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Democracy

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Democracy

Peter Breysse,
Address

I

the writings of Marx (Huebner, 1997, Frien, 1998)… "Neo conservative approach" (Ubbelohde, 1997, p.22)
technology and scientific advancement (Dagget, 2000, p.1)
"tools of colonization"(Hutchinson,1998)
antiassimilationist (Hutchinson, 1998)
elitist systems (Glasser, 1990)
collectively shaping society
male and female
words of politics echo
through readings
John Dewey's progressivism (Hutchison, 1998)
authentic practice (Hutchinson, 1998)
secular
non repression (Pamental, 1998)
biblical perspective (Steensma, 1977, VanBrummelen, 1977)
democracy
deliberative
voices personal yet
political.
maybe it's the season
elections…absentees
phone trees and attack ads
debates
or maybe it's
Kristalnacht
HUAC
Salem
Stalin
J Edgar Hoover
Malcolm X and Martin Luther King Jr.

II
i fear politics
yes I know
a child of privilege
white…european…male
middle class
educated private parochial school
i am a product of
beneficiary of
even practitioner of
even consciously perhaps of
oppression
politics balanced all in my favor
heavy fulcrum holding in place
women
cultures
the poor
the culture weighted heavily to my side
designed to nurture
picture
listen to
encourage
my story
my people
a colonist
assimilationist
so do I fear loss of identity?
Centrality of images?
"the invisible knapsack of privilege?" (McIntosh,1989, p.10)
control of language?
constructs that make sense to me? (Stout-Henning, 1994)
maybe it's ideology:
marxist/neo marxist
that I fear?

III

i am a lover of
family
God
poetry
and freedom… i do love
democracy
choice
justice
choice
nurture
my God demands nurture
my heart cherishes nurture
my God died for nurture
and yes, I fear religion
like politics
and words like
crusade
inquisition
jihad
hierarchy
the stake

IV

somewhere I heard
attributed some Greek… that all of
life is a political activity
but I work at the level of instruction
and think of curriculum as skills
a body of literature
or anything they’ll actually read
respond to
make part of their life
and my politics are
that to teach is to nurture (Kerr, 1996)
each is not only a student
but is also a child of God
full of life
deserving dignity
respect
lovable and loving…
my curriculum says that they need to write well
to deliberate well
to know/tell their story well
to have ideas
to give them…Shape
Sentence…Paragraph…to be equipped for?
whatever they choose
and my curriculum is that literature
is life
and difficult
and beautiful…i try to leave my joy
of well crafted…Fiction
Images…Poetry…Drama…Metaphor
as a sort of aftertaste
or echo
which will linger
or resound…
someday **Leaves Of Grass** may be there
shelved and mute yet
so necessary
and only the memory of a voice
a passion
a teacher who loved
may linger just long enough
that the book may be opened
and a "barbaric yawp" sounded…sounded (Whitman,1973, p.96)
above the voices of bang and blab
or
the quiet soft voice of a woman all in white
nobody really
invites only one
to be two and so inspires…
reverie. (Dickinson,1960)

**IV**

there are larger issues
things proscribed or described
required or banned
politics is all about power
and I fear power
no matter who wields it.
even me…the power in my voice
and its passion
can bring literature to life
but it can also
and has also
Hurt
Children
and if I
a lover of children
choice
freedom
choice
community
justice
choice
and poetry
can abuse my small power
well…what of someone else?
heck I've been hurt…been
in a minority
felt the fear
felt the taunts
and blows of a stronger majority…
i teach to give children the power
to withstand alone
or to stand with others
to survive the hurt
to never hurt back
(another curriculum I guess)

V

in my world there are so many voices…clamoring…
demanding…so many things
so many politics if you will
of gender and race
of culture and identity
of marriage and family
of judeo-christian values and yes
neo-marxist critical pedagogy
choices
often at odds
each claiming the words
Freedom
Justice
Opportunity…they cannot all be right?

VI

and so I guess
for this poem
for this class
i finally come to
democracy…and some values of democracy
(i grew up to believe/to dream that america was
democracy…later I came to hear Langston Hughes playing
the" boogie-woogie rumble of a dream
defered") (1990, p.221)
Freedom
Respect
Justice
Opportunity
Deliberation
Responsibility
Choice
can I teach?
can I grade?
and be democratic? i think so?
maybe? i can
" facilitate
democratic behavior" (Wile, 2000 p.171)
and begin with choice
with multiple ways to manifest learning: (Gardner, 1993)
drawings and dances
designs and drama
music and lyric
and i can hope for
Voice (Keeson 1999)
(demonstrate mine to encourage theirs)
so necessary for growth of Story
for Nurture (Kerr, 1996)
Nurturing
Sharing
to nurture the Voices
to listen to their Stories
to share the Power to earn
which involves Choice
inspires Voice
results in
Reflection (Gardner, 1996)
Nurtures " learning community" (Meier, 1993, p.180))
which is
Authentic
to their lived in world
Equipping
" for later experiences of a deep
more expansive
quality" (Dewey, 1938, p.47)
" providing what they need to become
willing
able
active
participants in a Democratic society"(Wile, 2000, p. 172).
tis a consummation
devoutly to be wished

References


