

**JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY
AND HISTORY OF EDUCATION
VOLUME 60, 2010**



**Joe L. Kincheloe
1950–2008**

JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY AND HISTORY OF EDUCATION

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**Joe Lyons Kincheloe
1950–2008
In Memoriam**

It is with sadness and honor that this volume of the Journal of Philosophy and History of Education is dedicated to Joe L. Kincheloe. His energy and willingness to become involved inspired those around him. His students and colleagues and the field of education are diminished by his loss.

David Snelgrove

Biography

Joe Lyons Kincheloe, Jr. was born on Dec 14, 1950, in Kingsport, Tennessee. He was the son of a rural school principal, Joe Sr., and a third grade teacher, Libby Bird. Much of his rhetorical style came from an uncle, Marvin Kincheloe, a rural circuit preacher in the Methodist Church. By 12, Joe realized he would never be saved, and refused to continue along that path. However, he did learn how to preach. Joe's main interests were rock n' roll and, following in his parents' footsteps, he was a fanatic for the Tennessee Volunteers Football team. All things Tennessee orange were his, and he made sure everyone who knew him, knew the Volunteers.

Joe went to Emory and Henry College, a small Methodist College in Virginia, where he was promptly put on probation for his participation in anti-war rallies and his long hair. He did eventually graduate, and went to the University of Tennessee for a Masters in history, a Masters in education (when he read Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*), and a Doctorate in educational history—he completed his dissertation on the evangelical camp meetings of fundamentalist Christians in the 1800s in 1980.

Joe's first job was probably his most significant, serving as the department chair of the education department at Sinte Gleska College on the Rosebud Sioux Reservation in South Dakota. It was there he began to publish and research on the disenfranchisement of Native Americans. In 1982, Joe was given the Lakota Sioux ceremonial name of TiWa Ska: "Clear Mind or Loving Mind or Brilliant Mind."

After two years on the reservation, Joe went to Louisiana State University, in Shreveport, where he started a doctoral program in curriculum studies. In 1988 he moved to Clemson University as a full professor with his first two books. In 1989, he attended the Bergamo Conference – a radical Marxist, feminist conference in Dayton, Ohio where he met Shirley Steinberg.

Joe, Shirley and her four children; Ian, Meghann, Chaim, and Bronwyn, lived in different states at different universities. The family lived through Hurricane Andrew two weeks after moving to Florida International University. Joe often said it was the most relaxing time of his life, he couldn't write, he just had to find food, ice, and water.

After FIU, and several new books, Shirley and Joe began editing book series, committed to publishing voices that had been marginalized by mainstream educational discourse; they moved to Penn State where Shirley finished a doctorate, then Joe was offered an endowed chair at Brooklyn College. After two years in this position, he was invited to join the CUNY Graduate Center faculty and to create the urban education doctorate.

Joe stayed at NYC until 2005, when he was hired to come to McGill University as a Tier One Canada Research Chair. Here, Joe established the Paulo and Nita Freire International Project for Critical Pedagogy. The only one of its kind in the world, the Project is a virtual and literal archives of global initiatives in critical pedagogy; deeply committed to the study of oppression in education ... how issues of race, class, gender, sexuality, and colonialism shape the nature and purpose of education. In the spirit of Freire's work, Joe understood the project as a means to "support an evolving critical pedagogy that encounters new discourses, new peoples, with new ideas, and continues to move forward in the 21st Century. The project is understood as continued evolution of the work of Paulo Freire. empowerment of oppressed peoples.

Joe was passionate, he had many radical loves: his family, rock n' roll, his students, and writing. Joe's passion fueled his struggles against inequality, oppression in all of its varied forms, and the stupidification of education. He is widely recognized for his scholarly contributions to a range of topics, which include post formal thinking, critical constructivism, critical multiculturalism, critical indigenous knowledge, and the work he did with Shirley on critical cultural studies topics such as the notion of kinderculture and christotainment. In addition to his scholarship, Joe taught countless classes and supervised well over 50 doctoral students, most of whom are now well-established

scholars and professors all over the world.

He was concurrently writing his 56th, 57th, 58th, 59th, and 60th books when he died, simultaneously...editing over eight different book series with Shirley. He was the senior and founding editor of The International Journal of Critical Pedagogy and the blogmaster to the several thousand registered readers and bloggers of the Freire Project blog. In addition to his scholarship, Joe remained committed to teaching classes and supervising students. And of course, Joe was still writing songs, kept playing the rock n' roll, and still passionate about everything in life.

Shirley R. Steinberg

<http://www.freireproject.org/content/joe-kincheloe-0>

DEAR DR. DRAKE: DO I READ YOU CORRECTLY?¹

Don Hufford, Newman University

Thank you so much for this opportunity. It's an honor to stand before you—an honor which I sincerely appreciate. And . . . as I am about to deliver the Drake Lecture for 2009, I have a confession to make. In spite of my ongoing involvement with this scholarly society—I must admit that I am surprisingly unfamiliar with William Earle Drake, the professor and educational foundations scholar to whom this lecture series is dedicated.

As I began to organize my thoughts for today, some questions intruded into my thinking: Who, really, was William Earle Drake? What kind of a man was he? What qualities defined him as a teacher, and as a man? And . . . why a lecture series honoring his name? What ideas flow from this man? Did he leave an intellectual legacy of ideas that can stimulate and motivate—and challenge - those of us who have gathered in this room today? Ideas are building blocks for the personal educational philosophies that help define who we are as educators. Each one of us made the journey here today because we intellectually wrestle with ideas—the old, the new, the revised, and even those still waiting for a creative birth.

We agree – at least in principle – with Theodore Roszak, that a major “task of education is to teach people how to deal with ideas; how to evaluate them, extend them, adapt them to new uses.” And, we build upon an interpretive understanding of a thought expressed by George Bernard Shaw, a thought that can be transferred from the performance stage to the classroom, “The quality of the play, is the quality of its ideas.” This epigram may be restated to say that the quality of the educational process – the daily, ongoing process which you and I engage in – is the quality of the ideas; ideas with which we intellectually wrestle, and interpret, and restate, and, perhaps, create. So, as I thought about Dr. Drake, I wondered about ideas – his ideas, and his intellectual struggles. And, I felt – well, I guess the best word is, embarrassed. I have shelves of books relating to the foundation of education: historical, philosophical, sociological, political, cultural, theological, biographical ideas; all encased in hard and soft covers. I have CDs of lectures from outstanding university professors who represent a variety of academic disciplines and educational philosophies. And yet, nothing by – or about – William Drake. So . . . I decided I needed to grow a little – to invest some quality time in a bit of research. *Amazon.com* allowed me to find, and purchase, some of the books Dr. Drake has written. Included was his fictionalized, autobiographical educational novel, intriguingly titled, *Betrayal on Mount Parnassus*. Sounded pretty heavy, and definitely philosophical. Maybe even somewhat mythological? So, I began a new learning journey; one of those open-ended quests that lead to new intellectual adventures.

Through the newly procured books, and other sources, I began to learn something about Dr. Drake, the person. Here was a unique individual; a university professor who did not just dispense knowledge, but who actually *connected* with his students and colleagues – who changed lives. Here was a risk-taker, one who challenged various forms of entrenched orthodoxy and dogma, whether it be political, economic, religious, or educational dogma. I was looking into the mind of an educational prophet; a prophet who, as defined by the Jewish Theologian, Abraham Heschel is “one who asks the challenging questions.” That is what William Drake did. His challenges opened-up new worlds of student thought. And, he was also one of those prophets who, in the words of James Garrison, “imagine possibilities beyond actualities, and who issue provocations to action.” In the foundations classroom, Dr. Drake was an intellectual provocateur.

Now . . . before continuing, I should offer-up another confession. Well, perhaps it's not a confession, but just a notification – perhaps a caveat. Many of the ideas I will attribute today to Dr. Drake – although not all – are from the words of Ron Jervis, his literary alter ego in the novel, *Betrayal on Mount Parnassus*. Be aware, however, that after also reading many of Dr. Drake's scholarly, nonfictional educational writings, I can attest to the fact, that the fictionalized Dr. Jervis realistically replicates the educational philosophy, historical understandings, humanistic inclinations, political concerns, pedagogical expectations, and prophetic intuitiveness of the REAL, the authentic, Dr. William Drake. I envisioned Dr. Drake incarnated in the fictional Ron Jervis – or is it vice versa? – Oh well, you know what I mean.

As I formed a mental picture of Dr. Drake, I began to visualize him through the words of the Danish philosopher, Soren Kierkegaard: “Though the system were politely to assign me to a guest room in the loft, that I might be included, I still prefer to be a thinker who is like a bird on a twig.” I see Dr. Drake on that metaphorical twig, thinking – and, unfettered by conformity to a power structure, ready to spread his wings in search of another idea.

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(Dr. Drake. Do I read you correctly?)

Those of us who involve ourselves in educational foundations would do well to take lessons from this foundations scholar, from the Dr. Drake who stimulated a memory in one of his former student. This student wrote: What I remember most about him is his infectious enthusiasm for intellectual give and take. He loved nothing better than a rousing discussion about the ideas underlying the problems facing society in general and public schools in particular . . . He never let political winds diminish his voice as he spoke out for what he believed. At the same time he . . . was always willing to allow his students to follow their hearts.”

Dr. Drake spoke out, and – perhaps more importantly – he allowed, and encouraged, his students to give voice to who they were. Another former student remembered: “He taught me to ask ‘why’ . . . and to search for my own answers. My life changed because of him.” I can see that Dr. Drake agreed with John Dewey that “teachers should start with question marks, rather than fixed rules.” The thoughtful “why?” was an important motivator for William Drake, as it should be for each one of us in this room.

We who are committed to the importance of educational foundations as an intellectual and ethical force in the education of teachers understand the importance of asking “why?” – of challenging the authoritatively transmitted. We – like Dr. Drake – favor “infectious enthusiasm.” We court it. We try to model it. We tell our students: “Express yourself. Be who you are – be authentic. Make room for a challenging ‘why?’” We – again, like Dr. Drake – are committed to “rousing discussion,” and the dialectical power of “intellectual give and take.” Or . . . we should be!

I have a feeling – perhaps it’s a hope – that most of us in this room agree with Dr. Drake that: “The Socratic, as contrasted with the catechetical method stands out with striking superiority.” There was no rigid, pedagogical catechism for William Drake. And we concur – I think – when he writes: “Dialogue does not demand ideological agreement; only the will to engage in and promote a deeper understanding of issues pertaining to problems of meaning and value.” Deeper understandings trump both ideological certainty and the mere acquisition of testable knowledge.

At this point, I hazard a guess. I may be wrong but it is a guess that most of us in this room favor the dialectical over the didactic in our teaching. I’m reminded of a thought I heard from the Princeton scholar and public intellectual, Cornell West, in a lecture at Wichita State University: “In dialogue we allow our differences to percolate.” Isn’t that what we do in the foundations classroom? We strive to intellectually percolate ideas, including opposing ideas.

We understand that an idea-generating power – even a life-changing power – may be sparked in a foundations classroom. That is IF, only if – like Dr. Drake – we *connect* with students as unique, independent, self-forming individuals. We understand that providing information, and developing skills, and concocting pedagogical recipes are insufficient teacher-education goals. There are big “why” questions to be asked – often, questions that have no definitive, concrete answers. Some of us here today seem to have an intuitive understanding of the Taoist reminder: “There may be no answers; search for them lovingly.” We may even ponder on a thought from W.E.B. Du Bois, as voiced in one of his seldom read educational novels: “There are questions so fundamental that not to talk about them is to die.” A pretty strong statement, but . . .

So we search, and engage in intellectual explorations; even those risky ventures that may be called “thinking outside of the box”. And, I suspect that most of us understand the Taoist-like wisdom of the recently retired Columbia University foundations scholar, Maxine Greene: “Teachers, like their students, have to learn to love the questions, as they come to realize there can be no final agreements or answers, no final commensurability.”

Dr. Drake agreed with this sentiment, and his philosophical inclinations also were in-tune with a statement made by the labor leader and poet, Saul Alinsky: “The question mark is an inverted plow, breaking up the hard soil of old beliefs and preparing for new growth.”

Foundations scholars – following the example of William Drake – push that metaphorical plow, and nurture new intellectual growth in students. And we understand that even the answers that our plow uncovers must be challenged and questioned in an intellectual give-and-take in which Dr. Drake’s idea of a “rousing discussion” excites and inspires both student and teacher. Each person in such a dialectical arena must utilize an open-minded give-and-take in a search for answers that keep alive possibilities for continuing intellectual and emotional growth.

Heraclitus – you know, that old Greek philosopher – . . . well, his voice still echoes down the corridors of time, to remind teachers: “Teaching is not to fill a pail, it is to light a flame.” This “flame lighted” classroom is the one that William Earle Drake encourages us to create. It is in such a classroom, alight with thought, that we would find the Dr. Drake who was described by one friend as “a gentleman, master teacher, patient listener, and superb

discussant.” I wonder if a No Child Left Behind, or an NCATE, definition of a “highly qualified” teacher would include these non-quantifiable characteristics. Just a thought. Something for another day.

Master Teacher? How is one defined? Paraphrasing Dr. Drake from various writings (and here I’m pulling from both his fiction and nonfiction writings, and putting them together) we would say: “it’s not so much teaching a subject as it is the kind of mind from which the teacher operates in the classroom; a mind that has an artistic sensibility, a sense of professional autonomy, a sociological imagination, a broad humanistic understanding, an ethical commitment, an intellectual sense of responsibility, and a commitment to the general welfare.” Now here really is a definition of a “highly qualified teacher.” Well, at least it’s a rather significant beginning to what may be an ever unfolding definition.

Let’s add that William Drake quality, “patient listener.” Now here’s a teacher quality that is often overlooked. How can you be a master teacher if you don’t listen—listen with an open mind, and open heart? Someone, I forget who, has said: “You must have an ear, if you want to develop a voice.” And, what about being a superb discussant? To achieve this teacher disposition you must practice the pedagogical skill of a Socratic midwife. You must give birth—birth to other voices, to divergent ways of thinking, to creative potential, to insightful understandings—even to unanswerable questions. We are reminded by Michael Foucault that even if we “never get the answer, that does not mean we don’t have to ask the question.” And so, those of us in this room – those who are educational foundations rebels, like Dr. Drake, rebels with a cause – ask questions, and probe, and challenge, and break up the soil of old beliefs; and challenge educational orthodoxies, and disturb the status quo.

Dr. Drake – by way of his alter ego in the novel, *Betrayal on Mount Parnassus* – reminds us that “the purpose of education is to create, and, in so doing, help the student develop the quality of his mind, along with any other talents that he or she may possess.” “Quality of mind” is a recurring, much emphasized theme for Dr. Drake. He especially sees it as a goal for educational foundations classes. In reading William Drake I am reminded of an aphorism in a John Dewey speech to the Teacher’s League of New York in 1913: “Teaching is either an intellectual enterprise, or it is a routine mechanical exercise.” Those of us who prepare future teachers for America’s classrooms would do well to listen to Dr. Drake: “What is needed is more emphasis on the quality of mind in our teachers . . . Those who teach in our public schools should be teacher-educated, not teacher-trained.”

Think about your personal experiences. Ask a question. In today’s schools of education, are teachers trained, or are they educated? There is a difference. Is what Dr. Drake observed so many years ago alive and well today? Do we – to quote Dr. Drake – see too much “skill training and not enough creative thought” in teacher education programs? Could Dr. Drake have been prophetic in his statement that “the concept of trade training dominates our teacher certification, not creative thought or social intelligence(?)” Well . . . it’s something to think about in this historical era in which foundations courses are being minimized in many schools of education across the country. More emphasis is being placed on courses which can more readily produce measurable outcomes for accreditation purposes.

Perhaps it’s an auspicious time to listen to Dr. Drake, who reminds us that “teaching is an artistic and intellectual performance.” I feel sure that he would agree with Bertrand Russell that “the teacher, like the artist and philosopher, can only perform his work adequately if he feels himself to be an individual, directed by an inner creative impulse, not dominated and fettered by an outside authority.” It was the inner creative impulse that Dr. Drake had in mind when he cautioned that: “Methodology will in no way solve the problem of quality teaching,” and that “this mechanistic view tends to ignore the affective creative art role, and the facts of impulse and motivation.” To be a true teacher is to be an artist, continually reimagining new paths leading toward creative engagement.

It’s not that Dr. Drake did not see a significant place for methodology; in fact he thought university professors should have much more exposure to “how to teach” learning-experiences in preparation for the university classroom. But, his understanding of a specific educational concept, the art and science of teaching, led him to express a thought: “We think of the scientific method in the teaching/learning process as a supplement to the art of teaching, and not as a substitute for it.”

You and I know that quality teaching is not something that can be formalized into a set of follow-the-recipe expectations. We can take a lesson from the culinary arts. I remember something Dalton Curtis reflected upon as the 2004 Drake Lecturer: “You can follow the recipes and become a cook, but that won’t make you a chef.” Dr. Drake reminds us of the dangers of recipe-thinking. He refers to the “hidden rigidities of thought;” and further cautions that, “this mechanistic view tends to ignore the affective, creative role . . . Mechanism in education is never desirable.” In another of his writings he asks a question: “How can we maintain a sense of freedom of individuality

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and of personal worth when confronted with a world where everything is standardized?"

I remember that, historically, our first teacher training institutions in the United States were called Normal Schools. And I recognize a certain irony in the fact that the word "normal" comes from the Latin, and its derivation means "to follow a rule or pattern." Now, there is a hint in this derivation of the word "normal" – a hint of "conformity," of adherence to rigid expectations and inflexible guidelines that limit the expansiveness of a creative mind. As Dr. Drake saw it: "Our problem is to promote a quality of teacher education consistent with the development of a free mind . . . What is missing in our teacher education program is the growth of the free mind of the teacher. We are not educating teachers, only training them to fit into some kind of traditional pattern of conformity," What did Dr. Drake mean by "free mind?"

Let me play with some ideas. A free mind is a counterpoint to the conformity that bows to systems and unchallenged orthodoxy. A free mind is an open mind, a questioning mind, a challenging mind; a mind that – to paraphrase Paulo Freire – "is never too certain of its certainties." A free mind finds discomfort with easy answers and half-truths, and dogmatic ideologies. A free mind – an open mind – is one that facilitates philosophical thinking rather than ideological thinking. It is as Robert Gurdin has written: "Philosophy is an open system. Ideology, on the other hand is a closed system. Ideology causes us to judge and to act uninquisitively We do not question our own judgments."

This uninquisitive thinking bothered William Drake. He was very concerned about a condition which he described as "indoctrinated minds." As I interpret Dr. Drake, indoctrinated minds are no longer free or open, they are chained to dogmas and orthodoxies, including educational dogmas and orthodoxies. He wrote that "dogma tends to destroy, to cramp individual initiative and creative thought." And he expressed a fear of "those dogmatic groups (that) seek to dominate the thinking of others." (Wow! Does that remind you some current happenings in the social/political arena?) In thinking of education, Dr. Drake expressed a personal concern: "It is almost impossible for the mind that has been molded into a rigid pattern to appreciate the joys of freedom, to learn to create." I am reminded of a statement by one of my students: "I do not want to *mold* my students, but help them give meaning and reason to their own learning experiences." She understood the molding metaphor to represent a counterpoint to student self-creation, facilitated by the educational experience.

As I read the writings of Dr. William Earle Drake I realized that he was a dedicated champion of those classroom experiences that we describe as educational foundation courses. And why? Here again, let me play at being Hermes. Do you remember Hermes? He was an interpreter. Think Hermes, and you think "hermeneutical." I am engaging in an interpretation of Dr. Drake. He saw educational foundations courses as those intellectual stimulants that encourage students to explore a wide and diverse spectrum of educational thought, the historical, political, philosophical, sociological, cultural – even theological. Within such courses are academic endeavors that open minds to diverse and divergent – even conflicting, ambiguous, and paradoxical ideas. There are ideas that may cause students to question the educational and social conditioning they have personally experienced, ideas, that when reflected upon, may even create cracks in certain students' personal worldviews.

When Dr. Drake wrote that "the key to human endeavor is the open mind," he expressed a motivation for those of us who teach educational foundation courses. Our goal is to open minds and to free the creative spirit; even if such a goal cannot be quantified and measured, or encased in a standardized, one-size-fits-all format. It is obvious that Dr. Drake understood the deeper implications of a thought by Oliver Wendell Holmes: "A mind changed by an idea never returns to its original shape." "We must have more creative minds," wrote Dr. Drake. He was concerned by an observed reality he termed a "pattern of conformity" that all too often infiltrates teacher education programs, and, thereby, negates the creative process. He was worried about the academic preparation of teachers, and wrote: "We have an intellectual vacuum in which the traditional focus on orthodoxy has gained ascendancy." He was concerned about the dogmatic rigidity in various orthodoxies – political, religious, economic, and educational. He saw the dangers in what he described as the "standardization" of thought, which "limits the development of the human mind."

Dr. Drake understood the educational importance of – in his words – "moving out of a narrow provincialism" in thinking, and he urged his students to seek "alternative possibilities" to life's many challenges and opportunities. He wisely wrote: "It is always important to raise questions, but intelligent questions will not be raised without some sense of challenge, and without a degree of understanding as to alternative possibilities." As I read, and interpret, Dr. Drake, I sense that he would say a rousing "Amen" to a statement made by social critic, Christopher Lash: "We do not know what we need to know until we ask the right questions, and we can identify the right questions only by

subjecting our own ideas about the world to the test of public controversy.”

And so we, who find an academic home and an intellectual passion in educational foundations, find no problem in exposing our ideas and ideals to the test of public controversy. We are also challenged by the memory of Dr. William Drake to keep questioning absolutes, and challenging handed down dogmas. We are challenged to be models in the classroom, models for wrestling with the plurality of truth[s], rather than being autocratic dispensers of a single truth. We are challenged to find intellectual sustenance in the Quaker martyr, Mary Dyer’s, words, when preparing herself for the Puritan hangman in Boston Common in 1620: “Truth is my authority, not some authority my truth.” We may even, on occasion, refer our students to Kahlil Gibran’s poetic advice: “Say not I have found *the* truth, rather *a* truth.”

I’m sure my time is rapidly coming to an end. So, I’ll conclude with a few final thoughts. Those of us who have gathered here today have reason to reflect upon those ideas which are integral to *why* this lecture series is called “The William E. Drake Lecture.” This lecture series honors not just a man, but also his concept of a “quality mind” and a “free mind” – an open-mind that dialogues with ideas and alternative possibilities, and challenges dogmatic structures. Here is someone who possessed outstanding educational credentials and authority but who did not flaunt that authority. Rather – as noted by one of his colleagues – he expressed gratitude to “those students who stimulated his thinking by challenging him to experience new ideas, and asking trying questions.” Do you remember what Ralph Waldo Emerson said to do in such situations – when challenged by a student’s probing question? It was: “Give that student a hug.” Dr. Drake hugged metaphorically. He encouraged his students to question, and to challenge, even to be somewhat educationally heretical. His challenge was to think—think with a critical awareness of alternative possibilities and opportunities. This is why our varied, personal journeys in the academic arena of educational foundations so often present opportune moments to challenge the “what is” as we search for the “what should be.” Can we do otherwise?

I recently watched a Wichita Music Theater performance of the musical, *Camelot*, and heard Merlin, the magician, in his last piece of advice before disappearing, encourage King Arthur to “remember to think.” That’s why we have a William E. Drake lecture series. It’s to encourage the “quality mind” – the free mind – the mind that “remembers to think.”

Thank you, and keep thinking. It’s what gives educational foundations its *pizzazz*.

ENDNOTES

¹Delivered as the Annual Drake Address sponsored by The Educational Foundations Society, a special interest group of the Society of Philosophy and History of Education.

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DIALECTICS OF DISSONANCE AND DEVELOPMENT IN TEACHER EDUCATION

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Abstract

There is a real need for the development of teachers who are willing and able to address the pressing problems facing our society and world. However, this can be difficult since personal development often involves intense disequilibrium, or cognitive dissonance. Although cognitive dissonance can lead to substantive growth, excessive disequilibrium can be counterproductive, leaving teacher educators in a quandary as to how hard to push. This report, based on a study of civic development in our elementary social studies courses (Houser et al. In Review), suggests that our students experienced dissonance and safety, that each was manifested in a variety of ways, and that the sum of these experiences was potentially, although not invariably, conducive to the social development of self. The analysis suggests that a dialectical relationship exists between dissonance and safety and that a delicate balance must be continually negotiated if classroom experience is to be educative in nature.

Introduction

Current social and environmental conditions require the development of citizens who are willing and able to address the personal challenges of day to day living and the broader problems facing our society and world.¹ Although specific approaches vary, personal development for the greater good of society has long been a primary and explicit focus of the social studies (Dewey, 1916; Evans, 2004; Hahn, 1991; Hertzberg, 1981; Parker, 2002). However, this can be a difficult aim since substantive self-development often requires cognitive dissonance, or disequilibrium. Although cognitive dissonance is necessary for growth, excessive disequilibrium can be counterproductive, making it difficult to determine how hard to push. As instructors in an elementary certification program, we have sought to address this problem in our two-course social studies sequence consisting of junior level Foundations and senior level Methods.

Three basic assumptions have influenced our curriculum and instruction. First, we believe issues of diversity need to be seriously considered at all levels of education. Diversity is essential not only to society, but to our very survival as a species (Baldwin, 1988; Banks, 1989; Capra, 1996; Houser, 2009; Deloria, 1999; Nieto, 2004; Naess, 1973). Second, we believe social change requires more than simply the learning of information. Since societies are composed of individual persons, social transformation ultimately requires personal growth, including the social development of self (Hewitt, 1991; Mead, 1934). Such development involves increased empathy, identification, and self understanding in relation to others (Nieto, 2004; Mead, 1934). Finally, we believe learning and development require both cognitive dissonance and affective safety. Piaget (1972) demonstrated that humans learn and develop as the result of the struggle they experience when they seek to reconcile new information with existing understandings. Yet, since excessive or unregulated dissonance may actually be “miseducative,” arresting or distorting further development (Dewey, 1938), a degree of affective safety is also needed to ensure continued intellectual growth.

Based on these assumptions, we attempt to support diversity and equality, promote social development through student interaction, and incorporate both dissonance and safety in our curriculum and instruction. For example, we often raise pointed questions about dominant histories and suppressed cultures, unexamined power, and unearned privilege in school and society (Baldwin, 1988; Banks, 1989; Freedman, Jackson & Boles, 1983; Greene, 1988; McIntosh, 1989; Nieto, 2004; Zinn, 2005). Yet, we also seek to create emotionally safe classrooms in which students can make sense of the challenges they encounter. We try to build a strong sense of community by sharing personal histories and educational experiences, offering regular opportunities for small group discussion, rearranging groups so more students can get to know each other, exercising humor, and continually moving back and forth between lessons for adults and lessons for children.

Student feedback and critical reflection suggest that we are generally on the right track. Yet, each semester we find ourselves struggling with strong resistance from at least a few participants. We recognize that some opposition may be normal and even necessary (i.e., it is consistent with our assumptions involving diversity and disequilibrium); however, excessive opposition can violate our final assumption regarding the need not only for dissonance, but also for safety. This presents a dilemma. We do not want our students to simply “buy in” to our particular ways of viewing the world. Yet, we are unwilling for the strong opposition of the few to undermine the ability of the many to seriously examine diversity and equality in education and society. Although we do not wish to “pull rank” by silencing dissent, neither do we want aggressive opposition to shut down the conversation. In light of these concerns, we decided to study our students’ perspectives regarding the curriculum and instruction they

experienced in our courses. In particular, we wanted to learn more about their perceptions of the relationship between dissonance and safety, and to apply what we learned to our ongoing efforts to promote social development in and through higher education.

Research Methods

The study was conducted at the large, southern Midwestern university in which we taught. With a history of success in academics and athletics, the institution is considered the flagship research facility within the state. Although rich in history and cultural diversity, economically the state is among the poorest in the nation. Commerce consists primarily of farming, ranching, and petroleum industries, and the population is largely conservative, both politically and religiously. The state is centrally located within the broader region colloquially known as the “Bible Belt.”

The study included six elementary classes taught during a single semester. There were four sections of Social Studies Foundations (N=81 students) and two sections of Social Studies Methods (N=42 students). One hundred and twenty-three students participated in all. The students ranged from approximately 19 to 40 years of age, but most were between 19 and 22. While most students were middle class European American women, there was modest diversity in gender, ethnicity, and social class.

The inquiry adhered to the tenets of critical teacher action research (Carr & Kemmis, 1986; Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993; Greenwood & Levine, 1998), and a qualitative methodology and interpretivist framework were utilized to gather and analyze the data (Cresswell, 2005; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Wilson, 1977). The primary source of data was an anonymous questionnaire designed to elicit feedback on dissonance producing experiences encountered in class. The instrument consisted of two open-ended items:

1. What materials or activities in this course created the greatest dissonance for you personally? Explain.
2. In the end, would you say the dissonance you experienced in this class was productive (led to personal growth) or counterproductive (did not lead to personal growth)? Explain.

Supplementary information was gained through participant observation, informal interviews, and the analysis of student reports and course evaluations.

Theoretical sampling and the constant comparative technique were used to guide the inquiry and identify analytic categories (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), and overall findings were sensitive to patterns as well as anomalies (Deloria, 1999; Mishler, 1979). Confidence and trustworthiness were enhanced through “disciplined subjectivity” (Wilson, 1977), the triangulation of data, and the use of member-checking techniques (e.g., clarification of students’ statements made in class, clarification of our perceptions regarding the collective or prevailing views of a group or class as a whole).

Findings

Two points became evident as a result of our efforts. First, our students experienced both dissonance and safety in varying ways and with differing effects. Second, the relationship between dissonance and safety was highly complex rather than simplistic or linear in nature. With regard to the first point, the data suggest that our students encountered both dissonance and safety, that each was experienced in various forms, and that there were differing effects on learning and development. Manifestations of disequilibrium ranged from feelings of confusion and anger to fear and despair. For example, a Foundations student said the curriculum created “confusion and . . . helplessness. It has made me wish I could fix the societal problems we have created, yet feel that doing so would be impossible,” and a Methods student said it “didn’t lead to personal growth because I didn’t ever feel like I had adequate understanding.”

One source of disequilibrium involved our own orientation toward insights rather than answers. Resisting temptations to strive for certainty and control (Dewey, 1929; Lagemann, 1989), we tended to emphasize relative perspectives rather than absolute truths. Alternating between ideas for adults and examples for children, we utilized books like Hyemeyohsts Storm’s (1972) *Seven arrows*, to discuss the value of multiple perspectives, personal growth, and strength in community, and children’s literature like Ed Young’s (1992) *Seven blind mice* to encourage suspension of judgment until all available information has been gathered. Focusing on insight rather than truth may have contributed to student discomfort by creating feelings of “confusion and . . . helplessness” and limiting their sense of “adequate understanding.”

Dialogue among diverse participants also generated considerable disequilibrium. This was especially true of class discussions on power and patriarchy, race and ethnicity, politics, and religion, in education and society. A Foundations student claimed:

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The most dissonance has occurred in class discussions. Especially as the election got closer, our class discussions became more heated; there were very diverse opinions, and I really had to stretch to think about my own views. A Methods student concurred that class discussion was not always easy:

I feel free to admit this on paper. I loved [*Ishmael*] . . . The reason it caused dissonance for me is because my views are so opposed to the rest of my classmates . . . I was squirming in my seat because I didn't agree! . . . The central view [of the class was] too set for me to be comfortable speaking candidly.

In spite of the difficulties, numerous ideas informed the discourse, contributing to a rich exchange of views. Thus, while one student stated "all we were doing was putting down America . . . nothing *good* was ever said about our country," a classmate responded differently:

I never really knew those feelings existed before. It makes me more aware of others and their feelings. Their wants are just as important to them as mine are to me, so why shouldn't they ask, demand, or be upset to meet them?

Thus, disequilibrium was experienced in a variety of forms. Figure 1 shows major sources of personal dissonance identified on the student questionnaire. The "frequency cited" column indicates the number of participants who identified each item. The list includes all items identified by three or more students. When students listed multiple sources, each was included, as long as it met the criterion of having been listed by at least three respondents. No item was counted more than once per student. Figure 1. Sources of disequilibrium cited on the student questionnaire.

Social Studies Course	Source of Disequilibrium	Frequency Cited
Foundations (N=81)	Star Power	27
	<i>Ishmael</i> (Quinn, 1992)	25
	<i>White Privilege</i> (McIntosh, 1989)	10
	Cultural Plunge (Houser, 2008)	9
	<i>Encounter</i> (Yolen, 1992)	6
	Class Discussions	6
	<i>The Grapes of Wrath</i> (Steinbeck, 1939)	5
	<i>Inquiry Island</i> (Houser, 2005)	4
Methods (N=42)	<i>My Ishmael</i> (Quinn, 1997)	35
	<i>The Color of Fear</i> (Lee, 1994)	19

As indicated in Figure 1, one of the greatest sources of disequilibrium was Daniel Quinn's provocative *Ishmael* series. Quinn's novels imply that Western civilization's current difficulties may be even greater than many have imagined. Among other things, he explores the processes by which ancient agriculturists, once a tiny fraction of the human community, gradually expanded and imposed their ways of life upon those with whom they came in contact. Quinn argues that initial efforts to accommodate a growing population—the inevitable consequence of an expanding food supply made possible by the agricultural revolution—led to increasingly aggressive efforts to acquire additional resources. Over time, an increasingly aggressive and expanding population led to the development of totalitarian agricultural practices. Like other totalitarian entities, this aggressive new "culture" utilized specific mechanisms to eliminate its competition, including the annihilation of alternative perspectives and lifestyles. What began as a novel way of life gradually evolved into a dominant worldview based on principles of acquisition, expansion, consumption, and control.

After thousands of years of accelerating expansion—supported by political, religious, and educational conventions—this acquisitive worldview is now prevalent on every continent. While other ethnic and cultural distinctions may persist, today there are few remaining humans who have failed to adopt the premises of totalitarian agriculture. With time and repetition, an approach anathema to social and ecological sustainability has become not merely the *prevalent* mode of living, but the *only* acceptable way of life, passed from generation to generation through mechanisms of cultural assimilation and social control. The supreme irony, according to Quinn, is that the destruction of alternative perspectives has left us with only one "right way to live," and such uniformity is the single greatest threat to the community of life.

While some students were fascinated by these ideas, others complained that the readings were strange and offensive. A Foundations student said that *Ishmael* (1992) "brings out too many strong personalities and turns into a

religious debate when it doesn't have to." Regarding *My Ishmael* (1997), a Methods student observed, "I am sure there is a different way of getting us to [think] . . . than reading a long weird book that seems to force its beliefs on you." As seen in Figure 1, *My Ishmael* was the most frequently cited source of dissonance in the Methods course, and *Ishmael* was second only to *Star Power* in Foundations.

Another source of considerable disequilibrium was Lee Mun Wah's (1994) *The color of fear*, a hard-hitting film examining the views of nine men of various ethnic backgrounds on what it means to be "American" within the current sociopolitical context. Audiences squirm as the participants share intense feelings of alienation they have experienced—and continue to experience—as "minority" members of a predominantly White society. Guarded optimism gradually turns to resentment, then anger, and finally to despair as nothing seems to penetrate one of the White participant's convictions that their fears are "unfounded" and that their continued difficulties *must* be the result of their *own* attitudes and actions. Many students were moved by the men's honesty and passion. However, confusion, guilt, and resentment were also expressed during follow-up discussions.

Further dissonance was generated by *Star Power*, a vivid simulation activity designed to expose the greed and alienation inherent in the capitalist economic system. One student angrily walked out in the middle of class and did not return until the following week. Another confessed intense dislike and said she could not even look at the facilitator for several months following the experience. Such activities, combined with a cultural plunge (Houser, 2008) and McIntosh's (1989) *White privilege*, were included to provide a glimpse of how it might feel to experience systemic marginalization in everyday life.

Although disequilibrium was present throughout the semester, we also sought to establish emotionally safe classroom environments in which students could make sense of what they experienced. Participants identified factors like patience, respect, and a sense of community as important to their growth. As one student put it:

I never felt forced to believe one idea or change my ideas—only challenged to examine and explain them to others. I felt very comfortable sharing in class—always respected and heard, even if not always agreed with.

How did the various forms of dissonance and safety experienced in our courses impact our students' social development? Again, the results were varied. Many cases were positive. Substantive social development was manifested in increased awareness and empathy, critical reflection, desire for continued learning, and, in some cases, commitment to act on the basis of new understandings. Regarding the impact of dissonant experiences, a Foundations student observed:

[I became] more aware of what I was placing value and worth in . . . [I] gain[ed] a better perspective and understanding on what is important to me in life.

Another participant reflected on personal processes of learning and development:

I still have not quite reached a full understanding . . . yet I know I will continue to grow and understand the ideas as I get older and begin teaching. Even the small things that may have caused any sort of dissonance have been productive. I have learned and grown so much . . . I think I just need time to let it all sink in.

Regarding the development of social awareness, a Foundations student cited McIntosh's (1989) *White privilege*: Reading the article about white privilege really struck me . . . because I didn't think that we still acted as a race toward others in that same manner.

Yet another participant reacted to Zinn's (2005) *A people's history of the United States*, McLuhan's *Touch the Earth*, and Yolen's *Encounter*: "Reading the books about Columbus and the Native Americans created the most dissonance for me. I was never taught two sides of this story." While it may seem remarkable that university students in a region historically populated by American Indians would remain unaware of such issues, it is encouraging that these matters were taken seriously once they were raised.

With heightened awareness, some participants began to engage in social critique and critical reflection. A Methods student observed:

The *Color of fear* shook me up. I kept thinking about it and couldn't get Victor out of my head. The white man that just couldn't think outside of the box also created dissonance from within myself . . . It was a struggle to look past some invisible injustices of our society and admit we are *all* a part of it. I feel like I learned a lot about multicultural attitudes from the dissonance and confusion. It was difficult and awkward to admit and try to understand. We need to see the inequality that does exist in our society to improve our society.

In some cases, social development was profound. A Methods student claimed to have "grown as a democratic thinker," and a Foundations student asserted:

Ishmael pushed me to understand Quinn's views, while battling with my own. His views were not my traditional

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ones; however, they made *perfect* sense, better than my own, actually . . . It allowed me to open my mind and realize that only then I can truly learn and reflect. This was the most thought provoking class I've ever experienced.

Deep introspection was exhibited by another participant as well. According to this student, Hyemeyohsts Storm's (1972) *Seven arrows*:

Really made me stop and question who I am. I was confused because I thought I was a person who was strong and fulfilled. After reading the "Seven Arrows" article I realized how empty I was and how I let this emptiness allow people to treat me poorly. It made me see that I needed to change within myself and also that I had been hiding behind a "happy" wall for way too long. This experience definitely led to personal growth. I realized that I was in denial about a lot of things.

Finally, some participants expressed commitment to act on the basis of their emerging understandings (Banks, 1989). A Foundations student acknowledged sharing ideas from McIntosh's (1989) *White privilege* with friends and acquaintances, and a Methods student asserted: "I have really been thinking about my purpose and what is really important in life. I am trying to grow and learn about how I can improve my life and others!" Moving from understanding to action was a prevalent concern particularly among Methods students who were preparing for their internship.

Findings like these were encouraging. However, not all disequilibrium was equally educative. On occasion, extreme dissonance seemed to jeopardize continued learning and growth. Some of these cases involved perceptual differences regarding our curriculum and instruction. For example, one assumption was that some of our sources seemed to support a simplistic back-to-nature solution for the problems of Western civilization—a solution that appeared to undermine the wealth and security of US citizens.² Although such conclusions engendered strong disequilibrium, the problem was at least partially perceptual in nature. Rather than advocating loss, these resources actually address a fundamental paradox: Less can be more. Rather than promoting weakness, they are really attempts to increase that which is vital to self, society, and the sustain ability of life: diversity, democracy, relationship, and equality.

Critical discussions of race and ethnicity were also often perceived as personally threatening. A common response to *The color of fear* went something like this: "I don't understand what 'their' problem is. I never did anything to them." An unspoken assumption was that direct personal activity is the only kind of relationship that exists. Such assumptions are at the heart of what physicist Fritjof Capra (1996) calls a "crisis of perception," an outdated worldview that attempts to interpret institutionalized problems through individualistic lenses. From Capra's perspective, there is a serious mismatch between the systemic *nature* of the world and our mechanistic *perceptions* of that world. While *The color of fear* offered a systemic analysis of a social phenomenon, many participants perceived it from a mechanistic point of view. In some cases the dissonance created by this mismatch appeared to be so intense as to be counterproductive.

Yet another example of extreme disequilibrium emerged from a discussion of the effects of religion on current conditions. An outspoken Methods student angrily asserted:

[My Ishmael] pushed [to] the point of disrespect towards Christianity . . . I was highly offended by it. I was so offended by it that it was very hard for me to be involved in class discussions because [I felt] I was violating my conscience.

Again, perceptual differences were involved, including literal versus metaphorical ways of viewing "reality." Always a difficult topic to address, this particular case was especially challenging. Vocally representing several of her peers (one of whom publicly stated, "We've got your back"), the Methods student opposed virtually all discussion of the novel, scheduled for a five-week stretch during the middle of the semester. Cases like these created intense disequilibrium not only for the students but also the instructors.

While it can be tempting to try to isolate the effects of particular experiences, in reality it is exceedingly difficult to determine the precise impact of a specific event. This is because real life experiences never exist in isolation (Capra, 1996; Deloria, 1999; Mishler, 1979). In the long run it would probably be more accurate to say that each of the experiences encountered by our students had a complex influence rather than a singular or predictable effect upon their thoughts or behaviors. Consider, as an example, various reactions to the *Ishmael* series, beginning with the Methods student who said: "I feel free to admit this on paper . . . I loved [*Ishmael*]." For this student, *Ishmael* was both a source of disequilibrium (in that it aroused heated commentary by others in class) and of reassurance (in

that it affirmed personal beliefs unpopular with her peers and society at large). Experiences like these can both advance and inhibit further development.

A similar argument can be made regarding the student who opposed discussions of *My Ishmael* because she felt the book “pushed to the point of disrespect towards Christianity.” This student continued to struggle with readings and discussions for the remainder of the semester, challenging her instructor at every turn. But this does not mean she failed to grow. Toward the end of the semester she wrote the following:

I cannot call my feelings toward *My Ishmael* as productive, but I did learn to suspend judgment of you as a teacher . . . I learned that you are passionate about your beliefs, and you are truly concerned about stimulating teachers to invigorate their students to go out and MAKE A DIFFERENCE. So in this sense my dissonance was productive because it forced me to suspend judgment.

As this student began to appreciate her instructor, her instructor developed a grudging appreciation for the student as well. Or was it the other way around?

Finally, consider the view of a Foundations student who said:

[*Ishmael*] really confused me throughout . . . , but for some reason it kept my interest . . . After I got to the end of the book it totally made sense even though most of it was confusing. It really made me realize what we are doing to the world and that we need to change the way we live before it is too late.

It may seem ironic that a book “confusing throughout” would, in the end, make “total sense,” but such reactions were not unique. In spite of numerous expressions of confusion, frustration, anger, and despair regarding various aspects of the curriculum and instruction, fully 114 of the 123 respondents to the questionnaire claimed that the overall experience led to personal growth. Only 16 of the 123 indicated that the disequilibrium they experienced was counterproductive, and ten of these qualified their responses, acknowledging that it was at least partially educative as well. A Methods student may have said it best:

I may not have agreed with everything the materials said, but it made me look at me. It also made me look at our world and society They made me question, [and] questioning can only lead to growth.

Thus, the data suggest that our students experienced both dissonance and safety, that each was manifested in a variety of ways, and that these experiences were potentially—although not inevitably—conducive to the social development of self.

Further Analysis and Implications for Education

What do our findings indicate about the relationship between dissonance and safety, and what does this relationship imply for those who wish to promote social development in and through higher education? First and foremost, our data suggest that there *was* no neat dichotomy between dissonance and safety. Rather than being linear or simplistic, the relationship between dissonance and safety was actually dynamic and complex. Indeed, this relationship appeared to be dialectical, perhaps even paradoxical, in nature.

According to Palmer (1998), a paradox is a seemingly absurd, inconsistent, or self-contradictory proposition that is nonetheless true. Appearing at first to make little sense, upon closer inspection a paradox reveals a profound connection between apparent opposites. As Nobel Prize winning physicist Niels Bohr famously stated, “The opposite of a true statement is a false statement, but the opposite of a profound truth can be another profound truth” (quoted in Palmer, 1998, p. 62). Assertions such as “less is more” or “none can be free until all are free” are prime examples of paradoxical truths. At first such statements may seem absurd, but upon closer inspection their meanings become evident, even profound.

Ultimately, the relationships between dissonance and safety described by our students appeared to be paradoxical in nature. What was educative for one student was often miseducative for another, and what was miseducative in one context was often educative in the next. While one student exclaimed that “nothing *good* was ever said about our country,” a classmate responded quite differently: “I never really knew those feelings existed before.”

Careful examination reveals paradoxical relationships throughout the data. Consider the Methods student who said: “I never felt forced to . . . change my ideas—only challenged to examine and explain them to others. I felt very comfortable sharing in class—always respected and heard, even if not always agreed with.” In this case, feelings of “comfort” and “respect” were juxtaposed with experiences of being “challenged” and not always “agreed with.” In a society that places a premium on acceptance, being “challenged” rather than “agreed with” can be extremely uncomfortable. Yet, for this student, dissonance and safety actually seemed to coexist. The student did not indicate that dissonance and safety were experienced *separately*, one before the other, but that they were experienced *dialectically*, in relation to one another. Paradoxically, what the student describes is not so much a matter of

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dissonance *and* safety as a matter of dissonance-*in*-safety, and safety-*in*-dissonance.

This paradoxical notion of dissonance-*in*-safety and safety-*in*-dissonance is also evident in the words of the Foundations student who said *Ishmael* “totally made sense even though most of it was confusing.” One might reasonably ask how the same book could simultaneously be both clear *and* confusing. Within the confines of binary logic, such an assertion seems absurd. However, from the perspective of paradox, it is entirely possible to know and not know. This was eloquently described by the student who said: “*Ishmael* pushed me to understand Quinn’s views, while battling with my own.” This student seems unwilling simply to “accept” one set of views while “rejecting” another. Rather, what is articulated is a sustained struggle to reconcile opposing sets of beliefs in order to gain greater understanding of the whole. Such examples suggest that social development occurs not in spite of the relationship between dissonance and safety but because of this relationship, and that this relationship is ultimately paradoxical in nature.

