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Journal of Pedagogy, Pluralism and Practice
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Lesley College Diversity Day:
Keynote Speech, October 1996
Cornel West

I'd like to thank my friend, Sam Turner, for that generous introduction. I am inspired to be here on this great day in the history of this grand institution. I'd like to thank my new friend and sister, the courageous and visionary captain of this ship, President Margaret McKenna. It is true that when Jennifer asked me to come to Lesley, I said yes because Jennifer, I'd do anything you say. She's that wise. Her father, mother and her brother and sister mean so much to me.

I stand before you this morning as but a small part of a great and grand tradition. And this day, in part, has to do with how we can connect with that tradition. In fact, I was speaking earlier with a Lesley College graduate who is a new member of the staff at Harvard in the Afro-American Studies Department, Sister Jill Salk, and I said, "Oh, really? You know your old institution is going to be linking with a tradition of struggle." And she said, "I've been to Lesley, and we are well acquainted with that tradition. Nothing new to us."

In all seriousness, it is a tradition of struggle, the struggle for decency and dignity, the struggle for freedom and democracy. We are reminded by that towering high-brow modernist poet and reactionary figure, that great wisdom but wrong in his political views. I am talking about the great T.S. Eliot. That means you can learn from anybody. You can be wise and reactionary at the same time. Eliot said that tradition is not something you inherit. If you want it, you must obtain it with great labor. You've got to fight for a while for a tradition -- and struggle for decency and dignity.

Which means in part that you first must situate yourself in a story bigger, and be able to locate yourself in a narrative grander than you, that will take you outside of yourself. That's very difficult to do in American society - individualistic and narcissistic and hedonistic, inward- looking, navel-gazing. But no, we, you at Lesley today say we are going to wrestle with the most fundamental question of what it means to be human and that is the problem of evil. How will we respond to the history - past and present - of forms of unjustified suffering and unwarranted pain and undeserved harm. To talk about diversity, destiny is talking. It's not simply a question of various peoples of various colors and genders and sexual orientation and physically challenged, and old, somehow coming together and feeling happy about being different. More than that: it's that we have the audacity to cut against the grain of most of human history which is a history of overlooking so many other peoples' suffering and pain and harm.

That's very difficult to do in the latter part of this century. Let's be honest. It's been a ghastly century: over 200 million fellow human beings murdered in the name of some pernicious ideologies that lost track of their humanity. The Nazism at the heart of so-called civilized Europe. Stalinism at the core of so-called emancipatory Soviet Union.

European colonialism and imperialism losing sight of the humanity of brothers and sisters in Asia and Africa. Indigenous peoples in this country. The patriarchy shot across social systems across the board, continued to leave such bruises of sisters of all colors. The homophobia that continues to bruise gay brothers and lesbian sisters. We're not talking about cheap p.c. talk.

We're talking about keeping track of forms of misery, sorrow and sadness, and how we can connect ourselves with others as they struggle against such adverse circumstances and conditions. But it is difficult to keep alive the tradition of struggle that talks about diversity in the latter part of this century, because as you can imagine, many are simply fatigued. They've had it. Turn on the television, read the newspaper - the Middle East - oh my God, here we go again! Another extension of bestial behavior across the board - unable to stay in contact with each other's humanity. Contempt, hatred. Burundi. Guatemala. Burma - let's never forget the sister in Burma right now, struggling. It's a global affair; it's a human affair. A challenge to each and every one of us. That's why it's not a question of simply being a person of color, a member of the working class, or working poor, or being a woman. It is a human question; it's a moral question because the tradition that I'm talking about has always said 'whosoever will, let them come if they're willing' to make certain moral choices, and we all have the capacity to choose - if we're willing to have some convictions, and if we're willing to pay the costs. And that's the most important one. Yet so many people have a wonderful vision of the world. We have a highly sophisticated nuanced and refined analysis of society, but they lack the courage to follow through and to treat people right. So it becomes like sounding brass and tinkering symbols. Emptiness, vacuous; it's not for real.

The tradition that I'm talking about, as always noted, it will be imperfect people who will constitute that tradition. That means that we look inside ourselves as much as outside. The great Tolstoy used to say: there's so many people who want to change the world, and so few who want to change themselves! He's absolutely right. In fact, I would recommend to all you wonderfully intellectually curious students here to read Tolstoy's 1882 text Confession where he reflects on how difficult it was for him to fully accept the humanity of peasants and serfs who worked for him because he was a count. Count Leo Tolstoy! When he fundamentally accepted their humanity, his world turned upside down, even though he had been fighting for their cause for many, many years. It is a struggle!

And to talk about race and gender and sexual orientation is to talk about the evil in us. I often encounter white brothers and sisters who tell me, oh, Brother West, you know I'm not like Mark Furman. I'm not a racist at all. I've gone beyond that. I say, oh really? I say, I'm a black man, and if there's some white supremacy in me, my hunch is there's still a little in you. A woman living ina patriarchal society: if there's a little male supremacy in sisters of all colors, then I know there's some male supremacy in brothers of all colors. Gay brothers, lesbian sisters, the homophobia in them is not a question. Being pure and pristine, and somehow being untainted by these vicious forces of history, because we all are so deeply shaped by them, the question is are we willing to struggle against it, and to unite with others such that we can have impact on a larger level. That's what we've been talking about. Reread Nathaniel Hawthorne's Young Goodman Brown -- wrestling with

that evil on the inside and how it connects with the larger institutional and structural forces of evil on the so-called 'outside'.

How difficult it is to talk about it. That's why it is fighting precedent for Lesley pause, to take this time out, a ki*nd of chy*ros moment - you know a meaning-infused moment separate from your everyday routine - and say, let me reflect on the most fundamental question of what it means to be human. Oh, how difficult that is in America.

Culture. Henry James called us a "hotel civilization". That's one of the reasons why he left and went to Britain. He said American culture is too thin, it's too impoverished; they don't want to wrestle with the most fundamental question of what it means to be human. It's a hotel civilization, preoccupied with comfort and convenience and contentment. Everybody wants to be Disneyland-like. That's what a hotel is, isn't it? Some place so clean and manicured. You don't know who's doing the work. You leave your room, it's dirty and when you show up it's clean. You don't see the laborers. You don't know what they struggle through. Hotels: that fusion of the home and market - how American.

How could you talk about the problem of evil in a civilization in which its basic pillars are home as haven and market heartless world, cut-throat competition? Who has time to think about the vicious legacies of white supremacy and male supremacy, the vast class and economic inequality in such a money-making, profit-taking culture? Our great artists have always reminded us that we have to have something profoundly un-American to wrestle with the problem of evil, namely, a sense of history, a sense of history. The history of that family, that haven as it were, that we often idealize and romanticize, what does the great Eugene O'Neill tell us about the Tyrone Family of Long Day's Journey into Night? America is a city on the hill where the sun's shining? No. Eugene says, let's do some deep-sea diving in the darkness, cutting against the American grain. Tennessee Williams tells us about the Wingfield family, or Lorraine Hansbury tells us about the Younger family. Glass Menagerie, A Raisin in the Sun - our artists trying to convince us that the problem of evil is shot through our institutions, even as we often would rather live lives of denial and evasion, and avoidance. And so the same with the market...the quest for liquidity and mobility. We see the problem, we can run from it. If you have a problem with civilization, strike out on the frontier. Just go, go, go!

Ralph Waldo Emerson gave his famous American Scholar address in this very church. He used to say 'everything good is on the highway.' Everything good on the highway, when you're moving. That word "mobility" is probably the second most American word in the English language. Just move. Nigger's number one. Moving away from! Cause they're immobile, stuck in slavery, stuck in Jim Crow. They can't move. Well, they can actually move, but they can't get about spatially. They do a lot of movement with their bodies, but that won't get them there. Mobility. The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn. Huck, that one 'raft' won't land for long because civilization is spelled with an 's'. But there's Jim there. History. Breaking the law. Huck's runaway slave, what ya gonna do? Ahab on that Pequod, Moby Dick - in one sense, trying to put at arm's length. Society constituting a microcosm of that society on the ship itself: to do what? To conquer that white whale. Of course, the whiteness of the whale is not simply a metaphysical construct, given the

centrality of white supremacy in 1851 when that text was written. A powerful critique leading to what? Self-destruction. Jack Kerouac - On the Road. William Carlos Williams want the variable foot, not the fixed foot in his very American poetry. Wanting to move. And there's nothing wrong with it. Wanting to move if you are not running away from, wrestling with, struggling with evil.

But if it's simply a mode of questioning, as I mentioned before, - in fact we know no democracy can survive without heroic energies of citizens who are wrestling with various legacies of personal and institutional evil. And if there's one fundamental hypothesis I want to float out this morning, and you all can slice it up, interrogate, question it, unsettle it - but I'm going to float it out: that there should be no discourse about diversity without its connection to democracy. Diversity in and of itself can become idolatrous, ahistorical and cathartic without some rooting in a democratic ideal that says there's some end and aim for our concern about diversity. Because democracy is about a critique of those forms of hierarchy that associate people who are different with degradation. We're trying to decouple difference and degradation. And we're trying to insure that if we have hierarchies, for those at the top will have some accountability for those at the bottom because democracy is fundamentally about individual responsibility, mutual respect, and social accountability. Yet, you can have a whole lot of diversity in undemocratic conditions. Who wants that? The question is what is the moral content of our discussion about diversity? What are the political consequences of our talk about diversity? And we say the exact same thing about identity. Talking about identity: I am black. I am from California. I am Chekhovian, intellectually. I have a lot of identities, don't I? Certain ones become salient if you get hit upside the head by the police. Then I take out my racial identity. I better check in on that one! I get in arguments with those who would trash Chekhov. I say this is my intellectual identity, I must struggle. My religious identity: I'm a Christian. A number of different identities must be pluralized.

But the question is: what is the moral content of that identity? I know a lot of black folk who have a lot of problems with it. We might catch hell together because of the legacy of white supremacy, but we still have deep disagreements. I know a lot of Christians, like Brother Ralph Reed (God bless him and be with him), I have deep disagreements with, but we still have a similar Christian identity. But the question is: how do we link our talk about diversity with some moral vision, some social analysis and some way of mustering the courage to follow through on what we are talking about. That's one of the reasons why the sense of history that I invoked earlier is so varied. Any discussion of diversity for me has to do with the various contexts in which we find ourselves. And for me, multicontexturalism is as or more important as multiculturalism. You have to be able to move from one context to the next, and preserve your sense of who you are, but be able to shape that context in such a way that it accents the democratic stabilities in these contexts. It means also we have to have a knowledge of the larger historical context.

As we gather today, I submit to you that we're living in one of the most frightening and terrifying moments in the history of this country. It has much to do with a certain, not so much complacency as a certain sense that we fundamentally solved a problem of diversity; or are we so far along that we ought to feel good about ourselves. We've made

so much progress. And it's true, we have progress: if I were standing here and you were sitting here 30 years ago, it would be a very, very different situation, wouldn't it? White supremacy had a different form. Male supremacy a different form. Class inequality. I'm saying, in part, that all this talk about progress can be misleading. Malcolm X used to say you don't stab a man in the back nine inches and pull it out three inches and say you're making progress. We have to be honest about the movement owing to vision, analysis, courage, of so many brothers and sisters of all colors.

But let's look at this present moment, the context in which we gather in this country, and see how it relates to diversity and democracy, keeping in mind that democracies are very rare in human history, and they tend not to last that long. America is the oldest surviving democracy in the world, showing signs of running out of gas. Usually when democracies begin to unravel, there are two fatal viruses: poverty and paranoia. Increasing poverty generating escalating levels of despair. No democracy can survive with escalating levels of despair of the poor who feel they have very little stake within the society or economy, and therefore expressing their rage. There will never be enough police and prisons to deal with that avalanche of despair. And then paranoia. An increase in paranoia generating escalating levels of distrust. No democracy can survive with increasing distrust among its citizens, especially on racial, gender and class lines that balkanize and fragment and segment the body politic so that we feel as if we are not in this together; that we feel as if somehow we can go in our own privatistic and individualistic ways that cultivate our gardens. ? No democracy can survive their citizens feeling their fundamental duty is to cultivate their private gardens, and devalue and debase public interest and common good. Fragmented. When I look at U.S.A. in 1996, I can see signs of this unraveling. To talk about diversity is in part to talk about the future survival of democracy.

What evidence do I see? First, the economic front; the relative decline of the well-being of the majority of American citizens. Yet, in most of our public conversation, we listen to our candidates running for office, trying to convince us that the economy is stronger now than it's been in 30 years, that we ought to be proud of our achievements and accomplishments. And you say that the economy has been strong - for who? For the top 20% , yes, I understand. The top 1% are euphoric; I thoroughly understand. But what about the majority of fellow citizens of all colors wrestling with stagnating and declining wages? They know the 205% increase in profits of American corporations, and a 499% increase in the salaries of CEO's, but their wages are still dipping, and their family income is hardly holding on because in so many cases, both wife and husband are working. That generates deep anxiety and insecurity which is the worst thing that can happen in a democracy among 80%. Because that anxiety and insecurity tends to promote this all-too-human proclivity to want to scapegoat the most vulnerable. It looks as if things are out of control. Maybe if we turn to those who are marginal and blame them, then maybe I'll be able to gain some handle over my seemingly uncontrollable situation. No democracy can survive with the racist scapegoating across the board of such a large number. Maybe it's the immigrants. If we keep them out, that will keep the economy in tact. Things that accommodate the antagonism. How long have you been here? Well, I'm third generation. I'm glad great-great- grandmother got here. I think I'll just close it up now. No men and women: let's put the women back in the kitchen; that's the problem.

Because so many of them are in the labor force now they no longer provide the spaces for the men. Men need to have good jobs in order to be good fathers and the economic backbone of the community. You think in fact that by suppressing the talents and imagination and intelligence of 53% of the population that we can actually have a grand democratic project? No! It's the gay brothers and lesbian sisters, that's the problem. They stepped out of the closet and civilization began to disintegrate. Four or five percent: that's the group that did it.

Or traditional scapegoats: the suffering which constitutes the precondition for the flowering of American democracy. The subordination of people of color. The prerequisite for the flourishing of American democracy. Malcolm X called the victims of American democracy, and Malcolm X was never subject to the charge that we hear from conservative thinkers these days when engaging in victimology. He always saw subordinated peoples as agents in the world; that he was going to keep track of the victimization and constituted the very thing they were fighting against. That 's very different; very different. The black folk, the brown folk, yellow folk as scapegoats. They make such special pleas, especially those black folk. 244 years of slavery, and they're back serving as part the foundation for the nation. After 81 years of Jim and Jane Crow, segregation and second-class citizenship went hand in hand with American democracy. The American apartheid in the South and other parts - after such a history they then become scapegoats. 'I lost my job because of black folk' You lost your job because the factory left. Who owns the factory? -
- Black folk, no. Affirmative action, that's what did it. Took my job and they got an unqualified black person in it. How many black folk in your workplace? Oh, about 3 out of 82. They're taking over, aren't they?

Of course, then, there's the same debate over higher education. State of California. Going to shambles: non-meritocratic criteria. I say, well, what are you going to do? Let's take Harvard itself, given that it's right across the street. It had 18,000 applications, 1800 slots, what are you going to do? 4000 meet the minimal qualifications. 14000 don't make the cut, and that's just the first cut. Well, it's hard to do. And they say, 'we're going to make sure we get highly qualified students, we'll choose only from among those 4000. And they start with alumni sons and daughters. Very meritocratic, isn't it? It's part of a natural lottery born to a Harvard grad -- you got a jump start for life. Harvard's got a long history. In fact, I would argue that probably some institutional continuity ought play some role. But let's be honest. Harvard then moves to regional diversity. We don't want to be an institution where 95% of our students come from Washington, D.C., Connecticut, New York, and Massachusetts. We want some people from Idaho, Arizona, Oregon. We want to be cosmopolitan in our student body. If I say that's fine, that's just wonderful, but not necessarily meritocratic. They've already met the minimal qualifications. Then they move to athletes. They say we don't give out any scholarships, but we know that in higher education there is some peculiar practice that says that the collective self-definition of the institution depends in part on how well their athletic teams do. We don't want a football team that loses game after game after game. That humiliates students. Then, that's difficult for the community to read Shakespeare and Toni Morrison. Field hockey, we can work with that. Football, basketball, no, no no. So you bring in the athletes. Still non-

meritocratic in terms of academic excellence, but they meet minimal qualifications. And then after the 1960s, President McKenna can tell you how intense those days were. It was not just a civil rights movement: there was a war going on: 329 rebellions in 257 cities; 212 uprisings on one night, April 4, 1968. There was a war going on. The National Guard protecting the White House for the first time since the Civil War. The elites at the top said, 'I think we might have a problem. I think maybe we should reconsider and let some of these folk in. Become more diverse.' Not just diverse. It's more democratic in terms of access of those who meet minimal qualifications. We had brilliant women...couldn't get in. Brilliant black folk...couldn't get in. Afterwards those challenges in 1990, we focused on these black folk gaining access. Why? Because it violates the meritocratic practice. They're targeted. Some of the black students appear on campus - there goes one of those affirmative action beneficiaries - look at them, there they go! It started in Texas: 99 white brothers and sisters who have a board score lower than the person who was promoting the suit, but she focused on the black folk. 99 white ones, that's not important, but I want that black one. That's the one; that's my slot that she got.

What's going on? Scapegoating. The most vulnerable situation, we find ourselves in. A situation which, it is true, that the vast majority of us are wrestling with intense competition, increasing wealth and income inequality, and fearful that we may become one out of five fellow citizens in our economy who work more than 40 hours a week who do not receive one penny from the federal government - we call the working poor. Increasing all the time - their plight invisible. Tremendous challenge.

