher-survivors of prolonged and pervasive trauma use a transformative pedagogy of testimony and witness to heal themselves and their students.

Informants

Interaction with three extraordinary teacher-survivors, Noemi, LeRoy (a pseudonym), and Miriam (also a pseudonym), constitute the source of data for this research.

Noemi

Noemi is a respected and beloved mother, grandmother, and synagogue elder. Born in Szeged, Hungary, in 1922, Noemi grew up in Kiskunhalas and then moved to Budapest where her sister attended the Hebrew elementary school where her father was school principal. When the Nazis came into Debrecen many young women fled Budapest. Noemi remained with her mother who had just given birth to her brother, Gabor. Early in 1944, Noemi's father was deported by the Nazis to a slave labor camp. On June 13, 1944,

Noemi, her mother, sister, brother, and maternal grandmother were deported in cattle cars to Auschwitz-Birkenau. Noemi and her father were the only members of her immediate family to survive the war.

After the war, Noemi married Earnest, also a survivor of a slave labor camp. Earnest taught mathematics and served as cantor of a local synagogue in Seged, where they had their first son. They moved to Budapest where their second son was born. Noemi taught elementary school. Shortly after the 1956 Soviet military repression of the Hungarian anti-Stalinist uprising, Noemi and her family escaped and eventually settled in St. Louis, Missouri. Noemi earned her American teaching credentials at the University of Missouri and tells wonderful stories of her experiences teaching sixth grade. She was honored for her teaching excellence with a Missouri Teacher of the Year award in 1981. Earnest went on to become a very highly respected synagogue cantor as well as teacher of high school mathematics. Earnest was afflicted with aphasia in 1989, dementia in 1990, Parkinson's disease in 1992, and died in 1994. Noemi described the final years of their lives together as being "like Auschwitz without the barbed wire.... There was little to look forward to except death."

LeRoy

LeRoy, age 53, is from a small city in Pennsylvania. Like Noemi, he is recognized for his exceptional talents as a teacher. However, unlike Noemi, the afflictors of his emotional trauma were not Nazis but cruel classmates, well-meaning adults, and the educational system itself. LeRoy attended a public school in a disadvantaged neighborhood. He did not learn to read or appreciate literature as a child and was functionally illiterate until his second semester in college.

LeRoy was in an accident at age six and survived a three-year hospitalization from the systemic effects of gangrene which left him physically deformed and "academically delayed." His descriptions of his physical and emotional agony while in the hospital, of the smell of rotting flesh, and the presence of death around him, were minor, in his mind, compared to the "real torture" which was to follow. At age nine he returned to the public schools where he was teased, ridiculed, and humiliated by peers and teachers for both his appearance and/or his inability to read. He had several encounters with school and police authorities. Years later he taught himself to read and eventually graduated from college with a bachelor's degree in special education. He is married with one child and has been teaching elementary and middle school students for the last 27 years.

Miriam

Miriam, age 31, was once president of her high school honor society, a beauty queen, and winner of several academic awards and scholarships; however, before finishing college and becoming an English teacher at a large suburban high school, she spent several years as a welfare mother. She is a survivor of spousal abuse and the effects of second-generation familial incest.

No aspect of Miriam's physical or social appearance might serve as a clue to the trauma she has experienced. She is a bright, well liked, and attractive woman who could have chosen any romantic relationship she wanted but persisted through the difficulties of a troubled marriage. She left her husband at the height of his violence with the hope and understanding that change could bring them back together. Miriam has also strengthened her relationships with other women, students, and colleagues through her bearing witness to the testimony disclosed by her mother, who is a survivor of incest. Administrators, parents, and teachers report that her professional acumen exceeds the skills of her more old-time colleagues. Miriam, her husband, and their two children have worked through the violent times and live in south central New York.

Framework

The informants' understandings are grounded in the literatures of psychiatry, phenomenology, and Talmudic hermeneutics.