What does this study imply for theory and practice in higher education? First, if both dissonance and safety are needed for social development to occur, both should be present in our curriculum and instruction. In our own teaching, we have spent considerable time identifying materials and approaches that question traditional norms and perspectives. This is not because we necessarily disagree with tradition, but because we believe that without disequilibrium, substantive development cannot occur. However, since unregulated dissonance can be counterproductive, we have also worked hard to create classroom environments in which students can safely make sense of the struggles that will inevitably arise.

Second, if the relationship between dissonance and safety is paradoxical in nature, it is unlikely that simply “striking a balance” will be sufficient to ensure learning or growth. The situation calls not for a simplistic balancing or eclectic synthesis of dissonance on the one hand and safety on the other, but for a full and simultaneous reaching as far as possible in *both* directions *together* (Palmer, 1998). Given the seriousness of the situation we face, social development must be maximized to its limits. For this to occur, a delicate relationship must be continually negotiated between dissonance and safety. This can be anything but easy. It requires knowing our disciplines, our settings, our students and ourselves, and anticipating the infinite complexity of relationships therein.

ENDNOTES

¹The concept “citizen” has been problematic, often denoting membership and exclusion. Our usage is more closely aligned with the idea of the community-, global- or cosmological-citizen than with the notion of national citizenship as traditionally defined.

²These concerns were directed most often to de Graaf & Boe’s (1997) *Affluenza* and Quinn’s *Ishmael* series. Quinn (1992, 1997) clearly states that the challenge is not to move backward but to move forward with the benefit of hindsight as well as foresight.

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HOUSER, PARKER, ROSE, AND GOODNIGHT: DIALECTICS OF DISSONANCE AND DEVELOPMENT IN TEACHER EDUCATION

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SOME PROBLEMS & PECULIARITIES WITH THE *LEARNING STYLES* RHETORIC & PRACTICE

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Introduction

A student in my Foundations of Education class recently told me, “The reason I’m not doing well in your class is because I’m a kinesthetic–tactile learner and we don’t do any hands-on activities in this class.” Over the years, both in class discussions and in students’ personal philosophy of education assignments, the topics of the *role of the student* and the *nature of learning* would often include references to *learning styles*. The gist of the students’ comments was that students learn in different ways. Typically the *visual*, *auditory*, and *kinesthetic* designations were used. My initial suspicions about such talk were placated because, while I didn’t know too much about the learning styles research or rhetoric, the idea was commonsensical and intuitively appealing. Namely, people learn things in a variety of ways and therefore teachers should use a variety of techniques to appeal to the variety of learning modes. If this was as far as it went, I was okay with it. However, over recent years, not only has students’ embrace of *learning styles* become more pronounced and pervasive, but as in the initial quote, students began to use the learning styles rhetoric as an excuse for their poor performance in my class. These developments aroused my skepticism about the learning styles rhetoric and practice, and prompted my coauthor and me to take a closer look at the phenomena related to learning styles.

Learning Styles Theory

People *do* learn things in a variety of ways, and there are numerous explanations as to what is going on in the process of learning. For example, a University of Minnesota website lists 50 various learning theories: from P. Cross’s *Adult Learning Theory* to J. Mezirow’s *Transformational Theory*.¹ Additional theories could no doubt be added to the list. *Learning styles* theories are those that attempt and purport to identify and classify particular types of learners. Since the 1940s a number of these learning styles schemas and taxonomies have been published.² These schemas utilize different measures and designations to classify and identify “types” of learners. One schema tracks learning preferences regarding the modalities of learning and perceptual styles. Others refer to cognitive styles, personality types and aptitudes. An example of an aptitude schema is Howard Gardner’s *multiple intelligences*.³ The most well known and widely used of these schemas is the learning preference and learning styles taxonomy that identifies learners according to the modalities of visual, auditory and kinesthetic/tactile. It is known by the popular acronym VAK.

We will be looking at this system of learning styles classification and using the VAK acronym as a type of shorthand throughout our paper. We will argue that, despite its popularity, the rhetoric and practice of learning styles are fraught with problems and peculiarities that warrant a critical reappraisal of its legitimacy and value in teacher education and in pedagogical practice. At the heart of our criticism is that the rhetoric and practice of learning styles rest upon the fallacious conceptual leap from the fact that people learn things in a variety of ways to the mistaken and unsupported conclusion that there are therefore different types of learners that can be identified and towards whom instruction can then be fruitfully applied in accord with the identified learning style.⁴

The Widespread Use of VAKing

The use of VAKing is widespread among both educational and commercial entities. A cursory web search of ‘learning style inventories’ comes up with 109 million entries. These include tests and inventories for individuals and educators to identify learning styles; workshops, seminars, and professional development programs dedicated to preparing teachers with instructional methods and strategies that cater to particular learning styles; schools, school systems and educational organizations that use these learning styles schemas to guide their curricular policy; and private schools that cite their use of VAKing as a selling point to tout their teachers’ attention to the individualized needs and learning styles of their students. We noted earlier that the notion of *learning styles* amongst education students at our institution has become conventional wisdom to the point of becoming dogma. Cognitive psychologist and *learning styles* critic Dan Willingham has found that 90% of the education students at the University of Virginia (where he teaches) subscribe to the practice and theory of learning styles.⁵ In his attempt to explain this widespread belief, he notes the paucity of support for learning styles in pedagogical textbooks and peer reviewed scholarship and thus implicates professional development programs as the culprits.⁶ Neither we nor Willingham have engaged in any systematic attempt to identify the source of this growing horde of learning styles enthusiasts.

The Appeal of the Learning Styles Rhetoric

The rhetoric of learning styles is intuitively appealing: the idea that we learn in different ways and some of these ways are more to our preference and abilities and therefore instruction should be geared to this mode of learning seems, at first glance, commonsensical. While we can understand the intuitive appeal, the fact is that it's not true and it doesn't work. This is the conclusion reached by three recent learning styles debunkers: Dan Willingham, Robert Stahl and Shirley Franklin. We will turn to their criticisms throughout our paper.

Observers of human behavior have noticed people's penchant for and attraction to systems of classification and categorization. Examples abound to illustrate our love of classification and our willingness to pay good money in order to determine what "type" we are. Myers-Briggs Inventories of Personality Types, personality profiles used in dating services, vocational aptitude inventories, spiritual gifts inventories used in a variety of churches, and astrology come to mind. Educators have been a perennial target of criticism for their unquenchable thirst for jargon laden fads, fetishes, and systems of categories.⁷

This tendency is intensified by educational policy mandates and the increasing demand from the public for teachers and school counselors to assign diagnostic and programmatic labels to students. This demand for labels is fueled in part by parents who have come to know that the system requires a label in order for their child to receive special services. Administrators know that in order to receive state and federal money, a label must be assigned to a child. Labels provide teachers with the illusion of pedagogical control. Society has become comfortable with the chimerical notion that the assigning of labels provides us with insight, understanding and closure. The notion of *learning styles* has an inherent ethical appeal. There is an apparent sense of fairness to its approach. We were surprised to find that it was primarily an ethical impulse that drove Howard Gardner to develop his work on *multiple intelligences* in order to counter the traditional and reigning concept of *intelligence*. Gardner writes, "I made a deliberate decision to write about 'multiple intelligences': 'multiple' to stress an unknown number of separate human capacities . . . to underscore that these capacities were as fundamental as those historically captured within the I. Q. test."⁸ Our speculation is that ethical considerations are also important to the appeal of learning styles, both for teacher education students and for practicing teachers. It offers an explanation, perhaps, for why they didn't do well at times in their schooling (implicating the teacher for failing to cater to their learning styles). It appeals to their altruism by offering hope (albeit unfounded) that by adopting instructional strategies aimed at students' particular learning styles then the students might avoid a similar fate.

The intuitive and ethical appeal of the learning styles is bolstered by a growing body of personal anecdotes and testimonials to the wondrous transformative pedagogical possibilities of following the practice of identifying one's learning style and then catering instruction and study habits to the identified learning preference. Anecdotes alone, though, do not constitute legitimate research findings or scientifically sound conclusions. Among the problems with relying on anecdotal evidence is the tendency for self-fulfilling prophecy and the failure to consider other variables and phenomena that might be responsible—in whole or in part—for a given outcome. In response to learning styles enthusiasts that support their case by use of anecdotes, Willingham writes, "There is a reason that people use the scientific method to address complex questions: It's hard to keep track of all of the variables that might be involved, or even to keep track of all the outcomes. You have to be systematic about it. That's basically what the scientific method forces you to do." He concludes, "When there are lots of factors contributing to outcomes, you really need to do research."⁹

Sources Promoting VAKing

One source of VAKing is teachers, who through informal observations diagnose their students as one VAK type or other and then instruct them accordingly. It can also occur with students who self-diagnose and then make the demand that instruction be directed to their learning preference. This would be most common with teacher education students who have just enough knowledge about learning style theories to be dangerous. As the old saying goes: "A little knowledge is a dangerous thing **if** (and this part is often omitted) you make a big deal of it." Categorizing someone as a particular type of learner and then directing instruction in consonance with this diagnosis **is** a big deal.

A host of surveys, tests and inventories are available that claim to be able to identify people as particular types of learners. These instruments range from the primitive and blatantly ridiculous to those with the veneer of legitimacy and credibility. What all of these instruments have in common is that they are unreliable, invalid, and are of little or no predictive value. This has led Dan Willingham to conclude that "learning styles are bunk,"¹⁰ and more dramatically to claim that "learning styles don't exist."¹¹ Let us now look at some of the methodological flaws of these VAKing instruments.

Predictive value

VAKing instruments have little or no predictive value. If VAKing is correct, then once a student's learning style is identified we would see an increase in learning if instruction is geared toward that learning style. However, the research indicates that it doesn't work. Steven Stahl cites five research reviews from between 1978 and 1992 on matching reading instruction to children's learning styles. He concluded that each of these research reviews found the same thing. "One cannot reliably measure children's reading styles, and even if one could, matching children to reading programs by learning styles does not improve their learning."¹²

Willingham makes the same point. According to VAK theory, visual learners would learn a list of words best if presented in written form and auditory learners would learn the words best if they were spoken. Another straightforward prediction, and again, there is no research that confirms this prediction. Willingham claims that this is because learning is primarily meaning based rather than based on the mode of learning. That is, a true test of auditory memory would be "Did I say shell or SHELL?" but this is not what we are after nor is it what we're after with most learning in school.¹³ Willingham affirms the necessity of predictive value for a claim to be given the status of "scientific" and for the claim to have epistemic clout. "Scientific theories do need to be specific enough that they can generate predictions. If you can't write down on a piece of paper, 'Under conditions X with person Y, Z ought to happen,' it's not a scientific theory."¹⁴

Reliability

Given the conspicuous absence of research to support VAKing, Steven Stahl was intrigued by the claims of Marie Carbo, a leading VAKist offering professional development programs, that her programs were research based. He wondered what research she was referring to. Reviewing her articles, he found of the 17 studies she had cited only one was published. "Fifteen were doctoral dissertations and 13 of these came out of one university—St. John's University in New York, Carbo's alma mater."¹⁵ In short, Stahl concluded that the research cited by Carbo "would not cause anyone to change his or her mind about learning styles." In studying Carbo's Reading Style Inventories, Stahl surmised that the questions asked bore a striking resemblance to what he calls the "fortune telling phenomenon." Namely the statements offered to select from "are specific enough so that they sound predictive but ambiguous enough that they could apply to a number of situations."¹⁶ In other words, the choices are neither predictive nor falsifiable in a strict scientific sense.

For inventories and other tests based on self-reporting, a reliability coefficient of .90 or higher is desired. Stahl reports that "The self-reported reliabilities of Carbo's Reading Style Inventory and Dunn and Dunn's Learning Style Inventories are moderate, especially for a measure of this kind—in the neighborhood of the .60s and the .70s. Similar reliabilities are reported for the Myers-Briggs Inventory, another learning styles assessment. These are lower than one would want for a diagnostic measure."¹⁷

Validity

In basic terms, a test is valid if it measures what it purports to measure. In reference to learning styles, there is no clear definition of what it is, nor is there any evidence that such a thing exists. In other words, learning styles are metaphysically and ontologically suspect. Questions abound. For example, is it a biological, genetic or a cultural entity (the old nature/nurture debate)? If it is biological, can the site of its source be located in some portion of the brain (a question perhaps for neuroscientists)? What is the nature of the styles? Are they preferences, talents, abilities, potentials, dispositions? Are they fixed and stable or are they fluid and malleable? The inability of the VAKist—or anyone else for that matter—to satisfactorily address these questions precludes any claim of validity for VAKing. Furthermore, it renders the claims of VAKers susceptible to circular explanations. For example, Person A: "I'm a visual learner." Person B: "How do you know that?" Person A: "Because I like to learn by looking at pictures, charts and graphs. That's the way I learn best." Person B: "Why is that so?" Person A: "Because I'm a visual learner."

These explanatory problems also plague the neuroscientist in his attempt to explain the workings of the mind by reference to discrete localized functions in the brain. Robert Nozick has pointed out these explanatory difficulties:

It is no illuminating explanation of our possession of a trait to attribute it to a little person within us, a psychological homunculus who exercises that very same trait. If there is to be an explanation of how our intelligence functions, it will have to be in terms of factors that, taken individually, themselves are dumb, for example, in terms of a concatenation of simple operations that can be done by a machine.¹⁸

In other words, until neuroscience can locate a "command central" that integrates, synthesizes and decides on the "information" that proceeds from the various parts of the brain, its explanatory possibilities will be limited to discrete functions of various parts of the brain. Perhaps the work of cognitive psychology as presented in Steven

Pinker's *The Blank Slate* marks an advance in explanatory possibilities.¹⁹ Yet again, perhaps neuroscience is caught in a morass of what Gilbert Ryle called "category errors."²⁰

When confronted with the lack of evidence to support learning styles theories, Willingham has noted that some VAKing advocates have resorted to a defensive posture of claiming that VAK critics "have not demonstrated that learning styles **don't** exist." This is similar to the claim made by former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld concerning the existence of WMDs in Iraq. Namely, "the absence of evidence is not evidence of absence."²¹ While technically true, the statement raises the old canard about the impossibility of proving a negative, and begs the question of whether or not the evidential grounding for VAKing is sufficient to warrant its use as a guiding principle for pedagogical practice. To that question, Willingham offers the following response: "For a researcher, one has to wonder whether it's worth the expense to keep looking for something that no one can find. For a teacher, you have to ask whether 'it's not proven that it doesn't exist' is good enough to bring a practice into a classroom." Willingham concludes that "while not every practice in a classroom needs to be based on a scientific theory," it is nonetheless a professional responsibility for educators to "be plain about what is scientifically supported and what is not."²²

Recent Ancestors of VAKing

Many of the VAKing programs are presented and marketed using language such as 'based on brain research' and 'the findings of neuroscience.' The use of this language has aroused my suspicions about VAKing and has conjured images of the similarities between VAKing and the now discredited psychological notions of *phrenology* and *faculty psychology*.

In short, phrenology is a 19th Century theory based on the concept that the brain is the organ of the mind and that certain functions or faculties of the mind have a corresponding locus in the brain. "These areas were said to be proportional to a person's propensities, and the importance of the given mental faculty. It was believed that the cranial bone conformed in order to accommodate the different sizes of these particular areas of the brain in different individuals, so that a person's capacity for a given personality trait could be determined simply by measuring the area of the skull that overlies the corresponding area of the brain."²³ Franz Joseph Gall (1758–1828), the initiator of phrenology stated the doctrinal principles of phrenology, several of which would not seem out of place in presentations of VAKing that purport to be based on brain-based research. Consider the following list of items taken from Gall's list of 27 "brain organs" to which he assigned specific functions and specific spatial locations that he charted on a "brain map."²⁴ Note that we have placed several of Gardner's multiple intelligences parenthetically next to the corresponding faculty in Gall's phrenological list.

- The memory of things; the memory of facts; educability; perfectibility (Intelligence)
- The sense of places; of space proportions (Spatial Intelligence)
- The sense of language; of speech (Linguistic Intelligence)
- The sense of sounds; the gift of music (Musical Intelligence)
- The sense of connectedness between numbers (Logical-Mathematical Intelligence)

In *Frames of Mind*, Gardner readily admits his debt to the work of Franz Gall. While noting there are flaws in Gall's phrenological doctrine, he is resistant to dismissing the work in its entirety. "Gall, after all, was among the first modern scientists to stress that different parts of the brain mediate different functions; the fact that we are not yet able to pinpoint specifically the relationship between size, shape, and function should by no means be taken as proof that we will never be able to do so."²⁵ Other parallels between phrenology and current systems of VAKing, multiple intelligences and other personality inventories include their successful marketing. Books and paraphernalia about phrenology enjoyed great popularity, and "thousands of people consulted phrenologists for advice in various matters such as hiring personnel or finding suitable marriage partners."²⁶

More Problems with the Pedagogical Application of VAKing

An additional problem with VAKing is that by catering to a student's perceived learning style, more germane pedagogical factors such as the nature of the subject matter, the developmental level of the student, and the difficulty of the subject matter are often ignored. The nature of the subject matter is a prime determinant in how it is taught and in how it is learned. VAK critic Stephen Stahl provides the following illustrative examples:

Nearly everybody would prefer a demonstration in science class to an uninterrupted lecture. This does not mean that such individuals have a visual style, but that good science teaching involves demonstrations. Similarly, nearly everybody would agree that one learns more about playing tennis from playing than from watching someone else play. Again, this does not mean that people are tactile/kinesthetic, but that this is how one learns to play sports.²⁷

Focusing instruction on a student's putative learning style category also gives short shrift to the fact that learning (and instruction) often depends on the student's developmental level. Stahl notes that "not including information about reading ability also leads to some strange prescriptions."²⁸ For example, it would be inappropriate to prescribe beginning reading instruction methods (letter identification phonics/linguistic approaches) to a competent reader. Another illustrative example is that children are often initially taught mathematics through the use of manipulatives. This is not because they are kinesthetic learners, but rather their developmental level of skill necessitates concrete illustration of abstract concepts. So, if in high school you are following the dictates of a kinesthetic learning style in mathematics, you're going to be in a world of hurt if you are still relying on manipulatives. Here's the upshot: It is not the learning style of the student that is at issue, but rather the level of skill.

Another pedagogical factor that VAKing ignores is the difficulty of a given subject or lesson. As the level of difficulty increases for a given subject, students need more direction from the teacher. This is not a matter of preference but is rather related to the complexity of the material. A related concern is that to the degree that teachers cater their instruction to students of a particular learning style, they may attenuate the richness and complexity of their instruction, thus limiting or reducing content and modes of presentation that might be of benefit to all students. For example, British VAK critic Shirley Franklin notes that in our increasing visual age, instruction on how to understand and interpret visual images should not be confined to students who have been labeled as visual learners. "Therefore it is important that teachers use a range of visual images in their teaching to stimulate learning for *all* pupils, rather than to focus on what they might consider to be visually able pupils."²⁹

The Pernicious Effects of VAK Labeling

Now that we've discussed some of the methodological flaws in the formulations of VAKing and the pedagogical problems with its application, let us consider some of the pernicious effects of labeling people in general and of using these VAK designations in particular. The dangers of assigning the VAK labels are especially problematic because in spite of the good intentions of VAKers, they constitute—as we have argued—a form of uninformed and misguided paternalistic imposition. Critics of VAKing agree that a central feature of the practice is to categorize and label students. Willingham claims:

When you think about it, the theory of learning styles doesn't really celebrate the differences among children: On the contrary, the point is to categorize kids. Each child is to be categorized as one of three types of learners.

Categorization might be worth it if the categories were accurate, and therefore provided information that would help teachers. But the categories are meaningless.³⁰

Stahl concurs, suggesting that using learning styles theory can function "to segregate children into groups where they would receive fairly one-dimensional instruction."³¹ Shirley Franklin shares the same sentiment as she laments the extremes to which VAKing has taken hold in Great Britain. ". . . teachers [in Great Britain] are encouraged to assess . . . individual pupils' learning styles. Some schools even give their pupils 'smart' cards or badges which indicate which sort of learning style they have. This stereotypes each pupil as being a particular learner, and sends out problematic messages to teachers, parents and other pupils."³²

We're all familiar with the problems of labeling, such as: logical fallacies of hasty generalization, stereotyping, filtering information through the lens of the label (i.e., embracing information that confirms the label and dismissing or ignoring disconfirming information), and the self-fulfilling prophesy. These problems are in full play when the VAK labels are employed. One pernicious effect of VAKing is that contrary to its intended effect, learning style labels can easily serve as a deterrent to student growth and provide a rationale for students to remain the same. Wayne Dyer refers to those limiting labels we give ourselves—self-descriptors—as "I'ms,"³³ as in "I'm not musical," "I'm not good in Math," "I'm a visual learner," "I'm a kinesthetic learner." To the degree that a student is identified with a particular learning style, then by implication he is not the other two learning styles. This allows and perhaps even encourages students to resist instruction that is aimed at these other learning modalities and offers the student an excuse or rationale for not succeeding or for not putting forth effort if the material is not presented in a way fits his preferred style of learning.

Moreover, if a student becomes convinced that "I'm a particular type of learner," this can lead to demands on the teacher to cater to the student's learning style, regardless of the teacher's professional judgment about the appropriateness and efficacy of teaching a given lesson or point in the student's preferred manner. As to the phrase *learning preference*: since when does a student or child's preference create an obligation for a parent or teacher to tend to it? Furthermore, just because a student or child prefers to learn in a certain way it does not mean that it is the way he learns best. Yet these pseudoscientific VAKing inventories create the appearance—both to students and

teachers—that there is some sort of legitimacy or validity to these labels. This serves to strengthen the hold and binding effect of the label. Willingham is of the opinion that “the idea that we have in hand a learning styles theory that can be used to improve instruction is remarkably well ingrained.”³⁴ To the degree that educators and teacher education programs embrace the practice and rhetoric of learning styles, they might rightly be diagnosed as suffering from what the late Neil Postman called “a hardening of the categories.”³⁵

Conclusion

Good teachers do what good teachers have always done: they exercise their informed professional judgment and creative imagination to consider their students’ individual interests, experiences, strengths, weaknesses, and developmental progress. Good teachers are aware of the nature and nuances of the subject matter, and the difficulty of its content. In short, good teachers pay close attention to what they are teaching and to their students. Good teachers take their students seriously, as complex, multidimensional individuals, rather than pigeonholing them into some unfounded category or classification. Good teachers spend years developing their “bag of tricks” in terms of examples, illustrations, creative instructional techniques, and a host of materials to present and reinforce a lesson. Ultimately, good teachers create the optimal conditions for learning to take place. VAKing has little to offer in achieving this goal.

ENDNOTES

1. “University of Minnesota.” 7/17/06. <http://www.d.umn.edu/kmc/student/loon/acad/strat/lnsty.html> (accessed 9/4/09).
2. Daniel Willingham, “Learning Styles Don’t Exist.” 8/21/08. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sIv9rz2NTUk> (accessed 9/1/09). Willingham includes the following list: Broad vs. Narrow, Analytic vs. Non-analytic, Leveling vs. Sharpening, Field-dependent vs. Field Independent, Impulsive vs. Reflective, Automatisation vs. Restructuring, Converging vs. Diverging, Serialist vs. Holist, Adapter vs. Innovator, Reasoning vs. Intuitive, Verbaliser vs. Visualiser, Visual vs. Auditory vs. Kinesthetic.
3. Howard Gardner. *Frames of Mind*. New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1983. While Gardner’s work on *multiple intelligences* is not technically a “learning styles theory,” there are many points of similarity and overlap. It is primarily on the points of similarity that we lodge our criticisms.
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31. Steven Stahl. "Different Strokes for Different Folks? A Critique of Learning Styles," 3.
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FORGOTTEN GIRLS: CRITICALLY REREADING AAUW'S *TECH-SAVVY*

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Introduction

In today's increasingly technology-dependent culture, education relies heavily upon online resources. However, as an influential work by the American Association of University Women (henceforth AAUW), *Tech-Savvy: Girls Learning in the Computer Age*¹ (henceforth *Tech-Savvy*) was undertaken because AAUW recognized that, "girls and women lag in interest and participation" in computer technology.² In addition to global concerns surrounding all pre K-12 girls', a subgroup of girls remains invisible and unaddressed. AAUW's theorizing of educational correctives in computer technology education (henceforth CTE) addresses gender, culture and socioeconomic needs of all girls' learning in K-12. However, what is absent is specific attention to the specific needs of girls identifying as lesbian, bisexual, transgendered or questioning (henceforth "sexually diverse"). The invisibility of this segment of learners in schools expands the usual maturational challenges and sense of isolation experienced by all girls. Sexually diverse girls, who are most in need of information concerning sexual diversity, likely will not find it in traditional school settings where requisite safe spaces, female technology role models and girl-sensitive technology education are inconsistently available. Lacking access to develop technological 'fluency'³ in ways the AAUW has identified as doubly condemning for sexually diverse girls who must rely upon online resources as a major venue to learn about sexually diverse culture.

Education about sexual diversity relies heavily upon online resources created and maintained by organizations such as GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network), PFLAG (Parents, Friends of Lesbians and Gays), and GLAAD (Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation). Each of these organizations maintains well-developed web sites with extensive informational offerings for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgendered and Questioning (henceforth GLBTQ) individuals and others. Youth spaces directed toward comprehensive, inclusionary education are only one facet of these organizations which provide information about, concern for and connection to GLBTQ resources. Access to this information is vital for sexually diverse girls, yet the lack of specific spaces for sexually diverse girls within these online sites, limits their opportunities to connect and explore sexual identity with girls who share the same needs. For sexually diverse girls this access is crucial to mitigate isolation and insecure environments already created by the everyday milieu of school. Wouldn't the overall efforts of AAUW's research be strengthened by engaging and including thought about sexual diversity?

Tech-Savvy's Executive Summary calls for gender equity in technology education with research centering on: gender issues in the computer cultures, teacher concerns with hardware, software, learning environments, statistics on participation, socioeconomic levels, girls' current participation in the computer culture and a new standard of computer 'fluency'.⁴

Tech-Savvy examines ethnic, cultural, and socioeconomic differences among K-12 public school students. Constructive engagement with liberal, cultural, radical and multi-cultural feminist thought is readily apparent in the educational correctives put forth, (Bennett⁵; Belenky⁶; Chodorow⁷; Furge⁸; Gilligan⁹; Haraway¹⁰; Kramarae¹¹; Rosser¹²; Turkle¹³; Wollstonecraft¹⁴) but thought that could address sexual diversity is omitted. Absence of lesbian feminist thought and queer theory from sources consulted by authors of and contributors to *Tech-Savvy* renders a portion of the female population invisible in its thinking. Lesbian feminist thought has theorized about such invisibility and its oppressive consequences. Invisibility is not the only issue. Inattention to the educational challenges particular to sexually diverse girls may be of greater concern. To achieve the AAUW'S mission of educating all girls, the AAUW should commission an update of *Tech-Savvy* that inclusively reflects, constructs, and fosters feminist thought on technology curriculum of and for sexually diverse girls.

The Inclusionary Value of Queer Theory and Lesbian Feminist Thought

Philosophers of education such as Gloria Filax¹⁵, Maureen Ford¹⁶, and Cris Mayo¹⁷, have amply demonstrated the educational value of queer thought and contemplated the liberating influence of online spaces for youth. By continually challenging the notions of sexual identity, queer theory focuses on removing socially generated labels of sexual identity. In this approach queerness is perpetually an evolving identity.¹⁸

Like queer theorists, lesbian feminists advocate the denaturalization of heterosexuality as an institution rooted in patriarchy, but unlike queer theorists, lesbian feminists also resist erasure of lesbian identity. Lesbian feminists seek not only gender equality, but sexual equality as well.¹⁹ In *Rethinking Sexual Identity in Education*, Susan Birden aptly and subtly established the value of both queer and lesbian feminist thought in education, claiming concern about all sexual minorities, not just lesbians.²⁰ Concerned about heterosexism in education generally, she did not

embark upon inquiry about CTE specifically. This is the concern that brings me to *Tech-Savvy*, because sexually diverse girls are girls who need CTE too if for no other reason than to have safe spaces to interact with organizations and share with people who support them and understand their needs.

Lesbian feminism claims the root of women's oppression is heterosexism, an institution rooted in an ideology of patriarchy.²¹ Adrienne Rich theorizes *Compulsory Heterosexuality* as a construct of male privilege, men's access to women. Rich conceptualizes heterosexism as an institution forcibly and subliminally imposed on women, enslaving its females where men dominate women's very existence.²² Heterosexism forces woman against woman in order to gain favor in the eyes of their oppressors. Women resist this destructive sexualized competition to the extent of torture, extreme poverty and death.²³ Rich's essay challenges accepted societal structures of property, male power and normative justifications of 'feminine' to incite heterosexual feminists to question what is 'natural' sexual orientation.²⁴ Additionally, according to Rich, Lesbians have been deprived of a political existence and forced into 'inclusion' of male homosexuality to "deny and erase female reality once again".²⁵

Feminist Contributions to *Tech-Savvy*

Tech-Savvy aims to meet goals beyond simply measuring girls' enrollment figures in technology classes and AAUW calls for a broader result, "For them (*AAUW Commissioners*) success is commitment to lifelong technology learning with all that it implies."²⁶ Changes suggested in *Tech-Savvy* align with feminist thought but do not address sexual diversity issues and needs of sexually diverse girls. These are absent from key recommendations for change not because feminist theorists have failed to consider such issues, but because the authors of *Tech Savvy* did not consult feminist theorizing that has addressed them explicitly.

Tech-Savvy reports research on "gender equity" and offers solutions stating that "what is good for girls is good for all of us."²⁷ This sentiment, shared by Mary Wollstonecraft²⁸ in *Vindication of the Rights of Woman* marks compatibility with liberal feminist thought. *Tech-Savvy* puts forth as correctives liberal feminist thought suggesting

- changes in learning environments, class construction, technology integration
- specific subject areas and disciplines such as art, music, literature
- preparation of computer savvy teachers at the college level.²⁹

Cultural feminist thought promotes non-violence, care, emotion, focusing world change through independence between the sexes (separate but equal).³⁰ *Tech-Savvy* suggests changes in girls' perception of computer users as "nerds" or solitary beings; redesigning of educational software, often shown to have gender bias; introducing CTE across a broad multidisciplinary curriculum Cultural feminist thought often includes lesbian feminist thought (Janice Raymond³¹) but *Tech-Savvy's* cultural feminist thought does not.

Radical feminism seeks to change female oppression created by patriarchy and the institutions created to manage female domination through redefinition of supportive mechanisms (i.e., feminine roles: passive, affectionate, reproduction) within oppression.³² *Tech-Savvy's* corrective suggests creation of girls' spaces such as clubs and camps as well as single sex classrooms. Susannah Camric's *The Lilith Computer Club* a paper describing the successful formation of a girl-centered computer club designed outside traditional norms and organized by girls and facilitated by women included in *Tech-Savvy's* reflects contributions of radical feminism, (French³³, Firestone³⁴, Millet³⁵, Rubin³⁶).³⁷

Multicultural feminism might best be understood as every woman is an individual interconnected with all women without exception to a larger group or community; diverse, complex and global. Sue Rosser contributed multicultural feminist thought to *Tech-Savvy*, theorizing gender issues/barriers in science, mathematics and engineering. In *Teaching the Majority: Breaking the Gender Barrier in Science*³⁸, a cited work in *Tech-Savvy*, Rosser called for gender friendly software, women mentors and role models for girls and engaging the subject of diversity. Noting what might be considered support for single sex schooling, Rosser described strong self-concepts and consistently higher enrollment numbers of female students in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (henceforth STEM) disciplines entering college from girls' schools. In *Re-Engineering Female Friendly Science*³⁹, Rosser clearly noted throughout her discussion the positive impact of cultural and multicultural feminist thought on STEM. *Tech-Savvy* recommended schools heighten awareness about issues of gender, race, and class by considering individual factors in decision making. Rosser also noted that lesbian feminist theory holds a possible explanation for the success of women's colleges producing a higher proportion of female scientists than coeducational institutions.⁴⁰ Rosser clearly noted positive impact of cultural and multicultural feminist thought on STEM. *Tech-Savvy* recommended schools heighten awareness about issues of gender, race, and class by considering individual factors in decision making.

Where the Boys Are

Tech-Savvy's findings showed a prevalence of 'boy centered' software, aggressive behaviors, lack of awareness to sensitive gender gap issues by teachers, and societal norms privileging boys. All are points of concern hindering girls' full participation in computer classrooms. Cheris Kramarae, author, feminist and contributor to *Tech-Savvy* noted in her research on communication and gender that female perceptions (as a group) differ from male perceptions due in part to different experiences based on division of labor and theorizing about dominant group dynamics and power.⁴¹ If Kramarae is right about this difference in perceptions, could not sexually diverse girls also perceive differently from one another in ways that are consequential in computer classrooms? Heterosexuality as a division of labor then is problematic for sexually diverse girls. Might we conclude that Kramarae's theories suggest a case for inclusion of sexually diverse girls?⁴² Feminist author Roberta Fueger in her book *Does Jane Compute?*⁴³, contributed to *Tech-Savvy* concerning the import of parental support and female role models, specifically noting computer savvy mothers and female teachers of girls holding influential roles. In her discussion around confidence-building effects of girls' observing their mothers use of computer technology, Fueger reports, "Girls frequently cite their mother as the most influential person in their lives."⁴⁴ This suggests that most, if not all, girls relate to grown women in a similar fashion, a misplaced notion when considering sexually diverse girls who find few female role models available to them (GLSEN).

Adding to barriers to girls' full participation in CTE, Fueger discussed preteen/teen girls' self-concepts surrounding the notions of math and computer technology classrooms, hostile name calling as "computer nerds" and issues of ridicule among girls as "geek" types. Citing AAUW's *Girls in the Middle*⁴⁵ Fueger noted ways in which girls 'negotiate' school during the preteen/teen years, pointing toward online "virtual" spaces as safe havens for girls, describing them as "a *critical* necessity for self-concept".⁴⁶ Speaking from experience, growing up in a preinternet era 'sexually different' I was left with few options to learn about myself in a positive way. Fear of emotional harassment and physical harm associated with 'telling' even my family forced me to hide what I needed to discuss most. A double bind exists for teachers and sexually diverse girls in CTE.

What of role models and safe spaces for sexually diverse girls? According to Caroline M. Eastman, addressing diversity in CTE, in Rosser,⁴⁷ Eastman makes recommendations to accommodate 'differences' and suggests corrective. About sexual orientation she writes,

"I am not aware of any studies indicating potentially significant differences in attitudes or approaches to the study of computer science that are related to sexual orientation. However, instructors should be aware of differences in student sexual orientation when selecting examples and assignments. AN example involving a database for heterosexual dating service may cause some students to feel excluded."⁴⁸

Feminist Sherry Turkle in her landmark book, *Second Self*⁴⁹ unpacked the 'new literacy' raising questions about needs, wants, and skill levels required in CTE, discussing 'the machine' as a catalyst for change in terms of our interaction with it. In *Life on the Screen*⁵⁰ Turkle discusses the artificial life of internet, a space where we might experiment with aspects of 'self', a place to exercise virtual identities.' Should a work cited in *Tech-Savvy* stating the apparent absence of sexual diversity studies be a concern when discussing curriculum to meet the needs of girls? I believe it must. What of teacher knowledge and understanding about issues of sexually diverse girls? What about teacher internet savvy in locating safe spaces for sexually diverse girls? These issues are paramount if CTE is to meet the needs of sexually diverse girls.

Girls Outside the Norm

In examining classroom climate, *Tech-Savvy*⁵¹ targets bullying as one of several factors designated as "need to change." Underlying causes of bullying were attributed to gender-mixed classes, computer competency, or its lack, as key sources of belittling, and harassment. Girls perceived boys' interest in and interaction with militaristic and competitive-centered software as aggression-promoting behaviors. Failure of teachers to "control" the boys' in the classroom appeared to support these behaviors. Harassment is a known force of power. According to Rich male power exists as a source of men's domination over women.⁵² What message do we send to sexually diverse girls? Does the lack of teacher control send a miseducative message that heterosexism is alive and well in CTE? Or, could it simply be a lack of discourse about such issues in preservice teacher education. A lack of positive action from adults forces sexually diverse students to suffer alone. Educators must understand the importance of their role in the lives of such students forced into isolation from fear of being 'outed'; to those students whose needs are ignored by a culture that certainly will devalue them if they attempt to 'come out'. It is painful it is to be devalued, and even more so to be ignored. According to Gloria Filax, "when queer youth are 'out' or outed, they disturb the social order that

overwhelmingly denies their existence".⁵³ Sexually diverse girls defy 'normal' sexuality (heteronormative) which has profound effects on how they deal with others. As noted by Filax, an effect of heteronormative is distortion and invisibility of the reality in which sexually diverse girls live. Unfortunately, the side effects include a disproportionate rate of successful suicide.⁵⁴

Conclusion

Today's daughters come of age in a much different world from ours, a world that allows them the freedom to pursue historically male stream professions but in a world that demands of them their father's values on 'being a girl.' For sexually diverse girls we add an additional weight, a society's value on being a heterosexual girl. AAUW acknowledges gaps, notes wrongs and suggests curricular correctives for k-12 education as a whole and specifically in STEM curriculum (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) as positivistic disciplines affecting girls' learning by making girls assimilate instead of transform. This is demonstrated in much of AAUW's research including its landmark assessment *Shortchanging Girls, Shortchanging America*,⁵⁵ and more recently, *Under the Microscope*.⁵⁶

Contributing works underlying *Tech-Savvy* outcomes suggested a range of changes reflecting feminist thought, including separate but equal classes, mixed expertise grouping in coeducation settings, after school programs for girls and parents, access and availability opportunities for socioeconomically diverse girls, yet failed to go beyond it to include characteristics of sexually diverse girls. None considered a double invisibility created by absencing sexually diverse girls from the discussions. It is as if all girls, by default, have a heterosexual genetic code. By neglecting sexually diverse girls, AAUW adds to their invisibility. It is paramount to include such girls especially when schools that do teach sex education often fail to adequately teach sexual diversity.

Excluding sexually diverse girls sends miseducative messages; cultural diversity is celebrated—sexual diversity is not; heterosexuality is normative and though heterosexual girls are not equal to boys, additionally, sexually diverse girls are even less equal: They are unequal to their straight sisters (heterosexual girls) too. AAUW should consider funding preservice education programs offering collaboration with such organizations to aid future educators in developing CTE with sexually diverse girls in mind. If not the AAUW then who, AAUW researchers, educators, and funding agencies must consider, recognize, realize and meet the needs of sexually diverse girls if they truly wish to meet their mission to educate "all" girls.

ENDNOTES

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3. *Ibid.*, x. According to the report: "the new standard of 'fluency' assumes an ability to use abstract reason; to apply information technology in sophisticated, innovative ways to solve problems across disciplines and subject areas; to interpret vast amounts of information with analytic skill; to understand basic principles of programming and other computer science fundamentals; and to continually adapt and learn new technologies as they emerge in the future".
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23. Ibid.
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Thanks to Dr. Susan Laird, for her generous reading, scholarly critique and guidance. Thanks also to Dr. Susan Birden, Dr. Elizabeth J. Diener, Dr. John Covaleskie and Julie Davis for their listening, discussion and ideas. Any faults and flaws are entirely mine.

FOUCAULT, *PARRHESIA*, AND THE PROBLEM OF “LEADERSHIP” IN AMERICAN PUBLIC EDUCATION: A *CRITICAL ENQUIRY*

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Introduction

Over the past several decades academic departments of Education Administration in many American universities have undergone a name change to *Educational Leadership*, or some variant with “leadership” in the title. For American public education, at least, this name change prompts a fundamental question and a corollary. Why in a democracy is it necessary to educate people to be leaders in matters of education? And, if there are philosophical grounds justifying the role of leaders in American public education, then upon what grant of authority can public school administrators claim the role of leader? These and other such questions are particularly important relative to the American democracy where public education is considered to be, in the words of the historian Newton Edwards, “. . . not merely a *function* of government but *of* government itself [emphasis added].”¹

The questions posed above are fundamentally significant considering, at least,

- the strategic position presently occupied by school administrators in the ever increasing complexity of the “governance” of the American public education enterprise,
- the ever lengthening history of American’s hierarchical socioeconomic structure,
- the historically grounded purpose of American public education.

This paper is a Critical Enquiry into these three considerations. The enquiry is framed within Michel Foucault’s treatment of the Classical Greek notion of *parrhesia*, “. . . ordinarily translated into English as ‘free speech’ . . . the one who uses *parrhesia* [is] the one who speaks the truth.”² The critical frame is also conditioned by Foucault’s notion of “governmentality.”

What is “Leadership”?

Because the term “leadership” is ubiquitous in current education administration literature, this enquiry begins with a brief etymology of the term and a history of the notion of leadership the field of education administration. The *Oxford English Dictionary* gives an extensive history of the term *leader*. Of the five categories under the major heading “One who leads,” the last two categories refer to the uses of the term *leader* in music and religion. The first three categories are more appropriate for this enquiry. The first defines a *leader* as “One who conducts, precedes as a guide, leads a person by the hand or an animal by a chord, etc.” The second gives the definition of *leader* as “One who leads a body of armed men; a commander, a captain.” The third category again divides the notion of *leader* into several sub categories. The first subcategory (a) defines a *leader* as, “One who guides others in action or opinion; one who takes the lead in any business, enterprise, or movement; one who is ‘followed’ by disciples or adherents; the chief of a sect or party. Subcategory (b) defines a *leader* as it is used in phrases such as *leader of laws*, “One who has power in the state, a ruler. Subcategory (c) defines a *leader* as “A counsel who ‘leads’ in the conduct of a case before the court, a barrister whose status (in England that of the King’s counsel) entitles him to ‘lead.’” Subcategory (d) defines a *leader* as “The foremost or most eminent member (of a profession); . . . a person of eminent position and influence.” Finally, and more contemporarily, subcategory (e) of the third category defines *leader* “As a rendering of German *Fuhrer*, Italian *Duce*, or Spanish *Caudillo*: the head of an authoritarian state.

Leadership and Public School Administration

The etymology of *leader* reveals that regardless of the historical period the meaning of *leader* retained its original hierarchical character affording a leader positional power. Important for this enquiry is that since at least the beginning of the nineteenth century this hierarchical character maintained parallel to the development of a broader dominant epistemological discourse of *modern thought*—the way of thinking about the world and all of its complexities, including human behaviors, from the *a priori* assumption that a purely objective nature governs all. Both the fundamental character of leader as hierarchical and modern thought assume the notion of *division*, which allows for *categorization* and *classification*. But what explains the transition of school “administration” into education “leadership”?

As an institution, American public schooling is not an island unto itself. It takes place within a dynamic, complex society. Following Foucault’s practice of historical analytics,³ it is more important to describe the social, economic, political, legal, and knowledge contexts within which the notion of school administrators as education “leaders” was first introduced as the authoritative discourse in the field of education. From this historical moment, it becomes necessary to trace the use of the notion of leadership within the developing literature of education administration.

The term “leadership” entered the discourse of education along with the discourse of manufacturing as a means

or a *process* to achieve a “properly managed” school. An early example of this process/function binary can be found in Ellwood P. Cubberley’s popular and highly influential book first published in 1916, *Public School Administration: A Statement of the Fundamental Principles Underlying the Organization and Administration of Public Education*.⁴ In the introduction Cubberley, immodestly characterizing the book, states “An attempt has been made, in the space of this book, to state the fundamental principles underlying the proper organization and administration of public education in the United States; . . .”⁵ But nowhere in the introduction does he refer to school administrators as education leaders. It is not until page 137 that Cubberley noted, “The man who would be a superintendent of schools—the educational *leader* [emphasis added] of a city—must be clean both in person and mind . . .”⁶

More modern and direct references linking education administration to leadership can be found in the 1999, *Handbook on Research on Educational Administration*. Here Kenneth Leithwood and Daniel L. Duke in their chapter, “A Century’s Quest to Understand School Leadership,” begin by invoking Lofti Zabehe’s notion of “fuzzy logic” in discounting any need for a clear definition of leadership because, “Persevering on the development of a precise definition of a complex concept like leadership is likely to be counterproductive . . .”⁷ Not to be deterred by their own recognition of the impediments inherent in trying to define leadership, Leithwood and Duke then proceed to adopt a definition. Borrowing from Gary Yukl, they equate leadership with social influence and state that, “Most definitions of leadership reflect the assumption that it involves a social influence process whereby intentional influence is exerted by one person [or group] over other people [or groups] to structure the activities and relationships in a group or organization.”⁸

Requisite for those who tenaciously adhere to the notion of leadership as the central function of education administration, Leithwood and Duke go on to present a rather extensive discussion of different forms of leadership including the usual, “instructional, transformational, moral, participative, managerial, and contingent.” Perhaps in frustration, Leithwood and Duke conclude that leadership ought to be “conceived as a set of relations.” This is significant in that they first summarize then discount as “mere flashes of the obvious” the contributions of philosophy in education administration to the development of concepts of leadership. Because there must be at least one follower if there is a leader, what could be more obvious than “leadership” as relational?

From this somewhat abbreviated history of the notion of leadership and how it found its way into the literature of education administration one might easily come to the same conclusion as Chester I. Barnard, one of the most respected scholars in the field of business administration. In 1948 Barnard concluded that, “Leadership has been the subject of an extraordinary amount of dogmatically stated nonsense.”⁹

Regardless of when and how the notion of leadership was being considered, it never lost its fundamental leader/follower hierarchical character. Embedded in this binary is the preeminent position, the dominance, of the leader over the follower. This dominance might be appropriate for monarchial and dictatorial regimes, but totally inappropriate for a democracy where, as a collective, the People are the sovereign.

Democracy, Education, and Public Schools

Hardly anywhere in the current literature of education—especially education administration (*qua*: leadership)—can one find discussions or even references to the philosophically and historically grounded fundamental role of American public education in light of the essential questions that define the character of education policy. Much if not most of the literature in education administration is anecdotal or quasi-anecdotal and concerned with “managing” through “leadership” a “system” of schooling, making technical improvements to the system, or discussing the outside social, economic, political, and legal pressures that make the job of the school administrator more difficult. In short, the field of education administration has been dominated by tightly bounded scientific-technical and legal-defensive discourses, at the exclusion of the broad, unbounded narrative discourses of the humanities.