The economic front is inseparable, but by no means identical with the cultural front. By *the cultural* front I mean the most precious dimension of any society is the quality of its systems of caring and nurturing. It has a tremendous impact on young people. What is most frightening about our day is we are witnessing the relative erosion of the system of caring and nurturing, with devastating impact on children. And it's not just the fractured family; it's the fractured neighborhood; the fractured community; the waning influence of civic institutions: church, mosques, and synagogues, and citizens' organizations.

And no democracy can survive without putting a premium on caring and nurturing, especially the young. Why is that so, you can imagine, is another lecture, seminar, book, volumes. Quickly, I think it has much to do with the fact that we live more and more in a culture so shaped by intense bombardment of market forces that leads to market morality that are hedonistic and narcissistic, and market mentalities that want to gain access to pleasure now and power now, and property now, that create, what is most frightening, which is "gangsterized" dispositions. So, the ultimate logic of a market culture is the gangsterization of culture. Everybody out for their own, trying to get over, regardless of what the moral standards are, regardless of how you relate to others. And if you can imagine, I'm not just talking about gangster rap. Brother Shakur who reflects and refracts a larger cultural atmosphere of people trying to get over any way they can, gaining access to their pleasure, whether they're abusing other people's bodies or not - usually women's bodies - gaining access to power, whether by law or not, or gaining access to property, sometimes your property which we have to take now. Scared. In such a culture, increasing fear of violent attack and vicious assault and cruel insult because we begin to

lose the very art of how to relate to one another as fellow citizens, and fellow human beings.

Or another way to put this is, in a market culture, publicness, or public spaces are devalued. Look at public education; public health care; public transportation, they're held at arms length. Look at the quality of public conversation. I'm not just talking about Brother Rush. Can't blame it all on Rush Limbaugh. This fellow human being is symptomatic of the problem of the difficulty of engaging in high-quality conversation of Rush and others because we're affected by the larger culture. It's more difficult to deal with our anger and aggression than mediate it with some respectful talk with fellow human beings and fellow citizens. It affects each and every one of us. I'm saying, in part, that on this cultural front without promoting non-market values in our market culture, then our talk about diversity and democracy becomes more and more empty. Because at the very core of our talk about diversity and democracy are non-market values like love, caring and empathy, especially empathy, i.e., conceiving of what it's like to be in the skin of other people, to walk a mile in their shoes before you engage in your devastating critique. Nothing wrong with criticism; must play a crucial role. But will the criticism be enabling? Will it be empowering?

One of the reasons why it's so very difficult to talk about race in America is in part because it's difficult to talk about any evil; but also because we feel as if once we enter into the conversation, we won't be empowered. We'll be convicted. Or we won't be enabled. We'll be paralyzed, so why engage? In part because we lose more and more of the art of public conversation. The wonderful book by the great John Dewey written in 1927 called The Public and its Problem, says show me a democracy that is unable to engage in candid, critical, high-quality communication with itself about its public problems, and I'll show you a democracy sliding down the slope to anarchy and chaos. That's 1927! It's amazing. What a challenge in 1996. But without non-market values, it's going to be difficult to engage in dialogue. And by dialogue I mean what Martin Buber meant. You all read I and Thou. You ought to be a little different when you leave dialogue than when you entered because you've listened; you've been challenged; you've been unsettled. You've been provoked. That's dialogue! Not chit-chat; not evasive exchange. That's dialogue, and it also ought to hurt a little bit.

In fact, talking about race and gender, difficult as it is, there might be some tears that will flow. There might be a little rage that spills over, because if you're honest about it, if you're most successful which is to allow the other to open up and become vulnerable such that the depths of who they are can be affected, then there might be some non-rational aspects to the dialogue. Just like a love affair. If it's all rational, you've got a problem. A big problem. I don't want this argument, honey. I want empowerment. I want affirmation. I want affection. I want connection. Maybe I want something of a non-market sort. I want some gentleness and tenderness and kindness. Smile at me as we converse. Believe in my potential to change, even though it looks as if I'm stuck. That's how conversation takes place. Conversation is the very life-blood of democracy. If we can't talk to one another, how can we even think about solving the complex problem. No one of us has the solution. Democracy is about proximate solutions to insoluble problems. Because human

history tells us there will always be new problems, new forms of hierarchy, new needs to account for elites.

Elites are so clever. They're so clever You have 1% of the population right now that owns 36% of the household wealth. How can you insure that they have civic responsibility? The tax code doesn't work - too many loopholes; they're too clever. Their lawyers are too sharp. Continual need for accountability, both for ourselves and everyone else. Non-market values: empathy, sympathy, care, nurture, sacrifice.

The economic front, the cultural front, we've come to the political front. What do we see more and more? Pessimism and fatalism and cynicism. And cynicism anyway is an understandable response. Cynicism is in part a perception of the situation, the dangers, and one wants to avoid humiliation, and therefore one holds back, and identifies with aggression. So one can be on the attack, and not have to be on the defensive being attacked. So let's be cynical. It becomes a near- slogan. I'm not just talking about jealousy. We're very good at it. How do we look at this cynicism and pessimism and fatalism and say, look, we're part of a tradition of struggle, and of those who came before that said that talk about diversity must be linked to democracy; and even though it's a very dark and difficult moment, that we still have a chance because we have each other. We have grand ideals, we've got some analysis, and we've got some courage. That's been the plight of all persons who have tried to be, in the language of John Coltrane, a force for good, even at a time when it seems that the good is relatively impotent, helpless and powerless.

I like President McKenna's talk about hope because I think that's so important. If we have a sense of history, a tragic-comic sense of history, not sentimental or melodramatic, with all the good on one side and the bad on the other, or one group having a monopoly on truth, but an attempt to generate heroic energy against limits we know not of, but we know there are limits. And there must be some sense of the comic because if we can't laugh at ourselves, then we're not doing something right. Our own incongruities and contradictions with that sense of history expanding the scope of it, putting the stress on courage. And let me say one footnote about courage. Frederick Nietsche reminds us, and he's absolutely right, that courage is not simply a matter of standing up for your convictions , but it's also having the courage to attack your convictions. You could be wrong, and it takes courage to admit that, so that what you do stand up for has to have some real ethical substance to it, because you listen to other people long enough and you're open enough to the counter-arguments against your point, even allow people's hearts and souls to affect your heart and soul.

But hope is so crucial. And I must say I do not believe that hope and optimism are the same thing. I am in no way optimistic about the human adventure in the 21st century? Not at all. The 21st century could be as barbaric as the 20th. You've got a global capitalism looking for profits all around the globe, focusing on cheap labor markets. We've got growing tribalized mentalities. We've got "gangsterization" going on in everyday life as well as in high office. Those are the very threats to any democratic project. Security systems going up all around the country; closed- in neighborhoods: what

would lead any rational human being to think there's enough evidence that would allow us to infer that things are going to get better if we keep doing what we're doing. But I am a prisoner of hope, like Ms. President, and a prisoner of hope says, "I know the evidence looks flimsy, but I'll make the leap of faith beyond the evidence by energizing and galvanizing fellow citizens and fellow human beings to keep alive this tradition of struggle for decency and dignity; to keep a dialogue about diversity linked to democracy alive, even in times in which it looks as if it is foolish or sheer folly, it still is worth fighting for, because it's right and moral and just."

And it's not a question of numbers; I'm not discouraged because the vast number of persons seeming to think that this tradition of struggle - this democratic tradition that I'm talking about - is somehow peripheral. It's a question of having enough people with vision, integrity, character, a sense of sacrifice, to keep that tradition alive. The great T.S. Eliot used to say that ours is in the trying; the rest is not our business. The Four Quartets. He's right. So many people who want to engage in the discourse they want people to be transformed overnight, as if they are a kind of savior because usually they're bringing the grace with it. They've got the insight. And we're reminded that if you're going to be part of this tradition, you better be a long-distance runner.

Another text that I recommend before I stop, as the Turkish philosopher told Candide at the very end of Candide, 'hold your tongue and shut your mouth! Said enough.' There's a book called The Long Haul by Miles Horton. Miles Horton is one of the great prophetic figures of this century. He's a white brother from Appalachia. (We say Appalaachia, they say Appalahchia.) He was in that struggle, the same black freedom struggle referred to earlier for over 65 years, and he said you have to be in it for the long haul. It's not just a question of one day of dialogue, or one week of dialogue, it's being connected and bonded to this tradition over time. Being affiliated with organizations and institutions; being willing to be organized and organize others, and to mobilize and mobilize others. And Miles would say it is a matter of hope, and that hope has nothing to do with the notion that we're going to save each other, or save the country, or save the world. Not at all. The question of this tradition staying alive should make things a little bit better for those who come after. It has so much to do with my own tradition, but as you can imagine, black folk who looked at America for 363 years have said in many ways this is an absurd place: a land of liberty and opportunity, but slavery; a land of mobility, but Jim Crow; a land of meritocratic standards, but being targeted as always being anti-meritocratic. And, yes, still making that leap of faith beyond the evidence.

My grandmother used to say coming out of the black church, that if the Kingdom of God is within you and everywhere you go, you ought to leave a little bit of heaven behind. Which is, that you ought to check yourself as well as check others. In terms of your ability to fight the evil in you and outside. Yes, it's true that white supremacy in its various forms, no matter how subtle, is still evil, and sexism, and heterosexist. It loses sight of humanity. Yes. But the question in part is whether you, are you treating people right? Are you part of organizations fighting against it? Are you honest and open in your conversation with others in your workplace? That's also a crucial challenge, and that's the challenge l leave with each and every one of you. Today I thank you so very much. I

simply say for those who are willing to meet that challenge, I'll be there with you because I'm going down fighting.

Teaching as Possibility: A Light in Dark Times

Maxine Greene

Borrowing from a bitter poem by Bertolt Brecht, Hannah Arendt entitled a book of essays, Men in Dark Times (1968). The poem, "To Posterity," she explained, spoke of the horrors taking place in the early days of Nazi rule in Germany and of the absence of outrage. Things were covered up, she wrote, by "highly efficient talk and double talk;" and she stressed how important it always is to have a space in which light can be shed on what is happening and what is being said. Granted, our times may not be marked by the kinds of monstrosities associated with the Nazis; but dark times are no rarity, even in American history. In the darkest moments, she wrote, we still "have the right to expect some illumination ...and such illumination may well come less from theories and concepts than from the uncertain, flickering, and often weak light that some men and women, in their lives and their works, will kindle under all circumstances..." (p. ix). I view our times as shadowed by violations and erosions taking place around us: the harm being done to children; the eating away of social support systems; the "savage inequalities" in our schools; the spread of violence; the intergroup hatreds; the power of media; the undermining of arts in the lives of the young. And then I think of the "light that some men and women will kindle under almost all circumstances," and that makes me ponder (and sometimes wonder at) the work that is and might be done by teachers at this problematic moment in our history.

There is doubt, unquestionably, within and outside the schools; and there is dread. The poet Adrienne Rich has written some remarkable poetry about the different kinds of dread experienced by different people. When asked how, in the face of this, she could maintain such an affirmative attitude, she said, "If poetry is forced by the conditions in which it is created to speak of dread and of bitter, bitter conditions, by its very nature, poetry speaks to something different. That's why poetry can bring together those parts of us which exist in dread and those which have the surviving sense of a possible happiness, collectivity, community, a loss of isolation" (Moyers, 1995, p. 342).

Arendt and Rich, each in her distinctive voice, are speaking of the capacity of human beings to reach beyond themselves to what they believe should be, might be in some space they bring into being among and between themselves. The two remind us (by speaking of an uncertain light and of something different) of what it signifies to imagine not what is necessarily probable or predictable, but what may be conceived as possible. All of those who have parented children or taught the young may resonate to this on some level, particularly when they recall the diverse, often unexpected shapes of children's growing and becoming. Many may find a truth in Emily Dickinson's saying that "The Possible's slow fuse is lit/ By the Imagination" (1960, pp. 688-689). Imagination, after all,

allows people to think of things as if they could be otherwise; it is the capacity that allows a looking through the windows of the actual towards alternative realities.

It is obvious enough that arguments for the values and possibilities of teaching acts (no matter how enlightened) within the presently existing system cannot be expressed through poetry, even as it is clear that the notlon of "teaching as possibility" cannot simply be asserted and left to do persuasive work. The contexts have to be held in mind, as does what strikes many of us as a backward leaning, inhumane tendency in our society today. For all the apparent resurgence of Deweyan progressive thinking in the school renewal movement, parent bodies and community representatives in many places are explicitly at odds with what they believe is being proposed. They respond more readily to the media-sustained talk of standards and technology than they do to the idea of multiple patterns of being and knowing, to a regard for cultural differences, to an attentiveness when it comes to voices never listened to before.

Teachers who are consciously and reflectively choosing themselves as participants in school renewal are being challenged to clarify their beliefs and (more and more often) to defend their practices. If the discourse they are developing can be infused with the kinds of metaphor that reorient ordinary common-sense thinking, if they can break through more often what John Dewey called "the crust of conventionalized and routine consciousness" (1954, p. 183) when attention is turned to the school, neighborhood or district discussions may be moved beyond the customary and the self-regarding. If the fears and suffering of local people, some of them feeling themselves to be ignorant and powerless, can be taken into account, what Paulo Freire called a "pedagogy of hope" might even take form (1995), and dialogue of a different sort might take the place of the language of prescription or complaint or demand. If teachers can begin to think of themselves as among those able to kindle the light Arendt described or among those willing to confront the dread and keep alive the sense of "a possible happiness," they might find themselves revisioning their life projects, existing proactively in the world.

Paying heed to the repetitive drumbeat of current concerns--for professional development, standard-setting, authentic assessment, an enriched knowledge base, technological expertise, teachers cannot but occasionally ask themselves "to what end?". There are, of course, the official announcements and prescriptions. There are presumably obvious "goods" linked to each statement of an educational goal. Most often, we realize, the benefits of reform are linked to the nation's welfare, or to market expansion, or to technological dominance in a competitive world. Suppose, however, we were to summon up an articulation of purpose suggested by Rich's "possible happiness, collectivity, community, a loss of isolation." The words imply a reaching out for individual fulfillment among others, in (perhaps) the kind of community in the making John Dewey called democracy. They are, to a degree, abstract, metaphorical; but, speaking indirectly as they do, they respond to some of the evident lacks in our society, to the spaces where people

feel solitary and abandoned, to domains of felt powerlessness.

If our purposes were to be framed in such a fashion, they would not exclude the multiple-literacies and the diverse modes of understanding young persons need if they are to act knowledgeably and reflectively within the frameworks of their lived lives. Situatedness; vantage point; the construction of meanings: all can and must be held in mind if teachers are to treat their students with regard, if they are to release them to learn how to learn. Their questions will differ, as their perspectives will differ, along with their memories and their dreams. But if teachers cannot enable them to resist the humdrum, the routine, or what Dewey called the "anesthetic" (1931, p. 40), they will be in danger of miseducative behavior, ending in cul-de -sacs rather than in openings. If situations cannot be created that enable the young to deal with feelings of being manipulated by outside forces, there will be far too little sense of agency among them. Without a sense of agency, young people are unlikely to pose significant questions, the existentially rooted questions in which learning begins. Indeed, it is difficult to picture learner-centered classrooms if students' lived situations are not brought alive, if dread and desire are not both given play. There is too much of a temptation otherwise to concentrate on training rather than teaching, to focus on skills for the work place rather than any "possible happiness" or any real consciousness of self. Drawn to comply, to march in more or less contented lockstep (sneakered, baseball capped, T- shirted), familiar with the same media-derived referents, many youngsters will tacitly agree to enter a community of the competent, to live lives according to "what is." There are, of course, young persons in the inner cities, the ones lashed by "savage inequalities" (Kozol, 1993), the ones whose very schools are made sick by the social problems the young bring in from without (O'Connor, 1996). Here, more frequently than not, are the real tests of "teaching as possibility" in the face of what looks like an impossible social reality at a time when few adults seem to care. There are examples, in Mike Rose's work on "possible lives," for instance, where he expresses his belief that "a defining characteristic of good teaching is a tendency to push on the existing order of things" (1995, p. 428).

In Toni Morrison's The Bluest Eye, the child Claudia is explaining her hatred of Shirley Temple dolls, to her the very exemplars of a world of objects, a world in which people yearn for possessions, above all, including white china dolls for Black children. "I did not know why I destroyed those dolls," writes Claudia. "But I did know that nobody ever asked me what I wanted for Christmas. Had any adult with the power to fulfill my desires taken me seriously and asked me what I wanted, they would have known that I did not want anything to own, or to possess any object. I wanted rather to feel something on Christmas day. The real question would have been, 'Dear Claudia, what experience would you like on Christmas?' I could have spoken up, 'I want to sit on the low stool in Big Mama's kitchen with my lap full of lilacs and listen to Big Papa play his violin for me alone.' The lowness of the stool made for my body, the security and warmth of Big Mama's kitchen, the smell of the lilacs, the sound of the music, and, since it would be

good to have all of my senses engaged, the taste of a peach, perhaps, afterward" (1972, p. 21). This cannot be attributed to teaching; but it is a "push on the existing order of things"; and it may hold clues to what good teaching can be. Claudia is cared for harshly by her mother; but she is confident of her concern and of her love. She is, at least at that young age, able to resist the existing order of consumable and ownable things and to tap into some deeper need for what she calls "experience." Perhaps this cannot be taught but Claudia's seems to be an insight that underlies the insistences of the culture, that has to do with being sensually alive and within a loving world.