Psychiatry

Trauma derives from the Greek word for wound. In adaptation to psychiatry, trauma "is an event in the subject's life defined by its intensity, by the subjects' incapacity to respond adequately to it [trauma], and by the upheaval and long-lasting effects it brings about in the psychical organization" (LaPlance and Pontalis 1973, 465-466). While experiencing a series of pervasive and prolonged traumatic incidents, such as being interned by the Nazis, humiliated by one's peers, or physically threatened by a raging husband, Noemi, LeRoy, and Miriam, respectively, each experienced intense feelings of fear, loss of control, and threat of annihilation. When neither resistance nor escape seemed possible and further action was of no avail, their psychic defenses became overwhelmed and disorganized. After the immediate danger disappeared, however, each component inherent in their ordinary response tended to remain in an altered and exaggerated way. As a result, these survivors of ongoing traumatic incidents experienced Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

which has been defined by the American Psychological Association (1987) as follows:

> The essential feature of this disorder is the development of characteristic symptoms following a psychologically distressing event that is outside the range of usual human experience (i.e., outside the range of such common experiences as simple bereavement, chronic illness, business losses, and marital conflict). The characteristic symptoms involve re-experiencing the traumatic event, avoidance of stimuli associated with the event or numbing of general responsiveness, and increased arousal. The diagnosis is not made if the disturbance lasts less than one month. (p. 247)

In a recent psychiatric study, Bessel A. van der Kolk recounts that survivors of severe, prolonged trauma invariably re-experience its physical sensations long before using words to describe the actual events they are experiencing. Not remembering and not recounting verbally can lead to serious debilitating symptoms and can potentially result in PTSD. Of all 43 subjects in the study, PTSD occurred only in those six individuals who were unable to recount their trauma verbally as a coherent story. As van der Kolk explains, "... people seem to need to remember the details of their trauma to deal with it effectively" (cf. Bower 1994, 365).

In order for Noemi, LeRoy, and Miriam to manifest their recovery they must have, at some point, attached words to their memories in order to enunciate the "unspeakable" events in their lives. Furthermore, as teachers, each must have encountered students affected by abuse, violent crime, suicide, and other traumatic events. Hence the research questions for this study:

- What do extraordinary teacher-survivors who have recovered from prolonged pervasive trauma understand about the restorative and/or dismembering qualities of acts of literacy?
- How does their recovery from trauma and their understanding of these qualities of acts of literacy inform their pedagogy, especially when teaching students who are underachieving due to ongoing trauma?

Phenomenology

Phenomenology is concerned with human perceptions of experience (Willis 1991, 173). The phenomenological frame of inquiry is well suited to the task of delving into the complex nature of the understandings held by Noemi, LeRoy, and Miriam of the restorative and dismembering influences of literacy on their experiences. I asked Noemi questions like: "What was it like to read about the SS once you were safely in the United States? What is it like to read the transcriptions of your experiences at the death camp at Auschwitz-Birkenau? What is it like for you when you visit classes and discover children who are dealing with trauma of their own? "

Though it may be painful to work with the many who suffer from pervasive trauma, their pain, unattended, is our pain too. Not attending is tantamount to complicity, forgetting, and dismemberment.

In the same vein I asked LeRoy: "What is it like for you to read the transcription of your story about 'beating the shit out of' the elementary school classmate who 'taunted you as a cripple'? What sense do you make of the violent behavior of young male students in your classes? What was it like to realize that you were being taunted by classmates and teachers because you could not read? What is it like to discover a fifth grader in your class who cannot read?" I asked Miriam: "What was it like to discover the voice of women writers when you were struggling with your own issues of domestic abuse? What is it like for you to read the transcription of the story of your mother disclosing her abuse to you? What is it like to learn from the poetry of your students that they are being sexually traumatized by relatives or live-in parent's friends?"

Talmudic Hermeneutics

Once they shape words, the heuristic tool of hermeneutics may be used by two or more people to "participate in a shared meaning" of their perceptions (Gadamer 1979, 260). Most important to this researcher's understanding of the answers provided by the informants is the hermeneutics practiced in the *Talmud*, written between 100 and 500 C.E. At the center of every page of the *Talmud*, one finds a short passage from the *Torah* surrounded by a wide array of allegorical interpretation, exegesis, and commentary.

The very format of the pages of the *Talmud*, suggests both the re-examination of text and a collective discourse of its polysemic meanings. Re-examination of text requires the reader to make a distinction between the words, as might be written on a page in Hebrew or English, and their iconic meanings, the pheno-

menological perceptions those words provide the reader. The text has no ultimate authority, not even in each individual's personal experience of its interpretation. More importantly, this meaning making is not to be done alone. Hermeneuticists argue that text is to be interpreted many times, by many people, with inherently differing perspectives "...reincorporating the circumstances of the interpreter into a *hermeneutic circle of understanding*...The truth of understanding is neither subjective nor objective, but an inter-subjective dialogue between different points of view" (McLaughlin 1993, 21).

