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ENCOUNTER

Education for Meaning and Social Justice

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Editorial

Global, Cosmopolitan Democracy And Holistic Education

Dale T. Snauwaert

Liberal democracy is a system of rights premised upon the *logic of equality* (Dahl 2000). At its core is a fundamental belief in moral equality, a belief that *all* human beings possess an equal inherent dignity. Its logic runs as follows: if we are morally equal, then we also possess rights, inviolable claims to the actual enjoyment of particular social goods guaranteed by the society (Shue 1980). The two basic rights of a liberal democracy are: the freedom to conceive and pursue one's own conception of the good life (consistent with the equal rights of others), often referred to as "negative liberty" and self-determination, often referred to as "positive liberty." The right to self-determination entails the basic notion of democracy as government by consent, which involves the right to political equality (including the right to direct or indirect representation) and concomitant rights such as rights to freedom of expression, association, due process, etc. As moral equals, all citizens of a liberal democracy have an inviolable claim to have their interests represented in the political process.

In a world that has become highly interdependent, the boundaries of the nation-state have become very porous, rendering many fundamental decisions beyond the control of national governments and thus beyond the consent of the governed. David Held (1995) has identified a number of democratic disjunctures that have eroded the ideal of consent in a national context: international law, internationalization of political decision-making, hegemonic powers and international security structures, national identity and the globalization of culture, and the world economy. These disjunctures call for a re-conceptualization of democracy toward a cosmopolitan ideal. Democracy can no longer be conceived as exclusively a national phenomenon but must be thought of as a moral and political ideal that has a fundamental cosmopolitan dimension. This is particularly pertinent to and consistent with democracy as a moral ideal premised upon the logic of equality. This cosmopolitan dimension of democracy is expressed most forcefully, I believe, in the articulation and enactment of *international human rights and humanitarian law*.

The recognition of international human rights in the world community begins in the post-World War II era with the Nuremberg Trial, Judgment, and Obligation, which formed the basis of UN Declaration of Human Rights and subsequent international human rights laws and conventions. This perspective posits a cosmopolitan position, the view that the moral community and thus moral consideration extend beyond the boundaries of the nation-state to include all human beings.

The Nuremberg Obligation is based upon a cosmopolitan conception of law and morality, and it provides the clearest statement of individual responsibility under international law. Although the Nuremberg Tribunal was devoted to the trial of Nazi war crimes, the adoption of the principles derived from the Nuremberg judgment by the United Nations at its opening session (UN General Resolution 95) clearly indicates that the Nuremberg principles are applicable beyond the context of World War II (Cooper 1999; Falk 1989; Glueck 1966; Woetzel 1962). The two major decisions at Nuremberg were that aggressive war, war crimes, and crimes against humanity are violations of international law; and that individuals, even when acting as state agents under national law, are responsible and can be prosecuted for such violations.

Two foundational principles of national sovereignty were at issue in this deliberation: self-determination and nonintervention. If these principles were superseded, obligation to international law would have legal priority over national law. The defendants argued that they were following the laws of the nation. According to the principles of self-determination and nonintervention, the State has a right to treat its citizens in the manner it deems fit, and there is no higher authority to judge whether their acts are right or wrong, legal or illegal. In other words, the Nazi defense was based upon an invocation of national sovereignty giving them the right to torture, enslave, and murder their own citizens.

The Nuremberg Tribunal argued that when the crimes are of such a heinous nature that they offend the basic principles of justice recognized by the international community, when an act violates our basic sense of human dignity, then it is an affront to the international community. It becomes an issue that transcends territorial boundaries.

The result of the Nuremberg refutation of national sovereignty as a defense generated the Nuremberg Obligation: a duty to uphold international law and morality "by taking appropriate action even if it violates applicable domestic law" (Falk 1989, 212). From the perspective of the Nuremberg Obligation, all individual citizens, including state agents, have an obligation to uphold international law and the basic principles of cosmopolitan justice even when not stipulated by national law or custom or even when in direct violation of national law. By implication, in a democratic society founded upon the consent of the people, the Nuremberg Obligation mandates that citizens actively oppose acts of state that are criminal in character under international law or violate international morality.

Subsequent international human rights conventions—beginning with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and followed by the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; the Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights; the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide; the International Covenant on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination; the International Convention on the Suppression and the Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid; the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women; the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment; the Convention on the Rights of the Child, as well as the whole European System for the Protection of Human Rights, among other conventions—follow from the precedent set at Nuremberg (Cooper 1999).

The Nuremberg Obligation and subsequent international human rights law posit a fundamental moral ideal: the imperative of treating every human being as an end, the basic ideal of respect for all persons. This ideal gives precedence to safeguarding human dignity above all other considerations of State. It establishes the inviolability of human dignity. This moral imperative constitutes one of our basic ethical intuitions, and it has attained universal acceptance (as exemplified by the acceptance of human rights as a fundamental part of international law and custom).

In summary, our shared humanity carries with it a moral imperative to respect the dignity of every human life. This cosmopolitan imperative is consistent with, perhaps even identical with, liberal democracy, for both cosmopolitanism and liberal democracy find their moral grounding in a basic "commitment to equal respect for persons" (Gutmann 1999, 311), that transcends cultural and political boundaries. The Nuremberg Obligation and international human rights conventions clearly extend the principle of respect beyond the boundaries of the nation-state to encompass all human beings. In this sense they posit the cosmopolitan ideal of equality.

This cosmopolitan ideal is not only consistent with the imperatives of holistic education but may be foundational to it. Given the fact that at the core holistic education's worldview is a vision of interdependence and humanistic universalism, the ideal of cosmopolitan moral equality, and its emergence in international society and consistency with liberal democracy, may provide a potent moral and political foundation and justification for the adoption of a holistic education. Holistic education may be central to a cosmopolitan democratic civic education.

I believe this centrality is apparent in light of the events of September 11, 2001. This crime against humanity highlights a neglected dimension of holistic

education: an education for moral and political responsiveness. Holistic education concerns the whole child as an intellectual, emotional, physical, spiritual, *and* social being. Holistic education predominately conceives the child as a being with soul, a being with a sacred essence and attempts to cultivate this essence from birth. However, the holistic child is not an island; she is fundamentally interrelated with all other beings. This is a primary characteristic of her sacred essence, the reality that the core of her being is interconnected with all living things. This interconnection, this feature of interbeing, means that when one is harmed everyone is harmed. We have felt this concretely, for example, on and in the days following September 11. If we are so interconnected, then the cultivation of our capacity to respond to others with care and respect, with empathy and justice should be a basic component of education, especially a democratic and holistic one.

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The Signature of the Whole

Radical Interconnectedness And its Implications for Global and Environmental Education

David Selby

Environmental and global education will not seriously impact our culture unless we embrace a radical interconnectedness that acknowledges that everything is connected to everything else and, at a deeper level, that everything is embedded in everything else.

This paper was originally the keynote presentation at the May 2000 annual conference of the Global, Environmental and Outdoor Education Council (GEOEC) of the Alberta Teachers' Association.

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Between the ages of five and ten, in the 1950s I lived in the village of North Hykeham, a few miles outside the cathedral city of Lincoln, on the edge of the Lincolnshire fenlands, England. To reach the fens we had to walk from the village down a bridle track called Green Lane. To go down Green Lane for any child interested in nature was to enter a world of wonder. In wintertime, the fens would freeze over and it was possible to walk for miles over ice, slipping and sliding, looking for animal tracks, with one ear cocked for the sound of creaks and groans indicating that you were literally approaching thin ice and that it was time to retreat. Not that ice walking was life-endangering—except for the drains and river ways the water stood only about two feet deep for mile after mile. To fall through the ice was cold and unpleasant, but also quite a thrill. In spring and summer the fens transformed into a vast wild garden of flowers with evocative names such as Marsh Marigold, Lady's Smock, Ragged Robin, Red Campion, Monkey Flower. I spent day after happy day searching for flowers and keeping an annual scrapbook of pressed flowers, noting the date of first seeing the flower in bloom each year. Each year we watched the coming of birds in the spring, their going in the fall. We knew the badger holes, the fox coverts, the broken-down willows where the shrews nested.

In the early 1980s I took my children to see this place of wonder, the place where I had lived out some of the happiest times of my boyhood. Green Lane had become the principal road through a sub-

urban housing estate. The fens had been drained in the name of agricultural development and efficiency (as understood by Strasbourg bureaucrats). The place where I once lost my Wellington boots in a mire of mud one springtime—to be chided heavily by my mother in those impecunious times on returning home bootless—had been concreted over. The sense of loss was palpable. Somehow, part of me, a source of my identity, of my sense of self, had been taken away.

This personal story captures for me some of the lifesprings of modern environmentalism: the adult experience of loss of places of deep meaningfulness in our lives through rampant development and urbanization; of increasing disconnection from nature and, through that estrangement, an existential crisis of identity (Tomashow 1996). The tarmacking of Green Lane was both process and symbol of disconnectedness from the Earth and the erosion of identity.

The Global Environmental Crisis As Crisis of Worldview

Hand in glove with this sense of loss has grown in many of us an uneasy sense that our window on the world—our worldview—is somehow distorted, deeply destructive in its impact, and quite insufficient to either understand what is happening to the planet, or to do anything fundamentally about it.

A number of commentators have argued that mainstream Western thinking has inherited a worldview from seventeenth and eighteenth century scientists and philosophers that is underpinned by notions of separation, otherness, and domination. That worldview, they argue, has been deeply influenced by Francis Bacon's view that the goal of science was to enslave nature (and in the process "to torture nature's secrets from her"), and by René Descartes's division of the world into *res cogita* (things of the mind) and *res extensa* (mechanical extended substances or matter), and by his consequent arrogation of mind and free will exclusively to humans. This has led to our creating a hierarchy within ourselves (mind above emotions and body) and to our locating ourselves outside and above nature (which has no mind). This has also correlated with our according only instrumental value to nature (nature as mindless resource); our denying ethical and moral status to other life forms and to environments (in that they are mindless machines); and, thus, to our allowing ourselves virtually unfettered license to exploit (Bateson 1973; Bohm 1990; Capra 1983, 1996; Evernden 1985; Merchant 1981). While fueling the hubris of uniqueness, it has fostered our modern sense of alienation and existential crisis. "We are distinct from everything around us and inexorably alone" (Zohar 1990, 34).

The machine image and understanding of the world as put forward by the likes of Descartes, Bacon, and Newton, the same commentators maintain, has also become deeply embedded in Western thought. We try to understand how something works by dividing it into what are held to be its discrete component parts. If an identified part malfunctions, we tend to it without reference to the whole. Understanding—and control—are achieved through compartmentalizing, pigeonholing, and analyzing, through atomism or reductionism. Separation is the name of the game (Capra 1983; Callicott 1986, Merchant 1981). The general practitioner or specialist tend to a pain in a part of the body without reference to the rest of the body, to the patient's psyche, to social and environmental relationships (the specialist often particularly so in that the greater the degree of specialism the more frequent the occurence of specialism-myopia). The corporate executive toasts a hefty credit over debit account without factoring in the environmental, cultural, social, and psychological costs of gathering raw material, processing, and distributing the firm's product. The science teacher teaches the flower by having the child name the parts, but misses the essence of the flower (more than the sum of its parts) and of the flower in its context. A reductionist mentality also tends to wed its adherents to a deterministic outlook. Just like in a machine process, in which nearby components react one upon the other, events in the world are viewed as happening in an inexorably linear fashion, while instability and chance are seen as shortcomings in our present capacity to control—as "physical problems awaiting mechanical solutions" (Callicott 1986, 303). Within reductionism "all causal relationships are reducible to the motion or translation from point to point of simple bodies or the composite bodies made up of

them. The mysterious causal efficacy of fire, disease, light, or anything else is explicable, in the last analysis, as the motion, bump, and grind of the implacable particles" (p. 303). Only our minds, Cartesianism holds, are free to range as and where they want (Cottingham 1986).

The dualisms spawned by Cartesian thought (e.g., human-animal; mind-body; masculine-feminine; us-them; inner-outer; subject-object; reason-emotion; spirit-matter; culture-nature; teacher-learner) and the hegemonic thinking they inspire have become very ingrained in the Western mindset. Overlay one or more dualisms, as mainstream Western culture has done and continues to do, and we create the hegemonic attitudes and structures that liberationist and transformative educators are now called upon to confront. Masculine-feminine, mind-body, reason-emotion, subject-object, for instance, superimposed, yield the mental and social scaffolding of patriarchy (Plumwood 1993, 43). Of these dualisms, more later.

Global and Environmental Education As Responses to the Mechanistic Mindset

In their most transformative expressions, global and environmental education can be viewed as educational countercultures to mechanism and reductionism as they have colonized education, and as educational expressions of a holistic paradigm (Selby 1999, 2000a). This is often expressed symbolically using the billiard ball and web models (See Figures 1 and 2). The billiard ball model—depicting a cluster of billiard balls on a billiard table—has been employed to indicate separateness, discreteness, and forms of external relationship between things where the relationship has no effect upon their internal structure and dynamics (Zohar 1990, 81). In education the model finds expression in the divison of arts and sciences, separate subject disciplines, grade apartheid, individualized learning, the strict delineation of who is the teacher and who the learner, and the arms length relationship between school and community (Greig, Pike, and Selby 1989, 18-24).

Transformative global and environmental educators have countered the model or metaphor of the billiard ball with the model or metaphor of the web (understood dynamically). The latter has seemed to convincingly capture understandings drawn from ecological and quantum (subatomic) science that:

- everything is dynamically connected and related to everything else
- nothing can be completely understood save in relationship to everything else
- identity is multi-facetted and includes a significant near-and-far contextual element
- what happens somewhere will impact to a greater or lesser extent elsewhere, even everywhere (captured to some extent in the environmentalist's saying, "You are always downstream of someone")
- what happens locally is also a global phenomenon (a part of the whole, itself acting to inform the whole) and that the signature of global events will be manifest locally
- different global issues—such as environment, development, health, peace, rights—are interconnected

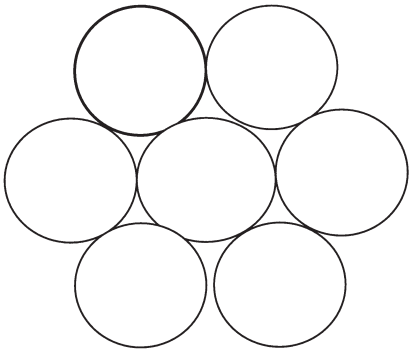

Figure 1. The Billiard Ball Model

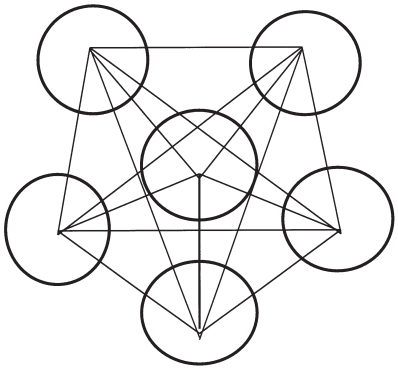

Figure 2. The Web Model

- past, present, and future are interwoven, co-evolving and co-creating elements of time.

Using such insights as captured in the web metaphor, educators have developed curricula, teaching materials, and learning activities built upon the concepts of interconnectedness, interdependence, and interrelationship (see, for example, Fountain 1995; Pike & Selby 1999, 2000; Townsend and Otero 1999). My question is: Have transformative global and environmental educators gone far enough in responding to mechanism and reductionism?

Metaphors tell their tale. The metaphor of the web is instructive. It can signify frailty—think of the delicate filaments of a spider's web caught in the dew of the early fall. As such, the web suggests the delicacy of the strands of any ecosystem—so easily disrupted by human interference. It can signify strength and security. Think of the strength and resilience of ecosystems through the ages. Think of the net that holds the falling acrobat. It can also signify entrapment. Think of the spider's web from the perspective of the fly. Think of the marginalized caught in the web of economic globalization. So, we need to be clear what our web metaphor is suggesting. Webs can be liberating; they can also be constrictive. There are positive and shadow sides to any metaphor (Heshusius 1991).

Radical Interconnectedness: A Third Level of Presence

My proposal is not that an emphasis on interconnectedness, interdependence, and interrelatedness, as captured in the web metaphor, is misconceived—far from it—but rather that it overlooks an important element of reality or third *level of presence* that is profoundly important to a holistic or ecological worldview. Longstanding models and metaphors retain some usefulness. The billiard ball, and the accompanying classic metaphors of mechanism, the building block and the clock, continue to have a rightful but limited place in our scheme of things. They represent one level of presence. I need to know a chair is a chair and that my car engine will work and can be put right if a part becomes faulty. But they fall far short of enabling us to understand human-human or human-earth relationships. Hence, the web has been proposed as a persuasive metaphor—of wider sway and significance—for understanding a second level of presence: the dynamic and interconnected nature of our world. This, I suggest, also has its limitations for evoking transformative earth consciousness and behaviors. I would like to propose dance (of the free-form variety) as a metaphor for the way we need to conceive of the world at a deeper and third level of presence.

Leading-edge ecologists and quantum physicists have suggested to us that there is a world of "unbroken wholeness" or "holomovement" (Bohm 1983, 1990) underlying the world of separate things and the world of interconnections. Inspired by the web metaphor, global and environmental educators have sought to depict in curriculum programs and learning modules the complex interactions between elements of ecosystems (plants, birds, insects, humans, fungi, and so on) and between entities in the human world (individuals, communities, nation, states, non-state actors). But, the overt and covert agenda of these curricular offerings still depicts the entities as primary, solid, and separate (even though interconnected).

At the third level, the entities are neither primary, solid, or separate. The relationship becomes primary and the entity is itself a secondary manifestation.

Physicist David Bohm (1983, 1990) has described the subatomic world of relatively separate things (neutrons, electrons, and so on) as the "explicate order" behind which is an "implicate order," in which everything is enfolded within everything else. Bohm extrapolates from the subatomic world to suggest we would be wise to countenance the implicate order in our understanding of our macro world—to see that in a profound and very real way, everything is embedded in everything else and that things or objects are ontologically subordinate to flows and patterns. Everything is thus the signature of the whole. Ecologist Paul Shepard and biophysicist Harold Morowitz have said very much the same thing. From a modern perspective, says Shepard,

> nature is epitomized by living objects rather than complex flow patterns of which objects are temporary formations. The landcape is a room-like collection of animated furniture … but it should be noted that it is best described in terms of events which constitute a field pattern. (1959, 505-506)

Or as Morowitz (1972, 156) puts it:

> Viewed from the point of view of modern ecology … the reality of individuals is problematic because they do not exist per se but only as local perturbations in (the) universal energy flow…. Consider a vortex in a stream of flowing water. The vortex is a structure made of an ever-changing group of water molecules. It does not exist as an entity in the classical Western sense; it exists only because of the flow of water through the stream. If the flow ceases the vortex disappears. In the same sense structures out of which biological entities are made are transient, unstable entities with constantly changing molecules dependent on a constant flow of energy to maintain form and structure.

Here are environmental philosopher Holmes Rolston III's reflections (1975, 122), as he stood on the shoreline of a Rocky Mountain wilderness lake:

> Does not my skin resemble this lake surface? Neither lake nor self has independent being…. Inlet waters have crossed this interface and are now embodied within me….The waters of North Inlet are part of my circulatory system; and the more literally we take this truth the more nearly we understand it. I incarnate the solar energies that flow through this lake. No one is free-living…. *Bios* is intrinsically symbiosis.

Entities—including ourselves—according to new physics and new ecology are momentary configurations of energy, local perturbations in a total energy field or holomovement. We emerge into the explicate, become manifest, only to resubmerge into the implicate order of being (which at one level of presence we never left). We are ephemeral manifestations of a fertile no-thing-ness from which all things emerge and to which all return (Zimmerman 1988, 22). David Bohm sees this conception of reality as closing the Cartesian bridge between mind and matter. Just as all things emerge from the holomovement, and their "existence is sustained in a constant process of unfoldment and re-enfoldment," giving rise to "their relatively stable and independent forms in the explicate order" prior to their resubmergence, so behaves mind "with its constant flow of evanescent thoughts, feelings, desires, and impulses, which flow into and out of each other, and which, in a certain sense, enfold each other" (Bohm 1990, 273).

Thus, at the deeper third level of presence, where the web metaphor becomes unsatisfactory, we need to consider things as expressions of the dynamic unfolding, the being and becoming, of the whole. We need to see entities—ourselves, non-human animals, rocks, nation states, political groupings—not first and foremost as objects but primarily as processes or dances. Phenomena (people, other-than-human lifeforms, places, countries) at this level are co-evolving manifestations of a multi-leveled and multi-dimensional dance of internal and external relationships. Global and environmental educators need to embrace the metaphor of dance, and the level of presence of unbroken wholeness it represents, in our theory and practice—while continuing to work with the metaphor of the web of relationship.