This is not a purely fictional phenomenon. Too many teachers, by now, have read their students' journals and stories and poems; they have exposed themselves to many kinds of dread and many kinds of desire. Much of the suffering, much of the deprivation is due, quite obviously, to economic and social injustices; but there is a sense in which imagination and desire can feed the recognition of the need to transform and, perhaps, the passion to change. To have that sense is to be able to listen to what Wallace Stevens calls "the man with the blue guitar" who "does not play things as they are" (1964, p. 165). Imagination alters the vision of the way things are; it opens spaces in experience where projects can be devised, the kinds of projects that may bring things closer to what ought to be. Without such a capacity, even young people may resemble the inhabitants of the town of Oran Albert Camus described at the start of The Plague, "where everyone is bored and devotes himself to cultivating habits." The point is made that you can get through the day without trouble once you have formed habits. In some other places, the narrator says, "People have now and then an inkling of something different" (1948, p. 4). They have had an intimation, and that is so much to the good. He did not necessarily mean an intimation of the end of the plague and a return to normal life. He meant, perhaps, an intimation of mortality, of injustice that has to be struggled against, of silences that have to be acknowledged and at once overcome.

For us, that may imply recognition, not solely of the human condition, but of the contradictions in what we think of as a democratic society. Even to think about bringing about significant changes within the school is to contest on many levels the behaviorist, stratifying tendencies that still mark the culture as it impinges on the school. To encourage the young to develop visions of what might be and then, against those visions recognize how much is lacking and what is may be to strike against all sorts of easy platitudes that obscure the turmoil of change. Most of us realize that, only when we envisage a better social order, do we find the present one in many ways unendurable and stir ourselves to repair. The sight and description of the new schools at the present time-the Coalition schools, the Charter schools, the New Vision Schools--make it uniquely possible to identify what is wrong with the traditional schools. All we need to do is to take heed of what can happen when a junior high school girl, caught in an overcrowded city school, visits one of the new theme schools. Abruptly, she may notice what is lacking in her own school: a brightly decorated classroom, small groups and family circles, a

breaking through of the forty-five minute class period. Without witnessing a better state of things, she could not have realized what was lacking, what was wrong.

Sometimes, introduced to a reflective or a learning community, someone will become aware of the dearth of understanding in her/his own domain, of the blocks to knowing and to questioning. Sometimes, a teacher or a relative or a friend may pay heed, as does the singer Shug Avery in The Color Purple (Walker, 1982). She suggests to Miss Celie a way of being without "that old white man" in her head, actually a way of becoming free. Celie writes: "Trying to chase that old white man out of my head. I been so busy thinking bout him I never truly notice nothing God make. Not a blade of corn (how it do that?) not the color purple (where it come from?) Not the little wild flowers. Nothing" (p. 25). She, too, made aware of alternatives, can discover that "she feels like a fool" because of what she was never enabled to notice and about which she had never asked.

Inklings and intimations, of course, are not sufficient, as the townspeople in Oran discovered when they organized sanitary squads to fight the plague, "since they knew it was the only thing to do" (p. 120). Imagination is what imparts a conscious quality to experience and the realization that things do not repeat themselves, that experience should not be expected to be uniform or frictionless. Imagination, moreover, is enriched and stimulated through live encounters with others, through exposure to diverse vantage points and unfamiliar ways of looking at the world. Imagination should not, however, as Dewey warned, be permitted to run loose so that it merely builds "castles in the air" and lets "them be a substitute for an actual achievement which involves the pains of thought" (1916, p. 404). Yes, there are distinctive moments made possible by the poetic imagination; but the social and ethical imagination is concerned for using ideas and aspirations to reorganize the environment or the lived situation.

Paulo Freire had this in mind when he wrote about the shaping of a critical discourse that showed adult learners "the lovelier world to which they aspired was being announced, somehow anticipated, in their imagination. It was not a matter of idealism. Imagination and conjecture about a different world than the one of oppression are as necessary to the praxis of historical 'subjects' (agents in the process of transforming reality as it necessarily belongs to human toil that the worker or artisan first have in his or her head a design a 'conjecture,' of what he or she is about to make"(1994, p. 39). Freire believes that democratic education requires enabling ordinary people to develop their own language, derived from their readings of their own social realities, their own namings, their own anticipations of a better state of things. We might return to the present use of story-telling, especially contextualized story-telling, by means of which young people explore the influences of social life on their becoming, of race and gender and ethnic membership, of traditions, of the stories told to them.

Dialogue can arise from story telling in a shared classroom space; and out of dialogue and conjecture can come the making of projects also shared. They may be as simple and concrete as polling the neighborhood mothers on immunization of their babies, as rehabilitating rooms somewhere for homeless classmates, as volunteering for a tutoring program, as organizing street dances or a marching band. There is considerable talk these days of how fair societies may be nurtured in families, schools, work places, and congregations. Modern democracies, says Michael Sandel (1996),can be nourished close to home, in settings where people experience and act upon accepted responsibility. One of his examples is of the civil rights movement, which actually began in small black Baptist churches in the South and extended from there to a national movement. We might be reminded also of Vaclav Havel writing from prison a decade ago. He found hope in small student movements, ecological movements, peace movements, because he believed that "human communality" begins in a "renaissance of elementary human relationships which new projects can at the very most only mediate" (1989, p. 371). This may well ascribe new importance to the school and to teachers willing to foster the values Havel talked about: "love, charity, sympathy, tolerance, understanding, self-control, solidarity, friendship, feelings of belonging, the acceptance of concrete responsibility for those close to one"--all with an eye on the social formations that decide the fate of the world. Freire, also thinking of how to move beyond the small community, the local, spoke about "the invention of citizenship," clearly with imagination in mind once again (p. 39).

The processes of speaking, writing, and reading must be attended to; there must be reflectiveness with regard to the languages in use--the language of images, of technology, of ordinary communication grounded in everyday life. The current interest in narrative and in the landscapes on which people's stories take shape is enabling many learners to explore their own idioms, to create projects by means of which they can identify themselves. To do that is inevitably to take the social setting into account, the social situation without which no self can come to be. We might recall Edward Said saying that no one is purely one thing, that "labels like Indian, or woman, or Muslim, or American are not more than starting points, which if followed into actual experience for only a moment are quickly left behind" (l991,p. 336). We need to listen to other echoes in the garden, he reminds us, to attend to the continuity of old traditions as well as to the connections only now being disclosed. Both require a consciousness of location, an awareness of both contemporaries and predecessors.

We are realizing how much the negotiation of identity today has to do with connectedness and membership; and the notion of participant membership has to feed into our conceptions of democratic citizenship. Visions of public spaces may open, if we allow them to, spaces where all kinds of persons can come together in collaborative concern for what is lacking or what is wrong, what needs to be improved or repaired. The greatest obstacle in the way, as Hannah Arendt saw it, is "thoughtlessness--the heedless recklessness or hopeless confusion or complacent repetition of truths which have become

trivial and empty..." (1958, p. 5). Clearly, this has pedagogical implications, as did Dewey's warning about a "social pathology" standing in the way of inquiry into social conditions. "It manifests itself in a thousand ways," he wrote, "in querulousness, in impotent drifting, in uneasy snatching at distractions, in idealization of the long established, in a facile optimism assumed as a cloak, in glorification of things 'as they are'..." (1954,p. 170). Again, there is the implied demand for attention to a "blue guitar," even as persons are asked to think about their own thinking, their own denials, their own ends in view. Both Dewey and Arendt paid attention to the problem of impersonality and to the empty sociability taking over from community. Both spoke of business, consumerism, and (in time) of bureaucracy. Action and the sense of agency were crucial for both; their writings urged readers to appear before one another, to allow something to take shape between them, a space where diverse beings could reach towards possibility.

Both knew that dialogue and communication were focal and, when conceivable, face-to-face communication, with persons addressing one another as who, not what they were. It was the lack of authentic communication, Dewey wrote, that led to the "eclipse of the public." He pointed out that Americans had at hand "the physical tools of communication as never before, but the thoughts and aspirations congruent with them are not communicated and therefore are not common. Without such communication, the public will remain shadowy and formless, seeking spasmodically for itself, but seizing and holding its shadow rather than its substance" (1954, p. 142). Writing seventy years ago, Dewey may have anticipated the predicaments of a computerized society with a public transmuted into audience or listeners interested in consumption of ideas as well as goods. He might not have been surprised by the crotchety, of insulting telephone calls to the talk shows by the prayerful heaves at evangelists' meetings, the shouts at rock concerts, the hoots and screams at football games. Certainly, people are entitled to make all sorts of sounds, to express themselves in multiple ways; but when the "thoughts and aspirations" Dewey sought are subsumed under noise and sound bytes, teachers are challenged to pay heed.

Classroom preoccupations with efficacy or technical efficiency or even "world-class standards" will not solve the problem of communication or the "eclipse of the public." Nor will they suffice when it comes to consideration of the arts of practice, much less the arts and mystery of being human. The things covered up by "highly efficient talk and double talk" (Arendt, 1968, p. viii) still call for many kinds of illumination. Teachers may well be among the few in a position to kindle the light that might illuminate the spaces of discourse and events in which young newcomers have some day to find their ways. Dewey wrote that "democracy is a name for a life of free and enriching communion. It had its seer in Walt Whitman" (1954, p. 184). Whitman's

"Song of Myself" comes insistently to mind, with its call for liberation and for equity! "Unscrew the locks from the doors'", he wrote. "Unscrew the doors themselves from their

jambs'/ Whoever degrades another degrades me,/ And whatever is done or said returns at last to me./ Through me the afflatus surging and surging, through me the current and index./ I speak the pass-word primeval, I give the sign of democracy,/ By God' I will accept nothing which all cannot have their counterpart of on the same terms" (1931, p. 53). Dewey knew this was not a definition of democracy, nor a series of slogans nor a sermon nor a lesson in political science. The function of art "has always been," he said," to break through the conventionalized and routine consciousness." Art is what touches "the deeper levels of life," and when they are touched "they spring up as desire and thought. This process is art." And then: "Artists have always been the real purveyors of the news, for it is not the outward happening in itself which is new, but the kindling by it of emotion, perception and appreciation" (p. 184).

It must be noted that Dewey affirmed the uses of the arts in the midst of a study of the public, and he spoke about the "deeper levels of life" at the end of the chapter called "Search for the Great Community." Not only was he emphasizing the place of art experiences in moving persons beyond what was fixed and stale and taken for granted. He was suggesting once again the importance of informing the state of social affairs with knowledge, intelligence, and the kinds of connections--past and present--that compose the fabric of what we have come to call the common world. Teachers, often troubled by charges of imposition of white, western culture upon young people arriving from different worlds, are often at a loss when it comes to providing the kinds of shared cultural referents that help weave networks of relationship. There was a time when the Scriptures offered something in common, or the orations of statement like Thomas Jefferson and Abraham Lincoln, or certain plays of Shakespeare, or folktales or (beginning in the l9th century) fictions capturing aspects of the American experience at sea, in the woods on the rivers, on the open roads. It is said today that television shows have replaced such common cultural holdings: "'David Letterman", "The Today Show," and " Saturday Night Live" shape the culture's conversation, and the "deeper levels of life" are rolled over or ignored.

Teachers concerned about illumination and possibility know well that there is some profound sense in which a curriculum in the making is very much a part of a community in the making. Many are aware of the call on the part of hitherto marginal groups--ethnic minorities, women, gays and lesbians--for an inclusion of their own traditions in what is sometimes thought of as the "core" of intellectual and artistic life. For all the dissonances and uneasinesses, there is a demand for a kind of historical consciousness on the part of diverse persons within and outside of their associations. That signifies a recognition that the past is like a stream in which all of us in our distinctiveness and diversity participate every time we try to understand. There are, of course, thousands of silenced voices still; there are thousands of beings striving for visibility; there are thousands of interpretations still to be made, thousands of questions to be posed.

The common world we are trying to create may be thought of as a fabric of interpretations of many texts, many images, many sounds. We might think of interpreted experiences with such texts taking the place of a tradition in the old sense of canonical objectivity. When Hannah Arendt wrote about a common world (1958), she put her stress on the innumerable perspectives through which that common world prewens itself and for which a common denominator can never be devised. In a classroom, this would mean acknowledgment of and recognition of different biographical histories that affect the shaping of perspectives. More than in previous times, teachers are asked to confront and honor the differences even as they work for a free and responsible acceptance of the norms marking whatever community is in the making: concrete responsibility for one another; respect for the rights of others; solidarity; regard for reflective habits of thought. At once, there are the ways of thinking and seeing that enable various young persons to decode and interpret what is made available: the ability to distinguish among the discourses in use, to have regard for evidence and experience, to be critically conscious of what is read and heard, to construct meanings in the diverse domains of their lives. "Be it grand or slender," said Toni Morrison in her Nobel Address, "burrowing, blasting or refusing to sanctify; whether it laughs out loud or is a cry without an alphabet, the choice word or the chosen silence, unmolested language surges toward knowledge, not its destruction. But who does not know of literature banned because it is interrogative; discredited because it is critical; erased because alternate? And how many are outraged by the thought of a self-ravaged tongue? Word-work is sublime because it is generative; it makes meaning that secures our difference, our human difference--the way in which we are like no other life. We die. That may be the meaning of life. But we do language. That may be the measure of our lives" (March/April 1996, p. 11). This should apply to all the young, whoever they are, if--like Whitman and Morrison as well--we refuse at last to withhold recognition, to degrade or to exclude.

Michael Fischer, an ethnologist also concerned for connectedness, writes about the importance of the present tendency to encourage participation of readers themselves in the production of meaning. The conscious effort to move readers to respond to incompleteness and make connections becomes, he suggests, an ethical device attempting to activate in readers a "desire for communitas with others, while preserving rather than effacing differences" (1986, p. 233). We might visualize interpretive encounters with Hawthorne's Hester Prynne daring to engage in speculative thought while living on the verge of the wilderness; Melville's Bartleby who "preferred not to," compared with "a piece of wreckage in the mid Atlantic": Edith Wharton's Lily Bart, caught like a cog in the wheel of a material society. Or we might think of the narrator of Ellison's Invisible Man saying he has "whipped it all except the mind, the mind. And the mind that has conceived a plan of living must never lose sight of the chaos against which that pattern was conceived." Or the chaos due to nameless pollution and the falsifications of the media in De Lillo's White Noise, or Doctorow's cities with their denials and their cover-

ups and their violations of children. Or Tillie Olsen's narrator standing behind her ironing board, hoping only that her daughter will be more than a dress beneath the iron. And so many other voices, Hispanic and Asian and Native American, all activating questions whose answers create no "common denominator," but which make each text deeper, richer, more expansive, yes, and more replete with mystery.

That, in part, suggests what is meant by teaching as possibility in dark and constraining times. It is a matter of awakening and empowering today's young people to name, to reflect, to imagine, and to act with more and more concrete responsibility in an an increasingly multifarious world. At once, it is a matter of enabling them to remain in touch with dread and desire, with the smell of lilacs and the taste of a peach. The light may be uncertain and flickering; but teachers in their lives and works have the remarkable capacity to make it shine in all sorts of corners and, perhaps, to move newcomers to join with others and transform. Muriel Rukeyser has written:

Darkness arrives splitting the mind open. Something again

Is beginning to be born. A dance is dancing me.

I wake in the dark. (1994, p. 284)

She offers a metaphor and a watchword. It may help us light the fuse.

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What Students Think is Funny: Gender and Class Issues in the Humor of Woody Allen, Grace Paley, Marietta Holley and James Thurber

Judith Beth Cohen

"Tell me what you laugh at and I will tell you who you are," says French writer Maurice Pagnol (Lewis 110).

To introduce students to the gender, culture and class dimensions of their reception of texts, I presented four short selections of literary humor. These forty two adult students, thirty women and twelve men, were beginning an intensive residency program to complete their bachelor's degrees at Lesley College in Cambridge, Mass. Ranging in age from their late twenties to late forties, many were human service workers, self-supporting divorced women and some were themselves recovering substance abusers. None were English or literature majors. Since I didn't want name recognition to influence their choices, I read the pieces aloud and gave them the examples without identifying the authors. The works represented contrasting narrative strategies, but all contained subject matter of high interest. Two were written by male authors and two were female. Students were asked to freewrite, noting places that struck them as funny, then rank the four in order of their preference and indicate the reason for their choices. I then revealed the identity and background of the writers. The exercise was intended as a teaching strategy and not as a research study. Their responses shed light on hidden gender and class dimensions of these texts, and pointed toward additional uses of humor in the curriculum. Though there isn't time to put you through the exercise, I'll try to capture the flavor of each excerpt I presented.

"Selections from The Allen Notebooks" by Woody Allen parodies both the literary trope of a writer's notebook and a confessional diary. Incongruous associations produce the humor: a man awakens to find that his pet parrot has been made Secretary of Agriculture, the writer tries committing suicide by wetting his nose and inserting it into a light socket. He broods on thoughts of death, wonders if there will be an afterlife, and if there is "will they be able to break a twenty (102)." By coupling unlike such unlike phenomena, Allen elicits surprise. As one student expressed it: "He leads me down one path and then takes a turn down another. "Should I marry W.?" writes the diarist, "not if she won't tell me the other letters in her name. (102)." Allen's narrator is concerned with failed love and family relationships. He meets his brother, whom he has not seen in fifteen years, at a funeral.