Testimony and Witness

Such an inter-subjective dialogue might best be illustrated analogously by examining the nature of binocular vision. Viewing a moving object with only one eye delivers to the brain phenomenological perceptions which lack the depth achieved when one integrates the perceptions of the same object from both eyes. But depth does not come without distortion. Binocular vision, seeing with both eyes, creates boundary problems manifested by the blurring caused by the overlapping of two distinctly different singular visions (LeCompte 1993, 16-17)

By analogy, viewed hermeneutically, binocular understanding, the overlapping of two distinctly different perceptions of the meaning of symbolic language may likewise blur the boundaries between the "self" and "other," the "survivor" and "listener," the "informant" and "researcher." Such telling (giving testimony) and listening (bearing witness) requires an embrace of the "other" in ways which change both irrevocably. The transformative pedagogy of testimony and witness creates shared meaning through communal narrative which honors the teller and listener, and, as the reader will soon see, is restorative by its very nature.

Qualitative Research Method

Within the phenomenological and hermeneutic frameworks for inquiry, the researcher and informants create a common text to help each other perceive how they endow their worlds with meaning. This researcher started this process with interviews using the "interview guide approach" (Patton 1982, 163-164). Audio tapes were transcribed and transcripts open coded, categorized, axial coded, and diagrammed with subsequent assertions grounded in the data (Glasser and Strauss 1967, 101-116; Glesne and Peshkin 1992, 127-150; Miles and Huberman 1984, 49-77; Strauss and Corbin 1990, 57-176).

Copies of the interview transcripts, field notes, categories, and assertions were then sent to each of the informants asking them to verify, dispute, or add to these findings. This process enabled the informants and the researcher to create the aforementioned "hermeneutic circle of understanding." Such a circle of understanding is often called "member checking" by sociologists and other qualitative researchers (Miles and Huberman 1984, 242). Subsequently, each of the informants and the researcher engaged in at least two follow-up "in-depth phenomenological interviews" (Seidman 1991, 9) which were also audio taped, analyzed, and member-checked.

Just as a surveyor locates points on a map by triangulating several sites, a qualitative researcher uses many kinds of data collection techniques to cross-check the accuracy of data collected and findings so asserted (LeCompte and Preissle 1993, 48). Interview data were triangulated with source documents (e.g., supervisor observation and evaluation forms, student evaluations, newspaper articles, teacher award portfolios, etc.), extensive classroom observations (more than 100 hours), familial artifacts and memorabilia.

Several months later, with the permission of each of the participants, this researcher shared drafts of his research findings with Noemi, LeRoy, and Miriam and was pleasantly surprised when each teacher-survivor expressed the strong desire to meet the others. The text apparently enkindled a connection which they wanted to develop. When the opportunity for the four of us to visit presented itself, this researcher helped facilitate this engagement. I had two motivations beyond celebrating their fellowship. First, I wanted to witness what and how these three extraordinary educators would teach each other about trauma, literacy, and pedagogy. Second, I wanted to form a "hermeneutic circle" in which the four of us could address the research questions.

Findings and Discussion

Acts of literacy may either have restorative or dismembering qualities. When restorative, literacy serves as a powerful key which opens discursive space through the process of giving testimony and bearing witness. Giving testimony allows the survivor to manifest, in words and silences, memories which have not yet been contextualized into current reality. The listener participates in the personal process of bearing witness by consciously apprehending and responding to symbols and the meaning they attempt to encompass. When the survivor can "hear the listener witnessing" that which he or she has never personally experienced,

a process is constructed in which a new common knowledge is created, a knowledge which allows teller and listener to restore understanding of their world.

In this process lies the potential for healing agency. Testimony and witness require an embrace of the "other" in ways which change both irrevocably. All three informants in this study told the researcher that it was "healing to tell." All three reported that it was healing to give testimony and bear witness for each other. I must add, it was healing for the researcher as well.

Noemi, LeRoy, and Miriam describe the restorative qualities of acts of literacy in many ways. All three consciously subvert signs so as to make the unimaginable real and the real unimaginable. Such acts of literacy carry with them the force of clarification and proof.

Noemi, LeRoy, and Miriam use acts of literacy in their classrooms to make connections with students who are dealing with trauma. They give testimony to their students and teach them how to bear witness. They include the testimonial literature of other survivors in their curricula, encouraging their students to find writers with whom they can identify, and when appropriate, support their students attempts to tell and/or write their own stories.