The virtual exclusion of the discourses of the humanities in education policy generally and education leadership specifically has surrendered the field of public education policy to politically connected elites from business and industry that see the public school experience as essentially a preparation for work—“human resources” for the economy—not institutions that prepare children for citizenship. This technical-business-legalistic character of public education policies is consistent with the hierarchical leader/follower binary character of leadership. The danger here is that the public assumes that the leaders know—or ought to know—what policies are best for the institution. The most fundamental of these policies is determining (mandating) what knowledge is to be taught to the students. At present, despite their apparent self-ordination as education leaders, school administrators are acceding the answer to

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the question—What ought to be taught to future citizens?—to the advocates of modern thought, who are often political appointees, such as the present Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, text book publishers, and the providers of standardized achievements tests. These unelected political operatives have considerable power in mandating what children ought to learn in the schools. In short, they become the “truth tellers.” But what counts as “truth” is a matter of personal preference, a fundamental aspect of the Constitutional guarantee of free speech.

Regarding the importance of free speech relative to government officials (even in the name of the People) intrusion into the domain of individual (thus political) speech, Justice Jackson in the landmark 1943 U. S. Supreme Court decision in *West Virginia State Board of Education vs. Barnette* made it clear that those elected to serve the people within the formal structures of government have no authority to control a person’s mind—the well-spring of *all* speech as discourse. In Justice Jackson’s words:

If there is any fixed star in our constitutional constellation, it is that no official, high or petty, can prescribe what shall be orthodox in politics, nationalism, religion, or other matters of opinion [emphasis added]¹⁰

The importance of “truth-telling” to the individual relative to governance was recognized long before the Founders wisely included its protection in the Bill of Rights.

Foucault and Parrsehia

Michel Foucault traced the beginning of the problems of “truth-telling” to the early Greeks. They were concerned with the problems truth-telling relevant to the notion of *parrsehia*, or “free speech.” Foucault reasoned that if Greek philosophy has raised the problem of truth from the point of view of the criteria for true statements and sound reasoning, this same Greek philosophy has also raised the question of truth from the point of view of truth-telling as an *activity* [emphasis added] It has raised questions like: Who is able to tell the truth? What are the moral, the ethical, and the spiritual conditions which entail someone to present himself [or herself] as, and to be considered as, a truth-teller? (About the world? About nature? About the city? About behavior? About man?) What are the consequences of telling the truth? What are the anticipated positive effects for the city, for the city’s rulers, for the individual?, etc. And finally: What is the relation between the activity of truth-telling and the exercise of power? Should truth-telling be brought into coincidence with the exercise of power, or should these activities be completely independent and kept separate? Are they separable, or do they require one another?¹¹

It appears that the questions about truth-telling that concerned the early Greeks are no less important today given our Constitutionally protected free-speech rights codified at the end of the eighteenth century. To this end, Foucault warns that the analysis of any given “problematization,” such as truth-telling and its relation to power, is not absent a specific historical context.¹² Those touted as today’s education leaders who advocate government sponsored standardized tests might argue that the connection between the present-day knowledge that these tests purport to measure and the eighteenth century notion of free speech are theoretically irrelevant given the almost universal agreement on many truth related questions. The agreements about knowledge are often justified on the grounds of “research” by “experts” who are “leaders in their fields.” As Foucault warns, “although you might find the same answer given in a series of texts, and at a certain point the answer may become so general that it also becomes anonymous,”¹³ at which point the truth-teller can no longer be interrogated. The belief that “truth” (*qua*, knowledge) is known, at least to some “experts” or “chosen ones,” is most often used to justify dictatorial regimes and authoritarian religious movements. But there is much more to education for citizenship than simple true/false distinctions relevant to “truth-telling.”

The nexus between truth-telling and power is extremely important in American public education given its mission to prepare children for citizenship. In modern times, at least, knowledge has been reduced to science and its true/false binary distinction which, in turn, has become the *sine qua non* of learning. This reduction presents a major problem in democratic societies. As Jean-François Lyotard has argued,

what is meant by the term *knowledge* is not only a set of denotative statements, far from it. It also includes notions of “knowing how,” “knowing how to live,” “how to listen” Knowledge, then, is a question of competence that goes beyond the simple determination and application of the criterion of truth, extending to the determination and application of efficiency (technical qualification), of justice and/or happiness (ethical wisdom), of the beauty of a sound or color (auditory and visual sensibility), etc. Understood in this way, knowledge is what makes someone capable of forming “good” denotative utterances, but also “good” prescriptive and “good” evaluative utterances¹⁴

Again, here are the two most fundamental questions: What counts as knowledge (truth)?; and, Who determines what

counts as knowledge?¹⁵ The answers to these questions are embedded in values, “subjectivities.” As such, in a democracy these questions are political questions directly related to fundamental issues regarding *access, equity, community, citizenship*, and, most important, *free speech*, the essence of the American democratic ideal. Ideally, the answer to these truth questions must not be reserved exclusively for a relatively few that occupy positions of power, including public school administration, in a complex web of responsibilities that characterize democratic frameworks of governance in what Foucault argues is the age of “governmentality.”

Governmentality

In his archeological and genealogical historical analytic method of analysis, Foucault considers the current problems of state governance to be one of “‘governmentality’ first discovered in the eighteenth century.”¹⁶ Foucault describes governmentality as a means of power born and nurtured within several historical periods, each having a unique requirement for governance. Beginning in the middle of the sixteenth century, when feudalism was being replaced by the much larger territorial state which, simultaneously, was conditioned by the often bloody Reformation and Counter-Reformation disputes, there was the Stoic revival that was concerned with “governance of oneself.”¹⁷ Then there were the problems associated with “government of the soul and lives, the entire theme of the Catholic and Protestant pastoral doctrine.”¹⁸ Concurrent with the religious conflicts there was the problem of the “. . . government of children and the great problematic of pedagogy . . .” Lastly, there was the problems surrounding “. . . the governance of the state by the prince.”¹⁹

By the end of the sixteenth century as the notion of “population” replaced that of family the “art of governance” was being replaced with the “science of government.” At the core of this “science” was statistics, which subsequently became the major technical discourse of this new means of governmental power. This new science rapidly matured in the nineteenth century with the beginning with the work of Adolphe Quetelet (1796–1874) who was the first to use the term “average man.” Quetelet’s work, when linked to that of Francis Galton (1822–1911), James Clerk Maxwell (1831–1879), Charles Sanders Peirce (1839–1914), and Karl Pearson (1857–1936), constitutes a genealogy of discursive elements that presently serve as the foundation of the human sciences.²⁰

By the middle of the twentieth century, the “science” of government acquired even more useful tools of subjection with contributions from the work of a new generation of social “scientists.” Significant among these contributors was the Harvard sociologists Talcott Parsons, who championed the notion of “social systems” and psychologists Benjamin Bloom and his “Taxonomy of Educational Objectives.”

At present, under the aegis of science, governments have a vast repertoire of disciplinary technologies of subjectification at their disposal to be applied through a complex web of institutions, including public education, by bureaucrats trained in the most prestigious institutions of higher learning, such as Harvard. Often referred to as “the best and the brightest,” these seemingly unselfish public servants shuffle easily between government service and lucrative jobs on Wall Street.

Conclusions

Ideally the role of school administrators in American public education is to “minister to” the needs of students and teachers in *their* quest—not that of administrators acting alone as “leaders”—to fulfill the mission of public education. In the Jeffersonian tradition, that mission is to prepare students to assume the primary political office of *citizen*. But what does the role of citizen entail in light of preserving both our democratic political structure and the individual rights and freedoms inherent in the American ideal?

Does being a citizen mean that persons should discipline themselves to “fit” into the existing politically conditioned socioeconomic structure regardless of its inequities? Or does being a citizen mean that each person should engage in a constant political praxis in order to maximize the American democratic ideal? If being a good citizen is the latter and not the former, then the mission of American public education must be to liberate, not to discipline. But what should constitute a public education policy that would more likely prepare citizens to engage in a liberating political praxis? First and foremost, public education policy should, must allow competing social, economic, and political discourses to be both openly and fearlessly expressed and debated through the curriculum.

Democracies gain their power not from consensus regarding “truth-telling,” but from what could be called “dissensus.”²¹ In this regard schools must strive to allow for the maximizing of opinions relative to truth-telling, which is at base a valuing enterprise. Any consensus on public values must take place in the open political arenas, not exclusively in the schools. We must educate future school administrators for the 21st Century and beyond. If future Americans are to avoid finding themselves one day in the year 88 A.F. (After Ford) described by Aldous Huxley in his sterile, repressive, *Brave New World*, then today’s educators, especially teachers, must reclaim their

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rightful truth-telling role regarding what future citizens ought to learn.

ENDNOTES

1. Newton Edwards, *The Courts and the Public Schools* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1955), 23–24.
2. Michel Foucault, *Fearless Speech*, ed. Joseph Pearson (Los Angeles, CA: Semiotext, 2001), 11. According to Pearson, this “. . . text was compiled from tape-recordings made of six lectures delivered, in English, by Michel Foucault gave at the University of California–Berkeley in the Fall Term of 1983.” (7) In Foucault’s words, “My intention was not to deal with the problem of truth, but with the problem of truth-telling, or of truth-telling as an activity . . . who is able to tell the truth, about what, with what consequences, and with what relations to power . . . [W]ith the question of the importance of telling the truth, knowing who is able to tell the truth, and knowing why we should tell the truth, we have the roots of what we could call the ‘critical’ tradition in the West.” 5.
3. Michel Foucault, “The Discourse on Language,” In Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, Trans. A.M. Sheridan Smith (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972), 215–237.
4. The education historian Raymond E. Callahan describes Ellwood P. Cubberley, then dean of the School of Education at Stanford, as “One of the leading, if not *the* leading, educational administrators in the period between 1915 and 1934 . . .(emphasis in the original).” Raymond E. Callahan, *Education and the Cult of Efficiency: A Study of the Social Forces that Have Shaped the Administration of the Public Schools* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1962), 96.
5. Ellwood P. Cubberley, *Public School Administration: A Statement of the Fundamental Principles Underlying the Organization and Administration of Public Education* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1922), v.
6. Cubberley, 137.
7. Kenneth Leithwood and Daniel L. Duke, “A Century’s Quest to Understand School Leadership.” In *Handbook on Research on Educational Administration*, eds. Joseph Murphy and Karen Seashore Louis, 45–72. (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1999), 46.
8. Gary A. Yukl, *Leadership in Organizations: Third Edition* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1994), 3.
9. Chester I. Barnard, *Organization and Management, Selected Papers 1886–1961* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1948), p. 80.
10. West Virginia State Board of Education vs. Barnette, Supreme Court of the United States, 319 U.S. 624, 63 S.Ct. 1178, 1943.
11. Foucault, *Fearless Speech*, 169–170.
12. Foucault, *Fearless Speech*, 172.
13. Ibid.
14. Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, trans., Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), 18–19. Originally published in France in 1979 by Les Editions de Minuit as *La Condition postmoderne: rapport sur le savoir*.
15. Many have conceived of a similar list. See, for example, Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition*, 48; and, especially, Richard J. Bates, “Politics, Ideology and Education.” *International Journal of Political Education I* (1977–78), 315–324.
16. Michel Foucault, “Governmentality,” in *Power*, ed. James B. Fabuon, trans. Robert Hurley, et. al, vol. 3 of *Essential Works of Michel Foucault 1954–1984*, ed., Paul Rabinow (New York: The New Press, 2000), 103.
17. Foucault, “Governmentality,” p. 87.
18. Foucault, “Governmentality,” p. 57.

19. Ibid.

20. Charles J. Fazzaro, "What Is Normal?: A Postmodern Inquiry into the Relations Between Education and Social Order." *Journal of Philosophy & History of Education*, 48: (1998) 11–17.

21. For an in-depth treatment of the importance of "dissensus" in education policy formation see: Charles J. Fazzaro and James E. Walter, "Schools for Democracy: Lyotard, Dissensus, and Education Policy." *International Journal of Leadership in Education: Theory & Practice*. Vol. 5, No. 1 (2002), 15–32.

POSSIBILITIES: KAMIL JBEILY–THE MAN AND HIS VISION FOR THE TEXAS REGIONAL COLLABORATIVES FOR EXCELLENCE IN SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS TEACHING

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Introduction

Every year seems to bring another study that finds that students in the United States are behind other developed nations in science and mathematics. Students who do poorly in a subject rarely go on to major in that subject in college and so the number of students who choose to become teachers in those fields or who decide to pursue masters or doctorate degrees in them grows smaller and smaller. A few years ago, the authors worked on an NASA grant with Millie Matteau, then the director of education for NASA. Millie said that in a few years, NASA would not be able to replace the engineers and scientists who would be retiring. In 2002 U.S. Comptroller General David Walker testified that “Within five years about a quarter of NASA’s scientists and engineers will be eligible for retirement while ‘the pipeline of people with science and engineering skills is shrinking.’”¹ For obvious reasons only U.S. citizens are employed by NASA, and they are scrutinized carefully. With the majority of Ph.D.s in science being granted to persons from other countries, the pool of persons meeting the requirements is small.

As citizens of this country have become aware during the financial meltdown of the past year, we are not as secure in world dominance as we may have thought before. What does this have to do with educating future scientists? Well, one obvious point is the depleting supply of oil which has led the country into several wars draining financial resources and placing it in a precarious position with regard to its independence. From 1973 to 2008, the U. S. “has gone from importing a third of our oil . . . to nearly three-quarters today.”² Our “friends” like Russia and Venezuela cannot be counted on to refrain from using such a powerful advantage in international affairs. We MUST become less energy dependent on foreign oil! We know that we have the best higher education system in the world. Thus, we have the ability to produce the scientists, mathematicians and engineers who can conduct the research to make us energy independent. Richard Monastersky states that we will have a 47% increase in available positions in science and mathematics by 2010. According to the U. S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics, we will also see a continued decline in U. S. born students receiving doctorates in those areas. At the same time foreign students who are receiving doctorates in the U.S. increasingly are leaving for positions in other countries.³

According to an online publication of the National Science Board:

The United States has always benefitted from international science and engineering talent. However, the US S&E workforce has become increasingly dependent on the Nation’s ability to attract scientists and engineers from other countries. Census-based estimates of the proportion of S&E occupations filled by scientists and engineers born abroad show steep increases at every degree level from 1990 and 2000, reflecting both the immigration patterns of the 1990s and the inflow of foreign specialists under various work visa categories. (These figures exclude US-educated scientists and engineers born in foreign countries hired by US firms into positions at their overseas affiliates.)

For all degree levels, the share of US S&E occupations filled by scientists or engineers who were born abroad increased from 14 to 22 percent. At the bachelor’s degree level, the share increased from 11 to 17 percent; at the master’s level, from 19 to 29 percent; and at the doctorate level, from 24 to 38 percent. The growing US dependence on international S&E talent, particularly on foreign nationals, has become problematic. The future US S&E workforce is imperiled by two long-term trends documented in this report:

- Global competition for S&E talent is intensifying, such that the United States may not be able to rely on the international S&E labor market to fill unmet skill needs;
- The number of native-born S&E graduates entering the workforce is likely to decline unless the Nation intervenes to improve success in educating S&E students from all demographic groups, especially those underrepresented in S&E careers.

The National Science Board has examined the issues and finds it imperative that the Federal Government lead an aggressive effort to better prepare the Nation’s S&E workforce starting at the earliest years of education.⁴

In 1957 the United States was shocked by the advent of Sputnik and began to make drastic changes in curriculum requirements, provided National Education Defense scholarships and loans, funded summer workshops for teachers and provided up to date equipment through grants for poor school districts. There is still time for this country to develop creative ways to tackle this problem and provide new preventative solutions as was done before.

One man, Kamil A. Jbeily, in Austin, Texas not only has developed a way to reach our future scientists, mathematicians, and engineers, he had slowly and methodically expanded his vision to serve a state which has one-tenth of all of the independent school districts in the United States. Beginning in 1990–1991 his dreams have become reality, and his story explains how he came to be what he is and to do what he does so successfully.

Kamil Jbeily's Story

Influence of Family

The Jbeily family in Beirut, Lebanon was a large extended family with an interesting composition. His father and his uncle married sisters. They lived in the same building in apartments across the hall from each other, and when the uncle and his wife found that they could not have children, it was decided that Kamil Jbeily's parents would have many children so that there would be children for all to love. So, growing up, Jbeily had two fathers and two mothers. While none of the parents had much education (his biological father had a fifth grade education and his mother a second grade education), they worked very hard—determined to provide the best education for the nine children. The brothers owned a very small grocery store which provided the means for that education at the Anglican Good Shepherd School. The parents were hard working, selfless, devout Catholics, and lived by a high ethical code. The children lived a healthy, sheltered, ethical life at home and at school.⁵ From his upbringing Jbeily learned that he had added so much to the continuity of who he is now because, he says, "Just like the roots of a tree you must never forget your roots. I am in awe even now when I sit next to a president of a university or any highly accomplished person: That I am here. I preach and practice the Golden Rule, especially when it comes to serving others. This country has given me so much and I want to give back. Never forget where you came from. Never ever forget your roots."⁶

Education

At the Good Shepherd School, Kamil met a teacher who would have a strong influence on his future. This teacher loved America and over and over told the children that it was the greatest land on Earth, the *Land of Opportunity*. He credits that teacher for his ever burning desire to come to America. He attributes the secret of his success to a hymn that was sung every day in that school, one which was important in forming his positive attitude and culture of service. The words of the song are, "We want everybody to be happy, we want everybody to be glad, we want everybody to be happy in the Lord, and we don't want anybody sad."⁷ He says,

It is amazing how transformational this hymn is because we become what we think about in selflessness to others, serving others. We must resist surrendering to the egocentric tendencies we have as human beings. Yes, you want yourself to be happy but equally important, you want everyone to be happy because happiness is best when it is shared. In my view there is no happiness without giving. A study observed this and found the happiest were the people giving, the next people witnessing the giving and then the person receiving. The lesson is—We have to share with others.⁸

In that school, the teachers also instilled a sense of high expectations, a sense of goal setting, and a sense of excitement, a sense of concern and responsibility to others. The closest of those "others" were his siblings. On a school day, very young Kamil and his brothers and sisters walked to the grocery store for lunch. He tells a story that reveals his early gift of keen observation and concern for others. One day, over lunch, mistaken for olive oil, store-stocked highly poisonous sulfuric acid was poured over a plate to be served for lunch. Kamil observes the fuming acid and curiously exclaims to his uncle who immediately realizes the mistake and removes the plate, avoiding major injuries and danger to the lives of the young children.

Back in school, Jbeily's elementary teacher told him that America was the greatest country on Earth. So since elementary school, he dreamed of coming to America, the Land of Opportunity. He says, "In the 1960s and 70s the image of America as portrayed in movies and other media outlets was incredible, the image of highways, the image of luxury, beautiful girls, California tall girls, abundance! Even without the enticement from the teacher, the reputation of America was irresistible to any young man with a strong desire and ambition to achieve. Everyone wanted to come to America. Why? Reason: *Opportunity* to be the best you can be, to serve, and to be whatever you wish."⁹ Almost 20 years after arriving in the US, Jbeily articulates that reason in a keynote speech at San Antonio's Institute of Texan Culture to over 300 new citizens among whom was his own mother who took the Oath at the age of 72. Reporting on the event, the August 29, 1999 edition of the San Antonio Express-News states:

Kamil Jbeily, a walking, talking advertisement for the American dream, said nowhere else in the world do people find such an abundance of rights and privileges. "What makes America so great? The answer is deceptively simple," he told the gathering. "Opportunity. Opportunity for everyone to grow, develop, achieve their goals and

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realize their dreams. Opportunity for all to enjoy liberty and justice. Opportunity to be protected by the law from oppression and illegitimate execution." (For full newspaper article, see the link:

<http://thetrc.org/jbeily/press/express.htm>)

After graduation from high school, Jbeily received a bachelor's in Chemistry and a master's degree in Chemistry and Chemistry Education. He taught at secondary schools in Lebanon for several years during the Lebanese Civil War. These were challenging times, for the students would fight all night and then come to school exhausted, check their weapons at the door or give them to their brothers and come to class. His creativity as a teacher was important during those times.

Excelling in his Master's degree, Jbeily was awarded a scholarship to pursue a Ph.D. in Science Education in Europe or the United States. He says,

in that moment my elementary teacher's stories and hymns flashed in my mind. That was my opportunity to come to America! On August 30, 1980, my plane landed in Houston Intercontinental airport at 1:30 AM. One of the very important milestones of my life."¹⁰

At age twenty-six he had come to the land where opportunity was possible.

The Collaboratives

Opportunity was waiting at The University of Texas at Austin in the guise of Dr. James P. Barufaldi who now holds the chair as the Ruben E. Hinojosa Regents Professor and serves as Director of the Center for Science and Mathematics Education and was at that time Director of the Science Education Center and who invited Jbeily to stay at his home during the doctoral interview process. Barufaldi was to become Jbeily's friend and mentor and one who helped him make the most of his opportunities. Jbeily enrolled in The University of Texas in Austin Texas and received his Ph.D. in Science Education in 1986. During the time Jbeily was a student, he spent five years supervising student teachers for the College of Education at U.T. After graduation, he began his U.S. career at the Texas Education Agency (TEA)¹¹ and began teaching Chemistry at Austin Community College. While at TEA, Jbeily became increasingly involved in science education reforms. In his first week at TEA in March 1987, while on a school accreditation assignment, Jbeily begins serving Texas teachers. He meets, assists, and advises teacher Carol Garcia in her chemistry laboratory at Kilgore Independent School District in East Texas. The one-day assistance and passion to serve left a lasting impression and led to a lifetime friendship and a poem, written by Garcia, titled "His Journey of Opportunity" and published in the 2000 edition of International House of Poetry. (See poem and photos on Jbeily's website link: <http://thetrc.org/jbeily/American.htm>)

The official brochure of the Texas Regional Collaboratives for Excellence in Science and Mathematics Teaching (TRC) gives a brief history of the development of the TRC under Jbeily's leadership. The brief history is as follows:

In 1990–91, major science education reform activities were underway in Texas. Changes necessitated that teachers adopt new methods of teaching and teach a wide variety of sciences for which they were not prepared. Dr. Kamil A. Jbeily, then at the Texas Education Agency (TEA), initiated a series of regional meetings across the state to explore ways to create ongoing regional support systems of professional development for Texas science teachers. The meetings included representatives from education service centers, colleges and universities, school districts, and community leadership. The goal was to create partnerships that are built on collaboration, cost-sharing (using Eisenhower funds as seed money), and synergistic relationships to provide science teachers with relevant, meaningful, sustained, and high-intensity professional development that will have positive impact on student achievement. The partnerships gave birth to the Texas Regional Collaboratives for Excellence in Science Teaching.

On March 2, 1996, with the reorganization of the Texas Education Agency, and under a TEA-UT partnership agreement, the statewide administrative office of the Texas Regional Collaboratives was moved to the Science Education Center (now Center for Science and Mathematics Education) at The University of Texas at Austin. The program now enjoys support from a wide spectrum of local, state, and national partners. In July 2006, the Texas Regional Collaboratives (TRC) launched a new initiative funded by the Texas Education Agency to provide high quality professional development for Texas mathematics teachers. After a competitive process, grants were awarded to 20 partnerships across Texas to establish the Texas Regional Collaboratives for Excellence in Mathematics Teaching.¹² [More recently the Louisiana Outreach Project has included LSU/Southern University Regional Collaborative and Louisiana Tech University/Grambling State University Regional Collaborative both funded through the Shell-TRC Partnership.]

The Teacher Is the Key

In explaining his emphasis on the teacher, Jbeily says that there is no possibility to transform the achievements of students unless there is an investment in the teachers. When the teacher closes the door, it is what they know, how they teach it, their high expectations, their strong beliefs, their confidence, their healthy attitude, and their creation of an environment of love for and curiosity about science, that will inspire the students to learn, excel, and think about pursuing science or technology related careers. "The best investment we make is in our teachers." As Jbeily began to work with a changing curriculum, he also began to provide a support system for teachers through professional development opportunities and tuition grants which were provided through the TRC's state, federal and corporate partners. Jbeily declared the following value system for the program: The TRC

- Serves its teachers
- Treasures its people
- Operates with integrity
- Rewards its partners
- Contributes to the community and systemic reform¹³

In order to reach as many teachers and students as possible, Jbeily developed a mentoring system which has made it possible to serve almost all of 254 Texas counties, and train over 40,000 science and mathematics teachers, many of whom mentor and support other teachers in their districts and regions. The examples below show how in one year only, hundreds of thousands of students can be the recipients of the expertise of these teachers and mentors.¹⁴

The impact of the TRC on one specific region can be demonstrated in its impact on the University of Texas-Pan American (UTPA) Regional Science Collaborative though

1. Educational Opportunity for Teachers

Through resources provided by the TRC, the UTPA Collaborative has been able to bring approximately 160 elementary, middle school and high school teachers into masters degree programs and help them complete their degrees. TRC resources have provided these teachers with tuition scholarships which enabled many of them to complete degrees that would have been impossible for many of them to do without this support.

2. In-service Opportunity and Instructional Materials for Teachers

TRC resources have also enabled the UTPA Science Collaborative to provide their teachers with many in-service opportunities to strengthen their pedagogical skills. It has also provided the instructional materials needed for the in-services and sets of instructional materials for the teachers to take back to their classrooms. These materials have included science equipment such as those items necessary for teachers to be able to effectively teach the Texas Educational Knowledge and Skills [TEKS]. This is important because the TEKS form the basis for the state assessment system. The TRC has also provided teachers with commercially prepared science kits that include all the curriculum materials and science equipment needed to teach science effectively and provided the in-service training necessary to use them effectively.

3. Leadership development of teachers

Many of the teachers who have participated in the UTPA Science Collaborative and completed their master's degrees have become leaders in their schools and districts. For example, six of the local school districts have science coordinators who are members of the UTPA Science Collaborative and completed their master's degrees in the Collaborative program. A large number of Collaborative teachers currently serve as department chairs in their high schools or grade-level leaders in their middle or elementary schools. Several others have moved on to complete doctoral programs. Three are currently pursuing doctoral degrees and one has completed a doctorate at UTPA and is now a university lecturer.¹⁵

The Results

Some of the indicators of the successful statewide impact of the Collaboratives include

- Elementary campuses with at least one Grade 5 TRC teacher each year during 2002–2005 scored higher on the Elementary Science TAKS (Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills), than the state average. Differences in student achievement were demonstrated both in the percentage of students that met state standards as well as the percentage of students that achieved a Commendable Performance
- On average, scores for Collaborative teachers on tests of science content knowledge increased from a mean of 52 before TRC training to a mean of 67 after TRC participation.
- Students taught by teachers in the Rice University Regional Collaborative showed significant improvement as

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compared to nonparticipant teachers in the same school district on a test consisting of items from the Third International Math and Science Study (TIMSS), and released state test items.¹⁶

In the UTPA Collaborative, a large number of Collaborative teachers have been selected as teachers of the year in their schools or district. Many of the Collaborative teachers have succeeded in raising the TAKS scores of their students. For example, one teacher who was very successful in raising the test scores of her students was asked by her superintendent to become a curriculum specialist and focus on four elementary schools whose science scores were not acceptable and whose student population was predominantly Mexican America and low a socioeconomic group. She worked with each school and within a two-year period brought all of them up to an acceptable or commended pass rate.¹⁷

The Partners and Collaboration

Kamil A. Jbeily has been successful because he not only believed that cooperation and sharing were important, he believed that the participants in that cooperation and sharing should be as inclusive as possible. Jbeily's enthusiasm for these Collaboratives and what they are accomplishing is contagious. He never seems to see a negative. Negatives are delightful challenges to be met with courage, commitment and determination. His personality sparkles. However, charisma alone will not convince corporate and government sponsors to pledge monetary and other support. Kamil A. Jbeily is brilliant, and he can answer questions and address issues in a down to earth way with clarity and excitement. Since that first seed grant from the Eisenhower Program, Jbeily has gained support from community leaders, the Texas Education Agency (TEA), the Texas State Board of Education, the State Commissioners of Education, The University of Texas Presidents and administrators, State political leaders, and corporate leaders from industry. They not only support but also participate with teachers, other educators at special Honoring the Teachers events, and at TRC annual meetings where educational excellence is celebrated and outstanding service is awarded. The TRC is a dynamic partnership where the partners have many opportunities to get to know each other and to form trust, respect, and lifelong friendships and relationships. State, federal, corporate and foundation partners include TEA, the U.S. Department of Education, the National Science Foundation, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, Shell, AT&T Foundation, El Paso Corporation, Toyota USA Foundation, and The Cynthia and George Mitchell Foundation. In addition to over fifty regional corporate and community partners, TRC project contributors include Abilene Education Foundation, Advanced Micro Devices, the Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum, Central West Texas Charitable Foundation, Jack Ramsey, Community Foundation of Abilene, Bob and Maggy Morford, Dian Graves Owen Foundation, Eleanor and Robert Hoppe Endowment DA Fund, J.E. Connally, Virginia H. Boyd, Kenedy Memorial Foundation, Morehead-Welborn LLP, Robert Gooch, Rockwell Fund, Sam E. and Ann Barshop, Scott Taliaferro, Jr., Sydney E. Niblo, Walter F. Johnson, William Wright Jr., Zachry Group, Inc.¹⁸

Recognition of Jbeily's accomplishments came in 2000 when he was inducted into the Texas Science Hall of Fame as a Charter Member along with such other notables as Dr. Denton Cooley, Dr. Michael DeBakey, Astronaut John Blaha, and Microchip Inventor Jack Kilby. This man who came to the Land of Opportunity has in fact used that opportunity to bring opportunity to thousands of teachers and millions of Texas school children and will leave a legacy of inspiring thousands of young people interested enough in science and mathematics to choose them as careers.

For those who are interested in more information about the Texas Regional Collaboratives for Excellence in Science and Mathematics Teaching: the following is from the Texas Regional Collaboratives' web site (<http://thetrc.org/trc/>).

Our Mission

To provide Texas science and mathematics teachers with support systems of scientifically researched, sustained and high intensity professional development and mentoring, to assist them in the implementation of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). Our programs equip teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills to engage students in meaningful science and mathematics learning experiences. Activities are designed to improve students' scientific thinking, their mathematical and technological literacy, and interest to pursue science and engineering related careers.

Achievements

1. Served over 1.5 million students across Texas through improved instruction and performance of participating teachers.

2. Developed the leadership capacity of approximately 16,000 Science Teachers Mentors (STMs) through sustained and high intensity professional development. These STMs are in turn sharing their experiences with thousands of teachers through mentoring, peer coaching, technical assistance, and workshops at the campus, district, and regional levels. In addition, over 16,500 mathematics teachers have received training in mathematics professional development modules sponsored by the Texas Education Agency. Science and Mathematics teachers in almost all of the State's 254 counties have been the beneficiaries of this extensive statewide support system.
3. Received commendation from U.S. Department of Education, National Science Foundation, policy makers, legislators, and business partners; inducted into the Texas Science Hall of Fame, and recognized by the Governor, the Senate and House of Representatives for distinguished achievements and contributions to supporting science education.

Activities

- Professional Development Academies (PDAs) are provided to Instructional Teams that consist of professors of science, mathematics, and engineering education, instructional specialists and master teachers.
- Professional Development Programs designed by instructional teams at each Regional Collaborative provide 75 to 105 contact hours of TEKS-based professional development to prepare teachers to become Science Teacher Mentors (STMs), and Mathematics Teacher Mentors (MTMs).
- Honoring the Teachers events, recognize and honor participating teachers and engage policy makers, legislators, and state leaders in the program.
- The Annual Meeting brings together teacher leaders, education and business leaders, policy makers, and legislators to share, network, communicate, and celebrate the achievements of the Collaboratives.

ENDNOTES

1. Audret T. Leath, "Concerns Over the Future of NASA's S&T Workforce," FYI Number 95, August 12, 2002, accessed September 23, 2009 from <http://www.aip.org/enews/fyi/2002/095.html>.
2. Shirley Ann Jackson, "You Cannot Get There from Here: Why the U.S. Needs a Comprehensive Energy Security Road Map," accessed September 23, 2009 from <http://www.rpi.edu/homepage/quietcrisis/ps072208-commonwealth.html>.
3. Richard Monastersky, "Is There a Science crisis? Maybe Not," The Chronicle of Higher Education, July 9, 2004, accessed from <http://chronicle.com/cgi2-bin/printable.cgi?article=http://chronicle.com/free/v50/i44/44a01001.htm>.
4. National Science Board, "The Science and Engineering Workforce Realizing America's Potential," 1. http://www.nsf.gov/nsb/documents/2003/nsb0369/nsb0369_7.pdf.
5. Kamil Jbeily, interview by Martha Tevis and John McBride, University of Texas-Pan American, Borderlands Room, May 19, 2009.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid.
11. After several years at TEA he traveled back for a visit to Beirut. While there he was introduced to a recent law school graduate who was both brilliant and beautiful. Being a man of action, he proposed in the first five minutes of conversation, and they were married seven days later. Today Kamil and Sana Jbeily are the proud parents of a son, Mark, and two daughters, Laura and Stephanie.
12. "Texas Regional Collaboratives for Excellence in Science and Mathematics Teaching: Dynamic Partnerships for Twenty First-Century Science and Mathematics Education," Accessed September 23, 2009 http://thetrc.org/trc/download/about/09_TRC_Brochure.pdf.

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13. Ibid.

14. “The TRC Fact Sheet,” http://thetrc.org/trc/download/TRC_Fact_Sheet_02_13_09.pdf. Accessed September 23, 2009

15. John W. McBride, Director of UTPA Regional Science and Mathematics Collaborative, and Martha May Tevis, Associate Director.

16. “The TRC Fact Sheet.”

17. McBride and Tevis.

18. TRC brochure.

‘CREATING A SPACE IN WHICH THE COMMUNITY OF TRUTH IS PRACTICED’: REFLECTIONS ON DIMENSIONS OF TEACHING

Philip D. Gould, University of Memphis

“To teach is to create a space in which the community of truth is practiced.”¹

After 18 years of teaching in a variety of adult and higher education contexts, the writer has come to appreciate and utilize the flexibility inherent in all learning opportunities. Whether the context is a community college, a four-year institution, or a continuing professional education session, the role of the teacher is fundamentally the same—sharing information with learners in a manner which they find useful, thereby enhancing their own life experiences. The ensuing discussion is an effort to relate Parker Palmer’s aphorism to the experiences of an individual instructor. It is hoped that this sharing will encourage all educators to periodically review their own methods of preparing to teach.

Overview

Four concepts in Parker Palmer’s maxim encapsulate an approach to learning which is stimulating to the learner and teacher alike. These concepts are creating a space, community, truth, and practice. Any learning opportunity which is designed to utilize these concepts should not only enhance the personal satisfaction of the learners, but maximize the potential learning that occurs. The narrative following this discussion is divided into four sections, one for each of these concepts. At the end of each section, a number of issues that teachers should consider are included, providing some practical suggestions for preparing for learning opportunities. These issues should not be regarded as a checklist which must be followed, but as considerations which may be useful in preparing to lead a learning opportunity. Additional issues may present themselves, and issues raised in this discourse may not be relevant to a particular learning opportunity.

To facilitate understanding the subsequent discussion, it is important that use of the following terms be clearly characterized. The term “teacher” includes the individual or individuals who bear responsibility for guiding and defining the scope of the learning opportunity. “Learners” include all participants in the learning opportunity, as they attempt to grasp new information, enhance their pre-existing knowledge, acquire new skills, or make new meaning from the provided curricular content and their individual experiences. This definition of “learner” includes teachers, since in every learning opportunity, teachers also learn. To avoid confusion, the terms “teacher” and “learner” will be juxtaposed in the succeeding discussion when it is intended to differentiate between attributes of these two divergent roles. When “learner” appears without the term “teacher,” the point under discussion is intended to apply with equal vigor to individuals in both roles. A “learning opportunity” may be a formal classroom setting, a continuing professional education conference, or a less formal setting in which teachers guide learners. The “learning environment” includes not only the physical space inhabited by the learners which, though relatively stable during the learning opportunity, contains experiential elements which are constantly changing as the interactions among learners occur. The teacher must constantly adapt to these changes and guide the learners through them using a combination of methods which challenge the learners to accept and make meaning of the new information presented and support them as they need assistance integrating the new learning into their previous experience. Finding the balance between challenge and support is a major consideration in preparing to teach.

Creating a space

The creation of a space in which to teach is the first of Palmer’s concepts, and may begin from the moment a teacher accepts an assignment to guide a specific learning opportunity. Ideally there will be adequate time to prepare for the coming opportunity, although the current financial demands on higher education often result in the last minute hiring of adjunct faculty, and the vicissitudes of life occasionally dictate that teachers have to assume new educational opportunities because of the serious illness or death of a colleague. In situations where preparation to teach must occur almost simultaneously with the beginning of the learning opportunity, the teacher’s creation of a space in which to teach must not be omitted, but must occur as quickly as the teacher meets more immediate demands of the learners.

Palmer has delineated four spaces of different natures which must be created in order to prepare to teach: physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual.² As a part of preparing to teach, each of these spaces must be prepared for optimal learning to occur.

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Perhaps the easiest of the spaces to prepare is the physical space. This is the setting in which the learning will occur. The teacher will usually have some idea of the learning space prior to arriving at the learning opportunity, although there are situations, especially in continuing professional education, where the teacher arrives on site just in time to begin the teaching.

Preparing the physical space requires that the teacher consider a number of issues. The first set of issues relates to the environment itself. In what physical environment will the learning occur? Is it formal, as in a classroom setting on a college campus or corporate training facility, or informal in a standard conference space or other space not generally designated for education? Can the space be altered in any way, by movement of walls, furniture, or equipment, for instance, to enhance the learning environment? Is it possible that a nonconventional setting, such as an outside activity in the open air, will enhance the learning environment?

As educational technologies have become ubiquitous, consideration of the physical space must include issues surrounding their use. A threshold question is whether the use of instructional technologies would enhance or detract from the desired learning. If they would enhance the learning, then other issues arise. Are instructional technologies available to be used in the learning environment? If so, which? If not, can they be brought in? Are there special or unique facilities on or reasonably near the primary learning environment which might serve as locations for experiential learning opportunities? Attention to these questions will allow the teacher to make the best use of the physical environment.

The next space that Palmer indicates that teachers must create is emotional space.³ Preparing the emotional space requires that the teacher be aware of her/his emotions and how they may inadvertently impact the optimum learning which is to occur. A realization that is often overlooked in literature discussing the impact of emotions on learning is that all learners in the educational environment bring emotions to the learning opportunity. Focusing on the potentially emotional aspects of the learning opportunity and awareness of emotions that other learners may bring to it may help the teacher's preparation. In addition, acknowledging the emotional impact of the material to be presented at the outset of the learning opportunity and sharing the teacher's own emotional reaction to it may help create a supportive environment which may encourage participants to honestly experience their emotional responses and enrich the learning opportunity.

This is perhaps the most difficult of the spaces for the teacher to create, especially in the United States and other Western cultures, as individuals are taught, practically from birth, to conceal their true emotional responses. Millions of times a day, when one acquaintance meets another, the simple question, "How are you?" is asked in the beginning of a conversation. The standard reply, "I'm fine," completes the conversational couplet, and allows the exchange to move on to more substantive matters, regardless of the responder's true situation. The teacher is faced with an enormous challenge in overcoming this deeply ingrained social custom.

But it is important that an appropriate emotional space be prepared and maintained throughout the learning opportunity. The mysterious interaction between emotion and learning is currently being redefined, thanks to new advances in neuroscience and neurophysiology, as James Zull has noted, "Emotion and thought are physically entangled—immensely so. This brings our body into our story because we feel our emotions in our body, and the way we feel always influences our brain."⁴ Current deliberations about the role that concepts such as emotional intelligence play in learning and continuing research into the function and development of the brain, the organ of the body in which learning occurs, suggest that teachers who are receptive to the emotional dimensions of learning may well improve their learners' ability to learn and enhance the outcomes of the learning opportunity.

The following inquiries may assist the teacher's preparation of an emotional space. How do I feel about the upcoming teaching opportunity? What feelings do I have about the substantive material? How strong are my emotional responses to the opportunity and the material? Am I able to compensate for the impact that my emotional responses will have on learning or can I manage them in such a way as to make that impact negligible? How will the learners in the learning opportunity feel about the opportunity itself and the substantive material? How can I help the learners manage their own emotions to allow for optimal learning to occur?

For Palmer, an intellectual space is not limited to the selection of materials to be delivered, handouts to be prepared, and items to be "covered."⁵ This last notion, that of "covering" material contains the insidious possibility that by injudicious selection of material, the teacher may obscure learning to the detriment of the learners. Issues of which materials to present are often negotiated by the program organizers and the teacher. Resolution of these issues is critical to the learning outcome, because a way of learning is a way of teaching.⁶ This writer suggests that the

reciprocal, a way of teaching is a way of learning, is equally valid. But the intellectual space which is created must take the other intellects in the room into account, those belonging to the learners.

The intellectual space must allow for learners' expressions of voice as they attempt to make meaning of the new learning and apply it to their existing experience. It must allow for a certain level of conflict, between learner and teacher and between learners themselves, but always in a controlled manner, with the teacher channeling the conflict to stay within the boundaries of the goals and objectives of the learning opportunity.

Questions which may be used to help teachers prepare intellectual space include, Where are the sensitive issues in the material which may cause conflict between learners or between a learner and me? What can I anticipate in the way of a conflicting view and how can I manage it within the context of the learning opportunity? What materials can I choose to aid in the exploration of this conflict without damaging the learning that occurs? How prepared am I to teach? Do I need to do additional study or research? How can I actively engage the learners in the learning environment and help them have a greater understanding of the subject matter?

The final dimension of space that Palmer suggests teachers should prepare is the spiritual space.⁷ Although there are introspective elements to the other spatial dimensions this one is entirely focused on the inner life of the teacher. Palmer indicates that each of us has an inner teacher which we have learned to disregard. He suggests that listening to the inner teacher will, "cultivate a sense of identity and integrity that allows us to feel at home wherever we are."⁸ To listen to this inner teacher, Palmer suggests that teachers find time for interludes of solitude, where the inner voice can be acknowledged and heard.

When the inner teacher has an opportunity to be heard, the teacher is better equipped to allow the inner teachers of the other learners in the learning environment to surface and become a part of the overall learning environment. Thus, everyone in the environment contributes to the learning their own personal authenticity, which enriches the learning and stimulates the learners. When obstacles arise during the learning opportunity, Palmer advises that teachers should not rush to "fix" them but let the learners involved work through them, letting their own inner teachers take the lead.

Community

The Latin root for the English word "community" is *communitas* and suggests a group of individuals who equally participate in society. It is related to the Latin *communis* meaning common or general. Each learning opportunity contains, within itself, common factors which may lead to the creation of a learning community. Its members are associated in a common task, learning; in a defined physical space; with a system of goals or objectives around which the learning is organized; jointly seeking to achieve a common purpose, enhanced knowledge.

A learning environment provides the common space useful for developing a learning opportunity. Many Americans have traditionally taken part in some type of commons, from the New England green, the Southern town square, the general store, a bodega, or main street.⁹ Whatever the type of commons one participated in, it was a place where one was educated and enriched by contact with the surrounding community. As technology has advanced and great distances are now traversed by the touch of a finger on a computer keyboard, new types and forms of community are being created.

The challenges and implications for creating learning opportunities are magnified. With the growth of distance education, it is possible to bring people together who jointly belong to no other community than the one created in a particular learning opportunity. Now more than ever, teachers must be aware of this and avail themselves of the enhancement to learning that community provides.

Truth

The simple question, "What is truth?" has been the object of philosophical discussion for millennia. In the context of educational opportunities, Palmer defines truth as, "an eternal conversation about things that matter, conducted with passion and discipline."¹⁰ This definition suggests that ultimate, perfect knowledge may be beyond the grasp of the learners in a learning opportunity, so that absolute truth is an unattainable goal. This definition also intimates that the search for truth is ongoing and may be constructed by individuals during the process of learning in collaboration with others. A foundation for the construction of this truth requires the personal authenticity of each learner in the collaboration, without seeking to mask internal feelings or hide information essential to the learning process. Instead learners share information without reservation, managing their feelings so that the subject under discussion may be fully explored from each individual's point of view.

As an illustration, consider the investigation of a traffic accident. Two automobiles have collided in the center of a major intersection where traffic flow is regulated by a stoplight. At the time of the collision, a witness was standing

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at each corner of the intersection with the opportunity to view what happened from the moment of impact to final resting point of the vehicles. As investigators interview each witness, four stories will emerge. Some elements of the collision will be common to each witness's story, some to three, or two. Some will be observed by only one witness. There will be elements of the collision which will either escape the notice of the witnesses or be unobservable, such as an internal mechanical failure on one of the vehicles. It may be that a mechanical failure will be obscured by the damage of the collision, so that the actual cause of the accident will remain hidden to even the most skillful investigator. Yet when the witnesses return to their normal routines, each will tell their limited observations to their family and friends as **the** truth of what happened during the collision.

The point of the foregoing greatly simplified example is that what is often told as truth, may in fact be only evidence of truth, lacking pertinent details or information, but yet sufficient to give a fairly accurate account of the event. In the same fashion, educational opportunities, by their very nature, seldom succeed in providing absolute, incontrovertible knowledge. Time limitations imposed by the learning opportunity will always force the teacher to select certain material and information, leaving other, perhaps equally important information for another learning opportunity. By establishing her or his own purpose within the defined goals and objectives of the teaching opportunity and sharing those with the learners, the teacher establishes the boundaries of the learning to be conveyed. It is important that the teacher acknowledges that other information is available to the learners to augment the content and issues presented in a particular learning opportunity. While the teacher has control over the information provided—the application of that information, the learning that occurs—is individual, and defines the relationship between the teacher and each learner. Many educators have observed that each of their students had a different teacher.

An underlying assumption embedded in this discussion of truth is the notion of personal authenticity. If any of the witnesses to the accident deliberately obscure their own truth by distorting their recollections or withholding information, an unwarranted outcome may result. Similarly, when an educator knowingly seeks to misinform or misuse the learning environment, learning may still occur, but the optimal learning for which the learning opportunity was designed cannot occur. While learners will eventually learn the reputation of teachers who consistently misuse their learning opportunities and attempt to avoid them, the fraudulent learning which is offered in the interim is, at least, a waste of the learner's time and may be physically dangerous depending on the subject matter.