On Individualism, Self, Altruism and Narcissism

Such a concept of radical interconnectedness helps us recall that the word *individual* has become distorted in modern times to denote she or he who is separate. It originally meant "a person undivided from the whole," a meaning arising from an intuitive and spiritual understanding that richness and uniqueness emerge from deep connectivity; that the more profoundly connected we are with the Earth and with each other then paradoxically the more we become special and distinct. As David Steindl-Rast puts it (Capra and Steind-Rast 1992, 102), "The more you know a friend, the more you know that friend as unknowable." Deeper connectedness, deeper mystery. Deeper connectedness, deeper awe.

If we embrace the third level of presence and its metaphor of dance—that we are processes, not objects, expressions of a perpetual dance of inner and outer relations—we also move to a radically different conception of self. The dance suggests that the world is within us, and that in some mysterious way, we are in the world. This is what Australian environmentalist Paul Seed in part meant when he exclaimed "we are the rocks dancing!" and when he could assert that the destruction of the rainforests had become for him as painful as losing a finger.

When he began to actively campaign to protect the remaining rainforests of New South Wales, he wrote:

> I knew then I was no longer acting on behalf of myself or my human ideas, but on behalf of the Earth … on behalf of my larger self, that I was literally part of the rainforest defending herself. (Seed et al. 1988, 6, 37).

I am the Green Lane; the Green Lane is me.

In embracing radical interconnectedness, the unending debate between working to save the Earth for reasons of self-interest (e.g., arguments in favor of preserving the rainforest because unknown plants may provide cures for human disease) or for pure eco-altruism becomes rather redundant. If at a deep and equally real level, self has no boundaries, saving the rainforest is the highest self-interest in that in a profound way you know you are the rainforest, or know the rainforest is within you and making you what you are. In the same way we give new meaning to narcissism. The "Song of Self" becomes the "Song of Earth," a fierce awareness of our short period of emergence from, but still unbroken deep connection to, the whole (Roszak 1992, 264). Put another way, we need to reconsider ongoing discussions concerning intrinsic value. Among global and environmental educators there has been a general (but not complete) embrace of the notion of self as intrinsically valuable. The argument has turned over whether we need to care for environments and other-than-human lifeforms because of their extrinsic (instrumental) value or because they have value in, of, and to themselves. If, as quantum and ecological theory suggest, there is a continuity of self and nature, and if self is intrinsically valuable, then nature is intrinsically valuable. There is axiological complementarity (Callicott 1985, 275). "If it is rational for me to act in my own best interest, and I and nature are one, then it is rational for me to act in the best interests of nature" (Callicott 1985, 275). The conventional separation of self and world—myself and Green Lane—cannot easily withstand the implications of a quantum/ecological worldview.

Val Plumwood (1993 176-81) critiques deep ecological notions of expanded or oceanic self, arguing that denial of boundary demeans the independence of, and devalues and disrespects difference and particularity in, the other-than-human, while enlarging and extending egoism. Such criticisms clearly require engagement but do seem to assume that egoism remains a constant, a "conventional, constricted ego" (Callicott 1985, 275), thus denying the leaven of axiological complementarity once the individual has consciously and mindfully embraced reality at different levels of presence, while they also overlook the dynamic and tensile interplay between the three levels within the mindful individual.

On Embracing Instability, Uncertainty, Awe, and Wonder

The quantum and ecological worldview show us that we can never know anything for sure. While the mechanistic worldview (and its educational manifestations) trades in certainties and stable understandings, a holistic worldview espouses instability and uncertainty. In a world in which, at one level of presence, everything relates to everything else, and at a deeper level, everything is embedded in everything else, we have to acknowledge that flow, movement, and complexity, allied to our limited vision and inability to comprehend and entertain all the questions to ask, make for, at best, provisional knowing.

Werner Heisenberg looked into the atom and found that subatomic entities are unknowable in any comprehensive way. Look for the momentum of a particle and you can't know its position; establish its position and you can't be certain about its momentum (Zohar 1990, 10-11). Allied to that, entities within the atom simultaneously manifest themselves as particles and waves but if you measure one, you can't see and measure the other. "Nothing," writes Danah Zohar (1990, 11), "is fixed or fully measurable, everything remains indeterminate, somewhat ghostly, and just beyond our grasp." What we observe is not nature itself, but nature exposed to the nature and limitations of our questioning. Elusiveness is a quality of world as dance.

Ilya Prigogine (1989, 396) asks us to think of a pendulum. If we agitate a pendulum, we can predict that it will move inexorably towards minimal then no swing with its centre of gravity as low as possible. We can be certain what will happen. But what, he asks, if we turn the pendulum on its head? It is diffi-

cult to predict what will follow. Fluctuating forces may make it fall to left or right. It is difficult to control. The notion of the upturned pendulum, Prigogine avers, has been "ideologically supressed" (p. 396) in that its message of instability is inconvenient for a culture that seeks to dominate and exploit nature.

> In a deterministic world nature is controllable, it is an inert object susceptible to our will. If nature contains instability as an essential element, we must respect it, for we cannot predict what may happen. (p. 397)

Mainstream Western thinking has viewed—and still largely views—nature as deterministic. Nature as swinging pendulum. (There is still determinism, albeit complex, in the web). But what if we allow that nature is non-deterministic and unstable? First, we bring the internal world of the human mind (seen by the dominant Western worldview as free, non-deterministic, and outside nature) and the external world of nature (seen, by that same worldview, as machine-like and deterministic) together. We subvert the mind-nature divide of Descartes.

Second, in denying certainty and recognizing our inability to control or predict, we are better able to accord respect, awe, wonder, and reverence to nature. There is a close connection between embracing instability and cultivating a sense of wonder and reverence. Calling for "respect, not control," Prigogine (1989, 399) writes:

> We need to be aware that our knowledge is still a limited window on the universe; because of instability we must abandon the dream of total knowledge of the universe.

Instability and radical interconnectedness are themselves in perpetual dance. Whenever nature, the world, a particular environmental or social situation moves closer to disequilibrium, the wider and more coherent the range of forces necessary to bring the situation to a new level of (complexified) equilibrium (Capra 1996, 181). Whenever a situation becomes static and moribund, the web and dance are there to restore dynamism. We can speculate that we would have a much less connected world if everything were in constant balance just as we would have less exciting human minds and psyches in a world lacking natural and cultural diversity.

All this, I suggest, makes me worry about global and environmental educators who continue to genuflect at the altar of "balance." What kind of balance do they have in mind between forces that are profoundly unequal and voices that are unequally heard, in a world that is out of kilter? Is balance an appropriate objective if the overall goal is transformation? *Or should we encourage tilt towards the disequilibrium that will effect radical change leading to new, more complex, configurations within a new equilibrium?* Disequilibrium is probably a prerequisite of holistic, global and transformative perception.

> Coherence far from a state of equilibrium acquires huge dimensions in comparison with what happens in a state of equilibrium. In equilibrium each molecule can only see its immediate neighbors. Out of equilibrium the system can see the totality of the system. One could almost say that matter in equilibrium is blind, and out of equilibrium starts to see. (Prigogine 1989, 399)

Educational Implications of Radical Interconnectedness

So, what does the radical interconnectedness of the dance have to say to global and environmental educators?

Radical interconnectedness suggests that we take a "both/and" rather than an "either/or" approach to the ongoing debate between those who think our environmental education should be locally/bio-regionally focused and those calling for a global focus.

David Orr, Madhu Prakash, and others have called for place-based environmental education and have discounted global environmental education as outside our experience and beyond our knowledge. Prakash (1994, 51) has argued that we can't "know" the globe except by reducing the whole to statistics, because it is too big. Orr (1992, 131) argues too that you can only know and appreciate what is really close, but concedes that place-oriented environmental education can be "inherently parochial and narrowing." These thinkers not only seem to harbor

questionable mechanistic understandings regarding what it means to "know" but also posit local and global as dichotomies. False dichotomies. Local and global are embedded or nested in each other. Both web and dance are everywhere. My Green Lane experience was and remains both a local *and* a global experience. As global and environmental educators, we need to allow both web and dance to inform our conceptual frameworks, as well as the learning programs and learning experiences we offer.

We should help students move beyond the mechanistic sense of the individual that mainstream Western culture propagates.

Too much environmental and global education has been outer-directed (looking out on the world) and has denied interiority (inner journeying). The hidden agenda of this tendency is to collude with mechanism by implying that our inner self is outside the universe. (The English word "environment" is itself problematic here—that which surrounds, but, by implication, is not, and does not include, us!)

Through appropriate topics and methodologies, we need to help those in our learning communities know and experience at one and the same time the discrete self, the relational self, and the dancing self. In Western education, we are very good at the first, weak at the second (despite the efforts of global, environmental, holistic, and transformative educators), and are usually blind to or ignore the third. This speaks, for example, to working with relational modes of knowing that would help us to recognize our inner connectivities (the embedded nature of body, mind, emotions and spirit) and our deep connectivities with each other and with nature. It would also mean introducing new modalities enabling students to explore their inner ecology, to cultivate their attunement to their senses and body rhythms, and thus, to develop an embodied relationship to nature: Contemplative and therapeutic art, artful self enquiry, dance, deep breathing exercises, yoga, meditation, relaxation, peer reflexology would all become valued features of a truly global learning process (Houston 1982; Liebmann 1986; Lipsett 2001; Macy 1991; Miller 2000; Nakagawa 2000; Nhat Hanh 1990, 1992; Selby 1996).

These modalities of inner journeying clear the clutter of explicate reality; limit or stop thought; bring together the physical, mental and emotional aspects of our being; and can create an awareness of the oneness of everything. They are ways to meet the dancing self. Many of us have experienced that occasional sense of self as oceanic—from the thrill of climbing a mountain, of weaving the waters of a difficult river in a canoe to other manifestations of what Abraham Maslow (1985) calls "peak experiences." But here the suggestion is that we cultivate inner journeying within our formal learning programs. Beginning will be difficult but this is a kind, not all or nothing, philosophy. We can feel good about small beginnings—because what we are doing is difficult and countercultural—knowing that the ripples will go where they will and remembering that what happens somewhere is in a strange way, happening everywhere.

The inner journeying modalities also speak to mindful, still and slow learning as a counterbalance to the packaged rush and treadmill of transmissional/mechanistic learning and the still often swift paced quality of much learner-centred learning. Slow learning is also an attunement to the pace of nature.

> The natural world is really slow. Save for the waving of trees in the wind, or the occasional animal movement, things barely happen at all. To experience nature, to feel its subtleties, requires human perceptual ability that is capable of slowness. It requires that human beings approach experience with patience and calm. (Mander 1991, 86)

As Krishna says in the *Bhagavad Gita* (6: 24-31):

> When all desires are peace and the mind, withdrawing within, gathers the multitudinous straying senses into harmony of recollection,
>
> Then, with reason armed with resolution, let the seeker quietly lead the mind into spirit, and let all his thoughts be silence. ...
>
> He sees himself in the heart of all beings and he sees all beings in his heart. (Mascaro 1982).

If this sounds like spirituality in the curriculum, that would be an appropriate conclusion. It is unlikely that environmental and global education can

ever impact our culture unless we embrace a radical interconnectedness that revives mystery, a sense of the ineffable, the unknowable. A common deep ecological reading is that spirituality is a recognizing of deeper levels of connection within ourselves and between ourselves and the world. Theodore Roszak (1992, 45, 63) suggests that there is no likely way to return to planetary and societal health unless we heal the dichotomy between psyche and nature born of industrialism and seventeenth-century mechanistic science. He adds:

> The great changes our runaway industrial civilization must make if we are to keep the planet healthy will not come by the force of reason alone or the influence of fact. Rather, they will come by way of psychological transformation. What the earth requires will have to make itself felt within us as if it were our own private desire. Facts and figures, reason and logic can show us the errors of our present ways; they can delineate the risks we run. But they cannot motivate, they cannot teach a better way to live. That must be born from inside our own convictions. And that birth may have to be a painful one. (p. 47)

As an afterword on the nature of self, I would like to make the likely controversial suggestion that we bring death into the curriculum. Death denial is, perhaps, a central aspect of our planetary crisis. We buy and consume and rush for seeming immortality. As Susan Griffin (1995, 51-52) puts it,

> Fragmentation creates a temporary reprieve from the fear of death and loss. But it also creates its own grievous sense of death and loss…. In dividing itself from mortality, the European psyche dulls its own experience of the world.

If we wish school-age or adult learners to see themselves at one level of presence as processes or perturbances in the energy field, then the return to the implicate order is something we need to talk about and reflect upon. The cycles of birth and death are central to an ecological perspective. How to do this within a dominant death denial culture is something we need to address (and in multiple and complex ways given environmental, socio-economic and cultural diversity).

Radical interconnectedness calls for multi-dimensional ways of knowing.

Transformative global, environmental (especially ecofeminist), and holistic educators have been in the forefront in trying to move learning away from an overemphasis upon reason, thought, analysis, and objectivity (Russell and Bell 1996; Selby 1996). Inspired by the metaphor of the web, they have called for intuition (the ability to be immediately sensitive to the whole), synthesis, the sharing of subjectivities, and relational sensibility to be accepted as equally valid ways of knowing. But, perhaps in deference to prevailing culture, we have not pushed these ideas with the conviction we might have brought to bear. The dance metaphor calls for a thorough reclaiming of emotion, subjectivity, bodily sensibility, intuition, empathy, caring and compassion, love, and relational and spiritual sensibility as means of knowing (Russell and Bell 1996; Miller 1993, 2000; Selby 1996).

In seeking multi-dimensional ways of knowing, let me add a caution against computers. Computers, we are often told with almost hysterical fervor, can connect us to the world. As one advocate (cited in Maxwell 1999) exhorts: "Let's put a computer in every home and every classroom..... Let's connect Canadians of every age, race, and gender to each other and to the rest of the planet." Yet it is important to recognize that computers offer a disembodied form of connectivity that denies physicality, compresses emotions through a cognitive prism, cushions us from direct experience of others and the outdoors, and ignores spirituality (Maxwell 1999). A radical rendition of interconnectedness would resist the onward rush to dot-com the learning community. While computers have their uses, we should recognize that they are among the latest technical phenomena in the process of disconnecting humans from nature. We should see them for what they are: machines that have their uses. They are no substitute for lived and embodied connectedness with nature and people. It is significant that, while we understand "media literacy" as the ability to critically de-

construct and decode media of various kinds, we are becoming conditioned to interpret "computer literacy" as the ability to use computers efficiently (while relating to them uncritically).

Radical interconnectedness suggests that more environmental educators recognize that they are part of a wider community of countercultural and liberationist educators and that new coalitions and alliances are necessary.

Ahough alliance building between environmental, development, health, humane, human rights, and peace educators as well as educators working against discrimination has been central to global education (Goldstein and Selby 2000), it remains the case that the majority of environmental educators have been shy of actively and concretely recognizing that they are part of a community of educators seeking environmental and social justice and non-violent change . For instance, peace education has long identified "environmental damage" as a problem of peace and "ecological balance" as a value underlying peace (Hicks 1988; Smith and Carson 1998), but the concepts, models, and theories of peace education have found little space within environmental education discourse. With some notable ecofeminist exceptions (for instance, Bell and Russell 1999; Donovan 1993), environmental education has shied away from creative engagement with humane education with its emphasis on animal-related issues, challenging anthropocentrism, and exploring the correlation of human and non-human oppressions. Soul sisters have barely talked and it is environmental education that has fought shy of engagement (Selby 1995). Also, most environmental educators have not seriously engaged with multicultural education by recognizing the interplay of different cultural perspectives around understandings of environment and environmental issues (Running Grass 1996). Biodiversity and cultural diversity have not danced together. Preservation of biosphere and preservation of ethnosphere (Davis 2000, A15) have not coalesced in environmental educations's learning and teaching. Finally, save at the cutting edge (Russell and Bell 1996; Russell, Bell, and Fawcett 2000), environmental education has not combined with anti-discriminatory education to any extent. Environmental issues are very much social justice issues if people of a different gender, and/or belonging to different racial and ethnic groups, contribute to, or feel the effects of, environmental despoilation differentially (Lousley 1998, 27).

The radical interconnectedness of the dance suggests that the respective fields are mutually enfolded. We need to see each field as one among a "network of pearls" as in this passage from the Avatamsaka Sutra (cited in Pike and Selby 1995, 13):

> In the heaven of Indra, there is said to be a network of pearls so arranged that if you look at one you see all the others reflected in it. In the same way each object in the world is not merely itself but involves every other object, and in fact IS everything else.

As a basis for broadening the community of liberationist and countercultural educators, it is important that we recognize, as ecofeminist educators and transformative humane educators have (Russell and Bell 1996; Selby 1995), that oppressions are not only mutually reinforcing but also that their dynamics are similar—whether the oppression is of women, ethnic or sexual minorities, environments, or animals. The

Table 1. The Billiard Ball, Web, and Dance Models

Metaphors	Underlying Concepts	Curriculum	Process
Billiard Ball/ Building Block/ Clock	Separateness Fragmentation Compartmentalism Linear Connection	Subjects Disciplines Arts/Sciences Duality	Individualized Competitive Learning Machine-Image Education (Input-Output) Fast Learning
Web	Interconnection Interdependence Interrelationship	Integration Interdisciplinarity	Cooperative, Interactive Learning Children (*not* child) Centered Mixed-Paced Learning
Dance	Embeddedness Enfoldment Interpenetration	Other-Than-Disciplinary Experience	Empathetic, Embodied Learning Spiritual Learning Slow Learning

oppressors treat the object of the oppression as "other" and proceed (Plumwood, 1993, 1996) to

- *radically exclude*—creating sharp boundaries and maximum separation of identity between themselves and the "other" as seeming justification and reconfirmation of superiority;
- *homogenize or stereotype*—hence disregarding or denying difference and diversity in characteristics, motivations, tendencies, and perspectives among the "other";
- *inessentialize*—denying dependency on, and backgrounding, the "other";
- *incorporate*—defining only in relationship to themselves and denying the intrinsic needs and independent agency, creation of value, and motivations of the "other" ("Humanity is male and man defines woman not in herself but as relative to him." [Simone de Beauvoir, cited in Plumwood, 1996);
- *instrumentalize*—denying any value in the "other" beyond the useful.

Radical interconnectedness suggests that we need to rethink how we try to bring about educational change.

Our approaches to change have been wedded to mechanism. We have opted for restricted change focuses (e.g., developing a global or environmental program for a specific grade and school subject; reduce, re-use and recycle programs, schoolyard naturalization) when our ecological understanding tells us that change is about strength/resilience through diverse, yet connected initiatives, coalitions and partnerships, and dynamic and synergistic interplays between different change initiatives (Selby 2000b). Change, in short, has to be holistic to be effective. A challenge we face, given the marginality of the fields of environmental and global education, is how to mount the kind of holistic, multi-facetted change initiatives our hearts and minds tell us are essential if we are to have sustained impact on educational institutions and systems and if we are to remain faithful to ecological principles and processes of change.

Endword

Radical means going to the roots of things. We have to deeply ask ourselves whether we are about reform (which may simply buttress attitudes and structures that are at the root of the ecological crisis) or transformation. We have to ask whether our aim is to tamper with or turn around. In a more sophisticated and contemporary version of the Hanns Christian Anderson "king is in the altogether" story, Douglas Adams wrote in *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* (1979, 119) that

> It is an important popular fact that things are not always what they seem. For instance, on the planet Earth, man had always assumed that he was more intelligent than dolphins, because he had achieved so much—the wheel, New York, war, and so on—while all the dolphins had ever done was muck about in the water and have a good time. But conversely, the dolphins had always believed that they were more intelligent than man—for precisely the same reasons.

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Self-Knowing as Social Justice

The Impact of a Gay Professor on Ending Homophobia in Education

Jeff Sapp

When a gay teacher is authentic in the classroom, students are able to transcend stereotypes and relate to him as a person.

> I went to a Holocaust lecture that was held on campus last night. As I walked into the room where the speaker was, I passed an armed security guard. It is this armed security guard that most clearly connects me to the Jews and the Holocaust. In my experience, you see, only Jews and gays have need of armed guards at their campus events in the year 2001. We had three armed guards at our GLSEN Conference two weekends ago. When we gather, there is always the threat of violence against us. I notice the deafening absence of security guards at every other campus event. They are not at the Literacy Celebration. They are not at the Economic Summit. Only Jews and gays, it seems, are in danger on campus these days.
>
> (Personal Journal, page 6302)

Anti-gay bigotry is alive and well in education. The following facts were collected by the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN): 26 anti-gay comments (like "faggot" and "dyke") are heard by high school students on a typical day. Fifty-three percent of students report hearing homophobic comments made by school staff; 97% of the time, teachers do not intervene in these incidents. These shocking statistics make me ask myself a scary question as a teacher-educator: Are the pre-service teachers we train at all representative of these statistics? My guess is that they are unless we actively do something about it.