All three read and write to "fill in the spaces." It is as though the adduction of history affirms their understanding of the enormity and connectiveness of the "unspeakable story" of which their experiences are but one of many. To one extent or another, Noemi, LeRoy, and Miriam perceive literacy as a means for interpreting, bridging and explaining the differences which exist between themselves and people with different historic/cultural backgrounds. Doing so enables them to connect with others whose background and belief systems are different from their own. Sometimes, as in this study, they learn that they are very much alike in their differences.

All three also describe the dismembering qualities of literacy. Each speaks sadly of the destructive power of "the word" which shapes inhumanity in death camp, classroom, school yard, living room, bedroom, and throughout their communities. For example, Noemi pointed out that Nazi propaganda did not command that old men, women and children be transported in squalor to be murdered in cold blood. Instead, Jews, like lice, rats, insects and other detestable vermin, were left in an appropriate habitat, the same fecal dirt from which they were spawned, until they could be exterminated with the insecticide gas, Zyclon B.

The cauterization of conscience by the use of metaphor and euphemism is not unique to the Nazis. LeRoy and Miriam point out that here, in the United States, there is a long and sorrowing history of "killing the Indian but saving the man," buying and selling "darkies," interning "japs," giving those "gooks" their just deserts, "nailing bitches," and "beating fags." Such cauterization sneaks into the language of professional educators, who in cases like LeRoy's "objectively" categorize trauma survivors as "brown rabbits" (the low reading group in which LeRoy was always placed) and "cripples." In Miriam's high school, colleagues choose to ignore the debilitating effects of abuse and instead label girls and young women "bitches who probably asked for it." In these cases literacy may function as a dead-bolt lock preventing discourse and thus hindering recovery.

How does Noemi, LeRoy, and Miriam's recovery inform their pedagogy, especially with those students who are underachieving due to ongoing trauma? All three have little patience for inflexible curricula, for grading and shading students, for any aspect of the "system" which dehumanizes either their students, the parents of their students, or themselves. All three believe that technique and method have to be secondary to affirming the value of each human being in their classrooms. None believes that it is appropriate to use size or authority as the means to dominate or disempower any student. All three have experienced being treated as less than human beings and take great risks to prevent dehumanizing their own students.

Through their pedagogy of testimony and witness, Noemi, LeRoy, and Miriam feel that their students have a more authentic understanding of who they are than their colleagues do. Noemi says, "What a teacher is, is more important than what he teaches." Miriam concurs with, "Teachers do not teach students, teachers teach themselves." Their intimate sharing with students, in large part, defines who they are as human beings and none of them can imagine their lives without having this personal contact.

Noemi, LeRoy, and Miriam have had episodes during which their own traumatic memories intruded during their teaching. They each, in their own ways, use these opportunities to teach their students, in words and deeds, how to deal with such instances.

Noemi, LeRoy, and Miriam are trauma survivors, not victims. A victim is one who is acted upon; a survivor is an active subject. These extraordinary teacher-survivors know trauma. Knowing trauma predicates an epistemology which subscends the past to a place where pain and humiliation go beyond tears.

However, as intimately as Noemi, LeRoy, and Miriam know trauma, they also know hope. Knowing

hope predicates an epistemology which transcends the present. Noemi and Miriam may name the presence of "fortitude," "love," and "compassion" as attributes of the pedagogy of testimony and witness; however, phenomenologically, it is the process of seeking these attributes with students which make these encounters pedagogically meaningful. Hence, one way of knowing whether one is practicing the pedagogy of testimony and witness in a restorative fashion is to determine if it is being transformative for *both* the student and the teacher.

Conclusion

The reality of pervasive and prolonged trauma exceeds its causalities. Who can conceive of a reality in which men, women, and children are killed like insects, dying in their own feces? Who can conceive of a reality in which the humiliation suffered at the hands of one's own elementary school classmates is greater than the discomfort of smelling one's own rotting flesh? Who can conceive of a reality in which one's husband's violent rage threatens the lives of those he loves the most and for whom one's mother has never disclosed the sexual abuse she experienced as a child? Who can conceive of a reality in which nearly all of humankind stands by, inattentive and/or complicit?