Practice

In an undergraduate American history seminar in a small, private, liberal arts college in the South, the professor, the chair of the department, assumes his customary position at the front of the classroom. The curriculum had consisted primarily of the study of historiography, the writing of history. It is the last class meeting before the final exam during which students would be expected to describe and recount the major themes and writers of American history. The students are expecting a brief review of the semester and the opportunity to ask questions about points which remain unclear. Before the review gets underway, the professor says he needs to talk about one last historical book, a work he had completed about five years before. The professor directed his class to a review of the work in the Sunday magazine section of a major eastern newspaper. The review was the lead piece, written by a noted contemporary social critic, who found little to compliment in the work. The reviewer castigated the author's analysis, and the author himself, with devastating remarks bordering on the personal.

As the professor read passages of the review to the class, he responded with his wry sense of humor, noting that he wished a historian had written the review. The personal pain of the review was reflected in his face in spite of his efforts to maintain his joviality. He then explained his purpose in sharing the episode. The class had been intended to prepare them for graduate study in history. He wanted to convey to them that it was possible to have the necessary skills to write publishable history, have the work mercilessly criticized in a national forum, and still continue to teach, publish, and enjoy working in the field.

The learning environment he helped create had matured to the point where he was secure enough to open his inner self and share a personal experience in his field for the benefit of his students' futures. While his personal risk was relatively low, his personal authenticity was clearly evident, and the overriding importance of the lesson he attempted to convey was memorable.

While this article is not intended as a paean to an early mentor of the author, the vignette provides an example of the courage that Palmer uncovers at the heart of teaching and of the creation of a space in which the community of

truth can be practiced. The professor could have taught the entire course without sharing his personal disappointment. Most of his students would not otherwise have known.

Conclusion

This reflective essay has used Palmer's aphorism, "To teach is to create a space in which the community of truth is practiced," as a framework from which to discuss considerations which teachers use in preparing for learning opportunities. The concept of 'creating a space' has been shown to include the physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual dimensions of education. Issues of community learning have been explored, with the impact of new technologies and emerging globalization and their impact on learning outcomes noted. The idea of "truth" not as a philosophical absolute, but as it appears in the context of undergraduate, graduate, and continuing professional education has been discussed and linked to the personal authenticity of the teacher. Finally, these ideas as they inform practice have been revealed. At points throughout the manuscript, questions to assist teachers in thinking through the concepts discussed may help guide the preparation for future learning opportunities. By keeping this simple statement in mind, teachers may enhance the learning which occurs and prompt positive change in their students' lives.

ENDNOTES

1. Parker J. Palmer, *The courage to teach: Exploring the inner landscape of a teacher's life* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1997), 90.
2. Ibid. See also Parker J. Palmer, *The courage to teach guide for reflection and renewal* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2007).
3. Ibid.
4. James E. Zull, "The art of changing the brain," *Educational Leadership* 62 (2004): 70.
5. Palmer, 2007.
6. Patricia H. Murrell, "Competence and character: The heart of CLE for the profession's gatekeepers," *Valparaiso University Law Review*, 40, 485-507.
7. Palmer, 1997; Palmer, 2007.
8. Palmer, 1997, 32.
9. Laurent A. Daloz, et. al., *Common fire: Leading lives of commitment in a complex world*. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1996), 2.
10. Palmer, 2007, 9.

PREPARING FUTURE ADMINISTRATORS AND TEACHERS: DEVELOPING EMPATHY FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

Mary Bevel and Ginny Altrogge, Webster University

Introduction

Parents of children with disabilities depend on schools to educate and prepare their children for independent productive lives. The individual with disabilities and their family experience life from a very different perspective than that of the school. For families, education is about the child's quality of life not just what happens that specific school year or course grades or goals and objectives/benchmarks on the Individualized Education Program [IEP]. If school personnel had a greater comprehension of what it is like to live 24/7 with a person who has disabilities, the dialogue between the family and the school might be focused more on the needs of the whole child and family.

Focus of the Paper

The focus of this paper is to report on an ongoing longitudinal study that seeks to discover if empathy can be revealed and/or enhanced through a greater understanding of the needs and emotions of families of children with disabilities. This paper presents information about a course requirement designed to encourage empathy for families and individuals with disabilities, foster a positive and collegial relationship between families of individuals with disabilities and schools, and to increase awareness of the reality of living with a disability. The participants of this study are postgraduate students, and families of children with disabilities. It is the hope of the researchers that the students will be able to increase their understanding of the families and develop empathy from their experience.

IEP Perspectives

When parents and school officials meet for the Individual Education Program (IEP), each has a specific point of reference. Many times the participants do not really hear what the other is saying, nor understand their points of view. It would be beneficial if the IEP participants would employ the active listening technique. Active listening opens the door to a deeper understanding and to developing empathy for one another. In active listening, one enters into the perspective of the other individual, validates their worth, empowers them, demonstrates respect, and creates a safe environment in which difficult issues can be examined and change may be facilitated through empathy. (Gerson, 2003) The traits of empathy include: the actions of understanding, being aware of, being sensitive to, and vicariously experiencing the feelings, thoughts, and experiences of another of either the past or the present without having the feelings, thoughts, and experiences fully communicated in an objectively explicit manner.

The Letter and the Spirit of the Law and Special Education

Laws are composed of intention (spirit) and words (letter). Congress and legislators enact laws and write regulations. State departments of education, boards of education, and superintendents interpret the law and write policy and procedures. Some school districts or program directors will follow and interpret the law, grounded in their perceived fiduciary reality. Parents expect the school to fully comply with the law. But school leaders are not required to be experts in special education, nor are they required to understand the stance of the family or have empathy for the child with disabilities. Among the most important qualities an education candidate (whether she be a teacher or an administrator) can develop are the abilities to have a deep understanding and sensitivity to the feelings and needs of others; a commitment to serve and provide for the specific needs of each child and the courage and dedication to transform this sensitivity and commitment into action to alleviate the pain and suffering of others. These qualities cannot be purchased nor acquired just for an assignment. They will not automatically become part of one's way of life while playing golf, shopping or watching television. Empathy as well as the dispositions may be developed and deepened over time through engaging in activities that broadens one's experiences and horizons.

The Role of the Principal

In this modern *episteme*, the role of the principal is complex, and it is complicated by the passage of laws such as No Child Left Behind and the revised IDEA. Too often, the new principal is thrust into the position of being 'the determiner' for issues surrounding IEPs, 504 plans, and even becoming involved in the process of educational diagnosis and special education decisions. Principals must be able to be true instructional leaders for each and every teacher in the school building because teachers directly influence the future of the child. It is imperative that there is open collaboration between the principal, teachers, and parents.

When principals exercise beliefs and values based on a strong sense of ethics and care in the administration of special education programs, the needs of students are first and foremost. Then the needs of teachers and other staff members who will deliver the cares should also be considered. Providing adequate professional development and support for teachers and staff members become the norm.

According to Ubben, Hughes, and Norris (2007), principals who balance the dual roles of legal administrator and child advocate help to set the tone of acceptance and community that are vital to the successful implementation of special education services. Ballering (1997) writes it is important that principals encourage others to appreciate the four phases of caring.

- Caring About—recognizing that care is necessary. What care is necessary?
- Taking Care of—Assuming some responsibility for the identified need; providing a service to meet that need. Who will see the child's needs are taken care of? Advance training/professional development is sometimes needed for those who will be doing the taking care of.
- Care Giving—Meeting the needs by taking an active part in the individual's care. Who gives the care?
- Care Receiving—Recognizing that individuals respond to the care that is provided and being attentive to that response. Is the child responding to the care that is provided?

Principals must have values, beliefs, and a strong sense of ethics and care in order for the needs of special education students to be met in an individualized manner that allows the students to integrate into the school experience as seamlessly as possible. Most educators (whether teachers, staff or administrators) possess only a surface knowledge of the complexity of living with a disability. Perhaps the reason for this is grounded in the muddy waters of a historically bifurcated system of education. Historically regular education has been for typical children and special education has been for children with disabilities. Because universities and state departments of elementary and secondary education require minimal course work in the area of disabilities, candidates with knowledge of special education and disabilities have resulted in a very shallow pool. American public education is replete with tangled laws, policies, inadequate funding streams and high stakes testing all of which are not conducive to developing a deep understanding of the needs of families and children with disabilities.

What Principals Need to Know

Principal preparation programs must provide a foundation of knowledge as well as ask difficult questions about school leadership. The following four questions are adapted from the book that is used in conjunction with this study, *What Every Principal Needs to Know About Special Education* by Margaret McLaughlin.

1. Do principals have a deep understanding of the core special education legal foundations and entitlements?
 - Most principals do not have a deep and comprehensive understanding of the core special education legal foundations and entitlements. However, some do. Others rely on special education directors and teachers. Principals probably fall in three categories when it comes to knowing and understanding the laws on special education.
 - Principals who do not have a deep and comprehensive understanding of the law. Principals who do not have the deep and comprehensive understanding have not, perhaps, completed advanced certification, and they may rely on the district's special education director or teachers. In some states, such as Missouri, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) serve as an advisor and interpreter of the laws on special education for district administrators, special education directors, and principals.
 - Principals who have an understanding but are influenced by the district's administrators and culture as well as the values of the community. These principals know the law but do not act upon it as fully as they could in being advocates for the education of all children. It is not the culture of the district to be caring.
 - Principals who do have a deep and comprehensive understanding of the law and act to fulfill the law. Some principals remain current on the laws of special education and strive to meet the spirit and letter of the law. In these districts, the education of all children is of utmost importance. Here the spirit of community is alive and well. Everyone is involved in the education of a child and cares about his/her success. They are active advocates of the students and parents of the building. These principals are true instructional leaders.
2. Do principals understand that special education is truly individualized and matches instruction to the learning characteristics of students with disabilities?

Some principals do understand that special education is truly individualized and matches instruction to the learning characteristics of students with disabilities. In all probability those principals have a background in special education or even hold certification as a special education director. Students with disabilities may be provided with accommodations that give them access to the general education curriculum and its assessments. Some students with disabilities participate in alternate forms of assessment in order to demonstrate learning. However, some do not. For many years, the instructional role of the principal was basically nonexistent. Their role was to be a manager. No Child Left Behind (NCLB) brought an instructional leadership focus to the principalship.

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As instructional leaders, principals must understand and facilitate the use of effective research based instructional practices as well as put the needs of all students first and foremost in their daily actions (Bateman, 2001; Burrello, 1994); Turnbull and Cilley, (1999), Gersten et al.,(2001); Gonzalez, (1996); Wald, (1998) write that when principals understand and recognize the instructional demands classroom teachers and specialists face each day, (i.e., when principals develop empathy for teachers and specialists), principals are able to provide more appropriate support to these teachers. Teacher learning is isomorphic with student learning, therefore school leaders should provide teachers with advance professional development for transitioning of all students (typical students as well as inclusion students and students with disabilities). Part of professional development should be an opportunity for teachers to enhance their skills on teaching and best practices as well as to observe and interact with children the year before they arrive in the classroom. When carefully planned transitions occur, relationships are already formed with next year's teacher.

3. Do Principals understand that special education is neither a place nor a program but rather a set of services and supports tailored to the specific needs of each individual student so that he/she can progress in the general education curriculum?

Most educators do not grasp the depth of the need for individualized education with appropriate services and supports for each and every child to progress in the general education curriculum. Many do not understand that fair is providing each and every child what he or she specifically needs to become a successful learner. Part of this inability is generated by a lack of comprehension of what the individual needs and a lack of empathy for the individual and the family. Often the pressures to follow the policies and procedures set by the school district and the state become overwhelming, blocking out the spirit of access to the general curriculum for individuals with disabilities.

The traditional university leadership education may supply opportunities to deepen one's skills and knowledge but very few leadership or teacher education preparation programs allow for or even encourage growing beyond the 'box' of prescribed learning objectives to discover what one values as truth. "Knowing why one holds specific beliefs to be sacred defines his being and reality," Ken Wilber writes. "As an individual draws up boundaries of his soul, he establishes at the same time the battles of his soul." (Wilber, n.d.). If educators truly want aspiring teachers and principals to be empathetic toward all children, university professors, must provide opportunities for students to reach and grow to widen their perceptions of reality. That is the purpose of the internship described in this paper.

4. Do principals know how to create the conditions within their schools that special education practices and to finally integrate special education into all aspects of school improvement?

If a principal has a background in special education, s/he probably creates the conditions for best practices in special education. Research from Gersten (2001) and others finds that principals who understand effective practices and recognizes the instructional demands that classroom teachers and building specialists face in providing an education for students, can provide more appropriate support to these professionals (Gersten, 2001). Part of that support is to create ongoing professional learning opportunities for parents, faculty, and staff. Recent developments such as No Child Left Behind, Response to Intervention, and the 504 model have changed the responsibilities of principals. Ongoing professional development is necessary for principals and teachers to keep abreast of the changes and requirements of the law pertaining to special and regular education

Avenues for Change

Leadership is about having a strong core of beliefs and principles. It is about valuing and putting others before self. It is about serving. It is about improving teaching and learning. For leadership to be effective, principals and administrators must develop and establish an environment of not just knowing the right thing, but doing the right thing. The culture must be one of caring, having positive relationships with faculty, staff, students, parents and community members. Doing what is right and caring for others must be the pervasive culture in a classroom, in a building, and in the district. In order for that to happen, change must occur.

Children are different than they were even 15 years ago. Families and society as a whole is different. Time has not stood still. To expect children to learn as they did 15 years ago is like expecting a child from today's technological society to move into the dark ages. Technology provides a plethora of ways to deliver instruction. The work of Marzano, Stiggins, Reeves, Fullan, and many others lend credibility to the need for teachers to change the way they teach students. Teachers today should be armed with the latest advances and methodologies to support student learning. Students and their learning should be at the forefront of every principal's decision, mission, and vision. Schools must provide all students with skills for living a rich and full life.

Leadership Preparation Programs and Teaching Empathy

Just as children have changed in the last 15 years, so have the roles of educators. The job of the principal is highly complex. It is literally impossible for a principal to be able to do everything and to do it all well. According to Sergovanni, schools need a strong heart beat. When a school's heartbeat is stronger and more resilient, issues and challenges are shared. Collaboration and collegiality become common places to dialogue about issues and concerns and to problem-solve.(2005)

Programs need to focus on improving the learning of every student, every teacher and every administrator, on closing the achievement gap for all learners, on developing empathy for others, on accepting differences and building on the strengths and uniqueness of each individual.

Universities provide courses prescribed by the Departments of Elementary and Secondary Education allowing for university students to have adequate *knowledge* and *skills* to obtain a state teaching or administration certificate. Webster University's Education Specialist degree program believes it is essential for its students to develop the ability to communicate with families, and to fully understand the civil rights and specific needs of each individual with disabilities.

The Course

This innovation is relatively simple but has proven to be very powerful for Ed. S. students. This specific embedded internship must be time spent with families and individuals with disabilities, not with school personnel. It provides our students with real life situations and helps them to discover room for flexibility, kindness and empathy when communicating with families and students with disabilities. The motivation behind developing the course *is* to prepare our students to be instructional leaders who more fully understand and appreciate the diverse learning needs of all students.

Principals and teachers also need to be taught to feel empathy for others. Webster University's LEAD Ed S Degree programs are attempting to do just that with an embedded internship in Legal Issues and Special Education Law. Internship requirements are as follows:

1. Students spend 30 hours with a family who has a child with a disability, or
2. Students spend 30 hours working with an advocacy group for children/students with disabilities. Students may not work with a school or institution.
3. Students keep a reflective journal during the internship.
4. Students write a report on their experience.
5. Each student gives an oral presentation that is filmed and edited. It serves as a visual record and becomes part of the archives of the study.

Students were to shadow a student with a disability for a period of 15 hours for a B and 20 hours for an A. This stipulation was difficult for some of the students because they did not understand that the school's concept might be different from that of the parents or an advocate. Some students volunteered in a crisis nursery at a local hospital. Some volunteered at an Equestrian Center where students with disabilities learned how to ride a horse. One student volunteered at a homeless shelter and another worked with individuals with emotional disorders. One student volunteered at a local restaurant where people with disabilities could come to obtain assistance with filling out job applications and preparing for job interviews. One student spent 24 hours taking care of her nephew who has Down's syndrome. Her experience was particularly interesting as she is an early childhood /special education teacher who is extremely bright and skilled. She stated that she had no idea what it was like to live with an individual with a disability until this course. She discussed the effort of getting her nephew to bed and going to shopping with him.

Course Impact

The following discourse focuses on the course and a very few of the experiences of the Ed. S. students in the class of summer 2008. Of the 27 students who were enrolled in the 2008 class, twenty were female and seven were male. Eleven of the students were African American and 16 were Caucasian. Most of the students were in their thirties and had approximately five to ten years of teaching experience. Fifteen of the 27 have degrees with an emphasis in special education. Despite that, they still did not fully comprehend the complexity of life with a child with a disability. Some of our students have had experiences in working with students with disabilities. Some exhibit a degree of compassion for those with disabilities; however, being compassionate on a six or eight-hour time frame is different than being compassionate with students with disabilities on a 24/7 format. It is the 24-hour format that empowered our students to more fully understand the daily life experiences of families and for many this embedded

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internship became a life changing experience. Not only did the students develop empathy for individuals with disabilities and their families, but also the students began to understand that school shapes the entire life of an individual with a disability, for it is most often in school where individuals begin to internally establish their possibilities dependent on what they believe about themselves.

In 2009 thirteen students enrolled in the class. Of the 13, all were females. Seven were masters level and six were Ed. S. level. Seven were Caucasian and six were African American. Most of the students were in their thirties and had approximately five to ten years of teaching experience. One student had no teaching experience, two were speech therapists, one was a counselor and two were special education administrators, and two were teacher assistants. The rest were regular education classroom teachers. Nine of the thirteen have degrees with an emphasis in special education.

One student reported about a family whose youngest daughter has Tuberous Sclerosis (TS). This disorder begins with rhabdomyomas of the heart which in mild cases goes away to severe tumors causing debilitating conditions and death. The latest report on the family was just last week—the student wrote that the mother continues to fight for her child’s civil rights and that the school has become less supportive over time. The study will continue for several more years.

The Nature of Empathy

Who bears the responsibility to teach values and morals in the United States? Is it possible to train others to develop empathy, that is, “i.e., not just to feel for one’s self, but to feel for others? (Kathleen Cotton, 2003) Character education has managed to enter and survive schooling, which is in line with the writings of Martin Buber, who wrote:

Education worthy of the name is essentially education of character. For the genuine educator does not merely consider individual functions of his pupil, as one intending to teach him only to know or to be capable of certain definite things; but his concern is always the person as a whole, both in the actuality in which he lives before you now and in his possibilities, what he can become (Martin Buber, 1947).

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PLATO'S WRITTEN CONCEPTION OF PHILOSOPHY AND EDUCATION

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Abstract

One of the principal debates concerning Platonic philosophy has centered on understanding why Plato wrote dialogues when writing was in clear violation of the Socratic conception of philosophy and its emphasis on the active, dialectical pursuit of truth. Scholars have tried to reconcile Plato's use of writing by explaining writing away as a regrettable but necessary means to preserve *Socratikoi logoi*.

Rather than understanding writing as a neutral attempt to represent Socratic philosophy, this paper will argue that writing is an integral part of Plato's conception of philosophy, a way of generating a philosophical relationship between the text and its readers. In other words, Plato's written conception of philosophy does not lie in a representation of a dialogical exchange between philosopher and interlocutor but in the dramatic effects this exchange may have on readers. My overall inquiry will try to identify what happens to the traditional understanding of Plato's conception of philosophy once writing is no longer understood as a means for recording dialectic, but as a way of provoking readers into a philosophical quest. In this inquiry, I am following and extending the work of recent scholars who have begun to reinterpret Plato's conception of philosophy on the basis of the effects his dialogues might have sought to create on contemporary and successive generations of readers.

Introduction

Plato's *Phaedrus* has generated countless attempts by scholars to reconcile the paradox between, on the one hand, Plato's critique of writing as an inadequate medium for representing his philosophy and, on the other hand, Plato's decision to use writing and to preserve his philosophy in written texts. In addressing this paradox, Platonic scholars have had to confront the following dilemma: If Plato truly believed that philosophy could not be fully manifested through writing, then why do his written texts reek of philosophical inquiry? And, if Plato did not fully commit his philosophy to writing then how should his dialogues be understood? Even though this dilemma is perhaps ultimately irreconcilable, it has nevertheless taken center-stage in Platonic scholarship, and has spawned a broad spectrum of methods for reading Platonic texts and for appraising their significance within Plato's conception of philosophy.

In this paper, I will discuss some of the most important lines of interpretation that have addressed the problem of writing as key to understanding Plato's conception of philosophy. However valid these lines of interpretation, they all approach writing, I argue, as solely a means of representing philosophical truths already attained through dialogical interaction. By exposing the limits that this approach places on our understanding of Plato's philosophy, I provide an alternative view of Plato's attitude toward writing, a view that can lead us to a deeper insight into Plato's conception of philosophy. Specifically, I claim that writing can be regarded as a means of generating a relationship between text and readers, which I regard as both integral to and constitutive of Plato's conception of philosophy. If we reduce the function of writing to a mere tool for conserving prior truths reached through dialectic, then only a historical recovery of Plato's philosophy is possible. But if we take the process of philosophical inquiry as the cornerstone of Plato's philosophy, then writing can be understood as playing a far more significant role than merely preserving past truths for posterity.

In advancing this position, I do not mean to suggest, as Derrida did, that writing unconsciously funds all Platonic thinking—an argument that seems to me to end where it begins. Rather, I regard Plato as consciously and strategically employing writing in order to produce a process of philosophical inquiry in such a way as to provoke interest in this process among readers known and unknown to him. By assigning writing with a productive and provocative function, I do not mean to dismiss the insights advanced by an entire tradition of Platonic scholars who have stressed the deficient nature of writing. Quite the contrary, several questions posed by the various lines of interpretation belonging to that tradition help fuel my own inquiry.

Review of Literature

Advancing perhaps the most extreme perspective on the problematic nature of writing, one line of interpretation argues that writing presented Plato with an unsurpassable problem, a limit he simply could not find a way to circumvent. As a result, proponents of this perspective maintain, Plato was forced to leave some of his higher philosophical principles aside, never even attempting to include them in his written texts. This perspective, in other words, obliges us to see Plato as having reserved the higher principles (*timiotera*) of his philosophy only for his

immediate interlocutors, and as having chosen to communicate these principles only through active and interpersonal dialectical exchanges. In addition to a chasm that it creates between Plato's oral and written philosophy, this position renders Plato's philosophy accessible to his contemporary interlocutors but conceals it from future generations of readers. Because of the inherent limits of writing, Plato's written philosophy—the only version to be accessed by modern readers—communicates only the most fundamental principles of his philosophy. Are we to understand Plato as having developed two distinct forms of philosophy, one for oral and one for written discourse? Are we to believe that an intellect as great as Plato could not find a way around the limitations of writing?

Another line of interpretation relies on a literal reading of the critique against writing in the *Phaedrus* in order to promote a view of writing as a regrettable but necessary means for preserving Socratic philosophy. Proponents of this position argue that Plato resorted to writing out of the obligation he felt philosophers have to disseminate the knowledge they had themselves attained in their pursuit of truth. Plato wrote dialogues, this position maintains, in order to share his knowledge with as many other people as possible, painfully aware of the inadequacies of writing for communicating this knowledge and for turning readers toward truth. This position construes orality as the perfect medium and writing as an inherently flawed medium to represent Plato's philosophy. Without reproducing the sharp divide between an oral and a written philosophy associated with the previous position, proponents of this view defend the superiority of oral over written discourse, regarding the former as a far better suited medium to preserve the *Socratikoi logoi*. But if writing is inferior to oral discourse, what are the aspects of Plato's philosophy that cannot be communicated through writing and must inevitably remain forever beyond the grasp of textual representation?

Esoteric scholars such as Leün Robin, Paul Wilpert, and Hans Kramer attempt to address this question by taking a more neutral stance toward writing. For these scholars, who regard writing as unsuitable to Plato's project but not as inherently flawed, the difficulties created by writing do not so much cause an aspect of Plato's philosophy to be left out of his written texts as much as to be concealed within them. Aspects of Platonic philosophy that would be immediately discernible to his dialogical interlocutors, in other words, remain concealed to readers of his texts due to the difficulties inherent in translating a living philosophy to its written counterpart. These problems of translation, however, are not unsurpassable and do not posit any insurmountable difficulties to Plato. On the contrary, Plato is regarded as having developed a writing strategy meant to address these problems directly, by guiding readers to access truths that are otherwise incommunicable. Plato's ingenuity, the argument goes, turns writing and reading into intellectual exercises that test, challenge, and encourage the reader's receptiveness to higher principles. This position divides the readers of Plato's texts into two distinct and separate categories: those who can only experience the philosophical texts literally, at face value, and those who are able to recognize and pursue textual clues and interpretative pathways that lead to higher levels of understanding. Yet, is it possible, that Plato concerned himself with only two types of readers? If he is as ingenuous as these scholars claim he is, would he have really understood his readers as occupying one of two fixed and inflexible positions?

Hermeneutic scholars such as Frederick Schliermacher and Hans Gadamer propose another line of interpretation by turning their attention to the interaction between text and reader, and by making this interaction essential to understanding the meaning of Platonic texts. Unlike the previous scholars, who assumed that Plato assigned readers to fixed positions, Schliermacher and Gadamer ascribe the role of active participant in the process of co-constructing the meaning of a given text to all readers. Because they regard the process of reading as a dynamic interaction between text and reader, they do not view writing as posing any particularly static problems to the act of interpreting texts. For as they construe it, each reading of a given text provides a continually changing experience for each reader as well as for each generation of readers. Consequently, a complete understanding of Plato's philosophy emerges not through Plato's strategic ways of leading the most competent readers to experience the concealed aspects of his philosophy, but through the horizon of interpretations formed by the totality of interactions between readers and texts, at any given time. But can the interaction between text and reader lead to nothing else beyond a sound reading of Platonic texts? Can the effects that the dialogues have on individual readers be reduced to one side of an interaction whose aim is merely to produce a correct interpretation? Might not these texts also be able to provoke interest in philosophical inquiry?

My own position provides an alternative to the lines of interpretation I have discussed, even as it attempts to address, and to be informed by, some of the questions raised by them. By focusing on the process of philosophical inquiry as the cornerstone of Plato's conception of philosophy, it becomes possible to understand writing as playing a far greater role than merely preserving philosophical knowledge. Indeed, the philosophical inquiry enacted in Plato's works is neither necessarily connected nor inherently attached to some prior knowledge. Capturing the spirit

of Socratic dialectic on its path to self-knowledge entails the task of enacting this process in writing, not of representing it. Plato's commitment to create a philosophy animated by Socrates' teachings, in other words, does not oblige him to reflect these teaching in his works as much as to construct them in meaningful ways for his readers. From this view, writing is released from its function to represent accurately or to reflect faithfully something preexisting, something prior to the written dialogues. Instead, writing is assigned with the role of creating a process within which readers can pursue effectively the kind of philosophical inquiry that Socrates stood for and sought to generate orally with his immediate interlocutors.

Once we judge writing not as a tool of accurate representation but as a means for dramatic enactment, then, the comparison between writing and orality becomes displaced and scholarly characterizations of writing as a poor substitute to orality or as an inadequate medium for reflecting philosophical truths become irrelevant. For the real judgment about writing must be made on the basis of how well Plato is able to perform a philosophical inquiry through his texts, and how successfully he can invite his readers to engage it and to accept it as meaningful for their existence. On this criterion, the verdict is out. For no one has ever doubted Plato's ability to dramatize events in ways that captivate readers and engage their intellect and emotions, to create dramatic situations that unfold simultaneously in multiple directions and that offer different levels of intellectual and spiritual challenges each step along the way. Similarly, no one has ever questioned Plato's ability to enact the philosophical inquiry he stood for without also finding a way to release the emotional and intellectual pleasures associated with it.

In this case, Plato's dialogues should not be understood referentially, as gestures aimed at conserving knowledge already attained through dialectic, but as performancetively, as dramatic events aimed at enacting the ongoing process of philosophical inquiry in all of its stages. For it is this performative enactment of philosophical inquiry that has enabled readers through the centuries to experience the journey to self-knowledge as though they were themselves part of it. Indeed, it is by performing the process through which the soul may eventually turn toward the divine that Plato's texts constitute readers as prone toward divinity, elicit readers to enter the process of philosophical inquiry, and guides readers to find meaning and pleasure in the discoveries that this process makes possible.

Conclusion

As I have argued, one of the principal debates concerning Platonic philosophy has centered on understanding why Plato wrote dialogues when writing was in clear violation of the Socratic conception of philosophy and its emphasis on the active, dialectical pursuit of truth. Many scholars have attempted to reconcile Plato's use of writing, sometimes by explaining writing away as a regrettable but necessary means to preserve *Socratikoi logoi*.

Rather than understanding writing as a neutral attempt to represent Socratic philosophy, this paper argues that writing is an integral part of Plato's conception of philosophy, a way of generating a philosophical relationship between the text and its readers. Plato's written conception of philosophy does not lie in a representation of a dialogical exchange between philosopher and interlocutor, but in the dramatic effects this exchange may have on readers. My inquiry identifies what happens to the traditional understanding of Plato's conception of philosophy once writing is not understood as a means for recording dialectic, but as a way of provoking readers into a philosophical journey.

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“THESE AREN’T AS RISQUÉ AS THE FIREMEN”: CALENDARS AS RECRUITING CAMPAIGNS FOR MEN IN NURSING

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Introduction

The American healthcare system is facing an uncertain future. Research suggests that there are shortages in numerous areas of the healthcare sector ranging from pharmacist, radiology technicians, laboratory technicians, hospital administrators, and family care physicians (American Federation of Teachers, 2003; Devi, S., 2008; Stretton, D.V., & Bolon, D.S., 2009).

The nursing profession is also experiencing a period of crisis. Growing attention has focused upon the rapid decline of qualified nurses working in the health profession and the low numbers of men in nursing may be a significant factor (Allison, Beggan, & Clements, 2004; Brady & Sherrod, 2003; Erickson, Holm, Chelminiak, & Ditomassi, 2005; O’Lynn, 2004). A scarcity of qualified healthcare workers is especially dire as the American baby boomer generation grows older and the need for quality healthcare becomes more critical. Men currently make up about 6% of the overall registered nurse population and in addition to their low numbers, research indicates that when men do enter the field of nursing they face frustration, lack of support, and often drop out of the profession at higher numbers than their female peers. Allison, Beggan, and Clements, (2004) noticed that men often experience greater stress, anxiety, and depression than their female peers within the field of nursing. Men may feel excluded from their peers on social and professional levels and men commonly find that they are overtly denied access to many areas of nursing, such as pediatrics and obstetrics (Poliafico, 1998; O’Lynn & Tranbarger, 2007). They may also experience little on-the-job mentoring and often find themselves in a hostile workplace environment that offers fewer benefits and rewards than their female peers receive. These inequalities include: access to hospital facilities such as rest rooms and changing areas and restrictions to certain hospital units. These men also reported strong feelings of disassociation and isolation due to working in a female-dominated occupation (O’Lynn, 2004). Nursing schools are making an effort to draw more men, but as Gene Tranbarger, R.N. explained, “All nursing schools now accept men, but I’m not sure that all schools welcome them” (Williams, 2008). Current recruiting campaigns may be excluding, rather than attracting men from the profession. This qualitative study will seek to understand the perceptions of recruiting and media images and how men working in the field of nursing discerned the effectivity of these materials.

Attracting Men to Nursing

The purpose of this study was to explore the images used in recruiting campaigns to attract more men into the field of nursing and how these images are perceived by men working in the field of nursing. The public and media image of nursing strongly reinforces an ideal that maintains the feminized status of the profession. Schweitzer, S. F., Eckstrom, B., Kowallek, D., and Mattson, K. (1994) proposed that there are six dominant images of the nurse in our culture:

1. Angel of Mercy—self-sacrificing, moral, noble;
2. Girl Friday—subservient, physician handmaiden;
3. Heroine—brave, dedicated;
4. Wife/Mother—maternal, passive, domestic;
5. Sex object—sensual, romantic, promiscuous;
6. Careerist—knowledgeable, intelligent, respectful, professional (p. 88).

The authors of the study then gave nurses and non-nurses working in a hospital a questionnaire to explore their image of the staff nurse. Nurses and non-nursing staff rated their image highest in the area of Careerist image. Second, by both groups, was the Heroine image. The non-nurses rated the image of Girl Friday higher than the nurses themselves, but not by a statistically significant rate. This study indicated that nurses and non-nurses view their image in the same manner although nurses believe that others view them in a subservient, menial role.

This cultural view of the image and perception of nursing was confirmed by Seago, J.A., Spetz, J., Alvarado, A., and Keane, D. (2006) when they discovered that the poor public image of the nurse is supported by the media and may be a major factor in the current nursing shortage. Media image plays a strong role in an individual’s career choice. A decisive study of the media’s image of nursing was conducted by Sigma Theta Tau (1997) entitled *The Woodhull study on nursing and the media: Health care’s invisible partner*. This research demonstrated that there is

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very little positive media attention in regard to the public image of the nurse. In an examination of over 20,000 articles from newspapers, journals, and trade publications the researcher's found that nurses and the nursing profession reflected very few positive images of nurses. The key findings of the study were that nurses as medical experts, were cited less than four percent of the time. No example was found where a nurse with a doctorate was referred to as "doctor" and the few references that were made to nurses came in a passing reference with one article referring to Sandra Gallegos, the nurse that discovered the cause of a deadly e-coli outbreak in 1997, as "Heroine No. 1" (p. 9). Gordon (2005) found that advertisements for recruitment of nurses resemble, "a repackaging of the nineteenth-century virtue script in twenty-first-century production values . . . that deliver a highly gendered message" (p. 443). This harkens back to a nostalgic, and ultra-feminine, view of the nurse is a strong deterrent for men to avoid the nursing field as an occupation. Advertisements highlight care, concern, and self-sacrifice instead of focusing on the medical and technological competence required of today's nurses. This strategy persists to maintain the unbreakable patriarchal hierarchy that exists in healthcare.

Symbolic Interactionism

Symbolic interactionism was the theoretical foundation that directed this study. This lens places an emphasis how "people create shared meanings through their interactions, and those meanings becoming their realities" (Patton, 2002, p. 112). By studying men in nontraditional occupations, it is of vital importance to understand how these men view themselves in the context of a female-dominated occupation. Charon (2004) posited that people always see themselves through their perspective of interaction with others. This research orientation focuses on human interaction and relationships with others and how the individual constructs themselves in certain social contexts. In this study of men an images of nursing, it was critical to understand the meanings that people attach to symbols and representations as Blumer (1969) articulated, "To ignore the meaning of the things toward which people act is seen as falsifying the behavior under study" (p. 3).

Symbolic interactionism uncovers meaning for a particular person and how they define truth through their relationships with others, with objects, and with symbols. Patton (2002) concluded that a study of shared meaning of how symbols and words can influence what is important to a group of individuals may have a profound impact on the study of men in nursing. Since the word "nurse" and the nursing profession itself has such a long history consisting of caring, nurturing, women, the images and words used to describe a nurse has deeply embedded feminine constructs that may prevent men from entering the profession. Historically, a nurse is a pervasive symbol of femininity (O'Lynn, 2004). Symbolic interactionism offered a rich, detailed frame for approaching how men in female-dominated careers locate and manage their sense of self.

Methodology

Data for this study was collected through semi-structured, one-on-one interviews with ten men who worked, or have worked in the past, in the nursing profession. At the end of the interview, the researcher obtained permission Executive Director of the Oklahoma Nurses Association (ONA) to give a copy of the ONA's *Men in nursing* calendar to each interviewee in order to:

1. Discern the calendar's usefulness as a recruiting tool
2. Gain reactions to the images used within the calendar
3. Promote further discussion about how men in nursing are perceived by others

Copyright permission was obtained to publish pictures in the final study.

Results

The age-range for the participants was between 23 years and 58 years. Experience in the nursing profession spanned from less than two years to just over thirty years. Only one of the interviewees was previously known to the researcher and the remaining nine men were recruited through recommendations from other participants. Each of the men appeared to be relaxed during the interviews but also seemed to be excited to relate their experiences to the researcher. At times, the retelling of past events was an emotional experience for some of the men. It was evident to the researcher that most of the men were enthusiastic for the opportunity to tell of their experiences. One man made the statement that for years he was frustrated in nursing and was so thankful that research was being conducted concerning men's experience in the profession.

The *Men in Nursing* calendar was published for three consecutive years: 2005, 2006, and 2007. Only one study participant interviewed had posed for the calendar. Reactions to the calendar were mixed. Identity was a strong theme throughout all of the interviews and related to the men's image of nursing. The workplace is a strong arena

where the men “do” gender (West & Zimmerman, 1987) and research has suggested that people attempt to negotiate their sense of identity through their behavior and actions. The researcher believes that men in nursing fully comprehend that they are not fulfilling societal constructs of what is an appropriate occupation for a man. They are daily reminded of images of the “caring mother”, the “angel of mercy”, and the “servant in white” image of the nurse. They also face a strong hegemonic occupational hierarchy in their contact with their families, peers, and doctors. All of the men in this study have experienced negative stereotypical comments in their profession. These data units are examples of the men searching for their voice, their unique place in a feminized arena.

Some of the participants enjoyed the calendar and thought they were a positive recruiting tool; however, they still recognized the construction of overtly masculine ideal the calendar was portraying as stated by Tom,

It helps to look at it (The field of nursing) in a different picture. You’re stepping into a predominantly female role. I was looking at this picture here that shows several men and another picture that shows this guy with a football, and you see he’s got his arms crossed in a masculine way.

Although his response was positive to the calendar, he did mention several times that the images were overtly masculine, “Yeah, I like the way this has been done. (Flipping through the pages) I got to say this, but I’ll try to be politically correct, but, okay, I’m just going to say that most of these look masculine”. Although Tom responded positively to the *Men in Nursing* calendar, he admitted that he could only identify with one of the men in all three issues, “. . . there’s only one here that looks like he could be . . . I might have related to him”. Chris also responded favorably to the calendars, “It looks like you’d be famous in there!” When asked if he thought it would be a good recruiting tool, he said,

I would say so. If somebody, a 12, 13-year-old would say, ‘Here’s a normal looking guy’ they’re not going to go ‘Hey, look at that gay male nurse!’ We’re just normal, old people. So I would say it would be pretty well. They don’t show anybody quilting though.

His reaction did conform to mainstream constructs of men and expectations of what characteristics and behaviors define a man. He contrasted this with his statement about women in a male-dominated field, and what would define a ‘normal’ man,

It would be just like a book on women diesel mechanics or something that would show. ‘Look they’re pushing their baby on a swing and then they’re working on a fuel injector!’ You know, it would be kind of the same deal. See? They are normal guys. They’re not at the ballet, normal stuff.

Not all of the other participants reacted positively to the calendar. Hank was not impressed with the calendars, “These aren’t as risqué as the firemen.” When asked what he would change about the calendar, he told the researcher about a summer camp for middle school boys called *Camp Scrubs*. This camp is sponsored by Oklahoma State University’s Health Science Center and is specifically designed to orient young boys to nursing. He has been an integral part of the camp since its inception in the late 1990’s. The camp started as an exploration and awareness program to recruit more males into nursing, but they do accept girls and often have a long waiting list for spaces. The four-day program is conducted by men in nursing and includes tours of local hospitals, basic first aid instruction, and observation of surgeries along with hands-on activities with simulated patients in a clinical setting at Tulsa Community College (Tulsa Community College, 2009). He proudly showed the researcher several articles that have been written about him and the *Camp Scrubs* program. He believed that this is a stronger recruiting tool than the calendars for a young boy who may not have previously considered nursing as a career for men.

Lou had never seen the calendars prior to the interview but he recognized that this type of recruiting may play to traditional masculine stereotypes. Portraying muscular, handsome men in the field of nursing is unlikely to entice more men into the field and does a grave injustice to the profession. Lou recognized this, “My response is kind of tempered by the responses I saw with some similar types of emotional materials for men in nursing, that they are playing on the energy of macho men in the images of nursing . . .” Kurt’s reaction to the calendar was similar to Lou’s in that he distinguished the marketing technique of sensationalizing nursing for men, “This just sends . . . you can be hot and sexy too type message; kind of glamorizing the sex, if you will, almost as if it’s a swimsuit model thing for Sports Illustrated type of deal.” He felt that it sent the wrong message about the nursing profession, “We’re really presenting this image that if you’re a male nurse, you’re hot and you’re sexy . . . Is he a nurse? Or is he a football player?”

Bill confessed that he received an application to appear in one of the issues of the calendar. When asked if he responded to it, he replied,

No, I did not! I thought it was kind of like a nursing beefcake type thing. See with stuff like that! (He is pointing

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at a very muscular man in a tank top posing with his arms crossed). It showed all these buff guys, it's like, uh, No, I'm not going to send that in . . . and *NO* I am not even going to respond to it. I threw it in the trash.

He also did not feel that the calendar was an effective recruiting tool,

It would not recruit me . . . if I was a guy who looked like that . . . (Holding up the calendar) and I don't look like that . . . you think they were trying to pick stereotypically good looking people . . . I kind of thought that was kind of sexist and appealing to a different aspect that to me is not a part of nursing, I mean, it shouldn't matter what you look like.

Including images of "stereotypically good looking" people may emphasize the wrong aspects of the profession. It is a profession of caring, not a beauty contest.

Don had also worked at the *Camp Scrubs* program, and while he did not seem offended by the calendars, he did not think they were an efficient recruiting aid,

I think it makes people recognize that there are men in nursing. Do I think it's a good recruiting tool? Probably not, I mean, it's swimsuit models . . . the same way, or Playboy might . . .okay . . . if you're into that okay, but do I think it's good recruiting tool, probably not. Do I think it hurt us any? The same with the firemen; you see firemen in calendars too and I . . . I don't think it hurt terribly, but did it help? No.

Bob was a friend of Don's and had also participated in the *Camp Scrubs* program. His reaction to the calendar was conflicted,

Oh, (sighs) (10 second pause) I don't know that they'd make me want to run out and be a nurse. I think that . . . if somebody was on the cusp of wanting to be a nurse and not sure if it's manly enough . . . it might work. But for somebody that, you know, decides that they want to be a nurse, I don't really think that it would make a lot of a difference.

Only one man in this study appeared in the calendar and he talked about the experience. Bill recommended him to the researcher after recognizing his picture in the calendar. Kendall thought it was a wonderful opportunity for him to be in the calendar and to bring about more coverage of men in the profession,

I think it was a good thing to expose the men to nursing. For a long time, you know, people thought of nursing, still think of nursing and it's still true to that is a female, predominantly female area, and, is good for the exposure to know that there are some men in nursing in a female occupation.

His enthusiasm was apparent about the calendar and when asked if people recognized him from his picture, he said, "Yes! I've had that! Yes, I've had comments and, in fact, people bought a bunch and gave them out and people were happy to see them in the offices! Oh! It's nice to see this again!" The enthusiastic comments may speak to the visibility such marketing tools bring to men's presence in the profession.

Significance

The traditional images of nursing represent a clear barrier for men and emit a subliminal message of the deeply feminine character of the profession. When the *Men in Nursing* calendars were released by the Oklahoma Nurses Association, an article in *The Oklahoma Nurse* heralded the project as "an awareness campaign . . . aimed at making more men and minorities aware of the possibilities within the nursing profession" ("Men in nursing," 10). On the very next page was an article about embracing new nurses in the profession and is titled *To the nurses in the 'real world': Let's be our sisters' keeper*. Although the concluding sentence of the article does interject "Maybe the profession should consider the end result of being 'their sisters' (and brothers') keepers" (Emory, 2005, p. 11). The inclusion of brothers, complete within parenthesis, almost seems like an afterthought.

This study indicated that in order to recruit more men into nursing schools, there needs to be an extensive overhaul of marketing campaigns. Current promotions saturated with traditional, stereotypical images of the female nurse: angel of mercy, self-sacrificing caregiver, and the eyes of the doctor, only serve to deepen the social constructs of a feminized occupation more profoundly into the national conscience. A calendar promoting pictures of men in conventionally acceptable masculine activities also serve as an injustice to the profession. Nursing schools should instead emphasize and promote the profession as one that requires a high degree of medical knowledge and technical expertise without regard to gender. Evans (2001) noted that men in nursing may continue patriarchal gender relations "predicated on separating the masculine from the feminine and valuing the masculine over the feminine (p. 196)." She contended that when men enter a female-dominated profession they continue a system of gendered power structures that disadvantages the females within the profession. Nursing schools should shift away from the focus of endorsing images of gendered ideals that has kept the profession solidly embedded in a patriarchal

system of healthcare.

The mission of nursing schools should be to revise internal structures which prevent the profession from welcoming all people. Recruiting campaigns might find targeting displaced workers and promoting the nursing the profession a viable option. Several hospitals across the country are instituting a *Camp Scrubs* type program for adults and this may be an avenue to reach a segment of the population who might not otherwise consider nursing an occupation for a man. Some of the participants in this study were enthusiastic about the *Camp Scrubs* program as an effective means to expose young men to nursing as a career choice and talked about the need to have more of these programs available to reach a wider audience. Expanded programs for young children such as *Camp Scrubs* could be utilized for children to depict the technological and medical expertise necessary to become a nurse. These programs are needed throughout the state to reach a larger demographic. Educating both male and female children at a young age to the realities of the nursing profession and promoting the field as it truly is; a complex profession that requires an extensive extent of medical competence and technological training may attract more young people to the profession. This would also require more middle and high school counselors to be aware of the need to expose young men to the possibility of a nursing career. Boys and girls as early as the elementary grades need to perceive nursing as a gender neutral occupation, and that caring, compassionate, professions are appropriate for both sexes.

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EDUCATIONAL TRACES AND SPACES: TEACHING VOICES FROM THE CIVIL WAR

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“The Civil War . . . had been a war of education and patriotism against ignorance and barbarism”
(Francis Wayland, President of Brown University 1865)

Introduction

This paper offers initial insights from applying the analytic lens of teacher identity to primary documents produced during the Civil War, namely a male schoolteacher’s diary (Fox family papers) and women’s letters (Rhoades & Bailey, 2009). This work-in-progress emerges from my ongoing interest in the subtle and varied intersections among war, gender, and educational processes. How, for instance, did educators and learners write and teach the war? Did women and teaching women engage differently with the war? What were learners’ embodied practices at home and in camp? How did war shape learning? How did war discourse reflect educational ideology? While these questions necessitate sustained attention, applying them in preliminary ways to the rich body of “war-text” (Nelson, 1997) that survived the war can highlight spaces and moments in which learning and teaching occur.