If you came to my home you would find a Pinocchio puppet hanging from my ceiling. He is there to remind me of how incredible it is to finally be Real. I have spent most of my life being unreal and I want to be reminded every day of how incredible it is

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to finally be Real. The sacred Journal was the instrument with which I loved myself to Realness by becoming, like the archetype Pinocchio, a teller of Truth. I had no idea when I began journaling that a personal revolution was about to occur simply because I decided to become a student of my Self. Pinocchio's nose, it seems, was pointing me in the direction of a major truth: Education at its best is always about transformation.

Personal Story as a Transformative Act

Like most people who begin journaling, it was a crisis that brought me to the blank page. My personal crisis was dealing with my sexual orientation and Coming Out as a gay man. Coming Out was complicated for me because I grew up in the Baptist church and even graduated from Jerry Falwell's Liberty University. I thought if I could just write it all out and look at it, perhaps I could learn something about myself. I started by telling my stories to myself on the blank page. Isak Dinesen said, "All sorrows can be borne if you put them into a story or tell a story about them" (Keen 1989, 1). I could hardly bear hiding from my sexuality anymore. I didn't know what to do and so I picked up black ink and blank page and began to decipher myself.

> I do not know and so I start with a blank page. I do not know and so I pick up an ink pen. I do not know is the one thing I know most. I do not know why knowing that compels me to pick up blank pages and scribble with black ink onto them. I do not know why I have to write so much. And I did not know that somewhere in the liquid white empty pages I would start to know. And understand. I did not know that. (Personal Journal, page 3598)

Each day I wrote myself onto the page in an attempt to deal with my sexuality, I became more and more clear. I had lived my life letting others define me. I was an unhappy wreck and suffered from a terrible bleeding ulcer. I understood the hopelessness that gay and lesbian teenagers feel, the hopelessness that leads to ever-increasing rates of teenage suicide (McConnell-Celi 1993).

I had this sudden moment of revelation: "Everything I know about being gay I've heard from white, conservative, evangelical, heterosexual males! No wonder I'm messed up. How is it possible for someone who is not me to name and define me?" I immediately made a commitment to begin reading material written by gay people for gay people. Likewise, I realized that I was the greatest authority on my own life. The revolution had began.

> In my writing I am sniffing myself out. I am rooting through the dense forest of pages seeking my scent. Sniff, sniff, sniff. So many things have smeared their goop all over me to hide my authentic humanity. Society. The church. My family's expectations. No wonder it's taken me so long to catch wind of myself. Suddenly I write something so randomly in the path of myself and wham! The hound dog in me catches a whiff! I grow excited and begin to run with it. Ink flying through the pages. The smell getting stronger and stronger. Finally I get it treed. Here in the pages that were wood and bark and leaves before this blank whiteness. My beagles self flips through the pages scent seeking. I discover that I am incense and offer myself up to the Universe as an offering. (Personal Journal, page 3564)

I moved from West Virginia to Los Angeles in 1993 and began teaching at a college in the greater Los Angeles area. As teacher-educators, we were training teachers to work in the urban schools of one of the largest cities in the world. When I entered the urban environment, I brought with me stories of my journey to Realness. I brought with me a love of black ink and blank pages. I brought with me a love of reflection. My first day of class, I told student-teachers about the teacher-as-reflector. I held in my hands my own instrument of transformation. I opened it and read to them of my personal "search for freedom" (Greene 1988) and told them that they could find themselves in the blank page as I had.

> When I was a small child in the rural Appalachian Mountains of West Virginia, my childhood friends and I would spend the lazy, hot summer evenings catching fireflies. We ran like banshees collecting them one-by-one-by-one. Soon, after imprisoning several dozen, we'd have nature's flashlight to guide us through the

> dark forest to home. Keeping a journal is like that. One-by-one-by-one you set free the celestial moments of your life. And after collecting dozens and dozens of them you begin to see the light—the patterns and themes of your life. Captured in your Journal Jar. Together they bring illumination to your dark journey through the forest and back home to yourself. (Personal Journal, page 1118)

I read to them about social justice.

> Sometimes I write in red. I write in red when those who once loved me as a liar don't speak to me anymore now that I speak my Truths. So, I write in red. I wrote in red last Tuesday when Dan died of AIDS. And each letter I wrote in red stood for a thousand-thousand Dans. So I wrote in red and I capitalized all my letters and underlined all my words. There was another gang killing of an innocent child this week. So I wrote in red. I wrote in red the day I heard a teacher speak a mean word to a student. And I wrote in red the day my brother stopped speaking to me because I was gay. I write in red a lot these days. Well … truth is I actually make it a point to write in red at least once a day now. There is, after all, so much to write about in red. (Personal Journal, page 1127)

And I gave them loving warnings.

> But I should warn you before you go on. If you fall in love with ink and blank pages it will change everything you have known. Sooner of later it will be time for you to write your own authentic version of yourself. And the people who are used to doing the editing for you may not like it. That one thing alone will tell you that you are on the right path. When people get nervous. (Personal Journal, page 3564)

Beane and Lipka (1986) have noted that teachers with a clear self-concept function more effectively within the teaching role. Unfortunately, the intense international preoccupation with national curriculum and national standards/assessments dwarf (and often even mock) any attempt at teachers seeking to contemplate their inner lives and its impact on their teaching. In their book, *The Role of Self in Teacher Development*, Lipka and Brinthaupt (1999) remind us that in the absence of functional self-knowledge, teachers lack the ability to overhaul or fine-tune those aspects of themselves that may be blocking teaching effectiveness. As Hamachek (1999) puts it, "one must look 'in here' for answers to effective teaching rather than 'out there.'" Education should be the process where life and knowledge are inextricably linked in the pursuit of understanding and engaging our Self, each other, and the world around us (Kazanjian and Lawrence 2000). In other words, "we teach who we are" (Palmer 1998) and if you're an educator and don't know yourself intimately then you have no idea, really, what it is you're teaching. More is caught than taught.

Good teachers know who they are and that knowing affects everything about their teaching.

I saw that the student-teachers I worked with who were struggling had little or no sense of themselves. They were overcome by their woundedness and often perpetrated it upon the children in their classrooms. They did not have self-esteem, they had "other-esteem." They fed upon their students. They were powerless and looked to their students for power. Over and over, their number one concern was whether or not their students adored them. Their professional portfolio would be disproportionately filled with students' adorations of them. In sharp contrast, I saw student-teachers with a strong sense of themselves able to inspire students from the overflow of self-power they had to freely give those students.

> All of my life I have been afraid of the things I have thought and felt. It all becomes too heavy for each of us to bear. I think that's what draws us to art. Art is a way to give Voice to the things we think are unspeakable. When I introduce journaling to a class of students, I can see this fear in their faces. They are afraid, as I was in the beginning, of writing some things in permanent ink. They don't know how liberating it is yet. It takes, I'd say, two journals of writing unedited

> for it to begin the Revolution. After two volumes of scribbling your unedited Self onto the blank page that bears witness, you begin to realize that it's not that scary after all. And then those words that you feared, those thoughts that terrified you … somehow giving them ink and shape causes them to start forming in your body … rising out of your stomach and into your throat. They form in your mouth like ripe delicious cherries. Not long and you will find yourself eating their rich, sweet fruit right in public. This is what makes the whole thing so amazing. It starts with ink and ends with Voice. (Personal Journal, page 2064)

Having found my Voice, I now knew I wanted to use it strategically to teach for social justice. I have a running joke with my students that at any given moment I may make them stand in a circle, hold hands, and sing Kumba-ya. We always chuckle together at this. It is after the chuckle that I imbed the story that I have just shared with them into the theory and practice of teaching. Starting with the personal and moving to the academic is a way to make curriculum relevant to learners (Jensen 1999). I know that people are suspicious of teachers talking too much about themselves. After all, who didn't have that old teacher in high school that you baited with a story about his experience in World War II so that he'd go on and on about himself and you wouldn't have to do any work in class that day?

The danger in telling our stories is that our ego can get out of control. Dewey (1938) said that "the road of the new education is not an easier one to follow than the old road but a more strenuous and difficult one." I think he knew that his dear Deweyian Midway—the balance between the cognitive and the affective—was a hard-won accomplishment. Palmer (1983) states that this way of knowing is an

> act of entering and embracing the reality of the other, of allowing the other to enter and embrace our own. In such knowing we know and are known as members of one community.

hooks (1994) refers to this process as "engaged pedagogy." Palmer reiterates what Dewey and Freire have said, that this kind of knowing is "not a soft and sentimental virtue; it is not a fuzzy feeling of romance." Instead, it is a "tough love" that calls us to involvement, mutuality, and accountability. Consequently, I would say that this communal knowing is what keeps ego in check. It is in relation to others that I can live out (or discover that I am lacking) my ways of knowing. Since the root meaning of "to educate" is "to draw out," I cannot imagine a teaching that does not want and need to hear each others' stories. Freire says that those that are oppressed must see examples of vulnerability from the oppressors so that a contrary conviction can begin to grow in them. I believe that sharing our stories can do just this. Likewise, I believe that it's the responsibility—even the privilege—of the teacher to take the first risk in sharing.

Story had changed my life and, honestly, I just wanted to let student-teachers in on a good thing: that good teachers know who they are and that knowing affects everything about their teaching. It wasn't until I began to journal in search of my own liberation that I began to be a participant in liberatory, emancipatory education. In his book, *Telling Tales Out of School: Gays, Lesbians and Bisexuals Revisit their School Days*, Kevin Jennings (1998) writes that "our stories are our best weapons in the fight against homophobia." I have discovered that my story does a great deal of educating towards an end to homophobia in education.

The Problem of Homophobia in Education

Certainly I saw an opportunity to make a dent in the institutional homophobia that permeates schools. In his new book, *Homophobia: A History* (2000), Byrne Fone notes that although gay and lesbian culture is seen everywhere now … including prime time television, it doesn't mean homophobia has ended. "Indeed, it stands as the last acceptable prejudice" (p. 411).

As an act of social justice, I simply wanted to use my new-found Voice. I wanted to speak about reflection and how it had changed my life. I wanted to be identified as my authentic self, one aspect of which was my gay identity. I wanted to break the silence that some gay/lesbian people feel and that gay/lesbian educators particularly feel. I wanted to end some stereotypes and educate. I wanted to model that my journey to my Real Self had drastically changed who I was and, thus, how I taught.

Little did I know that I was entering my Voice into a legacy and joining colleagues who had set the precedent 20 years earlier. Gay and lesbian professors met in New York City in 1973 for the first conference of the Gay Academic Union (D'Emilio 1992, 127). They wrote in their statement of purpose words I would honor 20 years after their ink had dried:

> As gay men and women and as scholars, we believe we must work for liberation as a means for change in our lives and in the communities in which we find ourselves. We choose to do this collectively for we know that no individual, alone, can liberate herself or himself from society's oppression…. We assert the interconnection between personal liberation and social change. We seek simultaneously to foster our self-awareness as individuals and, by applying our professional skills, to become the agency for a critical examination of the gay experience that will challenge those generalizations supporting the current oppression…. Our hope is that by pooling our experiences and sharing our expertise, we will be able to begin the arduous job of challenging the sexist myths that now dominate public discourse and influence private association.

Morey (1984) defines homophobia as "the fear and intolerance of homosexuality, bisexuality, lesbian women and gay men." Sexual minorities are among the most despised groups in the United States today. Homophobia operates on many levels, and if we are to work towards an end of it then it behooves us to have a keen understanding of its intricacies. The California Teachers Association/National Education Association's High Risk Program Committee published a handbook titled *Gay & Lesbian Youth: Breaking the Silence* (1997) and it states that homophobia operates on at least four distinct but interrelated levels.

- *Personal homophobia* refers to a personal belief system (a prejudice) that sexual minorities either deserve to be pitied as unfortunate beings who are powerless to control their desires or should be hated; that they are psychologically disturbed, genetically defective, unfortunate misfits; that their existence contradicts the "laws" of nature; that they are spiritually immoral, infected pariahs, disgusting—to put it quite simply, that they are generally inferior to heterosexuals.
- *Interpersonal homophobia* is manifested when a personal bias or prejudice affects relations among individuals, tranforming prejudice into its active component, discrimination. Examples of interpersonal homophobia are name-calling or "joke" telling intended to insult or defame individuals or groups; verbal and physical harassment and intimidation as well as more extreme forms of violence; the withholding of support, rejection, abandonment by friends and other peers, coworkers, and family members, etc.
- *Institutional homophobia* refers to the ways in which government, businesses, and educational, religious, and professional organizations systematically discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation or identity. The U. S. military, for instance, has a longstanding policy excluding lesbians, gays, and bisexuals from service. In most instances, rights gained through marriage, including spousal benefits and child custody considerations, are not extended to sexual minorities. Homosexual acts are outlawed in a number of states. Although agreement concerning same-sex relationships and sexuality does not exist across the various religious communities, and while some denominations are rethinking their negative stands on homosexuality and bisexuality, others preach against such behaviors and as a matter of policy exclude people from many aspects of religious life simply on the basis of sexual identity.
- *Cultural homophobia* refers to the social norms or codes of behavior that, although not expressly written into law or policy, nonetheless work within a society to legitimize oppression. It results in attempts either to exclude images of lesbians, gays, bisexuals, and transgender people from the media or from history or to represent these groups in negative stereotypical terms.

Examples are not difficult to find of each of these oppressive forms of homophobia. An example of *interpersonal homophobia* happens when we say nothing after hearing an anti-gay remark. If we are silent about any of this, then we are contributing to the problem. I'll even take a further step. A hate crime is defined as "physical and verbal abuse against individuals or groups because of their race, color, national origin, religion, political beliefs, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, marital status, or economic condition." Consequently, if you hear it and say nothing, I feel you are legally and morally guilty of participation in a hate crime.

In the Spring of 1997, my university distributed a survey to assess the campus climate. Some of the comments anonymously made by students are violent examples of *personal homophobia*. "I feel that there is an extreme number of homosexuals on this campus. I feel that they should have their own dorms and should not be allowed to be matched up with heterosexual males." "To improve this campus, the gay, lesbian, and homosexual issues need to stop. It's almost as if a normal heterosexual male or female is a minority at this school, and I'm sorry but this is sick! It makes me feel uncomfortable and sick to my stomach." "Crack down on gays and lesbians."

Education typically divorces the self from knowing and, in doing so, creates a power struggle where people only have two choices: to be a person who forces their distortions on others or to be a person who has succumbed to others' distortions of themselves.

An example of *interpersonal homophobia* happens every year on our campus during Gay Pride Week. The posters announcing the event always "mysteriously" disappear. As a further example, only twice have I received negative comments on my students' evaluations at the end of each semester. They were both about my being gay. One student stated, "I felt a little intimidated when I did not agree with some of his views regarding the 'gay agenda.'"

Institutional homophobia is, perhaps, the most difficult of all of them because it is embedded in the very framework of society and organizations. I have teacher friends, both homosexual and heterosexual allies, who are working to end homophobia in their school. There is very little that supports them administratively. Whenever their administrator wishes to meet with them for anything at all, they take a union representative because they feel so vulnerable. They've learned not to meet with an administrator alone because of the homophobic statements and threats.

A clear example of *cultural homophobia* is recorded by Rob Linne (2001) in *Thinking Queer: Sexuality, Culture, and Education*. Linne points out in his chapter titled "Choosing Alternatives to the Well of Loneliness" that even in gay and lesbian adolescent literature, young queer characters are often punished with violence, even death. Consequently, the message is clear: If you come out and try being authentic, something terrible is going to happen to you. Adrienne Rich once stated that

> when those who have the power to name and to socially construct reality choose not to see you or hear you, whether you are dark-skinned, old, disabled, female, or speak with a different accent or dialect than theirs, when someone with the authority of a teacher, say, describes the world and you are not in it, there is a moment of psychic disequilibrium, as if you looked into a mirror and saw nothing. (Maher and Tetreault 1994)

Didn't you know that Plato was gay? Or Richard the Lion-Hearted? What about Walt Whitman, Herman Melville, or Bessie Smith? As the old saying goes, "History has set the record a little too straight!"

It's not just queer people who pay the price for homophobia. Everyone suffers because homophobia hurts everyone. In his book, *Homophobia: How We All Pay the Price*, Blumenfeld (1992) notes many ways that homophobia affects homosexual and heterosexuals alike. It locks people into rigid gender-based

roles that inhibit creativity and self-expression. Homophobic conditioning compromises the integrity of heterosexual people by pressuring them to treat others badly. It inhibits one's ability to form close, intimate relationships with members of one's own sex. Watch any sitcom on TV and you'll see two heterosexual males embrace at some point and immediately pull away from each other dramatically, fearing that each will think the other is gay. It limits family relationships (my own brother stopped speaking to me when I Came Out ten years ago). It is one cause of premature sexual involvement because young people often feel pressured to become heterosexually active to prove to peers that they are "normal." It can be used to target people who are perceived by others to be gay, lesbian, or bisexual but who are in actuality heterosexual. I read an example recently where two Scottish men—Robert Dimelon, 20, and Robert Wilson, 19—were found guilty of an attack on Alistair MacIntosh, 25, and his younger brother, Neil, 18. The perpetrators said they beat the men up because they thought there were a gay couple. In reality, the two brothers were out celebrating Alistair's bachelor party the night before he was to be married (queer-anti-racist@egroups.com, October 20, 2000). This seems to have been, by the way, a major factor in what sent Andy Williams to Santee High School with a gun. The small-framed heterosexual Williams was teased constantly about being a "fag." Homophobia prevents heterosexuals from accepting the benefits and gifts offered by sexual minorities—theoretical insights, social and spiritual visions and options, contributions in the arts and culture, to religion, to family life, indeed to every single facet of society. Homophobia diverts energy from more constructive endeavors. Lastly, it inhibits appreciation for other types of diversity, making it unsafe for everyone because each person has unique traits not considered mainstream or dominant. Therefore, all of us are diminished when any one of us is demeaned.

One of the reasons I love Paulo Freire (1997) so much is that he gave me a paradigm for activism. He states in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* that the oppressors are not going to work for liberation. Why should they? They have all the power. Instead, it is the work of those oppressed to liberate themselves. Unfortunately, history has shown us that when those who are oppressed seek to liberate themselves, they often become even worse oppressors then those who had oppressed them. It is there that Freire gave me my greatest gift. He goes on to say that it is the single responsibility of the oppressed to not only liberate themselves, but to do it in such a way as to liberate the oppressors too.

The Impact of Being a Gay Teacher-Educator

McConnell-Celi (1993) states that "lesbian and gay adolescents have one of the highest suicide rates, one of the highest dropout rates, and one of the highest substance abuse rates in the country." One out of ten teenagers attempts suicide. A third of these do so because of concern about being homosexual. That means that in every statistical classroom across the country there is one young person in danger of dying for lack of information and support concerning his or her sexuality. Other GLSEN statistics tell of equally horrifying days spent in a public school classroom. Eighty percent of gay and lesbian youth report severe social isolation; 19% of gay/lesbian youth report suffering physical attacks based on their sexual orientation; 20% of all hate crimes against lesbian/gay people are committed by teenagers. If, as I stated earlier, 97% of teachers say nothing to these overt acts of violence, would my being an Out gay professor of teacher education create a different reality for future teachers?

I began to wonder what impact my personal transformation might have on my students. My original intent for this article was to ask former students if an Out gay professor had any impact on their current teaching experience. I emailed former students this question.

Tina speaks of her shock that she had a gay professor:

> I still remember that first night of class and someone asked how your winter break was. You mentioned that you had visited West Virginia and something about "ever since I Came Out." I felt shock immediately—a gay professor!! I could not believe it (and you were open about it). I remember feeling disgust—the idea of two men together repulsed me. However, as time went on, I saw you as a person and a good educator and I did not care. I developed respect

> for you and soon admired you for being honest with yourself as well as with your students.

Carlos shares his concern about having a gay professor:

> Initially I might have had reservations about the nature of your class because of your gay orientation. I lost any reservations within weeks because I learned so much information about education and about you.

Many students, like Willow, talked about how my being gay had little impact upon them except that it continued to deconstruct societal stereotypes of what is meant by being gay:

> On a personal level it was good to get to know someone who was gay on a more intimate level and keep reinforcing the idea that stereotypes of someone who is gay are just those … stereotypes.