Ours is a century of unrelenting genocide and epidemic kindred abuse. The deeds which are done must be heard in our hearts. If we, heirs to the universe of the Holocaust, wish to restore the humane in humanity, literacy must testify and bear witness, and pedagogy must catalyze.

Though it may be painful to work with the many who suffer from pervasive trauma, their pain, unattended, is our pain too. Not attending is tantamount to complicity, forgetting, and dismemberment. Noemi, LeRoy, and Miriam show us, in their words and deeds, the fruits of aspiring to a pedagogy of testimony and witness which remembers and binds irrevocably. They show us the meaningfulness of a pedagogy fueled by a hope which includes horizonless despair. Their capacity to affirm the value of life in the face of death, to choose recovery in the face of humiliation and despair, can do more than inspire us. It can inform how we teach.

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Book Reviews

The Culture of Education

by Jerome Bruner

Published by Harvard University Press, 1996

The Iroquois

by Dean R. Snow

Published by Blackwell, 1994

Golfing the Wright Way

Mickey Wright

Published by Taylor, 1962

Reviewed by Jill Hanifan

This is not a traditional book review. Instead, I have opted to read Jerome Bruner's most recent book, *The Culture of Education*, in the company of two other books, *The Iroquois* by Dean R. Snow, and *Golfing the Wright Way* by LPGA Hall-of-Famer Mickey Wright. All three of these books came into my hands during the winter of 1996-1997, and although there were of course many other books during that season, these three were related by Bruner's specific subjects — culture and learning.

> This is a book of essays about education. But it is by no means limited to education in the usual sense of classrooms and schools. For it is surely the case that schooling is only one small part of how a culture inducts the young into its canonical ways. Indeed, schooling may even be at odds with a culture's other ways of inducting the young into the requirements of communal living. (Bruner, ix)

> This book is about the Iroquois, not about the non-Iroquois who interacted with them and who largely wrote their history as we now know it. However much we may know about figures such as Isaac Jogues and William Johnson, they are treated here as supporting cast, not main characters. In some sense this book is also my gift to the Iroquois. (Snow, xiii)

> "A Swing is a Swing is a Swing," I wrote when *Play Golf the Wright Way* was first published. (Wright, 3)

Both Bruner and Snow offer immediate qualifiers, a hazard of academic texts. Bruner quickly moves to define education as cultural induction of the young, which significantly broadens his subject, and sets up a dynamic and imprecise relationship between the two terms, culture and education. This allows Bruner to range more broadly, to play hooky from school, if you will, and to critique the institution of which he is a part. Snow, on the other hand, is recasting a historical drama, scripting a cultural narrative that minimizes the written history and provides an alternative written history as a gift to contemporary tribal members. Wright, untroubled by academic convention, quotes herself paraphrasing Gertrude Stein. The openings triangulate. From Bruner's didactic redefinition to Snow's delimited historical narrative to Wright's modernist koan, "a swing is a swing is a swing."

> And by the same intuition, one can as easily come to see ones personal ideas or beliefs as relating (or not relating) to "what is known" or what is generally believed to have withstood the test of time. In this way, we come to view personal conjecture against the background of what has come to be shared with the historical past. Those presently engaged in the pursuit of knowledge become sharers of conjecture with those long dead. (Bruner, 62)

> Adolescents assumed adult names that were more than just names in the Euro-American sense. Specific names were held by the clans, and an adolescent was given an appropriate name from the available pool. He or she then became the reincarnation of the previous holders of the same name. (Snow, 73)

> The late Mildred "Babe" Didrikson Zaharias was the strongest woman I ever knew. An Olympic star in javelin, hurdles, and high jump at the age of eighteen, she was also the greatest woman athlete of this or any century. (Wright, 32)

Despite their obvious dissimilarities, these three texts of culture and learning share a convergence that is oddly synchronized choosing equivalent moments to discuss practical and specific methods for tapping the powers of the dead. Exactly one-third of the way through, the various technologies for communion with the dead are presented in each text. Bruner proposes that through a mix of intuition and written record students contemporize conversations with historical figures, in order to create a sense of historical backdrop that encourages the dead to "share conjecture." Snow describes the more literal contemporization of the dead in classical Iroquois culture, where instead of conjecturing with the dead, the youth embody them and instead of a posing a personal knowledge against a historical backdrop, the historical knowledge is personified in a specific individual, through the sharing of the name. Naming as the essential technology of conversation with the dead is also practiced in Wright's passage about Babe Didrikson. She is just beginning a section where she will use Didrikson's example to encourage women to swing as hard as they can. First she recites

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Didrikson's given name, then the nickname and "maiden" name by which she was known to her fans, then her husband's name, followed by testimonials to her strength, the list of her Olympic medals and finally, the assertion of her historical superiority. Bruner proposes conversation. Snow's Iroquois believe in reincarnation, while Wright urges emulation of the dead.