"...as usual, he produced a pig bladder from his pocket and began hitting me on the head with it (102)." The diarist wonders why this brighter, wittier, more cultured brother is still working at Mcdonalds, thus reducing his tormentor to a

nobody. Filial cruelty is likewise diminished by absurdity when he reports that his ridiculing father attended his first play, "A Cyst for Gus," in tails and a gas mask. Since his mother's terrible accident when she fell on some meat loaf and penetrated her spleen, the writer can no longer believe in God. Hope, he says was not "a thing with feathers" as the poet Emily Dickinson wrote, but his own nephew. He breaks off with W. who tells the writer his Critique of Metaphysical Reality reminds her of Airport (103).

In Grace Paley's short story "Wants," we also find an urban narrator, overwhelmed with life's complexities. This woman runs into her ex-husband on the steps of a New York library where she has gone to do her civic duty and pay a fine accumulated over eighteen years. They reminisce about the dissolution of their marriage, which he attributes "to the fact that you never invited the Bertrams for dinner (171)." When her mate of twenty-seven years, tells her "you'll always want nothing," she likens his narrow remark to "a plumber's snake...which "could work its way through the ear down the throat, halfway to my heart (172)."

Paley uses ironic humor to distance the narrator from the pain of the crumbled marriage. She sees her ex's limitations clearly but she's more compassionate than cruel. Though marriages fail, and wars go on, the Sycamore trees, planted before her kids were born, are in the prime of their lives. Perhaps she can't change the world, but she's not as passive as her ex suggests. Doesn't her decision to return those books prove that she can "take some appropriate action (173)." The humor in Paley's story comes not from wildly absurd images or slapstick effects but from a cumulative sense of the narrator's comic vision. Like Allen's persona, she's concerned with human weakness, but her humor derives, not from aggression delivered linguistically, but from a recognition of the absurdity of our social contracts, whether the rules pertain to marriage or library fines. Nonetheless, her emotional bonds to children, the library, and her beloved urban neighborhood remain strong in contrast to Allen's isolated loner, confiding in his diary.

Another character who finds social conventions laughable is Marietta Holley's late nineteenth century creation, Samantha, a hefty, upstate New York farm wife. Speaking in folksy rural vernacular, like the male crackerbarrel philosophers who preceded her, she attacks sexism and racism and rallies readers to defend women's suffrage. Holley published more than twenty books and was as widely read as her contemporary Mark Twain, but it took recent feminist scholars to rediscover her (Walker & Dresner 1988). In her preface to the 1873 volume, My Opinions and Betsey Bobbet's, Samantha decides "put her shoulder blades to the wheel and write a book on the great subject of "Wimmen's Rites." When she announces this to her husband Josiah, he reaches for the bottle. In despair over her project, he wakes in the middle of the night to proclaim that he won't pay

a cent of his money to hire anybody to read her book. Her silly neighbor Betsey Bobbet, desperate to please men, lectures Samantha that it is woman's greatest privilege and highest "speah" to soothe a man and be a poultice to the noble, manly breast. An angry Samantha sweating from her chores, is furious.

"Do I look like a poultice-- why don't they get men to soothe them--evenins they don't have anything else to do, they might jest as well be soothin' each other as to be a hangin' round the grocery store or settin' by the fire whittlin (Walker 103)."

The final selection, a fable by James Thurber called, "The Bear Who Let it Alone" tells of an alcoholic bear who

"would reel home at night, kick over the umbrella stand, knock down the bridge lamp, and ram his elbows through the windows (1955)." Determined to reform, he becomes a famous teetotaler and temperance lecturer who gets so agitated when he speaks of the awful effects of drink that he kicks over the umbrella stand, knocks down lamps and rams his elbows through the windows. Drunk or sober, the bear distresses his wife and frightens his children.

If you found the Woody Allen selection the funniest, then you agreed with twenty four of the forty two students who selected it as their first choice, though only one correctly identified it as Allen's work. Most reported that they chose Allen because of "the absurdity of the images." Ten students selected the Paley story as their first choice, eight of whom were women who identified with the divorced protagonist.

Grace Paley's narrator has much in common with Allen's diarist--she, too is overwhelmed by urban life, has relationship problems, and sees the absurdity of her situation but she's more deeply connected to people than is the Allen notebook writer. Rather than producing one-liners that explode in little bursts, most often at others' expense, Paley's narrative requires that you stay with it to get the whole effect. It doesn't deliver a laugh a minute, the way Allen does. What was striking about the eight female preferences for the Paley piece was not only their identification with her--in one student's words: "she represents the woman as survivor of divorce and I feel a bond with her," but her story elicited stories. Two women were prompted to write their own anecdotes about overdue library books. Paley's text is so much about intimacy that it invites a reciprocal bond from some readers, expressed in the form of a complementary narrative. Though Woody Allen explicitly wrote about struggles of faith, a man who selected Paley as his favorite cited the spiritual connection he saw in her text: "It relates to the cosmic joke and reminds me of the smiling Buddha. She shows a connection to the oneness in us all."

Despite the remoteness of the cultural situation and the rural dialect, six students selected the Holley piece as their favorite. One man wrote: "I felt her heart, like she was talking to me. She made a picture in my mind. I could see the expression on people's faces." A Cape Verdean woman who concluded from the dialect that the writer was black, said: "I

identified as a black woman. She's using humor to overcome dominance."

Only two students selected Thurber's cautionary tale, which seems more culturally removed, though it is more contemporary than Holley's writing. Like Samantha, women today still struggle to be more than unpaid domestics, but mocking abstinence is no longer funny, given recent changes in our consciousness about alcoholism as a disease. A therapist working with recovering substance abusers, himself a former addict wrote: "He sees the addictive layering in the human condition, but I miss the humor in this." A woman liked the piece because it reminded her of "being drunk and out of control."

These student responses suggest that their humor preferences are constructed by a shared culture and are more unified than their gender and class affiliations would seem to suggest. Though I had expected Paley and Holley to garner more first choices, Allen's neurotic persona and absurd juxtapositions appealed more to this predominantly white, female, working class

group. Traditional humor theories might appear to account for this preference. According to Incongruity Theories, we laugh when we are surprised, when our expectations are upset in an unthreatening way, as Allen does with his absurd juxtapositions. Disparagement Theory, which can be traced as far back as Plato and Aristotle, suggests that we use ridicule as a form of revenge and a way to make ourselves look better, as Allen's diarist does when he mocks his relatives. Freud's Release Theory argues that humor provides an outlet for repressed sexual or aggressive impulses--thus we can laugh with Allen, expel these dangerous feelings, and return to an equilibrium or status quo (Gagnier 135-6).

However, the work of feminist theorists has given us a new reading of women's humor that doesn't align neatly with any of the traditional approaches, which ultimately all view humor as a conservative force that allows us to "let off steam" so the social order can be maintained. Rather than supporting dominant cultural values, women's humor has the subversive intent of undercutting and destroying them. However, in order to get away with such a radical critique, much women's humor, like that of racial minorities and other oppressed groups is disguised. Feminist scholar Nancy Walker argues that writers like Marietta Holley create a "double text;" her Samantha character seems to endorse the stereotypes of the dominant culture, that women are gossipy domestics, so that her work appears unthreatening. However, lurking underneath this apparent simplicity is an indictment of the culture that assigns women such roles (Walker, 1988).

In addition to using concealment strategies, women tend to be storytellers rather than joke tellers; their humor is a sharing of experience rather than a demonstration of their own cleverness as we saw in the Paley selection (Walker 1988). A writer like Grace Paley combines the dual strategies of ironic distance, an ability to laugh at herself and her ex,

while she maintains her intimate connections, confirming what feminist theorists like Carol Gilligan and Mary Belenky have argued about the importance of relational thinking to women's ways of knowing (Gilligan 1982; Belenky et al 1986).

Then why did more of my women students favor the Woody Allen excerpt? I would argue that while Allen may seem to reflect the dominant culture's humor, he also subsumes the gendered aspects of women's connected humor. His persona-- the sickly, suicidal, under appreciated writer struggling with existential angst speaks to all who feel excluded or misunderstood. His degree of obsession with his father, mother, brother and nephew, and his questioning of his romantic choices might well appear in a woman's diary. Allen speaks to those who feel disempowered, whether by virtue of their gender, class or race. Grace Paley's humor, perhaps harder to see, is ultimately more subversive for she imagines a world where connection and compassion are more important than one-upsmanship and dominance. Though all of the examples I used contain an implied critique of the power structure, Allen's ability to mingle classic forms like slapstick and incongruous couplings with personal concerns make him reach across gender and class categories. This also helps explain the impact of his particular brand of humor on the mass media. Holley, whose gendered humor was as popular as Mark Twain's, may have been the Woody Allen of her day.

My purpose in using these literary selections was to grab students' attention, and stimulate their thinking about themselves as readers so that they could become more sophisticated about their reception of texts. However, the richness of their responses led me to consider other uses for humor in the curriculum. As powerful as it is for emotional and social expression, humor's untapped potential may lie in its cognitive underpinnings. Cognitive theorists study children's understanding of humor in order to assess their intellectual development (Lewis 73). For example, pre-school children consider figures of speech like: "You have a frog in your throat," to be hilarious because they picture the image literally. Psycholinguists like Ellen Winner study the ways in which children come to understand the nonliteral language involved in metaphor and irony (Winner l988). Students who have difficulty perceiving the irony in these humorous selections may be struggling with developmental issues that affect their overall intellectual performance.

In a recent New Yorker piece by neurologist Oliver Sacks, an autistic adult explains her inability to process figurative language as evidence of brain abnormality. Since an ability to perceive incongruity is central to humor, noticing when students don't "get" it can tell us about their level of understanding and their possible cognitive deficits. We can also learn about their cultural expectations. Is breaking a twenty in the afterlife funny if your religious beliefs about heaven and hell make such jokes impossible? If your own culture is authority-based, is humor that openly and defiantly challenges authority comic or frightening? And if you don't know that Airport is a pulp novel or haven't heard of Emily Dickinson, would you find Allen funny? Student responses to humor can help us better

assess what they bring to their studies, letting us know when we are assuming too much about them.

Humor can contribute to the curriculum in a host of other ways as well. Here are a few I came across: Boston University history professor Joseph Boskin suggests that we can understand the spirit of a time and place by studying its humor. Each decade in American history has particular jokes that reflect the period's ideas including its stereotypes of race and gender. Understanding why jokes that poke fun at ethnic minorities or women are no longer acceptable can help students understand patterns of social change (Boskin 1979). Humor also offers a wonderful vehicle for exploring cultural diversity. Bringing jokes, stories and sayings from their own cultures to class can help students understand some of the subtle communication differences they may take for granted. Viewing ourselves through the eyes of an oppressed group can give us some distance on ourselves and help us to better understand other world views. Eugene Hynes's sociology students study the jokes Western Apaches make about Anglos, not to learn about Apaches as much as to see how the dominant group in this country has been seen by those without power (Hynes 1989). And because humor reduces tension and creates a more relaxed classroom atmosphere, students are likely to perform better. Steven Schacht and Brad Stewart present cartoons to reduce the anxiety levels students bring to a tough subject like statistics (1990). When it comes to test-taking, humor can also be a boon. Some teachers deliberately add a humorous item to an exam and encourage students to be funny in their answers.

Unfortunately, much of the research on classroom humor has focused on the teacher as entertainer rather than the use of humor to enhance curriculum content. A 1979 study by Bryant and others found that 48% of the humor used by college teachers was hostile or sexual (McGhee & Goldstein 1983). When Joan Gorham and Diane Christophel tried to draw some conclusions about differences in male and female teachers' use of classroom humor, they found that women who adopt the aggressive humor often associated with male comics were not favorably perceived by students (1990). Whether this is due to rigid expectations about proper behavior for women or a rejection of male modes isn't clear, but teachers should be sensitive to gender and power differentials when using humor. The same male teacher who would never tell a racial or ethnic joke might think that harmless teasing of female students is acceptable. A male professor I know swore that his joking was evenly balanced amongst the males and females in his classes. He was shocked when a group of female students confronted him for "sexually harassing" them. If the senators at the Thomas-Hill hearing "didn't get it", it's not surprising that a male teacher playfully commenting on female students' hairstyles or clothing wouldn't get it either.

Researchers Zillman and Bryant distinguish between confrontational and non-confrontational humor and warn that teachers must laugh with, not at their students

(1988). Some teachers use self-disparaging humor of the Woody Allen variety to remove the distance between themselves and their students. Though making yourself, the authority figure, the butt of the joke rather than poking fun at the less powerful can pull a group together, injecting humor into your classroom doesn't mean you must become a stand-up comic cracking one- liners. Rather, I'm interested in creating a community of laughter, which can break down gender, class and race barriers (Walker 114). Such humor can encourage bonding between student and teacher, student and student, and most important perhaps, between students and the subject matter being studied. Using humor in this manner requires that teachers be listeners more than performers, noting what humor or its lack tells them about their students. Connecting humor with learning can cast the teacher as a collaborator, searching with students for imaginative and sometimes subversive ways of reenvisioning what we teach and what they learn.

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A New Paradigm of Learning for Urban Adult Learners: Challenges for Educators and Policymakers Regarding Education and Community Service*

Carroy Ugene Ferguson

Introduction

Ferguson and Kamara (1993) in Innovative Approaches to Education and Community Service argue that during the coming decades, educators and policymakers will be presented with many challenges that will require nothing less than the creation and implementation of a new paradigm of learning. Innovative approaches to education and community services outlined in that book focus on the urban adult learner and are reflective of aspects of the type of new paradigm of learning that policymakers, both within and beyond the academy must concern themselves with now and in the future. At issue is a commitment on the part of state and federal governments and on the part of higher education to urban communities, to urban adult learners, and to an urban mission. In this context, state and federal governments both must view higher education as a vehicle for constructive social change and empowerment and appropriate the necessary resources to higher education. In turn, higher education must view itself as a partner with urban communities to co-create and carry out opportunities and programs to empower people and to help bring about urban change. What follows is a discussion of a new paradigm of learning for urban adult learners and a summary of some of the challenges that educators and policymakers face.

Toward a New Paradigm of Education for Urban Adult Learners

In The Aquarian Conspiracy, Marilyn Ferguson (1980) presented an outline of what she considered the assumptions of both the old and a new paradigm of education and learning: "The old assumptions generate questions about how to achieve norms, obedience, and correct answers. The new assumptions lead to questions about how to motivate for lifelong learning, how to strengthen self-discipline, how to awaken curiosity, and how to encourage creative risk in people of all ages" (p. 291). They also create a context for various kinds of innovations for higher education and community service activities in the future. Ferguson and Kamara (1993) adapted and modified the aforementioned outline "to serve as a possible new paradigm for urban adult learners" (p.

158). In the adaptation, sixteen old and new paradigm assumptions are listed, respectively, along with educational outcomes for an urban mission of higher education (Ferguson & Kamara, 1993, p. 159162). What follows are summaries of these lists.

Assumptions of the old paradigm of education include: (1) an emphasis on "content" and acquiring a body of "right" information, once and for all; (2) learning as a product, a destination;

(3) a hierarchical and authoritarian structure that rewards conformity and discourages dissent; (4) a relatively rigid structure with a prescribed curriculum; (5) a focus on performance; (6) an emphasis on the external world; inner experience is often considered inappropriate in educational settings; (7) guessing and divergent thinking are discourgaged; (8) an emphasis on analytical linear thinking, left-brain thinking; (9) the use of labeling, which often contributes to a self- fulfilling prophecy; (10) a concern with norms; (11) a primary reliance on theoretical, abstract "book knowledge"; (12) classrooms are designed for efficiency and convenience; (13) a system that is bureaucratically determined and resistant to community input; (14) education is seen as a social necessity for a certain period of time, an approach which inculcates minimal skills and trains people to a specific role; (15) an increasing reliance on technology, which can result in dehumanization; (16) a one-way street where a teacher imparts knowledge to the students.

Assumptions of the new paradigm of education for urban adult learners include: (1) an emphasis on context and learning how to learn, ask questions, how to pay attention to the right things, how to be open to and evaluate new concepts, and how to achieve access to information; (2) learning as a "process," a journey (both prior and new learning are legitimate); (3) an egalitarian structure where candor and dissent are permitted and autonomy is encouraged; (4) a relatively flexible structure with a belief that there are many ways to teach a given subject (e.g., classroom; workshops; field-based; independent learning); (5) a focus on self-image as the generator of performance; (6) inner experience is seen as a context for learning and exploration of feelings is encourged; (7) guessing and divergent thinking are encouraged as a part of the creative process;

(8) a striving for whole-brain education, which augments and fuses rationality with holistic, nonlinear, and intuitive strategies; (9) labeling is used only in a minor prescriptive role and not as a fixed evaluation of the other; (10) a concern with the individual's performance in terms of potential and an interest in testing outer limits and transcending perceived limitations; (11) theoretical and abstract knowledge is heavily complemented by experiments and experiences, both in and out of the classroom (e.g., field trips, apprenticeships, demonstrations, visiting experts); (12) classrooms are designed with a concern for the environment of learning, varied and multi-leveled for the urban adult learner; (13) the encouragement of community input and even community control; (14) education is seen as a life-long process that may only be tangentially related

to traditional educational settings; (15) the use of appropriate technology, with human relationshps between teachers and learners being of primary importance; (16) an enviroment where the teacher is also a learner who learns from students.