Consequently, my being an Out gay professor who is training teachers is an act of social justice because of the way homophobia permeates society and education. It always amazes me that queer friends see me as a bit "radical." I honestly don't see it. I'm committed to deconstructing the advantage of being heterosexual. Thus, when my colleague and his wife kiss hello in our office, I say out loud, "You people are always throwing your sexuality in our faces." When a baby shower is thrown at work, I simply ask "What is the equivalent celebration for me?" Sometimes I walk to lunch with a close colleague and we hold hands. I tell her that I want to "play heterosexual" and watch people respond to us as "a cute couple." She knows that when I held hands with my boyfriend on this same block, that we had a hate-crime committed against us.

Why would I not do the same acts in my teaching? About every professor of education that I know of who has children has, at one time or another, used their own children as an example in courses. I do it as well, except that I talk about "my boyfriend's niece and nephew." Why is this politicized when I do it and not when they do it? Clear and simple, it's homophobic. When students in courses mention someone in history or literature that I know is queer, I casually insert in that they were gay or lesbian. It seems imperative that by modeling my work for social justice, I am showing a model of action to pre-service teachers.

Yet another way that being an Out gay professor is an act of social justice are the many times that young gay and lesbian professionals are in my courses. Their fear is tangible in regards to entering the teaching profession. They honestly believe that they are doomed to live a divided life because of their choice of profession. They are always a bit in shock to see a different vision—one undivided and whole.

I have had endless conversations with colleagues about my being gay and the impact my being Out has on students and colleagues. I now believe that my being Out is a way to bring and make manifest my body in the classroom and in the academy. Queer Theory and the history of gays and lesbians in the academy seem to validate this. In 1970 there was not one openly gay or lesbian college professor in America (D'Emillio 1992, 133). D'Emillio writes, especially, about gay white males coming Out in the academy as a way of deconstructing white male heterosexual privilege (p. 135). A colleague of mine, Suzi, does the same thing as an American-born Chinese woman. While teaching a class multicultural education, she asks her class if the reality that she is a Chinese woman will make the course any different. Some rush to say, "No, it doesn't make a differences because it's your ideology that is taught, not your ethnicity." I disagree. It does matter who we are physically. hooks writes that

> those of us who are trying to critique biases in the classroom have been compelled to return to the body to speak about ourselves as subjects in history. We are all subjects in history. We must return ourselves to a state of embodiment in order to deconstruct the way power has been traditionally orchestrated in the classroom. By recognizing subjectivity and the limits of identity we disrupt that objectification that is so necessary in a culture of domination. (hooks 1994, 140)

Be clear on this: The erasure of the body is about power. Keeping gays and lesbians erased is what feeds homophobia. Consequently, many gays and lesbians "pass" to feel safe and gay and lesbian children kill themselves because they do not see themselves in the world around them.

I still find this the most amazing indictment about many schools today—that they put *seeming* before *being*. I just finished reading a set of papers where pre-service teachers went and interviewed children. One of the typical questions they asked children of all ages was "What is a good student?" Even the first graders had already mastered the art of *seeming*. They replied, "Someone who sits quietly, sits straight, and has their hands folded on their desk and does what the teacher says." Dewey said that "the non-social character of the traditional school is seen in the fact that it erected silence into one of its prime virtues" (Dewey 1938). I agree with Freire (1997) that "innumerable cultures of silence still exist; there are numbed, hungry, and compliant populations everywhere."

Surprising to me, though, was that most of the responses students emailed me were not about the effects of my being Out. Instead, it was my personal "search for freedom" that seemed to have left the larger impact. Mary says, "I am not sure if my educational experience was really in any way affected by your being gay. It was strongly influenced by who you are." Carlos stated:

> You know what I really gained from you? It was seeing you model everything. It was your showing me and my peers about you—the Jeff Sapp who taught my class, the Jeff Sapp—the person. Who you were. Where you were from. What you were about. Before this I wouldn't tell my students anything about me. If I modeled poetry writing, vignette writing and journal writing, I would make up the entry/experience and I would tell them that. After Sapp, I opened up and related every one of my "modelings" to my life. To what I was about. Where I was from. Me. This is the greatest gift you gave me. You modeled for me how I could open up to my students and make myself more of a person and not just a figure in front of a classroom setting.

Indeed, it was the sharing of my "search for freedom" that deconstructed the traditional power paradigm of teacher and student in the classroom. Students saw my sharing of my sexual orientation as the sharing of an intimacy. One student wrote:

> One way that your being gay might have affected your role as a professor was that it was something very personal that you shared with us. It was like a confidence you trusted us with (not meaning that it was a secret or anything). It was a way of bringing in your personal life to the course.

Education typically divorces the self from knowing and, in doing so, creates a power struggle where people only have two choices: to be a person who forces their distortions on others or to be a person who has succumbed to others' distortions of themselves (Palmer 1983).

Donna demonstrated the theme of the deconstruction of power when she stated that

> I am mildly embarrassed to say that it was quite late in the term before I even realized you were gay. Being a good Jewish mother, my first reaction was, "How do I go about introducing my wonderful gay professor Jeff to my beloved gay cousin Joel?"

Donna didn't see her relationship with me in traditional teacher-student parameters. Instead, she saw me as someone she would want as a member of her family.

It's Not About Me Anymore

I have a blunt and, I think, powerful statement that I make to my students when I'm teaching them about cooperative learning. Some of my students do not like the strategy of cooperative learning for whatever reason. I show them research that validates it as an effective strategy that definitely meets the needs of some of our children. Then I take a long pause … look them straight in the eyes and say, "Get over it because it's not about you anymore. It's about the children you'll be living with—and some of them *do* learn best with cooperative learning." It's a powerful moment for them, perhaps because I'm so blunt. In the same regard, I often get "accused" of having a "gay agenda." I don't. I simply understand that "it's not about me anymore."

The teacher's "search for freedom" is only the model. It just so happened that my search for my Self had to do with my sexual orientation. Yours may not. Rest assured, though, you *do* have a search. I do,

however, offer my story as a model. I am talking about transformation and transcendence as a cornerstone of good teaching. What I really want to do is redirect students' attention away from my voice and to each others' voices. I am deliberate about this. I often begin each class session with what is known as a Gratitude Walk (Jensen 1999). Students take a ten-minute walk with each other and share with each other the "GLP" of the Gratitude Walk. What are you **G**rateful for in your life right now? What are you **L**earning (in class or in life)? What is a **P**romise you can make to yourself today? The Gratitude Walk becomes one of the best loved practices in our learning community because, as they walk with a different member each time, they are invited to become a real part of each others' lives.

We teach people, not content. If we see ourselves as the holders of an objective truth that needs to be deposited into our empty bank students, we are working from an unbridled ego. The humanist, revolutionary educator's "effort must be imbued with a profound trust in people and their creative power. To achieve this she/he must be partner of the students in her/his relations with them" (Freire 1997). Power in the form of knowledge is not the property of any one individual. Students know when a teacher works from ego and power. Myss (1993, 12) states that

> when an individual is focused upon the acquisition of any form of external power, it is indicative of what is absent internally in that person. The stronger the obsession, the greater the lack of authentic power.

In his book, *The Seat of the Soul*, Gary Zukav (1989, 26) says that authentic power is aligning "our thoughts, emotion, and actions with the highest part of ourselves." Sadly, most schooling does not model for students what authentic power is. Rather, as hooks (1994, 16) states,

> the objectification of the teacher within bourgeois educational structure seems to denigrate notions of wholeness and uphold the idea of a mind/body split, one that promotes and supports compartmentalization.

In sharp contrast, holistic educators agree with Martin Buber (1958, 69) that "in the beginning is the relation." I honestly believe that this is what students are responding to in my teaching—my sheer tenacity and commitment to authenticness.

The appearance of what Talburt and Steinberg (2000) call "queer thinking" is relatively new to education. Our Voices are still in an early stage of development even though, I must admit, the political hour feels very late. "There is an urgency to this work—people are still dying, being bashed, being discriminated against, still suffering unnecessarily in a myriad of ways, public and private" (Talburg and Steinberg 2000). Consequently, this demands that we summon our courage, achieve some kind of solidarity, and press ahead. The truth is that we have a tendency to regard teaching and activism as separate spheres. I do not think that is the case. Teaching is about consciousness-raising, pure and simple. Indeed, there are lots of actions that schools can take that are legislative in nature. Still, though, our greater act is humanizing ourselves through being Out, authentic, and narrators of our own stories.

I think we are afraid. Of each other. Of ourselves. Of coming together in vulnerability. I recently sat in a meeting where we were developing a new MAT (Masters in Teaching) program. Some of my colleagues were concerned that people who had only been teaching for a few months were going to be getting a Masters degree. "What can they offer in reflective practice and research with such limited experience," they said. I considered this Deweyan/Freirian heresy. I told them as much. Dewey assumed "that amid all uncertainties there is one permanent frame of reference: namely, the organic connection between education and personal experience."

The problem in education is that the focus is always outward. These huge books contain the realities that we deem important and anything inside the teacher or the students is suspect. Plain and simple, we need teachers who have done "inner work." How can we expect to teach transformation when we do not even understand what is meant by the word (Palmer 1998)? Thich Nhat Hahn believed and called for healers, teachers, therapists, and those in the helping professions to first heal themselves. He said, "if the helper is unhappy, he or she cannot help many people" (hooks 1994, 15). "The transformation of teaching must begin in the transformed heart of the

teacher. Only in the heart searched and transformed by truth will new teaching techniques and strategies for institutional change find grounding" (Palmer 1983). I am calling not only for the "teacher as reflector" of their practice, but for the "teacher as reflector" of themselves.

For things to change, I must change. This is not California New Age mumbo-jumbo. We simply teach who we are. A wounded person teaches woundedness. A person in search of her freedom teaches others how to search for their freedom. You can't teach liberation. You have to *be* liberation.

> If professors are wounded, damaged individuals, people who are not self-actualized then they will seek asylum in the academy rather than seek to make the academy a place of challenge, dialectical interchange, and growth" (hooks 1994, 165).

I spent thirty-some years teaching from my unknown self. I was teaching fear, voicelessness, and conformity. The enormous energy that I expended trying to "pass" as heterosexual was wasted energy. It was energy that could have made me a much more dynamic educator. The fear that I lived with each and every day had to have affected my students as much as it did me. They certainly must have felt how incongruent I was. This diminished my reliability. My inauthenticness made me enormously "less than." A teacher who is paralyzed with fear, who is voiceless, who is disempowered and living as a liar creates these dynamics as their curriculum.

On the other hand, I have a different curriculum today. I live a curriculum that says that this is how to find your Voice, that this is how to use your Voice strategically for social justice, and that transcendence is not only possible—it is an imperative and natural outcome of being a learner.

Dewey, like the existentialist thinkers, didn't think that the self was complete. He said that the self was "something in continuous formation through choices of action" (Dewey 1916). We create ourselves by going beyond what exists and bringing something new into being (Sartre 1956). We must always be birthing ourselves. "Education as growth and maturity should be an ever-present process" (Dewey 1938). Freire spoke about an education that affirms people as being in the process of becoming, "unfinished, uncompleted beings in and with a likewise unfinished reality" (Freire 1997). Indeed, he even stated that "the joy of being human is our unfinishedness."

Education can be enhanced, but it's not going to be enhanced by endless political reforms. Palmer (1998, 6) states that

> to educate is to guide students on an inner journey toward more truthful ways of seeing and being in the world. How can schools perform their mission without encouraging the guides to scout out that inner terrain?

I believe that the way to seriously work for the transformation of schooling is to vigilantly work for the transformation of Self.

Becoming authentic, or as Greene so aptly stated it, "searching for my freedom," completely changed my paradigm of Being and, thus, teaching. The transformation of education will not occur by politicians demanding longer days, more tests, and some abstract thing titled "higher standards." The transformation of teaching will occur when teachers who know themselves are able to intimately know their students. I have a postcard with a quote from the poet Marge Piercy hanging in my home. It sums up all of life for me, but certainly what I've been trying to communicate here about working towards an end to homophobia. She writes:

> Attention is love, what we must give children, mothers, fathers, our friends, the news, the woes of others. What we want to change we curse and then pick up a tool. Bless whatever you can with eyes and hands and tongue. If you can't bless it, get ready to make it anew.

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Making Connections to the World

Some Thoughts on Holistic Curriculum

Ron Miller

Holistic education aims to reconnect each person to the contexts within which meaning arises: the physical world, the biosphere, the local community, the culture with its many layers of meaning, and the Cosmos itself.

At first I was pleasantly surprised to learn that holistic thinking is beginning to take root in Mexico. But I should not have been surprised. The emergence of a postmodern civilization, with its many unsolved economic, technological, moral, and ecological problems, is a global phenomenon. The degradation of the earth affects us all. The concentration of wealth and power in the hands of transnational corporations and their elite managers affects us all. Our amazing new powers to manipulate information, communication, consciousness, and the genetic structure of life ultimately touches every one of us, often in deeply troubling ways. As Jeremy Rifkin warned several years ago in books such as *Time Wars* and *Biosphere Politics*, this new global civilization threatens to fundamentally alter the relationship between the human being and the world. Everything that exists, everything our lives depend upon—food, water, land, knowledge, language, time, health, and consciousness itself—everything is being turned into a commodity. Someone—more likely, some vast impersonal corporation—owns everything we need and will sell it to us to make a profit. Everything is measured, packaged, or redesigned to make it more attractive or convenient. Corporations add strange chemicals to our food, or alter the genetic structure of plants, so that their products can remain in a salable condition on store shelves, for the sake of greater profits. And everything happens faster, and faster still. During the Industrial Revolution, workers had to learn to keep up with machines; today we are being forced to keep up with the relentless torrent of information that computer technology and satellites scatter around the globe. We are constantly bombarded by advertising, news, stock market information, more advertising, trivial gossip about fashions, Hollywood, celebrities and sports heroes—and more advertising. This new culture is now

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spreading around the planet; it is rapidly becoming a vast global monoculture.

Throughout human history, most people have earned their livelihood by engaging in physical labor, doing tangible work that produced whatever food, clothing, shelter and security they could obtain. People's lives were regulated by the physical and biological environment—the climate, the terrain, the length of the day and season, the availability of resources. Their lives were given meaning by these tangible and vital connections to the world. By contrast, in this emerging postmodern society, millions of people sit for most of the day—and often during the night—gazing at computer screens and tapping on little buttons. By manipulating artificial electronic images, in complete isolation from the real physical and biological world, vast amounts of wealth are moved from region to region, from one nation to another, affecting the lives of millions and millions of other human beings and the habitats of thousands of plant and animal species. A growing number of people now have tremendous power, amplified by sophisticated technologies, to manipulate, control, alter, and seriously damage the biosphere. But because they are disconnected from the natural world and local communities and the primary sources of their food and wellbeing, they do not seem to have the ethical or spiritual sensitivity to use this power wisely, sparingly, or for the good of the whole. That is our problem, and that is what the "new paradigm" of holism seeks to address.

Let me step back for a moment. As a historian, I have no excuse for romanticizing the past. For much of human history, life for most people has been rather brutal. Given a choice between the suffering caused by multinational corporations and the suffering caused over the centuries by the mass slaughter of populations by invading armies, by religious persecution and warfare, by epidemics of plague and smallpox and other horrible diseases, and by the inadequacy of food supplies, shelter and tools, it is not terribly unreasonable to prefer our more modern forms of exploitation and struggle. Indeed, the scientific and industrial revolutions have succeeded grandly because they allow people to exchange severe forms of suffering for more modest forms, with the promise (or at least the illusion) of escaping suffering altogether. When we raise the alarm about the dangers of this global postmodern age, we have to be careful; we cannot simply condemn the modern era and all its technology and power and wealth. We have to explain why we find this brave new world so troublesome.

We have reached a point in history where it is possible to alleviate the grosser forms of suffering. This is wonderful! It is a great achievement of the human mind and spirit. But now we need to ask why these new powers are not being used on behalf of all humanity and to preserve the sanctity of life on earth, but primarily to help those who are already excessively wealthy and powerful become obscenely wealthy and powerful. The arrival of this brave new world, this "new world order," compels us to make a fundamental moral decision: Shall we continue to celebrate, indeed worship, the utilitarian, manipulative style of thinking that made global industrialization possible? Does it still serve us well? Or has it outlived its usefulness? Is it possible that it might be a tremendously destructive mistake to continue to treat the world entirely as a resource, as fuel for the omnivorous economic machine we have built? Is it possible that we must now tame and humanize our machine before we destroy the earth and ourselves with it? Holism is a response to this possibility. Holistic thought is an attempt to reclaim the sense of connection to the world that utilitarian manipulation and advanced technology have steadily eroded and now, by the dawn of the twenty-first century, nearly wiped out.

Holistic thinkers believe that essentially, by nature, the human being requires a sense of *connection* to the world. Our experience needs to be *meaningful* to us or else our lives are unfulfilling, no matter how comfortable we make them through material wealth or political and economic power. To the extent that people simply seek to enjoy whatever comforts and luxuries they can gather, even if they have gained them at the expense of other people and other living beings, then to that degree they are so much less human and act like merely clever animals. Every religious tradition, every mythology, many ethical systems, and much of our great dramatic literature, condemn this way of living as morally inadequate, psychologically deficient, or explicitly subhuman. Hu-

man life is fulfilling and meaningful only when we experience ourselves as being connected to the world—connected to the land, to a cultural heritage, to a living, striving community, to archetypal spirits and images, to the Cosmos as a whole. The danger of our time is that in our cultural worship and personal pursuit of comfort, security, wealth and power, we have become disconnected from these sources of meaning. By learning how to control virtually every aspect of the world, we no longer know how to dwell in its mystery. We seek to alter, improve, or commodify everything, and therefore we cannot see the world's intrinsic beauty, discern its inherent patterns, or hear its spiritual secrets. Meaning is no longer found through the soul by dwelling in the world with reverence, but imposed by the calculating mind, which assigns everything a value or a utilitarian purpose.

All of the leading holistic thinkers identify the crisis of our time as an *epistemological* crisis. We are not arguing against technology as such, or against capitalism in itself. We are saying that underneath our political, social, and economic arrangements, the way modern culture defines and understands reality itself is faulty, and this flawed way of knowing gives rise to distorted, we might even say cancerous, forms of technology and economic organization. Educational philosopher Douglas Sloan refers to this as a "technicist" way of knowing. David Orr, one of the leading theorists of environmental education, attacks what he calls "technological fundamentalism." Other holistic writers commonly identify "reductionist" or "mechanistic" ways of thinking and knowing as the primary problem of our civilization.[1] All these terms point to the utilitarian, manipulative, objectivist, and overly rational ways of treating the earth and the life that inhabits it. So long as a culture sees only economic value in the world and pursues material abundance and comfort with no sense of restraint or regulation, that culture will be blind to the more genuine sources of meaning that connect the human soul to the Cosmos. David Orr (1994, 33) identifies just what is missing in our distorted worldview: "We need decent communities," he says, and

> good work to do, loving relationships, stable families, the knowledge necessary to restore what we have damaged, and ways to transcend our inherent self-centeredness. Our needs, in short, are those of the spirit; yet, our imagination and creativity are overwhelmingly aimed at things that as often as not degrade spirit and nature.

This is to say that our considerable powers of intellect have served primarily to disconnect us from the world. Modern systems of education have fed these powers well, training young people how to gain knowledge *over* the world, knowledge at the expense of feeling, information without wisdom, facts without moral discernment. In the United States in recent years, technocrats in state after state have successfully forced educators to focus more and more narrowly on what they call "standards"—arbitrary packages of intellectual content that have little to do with deep understanding of the world but which give the technocrats useful data for evaluating and sorting students objectively. The increasing standardization of learning prepares young people to act aggressively, cleverly, and resourcefully in the job market and the competitive corporate world. It contributes little or nothing to decent communities, loving relationships, or ways to transcend self-centeredness.

Holistic education is essentially concerned with these basic sources of meaning, and seeks above all to reconnect each person to the contexts within which meaning arises: the physical world, the biosphere, the family, the local community rooted in a history and a place, the culture with its many layers of meaning—artistic, religious, linguistic, archetypal—and the Cosmos itself. How does holistic education connect people to the world? What is a holistic "curriculum"? Let me be very clear about this: There is no single method or technique for practicing holistic education. There is no "curriculum," as modern educators use the term, that best represents a holistic worldview. To understand the meaning of holistic education, we need to recognize two principles: First, an education that connects the person to the world must start with the person—not some abstract image of the human being, but with the unique, living, breathing boy or girl, young man or woman (or mature person, for that matter) who is in the teacher's presence. Each person is a dynamic constellation of experiences, feelings, ideas, dreams, fears and hopes; each person reflects what Asian traditions call *karma*—a meaningful pattern of influ-

ences, actions, and thoughts that shape one's possibilities, if not one's destiny. And as all holistic educators have emphasized, each growing child unfolds this cluster of possibilities through distinct phases of development, and at each stage the child needs the right kind of support, the right kind of environment, in order to move securely to the next. Maria Montessori said it simply, "Follow the child!" *Follow the child*. This is the true beginning of holistic education. An education that starts with standards, with government mandates, with a selection of great books, with lesson plans—in short, with a predetermined "curriculum"—is not holistic, for it loses the living reality of the growing, learning, seeking human being.