> What is sacred is that any well-wrought, well-argued, scrupulously documented, perspectivally honest construal of the past, the present or the possible deserves respect. We all appreciate that, nevertheless, we must decide between competing accounts, competing narratives. That is political and social reality. But that does not condone suppression: after all, that's what major amendments to our constitution are all about. (Bruner, 92)

> The Iroquois perspective was perniciously aggravated by another fundamental belief. This was the view that the possible exception of accidental drowning there was no such thing as a natural death. When a loved one died, someone else was to blame. Whether the death was a violent one or attributable only to subtle witchcraft, someone was to blame and revenge was essential. If the act of revenge occasioned the capture of someone who might serve as an adopted replacement for the lost relative, so much the better. (Snow, 110)

> As you can see, position in life is everything to a golf ball. (Wright, 46)

These quotes are drawn from the hearts of the texts, the physical centers of the books. Bruner, in his role of culture hero, sanctifies the virtues of academic culture, and in the plural, speaks the people's appreciation. But the punctuation of the sentence breaks down; because he uses a comma instead of a semicolon in front of "nevertheless," the antecedent of the relative pronoun "that" is unclear. Do the people appreciate respecting and respectful scholarly construals, or do the people appreciate that they must decide between competing narratives? In any case, Bruner asserts that competition between construals, with winners and losers, is social and political reality, and that suppression of the losers is wrong and against the law. At the center of his book, Bruner names the sacred, and in the name of the people, asserts the real, the taboo, and the holy writ. The real relations between narratives and accounts are competitions for primacy.

Snow assumes the role of providing one of the well-wrought, well-argued construals of the past that Bruner calls on the people to respect. Snow is also discussing sacred belief, but since he writes as historian recounting a culture belief instead of a culture hero establishing them, the subject is removed. Snow does not share the belief, and he does not speak for the people. The particular belief he describes appears exotic and irrational. The Iroquois construal of malice as the primary cause of death is itself presented as a cause of death. Snow's account shares the virtues of Bruner's sacred narratives; however, its social and political realities are very different. Instead of positioning reality as the necessary respectful competition of academia, Snow is recovering a neglected, if not suppressed, account of a different order of social and political realities, realities like invasion, epidemic, and cultural genocide.

But ultimately it is up to Wright, the "professional" competitor, to draw attention to the articulation of position in the centers of the other two books. Wright's clever synecdoche works in several ways for a golfer — position in the swing arc, position and lie on the golf course, position on the leaderboard. Bruner, like Wright, expresses the importance of positionality through another synecdoche; construals, accounts, and narrative are treated as though they were players instead of pieces of equipment and strategy. Political and social positions are everything to a competing narrative. To Snow, Wright offers an ironic metaphor. Captive Iroquois were swept up, perhaps even struck by clubs, and positioned within mourning families. The geographical position of the Iroquois nations relative to Whites and their diseases determined the number of deaths. Position is everything in life.

> So the dilemma in the study of man is to grasp not only the causal principles of biology but to understand these in the light of the interpretive processes involved in meaning making. To brush aside the biological constraints on human functioning is to commit hubris. To sneer at the power of culture to shape man's mind and to abandon our efforts to bring this power under human control is to commit moral suicide. A well-wrought psychology can help us avoid both disasters. (Bruner, 185)

> For the most part, these are wise and principled people, who understand that nothing is ever settled once and for all, and who have learned to live comfortably with the uncertainty that understanding entails. Despite everything that has occurred to them in their long past and the uncertainty of the future, the Iroquois prepare the way for the seventh generation still to come. (Snow, 221)

> A finish in a golf swing is a completed relaxed expenditure of the momentum of the clubhead generated during the swing itself.
> This book is completed and I am relaxed for I have told in words and shown in pictures how I swing and why.
> I think and do everything just the way I have said.
> It has helped me.
> I hope it helps others. (Wright, 96)