Although elements of a new paradigm for education have been evident in the overall culture for some time, they have yet to take full root. Fear of such a paradigm shift and the consequent conservative response in this country has led, in some instances, to a retreat to the more familiar and hence a retreat to the old paradigm and its assumptions. Educators and policymakers, however, must embrace a larger vision and this larger vision must include a commitment to an urban mission for higher education where public and community service activities are legitimized and appropriately credited. The assumptions of the new paradigm of education for urban adult learners, along with educational outcomes for an urban mission for higher education can serve as helpful guidelines to educators and policymakers in formulating strategies and structures and in establishing present and future priorities.

While innovations and reforms in education have taken form since the early 1940s, many have emerged out of the old paradigm, and hence, have simply tended to re-arrange old norms. In this context, the connection between education and community service has been tangential at best. An intent of the present discussion is to suggest that the connection must be given higher priority in the consciousness of educators and policymakers, particularly in the higher education arena. Higher education must take its place as a partner in helping to solve the many urban problems that it studies.

The new paradigm of learning implies a shift in consciousness, a new way of viewing the world and of carrying out education in that world. This new view or new consciousness seeks to transcend limits and to unleash new creative energy for innovative activities intended to bring about constructive individual change and empowerment, as well as social change and community empowerment.

Paradigms act like hypnotic suggestions that impact how one views the world or constructs reality. The old paradigm thus hypnotically generates suggestions about how to achieve norms, obedience, and correct answers. In the same way, the new paradigm can generate suggestions about the processes of lifelong learning, self-discipline, curiosity, and creative risk. The implication here for educators and policymakers is that they must create policies and educational arenas that support and motivate people toward the realization of their full human potential.

Educators and policymakers who focus primarily on limitations (i.e., focus on what cannot be done because of the perception of limited resources or limited options) to formulate policies and learning environments are acting out of fear and are reactive rather than proactive. The current conservative climate, for instance, has created some less than positive reactions to affirmative action policies. These kinds of reactions stem from fear, from a focus on limitations and the perception of scarcity, and from a retreat to old ways

of thinking about the world. The eventual result of such reactions is the creation of policies that stifle creativity and human potential that could assist in the resolution of perceived difficulties. The true intent of affirmative action policies is to support the realization of human potential. There may come a time when affirmative action policies regarding race relations in this country will not be required. However, within the current context of fear, reactiveness, and perceived scarcity, doing away with affirmative actions or retreating to old ways of thinking under the guise of color blindness would be ill-advised. Doing so would indeed be acting blindly. Educators and policymakers, therefore, must transcend these kinds of reactive tendencies and focus instead on the larger purpose of affirmative action. Embracing the assumptions of the new paradigm of learning can help in this regard.

Challenges for the Next Decades:

Making Education and Community Service Priorities for Change and Empowerment

Education is an organizing phenomenon for a society, whereby arenas are created for self and societal examination, self and societal exploration, and personal and societal growth and change. It is from this kind of activity that a society revives itself and survives. Community service is an expressive phenomenon for a society, whereby arenas are created for value development and value fulfillment; that is, to provide service to and for that which is perceived to be valuable and important. It is from this kind of activity that a society discovers its needs, develops strategies to address them, and thus nurtures itself. Empowerment is a synthesizing and integrative phenomenon and process for a society, whereby individual and/or collective visions and actions become energized as valid and meaningful in creating the conditions for personal and social change. It is from this kind of activity that a society moves itself toward its ideals and challenges itself to take action. Social change is the ongoing process and phenomenon for a society that reflects the dynamic tensions of individual and/or collective visions and actions about what is to be valued.

One of the foremost and ongoing challenges for policymakers in the decades ahead is to create, implement, and maintain policies that reflect an understanding of the connective importance and interdependence of the societal functions of the four phenomena identified above. That is, education (particularly higher education for adult learners), community service, empowerment, and social change must be viewed as an interdependent gestalt for a society. This means that policies that promote in deed the value of education (and not policies that reflect a belief in limitation and scarcity of resources and thus merely focus on and channel all creative institutional energy on survival dynamics for its own sake) and the value of community service (and not policies that merely value the concept of publish or perish as the primary service of universities or

policies that, in general, view community service as low status societal work as reflected by wages and salaries for such work) must be priority issues for policymakers in the academy and at the local, state, and federal levels of government. It also means that appropriate resources must be directed in such a way as to reflect these priorities. Policymakers must both remain open to new and bold visions that may emerge from empowered persons about how to actualize "the best" in society and avoid the temptation to fear all social change and retreat to a conservative stance. If policymakers heed this advice, they will help society to revive itself, to nurture itself, to challenge itself in realizing its ideals, and to constructively change itself for the better.

As we move into the latter half of the 1990s, society has taken on an increasingly conservative tone. This is symptomatic of a society filled with fear and lacking a sense of idealism. In a new millennium, new visions are required. The overall challenge for policymakers, then, is to overcome fear and to recapture a sense of what might be called practical idealism. As fears increase, people tend to look for easy, prescriptive answers and perhaps unconsciously want to be told what and how to think. It becomes easy to begin to think in terms of we-they, either-or, right-wrong, or good-bad and to accept prescribed answers as the only answers. It also becomes easy to look for and acquiesce to quick, easy, and simplistic answers. Perhaps the 1996 re- election of the Clinton administration signals a cry or a hope for moving beyond retreatism and categorical thinking, but that world has yet to materialize or be actualized.

The danger of a regressive and fearful mood is that free will and choice and unique individual human needs as significant and paramount aspects of the human experience are undermined. Ferguson and Kamara (1993) argue for innovative approaches to education and community service that nurture practical idealism. Adult learners are encouraged to be critical thinkers and problem-solvers in regard to public and community service issues and to use self-directed learning plans to focus and to actualize their efforts. The desired outcome is an empowered person who is competent in addressing and bringing about social change for the public and community concerns that they encounter or with which they are currently engaged.

There are other challenges and policy implications for the future. Some relate specifically to the academy. Taylor and Buchanan (1993), for example, suggest that the continuing challenge for the academy is to resist falling prey to the societal mood described. More specifically, they argue that the challenge for universities is to: develop or create a cohesive urban mission and/or maintain a commitment to an urban mission; relate sufficient university resources to deal with the complexities of urban communities and urban needs; and develop and/or maintain access to higher education for indigenous, low-income city residents. The policy implication is that, via resource allocations, urban universities must nurture their relationships with urban communities. To fail to do so would be extremely shortsighted and, ultimately, dangerous. There are numerous

historical examples that cry out for this kind of nurturance (e.g., The Rodney King incident and the subsequent 1992 Los Angeles riots are testimonies to this observation). Finally, state and federal governments must also reflect this priority in their respective budgets.

In this light it becomes obvious that community service must no longer be viewed as an afterthought in the academy. The College of Public and Community Service (CPCS) at the University of Massachusetts-Boston is a model for what can be done in the academy. As Taylor and Buchanan imply, CPCS via its competency-based system and community service activities, is itself a model of change and empowerment. And yet, there continues to be a need to push for more legitimacy of the concept of community service at the university level. Regarding such matters as tenure reviews, faculty reports, promotions, and so on, university polices must reflect the value of community service activities, for it is these very activities that enhance the statue of the university in the public eye.

The question of how institutions address the issues of diversity and cultural awareness constitutes another important challenge for policymakers. These issues are becoming increasingly important as the population of the United States continues to change and become even more diverse. The challenge for today and for the future will be how societal institutions can vigorously prepare for institutionalizing cultural awareness without reinforcing old stereotypes about groups of people. As indicated above, when there is the perception of scarcity of resources fear often sets in and institutions, like individuals, have a tendency to become less sensitive to the interdependent nature of events and people and to use shortsighted thinking and biases to cope with the perceived reality. Often the result is the victimization of self and the other.

Another way of stating the challenge for institutions, then, is to note that they must remain inclusive and responsive in the delivery of services to an increasingly diverse population with diverse needs. Again, in the academy this means, for example, that universities must implement policies that will ensure the maintenance of a commitment to an urban mission, access for the urban learner who aspires to higher education, and proper attention to the issue of diversity. Ferguson (1993) presents a holistic model and principles for addressing cultural awareness and argues for an institutional change approach in supporting and empowering individual efforts to develop cultural awareness at universities and other institutions. The policy implication here is that institutions must assess what kind of cultural awareness training might be required by the institution and how such training may be incorporated into the fabric of the way things are done without making objects out of people and their cultures.

The new paradigm of education for urban adult learners presents a creative challenge for educators and policy-makers. One challenge is how to create and use various contexts for learning. Kennedy and Mead (1993) outline a community service model from the perspective of field-based teaching. This form of teaching challenges traditional thought

about the essence of the teaching and learning process. It involves both faculty and students in change and empowerment efforts through innovative educational field-based projects. Such efforts must be valued in the academy as much, if not more in some instances, than some other activities. Beyond the academy, community service activities such as field-based teaching and projects help in the healing process of some of the ills of society.

The policy issues that are raised in this area pertain to how universities perceive and value such teaching. Advocates of the field-based teaching model argue that such teaching often involves more work and thus should be credited for more than one course, that it should be valued as professional activity and evaluated as such in tenure and promotional cases, and that it often involves a special kind of research which must be valued.

A fundamental challenge for urban universities is how to play significant social change roles. Ferguson and Souris (1993) discuss community policing and an interactive model for neighborhood security and development. They provide a specific example of how CPCS has played a role in addressing an important societal issuethe safety and development of communities. The interactive model they outlined argues by implication that universities can and must play creative roles in helping to resolve important societal issues. In this instance, the issue was the dynamic tensions between the community and the police. The challenge was to create the opportunity for dialogue and creative problem-solving that would lead to secure neighborhoods and community development. Again, the policy implications for the academy and policymakers involve legitimizing such community service activities by lending university resources and supports. By doing so, universities and other relevant entities become part of the solution of problems and not merely bystanders and observers of the problems.

The new paradigm of education for urban adult learners creates a context for the emergence of many strategies at all levels of interaction. Colon (1993) has outlined six interrelated policies, activities, and functions that can serve as a framework for an educational strategy that links the urban university to community development. The challenge for the urban university and policymakers here is to recognize and embrace an interrelation of policies, activities, and functions in making a statement about its willingness to participate in the community development movement. The benefit is an enhanced university educational experience for faculty and students and an improved community and society.

How does a new paradigm lend itself to creative and applied research and intervention strategies? Arnold (1993) suggested new intervention strategies to solve old problems by innovatively reframing the use of specific techniques and technologies to deal more effectively with health care concernsmore specifically, infant mortality. A community-based case management model and the use of computers to better manage health care in a

cost-effective manner reflects how the author's research on these issues could be used to solve community and societal concerns. The policy implication for the academy is how to make the various research projects be more alive and applicable in the service of the community. Much too often the publish or perish posture that drives the university results in stale documents that simply sit on the shelves of libraries or in storage, rather than impacting on the community. This shortcoming suggests that action research would be a useful kind of research for universities to more fully support. Indeed, Freeman and Upshur (1993) discussed the utility of applied, action-oriented research and how it was used to create an interactive planning process with a community organization. These kinds of activities must be supported by the university, for contained in such activities are the seeds of real solutions to real urban problems.

Conclusion

Each of the strategies and models discussed above support the notions of constructive social change and empowerment for urban adult learners. Educators and policymakers must begin to think about the importance of innovative approaches to education and community service in the context of a new paradigm of learning for urban adult learners. At a much broader level, the ultimate challenge is to reframe issues in the context of a new paradigm for learning and then to apply that understanding to various societal arenas. In other words, while the paradigm discussed in this article has been framed to specifically address the urban adult learner and an urban mission for higher education, the assumptions contained in the new paradigm can be reframed for many different arenas. It is important for educators and policymakers to have larger, inclusive visions that seek to empower and unleash the creative potential of individuals. Solutions to difficult social problems often come from inspiration. A paradigm that fosters fear and limitation cannot produce inspired solutions. Too often this has been the function of the assumptions of the old paradigm. It is time to look anew at the world and to tap the creative potential that is inherit within each individual.

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A College's Diversity Initiative Finds Its Way into Student Teachers' Lesson Plans

Sheryl Boris-Schacter and Susan Merrifield

Background

Lesley College is a small institution in Cambridge, Massachusetts that has an undergraduate school for women and a larger co-educational graduate school. Central to its mission is the preparation of students for careers in teaching. Two years ago the College began revamping its certification programs to meet new state regulations. This process of curriculum overhaul led the faculty to raise questions regarding the connection between coursework and practice. One such question was to what extent our students, who are academically typical of education majors nationwide,1 relied upon their Lesley coursework to help them conceptualize curriculum and plan instructional strategies.

In order to address that question, we designed a research project that asked: "How does coursework, fieldwork, and personal experience combine to influence student teachers' lesson plan development?" We framed the question along these parameters because they are the ones most frequently cited in the literature as being influential to practice (See for example: Bradley, 1991; La Baree, 1992; Holt-Reynolds, 1992). We chose lesson plans as the vehicle for the inquiry because they provided an authentic and concrete end-product to pedagogical thinking. In other words, respondents needed to actually engage in the activity of planning to teach in order to participate in the study.

We recognized, as Tyson (1991) did, that talking about teaching is not the same as teaching. However, also like Tyson, we believed that getting a window into novice teacher thinking can be a valuable resource for determining course content for teacher education programs. Consequently, our study builds upon the teacher knowledge/teacher thinking literature (See for example: Dewey, 1933; Lowyck, 1986; Shulman, 1986; Shulman, 1987; Newmann, 1991; Onosko, 1992), as well as the work on pedagogical content knowledge (See for example: Marks, 1990; Grossman, 1990). Additionally, our research was informed by what we call expert-novice studies in which it is argued that teacher thinking and professional reflection evolve over time (See for example: Tyson, 1991; Russell and Munby, 1990; Huling-Austin, 1992; Tremmel, 1993).

It is altogether reasonable to assume that veteran practitioners would have heightened abilities to reflect upon teaching as they increase their years of teaching practice. It is also reasonable to assume that novices are powerfully influenced by their early memories of

conventional teachers and teaching. In fact, Kennedy observed that these memories are so central to novice thinking that they compete with the newer strategies taught in teacher education programs "... the conventional images of teaching that derive from childhood experiences makes it very difficult to alter teaching practices and explains in part why teaching has remained so constant over so many decades of reform efforts" (1991). Although some researchers, such as Grossman (1990), are persuasive regarding the advantages of pedagogical coursework in the preparation of teachers, it was not entirely clear how those advantages influenced undergraduates such as ours in their thinking about teaching.

We pursued this research because we believe that the curriculum at our institution provides students with the appropriate content and experiences to be effective teachers in a wide range of communities; yet, we are not quite sure how students apply this knowledge when they have responsibility for lesson plan development. We wondered if they could articulate their ideas, the rationale for them, and the influences upon them. We considered these abilities central to the enterprise of teaching, whether one calls it "reflective practice," "mindfulness," or "paying attention" (Tremmel, 1993). Like many before us, we were motivated by questions impacting our professional role as teacher educators, most globally expressed as, "Are our courses and supervised experiences preparing students to be effective practitioners?"

Methodology

In an effort to better understand where student teachers' ideas about teaching come from, we began a pilot study of Lesley undergraduates completing student teaching in grades 4-8. During January 1993, we initiated our inquiry with an exploration of how volunteers talked about the process of creating a lesson based upon content from a single fifth grade Social Studies text. Our selection of this textbook chapter on immigration provided all respondents with an identically organized content base and avoided the possible distorting anxiety that a math/science textbook might evoke in young women (Bailey, 1992). Moreover, we selected a regionally popular textbook and an assignment typically given to student teachers, because it was not our intention to make the task too difficult or foreign. In fact, we wanted to replicate a familiar process that would have a greater likelihood of promoting confidence and professional reflection.

We solicited our volunteers from the student teaching seminars toward the end of their practicum experience. The timing allowed for student teachers' thinking to be significantly influenced by their cooperating practitioner as well as by professors with whom they were still studying or at least seeing around campus. The respondents agreed to complete short surveys and write lessons plans within three days of interview appointments. The survey posed demographic questions addressing possible confounding data that could impact student thinking about the content area:

What certificate (s) program are you in?

How many credits have you completed in education?

How many credits have you earned in history? What courses have you taken?

How many credits have you earned in Social Studies Methods?

Is this your first or second student teaching placement? (2)

During the interview appointment, which lasted between twenty and fifty-five minutes, students were asked questions regarding their lesson and their interpretation of the chapter:

What was the chapter, "A Land of Immigrants," about?

What was the main idea?

What did you know about immigration before you read the chapter? Where did you learn this? Did you learn anything new?

Did the chapter support or contradict your views of immigration? How do you think this affected your lesson plan?

When you finished reading the chapter and sat down to think about how you would teach the material, how did you start designing the lesson?

Where did your ideas about the format of the lesson come from?

Who did you imagine you were developing this lesson for? Would you have made any changes in the lesson if you were teaching a different population?

Is there anything else about your developing this lesson that you would like to add?

We worked from taped interviews and written fieldnotes to develop codes and identify trends that grew from the data and helped us to answer the research question. This approach offered a method for gathering complex data from a few students for the purpose of illuminating the connections between novice teacher thinking and lesson plan development. Clearly, such a methodology does not permit generalization beyond the sample group. However, as is true with other carefully designed and implemented qualitative research, we willingly traded breadth for depth. Moreover, we were not interested in investigating the degree of congruence between what students reported and what was actually written on their lessons. Rather, we focused our investigation on student thinking about their lessons and the self-reported sources of influence upon that thinking.