In previous work, I analyzed a set of women’s letters written during the war years (Rhoades & Bailey, 2009) that offer snapshots of white, rural, Northern women’s daily experiences during war. Among the patterns that emerged from analysis were the educational interruptions and advances the Civil War wrought in women’s lives as well as women’s ambivalence regarding teaching and learning (Rhoades & Bailey, 2009; Bailey, 2010). In reflection, I realized my analysis primarily centered on *women’s* shared concerns and experiences rather than considering the possible significance of their production by *teachers* in the emerging “culture of professionalism” (Bledstein, 1976) and the themes this approach might animate. While I noted that teaching was the only type of public work that women performed, I did not consider nuanced distinctions among those teachers who occupy *a role* and those who experience *an identity*.

In what follows, I revisit these letters,¹ and draw from diary entries I have not analyzed previously,² to consider teachers’ voices more closely. I first discuss the significance of *writing* the Civil War and advocate for greater attention to intersections between education and war in educational history. I then consider three examples that highlight teachers’ voices:

- how visible teacher personas or didacticism are in women’s war letters
- second, whether teachers embraced teaching as an identity or an activity, and,
- third, how the teachers used letters to chastise, persuade, and teach their correspondents.

I intend these examples to be suggestive, rather than declarative, because of the limited data on teaching identity available in the women’s letters. However, the school teacher’s diary demonstrates these are fruitful inquiries to carry to other texts. The original collection I analyzed consists of 168 letters, all but a few written by women, sent to an Ohio soldier between 1863 and 1867 (Rhoades & Bailey, 2009).

Still Unchartered Territory: War and Education

“Is war a greater evil than intemperance?”

(Question posed for school debating society, October 19, 1859; Fox Family Papers, University of Kentucky Archives)

The Civil War carries significant symbolic and material weight in the American historical imagination. This Cruel War ushered 600,000 soldiers to their graves—a proportion of the population equivalent to 6 million people today—and left a “republic of suffering” (Faust, 2008) in its wake that reminded Americans less than a century after their nation’s violent founding of the utter fragility of national identity and the corporeal costs of preserving it. Soldiers were well aware that their respective political missions might require them to sacrifice their bodies and lives. As one Confederate chaplain lectured in 1863, “Soldier . . . your business is to die” (Faust, 2008, p. 5). The magnitude of the war’s devastation and transformative power for individuals and nation alike has compelled historians, nearly 150 years after the Confederacy surrendered at Appomattox, to continue to write and rewrite the war (McPherson & Cooper, 1998) to trace its bewildering evolution and render its complexities, in some small way, comprehensible.

Interestingly, educational historians have often neglected both the minute and monumental machinations of education during war, perhaps diverted—as were citizens at the time—by the human costs of the war and its

consequences for national identity. Yet the Civil War was fought in part for a vision of freedom that democratic education has long symbolized. As the President of Brown University voiced in 1865, “The Civil War . . . had been a war of education and patriotism against ignorance and barbarism” (quoted in Perkinson, 1991, p. 13).

Classical educational histories have omitted or offered fleeting treatment of the Civil War years. For example, Tyack & Hansot’s (1982) notable work, *Managers of Virtue: Public School Leadership in America*, ends as the war begins, listing two references to the war, and scattered references to the early 1860s. Similarly, Henry Perkinson’s (1991) treatment of American faith in education, *The Imperfect Panacea*, begins in 1865, which he suggests marks the “formative period” of education (preface). The symbolic import of education for nationalism seemed to overshadow attention to educational practices during the war. After the war, educators argued that “Education would restore the Union. Education must be diffused through the South; black and white alike must be educated” (Perkinson, 1991, p. 14). In this view, failing to act might cause another war.

Yet the war, in both subtle and substantial ways, shaped educational experiences while, in turn, educational practices shaped war. Its outbreak overlapped with a number of cultural shifts influential for education: the expansion of literacy and the common schools, the increase of mass printing, and the symbolic value of the written word, to name a few (Bailey, 2010; Rhoades & Bailey, 2009). More directly, war events distracted educators, diverted tax dollars from the expanding common school system, and interrupted schooling and teaching. As a Kentucky schoolteacher noted in his diary after President Lincoln’s assassination, “[I] dismissed school for tomorrow in accordance with the wishes of our governor to suspend business in consequence of the funeral of President Lincoln” (Fox family papers, April 18, 1865). Despite the varied interruptions in educational activity, soldiers and civilians forged educational spaces in all kinds of conditions during war, including creating literary associations in camp (Wiley, 1952). Such endeavors evidence the significance of education to American middle class identity in the mid-19th century (Bailey, 2010; Rhoades & Bailey, 2009).

The In/Visibility of Teacher Identity

When I think of the wide-spreading gloom which hangs like a pall over all this once happy country and which is deepened by every battle, I cannot control my feelings. (Lou Pearl Riggen, August 15, 1864)

Soldiers and citizens experiencing the war first-hand turned to writing as a method to enunciate loss and grief, to process the costs of the war, and to teach others about their experiences. Soldiers recounted the daily drudgery and devastation they witnessed while women detailed their struggles to maintain the home front as their men slipped away to battle. Gender is thus a constitutive element of the war (Clinton & Silber, 1992) and of war writing (Nelson, 1997). As Nelson argues, “internal splits” that were inherent to the war “reproduce themselves in the representation of gender relations and in the process of representation itself” (p. 47).

Nelson argues that gendered prohibitions and tropes governed men and women’s literacy practices and the narratives of war they produced. War texts “habitually register this cultural pressure to conform to an ideal, gendered literacy.” Women were deemed consumers, rather than legitimate producers of war texts, with little authority to stand as witnesses to or to narrate war events. Their idealized role was to read heart-wrenching tales from the front lines that the legitimate actors wrote (Nelson, 1997, p. 43) and to use their epistolary weapons to champion men’s bravery (Rhoades & Bailey, 2009; Hamilton, 1863). Indeed, Dorothea Dix insisted to her nursing recruits that they “Must write and read for their boys,” (Nelson, 1997, p. 49).

The women who wrote the letters I have analyzed, in general, did exactly that. They wrote to bolster the soldier’s spirits; they crafted primarily light-hearted and entertaining epistles; and they followed gender conventions in avoiding politics and detailed discussions of war (Rhoades & Bailey, 2009). A variety of silences thus marks these texts directed for a particular correspondent in the context of war. Yet, occasional moments emerge in which the teachers discuss war. For example, Lou Pearl Riggen,³ a teacher who lived in Montgomery County, Kentucky, was twenty-two when she began writing to the soldier and twenty-six when she ended their correspondence. A witty writer who rarely shared personal information, Lou both violated gender conventions in writing to a male stranger and complied with conventions in the topics she addressed. Few of her letters display political themes.

Yet, in 1864, like many exasperated from the war’s seeming interminability, Lou treads outside of gender convention to express her despair, and her letter contains wording that hints to her identity as a teacher:

When I think of the wide-spreading gloom which hangs like a pall over all this once happy country and which is deepened by every battle, I cannot control my feelings. I feel that I would be willing to talk and write of nothing else, could I by this means contribute one mite toward the closing of this insatiable war . . . (Aug. 15, 1864).

The gendered impotency Lou feels is a poignant feature of this passage as is her willingness to “talk and write of

nothing else” if these epistolary acts could interrupt the war.

While I have interpreted this line previously as an example of the war work women performed in sending letters to the front lines (Rhoades & Bailey, 2009) what seems striking in revisiting this epistle with a different analytical lens is that this school teacher is describing instruments of literacy, talking and writing, as weapons against an uncivilized war. In this epistolary moment, she does not threaten to don military apparel, or join the sanitary commission, or nurse the wounded as many women chose to do during the war. Instead, the tools of combat she conjures in this instant of passionate expression are pen, ink, and voice—instruments fitting for a teacher. It seems to matter that a teacher wrote this letter.

One wonders, did Lou carry her anger into her classroom? Did she channel it into pedagogical exercises that required students to debate whether “war or intemperance was more immoral?” Did she ask them to pick up pens and write their impressions of war? How did teachers incorporate war content and experience into their classrooms?

Another hint to teacher identity emerges in the writing of lively Lib Baker. Lib was a school friend of the soldier’s who read, and taught, and took painting classes, and socialized with friends, and seemed to bound about the county as her whims directed. As she wrote on August 15, 1864, “. . . I am still at Danville. Yes, I who was determined to attend school at Spring Mt. Seminary. So much for “a fickle wild rose.” In this case, the reason she offered for changing her plans was agreeing to teach a village school for three months. Her spirits seemed lighter than Lou’s, her personality more sociable, and her surviving 12 letters suggest that she did not always silence her political views to the dictates of gender conventions.

For example, on the eve of a significant gubernatorial election in Ohio in which an antiwar democrat was gaining political ground, Lib conveyed her disapproval of a male acquaintance’s voting choice: “He said . . . he did not intend to vote at all, as he would not support that traitor [politician], nor could he think of voting with the Republicans . . . Is that a true and right Spirit? I think not, & am going to tell him so too” (October 12, 1863). Whether Lib’s disapproval stems from his unwillingness to cast a ballot—perhaps an affront to an outspoken young teacher who did not have that right—or his disinterest in supporting the Republican party, is unclear. However, in casting analytic light on Lib’s role as a teacher, we see a possible educational space in which Lib feels entitled to confront this young man and teach him his “false” and “wrong” spirit in voting matters.

Would she express similar sentiments in the classroom? How did young teachers like Lib teach war matters as they moved from school houses to literary clubs to social circles? How did gendered conventions that shaped war text limit what Lib could write? And how did gendered limitations in women’s knowledge and access to education also shape their treatment of war in their classrooms?

The Culture of Professionalism

I have been going to school to Fannie this summer. She makes the scholars walk around about right. She is a very good teacher. (Edith Welker, June 17, 1864; Rhoades & Bailey, 2009)

The culture of professionalism that emerged in the 1850s and propelled the “professionalization of American lives” (Bledstein, 1976, p. 80) also shaped the teaching profession. This cultural practice essentially transformed those who teach (an activity) into professional teachers (an identity). A variety of forces coaxed the 19th century teacher into being: the emergence of teaching institutes, normal schools, and professional organizations; the development of symbols of professional authority to separate lay people from experts; and the creation of examinations and credentials to legitimate expertise (Bledstein, 1976; Fraser, 2007). The culture of professionalism emerged mid-century, developed gradually, and crystallized in the 1870s. Reflecting this shift, the number of teacher institutes—what Fraser (2007) calls “normal school writ small” (p. 65)—sometimes doubled in size between 1860 and 1870. In Ohio, the source of the majority of letters in the collection, the number of attendees increased from 1,294 in 1860 to 11,000 by 1880 (Fraser, 2007, p. 67).

Trace archival evidence in the war texts I examined suggests that, while the battles raged on, some war-era educators identified with the emerging culture of professionalism to the extent that work, rather than the war, preoccupied their attention and writing. The diary of a male school teacher in Montgomery County, Kentucky, who seemed the consummate 19th century professional school master, revealed that he continued to open and close schools, develop lessons and hold examinations, lament children’s unruly behavior, and express angst about his teaching performance. His teaching professionalism provides an interesting gendered contrast to what appears in women’s letters. J. Fox, who began teaching in his mid-20s, and taught in a variety of school houses during his career, rarely described war particulars in his writing (Fox family papers). The war seemed a vague event quite distanced from his daily challenges.

A typical diary entry for this steadfast writer—who wrote daily entries for decades—contains his emotional processing of school events and weather reports. On March 1, 1860, he writes, “the weather begins to look very much like Spring,” while three years later a fall entry reads, it “begins to look like Autumn” (August 28, 1864). Some concerns that he expresses during the war echo those before it. “The girls did miserably in speaking” today, he writes on January 20, 1860; The next month he expresses, “I am, I fear, getting tired and losing my interest rather in my school . . . must try to feel more” (February 6, 1860). Five years later, only months before the Confederate surrender, he remarks, “school remains about as usual” (February 21, 1865). In August 1863, as the war marched into its darkest year, he expresses regret in not attending a local election, and moves on quickly to report the weather.

His daily reflections on teaching methods, debating societies, and student behavior suggest he embraced his role as a teacher and he absorbed, perhaps, broader cultural messages about teacher professionalism. In February 1860, for example, he remarks on the educational promise of exercise: “[I] bought a ball for the boys and played with them . . . felt better myself and think they studied better” (February 8). Three days later he remarks on needed changes in his strategies for classroom management: “I think I must be quite exacting in future with them, especially in speaking and writing” (February 11, 1860). He keeps a running account of his struggles to collect tuition, reflections on scholars’ progress, and preparations for student exhibitions.

Several letters also hint to the developing culture of professionalism. Edith Welker, at least, believes that Fannie [Meredith] takes her teaching role quite seriously: “She makes the scholars walk around about right” (Rhoades & Bailey, 2009). Similarly, Lou Riggen’s witty letters reflected a confident teaching persona. Although her war texts were bereft of information about her school days, lesson plans, or teaching troubles that would allow deeper insights into her teaching experiences, in two instances her letters adopt a didactic tone as if she was chastising a young pupil for his flawed reasoning. For example, when the soldier accuses her of pretending to be a woman, she retorts,

“*If You Are Not a Man!*” . . . Now will you inform me by what mysterious and to me unimaginable chain of reasoning you arrived at this sage conclusion based upon the single accidental circumstance that I make long handled letters or write in too bold a style for a lady [?] (January 23, 1864, Rhoades & Bailey, 2009).

While an intriguing commentary on the gendered conventions of handwriting is legible here, as is the possibility that writing fosters deception (Rhoades & Bailey, 2009), revisiting this passage with teaching identity in mind highlights its didactic elements. Lou’s chastising tone, affected air of astonishment, and charge to the soldier to explain his “unimaginable chain of reasoning” exudes authority. The passage reflects a teacher who is confident the logic she wields and her right to demand the soldier account for his. Her fluid adoption of her didactic stance speaks to Lou’s *identity* as a teacher.

Task, Duty, and Afterthought

Other letter writers display a decided lack of investment in teaching that contrast sharply with the examples J. Fox’s diary and Lou’s letters provide; the women seem to experience teaching as an activity rather than an identity. In fact, many writers view it as a task, duty, and afterthought, an often unpleasant interruption to their social and family lives (Bailey, 2010). Phrone Rogers, a young woman who taught in Knox County, Ohio, exhibits this most clearly:

I was at a small party at Emma Critchfield’s last night and did not get home until two o’clock and of course had to rise very early in order to get to school in time. Tonight I am going to a literary society at Cakes school house. I am a member and I intend to rehearse “Bingen on the Rhine.” Oh we have such pleasant times. (December 24, 1863)

This passage reveals Northern women’s sometimes lively social lives during war (Rhoades & Bailey, 2009). However, it is also revealing when viewed through a teaching lens; in contrast to Fox’s painstaking preparation for his school day, Phrone seems to squeeze in a stop at the school house between a local party and singing practice. While she intends to fulfill her obligations by arriving on time—a choice Fox would approve—the limited evidence available indicates that Phrone experienced teaching as an activity and afterthought rather than a professional identity. Unlike Fox, she seems to experience little angst about her performance.

Although Phrone expresses outright dread at the idea of teaching (Bailey, 2010; Rhoades & Bailey, 2009) in several letters, over time, she seemed to feel more comfortable with her teaching circumstances. Yet, in light of the culture of professionalism, it is clear that she experiences teaching—after more than two years—as an itinerant and temporary activity. She writes,

I have been penned up in the school house with forty scholars. I am teaching the Millwood school this summer. I

find it decidedly the pleasantest school I ever taught. I suppose on account of being at home (May 21, 1865) The location of her school seems to soften her difficulties in being “penned up with scholars” on the eve of summer. Yet, the passage conveys none of Fox’s careful reflections on teaching processes. Similarly, Christie Blakely, another Ohio teacher, expresses relief to complete her teaching term and return home. She, like Phrone, feels “shut up” in the schoolhouse:

School is almost out and I am not sorry for I am getting almost homesick. It seems too bad to be shut up in the schoolhouse all day these bright days. But guess you know how that goes. It takes somebody that likes teaching better than I to enjoy it much. (February 23, 1865)

Teaching emerges here as an activity, rather than an identity, and an intrusion to enjoying the “bright” winter days.

What is striking about these partial, situated, and gendered texts is that they offer no information about how war events shaped these teachers’ lives, how their approach to teaching as a temporary activity may have shaped their educational practices, and where war pedagogy surfaced in their classroom spaces.

Teachers Using Letters to Teach

Why don’t you answer Mrs. Israel’s letter? (Phrone Rogers)

The final example I offer in enacting an analytic shift to highlighting teachers’ voices and practices in war texts is the didactic nature of the women’s letters. As gendered communicative vessels, letters have a long association with formal schooling and informal didactic practices. They were used as models for learning writing in formal schools and as vehicles for mothers and wives to persuade their correspondents of a particular point of view. And, because women’s letters were frequently ‘tossed away in old drawers’ (to paraphrase Virginia Woolf), they rarely appeared to outsiders as political instruments. In this collection, women weave commands, instructions, and subtle didacticism throughout their letters.

A detailed expression of moral didacticism is evident in one of Lou’s letters, in which this teacher takes up a different kind of instructional role. She writes,

It seems to me that men constantly in danger of being killed might, as a natural consequence, see their dependence on the strong right arm of God more clearly than at any other time. If they only would there would be less of absolute horror in our battles; but they don’t. (Lou, August 26, 1864)

This extensive passage (see Rhoades & Bailey, 2009) goes on to explain the consequences of young men’s dismissal of their “mother’s warning words” and their drinking, card playing, and passivity that can lead, she suggests, to their own deaths. She hopes for the young men’s salvation, but she is unwilling to speculate on the likelihood it will occur. The didacticism legible in this text conveys a moral and behavioral lesson in a gendered form and suggests the varied moments in which education and war intersect. This teacher seems to mobilize women’s authority as moral agents to teach appropriate behavior during war. And the consequences of ignoring women, she warns, can be dire.

I frame these examples as suggestive invitations for further work on the intersections between war, gender and educational practices. The performative context in which these data were produced constrains the interpretive weight they can bear. Yet, I think purposeful, even heavy-handed analysis, is imperative to seek and document educational spaces during war because it is a site in which people sometimes battle to pursue and protect their most cherished values. And in the case of the Civil War, it created the conditions of possibility for women to blossom as educational subjects. As Solomon (1985) argues, war opened educational doors for women because “the question of whether an employed woman was stepping out of her domestic sphere became irrelevant in the face of an overwhelming need for labor” (p. 45). Although some opportunities dissolved when men returned from war, few forces could curtail the momentum accompanying women’s educational development in the aftermath of war (Solomon 1985).

ENDNOTES

- ¹All excerpts from letters are taken from Rhoades & Bailey, 2009, and used with permission by Ohio University Press. The full text of the letters on which this essay is based appears in that edited volume. My analysis of the letters would not have been possible without the labor and dedication of Nancy L. Rhoades, who found her grandfather's letters. Mrs. Rhoades died in 2007.
- ²All diary excerpts are taken from the Fox Family Papers, 1852–1962, University of Kentucky Special Collections, Lexington, Kentucky. These diaries are unusual because they reflect daily entries across multiple decades.
- ³Although Lou signed her name “Lou Pearl” in this collection of letters, census records document her given name as Louisa M. Rigger, born September 29, 1841. The “M” perhaps stands for Margaret, or Mary, which were her grandmother and mother's names.

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THE MORAL IMPERATIVE IN EDUCATION

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Introduction

To teach is to be engaged in the social and moral formation of the young, whatever else it is. Against the technocratic efforts to deprofessionalize teaching, it is both important and difficult to remember that there is no such thing as education in general: teaching and education is always, either consciously or unconsciously, directed for some moral and social goal. That is, education is how we bring the young into full membership into society; it is always and inevitably undertaken in pursuit of some vision of The Good and/or The Good Life. Undertaken mindfully and with intelligence, education results in a democratic citizen prepared to take up and fulfill the moral demands of democratic citizenship; done randomly and haphazardly, schooling is unlikely to produce such citizens, and democracy is unlikely to function. In the US today, education is morally both random and haphazard. Worse, at the policy level (though not always in the classroom), it is reductively and corrosively technocratic, having lost any moral vision connected to a robust democratic ideal.

The thesis of this paper is this situation is a result of serious confusion in our public discussions about education, confusion that causes us to ignore the inherently moral work that education entails. I take it that the root of the confusion lies in a series of steps that lead to what has proven to be a divisive public policy though intended to be the opposite: 1. government neutrality in the area of religion, required by the First Amendment, requires a “wall of separation” between church and state; 2. questions of morality are unavoidably and inherently connected to matters of religion; and therefore, 3. the state, in order to maintain its neutrality on matters of religion, must also and therefore be both neutral and silent on matters of morality (Kunzman, 2006; Purpel and McLaurin, 2004). Applied to education of the young, either deliberately or through inattention, these premises lead us to a seriously deficient education for life in a democratic state, democracy being a form of social life that inevitably is not only moral in itself, but depends on the proper moral formation of its citizens if it is to be realized even approximately. Democracy is a normatively substantive way of political and social life; it can never be merely a procedural system of decision-making.

A democratic majority, no matter how large, cannot restrict the civil rights of its fellow citizens, no matter how small a minority, nor can it unduly encumber the minority’s way of life or its pursuit. That is, it cannot do so *and* be democratic. It is generally understood that “tyranny of the majority” is *not* a democratic condition. Significantly the fact that majorities *can* pass laws they *should not* pass by the logic of democracy means the restraints on the scope of decision-making must be largely self-imposed. That is, it is moral restraint rooted in individual self-governance that makes communal self-governance at least theoretically possible and practical: without private individual virtue, in other words, collective public virtue is unlikely to be sufficient to the demands of democratic life.

The root error of our confusion is the idea that the First Amendment requires a “wall of separation.” The thesis here is not only that the First Amendment does not require this complete separation, but that the separation, to the extent that it is tried, actually weakens democratic governance; walls do not a democratic public make. The main effort of this paper is to show why this is so. The argument will move in three steps: the first section will argue that the wall of separation metaphor is a fairly serious overstatement of what the First Amendment reasonably requires; the second section will briefly defend the notion that moral discussion can take place between believers and nonbelievers; the final section will explore the nature of democratic education, and why this not only does not require a wall of separation, but positively commits us to tearing down any such wall that exists. The argument in the end is that the “wall of separation” trope, taken seriously, is profoundly undemocratic.

Given space limitations, this paper will not fully develop this argument, merely sketching its outline.

Tearing down the “Wall of Separation”

It is not insignificant that the “wall of separation” metaphor is originally political rhetoric, not Constitutional principle. It comes to us from a letter from Thomas Jefferson to a group of Baptist ministers. It did not gain the status of a Constitutional principle until 1947, when Justice Hugo Black cited it in his majority (5–4) decision in *Everson v Board of Education*. The next year, in *McCullum v Board of Education*, Justice Black cemented the place of this metaphor in Constitutional law by citing and discussing it at some length in his 8–1 majority ruling in *McCullum*.

The claim here is that acceptance of the wall of separation trope dissolves the constructive ambiguity at the heart

of the First Amendment: what one person considers free exercise is what her or his neighbor considers to be establishment, and vice versa. Much depends on whether one gives priority to the anti establishment clause (which has recently dominated, and which treats as support ANY government action that seems to have a positive effect on religion or religious practice) or to the free exercise clause (which has the somewhat lower standard of asking whether an act of government directly interferes with a religious practice or belief). And a democratic polity is one that wisely balances these two conflicting precepts.

Another source of confusion, the heart of our problem, is to fail to recognize the relationship between “government” and “politics.” There is a general agreement that government should not be involved in the details of religious practice, membership, support, or belief. But that is not at all the same as saying that people, as they participate in discussions about public policy, must refrain from referencing their moral, and even their religious, beliefs in support of their policy preferences. Today conservatives are extremely proficient at this sort of argument, which progressives seem to rule out of bounds. It was not always so: both the Civil Rights movement and the anti-Vietnam war movements were deeply moral in tone and public speech, and were disproportionately led by ordained ministers. Their appeal to public conscience was at least as much a part of these movements as their legal challenges.

Further, to disallow religious belief as a reason for advocating public policy is profoundly anti-democratic, since it effectively muzzles the public speech of religious people on the precise grounds that it is religious. Next we will turn to the relation between religion and morality.

Religion and Morality

One thing that US “conservatives” and “liberals” seem to agree upon is that religion and morality are inextricably interwoven: you cannot have (or talk about) one without the other. More precisely, conservatives believe that without religion one cannot be truly moral. Liberals appear to reverse that logic: talk about moral questions *as moral questions* must inevitably wind up being about religious belief. In consequence of their respective beliefs, conservatives generally are comfortable with government support of religion as a way to foster morality, while liberals are reluctant for political discussion to be about morality, since they judge that to be government involvement in religion and therefore a clear violation of the First Amendment.

However, democracy is a form of civil life that is inherently moral, requiring widely distributed virtue among its citizens. That we are *citizens*, neither subjects nor bystanders, is significant. Democratic citizenship is an office with responsibilities and duties that require certain virtues and a certain character to discharge. It is a way of life that is not natural to us in the sense that breathing, eating, or laughing is, but it is not as unnatural to us as flying is, either. We have the capacity for democratic life, but no more so than we have the capacity to live under tyranny. Much depends on what virtues are fostered. In effect, what we are doing when we educate properly is developing what is perhaps best called “civic virtue” in order to make sure that a civic morality is developed and preserved, “moral” here meaning the establishment of norms, the sorts of dispositions and actions that define decency in the public square.

There is, we must remember, no such thing as education in general. There is only education for this or that specific form of human social life. It is, therefore, always and inevitably a moral enterprise. And even when it pretends not to be moral, it is moral nevertheless. That is, even if we do not mean to, we teach what is important to us by what and how we teach the young (the hidden curriculum); this becomes the definition of morality for the children so taught. In fact, what we teach is not just what is important to us; it in a very real sense teaches who “we” are, what defines us as a people, and this is definitionally the domain of the moral. In the absence of carefully and mindfully instructing the young in (and also engaging the mature in discussions about) the content of democratic morality, our children will instead likely absorb the vacuous and often pernicious morality of the savage marketplace (“greed is good,” “he who dies with the most toys wins”).

This having been said, the proposition that one cannot be moral without also being religious is so absurd on its face that one hardly knows how to argue against it seriously. Refutation merely requires knowing religious people who live immoral lives, or virtuous and moral atheists.

Democracy and Morality

Private moral formation in general and religious formation in particular are really, therefore, also public concern; the private racist is unlikely to be a good public citizen, and too many of them make a decent society impossible. The individuals whose religious beliefs make them incapable of making reasoned decisions about issues like global warming are not likely to make good citizens.

It is worth pausing for just a moment over the way that these two issues differ from each other, and how in turn

they both differ from the even more contentious issues of abortion and stem cell research. To be a racist requires a fundamental *moral* corruption. That is, it is not about the validity of data available on one side or the other: to relegate any group of citizens to second-class status on the basis of race is a fundamental corruption of democratic life. The person who grows up to be a racist is, in a deep way, not fit for democratic life. And this shows that the *private* moral systems within which children grow and are formed are of *public* importance.

In contrast, decisions about global warming are derivatively moral, but primarily empirical. That is, the question of *whether* global warming exists is a matter of evidence, not opinion. Broadly construed, answering this sort of question is still certainly a matter of morals: regard for the truth, respect for others, care with data, openness to facts are all intellectual virtues, without which democracy will not be possible, but that is not the point here. The point is, *if* the evidence supports the claim that climate change is at least in part the result of human activity, then the question of what we should do is clearly a moral one.

Finally, consider issues that, like racism, are moral all the way down, but unlike racism, there is not yet a settled consensus about what the correct moral stance is: consider abortion and stem cell research. The thing to note here is that there is, in fact, no settled consensus, and the implication of this is that the state might indeed need to be neutral in regard to public discussion.

However, even as we reach that conclusion, we realize it is impossible. There is no such thing as neutrality on such issues, either the state allows abortion or forbids it, includes or does not include abortion in publicly funded health plans; the state either funds or does not fund, allows or does not allow, stem cell research. None of these positions is neutral.

Here the morality of democracy applies, requiring us to allow the maximum liberty of conscience (Nussbaum, 2008) consistent with maintaining a decent social order. The terms of this formulation (“maximum liberty of conscience” and “decent social order”) are obviously both up for interpretation and negotiation in reasoned public discourse. This, in turn, requires the virtues that allow such dialog to take place.

Without a certain kind of education, that virtue is unlikely to be fostered in the young, and therefore unlikely to be widely distributed among the adult population. This is the corollary to the point made earlier that there is no such thing as education in general or education that is morally neutral. All education, that is, all growing into human maturity and social membership, is the acquisition of the moral norms that define and stipulate the society of membership. And these norms are inevitably what pass as morality for that society, however thin and/or perverse they are, measured against the potential of our shared humanity.

Education takes place in the schools, but it also takes place in the broader society for the young, as well as throughout life for adult citizens. Education is as much the function (if not the purpose) of politics, media, churches, civic clubs, and museums as it is of schools. This is the meaning of Dewey’s (1916/1966) observation that democratic life is educational by its nature.

And this brings us to the question of education. If democratic life requires virtue and democratic moral norms broadly distributed within the population, then an educational question presents itself: if THIS is what we mean by “good,” how do we increase the likelihood that most of our citizens will be that way? In this case, how can we be sure that our citizens, in the course of growing up, acquire the basic moral grounding that will allow them to take on the care not only of their own children, but all the children in their reach, and their parents, etc.

It is essential that public education be in the business of reflecting the public’s moral consensus in the moral formation of the young. Further, the premise of democratic education is that the public must at the same time engage in moral discourse to critically examine and improve its own moral consensus.

Citizens must be prepared for their role, and that preparation includes the development in the young of democratic virtue in preparation for the office of citizen. A society must foster democratic character mindfully and deliberately, or it is unlikely to be done at all. One institution that should be doing this is the public school. Education for democratic life is neither restricted to schooling nor confined to childhood. Democratic life opens us to continual growth as we increase our worldview and understanding of the human condition while constantly expanding our capacity for further growth. The education begun in school continues as adults in the form of public speech (Green, 1994).

But to submit to the discipline of democratic life in the first place, requires a commitment to the development of the democratic virtues. The civic virtues of democracy are virtues of both character and intellectual virtues. That is, democratic citizens, to meet their obligations as citizens, must be, at the level of individual members, be predisposed to meet those obligations. To live democratically requires, among many other things, virtue spread widely among its

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citizens. This in turns requires that, whatever else it consists of, public speech will be about morality and virtue. And in order for this to happen, children must be educated to both value and have the skill to so engage.

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WIKIS AND COLLABORATION: ARE THEY A MIX?

Ralph Olliges

Introduction

Working with any new technology becomes an exercise in first learning about the tools. Once you understand how to use the tools, then you can decipher how best to use them in an instructional setting. Ultimately, the aim is to determine how the new technology can be used to improve the educational experience.

Teachers cannot simply transfer knowledge to students. We desire for our students to become actively engaged in their learning. We want our students to build their own knowledge base through meaningful activities. One such exercise is using a wiki within the classroom. First, let us define a wiki.

Wikis Defined

The term, “wiki,” is derived from the Hawaiian word for fast or quick (Educause, 2004). Wikis are free writing spaces on the web where students can compose their thoughts in a collaborative manner. Wiki pages are rarely organized by chronology. Instead they are linked by context as well as categories and concepts that emerge in the authoring process. They allow links going out and coming in. In summary, a wiki consists of web pages where everyone has the right to edit anything and editing is encouraged.

The focus is on the last draft, although earlier versions of the same work are saved. Wikis are generally published online, but not all of them are publically accessible. When wiki page permission is set for public viewing, the readership potential is unlimited. Each new reader may become a writer. Thus, the lines of authority become blurred.

Prior to wikis, group collaboration on a document was possible only by emailing it to each member and then waiting for their changes before proceeding further. Wikis are web-based, so that everyone can read and edit the documents and the latest edits are available to all. However, only one person may edit at any given time.

Wikis are useful for teaching collaboration and content. Teamwork features include collaborative page editing, file sharing and a complete audit trail. Email and RSS feed notifications are available to instructors. Below is an example of a case study using wikis.

Case Study

Some twenty-five years ago, I was prepared in the field of instructional technology. Continually, it required me not only to learn the latest in technology gizmos, but more importantly, to raise questions about how to best use them within the context of a classroom. With the rapid advance in technology, one must sometimes learn by experimenting with the tools.

Web 2.0 tools, defined as the read/write web, are an example of such technological advance. In January 2008, I decided that I needed some experience with Web 2.0 tools. I received a university grant in order to update my skills, and I subsequently modified the spring 2008 syllabus for my undergraduate class in technology literacy. During the month of April, I divided the nine undergraduate students into three groups of three, using a wiki. Each group was instructed to define their understanding of the School of Education goals and how they sought to achieve them. This exercise provided me with some experience in using a wiki with college students. I observed that the technology was easily learned; however, the students didn't appear interested in the activity.

In fall 2008 and spring 2009, the exercise was revised. Based upon the area that students wanted to teach, they would need to demonstrate that they met the content-based standards. Students worked either individually or with one student who was interested in teaching the same subject or level. They needed to find lesson plans or other activities to demonstrate their knowledge of each of the approximately eight to nine standards per area. For a variety of reasons, with only a couple of exceptions, the students working in groups were unable to effectively collaborate.

Students in these two classes had varied technical skill levels. However, each student had sufficient class time to practice writing to a wiki. The students were able to master the skill of creating pages and modifying them. Even though the wiki meant that the students had the potential to collaborate outside of class, the collaboration was mostly nonexistent. They created their own projects instead of working together on a wiki.

In the fall 2009 semester, I decided to abandon groups. Meanwhile, I would research what makes for good group dynamics. My experience with wikis has been successful as a depository of information, but not as a collaborative effort. Thus, I began to question: what is collaboration? What makes for a good collaborative effort? Furthermore, does it make sense to use the wiki as a depository of information? It is important to note that many of the projects were very good in demonstrating each student's ability to grasp the content knowledge that is important for them to

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be able to teach. Using the wiki as a depository of information was beneficial even though it may not be the best use of a wiki. Many years ago, I had struggled to teach students how to create web pages for use within their classroom. The wiki was easier for them to learn. Thus, even though the collaborative nature had failed, benefits for the students were still realized. So what makes for good collaboration?

Collaboration defined

The word, “collaborate” means to co-labor, to cooperate, usually willingly. “Some authors use the terms cooperative and collaborative interchangeably to mean students working interdependently on a common learning task” (Barkley, Cross, & Major, 2005, p. 5). Other researchers, such as Cuseo (1992), Flannery (1994), and Bruffee (1995), argue for a clear epistemological distinction. Millis and Cottell (1998) hold that the most sensible approach is to view collaborative and cooperative learning on a continuum with cooperative being the most structured and collaborative the least structured.

Cooperative Learning

Smith (1996) states cooperative learning is “the instructional use of small groups so that students work together to maximize their own and each others’ learning.” (p. 71) Thus, students are required to work together on a common task. They must share information and support each other. The teacher is still the subject-matter expert who assigns the groups, manages time and resources, and monitors students’ learning (Cranton, 1996; Smith, 1996).

Kagan (2001) lists five elements of cooperative learning that are essential: positive interdependence (sink or swim together), face-to-face interaction (promote one another’s success), individual and group accountability (no hitchhiking / no social loafing), interpersonal and small-group skills, and group processing. Some researchers (Kerr & Bruun, 1983; Diehl & Stroebe, 1987) found that members of groups do not work as hard as when they work alone. Some members may end up being free loaders.

Good students are highly motivated. When a good student is paired with a free loader, the good student tends to do all the work. Thus, the purpose of the group is undermined. Group dynamics are an important component. How does a teacher insure all members of the group work together? One way is to request peer evaluation. What tends to be more effective is when the groups have at least three members. If one student does not contribute, then this is noted by at least two other individuals. Anonymous peer evaluations may well assist the instructor in giving a fair grade.

Collaborative Learning

Different assumptions underlie collaborative learning which is derived from social constructivism. Knowledge is “something people construct by talking together and reaching agreement” (Bruffee, 1993, p. 3). The teacher and his/her students form a community in search of knowledge. Bruffee (1995) believes the goal of cooperative learning fosters working together in harmony to find a solution. On the other hand, the goal of collaborative learning develops autonomous, articulate people where dissent and competition may occur. Bruffee feels that cooperative learning may be better suited for use with children; whereas, collaborative learning is more beneficial with college students. For college students critical thinking becomes essential. We should be teaching students how to argue and challenge one another.

Collaboration is not an easy task. Wondolleck & Yaffee (2000) state, “successful collaborative efforts consciously deal with the need to motivate people.” (p. 168) The process needs to be fun. It needs to instill a sense of hope that success is possible (Wondolleck & Yaffee, 2000).

Forming Groups

So how are groups formed? Should the teacher select the groups or should students choose others with whom they would like to work? Both commonly occur. In companies, employees usually don’t pick their own teams. Depending upon the project, they are assigned to teams. In order to prepare students for jobs, this might suggest assigning students to groups, so that they have the experience of trying to work together with whomever they are assigned.

Case Study Analyzed

The students were assigned a common task. They had to demonstrate their content knowledge as an elementary teacher or as a secondary social studies teacher. The groups that were effective shared knowledge and supported one another. The groups that dissolved were ones in which the members rarely communicated with one another. One member would have a hard time trying to reach the other member for input. For other teams, the lack of interaction was due to a lack of agreement. With some groups, it was agreed upon that each member would independently pursue their own interests.

So what led to this collaboration going awry? At the outset, ground rules were never set up covering the scope of the issues to be discussed and how to deal with one another. This may have been due to a lack of knowledge on my part about how group dynamics function.

Obviously, one problem was a lack of interdependence among the team members. The assignment, although valuable, was a display of what the students knew or could find. A good student could do all of the work and the lazy student could ride his coat tails. The students had no incentive to work together. The students never went beyond shared goals to the perception that individual interests are interconnected. No need for cooperative action was realized.

Upon reflection, I think groups are likely to succeed if they have three to four members, rather than two.

Conclusion

Wikis were conceived to be used in a collaborative effort. The importance of Web 2.0 is the read/write web. The main reason for using a wiki is to improve the quality of student learning. Students not only have to read and gather information, but they must write it in a succinct manner. If the wiki is used as a depository of information, the students are at least writing for a public venue. Also, they are trying to convince their instructor that they have a good grasp of content knowledge. When the instructor makes constructive comments, students are forced to rethink what they have written and how they have presented the information. So why collaborate?

Wikipedia is the most famous example of a wiki. Many writers contributed to it. Still, I question how much of it is collaborative in nature. I tend to believe that it is more a depository of information. Some collaboration occurs because the pages are edited.

When our students are hired by various corporations, they do not pick the people that they get to work with. Rather, they are assigned to teams. To function effectively, you learn to work with other people. You learn how to delegate tasks and how to organize a project. You research and create knowledge. Group interdependence is essential for the team to succeed. Everyone must function within their role.

Wikis allow for students to display their work to a broad audience. The quality of their work usually increases because their audience is larger. Students are engaged in the school day. It is participatory learning.

Like Davies (2004), I found that the failure of wiki collaboration had little to do with the technology itself. The lack of a good understanding of a wiki community rather contributed to the failure of the wiki participation. The students never sought strongly the input of others to make their work stronger.

So how should we be using wikis in our classrooms? It depends upon our objective. If we desire to have students depict what they understand about a concept, then wikis make a great way to deposit information. Other students, the teacher, or some other outside expert can help guide the process by constructive criticism. The students learn valuable lessons. If the main objective is to foster a team atmosphere, then wikis are still an effective tool to use. But first, we must make sure to set up an interdependence among the group members, by assigning each member a specific role. The wikis can extend this interdependence beyond the classroom to a much larger forum, the entire web. A diverse society requires engaged citizens who can appreciate and benefit from working together with people of different perspectives.

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**RE-IMAGINING CLASSROOM CONFESSIONS:
AESTHETIC SELF-FASHIONING AND RHETORICAL AGENCY**

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Foucault's Theory of Confession

Michel Foucault's formulations about the discursive constructions of sex are well known. Yet, despite the fact of the prominence of confessional techniques in his genealogy about the manufacture and normalization of "natural" sexual identities, his theory of confession has received far less rigorous study. I concede that Foucault's problematization of confession has offered valuable insights about the inherent dangers arising from the power relationships that pervade confessional institutions. I applaud the fact that his analyses have challenged Western society's unexamined assumptions about the curative and liberatory properties of confession. However, I believe that since his confessional theory is the cornice piece of his panoptic vision of domination, it begs attention. Furthermore, given that Foucault's theory implicates not only religion, psychiatry, medicine, and jurisprudence, but also education, the need to reexamine his claims, charges, and conclusions is not an abstract philosophical concern, but a practical issue facing teachers in kindergarten and graduate school, community centers and religious institutions. Therefore, in this paper I will conceptualize an approach for thinking about confession in ways that can sidestep some of the pitfalls revealed by Foucault's deconstructive analysis, while holding out for our students the potential of exercising rhetorical agency and artistic self-fashioning.

Foucault argued that Western society is thoroughly saturated with confession: religious, legal, medical, and psychiatric. Social scientists and psychotherapists have maintained that secrets in themselves are discreditable, that what people conceal is what they regard as shameful or undesirable.¹ Foucault concluded: "We have . . . become a singularly confessing society . . . one goes about telling, with the greatest precision, whatever is most difficult to tell. One confesses in public and in private, to one's parents, one's educators, one's doctor, to those one loves . . ."² Foucault charges that individuals' "felt" need to confess, as well as the "felt" benefits from having done so, have been ingrained in us as members of Western societies beginning with the Christian confessional and continuing through the rise of nineteenth and twentieth century psychiatry. We Westerners, according to Foucault, have come to believe that truth is lodged in our most secret nature and that articulating those secrets produces freedom. And, of course, since sex has been a privileged theme of both the Christian and psychiatric confessional, revealing sexual matters has come to be seen as that which will most completely allow one's true self to surface.³

Foucault further contends that instead of perceiving the obligation to confess as a power that constrains us, we seem to believe that disclosing our secrets produces a kind of liberation. However, Foucault charges that we are mistaken if we are taken in by the ruse that all these voices urging confession are speaking of freedom.⁴ Confession, he reminds us, is a ritual of discourse that unfolds within a power relationship. One does not confess without the presence (or virtual presence) of a listener who is not simply the interlocutor, but the authority who requires, prescribes, or appreciates the confession, then intervenes in order to judge, punish, forgive, console, or reconcile. Both the one who confesses (the confessant) and the one who hears the confession (the confessor) operate within a web of power relations that crystallize in institutions: the state apparatus, the legal system, and various social hegemonies.⁵

Confession and Domination

These power relations do not simply repress action, but also operate to actually create the subjectified Subject. By internalizing expert discourse that has been developed from the study of our innermost secrets, we believe that we are finding our "true selves." Defining, and labeling ourselves with these power-laden assessments and terminology, we then hate, in ourselves, anything that contravenes what the experts have established as "normal," "natural," and "healthy." Thus, this discourse becomes an effective means of social control.

Foucault's vision of domination, then, is not a scenario wherein dominant groups wield power over subordinate groups, but an apparatus of states and institutions, built on a network of practices and technologies in which actions bear upon actions. We become complicate in the process of our own subjectification first, by confessing our secrets to these various experts, and second, by internalizing the norms that are fed back to us from the experts who have used the pains and passions of our innermost secrets as raw data.

Faced, then, with this vision of domination, founded upon confessional practices, what are educators to do? For practicing teachers experience first-hand what Foucault described as a "singularly confessing society." In the so-

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called “sharing” of classroom discussions, the essays graded, the advisement conferences held, students tell their life stories and they seek concern, consolation, and counsel. Yet, if we are to believe Foucault’s confessional theory, such acts of confession entangle both confessor and confessant in the sticky filaments of this web of power relations. The subjectification appears to be so complete as to leave little hope of agency. Student and teacher alike are trapped, enveloped in this infinitely malleable web. We may resist, to be sure, but it would appear that the power relations simply stretch, re-form, spring back, move, sway, lose their shape, but never loose us from their elastic embrace.

Foucault’s problematicization of confession is important because it has made us question our assumptions about confession. Unfortunately, Foucault’s critique has implicated all confession and those who engage in it as rather pathetic, unthinking pawns. For whether speaking of pleasure or pain; hopes or dreams; doubt or faith; and whether confessed to priest or parent; teacher or physician; friend or lover; Foucault’s rendering of confession reads as weak and submissive the sharing of significant experience.

Confession as Resistance

We are left, then with some serious questions. Given that Foucault contends that the act of confession is always a demonstration of power,⁶ but elsewhere maintains that resistance is always present within power relations,⁷ is it ever possible for confession to function as resistance? Since Foucault tells us that confession is a mechanism for disciplining the desires and behaviors of the subject through a process of normalization,⁸ can confession ever provide rhetorical agency? Furthermore, since Foucault maintains that one can always refuse normalization and recreate one’s self as a work of art, must we assume that such artistry is available only in refusing confession, or could the act of confession itself present opportunities for artistic self-fashioning?

I argue that artistic re-creation may be possible not *in*, but *through* confession. Certainly, if such an approach is to be possible, it must heed Foucault’s cautions. As important as it is for us to scrutinize our complicity in acts that reinforce social hegemonies, however, it also crucial that we re-imagine the confessional episode in ways that overcome Foucault’s skewed conclusions. To do so, there are three issues that must be addressed. First, confessional dialogue must be reconstructed in ways that refuse the power dynamics inherent in the confessor-confessant relationship. Second, it must be treated as a conduit for artful action, rather than an end in itself. Third, in order for either of the first two points to be effective, we must extricate confession from the confession box and the psychiatrist’s couch. We need a new metaphor.

The Power of Metaphor

George Lakoff and Mark Johnson have argued that while metaphor is typically viewed as only a device of poetic imagination, that, in fact, our conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical. They further argue that these metaphors so govern our everyday functioning that, were we to change the metaphors that shape basic cultural concepts, we would fundamentally change the concept.⁹

I submit that our cultural notion of confession is inextricably tied to the “confession box.” Re-imagining confession is, then, one instance in which the overused adage, “think outside the box,” is imperative. The metaphor, “confession is the confession box,” has anesthetized our imaginations. If, then, we are to change the concept of confession, remove it from its religious connections, then we must be done with the confession box and all that it entails: its whispers, seal of secrecy, and privacy screen. Away with the prescriptive, all-knowing confessor! Let us refuse the docile confessant accepting her penance for the hope of absolution! In fact, let us altogether rid ourselves of the term “confession.”