At the end of his book, Bruner grasps at power — the power to make meaning, the power of biological constraint, the power of culture, and his argument about hubris and moral suicide is the classic Sophoclean nar-

rative. Snow concludes by exchanging history's certain identifications with a present and future plural community and the uncertainty of living understanding. Wright, by far the most self-conscious of the three about the relations between her content and her narrative structure, finishes a swing illustrated on the front cover. In both backswing and finish, the club is over the shoulders, and weight has been transferred to one side. But the top of the backswing is a coil, storing muscular energy, while the finish, like Wright's finish here, is completely uncoiled and relaxed. Earlier, in a caption to a photo of her finish, Wright remarks, "If you have been in balance throughout the swing, you can stand and hold finish several seconds" (Wright, 13). At the end of her book, Wright "holds finish" by the pauses built into the way she has indented her final sentences.

Finally, all three authors refer to contexts beyond their texts. Bruner's conclusion recapitulates his role as a culture hero. His lesson in hubris and moral suicide is Oedipal, where an interpretive process, a cultural "oracle" makes meaning, and the biological "constraints" order blood and bloody relations. Ultimately, like Oedipus, Bruner's future is conflicted by two disastrous cultural narratives, biological "paternity" and cultural (maternal) abandon, and he would turn to a well-wrought psychology to solve the dilemma, answer to the sphinx's riddle and avoid its disastrous, albeit ancient, potential. Snow, attempting to achieve a sense of closure and resolution in the face of ongoing Iroquois factionalism and cultural strain, ends by rhetorically uniting the contemporary Iroquois in the phrase "to the seventh generation," which is both a phrase spoken by historical indian people about their future generations and a popular new age slogan. Snow's gift, a rearticulated Iroquois history, has ended before the end, and his weak and contrived conclusion actually invites continuation, a gift to future generations at the same moment where they are invoked in words. But again, it seems as though Wright, while watching the soaring arc of a well struck shot speaks in an imagist clarity not only for herself but for Bruner and Snow,

> I hope it helps others. (Wright, 96)

Erratum

On page 39 of the Spring 1997 (Vol 10, No 1) of the *Review*, two references should have read as follows:

Giroux, H. 1989. Toward a new sociology of curriculum. In *Curriculum and instruction*, edited by H. Giroux, A. Penna, and W. Pinar. Berkeley: McCutchan.

Gorodetsky, M., and S. Keiny. 1995. Conceptual change and environmental cognition. *International Journal of Science Education* 17(2): 207-217.

Beyond the Beanstalk: Interdisciplinary Learning Through Storytelling

by Lynn Rubright

Published by Heinemann, 1996

Reviewed by Esther Willison

I have been retired from teaching for three years now, with nary a look back, but Lynn Rubright has made me want a classroom again. Her reminder of the infinite possibilities when working with children, in *Beyond the Beanstalk: Interdisciplinary Learning Through Storytelling*, takes me back to the 1970s when a small group of us (parents, teachers, social workers and psychologists) founded an ungraded alternative public school, the Open School. We considered ourselves isolated revolutionaries then, so I'm delighted to see that now "interdisciplinary learning" is a well-respected choice.

In her introduction, Rubright states: "Readers will learn about the power and potential of stories and how to become effective storytellers who can employ movement, drama, music, creative writing, poetry, and most vitally, improvisational play." She is right. Readers, if they have an open mind, will learn these things. And she is right to stress the importance of "improvisational play." There still continues, unfortunately, a tradition of differentiating between play and work, the latter being, for many educators, of far greater value. It takes vision to understand what hard work play is! *Beyond the Beanstalk* clearly illustrates that its author understands the value of play and the learning that takes place when children are intensely involved in an activity. She states:

> When I let go and allow the children to playfully take over, I signal to them that I respect their ideas. For the moment, we are partners in the process of creative play. When I don't let go, opportunities that could lead to original work are quite often missed. There is a delicate balance between maintaining control and allowing fresh ideas to take us in new directions. Releasing control is at the heart of improvisation.

Beyond the Beanstalk is full of examples of "letting go." It is a practical book for teachers and parents, or for anyone else working with children, full of concrete ideas and methods of executing these ideas. Teachers already using storytelling in their classrooms will find this book as valuable as teachers who might be willing

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to give it a try. A teacher-principal (K-6) Rubright met in a small school near the Arctic Circle in Alaska, told her: "Teachers need to have plans and curriculum designs, but more important, they need to discard them, or put them aside, if a more authentic learning opportunity appears at the spur of the moment.... Storytelling is natural to this process...." Rubright acknowledges, however, that "letting go can be scary. It means leaving one's comfort zone to trust and risk, or shedding a traditional teaching style and slipping into a facilitator role."