The second principle of holistic education is this: We must respond to the learner with an open, inquisitive mind and a loving heart, and a sensitive understanding of the world he or she is growing into. Now, this is indeed the hard part! A holistic teacher cannot be a technician, administering a series of workbook exercises or performing a script he or she learned in a teacher training program. A holistic teacher is acutely sensitive to the student's needs and, at the same time, acutely aware of the challenges and possibilities the world offers this person at this moment and in this place.

How does the teacher act on this awareness? Again, there is no simple answer. We must constantly recognize the dialectic, the tension, between liberation and accommodation. In holistic education we want to free every individual to find his or her own destiny, to think and feel and do whatever he or she finds most meaningful and fulfilling; yet at the same time, we bring to our students the awareness that the world makes its own demands, and that for many complicated reasons of psychology, ecology, culture, history, politics, and many other factors, no one is totally free to follow one's impulses and desires. Meaning arises from the reflective engagement between person and world, and the holistic educator's job is to facilitate this meeting, to help it become more reflective, to help it touch deeper parts of the learner's soul. The growing individual takes the world into his or her experience, incorporates it, assimilates it, responds to it. This is what I mean by connection. The student comes to feel that he or she belongs in the world, and shapes his or her purposes accordingly, in relationship to it, in dialogue with it.

Holistic education does not simply instruct young people about what is true and what is false, what is correct and what is mistaken; holistic education enables the learner to inquire "What does this *mean*?" How is this experience, or this fact, or this advertising message related to other things I know? If I act on my understanding, how will that affect other people, or the habitat of other living beings? Holistic education teaches young people how to care about the world, because *we* care about the world, and we care about our students. Nel Noddings (1992, 36), one of our wisest educational theorists, has written that

> kids learn in communion. They listen to people who matter to them and to whom they matter.… Caring relations can prepare children for an initial receptivity to all sorts of experiences and subject matters.

To learn in communion means to experience connection. Other people matter; their lives mean something to the learner. The natural world matters. Cultural heritage, social responsibility, and ethics matter. A person educated in this way would not take actions that violate the integrity, rights, or feelings of those who contribute so essentially to one's own identity.

Over the years I have studied many forms of alternative education, from Montessori and Waldorf pedagogy to free schools and homeschooling, from progressive education to critical theory. There are significant philosophical differences between them, but the most critical difference, I believe, is in how they define the relationship between freedom and structure. Some radical educators, such as A.S. Neill and John Holt, have told us that learning ought to take place in an entirely free manner. No one should tell another person what or how or when he or she should learn. Every child should be free to play, to explore, to experiment, to ask questions. Education springs organically from a child's interests and natural curiosity; there is no need for artificial structure. On the other hand, other educational pioneers, such as Montessori and Steiner, insisted that the growing child needs a particular environment, carefully planned and aesthetically designed, in order to acti-

vate and support the potentials latent at each stage of development. On the surface, these views seem to cancel each other out: Either we give children maximum freedom or we don't. Either we let them explore the world freely, or we tell them what they need to learn. In my view, however, holistic education transcends this dilemma, by finding value in both points of view. The two fundamental principles of holistic education work together in dynamic balance: We start with the child, not abstractly but in reality—with the living child. But then we respond to the child, guided by a sensitive awareness of the world. The issue is no longer freedom against structure, but freedom in a dialectic relationship to structure, or the individual person in meaningful dialogue with the school, or with society. The student is not constrained by alien forces, but gladly participates in a structured world to which he or she feels connected.

In this sense, a holistic "curriculum" is not a pre-established plan that the teacher brings to the classroom. Curriculum *emerges* from the interactions between teacher, student and world. This idea—emergent curriculum—is one of the revolutionary concepts to come out of the progressive education movement. John Dewey wrote a century ago about the organic relationship between child and curriculum, and although he is not widely regarded as a founder of "holistic" education, no one has written more wisely about this relationship.[2] As the child grows out into the world, his or her experience grows deeper; connections are made and become more meaningful. Education starts with this process of growth; it respects the quality of this experience, and it facilitates these meaningful connections. A holistic curriculum is a growing-young-person-in-relationship-with-the-world. (I have placed a hyphen between all these words, the way some existentialist philosophers often do in their writing, to emphasize the wholeness, the integral nature, of this relationship. All the constituent elements are connected to form a whole larger than each is alone.) The curriculum is not outside the student, but the student does not completely determine the content of the educational process either.

You might wonder, isn't there anything that a holistic educator would want to make sure to include in the child's learning experience? Even if we confidently assume, based on experience, that in the course of a student's meaningful discoveries he or she will adequately learn the so-called basic academic skills—writing, reading, and arithmetic—there are surely other skills or values that we believe to be important. David Orr, for example, has written eloquently about the desperate need for ecological literacy—an understanding of our interdependence with all living beings and the earth as a whole. In recent years, many holistic educators have embraced the notion of emotional literacy, as proposed by psychologist Daniel Goleman and others, meaning a person's ability to recognize and manage one's own inner life and behavior in constructive ways, and to solve conflicts peacefully. We also talk a great deal about social responsibility, and want our students to think critically about social, political and economic problems, as Paulo Freire urged so passionately. But, are all these educational goals best considered as aspects of a "curriculum"? Should they be fashioned into "units" or lesson plans (let alone "standards") and presented to students as subject matter?

I want to say no. I want to see them as reflections of our moral sensitivity as educators, rather than as static bodies of intellectual content. We bring ecological literacy, or emotional literacy, or social responsibility to our students through our own presence to them, our own way of being with them. If we are deeply concerned about the ecological crisis because we care about life on this planet, this concern and this caring will enter the educational dialogue with our students. Asking a school, or the local board of education, or the state government, to add our favorite causes to the curriculum will not result in meaningful, transformative learning for students if the teachers who administer this curriculum do not themselves care about these things. Similarly, young people learn Shakespeare from teachers who are passionate about Shakespeare, and they learn chemistry from teachers who love science. It is not the curriculum that teaches them, it is the living reality of their teachers. This is just what Nel Noddings meant by saying that "caring relations" prepare students for academic receptivity. In holistic education, academics are secondary to human relationship. Curriculum is secondary to connection, or direct experience rooted in caring.

I have discussed two primary principles of holistic education, and together they point to the organic, dynamic relationship between person and world which I think lies at the heart of holistic education. But I want to emphasize that whenever we talk about holism, our concepts always fall short of the reality we are trying to describe. The world in its wholeness is so vast, so complex, so multidimensional and interconnected, that any attempt to describe its essence can only partially succeed. So, there are other valid ways to define holistic education. Ten years ago, as the young editor of *Holistic Education Review*, I suggested four principles that I thought were essential to this definition. One of my closest colleagues at that time, Dr. Ed Clark, sent a lengthy essay to the *Review* to question my choice of principles, and he went on to define holistic education in a somewhat different way. All these ways are valid; they all convey different elements of the complex wholeness that we are trying to express.

I have used several words here that also point to this wholeness, words that require further explanation. These words are soul, spirit, and Cosmos. I have always insisted that holistic education is distinguished from other progressive or alternative pedagogies by its spiritual orientation, but it is never easy to explain what this means. When we say that the human being has a soul, we are suggesting that some vital creative force animates the personality. The sophisticated sciences of biochemistry, neurology, and even genetics cannot explain this force: When they try to contain it within the boundaries of their disciplines they are committing reductionism. Instead, to recognize the wholeness of the human being requires us to acknowledge that our minds, our feelings, our ambitions, our ideals all express some living force that dwells mysteriously within the core of our being. We cannot locate it physically; it is a nonmaterial reality, an invisible reality. Science, at least, conventional science, doesn't know how to approach it. But poets and mystics do. Like them, holistic educators treat the soul with reverence.

In many contexts, the word "spirit" means something supernatural, something so foreign to our understanding that we make up an imaginary world to give it a home. But for holistic thinkers, having a spiritual perspective does not mean voyaging to supernatural realms or maintaining a blind faith in religious imagery. Spirituality can take religious forms, of course, and many people, including many holistic educators, have found inspiration in these forms. But just as the experience of inspiration is not the form, the experience of spirituality is not the same as religion and can exist independently of it. As I understand it, spirituality is a living awareness of the wholeness that pervades the universe. It is the realization that our lives mean more than material wealth or cultural achievements can provide; our lives have a place, a purpose in the great unfolding story of Creation, even if this story is so vast and so mysterious that we can only glimpse it briefly through religious practices or fleeting moments of insight.

Finally, when I use the word "Cosmos," the root of the word cosmology, I am trying to suggest that the universe is not merely a vast collection of stars and galaxies that we can study through telescopes, but an interconnected whole that encompasses everything that exists and everything that *can* exist. Cosmology is an attempt to understand this wholeness, to provide an intellectual framework for the intuitive knowledge that everything we know is connected to everything else we know. Beyond these few words—soul, spirit, cosmos, and wholeness—I am speechless. The Tao which can be named is not the eternal Tao. It is a mystery. Let's leave it at that, and hold it in reverence.

So now I hope it is clear why I think it is futile to design a holistic curriculum. If the goal of holistic education is connection, then we are ultimately dealing with the soul, with spiritual experience, and with the unfathomable meaning of the Cosmos. We are trying to help our young people find a place deep within themselves that resonates with the mystery of Creation. And it is only when we, as educators, look deeply within ourselves and strive to embody wholeness in our own lives, that we will inspire our students to do the same. Our lives make up the curriculum. Let us work on ourselves, and our lesson plans will take care of themselves.

Holistic education, then, is a pedagogical revolution. It boldly challenges many of the assumptions we hold about teaching and learning, about the school, about the role of the educator, about the need

for tight management and standards. Holistic education seeks to liberate students from the authoritarian system of behavior management that in the modern world we have come to call "education." But ultimately holistic education is far more than radical pedagogy: It is an epistemological revolution as well. It demands that we take a hard look at the foundations of the emerging global capitalist culture—the "technological fundamentalism," the worship of money, the assumption that the world is merely made of lifeless matter that is ours to manipulate and consume. This new paradigm, this new epistemology we call holism, challenges our addiction to violence, exploitation, and greed. When we embrace wholeness, when we recognize that the Cosmos is the ultimate source of meaning in our lives, then we will design not only educational institutions, but social, political, and economic institutions, dedicated to the nourishment and fulfillment of all human beings and the preservation of the ecosphere. To establish this profound connection to the world is to experience an incorruptible reverence for life.

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Notes

1. I am referring to the work of thinkers such as Theodore Roszak, Parker Palmer, Morris Berman, Fritjof Capra, Charlene Spretnak, Jerry Mander, Rudolf Steiner, David Ray Griffin, John Cobb, Matthew Fox, Krishnamurti, Donald Oliver, and John P. Miller—to name only a few.

2. See John Dewey, "The Child and the Curriculum," published in 1902 and reprinted in various places, including Reginald D. Archambault, ed., *John Dewey on Education: Selected Writings* (New York: Random House, 1964). Dewey's work provides some very important foundations for holistic thinking, but many of us in holistic education find that ultimately, his epistemology and his definition of human possibilities place too much emphasis on the rational and social sources of knowledge and do not fully encompass the more archetypal, transcendent, or spiritual dimensions. I discuss this in chapter six of *What Are Schools For? Holistic Education in American Culture* (Brandon, Vermont: Holistic Education Press, 3rd edition, 1997).

The Battle for Social Justice at The City University of New York

William Crain

The political decision to restrict open admissions by banning remedial courses on the main campus, and its reliance on poorly validated diagnostic tests, especially harms the poor and students of color.

On January 25, 1999, the City University of New York's Board of Trustees voted to ban remedial courses at all its senior (4-year) colleges. The vast majority of the nation's senior colleges offer remedial courses. These colleges primarily serve white, middle class students. But CUNY could no longer offer remedial courses to its students, who are predominantly people of color and poor (U. S. Department of Education 1999; *CUNY Student Data Book*, 1998). Here are my notes on the meeting, written the next day.

> I arrived early. It was cold and had been snowing. NYPD were everywhere. One contingent marched outside in riot gear. Other police circled the buildings on horses. I heard that a compromise plan to rescue some remedial courses would fail.
>
> Inside, security instructed us to sit in precise seats; every third row was off limits. Several of us [faculty] planned to hum "We shall overcome" when the board began discussing the remediation ban, but the students in the balcony began chanting loudly right way. They had come up with some new chants, too ("One, two, three, four, CUNY needs an open door; five, six, seven, eight, Don't expel—educate").
>
> As the meeting began, I saw that most of the students (mostly people of color) were seated in the back; the faculty (mostly white) were down in the orchestra. The Board of Trustees sat on the stage.
>
> As I looked at the stage, a feeling of horror came over me. It was like some bad dream—some time out of a past when rulers didn't treat all people as humans. I got out of my seat and

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> walked to the area in front of the stage, thinking I would try once more time to say something. I wanted to say how the vote would disproportionately bar students of color from the colleges. I wanted to ask the board to consider what people of color have had to suffer throughout our nation's history to achieve basic rights. I wanted the board to see that this was a racist policy. As I walked to the front, security officers behind me said two or three times, "Professor Crain, please return to your seat, "You must go back."
>
> I tried to talk, but I couldn't be heard above the noise. I made eye contact with some students in the balcony, who tried to quiet the audience, but it was impossible. I said a few words and was whisked away, placed under arrest and handcuffed. Six hours later I was released from a local precinct.

The Key Issue: Open Admissions

The board's vote was an effort to dismantle CUNY's 1969 Open Admissions policy. To understand the policy, a bit of history is necessary.

CUNY, the nation's largest urban university, was founded in 1847 in an effort to give poor and working class students a chance for a first-rate college education. For over a century, the university succeeded, but its student body remained largely white. Then in 1969, a group of students, riding the crest of the civil rights movement, took over part of CUNY's City College campus and demanded that the student body better reflect the ethnic and racial make-up of the college's surrounding Harlem community.

After many tense meetings, York City's political leaders agreed to an Open Admissions policy that guaranteed every New York high school graduate a place in the university. This often meant a place in one of the community (2-year) colleges. But as David Lavin and David Hyllegard (1996) point out, Open Admissions was groundbreaking because it was oriented to the senior colleges. The African-American and Latino activists didn't want people of color to have to settle for community college degrees. Thus, the activists sought and won an Open Admissions policy that permitted students who were either in the top half of their high school class or had an 80 grade point average to enroll in a senior college.

The Open Admissions policy did what it was designed to do; it opened CUNY doors to people of color. In l969, students of color comprised only19% of CUNY undergraduates; today they constitute 72%. (CUNY Office of Data Collection 1971; *CUNY Student Data Book* 1998). Larry Seabrook, an African-American New York State assemblyman and CUNY grad, says that Open Admissions was "like a breath of fresh air beginning to blow through the halls of academe" (Rushing 2001, 28).

But Open Admissions also met with prompt opposition. Spiro Agnew, the Vice President of the United States, said that CUNY would now give away "100, 000 devalued diplomas" (Lavin and Hyllegard 1996, 17). And during the early 1970s, CUNY senior colleges began tightening admissions. Then, in l976, CUNY imposed tuition. This was a year of fiscal crisis in New York City, but it also was the year when the university's student body became predominantly people of color. Before then—even during the Great Depression—CUNY had been tuition-free.

Within CUNY, the advent of Open Admissions opened faculty's eyes to the poor quality of education in the city's public schools. The new policy meant that CUNY would have to offer many more freshman remedial work. But the faculty rose to the challenge. They created innovative remedial offerings, and CUNY became a nationally recognized pioneer in the area. All the evidence indicated that remediation worked (Watson 1998). The vast majority of students completed remediation in three semesters in the community colleges and in two semesters in the senior colleges. And the students who completed remediation went on to graduate at the same rate as those who hadn't needed it. One study (Chen and Cheng 1999) found that after a few years in a senior college, the students who received remediation actually began earning better grades than the students who hadn't required remediation.

What's more, CUNY continued to provide a high-quality education. Statistics with respect to The City College, where I teach, are telling. Between l983 and l992, in the heart of the Open Admissions era, 860 City College graduates went on to earn Ph.D. degrees around the country. This number is higher than that for our prestigious neighbor, Columbia College. The City College student body is somewhat larger

than Columbia's, but the comparison is illuminating (Arenson 1996). Another CUNY college, Hunter, has sometimes even outperformed City in terms of sending undergraduates on to earn Ph.D.s, and other CUNY colleges have made their own marks in business, the arts, and the helping professions (Savage 1998).

Open Admissions, then, was a stunning success. It demonstrated that if we give people a chance, they will often succeed remarkably well. But the verbal attacks on Open Admissions continued. It often struck me that many white people simply looked at the complexion of CUNY's students and assumed CUNY had gone downhill. Many politicians disparaged CUNY, and during the 1990s, the state and city governments constantly cut CUNY's budget. Then, in the mid-1990s George E. Pataki became New York's governor and Rudolph W. Giuliani became New York City's mayor, and these two men mounted the biggest assault yet. They appointed people to the Board of Trustees who, in the name of "higher standards," began considering plans to limit admissions quite sharply.

Social Justice

As the trustees considered various new admissions plans, hundreds of faculty, students, and community leaders testified at public hearings on the importance of student access to CUNY. I helped organize the public testimony, and I tried to tell the trustees that the central issue was social justice. At one 1998 hearing I said,

> Through no choice of their own, children grow up in vastly different social conditions. Some children grow up in wealthy families and attend excellent schools. They have small classes, well-paid teachers, the newest books, and the best facilities. They receive a fine preparation for college. Other children do not have it so good. They find themselves in underfunded, overcrowded schools that frequently lack books and equipment. These children receive a poor preparation for college.
>
> As long as these social inequities persist, justice demands that colleges and universities step in and try to make sure that all students have a chance to develop their minds and pursue their dreams.
>
> We must remember that none of us chooses the social position we are born into. We do not choose whether we are born into well-to-do families that can educate us well or families that are so poverty-stricken and overwhelmed that they cannot do much for us.
>
> If, as Harvard philosopher John Rawls (1971) says, we assume a veil of ignorance, if we imagine we do not know what circumstances we will be born into, we will all agree that the most just society—the fairest—is one in which everyone has an equal opportunity to develop his or her mind.
>
> This is why, so long as the public schools cannot provide an adequate preparation for all, colleges must step in. This is what CUNY did with its Open Admissions policy, and it has proven to be one the most successful experiments in social justice in our nation's history. Do not vote for policies that destroy it.

The Vote and Re-vote

To my surprise, several trustees developed reservations about the plans to restrict admissions. But the mayor and governor put enormous pressure on the trustees to do so. Finally, in May 1998, Mayor Giuliani and Governor Pataki decided to tell the trustees specifically what the new policy should be. Admissions at the community colleges would be temporarily left alone; the focus would be on the senior colleges. Any student who failed any of the three CUNY's skills assessment tests, indicating a need for remediation in math, reading, or writing, would be barred from admission to a senior college.

The Board of Trustees first approved this remediation ban on May 26, 1998. However, they did so in a meeting room that was much too small to accommodate the anticipate audience, violating the New York State Open Meetings Law. A student, David Suker, and I already had a lawsuit underway that charged prior Open Meetings violations, and our lawyers Ron Minkoff and Wendy Stryker obtained a court order that stopped the university from implementing the new policy.

Then, on January 25, 1999, the trustees, led by Herman Badillo and Anne Paolucci, voted again, this time in a large auditorium in the meeting I described at the beginning of this article. All the evidence indicated that the new policy would disproportionately deny admission to students of color within CUNY. What's more, CUNY's senior colleges would have to stop offering remediation to their predominantly minority students while the senior colleges in the New York State's sister public university, the State University of New York, would continue offering remediation to their predominantly white, suburban students. Under intense pressure from the governor and the mayor, the CUNY board re-approved the policy. Cecelia McCall, an African-American CUNY faculty member, told a group of faculty that after the vote, "I had this image of George Wallace standing in front of the school building to block kids from entering."

People have often asked me if the remediation ban is as bad as I have made out. Can't students who fail a skills test simply attend a community college? Yes, they can. But Lavin and Hyllegard (1996, 52) report that CUNY students who begin a community college rather than a senior college have about a 20% lower chance of ever earning a bachelor's degree. (This figure resulted from a comparison of students who entered colleges with the same academic credentials and aspirations).