Aesthetic Disclosure

I propose reframing Foucault’s “confession” as a process of “aesthetic disclosure,” an approach that scuttles the metaphor of the confession box in favor of the language of improvisational drama. This process of re-imagining requires both skill and art. It also holds out the hope of rhetorical agency.

Drawing upon pragmatist aesthetics, in what follows I describe a process that is focused on growth, broadly construed. It is imminently practical. Although this process has identifiable phases, these phases actually overlap and circle back until the process comes to satisfactory completion. That said, I treat these phrases in a linear fashion in order more easily to explain them.

It is disequilibrium that instigates this process of re-imagination. Our students’ disequilibrium can result from traumatic experiences, new and troubling information, or even the examination of heretofore unexplored assumptions, beliefs, and values. Foucault has claimed that the response to troubling intellectual or emotional

situations is the desire to confess “whatever is most difficult to tell.” Disequilibrium, then, tends to prompt our students’ disclosures.

Now, Foucault’s deconstructive analysis of confession presumes disclosure of the confessant’s own sexual transgressions. Yet historical and contemporary accounts of both religious and psychiatric confession demonstrate that women’s confessions about sexuality are frequently accounts of sexual offenses committed against them. The narrations are actually attempts to bear witness against violation, even though these offenses are depicted and read as confessions of their own transgressions. Foucault is seemingly oblivious to the fact that in many instances women are “objects” of sex, not subjects. Likewise, the disclosures by other non-dominant social groups are often revelations not of their own “sins,” but instances of verbal and physical violence.

As Foucault emphasized, all such disclosures, whether they might be labeled “confession” or “testimony,” are saturated with power relations. Consequently, when the narrator of the disclosure, Foucault’s confessant, engages the listener, Foucault’s confessor, the listener must refuse the role of confessor who interrogates, interpellates, analyzes, explicates, coerces, chastises, defines, describes, prescribes, punishes, absolves, or withholds absolution. As important as it is to refuse the confessor’s role when dealing with a confession, however, it is crucial when the disclosure is an attempt to bear witness or provide testimony against violence or injustice. For even speaking may well be a first step in refusing normalization and resisting social hegemonies, something that Foucault altogether missed because of his patriarchal and elitist perspective.

Especially when the disclosure is imbricated with testimony, rhetorical agency almost certainly means speaking or acting in resistance to violence or injustice. Therefore, rather than providing some sort of secular absolution, the listener needs to begin to shift expectations so that the disclosure lives beyond the silencing confines of the traditional confessional dyad. The listener can help the narrator to reframe the disclosure, not as culminating act, but as segue into engaged and artful inquiry. This modification in expectations, however, means modifying a socially conditioned response that views confession as an end in itself.

Confession as Social Habit

Framed in pragmatic terms, Foucault’s socially constructed “felt need” to confess is understood as “social habit.” Yet, Dewey and James emphasized that individuals have the potential of being far more than a simple conduit for social habits. People can modify their desires, in part, because the desires that are stimulated by an impulse for change are somewhat plastic, so their satisfaction can be channeled more than one way.¹⁰ In other words, one may resolve conflicting habits with a machine-like repetition of behavior, which in the case of confession would be a return to the prescribed roles and rituals of confessional discourse. On the other hand, one may instigate a conscious search for opportunities to fulfill those desires in new and potentially more satisfying ways.

Therefore, once the disclosure has taken place, it may be rendered either aesthetic or anesthetic depending upon what follows it. The disclosure will be anesthetic if narrator and listener choose to rely solely on an inert set of rules or procedures, or to fall back on what has always been done before. On the other hand, the disclosure may be afforded aesthetic qualities if the listener and narrator are able to shift the role of the listener from Foucault’s confessor to guide and/or resource and change the role of the narrator to author and investigator. In other words, for the disclosure to be aesthetic it must be reframed, not as a culmination, but as the first act of a new drama.

Aesthetic disclosure, then, requires that the listener-guide and narrator engage in two types of inquiry that alternate with, and overlay, each other. These two forms are made up of what I call purposeful perception and articulation of alternatives. In purposeful perception the narrator and listener/guide seek to perceive the narrative through a wide angle lens. The goal is to grasp the narrative in all its complexity and muddiness: its inextricable links with many other stories, and within the narrator’s developmental and cultural history. This warm, intimate, and sympathetic taking in of the situation reveals that there are many ways of “reading” the narrative in its temporal, evolving, embodied, practical, and contextual character. James said, “The mind, in short, works on the data it receives very much as a sculptor works on his block of stone Other sculptors, other statues from the same stone! Other minds, other worlds from the same monotonous and inexpressive chaos!”¹¹ We might also add: Different narrators, different dramas from the same facts!

As the individual’s narrative is fleshed out, alternatives for action are developed. Together, the narrator and listener consider other resources that may be needed, and even who else might need to be apprised of the situation. Just as an artist is both limited and stimulated by her choice of watercolors or acrylics, canvas or paper, so is the narrator both limited and stimulated by understanding the broad scope of the situation, the available material resources, and the imagination of the inquirers. As alternatives are articulated, the inquirers imagine the many ways

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that this story, this drama, might play out. They consider form, structure, the actors, their improvisational roles, the twists and turns of plot, and the dramatic rhetoric to be employed. It is in this articulation of alternatives that the narrator develops her artistry. Here, she may engage in falsehood without lying by spinning yarns of what her future will hold, the actions she will take, the words she will use. She can tell tall tales about who she will become, how she will change her world, indeed, what kind of world it will be. In these fabrications, she actually prophesies her future, for these alternatives can be investigated, defined, and delineated, as the narrator and her co-inquirers move into deliberation.

Deliberative Dialogue

Conceived as colloquy, rather than soliloquy, deliberative dialogue provides the means for reflection about the potential of the various futures the narrator has dreamed. This process is inherently social and moral. Not only will others be affected by the decisions enacted, but the deliberative process engages the inquirers in what Dewey refers to as “dramatic rehearsal.”¹² The alternatives that the narrator has imagined should be rehearsed as fully as possible in order to forecast the probable consequences of each of the courses of action and to what extent those consequences will satisfy the desires of the principal investigator. The dramatic rehearsals often provide new insights, so the process can circle back to the phases of purposeful perception and articulation of alternatives as necessary.

The final decisions for conduct will be based on the kind of person the narrator wishes to become, the kind of world she wants to take a part in creating. When a decision is made about the best plan to employ in this improvisational drama, the process of aesthetic disclosure comes to a close. In pragmatist fashion, the point is not discovery of some new truth, even though truths may well be discovered, but with resolution of discord. Relative equilibrium is restored once a decision is made about how to proceed.

Of course, this drama is improvisational. The actors do not have scripted roles, so they will not play out their roles in exactly the ways that the narrator imagined. The narrator’s actions, as well as the actions of others involved in this drama, will have unforeseen consequences. The rhetoric will be more or less successful. Yet, skillful and artful deliberation can better prepare the narrator for coping with unforeseen consequences and in imagining possibilities for action and desired results.

Conclusion

Aesthetic disclosure, then, is not only an artistic process, but it acknowledges the social nature of our lived inquiry and moral deliberation. As Alisdair MacIntyre has said: “We are never more (and sometimes less) than the co-authors of our own narratives. Only in fantasy do we live what story we pleaseWe enter upon a stage which we did not design and we find ourselves part of an action that was not of our making.”¹³

Practical and pragmatic, aesthetic disclosure offers the possibility of self-fashioning and co-authoring, of thinking and acting as social, moral, and artistic storytelling beings. Aesthetic disclosure resists the normalization of confessional discourse and offers rhetorical agency in confronting social hegemonies and injustices that repress action, subjectify, and silence its victims. Of course, self-fashioning is always partial; agency, always temporary; change, always inconsistent and unstable. The process is undeniably mediated by rhetoric and encumbered by culture, history, and language. Yet, in the spinning of yarns and telling of tall tales we reinvigorate our moral imaginations, opening ourselves to new visions of ourselves, to artful relations with others, and we work toward bringing to pass the world in which we wish to live.

ENDNOTES

1. See Carl Gustav Jung, *Modern Man in Search of a Soul*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2008, original 1933), 31–35; Sissela Bok, *Secrets: On the Ethics of Concealment and Revelation*, (New York: Vintage Books, 1989), 8–10.
2. Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*, vol. 1, Robert Hurley, trans., (New York: Vintage Books, 1990), 59.
3. *Ibid.*, 63.
4. *Ibid.*, 60.
5. *Ibid.*, 92–93.

6. Ibid. 60.
7. Ibid., 96.
8. Ibid. 59–61.
9. George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 3–6.
10. See William James, *The Principles of Psychology*, (Chicago: William Benton, 1987), 68; John Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct*, (Carbondale and Edwardsville, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1988, original 1922), 70, 75.
11. William James, *The Principles of Psychology*, (Chicago: William Benton, 1987), 187.
12. John Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct*, New York: The Modern Library, 190.
13. Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 2nd Edition, (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984), 213.

MEANDERING THROUGH MY EPISTEMOLOGICAL PATCHWORK QUILT¹: A NARRATIVE INQUIRY OF MY LANDSCAPES OF LEARNING

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Introduction

When I ventured on this journey of quilting my patchwork of thoughts and feelings related to my educational experiences, I realized that I was delving into my epistemology. How has my own theory of knowledge been constructed? As a teacher, I believe strongly that epistemology is very personal and that it is embedded in experience, a rich multifarious life and classroom experience that educators need to articulate to themselves before they even begin to address those relevant issues of knowledge construction with students. As Parker Palmer (1998) says: “We teach who we are” (pp. 1–7).

Having explored the power of metaphor as an interpretive tool in the life of human beings and cultures in my Master’s thesis (Costandi, 1994), and having understood that “Metaphors are not just the concern of the poet or the literary critic [or visual artist] . . . They [metaphors] represent one of the ways in which many kinds of discourse are structured and powerfully influence how we conceive things” (Sarup, 1993, p. 48), I began to explore alternative ways of knowing. Lorri Neilsen expresses it aptly:

Propositional language, and the research it writes in education, has a linear, objective quality. It has also been largely the province of men (Belenky et al., 1986), although the majority of the teaching population is female. In the last decade, we have begun to read and learn from the increasing number of narrative, descriptive, and anecdotal accounts of classroom experience, all of which bring to life the sounds, images, and personalities in classrooms; and all of which demonstrate how powerful and vivid alternative ways of knowing and telling can be. (Neilsen, 1994, p. 7).

Hence, this exploration of my personal ways of knowing is important since it sheds light on the construction of knowledge of a Palestinian female living at the periphery, at the boundaries where race, religion, sect, language, identity, gender, socioeconomic status, education and social and psychological experiences within cultural representation intersect.²

My Methodology

As for my methodology, I use the impressionistic and interpretative qualitative methodology of narrative inquiry to story my epistemology (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Ellis, 2004). Through reinterpreting my experiences, narrative inquiry helps me bridge the rift between my theory and practice within my life and work (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995, pp. 2–6). Why is that important, and why should anyone care? It is important because doing narrative inquiry encourages other teachers to do the same; because I want to use my reflexive and recursive life story as a resource (Plummer, 2001, p. 398) as a social science text/site that can be explored to understand the context and culture in which I lived, to share the meanings of my experiences, to create new understandings, to give higher public profiles to human qualities (Cortazzi, 2001, pp. 385–387) that have been invisible to others, to highlight the historical, political and social circumstances in which a female Palestinian Arab teacher, researcher, writer, mother and activist lived and worked; because having been there during an important era in the life of the Middle East and throughout the larger part of the Civil War in Lebanon, I am able to bear witness as a Palestinian female scholar in exile. I want to use my voice as testimony and as signature (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 148) because it is important to give voice to those Palestinians who have been silenced and whose rights have been usurped. I know that my “I” is not merely a narcissistic “I” as the traditional norms of inquiry would have it; I can justify the “I” in a social sense and link my “I” with “they” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, pp. 122–123). Narrative inquiry is a great tool of exploration in education since it offers important insights and allows the reader and listener to sense, feel, visualize and “re-experience” with me those moments that I value as an educator. Narrative inquiry captures the images, in writing; like the human eye, it is not antiseptic, it is personal and loaded with meaning:

The eye is a curious thing; it is not passive, not merely a piece of physiology, practical and utilitarian; it is not just a hunk of living matter, gristle, tendon, blood. It sees. It has more skill than the foot or hand. When it takes an image in, this act appears to be simple. The eye has experience, knowledge and has cut out territories, reasons why it sees this subject learning in and that one learning away. (Brand, 1994, p. 181)

My narrative moves in and out, back and forth and up and down

This narrative captures my experience in a three-dimensional way—as Clandinin and Connelly (2000) would put it—by moving not only from the present to the past and vice versa, but inwards and outwards, as well as upwards and downwards all-the-while being quite cognizant of the question of re-creation within my autobiography: how

much of this narrative is life experience and how much is literary construction? (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 18). Notwithstanding the cautionary clause, it seems to me that the argument for qualitative research has already been made in powerful ways by Denzin and Lincoln (2000) and many others; hence, what I am saying is that my experience which happened on a continuum was embedded within “the larger narrative of social science inquiry, the people, the schools, and educational landscapes . . . contextualized within a longer-term historical narrative” (p. 19). Hence, this narrative highlights how my life intersected with other lives and the roles that I played; it is not only intimate but relational. This narrative allows me to invite the readers to see and experience life as I have experienced it; it takes an interventionist stance of advocacy from a philosophical feminist minority group perspective.

Childhood, Young Adulthood and Education

I was born in Diaspora in Limassol, Cyprus, by virtue of my father’s work in the British Near East Broadcasting Station; I did speak some Greek before the age of one. My parents chose to live in England for a couple of years and therein my sponge-like absorption of English in an Oxbridge accent in preschool, which greatly amused my relatives. That was followed by residency and education in Beirut, Lebanon for more than thirty years based on a choice my parents made to not impose on their children life very far away from Palestine or the Arab World at large. I was living in Beirut during the Civil War until my two sons reached the age of eight and ten, at which time I decided to move to Montreal, Canada, in 1988 to pursue both my Master’s degree and my Ph. D. degree at McGill University’s Faculty of Education.

Two years into my life in Montreal, I applied for emigration from within the country. I decided to make Canada my country of choice, a new home away from home, because I wanted my sons to grow up in and become citizens of a country whose values I believed in and upheld; I shared the Canadian democracy’s multicultural perspective on life and governance and its vision of an ecologically viable and equitable society. As my sons were growing up and obtaining an education in Montreal, Quebec, we procured the Canadian citizenship in 1996. In 2005, Professor Ratna Ghosh, McDonald Chair in Education at McGill, recommended me for the post of Chair of the Education Department in a new upcoming women’s university in the Kingdom of Bahrain. Hence, the fifth leg of my Diasporic journey commenced; four years into my work with the aforementioned women’s university, I moved to Ahlia University where today—since February, 2009—I enjoy teaching and doing research in Manama in Bahrain in the Arab Gulf.

My experiences include a childhood as the daughter of middle-class Palestinian parents living in Beirut in Diaspora and acquiring Arabic and English simultaneously as my native and first language(s). Within the larger Arab framework, I was raised in a Christian Episcopalian Palestinian environment embedded within a pan Arab Muslim society; this allowed me to experience the intellectual climate, compassion and aesthetic of both religious-cultural contexts. I was imbued with my parents’ identification with the Arab Islamic culture and civilization and their understanding of its contributions to world civilization; my father is very well read in that domain and my mother’s family have a long legacy in the field of education on the West Bank including the establishment of Birzeit University. On the other hand, I am a Christian Palestinian Arab Canadian who as a child grew up in Lebanon within a confessional system that identified Lebanon as a Christian country ruled by a Maronite Christian minority while its inhabitants were largely Muslim.

A consequence of colonialism was that Western powers instituted divisive and confessional policies within colonized countries; a striking example is the sectarianism that permeated Lebanon and led to the horrendous and long Civil War between 1974 and 1991. Concomitantly, Palestinian history was not marred by sectarianism because Palestinians had to face a common enemy (the Zionists); more poignantly, Palestine was the country of tolerance and compassion where the three monotheistic religions enjoyed coexistence for many centuries, particularly since Jerusalem represented an axis of spiritual confluence for Judaism, Christianity and Islam. My mother has often recounted to me stories of how during weddings Christian Palestinians and Muslim Palestinians always celebrated together in her village in the West Bank, and during burials they mourned together; they also demonstrated in the streets and closed their shops for long periods of time while fighting the Zionists together.

What added insult to the injury of lack of democratization in post colonial Lebanese society was that the majority of Maronite Christians who comprised the ruling class (since the French left economic and political power in their hands) were antithetical to the Palestinians as well as to leftist Christians and Muslims alike. A minority of Maronite Christians were affiliated with left-wing political parties that had pan Arab leanings. This complex background gave me insights into the questions of identity, race, religion, ethnicity, voice, power, justice and gender.

I was allowed to ponder questions and examine issues from uniquely privileged positions, privileged in the sense

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of situatedness and positionality. I experienced being a Christian, being Palestinian, being Lebanese³, being female, being Arab, identifying with an Arab Muslim civilization as well as a Christian Arab ethic, having respect and authority as a female within my middle class Palestinian family, but feeling disempowered within a larger Palestinian community, the existence of which was tenuous because it had always been regarded (since the occupation of Palestine in 1948) as a community in transition, a community of refugees. Moreover, the status of the Palestinian woman within her own society—although more advanced than that of her Arab sisters due to the pragmatic demands of daily life where women had to replace men who were being martyred or imprisoned—did not really improve qualitatively until the inception of the Palestinian Resistance Movement; even then, and 60 years post Diaspora, Palestinian women have not yet gained their rightful places within the Palestinian government in exile; for example, they have nominal but not equal representation within the Palestinian Parliament.

On the other hand, I felt privileged as a young Palestinian Arab woman whose parents came from a liberal bilingual multicultural⁴ background to have been raised by fiercely nationalistic Palestinian Christian Arab parents who mastered both the Arabic and English languages and lived at the cultural boundaries between the Middle Eastern Arab and the Western English cultures. However, when my parents settled in Lebanon in 1955, the dilemma was that they did not have a wide spectrum of schools from which to choose to enroll their children: In post-colonial Palestine and Lebanon the most reputed schools were the ones that the colonial powers (and their religious missions) had established.

Epistemological issues: How the Grand Narrative of the Christian English Western Education became so Present in My Life—Orientalism revisited

Since I come from philosophy of education and I teach philosophy of education, it seems appropriate to give a short but focused historical perspective on the kinds of developments that led to the grand, formalistic narratives that Eurocentrism and the British Empire imposed on students in post-colonial contexts such as the one I experienced. How did those come about and have such a profound influence on my life and learning?

Part of the experience of empire, as Edward Said describes it well in *Orientalism* (1978) and in *Culture & Imperialism* (1993), is that culture, education, literature, art and the aesthetic were all mediums through which colonial powers spread their influence and, indeed, left their indelible mark on the consciousness of the colonized.

Thus a very large mass of writers among whom are poets, novelists, philosophers, political theorists, economists, and imperial administrators, have accepted the basic distinction between East and West as the starting point of elaborate theories, epics, novels, social descriptions, and political accounts concerning the Orient, its people, customs, “mind”, destiny, and so on. (pp. 2–3)

Said (1978) also describes Orientalism as “the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient,” dealing with it by: “making statements about it, authoring views on it, describing it, teaching it, settling it, ruling over it: in short, Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring and having authority over the Orient” (p. 3). Hence, the British mandate over Palestine and the French mandate over Lebanon may have in certain ways forced the subjugated, of whom we were part, to internalize Orientalist perceptions of themselves harboured by the colonizers; it was in fact a kind of educational conquest (Hourani, 1991/2002, pp. 299–333). That is why in Lebanon, for example, schools established by the British or French missions were perceived to be offering an education of higher quality than local ones.

As a youngster, I absorbed the idea—in my religiously driven missionary elementary and high-school—that emotions are not necessarily linked to the domain of education. Studying at the Lebanese Evangelical School for Girls (formerly the British Lebanese Training College, a Protestant Christian missionary school), I did not experience education as having much to do with fun, excitement, personal imagination, individual interests, or a high level of student involvement. Education was bland, morbid, dark and had to do with depression on Sunday evenings and malaise on Monday mornings. At least those were my perceptions of it, so something was lacking. I actually hated school, but I loved reading and writing. In high-school, our education shifted to English, and we studied Arabic as a second Language. I remember also that I began to fall in love with the English language when an American teacher taught us vocabulary in an interesting and enjoyable way and a Scottish teacher taught us to appreciate some of the poetry of

Milton (1608–1674): *On His Blindness*

When I consider how my light is spent
Ere half my days in this dark world and wide,

And that one talent which is death to hide
 Lodg'd with me useless, though my soul more bent
 To serve therewith my Maker, and present
 My true account, lest he returning chide . . .

Wordsworth (1770–1850) in *I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud* (which I often repeat with my mother when we are reminiscing about the past):

I wandered lonely as a cloud
 That floats on high o'er vales and hills
 When all at once I saw a crowd,
 A host of golden daffodils;
 Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
 Fluttering and dancing in the breeze . . .

Or, the sad **Keats** (1795–1821) in *Ode to a Nightingale*:

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
 My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk . . .

I used to be secretly ashamed of my love of English literature; I was confused and experienced cognitive dissonance: how can I appreciate the language and literature of those who gave away Palestine to the Jewish people? I was deeply conflicted, but what helped was my own mother's role modeling, for she loved English literature and could recite whole segments of poems and songs that she had learnt in Birzeit Elementary School and High School but she loathed British foreign policy and could read colonialist attitudes from afar; she always made sure her English visitors knew exactly what happened in Palestine and how this was the fault of the British government! She had experienced, as a child, raids by the British troops on her parents' house because her father, who had been the Mayor of the town, helped the freedom fighters in their resistance to occupation. Her ability to live within that hybrid space, where she and my Dad appreciated the aesthetic of the West without condoning or forgiving its heinous political crimes, helped me to also find my way intellectually and emotionally.

Social and Psychological Displacement

As I quote Said I feel that Orientalism is still with us; it has never gone away; it may have had a facelift, but Empire thrives even without physical borders and its tentacles are spread over a huge expanse. Homi K. Bhabha in *Nation & Narration* (1990) identifies a "nation's coming into being as "cultural signification" and "as the representation of social life rather than the discipline of social polity" (1990, Introduction); he also identifies the relationship between colonizer and colonized (which in part represents my own educational situatedness as one of antagonism and ambivalence (Bhabha, 1990; 1994)—the ambivalence in my case was constituted by my anger at, and loathsome attitude towards, oppression and the subjugation of my people, and, on the other hand, my love of the language and high culture of the English. My recalcitrance was visible in my final year of high school where I was transformed from a "goody-two-shoes" to a subversive leader of a mini-rebellion when Israeli planes hovered over Beirut Airport in an attempt to intimidate the Lebanese army! I think in the deepest recesses of my consciousness I understood full well the use of religion in our school as a form of social control (Bhabha, 1994).

Educational emphasis in colonial schools was on the history, language, and heritage of the colonizer (Britain) and not on the history or heritage of the indigenous population. Hence, I always felt confused and experienced a sense of dislocation, perhaps not in regard to speaking English or learning the history of England, but rather by why and how it was that a big part of my own Palestinian Arab educational heritage was missing. In high-school, the language of education shifted to English; Arabic became my second language, and I never got the opportunity to develop my talent in writing Arabic prose or poetry which had been budding in elementary school; Henry the VIII and his wives were more accessible to me than my grandfather's orchards!

Last but not least, my social and psychological displacement (Hourani, 1991/2002, pp. 299–328) was accentuated by not learning anything specific about the history of Palestine. Palestine was invisible, it did not exist in history books that we studied in school. The land of the birth of Christ and its people seemed to exist only in historical archives but not in flesh and blood reality; "Palestine" was a word that was interpreted in colonial consciousness as a remote and far-removed image of a geographical location that was inhabited by the people of the Old Testament, namely Jewish tribes, and the rest of the population of Palestine, the majority of the population in fact, descendants of the Canaanites, Hittites, Semitic Arabs⁵, seemed to have disappeared from the face of the earth! Concomitantly, and as if that was not enough, with regard to Lebanon itself we were exposed in school to only the

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most antiseptic aspects of the history and geography of Lebanon; there was no analysis of any sort, no contexts laid out for a better understanding of why and how it came about that the French had colonized Lebanon, for example, and the British had colonized Palestine. There were never any discussions in our classrooms about the Arab world as ever having constituted a contiguous area—despite the fact that it had been for centuries a semi-unified area under Islamic rule. Moreover, it was the Sykes-Picot agreement⁶ that divided the Arab world (and within it the larger Syria in which Lebanon was located) into smaller political segments to facilitate controlling it by the colonial powers; however, I never learned any of those facts until we began to read history in the university. There was never a mention in our school of the Balfour Declaration of 1917⁷ which in fact had paved the way for the occupation of Palestine.

The Struggle to Adapt and the Ensuing Alienation

The question of return to our native land of Palestine notwithstanding, I constantly felt the need to adapt to the Lebanese environment and society as a young student: this was my psychological childlike defense against dispossession and alienation. On the other hand, my Palestinian national feelings were very strong and it was difficult to articulate them because the ambience around us was such that the Palestinian middle class was attempting constantly to fend off the humiliating images of Palestinian refugees living in the camps on rations from the United Nations. Being driven to get the best education they could, and being highly motivated to educate themselves where formal education was not possible⁸, the Palestinians in general succeeded in the work domains whenever and wherever they had opportunity; their dispossession made them aspire to prove to the world that they were hard working, creative and had an impeccable work ethic. Some Palestinians moved up the economic ladder through their genius and vision; success stories abound and include: Yusuf Baidas who established Intra Bank and Middle East Airlines in Lebanon; Haseeb al-Sabbagh and Said Khoury who established the most prominent and biggest engineering company in the Middle East and perhaps in the region at large, the CCC; Bassem Faris and Badr al-Fahoum who established the biggest insurance company in the Middle East—and many others whose names there is no space to enumerate in this article. Wherever Palestinians settled in the Arab world post 1948, they contributed in major ways to building the infrastructure and to educating the young in those Arab countries—since many Palestinians became teachers, particularly in the Gulf countries within the Middle East.

At the outset of their dispossession, most Palestinians in the camps in Lebanon were forbidden from traveling and from working outside the camps; the only official document they were allowed to carry was an ID that stated the person was a Palestinian refugee. Later on, with the inception of the Palestinian Resistance Movement and the creation of the Palestine Liberation Organization, agreements were put together that allowed young men and women to travel on special documents to Arab countries to work. In general, the Palestinian middle class ended up constituting the larger segment of ex-patriots in Arab countries and some even got official positions in the governments of countries where they became naturalized citizens.⁹

The public arena was rife with discussions on Palestine; in fact, the Palestinian cause became the main topic of discussion in most Arab official political and cultural forums, most newspapers and books and every media outlet including radio and television. There was a contradiction between the discrimination that was taking place on the economic and social levels against Palestinians on the ground in the camps of Lebanon and the intellectual debates that were ongoing in different forums that reified the Palestinian Cause. That, however, did not prevent the gradual growth of a strong affiliation between the poorer Lebanese classes and the Palestinians in the camps; they identified with each other since they were all oppressed and disadvantaged.

Identity and Voice

When I look back, I am amazed at my parents' wisdom in insisting on raising their only daughter in exactly the same manner as they were raising their sons while giving me even more extended privileges. I am proud to be a Palestinian Canadian Arab teacher, mother, writer, researcher and activist. I have a strong voice that has always impacted my students and my community through my teaching, my research, my academic writing as well as my conference presentations; my participation in NGO work (particularly in Canada) through seminars, workshops, as well as media interviews facilitated the dissemination of my eyewitness testimonials on behalf of Palestinian women who were silenced back home.¹⁰

From the perspective of identity, I am aware today that I am hybrid but this awareness did not come naturally nor was it without pain! I can finally say that it is okay for me to be hybrid, that it does not mean I am compromising my Palestinian identity. Emotively, I had to struggle with the fragility and precariousness of the notion of identity. At the

outset of my life, I used to believe like many others that if I do not cling to everything Palestinian in my life whether my linguistic accent, my knowledge of our history and heritage, our food, music, folklore, and our passionate determination to go back to Palestine, then I would be compromising my Palestinian identity—it would be lost like one loses a precious gold necklace or a diamond ring! I yearned to become seasoned in powerful arguments about why the land belongs to us; I was outraged by injustices against my people and that was nurtured by a sense of a national identity and national aspirations that discussions with family and friends strengthened.

But the reality was that I lived (and still do) at the margins, where race, gender, ethnicity, color, socioeconomic status and education intersect and therein lay the richness of my experience. I discovered that I was “NOT White” quite late in life! I am Semitic and share that with my Jewish anti-Zionist friends. There was nothing pure about my identity nor should I have aspired for such a thing nor reified it. I did not understand adequately the complexity of the concept of identity, its multilayered levels, nor the overlap of cultures and civilizations. Obviously, what contributed to my need to cling to Palestinian identity was the massive military and political onslaught on Palestinian national identity, culture and aspirations not only by Israel but by the International community; our people were labeled “terrorists,” and wide and consistent discrimination, harassment, imprisonment, and denigration were practiced against them. This treatment reminds me of the discrimination practiced against the Jews of Europe, merely because they were Jewish, and sometimes, among friends, we whisper that Palestinians are the “Jews of the Arab World.” Palestinians who struggled with weapons were fought fiercely—either through direct combat with the Israeli army in Lebanon—or through the perpetration of massacres against them by Israel and by local Arab agents; thousands died; those who used the pen instead of the sword were also assassinated by the Israelis in their homes, for example the writer Ghassan Kanafani¹¹ (in Beirut in 1972) and the writer and poet Kamal Nasir who was the spokesperson of the PLO (in Beirut in 1973)¹²

My incessant attempts to cling to a Palestinian identity must have helped me deal with my cognitive dissonance and the contradictions within which I was raised. Today, at a more ripe age and having been molded by rich experiences on many levels, I can identify with Amin Maalouf when he says in his Introduction to *In the Name of Identity: Violence and the Need to Belong* (1996):

How many times, since I left Lebanon in 1976 to live in France, have people asked me, with the best of intentions in the world, whether I felt “more French” or “more Lebanese”? And I always give the same answer: “Both!” I say that not in the interest of fairness or balance, but because any other answer would be a lie. What makes me myself rather than anyone else is the very fact that I am poised between two countries, two or three languages and several cultural traditions. It is precisely this that defines my identity. Would I exist more authentically if I cut off a part of myself? (Maalouf, 1996, Introduction)

This is exactly how I feel about being poised between not two but multiple countries (Palestine, Lebanon, and Canada), three languages (Arabic, English and French—with English being the dominant one) and several cultural traditions: Palestinian, Christian, Episcopalian, Lebanese, Arab Muslim, English, Canadian and Quebecois!

Intellectual, Emotional and Spiritual Turmoil

My emotional awareness of my visits to the camps to offer my services as a volunteer while I was still in Lebanon (before I got married and after) was painful: I used to feel so awkward and out of place even though I was welcomed warmly; I felt that I was more like a “fake” Palestinian because I did not live in a camp; in my mind the camp dwellers were the authentic Palestinians!¹³ I was ridden with guilt for not having suffered the same way the majority of our Palestinian people suffered; I was well aware of how much my parents had suffered and the price they paid to not make me and my brothers suffer. However, displacement affects everyone in different ways and those may not necessarily be materialistic.

I was also intellectually confused. How on earth am I to reconcile the Eurocentric education I had received in high-school and the North American education I had received in the university with the new understandings and insights I was garnering through my life experiences? Living as I was in the welter of Palestinian exile and situated at the periphery—where linguistic, social, economic, religious and other aspects of my identity were intersecting, the complexity of this confluence augmented my social and psychological displacement, even though it enriched me in other ways.

Moreover, how was I to reconcile my Christian Palestinian Arab heritage, my faith and my belief in the justice of the Palestinian cause, with the Christian Zionist Western onslaught on the Palestinian Resistance Movement, an onslaught condoned and supported by fundamentalist churches generally in the USA, which fermented hatred against Palestinians and supported the occupation of Palestine through a historical, literal interpretation of Biblical

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text regarding the question of the Promised Land (Ateek, 1991; 2008, pp. 51–66, 72–77, 140–150; Nuwayhed al-Hout, 1991, pp. 26–44, 272–278)¹⁴. Our Palestinian Christian community veered away from a literal interpretation of the Biblical text; pastors and bishops in their sermons whether in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan or other countries of the Fertile Crescent interpreted the Bible metaphorically and looked at the literal interpretation as reductionist and spiritually unjustifiable. I was one of the worshipers sitting in the church pews in Beirut, in the West Bank, and in Amman, Jordan on many occasions; I witnessed the way our church leaders attempted to deal with the cognitive dissonance that we as Palestinians were experiencing when we read passages of the Old Testament that had to do with the notions of the Chosen People and the Promised Land—which the Zionist Movement, although secular, used and abused to augment support from the West and the Western Churches in Europe and North America for the occupation of Palestine. Our pastors and bishops in the Episcopalian tradition tried to veer away from quoting these segments in the Bible. When references to those were unavoidable, interpretations given to the notion of the Promised Land by our Christian Arab theologians went like this: God’s Promise to give the land of Canaan to the children of Abraham was not exclusivist and given to all the descendants—including Ishmael, the father of the Arabs; or, the literal Promise had already been fulfilled since the Jewish tribes already established in Palestine two Kingdoms for a period of seventy years, one of which was the Kingdom of David; or, the promise is not about a specific geographic area and is not one given to a specific tribe or people, but to the whole community of believers. In our Arabic church language, “Israel” meant the community of believers and not Jewish immigrants who swarmed to Palestine to occupy our homes and lands through acts of violence.

While the world gave its total support to the victims of the Holocaust and supported them blindly in their attempts to create a Jewish state in Palestine (without so much as questioning who the indigenous inhabitants of that land were and how would they react to that?), we were experiencing discrimination, oppression and military onslaught on us by those very victims of European anti-Semitism, who became our persecutors. For example, massacres that were committed in Palestine by the Stern and the Haganah gangs made us, the Palestinians, see the Jewish people as terrorists—in the same vein as they saw us when we began resisting occupation.¹⁵

Other than the sermons of our Palestinian Episcopalian pastors, I had never been exposed to a scholarly debate on the question of the Promised Land and the Chosen People; as a young woman studying philosophy, I needed to hear an academic response to this fundamentalist and exclusivist religious mythology. I was angry at the Bible and its rhetoric; I was insulted by the way the word “Palestinian” (“Philistine” in the Bible) became part of the nomenclature denoting “stranger” or “disruptive person”, a derogatory term. I experienced cognitive dissonance in a painful way and it remained with me until I reached Canada. In the Department of Culture and Values at McGill Faculty of Education, I decided to explore the work of the comparative mythologist Joseph Campbell. So, the reader can imagine my joy and exhilaration when I discovered, through my in-depth study of the work of Campbell for my Master of Arts research,¹⁶ how liberating it was for me to find an academic and scholarly interpretation of religious mythology that is not divisive, not ethno-centric, not exclusivist and in harmony with our world-view—the Palestinian Christian view—and one that allows us to reconcile our Christian faith with our life experiences. Reading the work of Joseph Campbell opened up new horizons for me in the understanding of religious mythology; Campbell explored religious mythology from the perspective of a true scholar.

According to Campbell (1986), the Promised Land is not a place in geography to be occupied by force but a spiritual state of the mind and the heart to be reached by contemplation; he calls it the “elementary idea . . . of the Promised Land” (p. 21) or the “Old Testament motif of the Promised Land . . .” (p. 61), and says that the Promised Land is not “a portion of the Near East to be settled by a people chosen of God . . .” (p. 55); he adds that:

The very much later medieval idea of the Earthly Paradise is a variant of the same theme, representing a spiritual region, or condition of mind, whereupon phenomenal forms are recognized as revelatory of transcendence (p. 61).

As a Palestinian Christian, I felt truly liberated when I read that; I had not been able to ascribe to a literal interpretation of this motif because literalness misinterprets such a profoundly spiritual concept; literal interpretations, in my view, would make me a believer in a “warring” religious mythology that perceives [G]od through reductionist and fundamentalist lenses which give “ethnic centrality” the last word in religion (Campbell, 1986, p. 34). Only a metaphorical interpretation of Biblical text would allow me to reconcile irreconcilable images in the Old Testament where, on the one hand, what seems to be “an exclusivist (g)od is spurring his people to invade and raise havoc in the Land of Canaan” (as in Deuteronomy 7; 1–6), while on the other hand, the same (god)

disseminates promises of eternal peace where : “The wolf and the lamb feed together, the lion shall eat straw like the ox” (Joshua 65: 25) (Campbell, 1988, p. 183).

Palestinian Arab Christian Identity?

Like the late Edward Said (1996), as a Christian Palestinian, I do not identify myself with a minority in Palestine or within the Arab world. In the following passage Said speaks about Kamal Nasir, the assassinated poet and Palestinian leader (whom I discuss in more depth in my autobiographical work in progress and who was actually my mother’s cousin). Said also writes about Hanna Mikhail, a Palestinian Arab scholar of Islamic thought. Nasir and Mikhail were from a Christian background and were both Said’s friends; they each had a legitimate place within the Palestinian Resistance Movement. My maternal uncle Kamal was nicknamed “The Conscience” because of his nonpartisan perspective which allowed him to be widely loved and respected. It is interesting and indicative that many scholars of Arab Islamic thought were Christians¹⁷:

Like Kamal Nasir, Hanna Mikhail came from a Christian background; this is something I share with them. As I think about it, the three of us in fact had very different educations and we came to the Palestinian struggle from extremely divergent perspectives. Kamal was a Ba’athist originally; Hanna was a Quaker graduate and a Middle Eastern scholar; though I was born in Jerusalem, and grew up in Cairo, I was almost completely Western in my education and knowledge. None of us, however, felt that we were members of a minority, although of course we were. Each of us regarded our heritage as Arab-Islamic and our cultural perspectives as internationalist. Palestine was a liberation ideal, not a provincial movement for municipal self-rule under foreign tutelage. We saw it as an integral unit within the liberation movements of the Third World—secular, democratic, revolutionary. (Said, 1996, p. 79)

Being aware of the larger connections between Arabs and Westerners, I tended to see things in gray rather than black and white; I resented, without understanding why at the time, the binary oppositions through which colonizers had taught us to perceive the world (Bhabha, 1994). Even though I was politically against many aspects of Western foreign policy, that did not prevent me from appreciating Western culture and its aesthetic traditions nor did it prevent me from falling in love with English literature, for example. However, that also meant that my family and I, as well as other families in our middle class community, were cast into preconceived molds during the Civil War in Lebanon where we were perceived as “bourgeois” Western educated people by those who espoused radical revolutionary perspectives; the irony was, however, that we saw ourselves as quite revolutionary and very progressive in our thinking. I recognize today that this kind of categorization of people must have been due to the influence of socialist Marxist thinking on the Palestinian Revolution. Being labeled was hurtful to me because the Palestinian middle class and upper class both supported the Palestinian struggle in manifold ways, whether materially, morally, emotionally, intellectually or culturally.

The Impact of Western Philosophical Paradigms on My Education and on My Future Teaching Practice

Loughran and Northfield (1998) argue that “Reflection is a personal process of thinking, refining, reframing, and developing actions” (p. 15). In a way I am engaging in exactly what Katharine Childs describes as critical reflection . . . used almost exclusively by practitioners who study their own practice through the lens of their personal beliefs and values by adopting a form of autobiography or auto-ethnography (Coles & Knowles, 1995) with the intention of aligning their practice more closely with their values. (Childs in Mitchell, Weber & O’Reilly-Scanlon, 2003, p. 143).

Hence “the emphasis of self-study is usually placed on the growth and understanding that develops from critical reflection” (Childs, 2003, p. 143). Looking back again, in and out, up and down in the three-dimensional space that is my life, I find that the emotional and intellectual turmoil I was experiencing led me to study philosophy since I could not study drama which was my passion. Studying drama was not an appropriate medium for females aspiring to have a dignified career in the Arab World—at least at that time when I was young. Female actors were not well respected in our hierarchical and patriarchal world; my father understood that well because he was a radio and television producer and director; hence his advice was that if I wanted to do theater, I needed to emigrate to England. That was not a prospect I welcomed. I was on a quest; the next best field for me was philosophy; I made that choice because I was aware that I could at least have a voice in the classroom, that I would be permitted to speak up and speak out, debate and even challenge my professors!

I was fascinated by the Western philosophical tradition and studied its developments in depth. Mastering that knowledge was one of my aims in life; Arabic philosophy had only been accessible to me in a much diluted form in preparation for my public exams in my last year of high-school. However, I did not have the necessary scaffolding to

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study it in university; in truth I was not really interested in it and I see that as a deficiency, a lack in my own values and thinking that was a consequence of my Eurocentric education. Today, things are different; I would not teach a Sociology course, for example, without delving into the work of Ibn Khaldoun, the great Arab genius and, historically, the earliest sociologist, long before Jean-Jacques Rousseau; today I know better. Studying in English had created within me a love of European philosophy and an avid interest in the writings of the post-Enlightenment and post Scientific Revolution era: The Renaissance fascinated me. I loved playing with ideas; I was fascinated by sifting the different aspects of an issue or the laborious entanglements within a certain discourse in the same manner as one would enjoy a game of chess or scrabble. But I had a specific aversion towards analytic philosophy and positivism; I “felt in my gut” that something was terribly wrong with it. Today I understand why that tradition alienated its inheritors emotionally and dismissed their individual identities; it sought transcendence, constantly, through the disembodiment, through the split between mind and body.

In *Teacher as Stranger*, Maxine Greene (1973) says that teaching humans to be rational creatures was the major thrust of western philosophy in its early days, that to be rational was to be human and to exemplify the highest forms of self-realization (p. 28). But to be rational was to negate the personal, the emotional, the individual and the contextual and to emphasize the categorical, the universal, and the search for absolute categories through which one could describe human thinking and agency. We know how Plato’s *Republic* has influenced Western civilization for many centuries. Although Plato did not mean for the human being to become a closeted metaphysician (Durant, 1933, p. 33), institutions of all kinds, political, social, religious, economic and pedagogical, used Plato’s theories to make the individual succumb to that larger [U]niversal, [T]ranscendental, [O]ther [W]orldly, [A]bsolute, [T]ruth. The career of philosophy during the early decades of the seventeenth century until the age of modernity was intimately tied to the Scientific Revolution, which it accompanied and stimulated, for which it provided a foundation, and by which it was critically molded Philosophy now acquired an entirely new identity and structure as it entered into its third great epoch in the history of the Western mind. (Tarnas, 1991, p. 272).

The shift from the religious worldview to the scientific one began to dominate from the seventeenth century onwards. Initially, philosophy began as “definer and judge of the literate culture’s world view” (Tarnas, 1991, p. 272); with the advent of the medieval period and the Christian religion’s assumption of preeminent status, philosophy took on a subordinate role, that of joining of faith to reason (p. 272). Post Enlightenment and post Scientific Revolution, “philosophy began to reestablish itself again as a more fully independent force in the intellectual life of the culture . . . [through] its momentous transfer of allegiance from religion to science” (p. 272).

I see the influence of Rene Descartes (1596–1690) as central in the increasing power of this paradigm that had such damaging consequences for embodied thinking. His work epitomized the rationalist paradigm. The notion of preexisting truth, as Greene says, would only manifest itself to a mind with no illusions and prejudices; “Cogito ergo sum” are words that have rung through the centuries (Greene, 1994, p. 438).

That the consequences of such a development should be felt so acutely by a Palestinian Arab-Christian girl in Beirut centuries later is one of the fascinating aspects of this narrative inquiry; philosophy has been important to me in both my education and my teaching. Yet, as Susan Bordo points out, philosophy’s traditions were for a long time founded on a “flight from the feminine”—it was this flight from the feminine that disturbed me because it was a flight from whom I myself was.

Emphasis on purity, clarity, objectivity, and certainty attracted me, perhaps bizarrely, because of its promises of “truth” and clarity—denying my own embodied reality as a woman and as a young Palestinian female from the Arab world. Moreover, the patriarchal tradition took a double toll on me since it was impacting a female from an oppressed culture too. Upon reconsideration, this was not strange because this kind of thinking coincided with our religious education at school and the Christian teaching emphasis on achieving purity through salvation while denying the body and whatever gratifies it as sinful. The unnatural emphasis on “purity” in our Christian missionary education and on constant prayer and on a precocious awareness of sin really made me very depressed in school. One thing that helped me, however, was that the community of our Arabic Episcopalian Church did not worship in the same way as the British teachers did; in our local Church, there was more focus on celebration of God’s love, and there was a spirit of joy permeating our Sunday services rather than an obsession with a stern punitive perspective on sin—as was the case in our school.

Albert Hourani captures the mood of my dislocation, my disembodiment when he says:

The fact that so many of the higher institutions were foreign had several implications. For an Arab boy or girl to

study in one of them was itself an act of social and psychological displacement; it involved studying in accordance with a method and curriculum alien to the traditions of the society from which he[sic] came, and doing so through the medium of a foreign language, which became the first or perhaps the only language in which he could think of certain subjects and practice certain vocations. (Hourani, 1991/2002, p. 327)

In my philosophical studies and the more recent critique of them through my narrative inquiry, I see a particularly problematic development in the group of philosophers called the Logical Positivists at the outset of the twentieth century. They began to see no difference between philosophy and science. In fact while science could be seen during that period as an analysis of empirical reality, the logical positivists reduced the job of philosophy to the analysis of language.

I summarize all of this to contextualize and emphasize the turn of events in the philosophical field, and hence in philosophy of education, which directly impacted on my development as a learner and teacher. Something in me was sufficiently attracted to this area of knowledge to spend years of energy and time reading and teaching it.

I am focusing on the dominance of science at the turn of the twentieth century and the attempt by philosophers to emulate science. But there was a big problem in defining and interpreting experience and in seeing how experience can be translated into knowledge. Then a miracle occurred in my education, and I found writers like Maxine Greene, Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule, Elizabeth Dodson Gray, Mark Johnson, Carol Gilligan, Carol Witherell, Nel Noddings, Fritjof Capra, and Bryan Magee; that was very liberating for me; it helped me understand the ways in which I had been engaged in an act of self-silencing. The aforementioned authors aided me to understand that claims surrounding the “certainty” and “objectivity” of truth were in themselves biased and reductionist. The a-moral, disembodied, and purely linguistic form of philosophy constituted the antithesis of the kind of knowledge I sought—the embodied, East-West knowledge I finally was able to access in the writing of my doctoral dissertation which opened the floodgates to other kinds of writing.