The author becomes a real person in this book in the sense that she shares with us her own experiences and her own background. "... I realized that my own love of stories originated with my Grandmother's fairy tales...." She describes "learning the stories bones' [and] the setting, characters, sequence of events, (incidents) and ending."

Rubright's methods and ideas are familiar to me — many years ago my class (eight-, nine-, and ten-year-olds) found the bones of a cow on a walk through a field. We built a frame and put her bones together with wire, with the help of one child's father who happened to be a butcher. It took three months. From Mildred, our cow, we built a curriculum in reading, writing, science, math, social studies, art, music, and dance. But we never recorded the story of Mildred's bones in detail, of how we found them and how we put them together — the real "bones" so to speak. Rubright *has* recorded the creative process of children and her book is full of the tales of how she, other teachers, and the children have embellished, have let their imaginations flow and gone "beyond the beanstalk."

One way to expand on an already existing story, according to Rubright, is "Story Weaving." After a story is told, all the characters and objects from the story are listed on the board. "Students then choose one item from the board. Next a story weaver (a person in the class or the teacher) asks questions to generate information. The story weaver blends this new information into the unfolding tale." Rubright goes on to show how the story can be related to studies in art, drama, math, social studies, and science. "Once teachers and students taste the elixir of using storytelling to stimulate learning, it is difficult to return to mere text book centered classrooms, with subject areas taught at specific times and topics of study thematically separated from each other." At the Open School we made "trees" with the children; the trunk of the tree being the story itself and the branches being the possible activities stemming from the story, in all the areas of study, including the arts. Often we could not cover all the activity branches in our studies but it was always exciting to list them. Rubright concludes: "This integrated approach to teaching ... is exhilarating, but not easy."

Beyond the Beanstalk is filled with specific examples of storytelling on various grade levels, sometimes using a specific book, sometimes using the students' original stories or poems, but always with an interdisciplinary approach. "There is no formula or right way to teach this way," Rubright reiterates. "All that is necessary is to relinquish control and follow the lead of the children. When teachers exercise a little imagination and are willing to be open and try different approaches, amazing things happen in the classroom."

Rubright shows us, through specific examples and specific children, how to follow the lead of the children. Here are some of the discoveries made by teachers with whom Rubright worked:

> I discovered that children are natural philosophers. They delight in determining for themselves the often multiple meanings and messages buried in fables and other story genres.
>
> Lanie [a difficult child] displayed a talent for drama that I had not suspected. For the first time [she] got to see herself as a respected member of the class.... The children saw her and she saw herself in a different light — not in the troublemaker role that she had established for herself....
>
> [The teacher] found that some of her students who had poor reading and writing skills displayed an amazing talent for storytelling.... Such revelations underline the importance of providing more opportunities in classrooms for more alternative ways of learning, and of abandoning, when necessary, traditional teaching methods that do not engage students in the learning process.
>
> To this point Dana had experienced nothing but failure in school.... But the storytelling experience turned her around.
>
> Not only could they [students with learning disabilities] read the story [a story the students had heard in assembly], they added their own sounds. I watched their self-confidence growing before my eyes.

These storytelling experiences, diverse as they are, all strengthen the child's self image. They seem particularly helpful to children whose imaginative skills may not surface in a more traditional curriculum. From my own experience, success in one area in a child's life often leads to success in another area, i.e., a good storyteller might become a better reader because of his or her improved self-confidence.

There are two chapters in *Beyond the Beanstalk* which include children listening to "elders" tell their own stories, much as Rubright listened to her grandmother's tales. One is about an oral history project, in which the children interview elders, and the other is children sharing stories with senior citizens. There are,

> The implication [of such a pedagogy] is always that something mindless, dirty, and infantile is being recommended, which in a certain sense is true, since the faculties in question have not been allowed to mature and remain in an unregulated state. The concern that things will fall apart and no one will learn anything if these unruly elements are allowed into the picture stems precisely from their historic exclusion from our system of education. The less we know about these unpredictable domains, the less we want to know. (p. 214)

It is through an artful examination of her life, and an insightful institutional critique that Tompkins offers us the challenge of holistic pedagogy.

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