 We replicated our 1993 pilot with a second set of Lesley student volunteers interviewed exactly one year later in January 1994. The time of year and point in their student teaching placement, venue, methodology, book chapter, interviewers, and questions were identical to those of the pilot. We decided to repeat the process one year later to increase

the sample size so that we could have greater confidence in our findings. Interestingly, the number of students in 1993 and 1994 who volunteered and followed-through on their commitment to participate was the same. Each year we had eight white women completing the survey, designing the lessons, and participating in the individual interviews. Only one of the sixteen respondents was non-traditional age. (3)

What we hoped to uncover was how students moved from textbook chapter to lesson plan and how they talked about their conceptualization of curriculum development. Additionally, we were interested in finding out how students interpreted the textbook and decided between teaching strategies, and to what extent college coursework influenced the processes of interpretation and decision-making.

Findings

The literature suggests that the influence of school culture is so significant to a teacher's training that college coursework is virtually "erased" when students entered the field (Bradley, 1991). Similarly, others argue that formal academic training was not nearly as influential in student teachers' practice as was their personal recollection of their own experience as K-12 students (La Baree, 1992; Holt-Reynolds 1992). However, findings from our study indicated that coursework does have a profound influence on how these student teachers think about practice. It is important to note that our student sample consisted of predominately high achieving students. This was not surprising, given that essentially we asked student volunteers to demonstrate competency in lesson plan development to Education faculty from their college. What was surprising was that these high achieving students spoke often about the influence of Education coursework upon their lesson plan development, a group that the 1986 Holmes report found to be especially resistant to the content of pedagogical coursework (Grossman, 1990). Therefore, these findings have the potential to have important implications for our Education program.

In reviewing the first set of data, we realized that our information about how students think about lesson planning could be broken into four categories: the intellectual process involved in creating lesson plan ideas, such as brainstorming and marginal notes; instructional strategies for the lesson, such as journal writing, family trees, interviews, research, discussion and additional reading; the lesson format, the order in which strategies are presented; and background knowledge informing the content of the lesson. Both the ideas for the lesson and the lesson plan format came almost exclusively from college coursework, especially Education courses. However, other courses were also named as being influential in that the skills, such as problem- solving and brainstorming acquired in content areas, were directly transferable to their teaching of a social studies lesson. For example, a Mathematics major explained how her training impacted the way she devised the lesson: "The problem solving I learned was indirectly beneficial. It taught me not to give up when you write a lesson. You have to think about all the students. You

have to know the materials, then translate it so that students can learn."

Another Mathematics major applied a different aspect of the content area training to pedagogy: "A lot of my thinking comes from working as a Math/Science teacher. I focus on the concepts, not the mechanics." Although respondents indicated that college coursework in history and sociology played a role in their approach to the content of the chapter, students' background knowledge of issues pertaining to immigration came primarily from pre-college coursework and family stories and experiences. Typically, students reported that they "knew a lot about Ellis Island...I don't really remember learning much in school about immigration, but I do remember asking my grandmother and other family members how they got here."

When students talk about their lessons, their thinking falls into roughly two categories that we call "developmental" and "disconnected." Students who think developmentally about the process of lesson planning indicate an awareness of the difficulties inherent in creating an isolated lesson from a single chapter separate from a larger curricular context. As one student explained when she discussed the limits of our assignment, "I'm looking in my head to write a unit . . . so I started with an introduction lesson." Another described her lesson as "a pre-activity to the chapter." Other students that we labeled as developmental recognized that curriculum considerations include the long view over the course of a semester or a year. For example, one respondent explained: "I thought I could do this part of the lesson (sharing personal stories) in May or June, but I think it would be too scary to do in November."

By contrast, the disconnected thinkers tended to report that their lesson was based primarily on an idea that they liked personally. For instance, one student said: "Well, I guess my lessons always relate to my personal experience because I didn't have a good time in school." Interviews with such students provided little indication that their lessons might be part of a larger curriculum with specific academic goals and a long range view. It is interesting to note that the "disconnected thinkers" were just as likely as the "developmental thinkers" to use jargon-laden language from coursework when talking about their lesson. However, the disconnected group did not apply these concepts in a meaningful way. For example, one such student created a lesson composed of free writing and a family tree. When asked to explain the relationship between these activities, she explained that she was "mixing it up." Here we see that vocabulary acquired through coursework appeared to be little more than a "bag of tricks," the implication being that one instructional activity can easily substitute for another. A different disconnected respondent described the rationale driving her lesson as "... a bunch of techniques I put together."

The 1994 interviews confirmed the findings of the 1993 set. Again, we saw that undergraduate coursework, particularly Education courses, played a significant role in the process of lesson plan development. However, the developmental/ disconnected

distinction seemed less applicable to this data set as all students interviewed approached the assignment developmentally. In fact, this group expanded our notion of developmental understanding to include a framework of critique. The majority of students, without having any question to prompt them, criticized the text selection for lacking a fully developed multicultural perspective. Importantly, not a single respondent from the earlier group made such an observation, regardless of whether their thinking was developmental or disconnected.

It seemed to us that because the students had the ability to analyze the text as limited in terms of its cultural understanding, they acquired a lens through which to consider the lesson reflectively.

This reflection caused them to think developmentally about the process of lesson planning. One respondent criticized the chapter for its lack of specific and inclusive voices that would give students a better understanding of the immigrant experience: "I thought there was this vagueness in the chapter that I wanted to deal with...I wanted it to be more meaningful to the students..." Another interviewee commented about how the textbooks were still presenting children with unrealistic images of people and accounts of historical events: "People love their country of origin. I wish there was more of that in the text. It didn't give enough credit to home countries. America was too positively portrayed." We did not have any such statements in the 1993 interviews.

Our finding that the majority of student teachers interviewed in 1994 criticized the text selection for its limited cultural perspective stands in sharp contrast to the 1993 set in which none of the students indicated similar concerns. In analyzing our data, we have found that there really is only one reasonable explanation for this new finding. We believe that the source of the student teacher thinking about multicultural issues is Lesley College's Diversity Initiative. Sponsored by a contribution from a generous donor concerned about multicultural education for future teachers, this initiative began in the summer of 1993 with the multicultural curriculum project. Over 50 faculty participated in this project, either developing new courses with a multicultural perspective or redesigning old courses to make them more inclusive. While few of the students interviewed had actually taken any of these new courses, all of the students took a course or had significant contact with a professor involved in this curriculum initiative. Therefore, it seems reasonable to assume that students interviewed in 1994 had been influenced by the work of the undergraduate faculty who are presently engaged with the topic of multicultural education. The fact that this particular student population is unusually influenced by college coursework also underscores the role that the diversity initiative can play at this institution.

Lastly, as Education faculty, we were pleased to discover that the study itself served as an intervention. Students practiced lesson planning without the pressure of implementation but with the time for contemplation and revision. This was accomplished partially

because the design forced students to reflect upon practice. Moreover, a less obvious intervention occurred when the female students viewed the investigators not only as professors at the College, but also as women scholars. Students made remarks indicating their interest in research as an arena not contemplated before, but one that suddenly held possibilities for their own futures.

Implications

Each of the study findings holds implications for practice. For instance, it is central to our work to have discovered that pedagogical coursework does indeed influence student teacher thinking at our institution. After a decade of negative public relations regarding the relative worth of such courses to the education of teachers, this finding should boost morale and validate the efforts of Education faculty.

Given that the research design we employed here rendered a useful way to think about novice approaches to lesson planning, it seems to us that the same design could be used as a performance assessment with student teachers to determine whether they are developmental or disconnected in their thinking about teaching. Perhaps a goal would be for students to demonstrate the ability to place a single lesson in a larger curricular context. We view this context along two continua--the one that follows practice from Monday morning to Friday afternoon, and the one that goes from September to June.

The multicultural awareness exhibited in the second set of interviews but not in the first implies that it does make a difference to students when an academic institution has a vision and an agenda when it supports that vision with resources. The Diversity Initiative was targeted to faculty development with the hope that it would affect course content and the faculty's way of viewing the world. To that end, the college president gave financial support to outside speakers, programming ideas, research work, and scholarships for attracting students and faculty of color. The excitement and commitment seems to have altered the culture and the classrooms sufficiently for students to have gained a new lense for critiquing teaching strategies and materials.

The implication drawn from our last finding that the study itself was an intervention in which the investigators served as role models of teacher/researchers is that the faculty should be encouraged to incorporate discussion of their scholarship into their teaching. This is especially meaningful, in our thinking, to undergraduate women who are just struggling to make the transition from student to trained professional. It is also important to the teaching field to promote, from the very beginning, the notion of teacher empowerment and the false dichotomy between those who teach and those who conduct research on teaching. It is our contention that if students can see possibilities for themselves as researchers, they will be less likely to be isolated in their classrooms and more likely to participate in the policy debates affecting practice.

Notes

This assertion is based upon the comparison between the SAT scores of our students (the majority of whom major in education) and national SAT scores published by the College Examination Board for intended education majors (1990).

An analysis of the data revealed no correlation between the responses to the demographic questions and the study findings. It did not seem to matter, for example, how many History credits students had completed probably because their thinking was most heavily influenced by the education program which offers little deviation from prescribed courses.

The faculty member unfamiliar to the respondents had significantly more "no shows" and somewhat fewer "volunteers" than did the faculty member with whom students were familiar.

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Education For What and For Whom:
A Third World Perspective

Marjorie Jones

...a great responsibility rests on the educational system. Its role should be that of a midwife to the emerging social order. Instead it is the chambermaid of the existing social order. "

Eric Williams, Education in British West Indies

Many countries assigned the nomenclature of Third World Countries, have shared a common experience of colonialism and from this source their current formal educational systems have emanated.

"...colonial educational policy was not clearly thought out. It was often a hasty response to an immediate crisis as was sometimes the case for the French in Indo- China and the British in Ceylon. It was often inconsistent and was frequently changed, depending upon the findings and recommendations of different royal commissions, and each colony evolved its own system independently. There was no blueprint for all the colonies. Too often analysis of colonial educational policy was based on policy statements and documents issued in London, Paris or the Hague, when the reality of what happened in practice was often very different from official policy statements, because local situations demanded local responses and because the character and temperament of individual officers in the field were so variable (Watson, p. 11)

Third World countries participated in, and in a sense supported through their participation, systems which did not necessarily promote the development of the majority of the local population. These countries faced a continuous dichotomous dilemma. They needed to participate in the system in order to access the educational provision, but at the same time this participation promoted the very features of education that were counterproductive to their own development. Their participation in the system was one way of declaring a level of legitimacy and viability for their sense of nationhood. Cognizant of the low levels of participation in the formal system and the high levels of illiteracy, the local leadership continuously sought to introduce into the educational system those features which would respond to local needs. But since the local participants lacked access to policy making and implementation machinery, the impact of any of these infusions was diluted. These infusions were never system-wide and therefore did not impact those most in need of an education related to local experiences and needs.

Further, in many Third World countries there was a significant number of foreign born children who participated in the system. There were schools specifically designed to

respond to this segment of the population. So third World countries worked diligently to educate their people in a system that was in essence counter productive to the major strands of their development.

The importance assigned to the activity of education and the belief that the outcome would be beneficial to individual and collective development caused a type of psyche to be ingrained into the people. The local populations assigned a high value to education but the school systems that were developed under the colonial power were essential}y alien creations. They reflected the philosophy of their founders, whether the metropolitan power, the voluntary agency or the missionary society, and they were designed to serve the needs and interests of these groups as perceived by them. (Watson, p.26) As Becker (1972) noted, the educational legacy of colonialism was a sort of debilitating inertia, constraining local cultural initiative and developing a colonized condition of the minds of the people.

The fact that almost no educational facilities were established during the first and longest phase of colonialism in the West Indies, has determined the legacy of this period to be probably more profound that any other in educational terms. (Watson p. 26)

Education was provided by the government and by other individuals and agencies such as religious denominations and was compulsory to about age 14. Entrance to secondary schools was by a selective, competitive examination and students paid tuition. There were limited employment opportunities for those exiting the educational system at age 14, and they were employed primarily in the agricultural or 'manual' labor sector. Secondary education was for those who were successful at the 11+ examination and could pay the requisite tuition.

Noting the following features of the educational systems would further suggest who the systems were designed to serve. The systems:

were representative of the colonial power

had a large percentage of untrained teachers

were centralized

provided unequal urban-rural access

were elitist

were formalistic authoritarian and dominantly verbal in the instructional methodologies

were physically overcrowded.

In such systems, those exposed to an academic and social culture that mirrored the school culture could survive in the school structure with a minimum of difficulties. Those who lacked the academic and social culture were almost always locked out of the system. Those who worked diligently to acquire the requisite academic and social culture but

lacked the 'ability to pay' the fees were siphoned out of the system.

Thus the system provided an elitist, grammar type education mirrored from the colonial power for those who could afford it and produced workers, at the end of the secondary cycle, to staff the jobs in government offices. Race, color and class played a determining role in some employment opportunities, in those Third World countries whose inhabitants had come as 'masters', slaves or indentured servants from Europe, Africa or Asia

Most of the Third World countries that gained their independence during the decades of the 1950's and 1960's placed much of their faith for improving living conditions on the expansion of education. The political leaders of the Third World formulated plans for the development of education with the following expectations:

That better education would overcome ignorance and so open the way for individuals to lead richer lives, to establish better social relationship within communities, and so enable the local communities to gain in self-respect and become more democratic and responsible, more able to take initiatives for their own improvement and to become more outward looking.

That to improve education would contribute to economic growth, thus raising the general standard of living, and help towards better employment opportunities, health, housing, etc.

That education would improve the quality of rural life, especially the level of agricultural skills with the aid of literacy and the opportunities of richer cultural life.

That education would improve the training in skills for the development of industries, and also modern social services, increasing the readiness to learn new techniques required for innovation and change

That education would be the most effective means of developing a more equitable society, with better opportunities for individuals in the countryside as well as in towns, with less extremes of poverty and affluence, more responsible leaders and administrators.

That education would contribute to nation building, by fostering a growing respect for each nation's own culture and traditions, and by aiding the development of political maturity, which would be capable of combining orderly leadership with freedom of thought and expression, and respect for individual rights.

Through these goals, educational access has been expanded to include both urban and rural populations, to educate a greater majority of the population beyond the elementary level, to train teachers for instruction in a greater variety of disciplines, and to make provision for participation for those who are challenged by economic circumstances.

Challenges

With the achievement of independence, Third World countries have forged educational

priorities to respond to their national development. Their task is to educate their citizens for service in their own countries while participating in a global scenario. But more challenging than the transmission of skills for national development is the maintenance of values and mores necessary for the application of the skills-set developed by academic training.

Developed countries confront a range of challenges as they seek to promote national development. An impasse in 1996 between the President of the United States of America and the

Congress on a balanced budget amendment, is one such example. We might, therefore, reliably anticipate that developing countries would confront an even larger range and greater number of challenges as they seek to promote national development.

Two challenges will be presented here. The first relates to teacher education: maintaining adequate numbers and levels of qualified teaching staff to ensure the highest quality of education for the citizens and hence promote national development. The second relates to ways in which Third World countries do or do not participate in the technological development that has become part of the day to day interactions of developed countries.

The First Challenge

During the colonial period the countries of the Caribbean shared similar political, economic and social structures. Inadequate financial and human resources within each territory made it imperative for the countries to share some common resources. One of these was higher education, including teacher education.

The following outlines the design and content of teacher education in the decades of the sixties and seventies.

It has been a competitive and selective pattern of training, which has failed to produce the number of trained teachers to service the educational system;

It has been an expensive pattern of two years residential and non-residential training for a limited number of teacher trainees;

It has isolated the teacher trainee from the schools except for occasional forays for teaching practice;

Its program has not been geared specifically to equipping teacher trainees with the skills and competencies which are known to be necessary for them to perform efficiently in schools;

It has been college oriented and based on the professional hunches of college staff rather than on the realities of the classroom situations;

It has not always taken cognizance of the particular skills which teacher trainees would require to participate in the curriculum development and other innovative activities which

have been introduced into the educational system.

As a result of the failure of the traditional college pattern of teacher training to provide a sufficient number of trained teachers a pattern of in-service and/or on the job patterns of training at the pre-college and college levels with part-time attendance at a teachers' college or a teachers' center was introduced. This new in-service pattern of training tended:

To be less expensive, as teachers were not withdrawn from their schools for full time attendance at a teachers' college;

To produce a greater number of trained teachers;

To provide training which was more directly related to the skills which teachers required to perform their tasks in the classrooms;

To be more flexible in its attempts to deal specifically with suggested solutions to problems encountered by teachers in their uninterrupted teaching in the schools;

To provide regular feedback on the efficacy of the training in equipping teachers to operate efficiently in schools.

The training and adequate supply of qualified teachers was always recognized as one of the more serious needs of the educational system. When the Royal Commission traveled through many of the West Indian islands to analyze the causes of financial distress, the provision of education was criticized. The teachers, in particular were found to be inadequate in both quantity and quality of training. (Gordon, p.81) In 1966 in Guyana, sixty three percent of the teaching force had no professional training of any sort By 1973 74 the percentage of trained teachers in the system had risen by seven percent from the 1966 figure. Though the qualified teachers were dispersed throughout the systems some instruction was being undertaken by qualified personnel.

The Influence of Immigration

Since the decade of the 1970s, Caribbean countries have experienced a significant exodus of its people to North America. Whether these persons are highly educated or not, they represent a drain on the human resources needed for the development of the country.

The following headline, "Unending Exodus From the Caribbean, With the U.S. a Constant Magnet," appearing in the New York Times of May 6, 1992 and written about events in the Dominican Republic, tells the story of the effect of immigration on the development of Caribbean countries.