Talking back

Bryan Magee, the professional broadcaster, music and theater critic, writes a captivating narrative about the history of philosophy from the perspective of his own personal journey with it in his book: *Confessions of a Philosopher* (1997). He narrates eloquently his struggle with several leading Logical Positivists who were his colleagues while he was studying at Oxford. He knew Russell, Moore, Wittgenstein and Whitehead. I connected with his narrative so well because of my need to personalize education and to make it relevant, individual, contextual, meaningful, historically situated, and more human in every way. I remember an incident where my doctoral advisor asked me why I would even mention in my dissertation that some of those Logical Positivists came from Oxford, (and in the context of my Ph. D. Dissertation “Who cares?”) She was right in one sense, but not right in another. I cared and continued to care because I needed to locate those philosophers in a specific cultural time and space and deny those White European males the attribute of an intimidating transcendent authoritarian voice from above. These were human beings whom Magee knew personally; his personal encounters with them demystifies them, and his anecdotal recounting of certain incidents and situations in relation to them makes it clear that these were indeed European White Men.

The Logical Positivist, according to Magee’s account, and according to my impressions gauged by reading some of them, were engaging in philosophy as an intellectual game; philosophy was not to them a discipline through which they intended to unravel mysteries or solve important problems; it was probably a mere intellectual tool that helped them ascertain their claim to intellectual superiority. Philosophy did not seem to be close to the heart, nor was philosophical inquiry a discipline that was going to help them answer existential questions dealing with life and death, illness, sadness, love, fear, tragedy or any other paradoxical aspects of life. Magee believed that by reducing the job of philosophy to language analysis, “philosophy had abandoned philosophy” (Magee, 1997, pp. 85–86).

I would indeed give such a narrative as Magee’s to my students to read and explore in order to understand the history of ideas and of philosophy better, to contextualize it, to make it accessible, to make it embodied and to deconstruct and demystify those philosophers. Magee’s language is not intimidating; it is not obtuse, high-sounding, or obfuscated language. For if philosophy is to explain anything about the world, its approach must be accessible; it ought not to wall out ordinary human life and ordinary human discourse. As a passionate narrator of his own experiences with those colleagues who belonged to Logical Positivism at Oxford, Magee empowers me as a female educator, particularly because his voice in the text is not a voice from above, not an intimidating, pretentious, impersonal, and detached voice, but an embodied voice; I feel I can now stand and talk back at this particular group of White European male philosophers and challenge them. I can say clearly, “I think you are pretentious and your

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philosophy is a jumble of mind games that does not help me understand the world better. I will not teach you to my students.”

Carol Gilligan and Mark Johnson (1993) facilitated the shift in my thinking about the moral imagination and confirmed to me that as Johnson says: “moral objectivity consists, not in having an absolute God’s eye point of view,” but rather “. . . a specific kind of reflective, exploratory, and critical process of evaluation carried out through communal discourse and practice” (p. 217). Johnson (1993) demonstrates the error of understanding reason from either an absolutist perspective or an extreme relativist perspective; both views, according to him do not work:

In sharp contrast with the static, nondevelopmental and nonevolutionary absolutist view of our identity as moral agents, I have been emphasizing the temporal character of everything human. We are beings whose identities emerge and develop in an ongoing process of interactions within our physical, interpersonal, and cultural environments. To function successfully within these changing environments our reason must be expansive, exploratory, and flexible. The locus of our moral understanding is thus our imaginative rationality (as human, rather than Universal, Reason) that allows us to envision and to test out in imagination various possible solutions to morally problematic situations. By giving us alternative perspectives, it also thereby gives us a means for criticizing and evaluating those projected courses of action and the values they presuppose. (p. 219)

My understanding of how science develops and grows was greatly enhanced by reading Thomas Kuhn in *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1996) as well as Fritjof Capra in *The Turning Point* (1983) and *The Tao of Physics* (1991). What I discovered about paradigm shifts in science dovetailed with my other readings in philosophy and my voracious appetite for reading the work of female scholars and teachers. I was able to reconcile contradictory views I held on philosophy, science, social science and art; I became totally immersed in multi-disciplinary approaches to teaching and learning. I was, as Johnson (1993) says, “a creature in process”:

We are creatures in process, evolving selves whose identities are tied up with social relations and are affected by historical contingencies. I want to argue for a self-in-process, that is a self that is neither completely alienated from, nor completely submerged in, its acts, but instead an identity that is both revealed and transformed by its experience as it develops over time. It is this temporal, transformative process that moral objectivism cannot abide, because such a process would deny the static essence objectivism needs as the locus of moral agency. (p. 133)

Today, I understand fully what was wrong with the essentialist, Eurocentric education I had gone through; I understand how and why it alienated me. I also understand in particular the patriarchal misconceptions that dominated the world views I had been exposed to. I know from whence I speak when I explain to my students why and how patriarchy is “a conceptual trap” (in Elizabeth Dodson Gray’s words).¹⁸ I also understand the need to get rid of the essentialist, Eurocentric patriarchal voices of [U]niversal [R]eason that hover over students’ thinking and intimidate them, how those voices have intimidated students and teachers over the centuries and decades. I agree with Sandra Harding (1998) that:

Europe’s domain of the “local” expanded in a fashion that was at least partially predatory of other cultures’ resources and the localness of such European features was made to disappear. Until recently, the European worldview seemed the only reasonable one to Europeans and their admirers. (p. 72)

I understand my confusion and my alienation because I understand the context in which I studied, the embodied context. I also join other feminist writers questioning “the supposed [G]od’s eye view” of the academy—as Linda Nicholson says in *The Introduction to Feminism/Postmodernism* (Nicholson, 1990, p. 3); I can affirm with pride and without any apologetic innuendos that I am a knower, I am empowered, I have a voice, because I have overcome the artificial dualistic conception of the rational mind and the irrational body which the Australian philosopher Genevieve Lloyd masterfully deconstructed in her groundbreaking work *The Man of Reason: “Male” and “Female” in Western Philosophy* (1984); she demonstrated that this dualistic conception aligned women symbolically with irrationality and men with rationality when maleness carried historically associations of mind and reason while femaleness carried associations with passions, nature, and body.

Tuhiwai Smith (1999) speaks of indigenous populations wanting to tell their stories in their own way, for their own reasons. And I, in my hybrid space, using my research as a site of resistance, am about reconciliation: Reconciliation of Mind and Body, reconciliation of Male and Female, reconciliation of Palestinian and Jew, reconciliation of East and West, reconciliation of the Word and the World.

But in order that reconciliation be possible between these constructed binary opposites, there needs to be an

Indigenous Other who actually is not a mere creation of the colonizer or oppressor's imagination. For the world to hear me speak, *I need to speak with my own voice.*

ENDNOTES

- ¹The title of the article was inspired by Denzin & Lincoln's description of the qualitative researcher: "The qualitative researcher as *bricoleur* or maker of quilts uses the aesthetic and material tools of his or her craft, deploying whatever strategies, methods, or empirical materials are at hand" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 4).
- ²As homi bhabha says in the Introduction to *The Location of Culture* (1994) and in quoting Heidegger: A boundary is not that at which something stops but, as the Greeks recognized, the boundary is that from which something begins its presencing.
- ³My father and paternal uncles and aunts all got Lebanese passports for their families; being Christian facilitated the acquisition of such official documents within the ambience of sectarian driven policies—where the President of Lebanon, usually a Christian Maronite in confessional Lebanon, was eager to increase the number of Christians within the country. But being "Lebanese" for me had to do with much more than holding the passport; it had to do with constantly attempting to adapt to the "Lebanese" way of being, customs, colloquial language -to avoid the pain of being transparently Palestinian since that meant loss, sadness and shame.
- ⁴I say multicultural because the geographical location of Palestine put it at "an intersecting point between major not only religions but cultures. The cultures of East and West intersect there, Hellenic, Greek, Armenian, Syrian, Levantine, broadly speaking, and the European, Christian, African, Phoenician—it's a fantastic conjuncture" (Said & Barsamian, 1994, 26).
- ⁵Professor Bayan Nuwayhed al-Hout traces the history of Palestinian Arabs back to three thousand years B.C. dating to the Amorite exodus from the Arab Peninsula; those Semitic Arab tribes settled in the land of Canaan and amalgamated with the people of the fertile Crescent as well as with the Philistines who came from the sea, from Crete; the majority of the inhabitants spoke Aramaic and fought the Egyptian and the Hittite invasions. As such, she demonstrates that the Arabs existed in Palestine even during the time that the prophet Moses was there. (Nuwayhed al-Hout, 1991).
- ⁶Sykes-Picot agreement, the Anglo-French agreement of 1916 "while accepting the principle of Arab independence laid down in the correspondence with the *sharif* Husayn, divided the area into zones of permanent influence" (Hourani, 1991/2002, pp. 318; 319–322).
- ⁷In the Balfour Declaration of 1917, the British government undertook to "view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people" in Palestine "with a flat disregard of both the presence and the wishes of the native majority resident in that territory" (Said, 1979, pp. 15–16).
- ⁸My father, Kamel Costandi, could not afford to go to university and was self-taught; he became one of the most reputed radio directors (of programs and radio plays) in the Arab world. He was nicknamed: "The golden voice."
- ⁹For example, Mr. Hatem Zubi who held different Ministerial positions in Jordan and established, later, the most prominent law office in the Kingdom of Bahrain.
- ¹⁰My research in fact earned me the **Margaret Gillett Award** from the Centre for Research and Teaching on Women at McGill University (April 10, 2000). My community work earned me **The Helen Prize for Women** (Montreal, March 8, 1999) where a group of women, of whom I was one, were honored for their community engagement; I obtained that prize for merging my academic work with my community work.
- ¹¹Please see *The Encyclopedia of the Palestine Problem* (Online) 1991, by Issa Nakhleh, pages 11 and 833.
- ¹²See Rosemary Radford Ruether's "'We Have No One to Talk To': Israel's targeted Assassination Policy," Counterpunch 3 June, 2006 <http://www.counterpunch.org/ruether06032006.html> ; also see *The Encyclopedia of the Palestine Problem* (Online) 1991, by Issa Nakhleh, Chapter 8: A Massacre in Beirut. Accessed December 26th, 2009.
- ¹³I believe that this was partly due to the leftist socialist rhetoric that dominated the discourse of the Palestinian

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revolution at the time; the less fortunate and those who lived in the camps used to call the middle and upper classes: “the bourgeois.” Being young and impressionable, I was influenced by that. I felt that there was a debt of an amount of suffering that I had to pay!

¹⁴Both authors deal extensively and in depth with the notion of the Promised Land; **Naim Ateek**’s books are particularly valuable since they are in English and since he is a theologian, a Palestinian pastor who lives in the West Bank. In his book: *A Palestinian Christian Cry for Reconciliation* (2008), he writes about the theology of the land in chapter 4 which is entitled: “The Bible and the Land;” chapter 5 is entitled: “Jonah: the first Palestinian Liberation Theologian;” chapter 11 is entitled “Whose Jerusalem?” In it the author addresses the theology of the land.

¹⁵It was impossible for Palestinians to feel the pain of the Jewish victims of the Holocaust—as others in the world did—since they, the Palestinians, were becoming the very victims of the victimized Jews of Europe who had put together the Zionist project to occupy Palestine and settle it, a colonial project. Two of the most famous massacres committed against the Palestinians in Palestine were the Kafr Kasim massacre and the Deir Yassin massacre. Please see *The Encyclopedia of the Palestine Problem (Online)* by Issa Nakhleh, Chapter Ten: Examples of Massacres Committed by the Zionists, Part 1 of 3. http://www.palestine-encyclopedia.com/EPP/Chapter10_1of3.htm Accessed December 26, 2009.

¹⁶The title of my Master’s thesis was: “The Spiritual Aspects of Joseph Campbell’s Hermeneutics in Mythology: An Examination Leading to Implications for Religious Education” (1994).

¹⁷Other names one can adduce are of Lebanese Christian thinkers who studied Arab Islamic thought and produced prolific volumes on what the Arab Muslim civilization gave to the world; for example, Amin Maalouf who wrote *The Crusades through Arab Eyes* (1983, Schocken Books, New York/1984 translated edition from French to English by Al Saqi Books, England); another example is the distinguished Albert Hourani in whose name there is a book award and who wrote the voluminous and exceptional study in 1991: *A History of the Arab Peoples* (more recently republished with a forward by Malise Ruthven by the Belknap Press of Harvard University Press in 2002) as well as his classic: *Arab Thought in the Liberal Age 1789–1939*; although born in Manchester in 1915, Hourani was the son of Lebanese immigrants Fadlo and Sumaya Hourani who emigrated to England from Marjayun in the South of Lebanon.

¹⁸The book by the same title: *Patriarchy as a Conceptual Trap* by Elizabeth Dodson Gray (1982) was really an eye-opener for me and for my students.

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E PLURIBUS AD PLURIBUS: HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS OF MULTICULTURALISM

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To be able to imagine the other and the experience of the other is what wisdom is all about. But nobody talks about wisdom or virtue. Wisdom and virtue are not appreciated in a world of glitz and effect.¹

Introduction

The emphasis on multiculturalism in America has largely developed as a consequence of the Civil Rights Movement of the middle of the last century. Supreme Court decisions and civil rights legislation have greatly impacted American society and have created a social atmosphere that ideally seeks to provide greater social equality and economic opportunity. The postwar recognition of multiculturalism does not, however, mean that the social conditions did not exist and our focus on American society often does not take into account the historical and international elements of the difficulties faced by multicultural and pluralist societies. There is a need for an examination of the historical, psychological, social, and philosophical factors which will assist us in the exploration of the roles of difference in the society.

This paper is an effort to bring together some of the philosophical, historical, and international background of multiculturalism in an effort to appreciate the human condition in a wider range of societies. Such an appreciation can only, it seems to me, assist us in the continuing search for a truly free and open society.

Nationalism

Multiculturalism is a twentieth-century concept but its origins are in the nationalistic movements of the nineteenth. The origins of national groups are largely linguistic. Most groups view the creation of a written language as one of the primary factors in their national identity. Latin served the purpose before the nineteenth century, and Esperanto was the latest effort. The rise of national linguistic groups changed the political, economic, and social conditions of the nations of Europe beginning at about the time of the Thirty-Years War. The Peace of Westphalia which ended the Thirty Years War recognized the need to establish state boundaries and to re-emphasize the rights of rulers to determine the religion for their own state (Roman Catholic, Lutheran, and Calvinist were the choices) and the rights of other Christians to religious freedom. From the recognition of the sovereignty of states arose the idea of states which corresponded to nations, people united by language and culture.

Nationalism was the most powerful political force after the Napoleonic wars. France and England were unified by state-driven nationalism (the state preceded the nation). The European revolutions of 1848 were largely nationalist in origin resulting from the challenge to the rule of monarchs and aristocracy and the lack of autonomy of minority peoples. The rise of socialism as a response to the increasing industrialization of Europe also played a role in the revolutionary unrest. The movement toward national states came in the aftermath. Germany and Italy were consolidated. The Austrian Empire was divided into the dual monarchy of Austria-Hungary with a new constitution that recognized its multinational nature. Many other national states only came into being after the First World War and the states that came into being were not nationally homogenous; they all had minority-groups. Czechoslovakia, for example, consisted of Czechs, Slovaks, Germans, Hungarians, Ruthenians, and Jews.

Internationalism

The colonial empires which began in the sixteenth and lasted, in some cases, into the twentieth century added new pressures. The Austrian then Austro-Hungarian Empire serves as a good example of the difficulties linguo-ethnic identity can lead to. The Austro-Hungarian Constitution recognized the equality of all customary languages with public and educational institutions available in multiethnic regions. In the Austrian part of the empire Bohemia had German as the official language until the majority of the Diet became Czech in 1880. Czech, Slovenian, Croatian, Polish, Romanian, and Italian became customary (official) languages. Charles University was split into Czech and German faculties. The Hungarian part of the empire was less willing to allow linguistic freedoms but had to allow for Slovak, Serbian, Romanian, Ruthenian, and German. Hebrew and Yiddish and Gypsy Roma were also present but never achieved "customary" status. This polyglot empire was long beset by problems associated with the desire of the ethno-linguistic groups for autonomy. The assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo and the First World War dismembered Austria-Hungary but since the empire had spread German-speaking people throughout its lands and region the resulting states problems with minorities survived.

The origins of national groups are largely linguistic. Most groups view the creation of a written language as one

of the primary factors in their national identity the origins of which are often literary. A number of efforts have been made to provide a universal language. John Amos Komensky, Comenius, advocated a universal language in the seventeenth century, Esperanto is the latest effort. The rise of national linguistic groups changed the political, economic, and social conditions of the nations of Europe beginning at about the time of the Thirty-Years War. The colonial empires which began in the sixteenth and lasted, in some cases, into the twentieth century added new pressures. The Austrian then Austro-Hungarian Empire serves as a good example of the difficulties linguo-ethnic identity can lead to. The Austro-Hungarian Constitution recognized the equality of all customary languages with public and educational institutions available in multiethnic regions. In the Austrian part of the empire, Bohemia had German as the official language until the majority of the Diet became Czech in 1880. Czech, Slovenian, Croatian, Polish, Romanian, and Italian became customary languages. After the First World War and the creation of the successor states a minority problem remained for each of those nations. Nazi Germany's *Anschluss* with Austria and the demands for the Sudeten area of Czechoslovakia resulted from the desire on the one hand to enlarge the Reich to include Austrian Germans (the *Anschluss*) and on the other to include the ethnic Germans minority living in western Czechoslovakia and ultimately World War II.

The Russian Empire serves as a good example since the revolutionary movement took into account the question of ethnic differences. Josef Stalin was the Commissar of Nationalities and, with Nikolai Lenin's assistance produced a book, *The Nationalities Question*, which established the Bolshevik view of a multinational society. During the seventy-year existence of the Soviet Union, a concerted effort was made to downplay the differences between the many cultures and hold up the ideal of Soviet citizenship reminiscent of Plato's Republic in which all the citizens were happy because their place in society corresponded with their needs and talents. Ultimately, the ideal of the "soviet Citizen" failed. The dissolution of the Soviet Union dissolved the Soviet ideal and the nationalities and ethnic groups again demanded their own states and minorities from other republics.

The Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, a nation of six republics, five nationalities, four languages, three religions, two alphabets and one Tito did quite well after World War II. A truly pluralistic society, the Yugoslavs were among the most prosperous of the European communist countries. An early break with the Soviet Union over the Warsaw Pact led Yugoslavia on its own political and economic path and for thirty years. Yugoslavs traveled with ease to jobs in Western Europe and there was a certain tolerance for European commerce. With the death of Tito in 1980, things increasingly began to deteriorate. By the 1990s all the historical animosities that existed among the various groups resulted in horrific ethnic and religious cleansing.

Americanism

In the United States the idea of the melting pot relied on the assimilation of immigrant nationalities into the Anglo Saxon mainstream. This was not always and in all places possible. In some cases it was the local society that limited the social conditions necessary for assimilation as well as the desire of the immigrants to be in familiar circumstances even though that meant living in national enclaves. In the early twentieth century these issues reached a tipping point and a more cosmopolitan attitude toward diversity was demanded.

Horace Kallen, Randolph Bourne, and John Dewey

The three most important names in the early consideration of the set of ideas that are now expressed as multiculturalism are Horace Kallen, Randolph Bourne, and John Dewey. Kallen and Bourne focused on pluralist ideas, Dewey's interest was in the social dynamics of democracy in the United States. Kallen, Bourne, and Dewey were acquainted with each other and even friends. They each contributed to the *New Republic*, Kallen first met Dewey in a 1905 or 06 meeting of the American Philosophical Association. He corresponded with Dewey and was invited to teach at Columbia in the summer of 1917 and in the spring of 1918. In 1919 Kallen moved to New York where he and Dewey helped found the New School for Social Research and began a long relationship. In 1927 Kallen invited Dewey to be one of the lecturers at the New School for a course on the problems of freedom. *Freedom in the Modern World* was the result of that course with Dewey supplying a chapter. Bourne was Dewey's student at Columbia and an admirer of Dewey's thought until their disagreement on the entry of the United States into the First World War. Bourne was influenced by the ideas published by Kallen in his article "Democracy Versus the Melting Pot" but found Kallen's cultural pluralism too confining, too much determined by heritage. Bourne's idea, published in "Trans-National America" expressed a cosmopolitan view, in which a person's identity was liberated from the ethnic group to be determined by choices from a wide range of cultural possibilities.

Horace Kallen

Horace Kallen was the son of a Silesian rabbi who emigrated to Boston in 1887 when Horace was only five years

old. He attended secular public schools much to his father's chagrin and distanced himself, it seems, from the conservative Judaism of his family. When Kallen entered Harvard he was interested in writing novels and poetry but soon was attracted to philosophy, especially aesthetics and social philosophy. It was in a literature class that Horace saw the impact of religion from a different perspective. He completed his undergraduate degree in 1903. Kallen became a Zionist supporter of a Jewish homeland and an active member of the Jewish community working in such organizations as the American Jewish Congress, the American Association for Jewish Education, of which he was vice-president, and YIVO-Institute for Jewish Research. His papers were bequeathed to the American Jewish Archives. Kallen taught English at Princeton from 1903 to 1905 then studied philosophy in Europe at Oxford University and University de Paris La Sorbonne. He returned to Harvard to complete the Ph. D. in 1908 as a student of William James, Josiah Royce, and George Santayana. He taught at Harvard and at Clarke College until he was appointed to the faculty of the University of Wisconsin in Madison in 1911. He remained in Madison until he was forced to resign for his support of conscientious objectors in 1918. In 1919 he was among the founding faculty of the New School for Social Research along with James Harvey Robinson, Charles A. Beard, Thorstein Veblen, Alvin Johnson and Robert Bruerre. Kallen was named research professor of Social Philosophy in 1952 and retired in 1969. He taught his last class in 1973 at the age of 91, as the last of the founding professors. He taught courses at Harvard, Columbia, the University of Wisconsin, Ohio State University and Claremont College (California). He died in February 1974.²

Kallen was familiar with pluralism in philosophy. William James, with whom Kallen studied as an undergraduate, wrote significantly of pluralism in philosophy. After James' death in 1910, Kallen took on the task of getting James' last book into print. In the editing of *Some Problems of Philosophy*, Kallen again encountered philosophical pluralism. James wrote about pluralism as opposed to monism, primarily in a religious and philosophical sense.³ Kallen first spoke of cultural pluralism, he says, in George Santayana's Harvard classroom where Alain Locke was a student and Kallen was Santayana's assistant.⁴ By 1915, Kallen had expressed in print the idea of pluralism applied to culture. Kallen first used "cultural pluralism" in print in 1924 in *Culture and Democracy in the United States* where he wrote, "The standpoint of these essays can be described briefly as Cultural Pluralism. The outcome of the observation they embody is the view that democracy is an essential prerequisite to culture, that culture can be and sometimes is a fine flowering of democracy, and that the history of the relation of the two in the United States exhibits this fact."⁵

The cultural pluralism, described by Kallen in his essay "Democracy Versus the Melting Pot," which appeared in *The Nation* in Feb. 1915, challenged the views of his then University of Wisconsin colleague, E. A. Ross. Ross's book, *The Old World in the New*, was a discussion of the relative merits of the ethnic and cultural attributes of non-English immigrant groups. Kallen says,

The Germans, as Mr. Ross points out, have largely a monopoly of brewing and baking and cabinet-making. The Irish shine in no particular industries unless it be those carried on by municipalities and public-service corporations. The Jews mass in the garment-making industries, tobacco manufacture, and in the "learned professions." The Scandinavians appear to be on the same level as the Jews in the general estimation, and going up. They are farmers, mostly, and outdoor men. The Slavs are miners, metal-workers, and packers.⁶

When he wrote the "Democracy Versus the Melting Pot," Kallen was more focused on the group as the primary source of identity. For Kallen the United States was a federation of enduring cultures, a celebration of difference. Kallen, in reaction to the assimilationist idea of the melting pot, developed the analogy of the symphony orchestra to describe the role of cultural groups in American society. Kallen's symphony emphasized the integrity and autonomy of ethno-racial groups. He defended the right of immigrants to resist Anglo-Protestant assimilation and maintain cohesive cultural communities. John Dewey who worked with Kallen on the Bertrand Russell case, viewed Kallen's ideas as extreme and warned him against the undemocratic dangers of segregation and identifying individuals too closely with groups.⁷ Kallen later expanded his view of cultural pluralism. He wrote,

In my mind, here is what it fundamentally signifies: first, a concept that social science and social philosophy can and do employ as a working hypothesis concerning human nature and human relations; second, an ethical ideal—an article of faith which challenges certain prevailing philosophical conceptions about both.

It postulates that individuality is indefeasible, that differences are primary, and that consequently human beings have an indefeasible right to their differences and should not be penalized for their differences, however they may be constituted, whatever they may consist in: color, faith, sex, occupation, possessions, or what have you.⁸

Kallen recognized that society's natural inclination is toward unification, but thought that such unification would

ultimately be unsuccessful. He wrote,

The propensity is to “assimilate” the culturally diverse, converting the differences into sameness with one’s own culture, while what cannot be converted because one is too weak or another is too strong, tends to be excreted, isolated, destroyed, as an offense, an unworthiness, a foe of the good, the true and the beautiful . . . Under certain conditions this disposition may become a ruling passion, the impulsion of a program whose utterance by rite and rote is articulated into a creed and a code respecting human nature, human destiny and human relations . . . No institution of any civilization ever gathers enough power to impose an everlasting submission and servitude upon the different, or to suppress differentiation with the same. Every authoritarian culture . . . has its perennial sayings and inquisitions and purgings, and every non-authoritarian culture seeks them on occasion, witness Mccarthyism in mid-century United States.⁹

Later Kallen wrote about the dilemma of the many and the one, pluralist and monist, he said,

. . . nature breeds and multiplies differences . . . different species, different peoples, different communities with different economies, different faiths, different cultures, and different ways of life and living. The mere existence of these differences is a denial of the claims and a challenge to the rule of those who speak on behalf of a One, sole, exclusive, sovereign authority . . . As the enemy of difference, such authority is also the enemy of freedom, since freedom lives and moves and has its being in the rights to be different. It wages permanent war against freedom . . . those who would impose their One to destroy or to enslave those who acknowledge and respect the equal liberty of the many.¹⁰

The question remains of how to adequately recognize the right to be different. For Kallen, a democratic nation is a nation under law and, “Law, in democratic societies, works as a series of covenants of the different, by the different, for the different; it signalizes an organization of liberty.”¹¹ The United States, Kallen believed had worked out the framework for creating a means for dealing with difference. He said,

The way of resolving the problem of the One and the Many starts in such acknowledgment and respect (of the equal liberty of the many). We call it the democratic way. Its device is *e pluribus unum*. Its doctrine is stated by the Declaration of Independence. Its discipline by the Constitution . . . 126. (I)t requires the cooperation of team play of the different on equal terms . . . Cultural pluralism is both the means and the goal of a way of life for whose survival American history has been an increasing struggle.¹²

Kallen suggested other ways of dealing with the problems of pluralism. He believed that a nation that required “universal allegiance” signified the “lack of faith in the power of a doctrine to win and hold allegiance on its own merits.”¹³ Liberty in thought and deed were precious to Kallen. A democracy demands a certain degree of faith: faith in the process of democracy, faith in the citizens of democracy to participate in that process, and faith in the leaders selected to lead a democracy to make correct decisions. He said, “the one faith which I regard as indispensable to ‘democracy’ is a faith in freedom. Generally intolerance is a sign of insecurity, or a concealed skepticism of one’s own doxy.”¹⁴

Kallen also recognized that cultures are dynamic, evolving constructs whose forms change over time and are dependent on location. He said, “Cultures change from dominant to spiritual, detached from heritage and location, and posited in a system of attitudes, thoughts, and things, capable of itself to shape anyone’s experience anywhere.”¹⁵ This idea came, perhaps, from his relationship with his father, Rabbi Jacob Kallen who taught the importance of ritual in maintaining group identity. Rabbi Kallen clung to the orthodox and made no concessions to changing circumstances. Horace, however, believed that cultural expression was, to some extent, affected by environmental circumstances. He thought that religion was one aspect, an important aspect to be sure, but still one among many which serve to make an ethnic group unique. He considered ethnic history and the compromises which have to be made to live in a secular world required change. He opposed the dogmatic, fixed character of orthodox religion, preferring a changeable and socially applicable ideals to guide the day-to-day life of the individual. American pluralism demonstrates that one could not only freely be Jewish, but should feel free to be Jewish in many ways. In order to do this it was necessary to view religious expression as a voluntary behavior. Although Jews were a group formed largely by biological descent, the experience of living in the United States required creative responses to changing environments. Migration to America meant that different European and Middle Eastern cultures would be changed and that new institutions would have to be constructed to preserve what was sacred in their common tradition.

Randolph Bourne

Randolph Bourne, the disabled and disfigured Columbia graduate and New York City essayist, took a more

cosmopolitan view. He was more focused on the variety inherent in society and the options open to the individual. Bourne was also opposed to forced assimilation, but emphasized the dynamics of the co-mingling of groups that would transform the nation. Bourne, a student of Dewey, thought that the individual's ability to move smoothly from group to group would be enriched by the experience of the entire society which was much more dynamic and complex than the proscribed ethno-racial groups envisioned by the pluralists like Kallen.

In January of 1910 Bourne's first essay was published in the *Columbia Monthly* and by the spring of 1911 at the end of his sophomore year, the *Atlantic Monthly* helped launch Bourne on his literary career. It was, in fact, at the request of Ellery Sedgwick, the *Atlantic Monthly* publisher, that Bourne wrote his essay, "The Handicapped, By One of Them"¹⁶ Later published in *Youth and Life* as "A Philosophy of Handicap."

Bourne at some time during his career at Columbia became interested in the work of the pragmatists. The thought of William James captivated him and the ideas and writing of John Dewey soon also became important. He used Dewey's *Ethics* and other works in his criticism and book review essays and called himself an instrumentalist, accepting wholeheartedly the "assumption behind Dewey's pragmatism that human intelligence could envisage the future clearly because human beings, in addition to being purposeful, were at heart rational and good."¹⁷

In a short essay, "John Dewey's Philosophy," Bourne writes,

His philosophy of "instrumentalism" has an edge on it that would slash up the habits of thought, the customs and institutions in which our society has been living for centuries . . . his tolerant democracy loves all human values, and finds nothing so intolerable as artificial inequality . . .¹⁸

Bourne also recognized the value of Dewey's philosophy to the development of the new society, the broader application of science to the evolving American democracy. He wrote,

It is in showing the unity of all the democratic strivings, the social movement, the new educational ideals, the freer ethics, the popular revolt in politics, of all the aspects of the modern restless, forward-looking personal and social life, and the applicability to all of them of scientific method, with its hypotheses and bold experimentation, that Professor Dewey has been the first thinker to put the moral and social goal a notch ahead."¹⁹

In speaking of culture, Bourne believed that the forced assimilation advocated by many was the wrong path. He spoke for a pluralist view of society that made possible the movement of the One between and among the Many, a cosmopolitan pluralism of possibility which allowed those who were able to see them, the opportunity of picking and choosing from the ways, beliefs, and behaviors of diverse groups and inventing oneself in whatever way one chose. Kallen's "Democracy Versus the Melting Pot" and Mary Antin's autobiography *The Promised Land* and "They Who Knock at Our Gates," encouraged Bourne to write "Trans National America" which developed the idea of cosmopolitan pluralism in opposition to assimilationist Americanization.

Bourne thought that the existence of foreign-language newspapers and foreign-language publishers was no cause for alarm. He wrote,

To face the fact that our aliens are already strong enough to take a share in the direction of their own destiny, and that the strong cultural movements represented by the foreign press, schools, and colonies are a challenge to our facile attempts, is not, however, to admit the failure of Americanization. It is not to fear the failure of democracy. It is rather to urge us to an investigation of what Americanism may rightly mean. It is to ask ourselves whether our ideal has been broad or narrow—whether perhaps the time has not come to assert a higher ideal than the "melting-pot."²⁰

Bourne believed that the immigrants were being treated unfairly in part because of the war. Across the country foreign, especially German, communities were required to prove their patriotism. In Oklahoma even town names were changed, names like Freedom and Loyal replaced Kiel and Berlin, and German speaking churches and schools were closed or burned; their ministers run out of town. The Socialist Party, which had opposed the war, voted itself out of existence. Bourne called this the failure of the "melting pot" He said "the war has brought out just the degree to which that purpose of 'Americanizing,' that is, 'Anglo-Saxonizing' the immigrant has failed."²¹

In Bourne's eyes,

We are all foreign-born or the descendants of foreign-born, and if distinctions are to be made between us they should rightly be on some other ground than indigenouness. The early colonists came over with motives no less colonial than the later. They did not come to be assimilated in an American melting-pot. They did not come to adopt the culture of the American Indian. They had not the smallest intention of "giving themselves without reservation" to the new country. They came to get freedom to live as they wanted.²²

But Bourne found freedom, viewed as "the right to do pretty much as one pleases" to be insufficient since it

deprived the minority peoples of “cooperation in determining the ideals and purposes and industrial and social institutions.” In the name of Americanization, society becomes “a tasteless, colorless fluid of uniformity.”²³

Bourne thought that the Anglo-Saxons were worst of those who sought to maintain their cultural ties with their native land and that their cultural dominance was based merely on timing.

The Anglo-Saxon,” he said, “was merely the first immigrant, the first to found a colony. He has never really ceased to be the descendant of immigrants, nor has he ever succeeded in transforming that colony into a real nation, with a tenacious, richly woven fabric of native culture.”²⁴

Newcomers, thought Bourne, found no uniquely American culture to replace their own but were simply given the chance become a citizen, learn English, and to send their children to the public schools.

Bourne believed that nationalism as it existed in Europe at the time of the First World War was not something to be envied. He thought that America as it was constituted by the nationalities of Europe living in relative toleration and harmony served as an example. He said, “America is transplanted Europe, but a Europe that has not been disintegrated and scattered in the transplanting as in some Dispersion. Its colonies live here inextricably mingled, yet not homogeneous. They merge but they do not fuse.”²⁵

Bourne said, “Whatever American nationalism turns out to be, it is certain to become something utterly different from the nationalisms of twentieth-century Europe.” It was his opinion that the “melting pot” had failed but that in its failure, it was replaced by an increasing internationalism,

. . . a cosmopolitan federation of national colonies, of foreign cultures, from whom the sting of devastating competition has been removed. America is already the world-federation in miniature, the continent where for the first time in history has been achieved that miracle of hope, the peaceful living side by side, with character substantially preserved, of the most heterogeneous peoples under the sun.²⁶

Bourne’s conclusion was that the United States had successfully transplanted European cultures into society without the bellicosity and animosity that continued to exist in Europe. He admitted that a battle of *Kultur*, “thrilling and bloodless,”²⁷ existed but that rivalries of ways-of-life, philosophies and traditional attitudes will give way to an evolving cosmopolitanism which will provide “a pleasurable sense of liberation from the stale and familiar attitudes . . . more valuable and interesting to each other for being different, yet that difference could not be creative were it not for this new cosmopolitan outlook which America has given.”²⁸

Only America, said Bourne, by reason of the unique liberty of opportunity and traditional isolation for which she seems to stand, can lead in this cosmopolitan enterprise. Only the American . . . has the chance to become that citizen of the world. America is coming to be, not a nationality but a transnationality, a weaving back and forth, with the other lands, of many threads of all sizes and colors . . . All our idealisms must be those of future social goals in which all can participate, the good life of personality lived in the environment of the Beloved Community. No mere doubtful triumphs of the past, which redound to the glory of only one of our transnationalities, can satisfy us. It must be a future America, on which all can unite, which pulls us irresistibly toward it, as we understand each other more warmly. To make real this striving amid dangers and apathies is work for a younger intelligentsia of America. Here is an enterprise of integration into which we can all pour ourselves, of a spiritual welding which should make us, if the final menace ever came, not weaker, but infinitely strong.²⁹

John Dewey

So what was the problem with John Dewey? Why is it so difficult to find, in his writings, the engagement with problems that might lead to a firm stand on multicultural, ethnic, or racial issues? Was he Eurocentric? Was he above the fray, so to speak, writing about what Cornel West calls the “metaphilosophical implications of modern historical consciousness?”³⁰ or was he of the opinion that his work spoke for itself on the issues without the necessity of being specific about particular contemporary events? It seems that those who think about Dewey and diversity or racism fall into two camps. Some of them believe that Dewey, a white male with roots in Vermont, Harvard, Johns Hopkins, Michigan, Chicago, and New York City does not have the background or the will to appreciate and address the issues of diversity and race that presented themselves. Others believe that Dewey’s philosophy, pragmatism, instrumentalism, etc. implicitly includes all that is necessary to deal with diversity and race.

Frank Margonis believes that Dewey was Eurocentric. He wrote,

Dewey’s path breaking child-centered pedagogy was developed with European American students in mind, and consequently, the portraits of “the student” and “the classroom community” that lie at the center of his pedagogical prescriptions are—implicitly—European American and often obscure the dynamics of learning for

students of color within a racially polarized society.³¹

As evidence, Margonis uses Dewey's chapter in *Schools of Tomorrow*, "The School as a Settlement," which describes public school number 26 in Indianapolis. Dewey apparently supported a vocation-based education for African-American that he would not support for European-Americans. Margonis posits that Dewey included African Americans among the primitive peoples in the primitive-to-modern social evolutionary process.³² This position is, to my thinking, a narrow reading of Dewey who was trying to express a historical continuum and not a contemporary analysis. In focusing on Dewey's description of one school with a leader whose self-professed mission was to improve the local community and to develop that school as the focus of the community, ignores most of Dewey's statements about race and society—that race is a social not a scientific concept—and misses Dewey's caveat that "probably the greatest and commonest mistake that we all make is to forget that learning is a necessary incident of dealing with real situations."³³ We can, and do, take Dewey to task for not speaking out about the racial inequality and violence but there are very few intellectuals of that time who would not have been.

Dewey's most important educational work was done before the First World War. During that time most of the work on diversity like that of Kallen and Bourne was focused on ethnic identity, subculture, and regionalism. It was not until after World War I that the race riots occurred. By then Dewey writing was more focused more on political philosophy and democracy. *School and Society* contains Dewey's thoughts on the mission of the school and the application of ideas he had previously expressed in "My Pedagogic Creed" (1897). *Schools of Tomorrow*, written in 1915 contained Dewey's observations on the schools he visited perhaps with a view to discover how his theory had been translated into educational practice. The schools were chosen because of their innovative reputation. *Democracy and Education* published in 1916 represented his summary statement on education from which he wavered only very little afterwards. Indeed, one need only look at the progression of Dewey's thought from his "My Pedagogic Creed" of 1897 through *School and Society*, *Schools of Tomorrow*, and *Democracy and Education* to view his consistency as an educational philosopher.

On the other side of the question of race and diversity are those for whom, "Deweyan pragmatism offers unique and innovative insights for creative intelligent inquiry into these problems."³⁴ Dewey was concerned with racism as a problem of the society which can be approached intelligently with the proper method of inquiry.

Gregory Fernando Pappas took on the task of explaining Dewey's ideas on racial prejudice expressed in his only essay to specifically confront the problem.³⁵ Dewey believed, said Pappas, "that many of the racial prejudices we have inherited today are historically rooted in political nationalism and in exploitative political relations."³⁶ Racism, discrimination, and prejudice exist as hegemonic tools. Pappas says that "Dewey . . . admits that most racial friction does not originate out of racial prejudice; instead, racial prejudice grows out of some actual social (political or economical) tensions and antagonism that are conveniently and effectively tied to racial differences."³⁷ For Dewey racism is another manifestation of the broader problem which is that humans are creatures of habit, finding it difficult to break from our socialization, our expected experience of the world. "Dewey," says Pappas,

would not be troubled by the broad definition of racists as people who, through their everyday habits, perpetuate racist practices. Nor would he be troubled by the notion of racism as a collective problem (i. e. racism that is perpetuated by a society's political and economic institutions).³⁸

It may be that only pragmatism is able to deal effectively with racism and diversity in any meaningful way. Pragmatism is certainly the most optimistic when it comes to the possibility for true social equality and social justice. Dewey points out that the sources of difference are physiological, social, political, and economic differences but the most important relationship is the exploitative power of class domination.³⁹ Neopragmatic thought, critical theory, and progressive politics seem to be the result of that tradition.

Concluding Questions

As the title implies, modern American society has come full-circle. It began with a diverse culture made up of national groups living amongst themselves relatively isolated in small villages. Then the cities developed with minority regions, and ethnic neighborhoods. Where once we were skeptical about so much divisiveness, many have come to appreciate the heritage of diversity and celebrate it. Does that mean that the society is being divided? Do we really need to be concerned about new immigrants, legal or illegal? Are the core values of the United States capable of withstanding multi-identities? Perhaps the important question is: What comes next?

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PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND THE LABOR OF LEISURE

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Introduction

Though not referencing practices of physical education directly, Louis Althusser did identify the institution of education as a significant site for the definition and dissemination of ideology. In “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus” Althusser defined *ideology* as a “‘representation’ of the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence,” and claimed that ideology operated by “interpellat[ing] individuals as subjects.”¹ For Althusser, ideology was an important term because he believed that it could be used to both explain how the reproduction of the relations of production were secured and also demonstrate that the act of securing was made possible through repressive and ideological state apparatus’ (RSAs and ISAs)—institutions that work respectively through violence and ideology. Althusser labeled education to be a dominant ideological state apparatus (ISA) and justified such a claim because school systems both had access to children for six to seven hours per day and were represented as a “neutral environment purged of ideology.”²

For Althusser, education was an especially effective ISA because of its access to a captive audience, and its ability to interpellate, or hail, individuals as subjects. This act of hailing, according to Althusser, occurs in both the domains of the practical, through rituals, and within the discursive, through the act of address. Althusser’s famous example of interpellation describes an individual casually walking and turning around in response to a shouted “hey, you there.” The performance of the subject embedded within ideology is then demonstrated through “actions inserted into practices,”³ this is later refined by Foucault, who more strongly emphasizes the way in which the regulation of practices, especially within education, are utilized to position individuals as subjects.⁴

Untheorized by Althusser, and perhaps unstated by Foucault, however, is an acknowledgment of education’s function as a site of discursive and pedagogical invention.⁵ That is, we might conceive of education as a site where students are trained and disciplined and also as a discursive space where different school subjects, like physical education, are theorized, developed, and later utilized by teachers to educate students. Given Foucault’s claim that “all knowledge rests upon injustice (that there is no right, not even in the act of knowing, to truth or a foundation for truth) and that the instinct for knowledge is malicious (something murderous, opposed to the happiness of mankind),”⁶ we might infer that had he identified education as a site of such an invention, he would have seen a space through which truth was produced through the “exteriority of accidents.”⁷ Indeed, an interrogation of the “accidents, the minute deviations—or conversely, the complete reversals—the errors, the false appraisals, and the faulty calculations”⁸ within physical education might initially yield a decidedly problematic understanding of its history and development—a conclusion that is quite justifiable. Despite the seemingly pessimistic view of the results produced through such a reading—the implication that all knowledge derives from injustice, for example—the practice of seeking ruptures in the production of truth, simultaneously identified a site of truth production, and a potential space through which truth can be contested. Both the oppressive and transgressive consequences of physical education in the 1950s emerge through a genealogical inquiry into the rhetorical construction of the value of play.

The attention to both the strategic use of language and the function of practice in Althusser and Foucault’s theorizations of subject formation has been especially enriching to the discipline of rhetorical studies. For Althusser, strategic language use is essential in the formation of individuals as subjects. In the discussion of interpellation, identifying/addressing an individual as “you,” a term used to identify a person as a subject being addressed, necessitates that, upon turning around, that person will acknowledge their status as such. Maurice Charland’s 1987 discussion of the function of a formal policy statement issued in 1979 by the government of Quebec illustrates the way in which a strategic use of language positions individuals and, consequently, functions ideologically. Charland argues that the government of Quebec’s decision to rename the citizens of Quebec the *peuple québécois* served as a constitutive rhetoric that positioned the people of Quebec as a group altogether separate from the rest of Canada, and thus capable of existing apart from Canada.⁹ Similarly, this paper examines the values inscribed onto texts by specifically looking at how practices of physical activity are assigned value in texts theorizing/developing the discipline of physical education.

The presupposition here is that rhetorical practices, like ISA’s, determine the ways in which objects of knowledge can be intelligible. In particular, play, leisure time, and recreation during and prior to the 1950s were visible and valued in entirely different ways. Throughout this paper, I will consider the ways in which rhetorical practices operate in order to determine the limits of how an object can be understood. In this paper, for example, the

discourses framing physical activity at different moments of public crisis represent very different approaches to thinking about the value and purpose of physical education. A view of physical education as a means of producing citizens is a manifestation of one such approach that I examine in this paper. While not entirely focused on using physical education as a means of actively producing citizens, leisure education complements this perspective by conceiving of the value of educating individuals in proper physical activity as a necessary means of keeping them out of trouble. In contrast, I consider the earliest institutionalized form of educating physical activity, play education, which frames play as an activity that brings individuals, particularly children, closer to the achievement of both individualized and community minded states of being.

In the late 1800s and early 1900s the concept of play emerged as a key concept among physical fitness educators in the United States. The term was utilized much earlier by the German Karl Groos, in the early 19th century, but it and its theoretical value eventually made their way into the vernacular of theorists of physical education. Through the definition and valuation of the term play we can see an alternative way in which the value of physical activity of children was made intelligible. In the later emergences as “leisure” and “recreation,” then, we find some remainder of the early definition of play, several subtractions, and several additions. This paper examines the significance of what was added to and subtracted from play in the 1950s and how its value in physical education literature shifted from the pursuit of an ideal self-construction to a process of democratic citizenship formation, how, in short, the value of pursuing play was deferred and substituted for values that emphasized physical activity as a labor of leisure and as an enforcement of efficiency.