Among CUNY's students, the problems involved in transferring from a community college to a senior college add to a long list of struggles. Most CUNY students are from very poor families and the students must work long hours on jobs outside college. Many have family care responsibilities. They also are frequently the first in their families to go to college, so they are navigating uncharted waters. They have many doubts and anxieties. Thus, any new hurdle can make the whole college enterprise seem overwhelming.

Reckless Implementation

CUNY's new admissions policy hinges on three standardized skills tests (in writing, reading, and math). These tests were initially used for placement purposes, but the new policy elevated them to admissions tests; students must meet cut-off scores on all three tests to attend a senior college. The policy permits a few exemptions, but for most students the tests are critical. It doesn't matter whether a student has good high school grades. If the student doesn't also meet the cut-off scores on all three CUNY skills tests, the student cannot enter a senior college.

CUNY's trustees directed the implementation of this new policy to begin one year after the re-vote. One would think that prior to actually implementing such a test-centered policy, CUNY's leaders would make sure its tests were adequate. Specialists in the area of testing judge the adequacy of tests by several criteria, including the tests' *predictive validity*. In the present case, test experts would ask, Do the tests used to determine admission do a reasonably good job of predicting college performances, at least in the freshman year?

The answer was no. A few months after the re-vote, the Rand Corporation (Klein and Orlando 1999) confirmed earlier research (Otheguy 1990) and reported that the predictive validity of CUNY's skills tests was far below generally accepted levels. The tests were poor predictors of college performance in the freshman year. But this finding didn't deter CUNY from its implementation schedule.

CUNY did take one small step forward. It decided to permit students to substitute SAT or New York State Regents test scores for its own skills test scores. But the Rand Corporation found that the SAT was also a poor predictor of freshman grades at CUNY, and the predictive validity of the Regents tests was unknown.

Much clearer was the new policy's likely effect on students of color. CUNY's Office of Institutional Research (1999) looked at what would have happened if the policy had been in effect in the Fall, 1998, three semesters prior to the actual implementation of the policy. The research office found that 18% of the entering white freshmen would have been rejected from the senior colleges. In contrast, 38% of the Latino students, 34% of the African-American students, and 27% of the Asian students would have been rejected.

But neither these findings on race and ethnicity, nor those on the inadequacy of the tests, prompted CUNY's leaders to postpone the implementation of its new admissions policy. CUNY went forward with its implementation plans—which were likely to dis-

proportionately reject students of color on the basis of tests of poor or unknown validity.

Several of us found this behavior so outrageous that we filed a complaint with the United States Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR). The OCR wouldn't put brakes on the new admissions policy's implementation schedule, but it did agree to monitor the policy for potentially discriminatory effects.

CUNY, to be sure, couldn't ignore the prestigious Rand Corporation's findings on the poor quality of its skills tests. At the time we filed our OCR complaint, CUNY hired the ACT to develop better reading and writing tests. But CUNY didn't wait for the ACT's new tests before it began rejecting students from the senior colleges on the basis of its flawed skills tests. As of today (September, 2001), the new admissions policy is fully phased in at CUNY's 11 senior colleges, and the new ACT tests are finally in use, but the ACT still has not reported on the predictive validity of *its* tests at CUNY.

It is not easy to predict college performance. For this reason, the fair and sensible approach is to give students a chance whenever possible. To the extent that one can predict college performance, at CUNY and elsewhere, the single best variable is usually high school grades (Sacks 1999, 267-274). Many admissions officers believe student motivation is a better predictor, although motivation is harder to quantify. In any case, at CUNY neither grades nor motivation matter if the student doesn't meet a standardized test cut-off score—even though the cut-off score's ability to predict college performance is either poor or unknown.

It will take the Office for Civil Rights until May, 2002, to release final data on the discriminatory effects of CUNY's new admissions policy. For the past year, I have tried to initiate a lawsuit against the policy, but lawyers have consistently told me that one must wait until the discrimination has clearly occurred before one can sue. In the meantime, CUNY has gone forward with a test-centered admissions policy in the absence of evidence that any of its tests are valid. What's more, CUNY has added an ACT testing requirement at the community colleges. Students cannot exit from remediation and enroll in pivotal English composition courses until they meet the new ACT cut-off scores. At the community colleges, too, the policy has been implemented before we know if the tests are valid.

Tests for Teachers

Test-centered policies also dominate New York State's schools of education. The state has recently threatened to eliminate any school of education if its passing rate on its new standardized certification test is less than 80%. In response, The City College's School of Education, the single largest source of New York City teachers, now pre-tests students and only admits or advances those who are likely to pass the state's test. The City College now meets the 80% pass rate, but it has sharply cut enrollment to do so, contributing to the teacher shortage.

Moreover, school of education officials have told me, on the basis informal data and a state report withdrawn from circulation, that the paper-and-pencil certification test disproportionately fails African-American, Latino, and Asian students in comparison to white students. All the while, the state has produced *no* evidence that the test predicts good teaching. The National Evaluation Systems corporation, the firm that is developed the test for New York State and many other states, has actually refused to provide the U.S. Department of Education and the National Academy of Sciences with any relevant data (Levinson 2001). Thus, large numbers of people who might become excellent teachers will not get the opportunity because of a certification test of unknown validity.

Explanations

Why is such shabby and potentially discriminatory behavior allowed to continue? Why isn't there a greater outcry against it?

One factor is that incredible stature of standardized tests in the U.S. We seem to assume that standardized tests are authoritative because they are uniform and provide quantitative measures. Never mind that a test fails to predict what it should predict. Never mind that a test says nothing about qualities such as a student's motivation, creativity, empathy, compassion, or capacity for independent thinking. When it comes to standardized tests, our society seems unable to put things in perspective. As Peter

Sacks (1999) says, the U.S. has an almost mystical belief in test scores.

In addition, we must consider the function that standardized tests serve. Standardized tests invariably yield higher scores among white and economically advantaged people in comparison to poor people and African-Americans and Latinos. Thus, to the extent these tests deny poor people and people of color access to senior colleges and professional programs, the tests help perpetuate basic social class and racial inequities in our society. This is an outcome that many people in the higher ranks of society may tacitly approve of.

Do white political leaders actually get together to talk about ways of preventing large numbers of African-Americans and Latinos from getting college degrees? Do they discuss how standardized tests can keep their own kind—white and economically advantaged people—in the top tiers of the universities and society generally? Some African-American political leaders are certain that such plotting occurs all the time (Rushing 2001). I suspect such plotting occurs, but I believe we need more direct evidence. In any event, one conclusion is beyond doubt: We are giving standardized tests undeserved power to impede the progress of peoples whom our nation has historically oppressed.

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Habit as Habitation

Television's Effects on Learning

Cynthia R. Rothschild

The effects of long hours of television viewing by children are serious and they extend beyond the classroom into our daily lives.

In the decades since 1939, when Franklin D. Roosevelt became the first televised president and the "Father of Broadcasting," David Sarnoff, announced at New York's World's Fair that we had added "sight to sound," television has become an increasingly large part of American's lives and homes. During these same years, there has been much scrutiny of TV's effects, particularly on children. However, in recent times, as the speed of technological development sweeps us away, parents and educators are forgetting much of what we had learned about television's effects. It is easy to focus on developments of the personal computer and the Internet, while forgetting the old box in the living room. This paper will revisit the subject of television's effects on children and examine anew the role it plays in their lives.

Our survival depends upon habit. From an early age, we learn to wash our hands regularly, we form habits of sound that eventually turn to words, and find ourselves tightening muscles in certain patterns until we can sit and then stand. Due to these habits we find ourselves, generation after generation, able to resist disease, communicate, and walk. However, many parts of life quickly become unnecessarily and unproductively habituated. By adulthood we may rightfully begin to wonder: Where is habit useful and where does it get in the way?

Habit's power comes partly from being handed down generation after generation. It makes its way not only into what we do or think on a large scale, but also into the details of our lives. Even our most basic building blocks of language carry collective meaning. Owen Barfield (1979, 73) writes,

> It is there in the meanings of the words we speak and think with, and notably so in the commonest words of all—words like "thing," "life," "man," "fact," "think," "perceive," and

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> so on. It is not merely a habit, but an ingrained habit. It is even what we call "common sense."

To intricately dissect the meaning behind the words we use is one way to examine our inherited mental habits.

Beyond the meaning of words, we also often take for granted shared interpretations of non-verbal language. The ways that we move and react communicate to others. We learn to express and interpret non-verbally from an early age, according to the culture and individuals around us. In many cases the absorption of non-verbal language is unconscious. Consequently, only by putting ourselves in new situations (for example, living in a foreign country), do we see, by contrast, all of the communicative habits we have built up, that have been handed down to us from generations past.

We can also turn to the huge body of work handed down orally to see how habit has been productive. We owe a great deal of our traditions and knowledge of the past to habit. Had it not been customary in so many cultures to sit together telling stories, for example, much of the great oral traditions could have been completely lost. I remember well my grandfather sitting and telling the same stories year after year at the Thanksgiving table. While he sometimes seemed to be telling them purely to keep up the tradition, his memories of early childhood in Nova Scotia are a part of a family oral tradition that now I can pass on. On a larger scale then, habit has the power to help preserve collective memory and ancient understandings.

However the useful place of habit can easily twist into weighty burdens. Reinhold Niebuhr (1983, 11) writes,

> Our habits, which should be only temporary dwellings, like the tents of nomads, we allow to become the permanent houses in which we are shut up. Our habits become our habitations. To make our vision clear means to unwrap the habits of our imaginations that enfold our minds and hearts and keep out the light and the world. (Niebuhr 1983, 11)

In these habitations, we attend automatically. Those ideas, patterns of action, or beliefs that may once have been useful to us become a rigid and "powerful soporific" (Niebuhr 1985, 43). They no longer help us to discover new perspectives; instead, they fall into the background. They become the assumed backdrops for the daily goings on of life.

The more our habits fade into the background of our lives and go unnoticed in our daily motions, the greater their force. Our habits can determine our actions without our even realizing it. After twelve years of having hair down below my waist, I cut it to only a few inches. I was surprised to find myself a few times a minute bringing my hand up to put my hair behind my ears. I had no idea that I had trained myself to constantly keep my hair behind my ears. This example of a small physical habit nonetheless illustrates the kind of automatic actions that can also take place mentally or emotionally, often with more far-reaching affects. The less we notice our habits, the more we live in an imagined freedom, not even seeing that which constrains us.

Habit as habituation is static. Once habit becomes ingrained we become, as it were, stuck. We lose the opportunity to move, even backward to our former state of unknowing. Try learning *not* to ride a bicycle, or unlearning the meaning of the word "tree" or "house." The effects of our habitual modes are so hard to see that rarely, if ever, do we consider the usefulness of "unlearning" in order to see differently. Probably we do not all need to start falling off our bicycles (although maybe we do!), but certainly we should consider the implications of such an approach for education.

If we want students to move forward not just in the accumulation of information, but in searching for meaning and the power to effect real change, we need to examine mental habits. Sophie Haroutunian-Gordan in her book *Turning the Soul: Teaching Through Conversation in the High School* writes, "…by and large, education both in America and abroad has assumed that teaching is showing or telling students what to do and think" (Haroutunian-Gordan 1991, 7). Telling students what to do does not necessarily either challenge or even *recognize* the habits of students and teachers. Such recognition holds the key to breaking the will of mental habit.

Instead of always having others show them, students could rely instead on their own direct experiences. Habits can be an unfortunate barrier to direct experience. Our habits can create an environment

where we come to new situations with predetermines perspectives. This pre-perception can overly shape our experience before we have even gone through it. Niebuhr (1985, 43) writes,

> Pre-perception … is also a powerful soporific, under the influence of which we become victims of morbid dreams. Our invertebrate groping toward the outer and the inner landscapes of the mind leads us through regions where wrecked images lie corroding. Images that insensible decompose in the subterranean passages of memory and that can be neither wholly forgotten nor fully recalled become shadowy presences that confuse and betray us.

In the sleep pre-perception can induce, we risk piling up absorbed impressions and information only into a rotting mess of images. The more information we try to cram in more quickly, the less room we have to attend to the meaning and relevance of each piece of it. We end up with a haunting pile of images instead of useful and meaningful experiences to draw upon.

Our intellectual habits largely determine how we approach each piece of learned information. In education, we might form the habit of interpreting a text always in the same way, or believing that it is always the teacher, or always the students, who should do most of the talking. It is not the nature of the idea but its rigidity that causes habit to turn to habitation. Maxine Greene, a Professor of Philosophy and Education at Teacher's College, Columbia University, writes,

> When habit swathes everything, one day follows another identical day and predictability swallows any hint of an opening possibility. Only when the given or the taken-for-granted is subject to questioning, only when we take curious, sometimes unfamiliar perspectives on it, does it show itself as what it is—contingent on many interpretations, many vantage points, unified (if at all) by conformity or by unexamined common sense. Once we see our givens as contingencies, then we may have an opportunity to posit alternative ways of living and valuing and to make choices. (Greene 1995, 23)

When habit controls education our attention moves repeatedly in the same manner, without questioning or reevaluation. It becomes difficult to open to the unknowns and potential questions of our experiences. The pattern of attention itself may go unnoticed in the same way that the child unconsciously sucks her thumb.

In education, routine systems effect ways of teaching and learning on the individual level. According to Greene (1995, 9),

> Standards, assessment, outcomes and achievement: these concepts are the currency of educational discussion today. What ought sixteen-year-olds be expected to know, whoever they are, wherever they are?

Her question reminds us that by operating under the assumption that there *must* be something, *anything*, that all individual sixteen-year-olds should know, attention has already become directed in a very specific way. This underlying assumption often goes ignored—because it is habitual and has fallen into the background. More often, attention goes to the question of what masses of information a certain age group should know, or why not everyone in an age group knows everything they "should" know.

A poignant example of these assumptions in action is standards-based reform. A 1994 Congressional reform of the Elementary and Secondary Educational Act required states to develop "both content and performance standards to measure students' academic achievements" (Children's Defense Fund 2000, 70). This complex reform may have benefits, but it shifts the U.S. even further towards a model that can force teachers to stick to teaching a pre-determined set of information at each level. This kind of broad top-down approach says, in effect, that the same information is important and necessary for all students of the same age, regardless of individual interests and background.

In an environment where the larger system does not encourage examination of educational habits, such an examination becomes all the more difficult on the "local" level of the classroom. Greene (1995, 24) writes that "the difficult task for the teacher is to devise situations in which the young will move from the habitual and the ordinary and consciously undertake a search." This is a tall order that calls not only for recognition of student's patterned learning,

but also the teacher's own habitual patterns of learning, understanding, and explaining.

Television illustrates well the double-sided nature of habit. At first glance, one may see television, in its effects as a relatively new medium, only as movement *from* habitual conceptions of time and space. Television may expose students to different cultures and new concepts or useful information. A student can watch something on TV recorded months or years ago in another country that expands his or her viewpoint.

However, especially in the case of the young child, we must also ask what mental habits TV is reinforcing. How and to what is TV teaching students to attend? What new habits of learning does television move *toward?* For young children, the price of television is the surrender of the natural development of attention. Television can quickly become not a useful habit providing a new perspective, but a habitat confining how we learn.

The habituation process takes place most quickly in the stage of life when people make the largest neurological developments—when we are children. Dr. Jane Healy, educational psychologist and an expert on technology and children, writes, "For children, *habits of the mind soon become structures of the brain*…"(1990, 138).

Modes of thinking do not only become psychologically or sociologically habitual, but also become *physicall*y habitual. The average child in the United States watches about 28 hours of television a week, or three to four hours daily. This makes television the number one activity outside of school for 6- to 17-year-olds (Center for Media Education 2001)—and means that the patterns television reinforces have plenty of time to become ingrained.

The images come from television so fast and are so numerous that there is little time for digestion. As Niebuhr reminded us, images so quickly ingested will end up only corroded and haunting. Indeed, haunt they do. One study found that "90% of college students recalled being frightened by something on TV or in a movie, and one in four experienced residual anxiety when he saw similar images in adulthood" (Pupura 1999, 93). The images that we take in as children remain within us, affecting us, whether or not we have consciously contemplated and processed them.

Parents of children ages two to seven only watch TV with their kids 19% of the time (Kaiser Family Foundation 2000). Many parents, consequently, are not aware of what impressions their children are receiving. The images nonetheless stay with the children. On one occasion, I found myself sitting for an hour with a crying three-year-old in my lap. "Why are you crying?" I asked. Through tears she said, "I'm scared." "What are you scared of?" I continued. "TV," she replied, simply. I could not learn from her what specifically she had seen, but what was so striking about the situation was how removed the emotional response was from the actual moment when she had become afraid. There were no televisions where we sat. Instead there was colored play dough and an easel with poster paints. Yet the memory of TV's images had triggered for this little girl such a strong emotional response that she could not engage in these activities and instead needed to sit in my lap weeping.

Television often takes advantage of natural survival mechanisms to force us into a passive attention. Before the age of eighteen an average child in the United States will witness 200,000 acts of violence on TV (Kalin 1997). Viewers ingest these startling images, which (if they were actually occurring) would require immediate action. Rather than having stress be an unusual state where the brain suddenly goes into action for protection, television forces our brains to be on constant alert. Television unnaturally accustoms students to a constant state of alert, and at the same time teaches them not to respond to such alerts. They remain seated, glued to chairs, and watching.

The aspect of "new" habits associated with television that seems most consistent with pre-technology habits is the ancient habit of passivity. Living in reaction is a habit that television reinforces, making us beings reacting to outside impressions rather than actively choosing the objects of our attention. Television is a one-way stream of stimuli; but rather than reacting as one would to just a small fraction of that amount of stimuli in the natural world, one remains passive. The television pulls the attention out and causes one to feel situations of extreme stress and do nothing about them. There is, of course, nothing to do, as the factor generating the stress is not real.

Dr. Susan Johnson, Assistant Clinical Professor of Pediatrics, writes,

> Television can't give us this intelligence of the heart. It can shock our emotions and we can cry, laugh or get angry, but these emotions are just reactions. When human beings speak on TV, children are often doing homework, playing games, and talking to friends while watching TV. These activities help save their visual system from the effects of TV, but the underlying message is that you don't need to listen when another person speaks or comfort anyone if you hear crying. (Johnson 1999)

Healy (1990, 204) writes that

> studies have described a phenomenon apparently related to the "zombielike" responses of some viewers: "attentional inertia." The longer a look at TV continues, the greater the probability it will be maintained.

Once television has grabbed students' attention, it is harder and harder to make the choice to look away. By tuning in they zone out.

The natural reaction to high levels of stimuli is overload. Thus, Healy (1990, 200) writes,

> children's attention to TV programs tends to be fragmented, in the sense that they are actually watching it only about two-thirds of the time they spend in viewing. They may simultaneously engage in other activities or simply look away for "reduction of stimulation"—until they are drawn back by another special effect.

Special effects override the child's natural instinct for normal levels of stimulation. The fact that television producers go for just such an effect is no deep secret. Robert MacNeil of *The Macneil/Lehrer Newshour* once said, "The idea is to keep everything brief, not to strain the attention of anyone, but instead to provide constant stimulation through variety, novelty, action, and movement" (Healy 1990, 228). Anyone who watches TV knows that the news makes almost every story into thirty seconds, as do commercials. The average child in the U.S will see about 25,000 ads in a year. (Ford 1999) Even within regular programming there are constant shifts designed to keep us watching. The camera zooms or shifts viewpoints, each time recalling our attention. We become addicted to the quick shifts and constantly new images. In fact, according to some research, a majority of people in the U.S. believe that television is addictive. (Peiser 2000) Television is so good at drawing us in that, although we recognize its addictive quality, we continue to watch hours each day.

What is the effect of TV-induced passivity in the classroom? By many accounts, the answer is chaos. Real life, including the classroom, without constant danger, may no longer stimulate enough to hold the attention. For teachers, the habit ends up causing problems in the classroom since, Healy writes, "children become habituated to 'surprise and circus-type' presentations" (Healy 1990, 200). Teachers often have to try live up to such presentations in order to keep the attention of the class. Producers and directors design TV to provide a constant set of stimuli. The problem, for education, comes when the student tries to transfer this method of receiving information to the classroom where, Healy (1990, 202) writes, "one can't just let the mind change channels or wander away when things become a bit difficult or 'boring'." The student becomes so used to getting immediate gratification in the form of new and exciting images that a sustained effort to come to an understanding feels unnatural and not worthwhile. The teacher has to come up with ever more enticing methods of holding on to the attention. A teacher is, gratefully, only human, and cannot provide unnatural and abnormal levels of stimuli.