"Before dawn on many days, in a ritual repeated across the Caribbean, long lines of people anxious to build new lives in the United States begin forming outside the high white walls of the American Consulate...

Hit by hard economic times and seduced more than ever by influences like mass tourism

and satellite television this region (the Caribbean) of 15 independent countries and a smattering of dependencies of the United States and European countries, with a total population of only about 33 million, has been consistently exporting more of its people in percentage terms than any other area of the world...

Tiny states like St. Kitts and Nevis, Grenada and Belize are sending 1 percent to 2 percent of their citizens to the United States every year, meaning that they are exporting all of their population growth to us (U.S.)...

Between 1981 and 1990, the four Caribbean nations that supply the largest number of immigrants together accounted for nearly 12 percent of all legal immigrant admissions to the United States, according to Immigration and Naturalization Service data The Dominican Republic sent 251,803 people to the U.S., Jamaica 213,805, Haiti 140, 163 and Guyana 95,374. In 1990, 111,000 citizens of Caribbean countries already living in the United States, applied to become legal residents." All of this data is naturally swelled by the number of illegal immigrants.

In Caribbean countries where appropriate post-secondary education and training for specific professions does not exist, citizens migrate for educational purposes but then seek to remain in the developed countries. In some instances their reluctance to return to their home countries is due to the struggle they face in applying their training acquired in the milieu of a developed society to their work in a "developing" context or there is the urge to improve their economic status.

In all of these scenarios there are always a significant group of persons who are teachers at the elementary and secondary level in the technical fields and at the university level. With the loss of trained teachers and others who can add to the knowledge and instruction base of the people, either through direct instruction, modeling or by their input into the lives of the people, these Third World countries are now faced with a dilemma of educating their citizens for participation in an ever advancing world while they lose the human resources which they need to carry out the task.

The Second Challenge

The second challenge relates to the decisions that Third World countries must make in relation to the technological advances that are taking place around the world.

Third World countries are impacted by the concept of the global village. Mass communication brings nations together in a matter of seconds. Mass communications facilitates the transmission of both information and culture across the globe. These advancements in science and technology in the developed societies send a clear message about the placement of the developed countries and the developing countries in the world order. How does the Third World participate in a scientific and technological world? How does the Third World participate in the global village and maintain those aspects of

their national identity that are critical to their self-definition? Can Third World countries choose how they will participate?

Science and Technology

Within the colonial structure of education, instruction in science and technology was either non- existent or was present at a very basic level. When there was instruction in Biology and Chemistry the laboratories existed on the barest minimums as a significant number of the tools and materials were imported. Post independence brought about renewed efforts to include science and technology in the education of the population in an effort to keep pace with other sections of the world population The concept of colonialism has been removed as a descriptor of the relationship between developed and developing nations but the relationship between the two sets of nations continue to suggest a level of dependency from one quarter and a level of governance in terms of 'dictating' the course of events from another.

In the United States, the use of the computer and computerized systems are a part the everyday experience of a significant section of the population. Shopping in a supermarket no longer requires a clerk to read labels and enter prices and it doesn't require the shopper to present cash or a check to pay for purchases. Many of the ways of doing business are changing from an old order to a new order. I use the example of the supermarket as most people will be exposed to this experience and modeling is a significant part of learning.

There are schools in the United States that provide instruction in computers beginning at the kindergarten level. College students are able to access, free of charge, the Internet and the World Wide Web. They are able to receive and exchange information with students across the nation They are able to access their teachers after the regular school hours to get assistance with homework or to raise questions. In addition to newspapers and magazines information is shared through electronic mail and fax machines. What is the decision for third World countries in this technological milieu? Can they keep up? Should they try to keep up? How far behind is an acceptable distance?

Third World countries have sought to extract the wealth of their land using indigenous technologies. We have witnessed the multinational corporations introduce technologies that render the indigenous processes obsolete, and remove from local population the ability to compete or keep pace.

Third World countries cannot keep pace with the technological developments of the developed world. What can these countries do to participate in ways that they need to? It is useful for their own development to be able to access tools and information. It is useful for their development to be able to communicate and participate in the generation and dissemination of information If Third World countries are ill-equipped to participate in the communication pace, the information they disseminate can in certain situations become obsolete before the information is even received. And so, as the countries grapple

with developing their economies they face a serious challenge of deciding about their participation on this information highway. A further challenge of this participation is that the information transmitted, particularly through the television, is not censored and so can and does clash with the promulgation of indigenous values and mores. So, often, there are sets of behaviors and expectations, defining quality of life, that are transmitted via the media to Third World populations that are not available in the day-to-day experiences of the people, but they become familiar to the people and are transformed into magnets of desire.

Visions and Realities

"A healthy, well-trained and educated population is pivotal to development and growth .." (Miller, ed. p. 15)

Third World countries make significant investment in education as education is regarded as the mechanism through which the nation can forge goals for development.

Their vision is for the provision of early education to both urban and rural communities. The greatest challenge is the provision to rural communities where there is neither a wealth of human or material resources and where some areas are not easily accessible.

Efforts continue in the provision of secondary education to a greater proportion of the population. The schools themselves seek to provide training in areas that related to national goals so that opportunities for employment might be expanded As these educational goals are pursued, the countries seek to provide health and nutritional services that ensure the population's ability to participate fully and effectively in the educational system.

The possibility of realizing the visions of the Third World relate not only to Third World aspirations but are deeply influenced by the political and economic power of the developed world Among the visions would be:

Equitable access to the world's resources

Freedom to use one's resources for one's development

Freedom to define one's path

Fair share of the world market

The vision for the development of the Third World revolves around the concept of self-determination. If the developed world believes that all nations and all people are capable of development, the development posture would be one of support, not for the further enhancement of the already developed sections of the world but for the enhancement of the lives of the people who inhabit the Third World.

The ultimate hope is therefore that no country would dominate another, that the wealth of small nations would be perceived as true wealth by the larger nations. That money and

services would be aspects of wealth in addition, other resources, particularly those which exist within the natural resources of Third World countries, would be included in the definition of wealth. The well- being of all nations would be determined by the interrelationship of political economic, social cultural and physical health That small would not necessarily represent weaker.

As the 21st century approaches and as the information age explodes, the educational principles of Paulo Freire, a Third World educational philosopher assumes greater significance for the self- determination of the people of the Third World. Freire notes that education is not neutral whether it occurs in a classroom or in a community setting People bring with them their cultural expectations, their experiences of social discrimination and life pressures, and their strengths in surviving. Education starts from the experiences of people, and either reinforces or challenges the existing social forces that keep them passive. (Wallerstein, p.33)

In Freire's terms, the purpose of education should be human liberation, which takes place to the extent that people reflect upon the relationship to the world in which they live. And...in conscientizing themselves, they insert themselves in history as subjects (Freer, 1971). This goal of education is based on Freire's view of the learner and of knowledge: the learner is not an empty vessel to be filled by the teacher, nor as an object of education. Learners enter into the process of learning not by acquiring facts, but by constructing their reality in social exchange with others. (Wallerstein, p. 34)

The possession and control of economic wealth coupled with the possession of the infrastructure that provides ready access to goods and services bestows power on the developed world. Third World countries are therefore always at a disadvantage if their development is to be measured by the identical development principles and practices as the developed world. Third World countries are faced with the reality of always having to work harder to achieve what might be considered to be less, by the world's standards, but these achievements must be measured in the context of their own political, economic and cultural spheres and as related to their self-determined goals.

Though extremely challenged by the unavailability of resources to purchase the necessary resources on the world market, Third World countries must continue their unrelenting drive to educate their people based on the concepts of self-reliance and self-determination, seeking to foster a more "liberating" experience throughout the educational process.

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Ode to Black Men: Be the Light In the Corner
Merlin R. Langley

As a psychologist I was trained to understand that perspective is everything. I also learned and over time came to understand that people are compelled to share their perspective through the telling of stories. Stories seem to provide the connection between the facts of their lives. That is, the telling of stories seem to contribute to their sense of wholeness or integrity.

When I sit with an individual in the stillness of the therapy hour, I am there to help the individual put his or her life in a meaningful context by helping him or her to tell me the best story he or she can. I have decided to change my role as a trained and skilled listener and instead tell you a story. A story that will provide you with a rare glimpse of an increasingly common and shared perspective by many Black men of their present status and future in America. In other words, I challenge you to become the listener and discover the meaning and value of this story.

The Story

Several of my female friends and friends of my wife constantly ask me "what's up with the brothers?" I believe that they ask me the above question because I am their friend who also happens to be a psychologist whose clinical practice primarily involves working with Black men and their families.

I also believe that my friends ask me the above intriguing question because they are attempting to achieve through dialogue with me a "deeper" understanding of the origin of the sad and the deteriorating state of the Black male-female relationships. In particular, my female friends seem to be concerned and confused about the nature and quality of their relationships with Black men. Concerned because they really do care about Black men. Confused because they do not understand why many Black men display a lack of willingness to make an emotional commitment to them. Additionally some of my female friends are also angry because they feel helpless and increasingly hopeless about finding a Black man to share their lives with.

Over the past decade several Black social scientists has painstakingly described in the literature this change in the social structure of Black male - female relationships. However, it has been only within the last couple of years that this social anomaly has emerged as an integral part of the dominant discourse at cocktail parties and family gatherings all over Black America. This social phenomena has happened largely as a result of the work of Terry McMillian in her award winning book and her recently released movie entitled "Waiting to Exhale".

As a Black man, husband, and father I was also troubled that some Black men tended to avoid (consciously or unconsciously) involvement in committed relationships with Black women. As a result, I contacted some of my colleagues and informed them that I would be interested in taking referrals for an all Black male support group. I told them that I was interested in learning from Black men directly their perspective on the nature of their relationships and their relationship difficulties. Specifically, I was interested in understanding the factors that contributed to some Black males difficulty in initiating and maintaining caring and loving relationships with Black people in general (parents, siblings, wives, children) and Black women in particular. I was at the most cautiously optimistic and at the worst guarded that I would get any referrals. Why? Because I was aware from training and experience that Black clients who are referred for any form of counseling typically do not show up and if they do over 50% do not return after the first interview. Not very good odds.

Four weeks later to my surprise I was sitting with a group of Black men representing diverse social, educational, economic and political backgrounds. During the early phase of the group many of the men appeared guarded and surprised. Guarded because I had asked them to violate a major taboo in male culture: to talk about feelings. Surprised because I was willing to listen to them. Most revealing were their statements that they had gotten used to being at best ignored or at worst feared by both Whites and Blacks in society. Simply, as Black men they were aware that they are not heard or seen in this society. They were invisible because they were not valued. But I realized as I listened to their sad and painful stories that what was even more destructive to their sense of self and their soul was that they had gotten used to being invisible in American society.

The men from poor working class backgrounds described in graphic detail how they were reminded daily of their marginal status by Whites and to our collective shame and detriment, by Blacks as well. With respect to Whites, some men in the group described how their education under conditions of cultural oppression and institutionalized racism had not adequately prepared them to be productive members of society. They described how stagnant or declining wages, the loss of jobs and the growing chasm between rich and poor had contributed to their sense of alienation and isolation from their families and communities. They believed that these factors contributed to Black women not seeing them as potential mates. Some men were courageous to report that at times they wondered and yes doubted whether they could fulfill the role of husband and father as well. Although they were fully aware that race and gender matter in American society, that their socioeconomic options were limited, they experienced shame and guilt. They felt ashamed because they believed that their marginal economic status did not make them appear like men in Black women eyes. Guilty because they felt that they had done something wrong. That they had failed to live up to the expectations of their families and communities.

In contrast, professional men in the group stated that although they believed that their education had benefited them, they continued to experience institutionalized racism and discrimination due to the color of their skin. They described the impact of downsizing, restructuring and reengineering on their ability to not only survive but to thrive in corporate America. For example, one member of the group stated that he "had not reached a glass ceiling with respect to his career. Rather, he had hit a brick wall." Other members described the high price they had paid to be "successful." For them to "make it" it was not a question of integration but of assimilation into mainstream American society. They believed and felt that they could not afford to be Black. As a result they became invisible. They also became very depressed and angry. This should not be surprising to relatively conscious Blacks and Whites in America. Race matters in America, as author Cornel West has so eloquently stated.

In addition, the recent work of Williams Julius Wilson, a Harvard sociologist has helped us to understand the important and defining role that work plays in the life of an individual regardless of his/her race. In a recent New York Times Magazine excerpt of his work entitled When Work Disappears: The World of the New Urban Poor Dr. Wilson stated:

"where jobs are scare, many people eventually lose their feeling of connectedness to work in the formal economy; they no longer expect work to be regular, and regulating force in their lives...in the absence of regular employment, life, including family life, becomes less coherent."

Although Dr. Wilson's work focused primarily on what happens to the poor when work disappears I think his findings have significant mental health and policy implications for professionals as well. I have observed that many individuals regardless of their socioeconomic background tend to experience significant intrapersonal and interpersonal social disorganization as a result of their uncertainty about whether work will disappear for them in the near future as well.

In addition to the absence or uncertainty about the world of work the Black men in this group described how the absence of their parents in general and their fathers in particular during their childhood and adolescence had negatively affected their identity. The unavailability of their fathers as a function of consequences not choice negatively their self concepts and self-esteem. For instance, one group member with tears in his eyes and rage in his voice described how he felt that his father had emotionally neglected and abandoned him and as a result had failed to properly prepare him to cope with the challenges of life as a Black male in White America. As a psychologist, I am fully aware that the above experience may not be unique to Black men. Nevertheless, the absent of a loving and strong Black family in general and a Black father figure in particular is negatively affecting an increasing number of Black boys and girls. Resulting in many Black men and women as adults experiencing problems being able to form committed

relationships, creating and maintaining stable families, and strong communities.

In addition, some men felt that over the last two decades, as a result of major structural changes occurring in the economy (poor education, loss of jobs, migration of middle income families to the suburbs, drugs and violence), the Black community, as an extension of the Black family, did not provide them with the vitally necessary knowledge, guidance, support or role models to learn how to become faithful husbands, loving and responsible fathers, and productive members of society.

I have come to appreciate and understand that as a result of the many negative sociocultural factors described above that many Black men as adults tend to use their relationships with Black women as the context to resolve historical and socially constructed emotional and behavioral problems in living. Problems that are intimately associated with their individual and collective struggle to increasingly feel in control and to feel valued and loved.

The Black man is in trouble. What can be done and who should do it? Although I believe that the support group provided a necessary and supportive community to help the men begin to understand and to change their identity and their behavior, it was not sufficient. What is required? We must remember that it is important to see the struggle of Black men and their families within a historical and sociological perspective. Black men and women must begin to understand the role of the federal government, education and the community in our struggle for racial and economic equality. Black men and women must support affirmative actions measures until America gets the work, race, and the fairness issues right. What John Kenneth Galbraith, a Harvard economist, calls the "The Great Society." The Million Man march in many respects was a cry from Black men. Black men saying I want to do the right thing: I want to work, I do not want my race to be an obstacle for upward mobility, and I want to be treated fairly when times are economically good and when times are economically bad.

Black males need to create organizations or other social mechanisms to develop leaders for the Black community. They desperately need a place where they can get together as men to discuss social and economic policy as it relates to their group interests. In other words, to look at ways to develop our community but to also secure a more independent position economically in America. This is nothing new. As I go across the country I see other ethnic groups engaging in such economic activity sometimes even in our community. Black men need to rebuild what Dr. Courtland Lee, a Black psychologist, calls the triangle of support: strengthen families, strengthen schools and strength institutions (church). Black men and women need to create a public space where they can examine the nature and quality of their relationships. To develop plans for the success of the next generation of our Black youth. To create and develop mentoring programs to expose Black boys and girls to positive role models.

Black men and women must begin to understand the structural relationship between work

and the creation and maintenance of a stable family and community. In other words, when work disappears many times so do fathers. They must understand the responsibility of both the Black family and community as cultural institutions to provide its members with a sense of their personal and collective identity. Black men and women must develop an unequivocal commitment to develop our children for the 21st century. The Black church must reexamine it historical mission within the global community because it has lost its way and as such can not fulfill its role as a cultural institution that provides direction and comfort to the human soul.

Recently my wife and I returned from a trip to South Africa. There were two important lessons that I learned and would like to share with Blacks in America. The power of beliefs and rituals.

Allow me to digress for a moment through the use of a story to illustrate my point:

I was walking along the Indian ocean and I met a brother from Johannesburg, South Africa and we started talking about what life was like before and after the elections in 1994. He said: "you know why the movement against apartheid started in Soweto? Because in Soweto people were reared to always believe that they must be the light in the corner." He explained that "when things seem desperate you must, by your example (behavior), be the light in the corner that provides others with hope that tomorrow will be better than today even though there is no real reason to be optimistic."

The other lesson was the power of rituals. Every significant event in South African society begins with a grand ritual (story telling, song, music, and dance) as a means of denoting that something or somebody is being transformed. Being changed. Being changed for the better. Blacks in America should develop rites of passage programs for Black youth to instill a sense of connection to and responsibility for their family and community.

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Stories of the Holocaust: Teaching the Hidden Narrative

Barbara Vacarr, Ph.D.

Every November, as the world remembers the devastation of Kristallnacht, I teach the Stories of the Holocaust course. The idea of teaching the Holocaust through first person narratives of victims, perpetrators, bystanders, and rescuers took shape during a visit to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum with my father, a survivor of the Holocaust. It was in this visit that I fully realized the power of narratives as I uncovered the hidden narrative I share with my father. His inability to speak his experiences shaped my personal vision of who I am, of my father, and of the world. My father's silence kept me from fully knowing him and myself. In the absence of my father's stories, I shaped him in the image of Holocaust stereotypes. I perceived his silence in my life as the helpless weakness of the victim. Amidst the haunting images housed in the museum, my father began to tell me his escape stories. In his stories, I encountered my father the hero, and saw him as I had never seen him before, through eyes of compassion and deep admiration. This encounter with my father's heroism put me in touch with my own and I was moved to create the Stories of the Holocaust course.