For students, the result is a lack of ability to attend to a specific line of inquiry for very long. Healy (1990, 153) writes,

> In the United States a national crisis in "problem-solving ability"—the ability to stay focused long enough to reason out and solve a mental challenge—has become the primary agenda item of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics and the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Students have an increasingly difficult time staying focused on anything not constantly providing them with high and stressful levels of stimuli. The more stimuli they are used to from the outside, the

harder it becomes for them to be active learners from the inside. Dr. Jennings Bryant, of University of Alabama, says,

> One thing we do know is that it [television] reduces what we call *vigilance* [the ability to remain actively focused on a task]. If they watch lots of fast-paced programs and then we give them things to do afterward such as reading or solving complex puzzles, their stick-to-itiveness is diminished; they're not as willing to stay with the task. Over time, with lots of viewing, you're going to have less vigilant children. (Bryant in Healy 1990, 201)

The correlation, as well, between high levels of television watching and reading underachievement are well established. The 1998 National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) found that there was a direct relationship between the two. The more time students spend watching television, the worse their reading performance (U.S. Dept. of Education 1998). The more passive the learner, the harder it is for him or her to actively engage in the learning process. Receiving facts is still possible, but any kind of active engagement of those facts becomes difficult. The ability to problem solve, make connections, or memorize pieces of information requires the ability to stay on task.

Television's potential for inducing inertia becomes compounded as television itself becomes a part of our physical habitations. The more television itself drops into the background of students' physical spaces, the harder it will be to change television learning patterns. Television has increasingly become part of our homes. Between 1980 and 1995, the number of TV sets per 1,000 people jumped from 121 to 235 (Buvinic and Morrison 2000). As the turned-on TV increasingly becomes furniture in the home, people literally make the habit the habitat. The Kaiser Family Foundation found that "among kids eight and older, two-thirds (65%) have a TV in their bedroom and say the TV is usually on during meals in their home, and nearly that many (61%) say their parents have set no rules about TV watching" (Kaiser Family Foundation 1999). Over half of our children find their family time, their homework time, and their physical spaces dominated by the television habit. In schools as well, television is often present. As of 1994, 74.2% of all public schools had access to cable television (U.S. Dept. of Education 1995). The more television falls unnoticed into a constant background buzz, the less chance there will be to recognize the habits it causes.

Television habituates students to abnormally high levels of stimuli. The images received are so many that there is not adequate time for attention to each. The younger the child, the larger the impact of television on the development of the general way of thinking, and thus the more important careful monitoring and limitation on television watching. As students progress through the educational system, the habits of passivity and short attention that television teaches can mean possessing lower abilities for problem solving, questioning, and deeply exploring material presented to them. The more the television habit becomes part of our physical habitats, the more easily we can forget about these effects and become overly accustomed to television's influence.

The case of television reflects well the situation of habit in general. There may be the potential for a useful and productive tool. However, there is also the great danger of confinement and stagnation. Though the scrutiny of television may have declined in recent years, its effects have not. The greatest danger lies precisely in this inconsistancy. TV's pervasiveness, demonstrated by the national daily average of six and a half hours a day of television in each home (Markey 1994), is met by the hazardous ease with which it drops into the background buzz. The unexamined habit is the most dangerous: The more accustomed children are to the constant barrage of imagery, the more effect it has. Then the images enter without criticism or questioning, becoming more quickly and fully a part of how children receive and interpret their experiences.

Many children have learned to inhabit their world largely mediated by such images—but at what price? The result is difficulty in developing the attention span and active learning habits; it limits the natural imaginative capacity of young people and encourages the development of passive reactions; it causes declines in the ability to problem solve, to stick with the hard questions, and seek for answers. These are effects that go far beyond the classroom, into the very fabric of our relationships with one another, our cre-

ative and personal lives. These are effects that extend into our very homes, our very living rooms, where, in front of the couch, sits that old box.

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Book Reviews

Listening Up: Reinventing Ourselves As Teachers and Students

By Rachel Martin

Published by Boynton/Cook, Portsmouth, NH, 2001

Reviewed by Patricia M. Cooper

Rachel Martin is a self-described "itinerant teacher" and life-long student of "liberatory" pedagogy. *Listening Up: Reinventing Ourselves as Teachers and Students* is her largely successful effort to do what many education writers hope to do: link theory to practice. Martin's job is made harder by the fact that she is attempting to lay a coherent poststructural foundation for her work in adult literacy, while necessarily arguing against any fixed position except the fluidity of categories and ideas. As many critics will agree, limitations of language make this a contortionist's chore. Martin, though, has an engaging writing style and an interesting personal story that help a lot (despite some occasional lapses into overwriting such as her pursuit of "strategies created by angles of vision different from mine" (p. 77)). For the most part, however, Martin argues for "reinventing" our roles as teachers and students of literacy through poststructural and psychoanalytic lenses with surprising practicality and force. Few have made the "into practice" case as well. Martin thus fulfills her goal "to demonstrate when a poststructural perspective is meaningful and useful in a classroom" (p. 2). In fact, the book's title and subtitle do not let on just how valuable the second half of the book will be for literacy teachers across grade levels and programs.

For readers new to a poststructural view of pedagogy, the first half of Martin's book, which chronicles her journey from one-time Freirian educator to proponent of poststructuralism and psychoanalytic theory in the service of adult literacy education, will be very instructive. Readers with more background will find it to relatively free of the pitfalls which lace most attempts to marry poststructuralism and practice. The book begins, as is required by poststructural theory, by locating the author in the context of her own argument. Chapter One introduces personal change as central to Martin's story, but by extension to all teaching. In a subsection called "A New Look at Critical Pedagogy," she writes

> Up until a few years ago, I would say I became a teacher because I thought people needed to think more critically about the social conditioning of their personal experience…. (p. 6)

Martin began to question this Freirian approach to teaching when she realized that her students were far more critically aware of their own lives than she had assumed, an assumption she now believes was prompted by her reading of Freire. Martin realized, however, that it was also influenced by her own position in the social hierarchy as more enlightened than the lower classes, and, moreover, by her subconscious needs to retain that position. Another manifestation of her former Freirian attitude, she writes, was the tendency to see her students as passive in their so-called dominated existence; in other words, as one dimensional in their oppression.

Martin traces her new perspective on teaching, where interpretation and dominance are constantly shifting to her education in poststructural and psychoanalytic theory. This does not change her focus on social issues, though. Race and racial identity in America are themes that run throughout the book. Among other related problems, Martin is keenly interested in the intersection between her white, middle-class, Jewish background and that of her Native American, Latina, Black, and African American students. She admits to her tendency to identify herself with students of color, despite the obvious ironies involved. She also does not hesitate to admit that in doing so she sometimes marginalizes the few white students in her classes. Ultimately, Martin says, her goal

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as a poststructuralist educator is to be more of a co-learner than a teacher. To avoid assumptions about her students, she turns her focus from their learning to her own. She now views teaching as the effort to create something that wasn't there before—not just in her students, but in herself. To this end, she writes, she is no longer seeking to raise the consciousness of others, but to raise her own.

Martin's concern with the limitations of Freirian pedagogy and the promise of poststructural theory is manifested in her analysis of the process writing movement, which begins the three chapters on classroom practice. First, she is careful to delineate what process writing is, as opposed to what many publishers would have teachers believe.

> The process writing movement is not a monolith, contrary to the prevailing ways of presenting it. Rather, it's a category into which many actually diverse theories and practices are placed. What almost all of these approaches share, however, is a focus on the concept of discovery. (p. 79)

According to popular wisdom, process writing is individual, cognitive, and authentic. Martin argues (supported by Henry Lois Gates) that there is no such thing as an individual voice or even an authentic one. All voices are multi-voiced, all meaning is layered in the social construction of knowledge, which is never controlled by the individual. She writes, "It's in this sense that freewriting," the staple of process writing, "is never free" (p. 79). It follows, then, that the teaching of freewriting is never free.

> In the workshops I offered … the young people wrote about colorism, interracial dating, White fear of Black youth, and advice from Southern grandparents. These topics emerged as I jotted down notes while listening to conversations…. But I know I key in to what I want to hear. And I also know that who I am encourages people to write some things and inhibits them from ever saying others. (p. 80)

In her effort to be fair to the students' true experiences in her writing classes, and in keeping with a poststructural approach, Martin examines how her whiteness and her politics influence their responses. She is most persuasive in arguing from her post-Freirian viewpoint that a real limitation to the process writing movement as usually practiced is that it rests on the notion that students, especially students of color, lack voice. As Lisa Delpit and others have pointed out, however, it is more likely that process writing teachers simply may not be prepared to hear the voices students use. Martin says that it is deconstruction—that is, acting in a poststructural way—that allows teachers to embrace what students offer, however different it may be from what teachers want to hear.

Despite Martin's stated preference for the role of co-learner as opposed to teacher, the last third of *Listening Up* is devoted to teaching strategies in literacy, where she sounds very much the expert. Though many of the strategies are not original, and some are downright traditional process writing activities, almost all are examples of reading and writing exercises that an experienced literacy teacher will recognize as rich with potential to help students create something new, not merely discover what they already know. In the section called "Strategies for Getting Writing Started" key words, phrases, and guided imagery are two techniques that rely on associations seminal to the students' worlds, and not the teachers'. Writing from pictures and written reactions to newspaper quotes that touch on issues central to student life are two more. Martin also tackles revision, the nemesis of all writing teachers and writing students. Using open-ended questions like, "What's the most important thing you're saying?" and "What came into your head as you finished reading?" she finds a place for herself in the process, but avoids imposing her preconceived ideas of what's wrong with their pieces on the students.

Martin tackles teaching reading in the same practical way. Disregarding the common use of leveled texts, she argues that any text can be used with any student provided three things are true:

> (F)irst, that I provide strategies that offer paths into the text; second, that there is a context for reading; and third, that I believe I will learn something from our collective thoughts on what we read. (p. 139)

The second and third provisions suggest poststructuralism's emphasis on social construction of knowl-

edge. The first, though, like the writing exercises described above, reflects more traditional progressive pedagogy. Among other strategies for getting into the text that Martin offers are chunking, talking back, reacting to a text, and predicting. Finally, Martin offers several ideas for creating theme-based curriculum, such as work, education, and Standard English that seem both appealing and comprehensive enough to allow students room to create.

Ironically, Martin's very success in conveying what an accomplished teacher of reading and writing forces us to refine our impression of the teacher-as-co-learner role, which Martin argued so vigorously for in Chapter 1. True, her students had much to teach her about life beyond the classroom door, about their nontraditional handle on literacy, and their ability to think critically, despite the limitations of their formal education. She even had much to learn from them about her sometimes controlling style of teaching. But the evidence suggests that when it came to literacy learning that made a difference in traditional venues, Martin acted, in Vygotskian terms (1978), as the "more capable" other with her students. In this sense, she appeared every bit the teacher. In the long run, however, the emergence of the teacher-as-teacher role should not present a threat to Martin's poststructural vision. Teachers can learn from their students, and still deliver the goods. Students, especially students for whom time and money must be spent sparingly, do not come to school to do the teacher's job.

If there is a false note to *Listening Up*, it is that on occasion Martin uses her students' stories to promote stereotypes. Disenfranchised students of color are always wise. All of them? Policemen are always odious and unjust. Every policeman? Boston—home to millions—is unequivocally racist to the core. All aspects of Boston life? Every Bostonian? Such a willingness to indulge in stereotyping undercuts Martin's expressed desire to "value paradox," contradictions, and fairness in the classroom, if not in life. This is extremely troubling. At the very least, such slips reinforce Martin's own message that even the most open-minded educator cannot escape contradiction and paradox. The good news is that most of *Listening Up* rises above this kind of pandering. As Martin herself manages to convey often, it's what we do in the face of contradiction and paradox that really counts in the classroom.

The Identity of Liberation in Latin American Thought: Latin American Historicism and the Phenomenology of Leopoldo Zea

By Mario Sáenz

Published by Lexington Books, 1999. 372 pp.

Reviewed by Eduardo Manuel Duarte

> Philosophical ideas sometimes appear to develop continuously one on top of another, but at other times they disappear to reappear again in the same or different form. They always seem to be 'there,' seemingly waiting to be gathered by a certain type of sustained reflection. However, the reflection does not produce them. Instead, our reflection comes across them being worked on endlessly by social and cultural forces that, like the ocean surf polishing rock and shell, deposit them ashore and draw them back into the depths of reality. The Latin American philosophy of liberation attempted to gather that connection and, in a sense, become the ocean, to change the world of millions of Latin Americans seemingly condemned to a life of material poverty and cultural alienation. (Sáenz, p. 2)

The 2000 Census revealed that Latinos are the fastest growing group in the United States. The census data show the Latino population grew from 22.4 million in 1990 to 35.3 million in 2000. More importantly, the Latino community is young—more than a third of its members are under 18. Yet, as anyone familiar with the latest national debate on immigration knows, the number of Latinos living within the borders of the U.S. rises above 40 million when undocumented immigrants from throughout Latin American are included in the overall numbers. In fact, we

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may soon witness these additional numbers as part of the official count as the federal government embarks on the most ambitious overhaul of immigration policy since 1986, when Congress passed a law enabling undocumented immigrants, mostly Latinos (specifically, Mexican farm workers) to become U.S. citizens.[1] Another sweeping amnesty program would propel further what can only be described as the inevitable *latinozation* of el norte.

It is not an imaginative leap to suggest that we are witnessing the northward migration of Latin America as a geocultural phenomenon. And like all migratory phenomenon, the extension of Latin America brings along its most fundamental elements, specifically, its perennial struggle to understand itself. In essence, this northward migration *is* the next big evolutionary moment in Latin America's attempt to define itself. One should be mindful of this epoch of angloiberian hybridization as one begins reading Mario Sáenz's expansive volume, *The Identity of Liberation in Latin American Thought*. This book offers us the framework through which we can legitimately raise the question concerning the identity of Latin America within the United States.

Sáenz's volume is organized around historicist phenomenology of Mexico's most important living philosopher, Leopoldo Zea. It is a multilayered extension of a set of questions and themes that define Zea's work, the most important of those being the question concerning the identity of *neustra america* (our America). Upon concluding this book, U.S. readers will become accustomed to reading the word "America" as a sign for all areas *south* of the United States. In terms of raising the consciousness of those readers who are all too accustomed to using "America" as a synonym of the United States, this different denotation of the sign might be the most important unintended consequence of this book. But this extended meaning of "America" would also apply to a Zea-inspired search for the identity of Latin America. Indeed, insofar as this search for *nuestra america* is defined as a struggle for the liberation of the Latin America from the position of *dependencia* (dependency), perhaps the extension of the sign "America" to include the entire Western hemisphere represents the deeper meaning of Zea's claim when he declared, "Nuestra filosofia y neustra liberacion no pueden ser solo una etapa mas de la liberacion del hombre, sino su etapa final."[2] (Our philosophy and our liberation cannot simply be another step in human liberation, but rather, the final step). In sum, within the context of Latin American liberation philosophy, the latinozation of el norte must be understood as an epochal event in the history of human liberation.

But if Zea and the project of Latin American liberation philosophy are extended north, what will be the outcome for this discourse that appears, upon first glance, unaffected by the postmodernist suspicion of liberatory narratives? Will it undergo the type of deconstruction that has disarmed Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy? What will be made of discourse which reserves such an exalted place for philosophy, of a perspective that claims to "see" the movement of human history? These are inevitable questions for the historicist who, following in the tradition initiated by Hegel and Marx, cannot avoid offering what appear to be grandiose statements about the movement of history. Sáenz is no exception to this rule. Indeed, he opens his book with the rather emphatic declaration: "The century began with revolutions; it ends without them" (p. 1).

Fortunately, Sáenz takes his cue from Marx's critique of Hegel. Marx's famous eleventh thesis—"The philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point is to change it."—was a rejection of Hegel's equally famous statement about philosophy being "The Owl of Minerva [which] spreads its wings at dusk." While embracing Hegel's historicist view that philosophy is caught up in and thus the expression of human history, specifically the philosopher's own epoch, Marx totally rejected Hegel's belief that the philosopher stands at the end of history, or at the close of an epoch. For Hegel the philosopher arrives too late to teach the world anything, he dwells in belatedness. For Marx, the philosopher, understood in the Hegelian sense, must give way to the social critic who struggles against the weight of the past in order to bring about a just New World.

As a philosopher of liberation, Sáenz follows Marx's critique of Hegel, but offers a decidedly late 20th century reflection on the *positionality* of the liberation philosopher. Perhaps one of the most important pieces of wisdom offered by Sáenz is the caveat that has become a commonplace qualification in

most contemporary critical theory concerning the historical location or position of the theorist who is engaged in articulating challenges to the status quo. Almost to a fault, Sáenz is concerned throughout with avoiding "philosophical false consciousness," which results when a critical theorist fails to be *self*-critical. False consciousness about one's own race, class, and gender location leaves one prone to concealment and subterfuge. On the contrary, a rigorous critical theory demands that a theorist allow his or her very position to be examined in a critical manner. This is a form of social self-critique that is at the heart of the dialogic and communicative form of reason that Sáenz correctly identifies as the core of liberatory theory. In what is probably one of the most poignant moments in the text, Sáenz writes,

> philosophers are not so transparent to themselves that they cannot express in their motivations, thoughts, and "consciousnesses" ideological formations. Hence, they may express in their philosophizing a false consciousness. These ideological encrustations are unavoidable today. Sexist, racist, and classist prejudices are an integral element of our cultures and it would be naivete to expect that someone can write a perfect theory of liberation. I see no better guard against this belief in total representation except by means of a theory of communication that maintains open access to individuals and group interests, to the "people" and the "university," to the "civic public" and the diverse "*etnias*" (or ethnic groups) of Latin America, and to the men and women in societies such as ours that struggle daily with the most diverse forms of gender and sexual domination."(p. 16)

While the philosopher of liberation speaks and acts out of vocation "so that the *logos* of the excluded and the oppressed can transmit its own message" (p. 19), this communication is always filtered and mediated by a self-criticism that is grounded in understanding the contingency of one's language. In turn, the liberation theorist

> must speak for others wearily. If moved to "prophesy," then she or he must be a weary prophet, preferably an ironic prophet, capable of laughing at the speech before he or she speaks it; if that is not possible, the philosopher must at least avoid the representation of the poor, the oppressed, and the exploited in absolutist terms (p. 19).

Sáenz borrows from the Mexican writer Octavio Paz, and deploys what Paz calls *meta-irony* in order to fend off the disarming posture of postmodern irony and the distrust of so-called grand narratives of liberation. I concur with Paz and Sáenz when they protest against academic postmodernism that acts as a veil for ethical indifference and political disengagement. While meta-irony is able to recognize the contingency and limits of language, it still retains some of the modernist revolutionary faith in community, solidarity, and the collective redemption of freedom, equality, and justice. The material reality of abject poverty and environmental destruction demand action, not linguistic play.

> The deconstruction of social structures and discourses of liberation leaves us in a hopelessly ambivalent position, that only a cynic with pupils can bear. We must deconstruct the deconstructionist in us. We must dissolve an irony that no longer proposes anything valuable. We must mistrust the mistrust itself, if mistrust is all it offers. One should not forget, after all, that the best postmodern critiques of modernity were done for the sake of human liberation and not for the sake of discouraged, bilious, and poisoned academics. (p. 19)

To be a Latin American philosopher of liberation is, inevitably, to be an historicist: one who defines philosophy as a project engaged with the specific sociopolitical and cultural situations that have emerged in their epoch. However, the Latin American philosopher of liberation is a distinct sort of historicist, because s/he struggles within an enduring epoch that resists closure. For the Latino/a, the fundamental philosophical problem which continues to emerge out of history is the question concerning the conditions for the possibility of doing philosophy within the eternally recurring collision between the indigenous and colonial cultural frameworks that lives on within a dialectic of domination and resistance. This is the problematic that consumed Zea and his progenitors, such as Juan Bau-

tista Alberdi (1810-1884), Bartolome de las Casas (1474-1566), Francisco Javier Clavijero (1731-1787), and Domingo Faustino Sarmiento (1811-1888), all of whom receive extensive treatment by Sáenz. Indeed, the comprehensive genealogy of Latin American philosophy is the truly outstanding contribution of this volume. At minimum, Sáenz's book should spur anglophone readers to take a serious view of Latin American intellectual history. Particularly as the question concerning the cultural identity of the south migrates to the north.

> The study of our history of ideas, the development of a philosophy of history, the preoccupation with our dependence and the need for our cultural liberation, have all revolved around the question "What are we Latin Americans?" The question of our collective identity is a question that has occupied the inhabitants of *América* since the invasion of the continent. That is one of the reasons why the Latin America history of ideas is an integral element of Latin America's sociocultural identity. (p. 94)

The historicist character of Latin American philosophy defines it as a project that dwells *with and in* the gap between past and future. Liberation philosophy is thus defined by the social critic's struggle within the gap that Zea called the *presente extraño*, or strange present. Liberation philosophy represents the project of positioning oneself within this dialectic *on* the side of resistance, of immersing oneself within the struggle of freedom against oppression, and, from that position, struggling to bring about a new epoch in human liberation. But as the position is situated on the threshold of a new horizon it is marked with an ambiguity that arises from a *multidimensional* present. The simultaneity of a *present* that is conditioned *both* by the past, in the rigidity of the fossilized relations that maintain the condition of oppression, *and* by the future, in the fluidity of the process of liberation that is defined by production of new cultural formations. The ambiguous temporal position of the liberation philosopher is thus defined as a *un presente extraño,* a strange and ambiguous present.