My experience teaching "Stories of the Holocaust", as well as the experiences of my students, has given me a deep appreciation of the transformation that can take place in a safe learning environment. It has also clarified the institutional support that is necessary for constructing and participating in transformational education. The following discussion examines the ways in which the delivery, the process, and the content of this course work together to facilitate a transformational learning experience in which students are invited to discover the hidden narrative in theory.

Stories of the Holocaust is offered in a two weekend format with a month between the two weekends. Prior to the first weekend of class, students read first person narratives of Holocaust survivors, perpetrators, and bystanders. The first weekend of the course provides an immersion experience into the Holocaust. It is spent living and studying together as we visit the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, and meet with survivors. In the month-long period between classes, students read ghetto diaries and rescuer narratives. The second weekend of the course is held on campus where students meet with a resistor and a Jehovah'a Witness who tried to protect her family by joining the Hitler Youth. The emphasis during the second weekend is on deepening understanding through an examination of the themes contained within the narratives.

One of the fundamental strengths of the Stories of the Holocaust course is also one of its greatest challenges. In addition to being diverse culturally, students in this course come

from different schools within the College. Students come together from the Women's College, the Adult Baccalaureate College, and the graduate programs. Even within the same programs, students are pursuing different majors. Consequently, the challenge of the first weekend is to create an inclusive learning community. This challenge is addressed during the first stage of group development as students negotiate membership in the group. There is a distinct way in which the delivery and design of this particular course catalyzes this process. Being away from one's usual support systems, in combination with the difficult nature of the course material, contributes to a sense of vulnerability. This heightened vulnerability provides motivation for group cohesion.

The group process is initiated as we come together on Friday night in Washington D.C., where I begin by telling the story of my personal connection to the Holocaust, and the way that coming to terms with my own story led me to the creation of this course. In doing so, I model a way of speaking to the material that is personal and reflects the transformation of experience into action. Students follow by sharing stories of their personal or professional interests in the course and articulating their relationship to the material. Quite often this process becomes one of student's identifying their cultural backgrounds. Differences in identity are exposed and alliances within the group are formed.

Following introductions students meet in small groups to discuss the narratives read prior to class. In these discussions students identify themselves through their relationship to the narratives. Albert Speer's *Inside the Third Reich* engages students in a rich discussion that begins to bridge their own stories with those of the authors. As one of the most powerful men in Hitler's Germany, Speer's story is one from which students initially want to distance themselves. For many he becomes the personification of evil. However, as students discuss his life they are drawn into the very human story of abdicating responsibility for the promise of power. It is in this discussion that students begin to look at, question, and share their own experiences of responsibility and silence. Within these very personal experiences the polarity of good and evil is questioned. The group tentatively begins to consider the possibility that good and evil live commingled in the individual and in society. The idea that good and evil are not "different coins" is a difficult one, particularly in the context of personal experience. As I teach this class, I am continually confronted by students' desires to remain locked in the comfort of dualistic thinking. A student's comment made during this discussion speaks to the painful process of challenging this dualism, "what do you mean that we are all capable of evil in the same way that we are capable of great good? The people who did these things were evil. And no matter how much Speer fights with his own conscience, he was evil,". The group gains strength as students support one another in the struggle to contain the polarities of experience. Beyond its centrality to the course, engaging in this struggle is essential in our development as moral human beings. As a Psychologist, I know that living in the tension of this struggle is the possibility for movement beyond the rigid confines of

dualistic categories. More importantly, our ability to truly engage one another in authentic interactions is contingent upon the development of more complex and contextual thinking.

For some American students, the Holocaust is an interesting and illuminating subject for studying human behavior, yet it remains removed in the past, something that happened fifty years ago to other people in other countries. For others, the Holocaust is an overwhelming but compelling emotional experience of traumatic horror. The polarities of these positions are bridged as students have an intimate experience with a survivor, rescuer, or resistor who spends a two to three hour period sharing the story of her/his pre-war, war, and post-war life. For those students whose only contact with the Holocaust has been in a history course or in a written narrative, this encounter is profound. The intimate nature of the encounter and the dialogue that focuses on the full story of a life create an empathetic connection with the storyteller. In her/his story we live the stories of our own relationships wth mothers, fathers, siblings, and community. It is within this connection that we witness the unspeakable losses of the speaker which were the result of the same kind of stereotyping and racism that exist in our world today. In this connection we are also confronted with the complexities of both experience and history.

Inevitably, in the discussion that follows students wonder why people did not act differently, why they stood by silently, why they did not escape? The stories uncover a chilling reality about the world in which the Holocaust took place and the reality of our own complacency. Survivors speak about the step by step process in which events took place that belied the ultimate outcome. In each story lies the painful discovery of the very human experience of adjusting ourselves to the frightening realities in the world around us as we struggle to maintain control of that world. Their stories push us to realize the mistake of our attempt to construct meaning from questions that frame simplistic answers. As we struggle with dualistic thinking that seeks to place events in cause and effect relationships, the focus of the course shifts from an attempt to understand the "why" of the Holocaust to an inquiry into the "how". The course becomes a course of questions that defy easy answers. The first night of class ends with students looking to one another for support in dealing with the painful realities of the stories, and the discomfort of the void created by questions that have no simple answers.

The next two days are spent in the museum. For anyone who has not experienced the Holocaust museum in Washington D.C., words are inadequate approximations of the experience. The form of the museum follows its function to produce a visceral experience of confinement, powerlessness, despair, rage, and grief. Its brilliant design moves visitors more deeply, step by step, through the destruction of European Jewry. The museum experience is made more powerful by the encounter students have already had with a survivor. History has been given a name and a face to which the museum provides a disturbing context.

The first day in the museum is spent just walking through seeing history. On the second day, students walk through the museum in groups of three looking at the artifacts from the perspectives of victims, perpetrators, and the bystanders who appear in many of the museum's photographs. The objective of this configuration is to engage in perspective taking, and to attempt to see through "their" eyes. We return from the museum silenced, each of us isolated in our struggle for words. The silence is penetrated as each member of the group draws what cannot be spoken. Through our drawings we begin to make contact with each other and with the experience of the museum. The conversation reflects the difficulty of comprehending humanity's capacity for indifference. This discussion is made more personal by student's shocked reactions to the museum's portrayal of America's silence during the Holocaust. Shock yields to an uncomfortable self-examination as students begin to acknowledge the many ways in which we routinely remain silent and indifferent to oppression in our everyday lives. Anger at "those" bystanders shifts as students begin to tell stories of their own indifference.

I was very moved by the story of a young African-American woman who was clearly shaken by the things she saw in the museum, and was disconcerted by the fact that she had never before encountered the Holocaust. As she shared her reactions she spoke about her experience when she first came to college. She described her ambivalence in classes that seemed to spend so much time focusing on women's issues and women's oppression. Having grown up in an African American community, there were more immediate civil rights concerns that involved members of her community. She spoke eloquently to her growing realization that, "feminists are fighting for the same things as are people in my own community". She acknowledged her growing understanding that to dismiss the voices of women who are fighting for equality can lead to perpetuating and perpetrating the same kind of racism that she has experienced as a person of color. It was a powerful moment when she subsequently turned to the Jewish women in the class and asked them if they experienced the same kind of racism in this culture as she does. In the conversation that followed students shared stories of marginilization, realizing as they did so, that the same kind of racism portrayed in the museum is an inescapable reality for members of society whose appearance marks them as different from dominant white culture.

It is important to note the tension that is present in the room during this discussion. It is one thing to visit a museum that reveals a history of stereotyping, marginalization, and oppression, it is quite another to address it interpersonally in the moment. During a similar discussion that took place the first time I taught this class, students entered into a very tense conflict with one another. The divisions occurred between Jews and non-Jews and older and younger students. As one student stated at the end of that course, "It was as if all our differences were in the room, and it was frightening to think that there would be no way to work it out". As in the discussion described above, this incident took place at a point in the course when students had already established support within the group, a

norm of allowing space for each member to speak, and for members to speak about personal experience.

In that first class, the conflict happened shortly before lunch. In the first few moments a student left the room quite upset. Bringing the student back into the room and deciding to remain beyond lunchtime were important commitments the group made, essentially modeling the way an inclusive community works. In the tension of the process, students spoke their anger of being defined by the "other". It was a vulnerable process, one in which fear and a desire for inclusion were exposed. Yet, safety was more than the product of established group norms, it was a result of continually relating the conflict in the room to the content of the course. It was important to identify the issues in the room as the same issues we were attempting to understand by studying the narratives of the Holocaust. In framing it this way students were able to integrate the learning intellectually and emotionally.

The conflict was an invaluable experience of struggling with the complicated concept of tolerance, the consequences of being defined by others and engaging in defining others. The group grappled with the problem of remaining intact in the face of individual differences. Ultimately, members of the group recognized the need for community to be inclusive and protective of everyone. In the words of Cornel West,

The interplay of individuality and unity is not one of uniformity and unanimity imposed from above but rather of conflict among diverse groups that reach a dynamic consensus subject to questioning and criticism. As with a soloist in a jazz quartet, quintet or band, individuality is promoted in order to sustain and increase the *creative* tension within the group- a tension that yields higher levels of performance to achieve the aim of the collective project. This kind of critical and democratic sensibility flies in the face of any policing of borders and boundaries of "blackness," "maleness," "femaleness," or "whiteness," (West, 1993)

Stuart Cook, a social psychologist, identified conditions that lead to favorable attitudes toward people who are different. One of these conditions is that our contact with the other must be authentic and not superficial, we must come to know the other as an individual (Fogelman, 1994). Essentially, the other must exist for us as a subjective experience. If our goal in teaching the Holocaust is to make the lessons personally relevant then the encounters we facilitate between students and those who lived the event, and within the classroom itself must be authentic ones. Narratives provide a rich vehicle for these encounters. The very construction of narratives facilitates a connection to others and to our own history as they "involve not only a sequence of events, but also a story teller and an intended audience,"(Noddings, et. al, 1991). It is in this dynamic relationship between the storyteller and the listener that we deepen our understanding of the narrator's culture, reality, gender, beliefs, and choices which comprise one's life history (Ibid.) And it is in the practical ethics of peoples' lives that we confront the profound, and often

uncomfortable, questions about the decisions that real individuals, groups, and nations made and did not make. As Bill Moyers said in an interview with Margot Stern Strom, "...Unless we keep hammering home the irrefutable and indisputable facts of the human experience in history, history as it was experienced by people, we are going to find ourselves increasingly unable to draw distinctions between what was and what we think was," (Johnson, et. al, 1989). Teaching through the lessons that are embedded in life stories provides an inclusive, critical, and pluralistic way of thinking that stands in sharp contrast to Nazi Germany's annihilation of thinking and difference.

As the 'teacher', I am most aware of my own growth and learning that resulted from this experience. In the moment of that class I was frightened and worried about my own ability to responsibly facilitate the conflict. In retrospect, I stand in awe of the process, and have gained clarity about the importance of creating safe learning environments that challenge us to engage in conflict with one another and that move us beyond polite political correctness. I am also aware of the need for institutional support in creating these classrooms. It is courageous and creative work. It is the kind of work that initiates all participants into new ways of experiencing ourselves and our worlds. Initiations require witnesses. Just as students require a witness to their learning process, a place to speak their experiences, and teachers who reflect their abilities back to them, faculty require an institutional witness. Specifically, transformative teaching is supported through institutional structures such as: alternative delivery models that provide sustained contact among class participants, teaching assistants, and forums for faculty to debrief their experiences. Mostly, however, the risky business of transformational education is best supported by institutions whose commitment to diversity recognizes the need to move beyond rhetoric and engage its community in "authentic" interactions.

I recently finished teaching this fall's Stories of the Holocaust. At the end of class, as we were reflecting on our experiences with one another, I was struck by a student's comment. She said that for her, "Studying the Holocaust with this group was like being in a microcosm of everything. It was as if we were studying the whole world and the world will never look the same," her experience resonated with my own. The journey which began for me in the discovery of my father's story has come to full fruition as I continue to discover myself and the world in our stories.

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NIGHT SUN

Sebastian Lockwood, 1996

There is writing in the milk of your skin in the blue channel of

your eyes in the deep root of your tongue.

I cannot explain these

images: only move

about them in wonder,

tell you that it has

been so forever

rung by rung as we

climb this ladder that

leads from world to

world,

axis mundi: the four

braded pillars that restrain

the crush of the sky.

There is an alphabet written in your flesh I saw it in the

moment of your birth fresh from that dark fight into light

first breath of this too heated air.

A pox on Columbus:

a pox on a monopoly on morality:

a pox on the long nightmare of history.

Were I yet a shaman I would

absolve you from the insult of

memory, your debt a future

written in blood and stupidity

long before you surveyed the

shambles of your inheritance

remember in second grade you

were already a Toxic Warrior...

What now sweet prince?

Squeeze the colors from the
rainbow

for power is a pestilence that pursues you.

The Extremely Funny Gun Salesman

Luis Lopez Nieves
Translated from Spanish by Ted Kuster

When Rodrigo Huertas opened his eyes the morning of October 24, he understood in a flash that he had exhausted all of his choices save one: suicide. He stayed in bed a few more minutes and observed every detail of his wife's nude body: the still-firm breasts, the strong thighs, the silken torso he had caressed so many times with genuine pleasure. But Rodrigo Huertas had for more than two years been unable to smile, to enjoy life's pleasures; he could not even make love, for all his wife's beauty. He caressed the back and the buttocks that for so many years had aroused him, found yet again that he felt nothing, and decided suddenly, if a bit sadly, that the time had come: he must commit suicide that very day. But first he would kill her. He could not possibly leave her alive: a beautiful and sexy widow, with a fortune to squander on other men; the very idea drove him crazy. He would put an end to it once and for all: life was worth nothing.

That morning, after she had gone to work, he put his papers in order and made a holographic will leaving everything to his mother. At noon he lunched on lobster at his favorite restaurant and then went into the San Judas Gun Shop. In a whisper, even though the place was deserted, he told the handgun salesman that he wanted to buy the best and most expensive gun of them all. The salesman pointed to a nickel-plated Magnum .357 lying by itself, on black velvet, on the second shelf under the glass countertop.

"A deadlier pistol is impossible to find, sir. In the whole world, on the entire planet, there is no better gun. Just let me get it out of the cabinet and I will let you feel it. Or if you like I'll whistle and it'll come on its own. Of course, of course, sir, just a joke. Don't take offense, eh? I like jokes. Here, take its weight, feel the balance. So, are you going hunting? Need protection from criminals? Perhaps you're going to shoot your wife? Caught her with another man, did you? Of course I'm joking, sir, of course I am. It doesn't really matter to us. As a matter of fact, you don't even look like a married man. You are? But so young! What was it, an arranged marriage? You were married off when you were a boy? Ha, ha. Come on, don't be so serious. I just like to lighten up my life. Ha, ha. Here, feel it, caress it. So young -- I can't believe it! How does it feel? We have every kind of bullet, you know, even silver ones, to kill the Werewolf and Dracula. We bought them from the Lone Ranger when he retired. Ha, ha. It's very easy to clean. It comes apart in a matter of seconds. How does it feel? Oh, but don't forget its looks. I always say a weapon is the last resort, don't you think? Look how fierce it appears. Because the tiger is not as fierce as its stripes. Get it? The stripes are fiercer because they're riding the tiger. Ha, ha.

That's a joke my kid told me last night. Ha, ha. The boy is extremely funny, just like his dad. Ha, ha. But around here we say looks don't lie. The gun looks fierce, and it is. It's intimidating all by itself, you know. You're face to face with a bandit and you say to him 'Don't move or I'll blow your brains to hell' and I guarantee you he'll piss himself. Because with one of the little ones, with a .22 or whatever, they look at you and break out laughing. But when they see this little animal I swear they'll fall to the ground and cry, and beg, and pray, and even recite poetry. Ha, ha. Pay no attention to me, eh? It's good to smile once in a while. This monster earns respect with her looks alone. Clothes make the gun, see? Ha, ha. And there's no better weapon for committing suicide. Look, it's very easy. In fact, the instruction manual explains how to blow one's own brains out. Ha, ha. That's a joke; I'm just kidding. You don't need instructions for that. Nothing to it. Place the barrel here at your temple, like so, and squeeze the trigger..."

The flash blinded Rodrigo Huertas. The gun salesman's brains splattered the ceiling and the walls and spilled all over the counter before the body, an enormous hole above its right ear, fell to the floor. When the smoke cleared and Rodrigo Huertas understood what had happened, he could not control the urge to laugh. He roared with laughter. He laughed as he had not laughed in more than two years. He laughed until he almost lost his breath, until he was doubled over, until his stomach ached and he tasted salty tears in his mouth. He laughed the rest of the afternoon at home, as he waited with a fierce desire to see his wife, as he listened to music and danced in the living room for the first time in more than two years. He opened the windows and let the sun in. And he was still laughing that night when he made love; and so contagious was his laughter that his wife laughed too, and they both laughed, and they made love laughing, and they could not sleep that night because every time Rodrigo Huertas remembered the extremely funny gun salesman he was overcome with an uncontrollable urge to laugh and to cry and to reach out for the pleasures of love.

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