For Sáenz, the dialectical struggle between past and future, between *dependecia y liberacion*, is defined by the most recent form of colonialism unfolding on the world historical stage: globalization.

> The basic conflict remains today a class conflict but at the level of "north" and "south." It has become most acute precisely at the border that divides the imperialism of the postindustrial world and the neocolonized majority (now counted in the billions of people)…. As we will see in this book, we cannot understand Latin American philosophy outside the socio-economics and the politics of this conflict. (pp. 14, 15)

In turn, the latinozation of el norte must be understood as an *outcome* of the north/south conflict and contradiction. And this dialectical reading has important implications for the practice of liberation philosophy, or what Zea calls *nuestra filosofia* (our philosophy). After all, if the synthesis emerging from this dialectical conflict is an extended and hybridized "America," then the project of Latin American philosophy is no longer limited to the regions *south* of the U.S. And this is why it is now possible and necessary to practice nuestra filosofia *in* el norte.

The philosophy of liberation, as a philosophical movement, emerged as a rigorous theoretical response to the Eurocentric philosophy of human nature that privileged the cultural characteristics of the European subject and subordinated the non-European. This is a complicated story, and Sáenz does justice to it, particularly in his treatment of the early critics of European racism against the indigenous Americans. An excellent example is Sáenz's presentation of Clavijero who followed de las Casas in writing a defense of the Native Americans, but also produced an historic refutation "of the racist science that developed in Europe later during the flourishing of its modernity" (p. 122). While it is cannot be overstated that Western philosophers, like John Locke, were totally complicit in the colonial subjugation of indigenous Americans, there have been too few rigorous analyses of this story. Fewer still take up this historical struggle against Eurocentrism from the perspective of Latin American. The result is that most "Americans" have amnesia about the ongoing struggle to

overcome the oppressive and exclusionary ideologies and practices of the Old World. But, as Sáenz convincingly demonstrates, it is along the frontlines of ideological battle to construct the "American" subject that we locate the origins of the philosophy of liberation. At the current moment in its history, this ideological battle appears to have moved north.

In its most recent report, released at the 2001 annual conference in July, the National Conference of La Raza (NCLR) put the growth of the U.S. Latino community into its proper perspective.[3] Despite the 58% increase in its population, less than half of the Latino population own their homes, only one in three Latino children are enrolled in preschool, and working Latino adults and their children are less likely to have health insurance. Despite a growing middle-class of professionals, Latinos are more likely to work in non-unionized, low-wage jobs, such as food preparation, personal service or cleaning and maintenance jobs. The NCLR report underlines what ought to be understood when we speak of the latinozation of el norte. The growth of U.S. Latino community means, for worse *and* for better, the northward migration of *el peublo*. But this data should be understood as holding enormous progressive potential. That is, if the following occurs: first, the absurdly high dropout rates among Latinos fall, and, second, the emerging Latino middle-class remains faithful to *el pueblo's* demands for social justice. Such demands, however, suggest that the hybridization of el norte will produce a process of sociocultural change which Sáenz calls the *mestizaje from below*:

> The affirmation … of the Indigenous American, the African American, the marginal and, therefore the *mestizo culture of the oppressed* does threaten Eurocentric self-confidence regarding the identity of the Americas. The oppressed does not mirror the oppressor's past development. They cannot because their cultures have an internal integrity that is not reducible to the platitudes of the hegemonic thought concerning modernization…. Of course, it is from below that those who have been privileged by Latin America's brand of dependent capitalism will be coaxed into accepting that their culture too is *mestizo*, and that the affirmation of *mestizaje* requires a redistribution of wealth in keeping with the dignity of the Indian, the Black, and, in sum, the *mestizo* of America." (pp. 236, 237)

Although the salsification of U.S. popular culture—especially through music, from the authentic (Buena Vista Social Club) to the inauthentic (Ricky Martin)—is having an impact on the aesthetic sensibilities of the middle-class, a more profound effect will occur in the politicoeconomic arena as the historic/traditional demands of *el pueblo* become increasingly well articulated by the maturing Latino population. If this maturing community evolves in and through a renewal of the liberatory tradition, it is reasonable to believe that the latinozation of el norte will effect a socialistic shift in the politicoeconomic value system in the U.S. I am suggesting the maturation of the U.S. Latino community will produce a dialectically renewed tradition of revolutionary democratic struggle in the United States. The very tradition of struggle for social justice in Latin America, which is so brilliantly retraced by Sáenz, is destined to link up with the U.S. revolutionary democratic tradition which culminated in the civil rights movement, i.e., political equality, economic opportunity, and cutural freedoms (lifestyle choices). Both traditions will be transformed, and the result will be a new, more complex movement towards human liberation. The inevitable latinozation of el norte, and the production of an anglo-iberian *mestizaje* will, as Sáenz insists, emerge from "below," albeit in a manner that does not necessarily oppose "below" with "above" because "below" is not understood to be a fixed position, but a form of consciousness that, akin to the Freirian notion of conscientizacion, can and must be attained by any and all (disregarding their social location) who are enlisted in the struggle for social justice.

Notes

1. Census data and immigration policy debate both reported by the Associated Press in the *Portland Press Herald*, July 16, 2001, p. 3A.

2. Leopoldo Zea, "La Filosofia Latinoamericana como filosofia de la Liberacion," *Dependencia y Liberacion en la Cultura Latinoamericana*. (Mexico: Mortiz, 1974), p. 43.

3. For more information on the NCLR 2001 report, "Beyond the Numbers: Hispanics, the Census, and an American Agenda," visit <www.nclr.org>.

Ecology of a Cracker Childhood

By Janisse Ray

Published by Milkweed Editions (Minneapolis), 1999, 273 pp. Hardbound.

Reviewed by Peter Blaze Corcoran and A. James Wohlpart

> Woodman, spare that tree!
> Touch not a single bough!
> In youth it sheltered me,
> And I'll protect it now….
> My mother kissed me here;
> My father pressed my hand—
> Forgive this foolish tear,
> But let that old oak stand!
> (Morris, "Woodman, Spare that Tree")

In *Ecology of a Cracker Childhood*, Janisse Ray tells the reader the story of her life growing up in the southern Georgia delta, a story that becomes intertwined with a call for reconnecting to the sacredness of the landscape. Through recapturing scenes from her childhood, Ray shares the experiences that fostered her growth. She begins her chapter, "How the Heart Opens," an important chapter in the book, noting that "One essential event or presence can save a child, can flower in her and claim her for its own" (p. 127). For Ray, this event was her connection to a clump of pitcher plants that grew, significantly, amidst the scrap and remnants of the junked and wrecked automobiles that surrounded her home. What began as a fifth grade 4H project cataloging and diagramming the plant bloomed into a way of being for the author—"of being able to be" (p. 128)—that nurtured a delicate and fragile emotional and spiritual bond to the southeast Georgia landscape. Through alternating chapters describing her biography and the ecology of the area, Ray tells the story of how her life became whole with the growth of an intimate connection to the land.

A compelling dimension of Ray's work is her scrupulous attentiveness to the human spirit. She asks us to be guided in our writing, teaching, and daily lives by the question, "Does this elevate the human spirit?" Her writing, like her activism, reflects concern for this lifting of spirit amidst the noise and confusion of our lives. We are reminded to hear what cannot be heard, to see what cannot be seen, except with the human spirit. We are asked to counteract the fragmentation that has become our lives in the twenty-first century, to live lives of integrity and wholeness.

In this sense, her work is particularly convergent with the philosophy of holistic education in which we seek to honor the spiritual life of the learner and in which we believe in the ascendant human spirit. If we think of holistic education as tending to the spiritual, emotional, physical, and intellectual growth of the student, we can view Ray's *Ecology of a Cracker Childhood* as a painful search for wholeness. The honesty of her literary recapturing of that childhood powerfully reminds us of both the tenderness and the strength of the human spirit, of the great power of the landscape, of the influence of even one teacher who is open to one's full humanity.

Ray's depiction of the generative power of her childhood experiences in nature connects her work to a history of environmental and educational texts such as Edith Cobb's *The Ecology of Imagination in Childhood* and Rachel Carson's *The Sense of Wonder*. Yet *Ecology of a Cracker Childhood* reaches beyond these works through a complex engagement with issues of social and economic justice and with the relationship between our lived experience and our historical interaction with the landscape. Ray admits toward the end of her book that in fact the natural landscape was not open to her in her childhood, that because of the historical degradation of the longleaf pine uplands and the further, more direct disconnection of her father from the land, her lived childhood experience left her uneducated in terms of her own personal connection to the natural world. Ray describes the way in which her encounter with George

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Peter Blaze Corcoran is Professor of Environmental Studies and Environmental Education at Florida Gulf Coast University. While he is on academic leave, Janisse Ray, author and activist, will be teaching in his place as a scholar-in-residence. He is a Senior Fellow in Higher Education for sustainability at University Leaders for a Sustainable Future in Washington, D.C.

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Pope Morris's poem "Woodman, Spare that Tree" at North Georgia College turned her thinking and, as she states, "made me wish I knew myself better and wasn't gripped with fear when I spoke" (p. 263).

Indeed, the writing of *Ecology of a Cracker Childhood* allows Ray simultaneously to overturn the domination of a lived childhood experience that had no real bond to nature and the domination of the degradation of the southern Georgia landscape. Two intertwined texts exist in this work—that of her biography and that of the landscape—each acting as a kind of palimpsest with a dominant text suppressing an erased text. In the case of the landscape, the dominant text is the pine plantations, the junkyards, the muddied rivers of our time, a text that has all but erased the longleaf pinelands that once covered 85 of the 156 million acres of the southeast United States. Now, only a trace of virgin pineland remains—less than .001 percent of the original. The dominant text of her childhood is the fear of nature engendered by a religious fundamentalism and a father who experienced bouts of manic-depression.

Significantly, the writing of this book, the breaking of her fear of speaking, supplies the erased text of her life—a life connected to the land—and, more importantly, overturns the dominant/suppressed dualism. With the establishment of her voice in the rewriting of her life, the dominant text becomes the published book in the reader's hands. And with the reversal of the text of her life comes a vision of the reversal of the text of her landscape: "I will rise from my grave," she says in her concluding chapter, "There Is a Miracle for You If You Keep Holding On,"

> with the hunger of wildcat, wings of kestrel, and with possession of my granddaughter's granddaughter, to see what we have lost returned. My heart will be a cistern brimming with rainwater—drinkable rain. She will not know my name, though she bears the new forest about her, the forest so grand. (p. 273)

Ray knows that a legacy of ruination can be redeemed, that fragments of venerable old growth forest can be re-imagined into being, that the land can rebound. "When we say the South will rise again we can mean that we will allow the cutover forests to return to their former grandeur and pine plantations to grow wild" (p. 272). But she also knows that the promised land is not a given; the redemption of the Southern landscape will not happen without a fight.

> In new rebellion we stand together, black and white, urbanite and farmer, workers all, in keeping Dixie. We are a patient people who for generations have not been ousted from this land, and we are willing to fight for the birthright of our children's children, to be of a place, in all ways, for all time. (p. 272)

Nor will it happen without changing our ways. Ray reminds us that "all of our names are written on the deed to rapacity" (p. 272), offering hard words for those of us who live in, and are complicitous with, the desolation of the South. But Ray knows the redeeming capacity of right living, of living a vision of Bellahland. In *Ecology of a Cracker Childhood*, she offers a vision of healing not only the degradation of the landscape, but also the economic and social injustices of the South and the wider fragmented nature of our lives. Through healing the land, and our relationship to the land, we heal our communities and ourselves. In the story of her making whole a disjunctive life and in the demand upon the reader to make whole the intercalated text, we have object lessons in how we might re-imagine the southern land made whole and, at the same time, the human spirit elevated.

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The Individualized Society

by Zygmunt Bauman

Published by Polity Press (Cambridge, UK), 2001, 259 pages.£35 (paper)

Reviewed by Yusef J. Prögler

Academic disciplines in the West are facing a crisis of meaning. Traditional approaches to knowledge construction and maintenance in the Western acad-

emy, rooted in 19th century intellectual and institutional norms, are increasingly coming to be seen by many observers as outdated and irrelevant in contemporary social contexts. Several recent trends are contributing to this crisis, including increased privatization of academic institutions, broader availability of academic information via the Internet, and the global media emerging as a transnational guiding and legitimizing force above and beyond traditional institutions of higher learning.

Careful observers will recognize that this is not the first time the Western academy has faced a crisis of meaning. During the 19th century, Euro-American natural and social scientists had the world figured out according to a paradigm rooted in white supremacy and essentialism, seeing Europe as the epitome of human civilization and ranking other peoples and societies on a descending scale. But when Europe exploded into a horrific frenzy of murder and mayhem during World War I, killing millions of its own people in the most barbarous and savage ways imaginable and on a scale never witnessed in human history, the 19th century model crumbled, leaving many intellectuals to lament "the decline of the West."

Between the Western World Wars, a new paradigm emerged that made a concerted effort to avoid the hierarchical moralizing of the 19th century. Scientists of all stripes began to indulge in relativism, which taught that all natural and social phenomena are relative to the time and place in which they occur. This distinctive 20th century paradigm became a haven for academics who felt a new-found sense of purpose. But when Europe convulsed again into another orgy of death and destruction at mid-century, absolute relativism began to lose its appeal. Many observers noted that relativism was amoral, and called for renewing essentialism. As the debate between essentialism and relativism became increasingly convoluted and self-serving, academics on all sides lost track of developments in the world.

By the time these events fully unfolded at the turn of the millennium, a generation or more of non-Western peoples had already been seeking Western academic knowledges. While their presence challenged the old essentialism and raised questions about relativism, now that the West is in the midst of yet another crisis of academic purpose, it becomes feasible for all involved to anticipate a possible paradigm shift. This seems particularly necessary for non-Western peoples who still insist on seeking traditional Western knowledges despite their colonial legacy. To the extent that people still look toward the West for meaning and purpose in higher education, careful reflection on the current crisis may pave the way to rejuvenate indigenous ways of knowing, and it may also revive academic purpose in the West. One way to do this is to seek out and learn from Western mavericks.

Zygmunt Bauman's life spans most of the 20th century, and his career as a sociologist has weathered several paradigm shifts and shows no signs of waning. From Warsaw to Leeds, with stints in many major Western academic metropoles, Bauman seems ideally situated to evaluate the current crisis. Fully conversant with social theories from modernists like Weber and Parsons to postmodernists like Foucault and Baudrillard, Bauman nevertheless seems able to see through the distractions and formulate a clear picture of the current academic crisis. He has set down this task in several books, such as *Globalization: The Human Consequences* (1999), *Liquid Modernity* (2000) and, more recently, *The Individualized Society*.

As a collection of essays, speeches, and addresses, *The Individualized Society* brings together some of Bauman's most vibrant thinking on a variety of topics ranging from politics and morality to education. The collection is divided into three overlapping sections: The Way We Are, The Way We Think, and The Way We Act. His rhetorical style, at times rigorous and at other times casual, is always engaging and accessible, and he has a distinct ability to cut through the distractions and provide a clear, optimistic, and forward-thinking critique of social systems. The essays are bound together by several broad questions, such as: Why do people shift their attention away from their real problems and take refuge in distractions? How do supposedly rational beings divert the energy of their life's anxieties away from their

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causes? What are the reasons for not reaching beyond the subjective self?

Beyond asking such questions about social knowledge, Bauman's work sets the framework for posing important questions about the crisis of meaning in education. In a chapter entitled Local Orders, Global Chaos, Bauman tracks the emergence of a new global ruling elite whose power is derived from mobility. In the 19th century, power was defined by stability, with the power elite building vast edifices to themselves and their nations, investing capital, labor, and intellect in long-term projects, industries, and governing structures. Subordinates to this system, whether they were factory workers, students, or colonial functionaries, were bound to the same system as their overlords, both parties intertwined in elaborate regimes of law, regulation, and inspection. But power in the age of "liquid modernity" has eschewed this solidity of the past and now seeks to be utterly free of all constraints. In such a scheme, which Bauman sees as a key feature of postmodern globalism, one finds the "devaluation of order as such" and that "order becomes the index of powerlessness and subordination." He describes this new feature as "the revenge of the nomads," overturning orthodox sociological assumptions that sedentary peoples come to subjugate mobile peoples. It is now the mobile who rule, and the new global order (perhaps "disorder" is a more apt term) can be seen as a way of eliminating all constraints of time and space to free up the global ruling elite (with its intellect and capital) from all boundaries, conceptual as well as national. This new cyber-elite consists of those who have developed the "confidence to dwell in disorder" and the ability to "flourish in the midst of dislocation." They have mastered the art of "positioning oneself in a network of possibilities rather than paralyzing oneself in one particular job," and their works are indicated by the "willingness to destroy what one has made" and then "to let go, if not to give."

At the intersection of postmodern psychological and educational thinking lies the web of identity. For Bauman, "identity in the globalizing world" is distinguished by a process of "individualization" that carries with it "the emancipation of the individual from the ascribed, inherited, and inborn determination of his or her social character." He links this individualized freedom to create and re-create oneself

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with the emerging media-fed global consumer culture, in which shopping (for products, identities, moralities) becomes the defining feature. Such an individual has no need for long-term commitments, whether they be commitments to religion, marriage, or nation, and instead becomes part of a class of drifting free agents continually in search of the latest fad or fashion, never needing to settle for long.

As school shootings continue to tempt technocrats to tighten the carcerial regime of public education, violence becomes an important point of contention. Bauman develops his discussion of "violence, old and new" by looking at definitions of violence, and related terms such as terrorism, and showing that they are contested concepts. The power of the United States, for example, is in its self-proclaimed mandate to define what is violence and what is not:

> The essence of all power is the right to define with authority, and the major stake of the power struggle is the appropriation or retaining of the right to define and, no less importantly, of the right to invalidate and ignore the definitions coming from the adversary camp.

Thus, for instance, Palestinians are terrorists simply because America and its surrogate in Zionist Israel say they are, and American power is defined by maintaining the ability to normalize and enforce such definitions on a global scale. While he takes time to elaborate on the features of the emerging global (dis)order, Bauman brings this all to bear on one of most powerful essays in the collection, Education: Under, For and In Spite of Postmodernity. While in the modernizing countries, universities "may still play the traditional role of factories supplying a heretofore missing educated elite," universities in the West will need to "rethink their role in a world that has no use for their traditional services, sets new rules for the game of prestige and influence, and views with growing suspicion the values they stood for." Bauman suggests that universities have become slow to respond to a hyper-changing world, noting that by the time graduates finish a course of study, the knowledge they gain may already have become obsolete. Meanwhile, after the "scientifically assisted horrors" of the 20th century, faith in the humanizing potential of Western science "seems laughably, perhaps even criminally, naïve." While many 19th and 20th century academic traditions used to be coveted assets for creating meaning in Western universities, they have become liabilities in a world that is more fluid and tentative. In order for universities to survive, Bauman suggests that they will need to develop creative responses to the emerging global (dis)order and that the best way to maintain their sense of meaning and purpose is to elaborate upon their current diversity of opinions, methodologies, and curricula.

Each essay in this collection is equally provocative, whether Bauman is talking about labor, security, progress, poverty, faith, love, or democracy. In each case, he cites with ease fellow travelers on the path of understanding the emerging paradigm shift in the meanings of social knowledge, but the work is not weighed down with alienating academic jargon or imposing lists of references. However, in a strange sort of way, what Bauman describes, which is basically limited to Western social contexts, begins to sound more and more like the ordinary lives of most of humanity—tentative lives that are fraught with insecurity, instability and uncertainty. So this is indeed a crisis of the West and ought to be seen as such, but at the same time it may create bonds of meaning over time and across cultures.

The value of such a work to non-Western peoples can be in helping to rethink their century-long obsession with mimicking the West as the only solution to life's problems and the only path to future prosperity. For those who are still committed to the mantra "West is Best," books like this will be a rather rude awakening, but may help to reconsider long-held allegiances to Western systems that are now being reconfigured from within. For those who have always been more skeptical of the Western imposition of its thought and action on the world, such books ought to help define the parameters of the emerging struggles for normative distinctions between what is right and what is best for the future of humanity. On both counts, *The Individualized Society* may prove to be a worthwhile and useful contribution.