In order to fully consider the consequences of physical education, this paper traces the development and theorization of physical education as a discipline within teaching manuals and other texts by leading physical fitness educators. I engage these texts in order to understand the values and assumptions embedded within discourses of physical education and trace the way in which play—and its derivations—are continuously used in response to historic problems as a practice necessary for educating individuals in the proper management of their behavior and efficiency. Finally, by considering the ways in which the development of physical education highlights some elements of its intellectual past while ignoring others, I demonstrate the alternative possibilities for imagining the value and function of the physically active body that are latent within rhetoric of physical education. I specifically do this by illustrating the ways in which the production of history seeks to minimize ambiguity, while never completely eliminating it.

The Theory of Play and the Slum Problem

Play, leisure, recreation, and physical education are four distinct yet interrelated terms that I will develop throughout this paper. The terms in particular are associated to key historical moments in the development of educational discourses concerning physical fitness and their integration into the curriculum of public schooling. The development, function, and theorization of public physical education developed in response to several different social problems: slum life, World War I, and the Great Depression.

The theory of play emerged in the United States as a result of the playground movement, a social movement organized in response to the increasingly poor conditions of slum life in the late 1800s. The work of police reporter turned social reformer, Jacob Riis, chronicled the conditions of slum life in *How the Other Half Lives*, a book that combined stark photography and angry prose to protest the extreme conditions of New York slum life. Much of Riis’ book was directed toward the making visible the abject conditions faced by slum children, in particular. One photograph, for example, depicts three adolescent boys sleeping on the ground in a New York alley. The startling conditions represented in Riis’ first book struck a chord with many New Yorkers, including Theodore Roosevelt, who had been the police commissioner at the time. After reading Riis’ book, Roosevelt worked with Riis to eventually build parks and open playgrounds and to begin making substantial reforms to tenement living.¹⁰

The Playground Movement in the United States began in the late 1880s within such a cultural climate. The observations of Dr. Marie Zahrezwska concerning “Berlin children in congested areas” are thought to be the earliest origins of the playground movement in the United States.¹¹ While in Germany, Dr. Zahrezwska noticed children’s “sand play, singing, and marching, directed by a neighborhood woman,”¹² and, thinking it would benefit less fortunate children, encouraged the construction of a sand pile for the Children’s Mission in Boston. Made intelligible by the photography and anti-slum campaigning of Jacob Riis, the concern for less fortunate children expressed through Zahrezwska’s actions, had become a significant value in the United States during the early 1900s.¹³

This concern arose out of a much larger public problem that was dominated by class conflict and labor strikes resulting from unsafe working conditions and exploitation.¹⁴ The visibility of slum life alongside “laws prohibiting

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play in the streets, citizens complaining about children playing on their lawns, accidents and arrests from play in the streets showed how it was impossible to grow up in the cities.”¹⁵ This, in turn, positioned the playground movement as a means of attending to these frustrations. The movement’s significance became part of political reform policies as evidenced in the reelection campaign of New York Mayor Seth Low, who wrote: “special consideration and attention, also, has been given to the development of children’s playgrounds.”¹⁶

Soon the value of the playground in city life became advocated by scholars and educators of physical education, a development that also resulted in the introduction of play as an object of inquiry within the field of physical education. Specifically, play theory in the early 1900s insisted on the importance of organizing where children played and teaching them how to play.¹⁷ In describing the role of the play teacher, Luther Gulick associated value to the production of good character: “through play leaders such as these a transfer is made from generation to generation, not merely of games, but of character.”¹⁸

Similarly, play theorist Joseph Lee wrote, “play demands teaching, which thus becomes a part of the law of growth. Children, as a result of their own instinctive tendencies, are molded upon the traditions of their race.”¹⁹ Further emphasizing the function of training children how to play, Lee also argues:

What is necessary is that education from this time on shall have a future to it, shall be felt by the child as preparation for real life. Our first remedy then is to develop the child's nature to its natural breadth, and to train it during the period when it is still malleable, and when the gang instinct combines with the specializing tendency to set him upon fitting himself for grown-up work, that it may be turned so far as possible toward the channels that existing industry affords. This we shall do not for the sake of industry but for the sake of culture; not in order that the man shall make more goods, but that the making of the goods may better make the man.²⁰

For Lee, the value of play education rested in its ability to prepare children for life as adults and to impart them with a strong work ethic, or to put it more aptly, a strong ethics for working well. Though left unwritten, ethics and morality were implied within Lee’s characterization of play. The phrases “for the sake of culture” and “better make the man,” for example, characterize the significance of play education as residing within its ability to improve the way in which children develop as members of a community. Lee’s description, then, attributes the ultimate goal of play education to be within its ability to shape individuals as members of communities.

Henry Curtis more specifically references play’s moral function, but also makes specific reference to time utilization, a concern not addressed by Lee:

In the past the problem of idleness has been a great problem, perhaps the greatest problem of our city children. With the shortening of the hours of labor, which is everywhere going on, it becomes a great problem of the adults as well. If increased leisure is to mean increased dissipation, it will only be a curse . . . How very much better it will be for the community if we can inspire in the children such a healthy love for sport that this leisure time will be spent in vigorous games. If it is necessary for a free country to educate its citizens in order to protect the ballot, is it not equally necessary to provide for their amusement in order to protect their morals?²¹

Like Gulick and Lee, Curtis engages play as an activity more significant than mere amusement, but as something with implications on the character of the child as a whole. Curtis’ statement above is unique because, unlike Lee and Gulick, it referenced play education as significant because of its abilities to *protect* the morals of children. Here the function of play is intelligible in a slightly different form. Rather than functioning as a tool for assisting in the development of individuals with no clear goal, it is identified as a tool that develops children according to an end that is focused less on the improvement of the individual and more on the community.

The work of Gulick, Lee, and Curtis serves two separate, but closely related functions. First, the practice of developing the necessity of play for human development is an early step in the formulation of physical education as a discipline. Second, the specific form taken by such a formulation also can be read rhetorically for the particular way in which play is represented as having value. For Gulick and Lee, play activities are processes through which individuals shape their future selves. Curtis echoes these beliefs, but also describes play as valuable due to its ability to instruct individuals in practices of morality. So far, play was made visible to physical educators as an activity for educating individuals in morality and in personality. Educating children in proper play as discussed in the scholarship of leading physical educators such as Gulick, Lee, and Curtis is, in part, significant because it highlights the importance of cultivating good behavior through physical activity and group play.

World War I and the Institution of PE

If the public slum problems of the late 19th and early 20th centuries operated as the exigency for play to be valued for its educational qualities, then the period surrounding World War I can be marked by the institutionalization of

physical education into American life. Though a certain kind of physical education was made valuable in the early 20th century, this is not to say that physical education did not have any presence in American schools or culture prior to this time; German gymnastics, for example, immigrated to the United States and resulted in the formation of Turnverein, gymnasiums that provided “a place and opportunity for exercise and recreation for both sexes regardless of age.”²² German gymnastics, or free-form natural gymnastics that made use of “natural skills,” like running, jumping, and swimming²³ were incorporated into the public school systems near communities with large German populations by the 1870s.²⁴ Swedish gymnastics—also known as medical gymnastics were based on “military, aesthetic, medical, and educational values”²⁵ and utilized apparatuses like rings, swinging ladders, and rope climbing, were incorporated into the curriculum of the Boston public school systems in 1890. The use of German and Swedish gymnastics to train students in PE manifested a larger issue at hand in the late 1800s: the lack of an agreed upon system through which students could be provided a physical education. In fact, many histories of physical education refer to the “battle of the systems” as a reference to the multitude of differing approaches to physical education.²⁶

Many opposing of the positions within the “battle of the systems” were united by the similar belief that gymnastics were the proper form through which physical education should be taught, an approach contrasted by those that utilized the practices of play, games, and sport. The formation of the playground movement in response to the public problems of slum life and class dissent, and the importance it placed on providing children with opportunities to play, was one key catalyst in the adoption of play training, sports, and recreation as the nationally accepted means of teaching physical fitness.²⁷ The poor physical condition of draftees during World War I functioned as an additional problem that allowed for physical education to be assigned value as a method for enabling military-fitness, something that had not been yet implemented into the American armed forces. Additionally, the usage of sports as a means of boosting soldier morale and fostering the wholesome usage of time during WWI also positioned the regulation and training of physical activity as a means of enabling individuals to use their time productively.²⁸ Along with the emergence of intramural sports in 1915 these developments catalyzed the conflation of physical education with play education in the United States. The presence of sports and importance of fitness, made visible as a result of World War I, also resulted in 36 states passing compulsory physical education laws and gained national recognition when the National Education Association included health, worthy use of leisure, and ethical character among its seven cardinal principles.²⁹ Eventually the advocacy of play by leading professionals in the field and the “visibility and popularity of intercollegiate and professional sport help[ed] propel, play, games, and sport to the forefront of physical education,”³⁰ and ultimately resulted in sports replacing formal gymnastics as “the medium of physical education.”³¹

The institutionalization of play as physical education into the U.S. public school system specifically involved the passage of state laws to require schools to provide a minimum amount of physical education. This institutionalization also eventually led to the establishment of a state director of physical education.³² Though such a development seems quite natural, one value implied through both PE’s use as a means of preparing the military and through PE’s focus on educating individuals in sports is the need for the production of an efficient body. This theme of PE as a means for developing more efficient bodies/individuals remains consistent throughout the history of physical education. As physical education became structured into the educational system, its foundational principle, play, was further developed in the time following the great depression. This next section delves into the value given play as a means of educating children in the proper management of leisure time.

Recreation, Leisure, and the Great Depression

Ten years following the end World War I, the stock market crash of 1929 resulted in an immense economic depression and, due to the massive decrease in employment, prompted a national emphasis on the importance of recreation. The years following the economic depression reflected a prioritization of physical activity as a means of managing leisure time. This emphasis on the importance of leisure time, and the necessity of utilizing recreation as a means of properly utilizing that leisure time, was largely due to the abundance of idle time, an effect of high unemployment rates brought on by the depression. Quite unlike the situation described in Thorstein Veblen’s *The Theory of the Leisure Class*, the economically underprivileged were given extra leisure time by no choice of their own.³³ The proliferation of leisure time instigated the formation of the Works Progress Administration, a division of the Federal Works Agency that focused on the expansion of social, cultural, and physical forms of public recreation as means of keeping the population busy.³⁴

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The theorization of leisure's significance in the physical education and recreation disciplines shifted slightly from an emphasis on the importance of play as an exercise in character building to "time management," a characterization which, though present in earlier discussions of play and leisure, was given added visibility as a result of the 1928 stock market crash, the unemployment that ensued, and the formation of the WPA, a federally funded institution intent on the promotion of wholesome leisure activities. In fact, many books were published as a response to the necessity of proper leisure management; Overstreet's *Guide to Civilized Leisure* being one famous example.³⁵

Mitchell and Mason's 1935 book, *The Theory of Play*, indicates that such a priority also manifested itself in the development of physical education as a discipline:

People unequipped for leisure often tend either to get into trouble or stagnate . . . Men are skill hungry individuals, and it is much better to educate them in skills so that they can become self-active in leisure hours than to attempt to amuse them in the leisure hours of later life.³⁶

Much like Curtis, Mitchell and Mason framed play/leisure, not as a practice that would culminate in the formation of capable members of a community, but as an occupation, or even distraction, that prevents people from getting into trouble. This scholarly conceptualization of leisure as an opportunity in which individuals must be properly trained to engage is, with one addition, an extension of play scholarship that considered a child's play to be an indication of what the adult the child would become. Though early play theorists such as Gulick identified the necessity of the "proper use of this [leisure] time," leisure as an object of scholarly inquiry had not yet emerged within the field of physical education at the time of his writing.³⁷

Leisure's continual representation as an activity necessitating management, repeatedly placed the education of individuals in proper leisure time use within the purview of physical education.³⁸ The need for ensuring that children in particular make proper use of leisure also emerges in physical education scholarship. In a report prepared for the American Youth Commission, a committee appointed by the American Council on Education, C. Gilbert Wrenn and D.L. Harley used the evidence of a study conducted in Maryland to lament "the poverty of the leisure of many young people."³⁹ The authors then advocate that youth desire "direction and the means of doing something for themselves," and, thus, require opportunities for proper leisure. Similarly, physical fitness pioneer, Jay Nash, articulated his fears over the prevalence of *spectatoritis*, an affliction characterized by an inability to responsibly/properly use leisure that he believed was symptomatic of many Americans in the early 1930s. For Nash, training children to productively make use of their leisure time would eliminate the presence of boredom, spectatoritis, and crime, ultimately resulting in the formation of members of an ideal population.⁴⁰ Though Nash does not blatantly characterize worthy use of leisure as an activity beneficial to democracy, it most certainly is implied.

In 1956, physical fitness expert Bonnie Prudden also identified physical activity as a means of managing leisure time. Specifically, Prudden suggested that the improper usage of leisure time had caused children in the United States to become considerably less physically fit than children in Europe. According to Prudden, "school buses, cars, labor-saving devices, movies, radio, adequate play space, spectator sports, and television . . . have lowered the physical fitness of our children to a dangerous level."⁴¹ One cause made visible by Prudden was that American children were found to no longer engage in "muscle building chores."⁴² Bussing, for example, provided them with exertion-free transportation to and from school, consequently providing children with additional time for watching television—another factor attributed to children's lack of fitness. Proponents of physical fitness partially blamed this excess in leisure time on the increasing cases of juvenile delinquency seen across the country.

Above we have seen one formulation of play as a means of providing children and adults with wholesome options for utilizing their leisure time. From this standpoint, play is visible as a means of education, resulting from its ability to direct the way in which individuals spend their time. The WPA, for example, provided Americans with a wealth of leisure opportunities, while implicitly guiding them away from other, less ideal activities. Similarly, physical education activities, sports primarily, provide children with a wealth of examples that are meant to demonstrate proper methods of time usage. One notable component of physical education that was retained from play theory was a conceptualization of physical activity as a means of character education.

Jesse Feiring Williams, former president of the American Association for Health, Physical Education and Recreation, referred to this function of play activity as "education through the physical" and described its value as follows: "physical education seeks the education of man through physical activities as one aspect of the social effort for human enlightenment."⁴³ It should be noted that education through the physical, much like play, remained fixed as a "social effort" for the achievement of an ideal. The ultimate goal of these efforts, as articulated in 1931 in *The*

White House Conference on Child Protection, a document responsible for the initial standardization of PE curricula,⁴⁴ was the cultivation of both the individual and the democratic citizen. When put into practice these goals were meant to provide students with opportunities to perform democratic ideals:

Once every two months captains are elected in each class from the fourth through the sixth grades and these captains choose teams. It is decided by lot which team shall be red and which team shall be blue. In this way a child may be on the red team one time and the blue another, thus getting competition without rivalry . . .

Individual differences are considered in all activities and the child is taught than an activity that may be easy for one individual may be quite difficult for another.⁴⁵

By respecting individual differences and participating in an activity that promotes the election of leaders, children enact democracy at the microlevel. Other scholars of physical education clearly articulate the value of proper physical activity, recreation, leisure as instruments for interpellating a populace as democratic citizens. Aside from positioning the utility of leisure, recreation, and play as wholesome activities capable of occupying the activities of youth in a beneficial way, academic scholarship in the field of physical education also highlighted such practices as activities for the cultivation of a democratic public. These values ultimately get materialized in a code of standards that were required for secondary school teachers.⁴⁶

Democracy, Leisure, and Labor

Rosalind Cassidy, a physical education educator and scholar partially responsible for the developing new physical education curriculum articulates the relationship between physical education and democracy in her 1954 book *Curriculum Development in Physical Education*:

The primary job of the physical education teacher as differentiated from other teachers in the school is to educate for an understanding and acceptance of the body as a symbol of the self, for an understanding of the laws of its expression and use, and for an appreciation of the values of achieving and maintaining a responsive, well-directed, mature, responsible instrument for living democratically both with oneself and with others.⁴⁷

Cassidy's description of the function of the physical education teacher as responsible for inscribing the body with democracy illustrates that the practices of physical fitness and the function of physical education are both made intelligible, and are also framed as a laboring for the production of individuals into democratic subjects. Cassidy's theorization of physical education as a means of training students in the proper practices of democracy draws upon previous discourses that valued physical education as method for training citizens. Sharman Jackson is one of many academics envisioning such a relationship between democracy and physical education: "in physical education we should seek to develop intelligent cooperators and not train some individuals as docile followers and other as autocratic leaders. In a democratic society, a person prepared to be a good follower should also be a good leader."⁴⁸

The National Council for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency, for example, claimed that "the constructive use of leisure time is increasingly important in a democratic society which anticipates a future having greater leisure for all people." The value of disciplined leisure time in the 1950s, much like in the 1930s, is derived from its ability to serve the greater community. In the 1950s discourses concerning leisure time and its proper use represented a means of enacting democracy, a phenomenon made intelligible by The National Council for the Prevention and Control of Juvenile Delinquency as well:

We are concerned for a wholesome use of leisure time and we believe that physical education has an important function in preparing for this . . . we mean, through our physical education to develop robust, skilled, happy human beings with impulses to behave generously and confidently in the best democratic tradition.⁴⁹

Above, the Council articulates physical education as a means of teaching children the proper usage of leisure time, and also identifies the democratic tradition as the end goal achieved from using physical education to "develop robust, skilled, happy human beings with impulses to behave generously and confidently."⁵⁰ Recreation and physical fitness are meant to discipline individuals, and therefore, teach the correct and moral means of managing their leisure time. The National Council for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency makes note of similar benefits noting that: "through recreation youth educates itself for adult living."⁵¹ Physical education's importance as a tool for developing children in social settings also becomes a tool for developing children in political settings.

Miller and Whitcomb provide a further elaboration on the importance and value of physical education and democracy:

Through physical education, children have fine opportunities to develop socially and emotionally. Characteristics such as cooperation and competition, two opposing yet complementary terms, may be developed through games and sports; leadership may also be developed, as well as the ability to follow.⁵²

Unlike federal discourses engaging with physical fitness, the physical education manuals written Miller and Whitcomb, Jackson, and Cassidy do not discuss the value of PE to be derived from its ability to produce a combat capable population, but rather a population well-socialized in democratic practices. Physical education theorists concerned with democracy, then, envision PE as place to enact the democratic principles of “cooperation and competition,” through interacting with other individuals. The emergence of PE in federal discourses, however, is quite different.

During the Korean War, a 1951 physical education area report commissioned by the Federal Security Agency and the Office of Education titled the “Mobilization Conference for Health, Education, and Recreation” positions physical education in a slightly different manner:

In the secondary schools are the young men and young women of America who will become the workers and defenders of the nation tomorrow. The physical education program at this level must, therefore, embody the vigorous activities that contribute most to fitness, strength, agility, and endurance. It must not only make provision for the acquirement of skills but it must also develop interest in and positive attitudes toward activities that will be useful for recreation.⁵³

Though recreation is indeed mentioned, the conference emphasizes the necessity of PE to reside within its abilities to train warriors, a value also implied by the use of “mobilization” within the conference title, a word often connoting the amassment of military forces. The emergence of the President’s Council on Physical Fitness highlights the federal government’s approach to PE as a means of cultivating a productive populace. Though also making mention of recreation and health, the council’s introduction of military preparedness to PE discourse vastly diverges from the education and practice of play envisioned by Luther Gulick.

Conclusion: Play and the Aesthetics of Existence

There are several different approaches we might take to making sense of the function of physical education and fitness in the United States. One approach might consider that education, through the physical, serves as an apparatus for disciplining citizens and producing populations. From this perspective, the development of play theory functions as a crucial theoretical development in such an endeavor. The playground movement could easily be read as a strategy to pacify laborers and slum-dwellers, who were protesting living conditions, by functioning as a demonstration of concern for underprivileged slum-children. The considerable development in parks and recreation in response to the Great Depression might also appear as another line of penetration into the practices of the public in attempting to more thoroughly produce docile citizens. Similarly, the incorporation of sports into military life during World War I could easily be read as an attempt to prevent soldiers from getting into trouble through an intervention into the body.

Absolutely essential to a reading of these three historical moments as examples of disciplinary power at work is the development of play within the discipline of physical education. Play, as a method for developing an individual’s character through the body, makes a decisive move away from gymnastics, which were valued for their ability to develop strength and poise. This move to educating through the physical is first manifested in the Playground Movement, and later in the usage of sports in World War I, and after the Great Depression functioned as a pedagogical tool for instructing physical fitness educators in the value of physical education. From one perspective, then, play theory operates as the theoretical origin of physical education as a disciplinary apparatus.

Though play does function in this capacity, certain elements of its initial theorization are also ignored and substituted for values that coincide with the historical contexts in which it emerged and reemerged. The most notable quality that did not make its way into later theories of leisure, recreation, and physical fitness was play’s ability to assist children in shaping their own identities. What is fascinating about the theorization of play in the early 1900s is how it was theorized as a necessary element of life. Play theorist Joseph Lee writes:

The playing animals are products of their own efficient will. Man especially is incarnate purpose. We are all in this most literal sense self-made. Play is thus the essential part of education. It is nature’s prescribed course.

School is invaluable in forming the child to meet actual social opportunities and conditions. Without the school he will not grow up to fit our institutions. Without play he will not grow up at all.⁵⁴

The significance of the activity of play is derived from its function, play then, is the process through which children fashion themselves. “Play is to the boy what work is to the man—the fullest attainable expression of what he is and the effective means of becoming more.”⁵⁵ Like Joseph Lee, Luther Gulick shares a similar orientation to the concept of play. For Gulick, “the individual is more completely revealed in play than in any one other way; and conversely, play has a greater shaping power over the character and nature of man than has any other activity.”⁵⁶

Within PE manuals and handbooks following World War I, the Great Depression, and World War II, play respectively gets incorporated into sports, gets conflated with recreation, and, finally, gets subsumed by the focus on physical fitness for citizenship highlighted by the President's Council on Physical Fitness. While its trace remains within these discourses, recall that the values of education through the physical and leisure management associated to physical activity emerged from play theory, its function as a tool for individual self-development is simply ignored. This absence provides an alternate approach to the critique of physical education, one quite similar from its usage as a means of producing subjects, but slightly different.

This absence within the history of play's incorporation into the President's Council on Physical Fitness is especially important because it points to a disconnect within the federal government's supposed interest in cultivating democratic citizens, while simultaneously advocating a particularly undemocratic approach to doing so. An emphasis that identifies the value of physically fit children with proper citizenship prevents children from envisioning and utilizing physical activity in different capacities. If play, as Gulick initially theorized it, was meant to function as a means of self-expression, then the framing of physical education corresponds more closely to representations of the homogenizing nature of communism. It is quite ironic that physical activity's supposed value runs so contrary to its mobilization. In addition to marking a space of discursive rupture, and thus a space for critique, play as a means of individual self-creation, also points toward a transgressive practice.

Much like Gulick's notion of play, Michel Foucault views self stylization to be focused first on the proper development of the individual. This practice allows one to act more clearly as an ethical subject: "The control of one's self is absolutely based upon having the freedom to control one's self—a freedom to do wrong, as well as right."⁵⁷ In this arena, play strongly resembles Foucault's notion of an aesthetics of existence that involves properly caring for oneself:

. . . if you know ontologically what you are, if you also know of what you are capable, if you know what it means for you to be a citizen in a city . . . if you know what things you must fear and those that you should not fear, if you know what is suitable to hope for and what are the things on the contrary which should be completely indifferent for you . . . you cannot abuse your power over others . . . the one who cares for self, to the point of knowing exactly what are his duties as head of a household as husband or father, will find that he has relationships with his wife and children which are as they should be.⁵⁸

Like Gulick, Foucault believes that learning proper practices of self-care allows for the betterment of the individual. Though he does not specifically mention play, the implication is quite evident: learning to play is a way of learning to live ethically, a way of properly learning one's ethical place. Gulick puts it quite well:

the first conclusion to be drawn from these facts about human choice and free play is that life, self-activity, is an end in itself . . . The impulse to play is the impulse to express oneself, to function, to live."⁵⁹

Despite the fact that the theory of play came to be used as a means of cultivating better more effective citizens, its intellectual history remains. The value and significance of play education, the precursor to physical education, are that its existence as an object of knowledge far exceeds how it came to be used. That is, play theory provides more than a theorization of how to instruct individuals with proper morals; its historical legacy also contains a vast remainder of unused knowledge. Play's rhetorical history, then, allows it to also function as an activity that allows for a move away from the disciplinary subject producing practices of the 1950s, to an activity continuously focused on reinvention and development.

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PESTALOZZI REVISITED: HOPE AND CAUTION FOR MODERN EDUCATION

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The business of education, in respect to knowledge, is not to perfect the learner in all or any one of the sciences, but to give his mind that disposition, and those habits, that may enable him to attain any part of knowledge he shall stand in need of in the future course of his life. (Locke as cited in Pestalozzi, 1827, p. 143)

Introduction

Johann Pestalozzi's philosophies and writing on child rearing and educational practice constitute a major influence on modern educational thought throughout the Western world, particularly on seminal American education pioneers such as Joseph Neef, William Maclure, Horace Mann, and Edward Sheldon (Barnard, 1859). Despite this, the work of Pestalozzi is no longer part of the popular cannon of educational philosophy or pedagogy in American teacher training programs nor is it present in most continuing education opportunities for practitioners. The lack of contemporary familiarity with Pestalozzi's work in education circles is disheartening since his work has a great deal to offer to modern educators. Pestalozzi's oft stated goals 1. making the world better for children and 2. treating children with dignity and compassion were eloquently outlined in his writing for future generations to discover and are worth reconsidering today.

Through a close examination of his life story and writing, particularly *How Gertrude Teaches Her Children* (1810), four tenets of Pestalozzi's educational philosophy emerge and prove particularly relevant for today's educational climate. These tenets include his beliefs on: the development of the child, family as a primary means of influence on learning, equal focus on both the affective and cognitive aspects of education, and active, child-centered teaching practices (Barnard, 1859; Green, 1912; Kilpatrick, 1951; Pestalozzi, 1780; 1827; Quick, 1874). Examination of Pestalozzi's beliefs about these four educational tenets and an effort to translate them into actionable ideas for classroom practice is what Freire (1970) referred to as praxis and seems a worthwhile endeavor for new and seasoned educators alike. Pestalozzi himself said,

Principle merit is due to him, who says so long, so loud, and so clearly, that he compels mankind to hear him; the man who is so deeply impressed with the importance of the discovery, that he will take no denial, but, at the risk of fortune and fame, pushes through all opposition, and is determined that what he thinks he has discovered shall not perish for want of a fair trial. (Pestalozzi, 1827, p. xliv)

Before delving further into the core tenets of Pestalozzi's philosophy for current educators to ponder a short contextualization of his life is in order.

Despite a life of change and hardship, varying degrees of success with educational endeavors, political and social upheaval, and multiple family and financial crises, Pestalozzi's vision of children and education remained notably consistent throughout his life (Barnard, 1859; Green, 1912; Kilpatrick, 1951). His focus on core principles regarding child development, social order, a life of Godliness, and best practice teaching are omnipresent in his writing (Pestalozzi, 1780; 1781; 1801; 1827). Moreover, Pestalozzi's own personality and dispositions, including his seemingly insatiable need for active learning, his belief in the goodness of man, and his own need for love and approval inform his work in substantial ways (Barnard, 1859; Brühlmeier & Kuhlemann, 2007). In addition, Europe's Enlightenment ideals created an ideal environment for Pestalozzi's progressive thoughts on parenting and education. The attention placed by other scholars and publications of the time were saturated with commentaries and pleas for encouraging "human progress," glorifying personal autonomy, supporting the close connection of economics and politics, and the value of reason (Soetard, 1994). This readied the audience of late eighteenth century for Pestalozzi's work on parenting and childhood as sacred elements of humanity and allowed the most basic tenets of Pestalozzi's educational philosophy to take hold. Also much to Pestalozzi's favor, the Enlightenment brought attention to the plight of the poor and those in servitude. Finally, Pestalozzi's work was influenced not simply by the ideology of the time but prominent philosophers, Locke and Voltaire (Brühlmeier & Kuhlemann, 2007).

Lessons from the Past: Four Core Principles of a Pestalozzian Approach—The Development of the Child

Pestalozzi's first educational endeavor, a farm school at Neuhof, allowed children to be schooled while also learning a trade. In theory, the profits from the goods the children produced were to benefit the school. In reality, as soon as a student was competent at the craft they were learning the parents removed them from the care of Pestalozzi. The inability to retain children made Neuhof a practical failure. However, Pestalozzi's first writing, *The*

Evening Hour of a Hermit (1780) and *Leonard and Gertrude* (1781), both came from his reflections on the experiences of the time. Each piece espoused a sense of dignity for all men and a goal of life being the cultivation of justice and truth. Education, he noted, must be practical in its treatment of ideas and deeds, and never stray from the ultimate goal of seeking happiness and fulfillment through a more complete relationship with God as the creator (Pestalozzi, 1780). Clearly, a more secular view of his texts must be used when applying Pestalozzi to education in the modern public school context however, little is taken away when a more secularized view is applied from Pestalozzi's core themes and teachings. The foray into the creation of his school at Neuhof led Pestalozzi on a path that spelled out ideas on child rearing and family that, given the current educational climate, are a much needed reminder about the care and tenderness children require for a successful education and upbringing.

In 1801, Pestalozzi wrote *How Gertrude Teaches Her Children* in an attempt to guide and aid mothers in child rearing. Despite Pestalozzi's intention that this was a book for mothers, modern day educators would do well to examine some of the core pieces of Pestalozzi's child centered teaching philosophies. In this text Pestalozzi lays out some of the most important pieces of his educational philosophy including the following:

1. children have a sacred personality,
2. children are inherently good and are not miniature adults,
3. children follow a natural course of development that mothers (insert educators) must be willing to follow and embrace,
4. children require active, spontaneous, and language filled activity to grow (Kilpatrick, 1951; Pestalozzi, 1801).

Imagine how different our schools might look if every educator took seriously the task of examining these principles, learning how they apply to our modern day classroom and child. Imagine how different teacher preparation programs might be with these ideas as an explicit value set of a program. Pestalozzi's wisdom doesn't end with his ideas on children and the purpose and dignity of life. *Leonard and Gertrude* (1781) and *How Gertrude Teaches Her Children* (1801) also layout substantive ideas on the role of parents and the family on a child's development.

The Core of Education: Families

The widespread reading of Pestalozzi's first two progressive works gained him considerable credibility in his time. For us as present day educators would be wise to heed Pestalozzi's example of writing with simple explanations, the recognition for the need for understanding for ideas to take hold, and the connection between values, family, and education. In the most basic sense, Pestalozzi's early works assert the belief that families must educate their children as a central component of a stable and peaceful nation (Pestalozzi, 1780; 1781). In essence, Pestalozzi noted that family stability and substantive agreement on value sets provides ample ground and tolerance for more difficult and nuanced discourse later on. It is easy to extrapolate from this the value of school as a similar vehicle for a common understanding of values and national stability. If, as a nation, we were to recognize and take seriously the purpose of education from its present day status as a means to an economic end (otherwise thought of as preparing children for the workforce or further schooling) to a means for assuring a peaceful, stable, cohesive community/nation curriculum, instruction, and administration within schools might look quite different from today's reality.

Similarly, the emphasis on mothering and infancy in *How Gertrude Teaches Her Children* (1801) deserves further reflection by modern day educators. In his time, Pestalozzi's attentiveness to parenting was a new horizon in child rearing and child development. His writing emanated a deep, visceral sense of care for the human condition as he worked to mesh his religious perspective and attentiveness to the fragility of childhood. It is notable that while Pestalozzi's work is philosophical in nature we hear much more about modern attachment theory from the psychological lens from the likes of Bowlby (1961) and Ainsworth (1965) and very little about Pestalozzi as one of the forefather's of this line of thinking.

Pestalozzi's attention to the fact that origins of moral and social upbringing lie in the hands of the parents, especially the mother, is food for thought in the rushed hustle and bustle of parent and teacher lives. In many instances, parents and teachers alike seem to have so many things to "do" that they forget to "be" with children. Modern day educators and parents would also be wise to heed Pestalozzi's recognition of the natural needs of infants and children and their propensity to absorb meaning from the actions of those around them (Pestalozzi, 1801). Pestalozzi asserted that mothering, and parenting and teaching by extension, is an art that should be encouraged and trusted. "As the first germination of love, gratitude, trust, and obedience was a simply result of coincidence and

instinctive feelings between the mother and the child, so the further germination of these feelings is a high human art (Pestalozzi, 1801, p. 185).”

Through countless variations of these initial theories Pestalozzi never wavered from the essential nature of relationships, the abhorrence of violence towards children, and the value of family as central to social society—something that must be brought back to the foreground of modern educational practice in both the home and school arenas. With a similar thematic backbone the third tenet of Pestalozzi’s work useful for modern day educators to examine is his philosophy of educating both the head and the heart.

Education of mind and heart

Pestalozzi’s philosophy of education included having a multifaceted means of delivery and purpose (Barnard, 1859). This philosophy was grounded in his belief that appreciation and love of those we educate is critical. In addition, Pestalozzi asserted that examples of self control, attentiveness, and moral grounding are necessary for the education of both the mind and heart (Barnard, 1859). *How Gertrude Teaches Her Children* (1801) followed a period of his life when Pestalozzi created a children’s institute at Stanz for poor and orphaned children. The institute housed more than 80 children and was one of his more successful endeavors. Unfortunately, after a little less than six months the institute was closed to make room for a military hospital (Brühlmeier & Haller, n.d.). Pestalozzi’s work at Stanz centered on the idea of children learning through “the head, the hand, and the heart” and it was here that many of the moral principles that he espoused twenty years earlier in *Leonard and Gertrude* were acted upon (Barnard, 1859). Pestalozzi acted as father and teacher to all the children at Stanz and had little in the way of help or support. When looking back, even though Stanz was short lived Pestalozzi’s actions were light years ahead of other educational contemporaries, clearly seeing the potential of societal reform through quality holistic care and education of children.

Two critical lessons for the modern day educator emerge from Pestalozzi’s time at Stanz. First, working with disadvantaged populations can be transformative both for those in need and those working beside them. Second, working with anyone, but especially children who are suffering or in need, requires a deep commitment to educating the whole person. Pestalozzi’s work at Stanz led him to be critical of the schools of the time as “factories” that stifled children’s enthusiasm for learning and ideas. He believed that the development of man’s nature was achieved through attention in equal parts to art, music, arithmetic, and languages but always in relation to the senses (Pestalozzi, 1801). The senses, according to Pestalozzi, were the true way to understanding that leads to knowledge which is noble, useful, and instructive in life (Kilpatrick, 1951; Pestalozzi, 1801). Throughout *How Gertrude Teaches Her Children*, Pestalozzi also stressed the attention of subjects to perception, with great consideration to objects, their relationships to individuals, and their relationships to other objects (Pestalozzi, 1801).

Educators would do well to keep in the forefront of their minds the fact that many of Pestalozzi’s theories were a direct response to his work with the orphans at Stanz, whose lives were defined by crises and misfortune. Pestalozzi recognized that the innate needs of these children included experiencing learning first hand, using the arts to heal and teach, and to making relationships paramount to any teaching circumstance. Today, in the back to basics, “traditional” model of teacher driven, rote instruction often implemented in underperforming schools in the name of necessity or serving these most educationally needy students is precisely the type of short sighted thinking Pestalozzi saw in the schools of his time. Pestalozzi recognized over 150 years ago that this was not the best way to foster well-cared-for or well-educated children. Pestalozzi thought it took much, much more than that including giving appreciation, love, and attentiveness to children along with attention to the fostering of intellect (Pestalozzi, 1801). Current educators can learn a great deal from this time in Pestalozzi’s life and the work that it led to.

Teaching pedagogy

After Stanz was closed, and following the death of his only son, in 1801, Pestalozzi went on to find personal success at the Burgdorf School, working as a teacher for the government in the experimental section, creating what many consider the first “preschool” (Brühlmeier & Kuhlemann, 2007). This preschool, teacher’s college, and boy’s school was soon famous for Pestalozzi’s innovative educational practices. Pestalozzi prided himself on the curriculum and methods of the school which focused on attentiveness to community, and whole person development, despite criticism by colleagues and initial mistrust of parents. It was Pestalozzi’s most successful endeavor and became known the world over.

This commitment, or re-commitment, as Pestalozzi referred to it as, led to the establishment of his longest lasting educational endeavor, Yverdon, which served as both a teacher training ground and school for both boys and girls (although separated) from a variety of economic backgrounds. It was here at Yverdon that his writing while less

prolific in length and audience, shifted to focus on specifically on educational pedagogy more than child development and parenting. Like other institutions that Pestalozzi headed, the school suffered from severe financial mismanagement and difficulties, in part due to Pestalozzi's acceptance of children regardless of their ability to afford the education (Quick, 1874). Notable too, was the eventual internal strife created between different prodigies of Pestalozzi both vying for control of Yverdon as Pestalozzi aged (Von Raumer, as cited in Barnard, 1859). In the end, according to all accounts, the time and effort that the dissent and disagreement took detracted from his ability to serve these ideals to their fullest extent. That said, Yverdon was a model both internally for the Swiss but also for many foreign educators looking at the school for guidance in developing systems of compulsory education as this notion became more and more popular across Europe and beyond.

His major works of the time on his methods at Yverdon, *Report to Parents and the Public* (1807) and *A Word on the Conditions of my Pedagogical Enterprises* (1820) are instructive for contemporary educators to reflect upon. As biographer Green (1912) notes, while neither piece delves into the deep musings of his earlier or later publications they do speak to the methodological approaches of Yverdon and the student success with these methods. These methods included: the concept of teacher as guide, group learning, self paced and hands on, real world learning, and narrative non-competitive assessment, and community involvement (Green, 1912). His methods also included students working together scaffolding one another when they were able with their own knowledge. Interestingly, as with past endeavors students also became proficient at "trades" and observed tradesmen while at Yverdon. Unique to the time, and of serious import to modern times, is the fact that school was lengthy, taking up to sixty hours a week but when school was not in session children were encouraged to play in every sense (Green, 1912; Kilpatrick, 1951). In addition, Pestalozzi also insisted on no violence in schooling which at the time was an incredibly novel concept. Corporeal punishment was not tolerated and children learned to resolve issues with dialogue and empathy rather than physical force (Barnard, 1859; Green, 1912).

Pestalozzi's ideal educational environment as outlined above should be taken as philosophical evidence of best practices that should be used and taught today both in teacher education programs but also in professional development realms, especially again, in the context of some of the most difficult educational environments. To allow children to grow intellectually at an appropriate pace allows children security, freedom to play, and responsibility towards others, is not novel at this point in history but is difficult and support for the methods that support the idea is welcome. Reexamining the fabric of Pestalozzi's community at Yverdon allows for a deep understanding of the circumstances in which these methods flourished and the possibility of current teachers recreating the positive educational climate Pestalozzi worked to develop.

Karl Von Raumer's account of Yverdon, housed in Henry Barnard's (1859) summary of Pestalozzi's life and works, paints an invaluable picture of the school, staff, and Pestalozzi himself at the time. Von Raumer lived and worked at the institution while writing a detailed account of the school. He paints a picture of an institution shaped and sold on many of the same ideas as a large family—communal goals, common understandings, love of individual talent, and the desire to evaluate each child on their own merit rather than a comparative ideal (Von Raumer as cited in Barnard, 1859). Von Raumer also chronicled the problematic aspects of the Institute,

The most significant internal strife at Yverdon the most significant of which focused on whom would become head of school when Pestalozzi stepped down (Barnard, 1859). Yverdon is a stark reminder, in the context of poorly led public schools, charter school, and the for-profit school movement, that motives other than the pedagogical and developmental best interest of children can, and do, filter into school administration, structure, and teacher incentives which are often at the heart of unsuccessful school organizations and creations. This lesson and Pestalozzi's attention to curricular and methodological means of education are of paramount interest to modern day educators when examining the happenings of Yverdon and Pestalozzi's writing of the time.

A Contemporary Perspective

As the introduction noted, contemporary educators would do well to examine the core tenets of Pestalozzi's work. First, his unquestionable dedication to teaching both children and adults is a reminder of how dedication and continual improvement matter to the successful education of students. Second, the philosophical pillars of Pestalozzi's work: child development, family, affective education, and active, child centered educational pedagogy provide strong footing for contemporary educators to take a step back into to reexamine their own understanding of both the purpose and best methods for reaching the children, families, and communities they work with on a day to day basis. Third, preservice and practicing educators who are familiar with Pestalozzi have access to a deeper

understanding of the foundations of American education in a way that better informs their understanding of current events in education.

Pestalozzi's life story and writings demand thought, reflection, engagement, debate, and conversation as any good educational endeavor should. It is time once again to bring them to the forefront of educational philosophy to support and further modern day educational practice.

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PROGRESSIVISM: ANOTHER LOOK THEN AND NOW

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John Dewey may not have been the world's greatest educational philosopher, but he was a pedagogue who inspired widespread rethinking of educational objectives, principles, and procedures. Because the inspiration was and continues to be universal, it is appropriate to honor him 100 years after his birth. (Brickman, 1959, p. 373)

We've got to start to make this world over. Thomas Edison, 1912.

Introduction

While pundits write and speak of cultural wars, red and blue states, dangers of socialism, and big government, labels of conservatism, liberalism, and progressivism in often stark and frightening terms, it is worthwhile to review a bit of history. Many faculty in the education field were beneficiaries of the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 signed by Franklin D. Roosevelt and carried out by Harry S. Truman. Veterans returning from combat and service areas were presented an opportunity for upward mobility through the G.I. Bill. Returning veterans were given a choice of schools in higher education. Seven decades later, Congress has passed the post 9/11 G.I. Bill of 2009 with many of the same provisions for our returning Middle East veterans. We have much to be grateful for due to our government's progressive intervention in educational policy and decision making. In our history of economic upheavals, we find pendulum swings between progressivism and traditionalism. Populism thrives in economic down cycles and laissez-faire economics comes to the forefront during periods of prosperity. Speculators get on the bandwagon and push risky investments leading in the past, present and will in the future to depressions and recessions of varying degrees of severity. The current sub-prime loan fiasco continues a history of boom and bust cycles that were especially severe in the 1890s.

The progressive era reflected disenchantment with the status quo. There was an examination of all aspects of society and a call for democratic renewal and reinvigoration. It was a period of examination of democracy and society. The late 19th and early 20th centuries reflected an intellectual ferment in the United States. New religions emerged. Women began to play leadership roles wherever they could. Mary Baker Eddy (1821–1910) founded the Christian Science Church in Boston, Massachusetts. Aimee Semple McPherson (1890–1944) founded The Four Square Gospel Church. Both Churches remain active contributors to faith-based initiatives. John Dewey reflected the soul searching and demand for change in educational institutions. Like others of the period he was a child of the age of ferment and questioning established ways of doing things. People were excited, wanted change, and reinvigorated the democratic process. Child labor laws were adopted and enforced. Maltreatment of the mentally challenged was exposed. Corporate malfeasance was assailed. As in Jacksonian Democracy there was a trend toward egalitarianism. Lincoln Steffens exposed city machines in the *Shame of the Cities*, 1904; Ida Tarbell exposed Standard Oil Trust Abuses; Upton Sinclair attacked the meat packing industry in his 1906, now classic book, *The Jungle*. Industrial monopolies were brought under control. Part of the impetus for the reform movement was the great depression of 1893 that lasted through the 1890s until the start of the 20th century. Unemployment reached 25 percent, people were begging for food for their children, railroads went bankrupt, men fought for work. There was fear of class warfare. The wealthy claimed the unemployed were shiftless, lazy, and unwilling to work. In 1894 a businessman from Ohio, Jacob Coxey created and led an industrial army, protesting government inaction in the face of a national economic crisis. His business, a sand quarry, like others, was affected by the great depression and panic of 1893–1895. Coxey proposed several government programs which were adopted by Franklin D. Roosevelt in the 1930s. Coxey spoke on the steps of the Capitol on May 9, 1894 noting that for a quarter of a century the rich have been growing richer, the poor growing poorer and that by the close of the present century the middle class will have disappeared as the struggle for existence becomes fierce and relentless. Coxey spoke of unjust legislation that protected idlers, speculators, and gamblers (Coxey, 1894; 2009, Edwards, 2009).

Throughout history the depressions pass and good times come once again. But the issue of free enterprise, unbridled capitalism with occasional explosive down cycles, remained a challenge to elected lawmakers. Laissez-faire as a philosophy has proven unworkable. In an ideal world moral and ethical theory would prevail, codes of ethics would not be merely written but practiced. Currently as in the past we have opponents and defenders of private enterprise, corporate freedoms, and business control of their own destiny. Each recession and the depression of the 1930's resulted in Congress enacting regulatory safeguards. Captains of industry and business found loopholes to continue their creative endeavors to improve bottom line performance often risking company survival as has been

noted through corporate history. Charles Frankel, like John Dewey a practical philosopher rather than a metaphysician wrote about issues of this era as a social philosopher. His *Democratic Prospect* provided insight into the role of lobbyists in a democratic society. Through lobbyists captains of industry and business can plead their case when it comes to regulatory reform. By the same token Unions can use their financial clout to influence Congress to pass legislation favorable to their agendas (Grier, 2009) notes that the number of lobbyists has grown from 10,662 in 1998 to more than 14,800 in 2008.

While progressives past and present have sought to limit the role of special interest groups in governmental decisions, lobbying is rooted in the Constitution that prohibits Congress from making laws that restrict the people's right to petition the government for redress of grievances. Progressives play a role in raising questions about the role and scope of efforts to influence governmental decisions. There may be no way of controlling recessions, which vary in severity, without government intervention. Creative destruction occurs periodically when modern financial manipulators engage in innovative ventures such as the current sub-prime crises in real estate. That creative destruction involved major financial and insurance institutions. As during the progressive era the legislative and executive branches are engaged in a wide variety of strategies to address malfeasance. Current muckrakers are engaged in model making to prevent excesses in management decisions and are providing a variety of oversight committees and czars for every conceivable element in society and its institutions. As is true in the past, so today Congressional regulatory laws often create more problems than they solve. Future legislators pass laws to undue damage from excesses of over regulation. The search for balance is as important today as it was with Aristotle's philosophy of the Golden Mean.

Progressive Era in Education

Knight (1951) noted that it is not altogether clear when the first Ph.D. in education was conferred, but that in 1899 the degree was first awarded at Teachers College, Columbia University, a pioneer in graduate education. The first university to bestow a doctorate in education was Harvard University in 1920. Knight went on to note that it was possibly an honorary Ed. D. Degree was given. Expanding programs for education and increasing degree opportunities were part of the progressive era permeating all the nation's social institutions (pp. 642–643).

Progressivism and Dewey:

There was a concerted call for economic and social justice during the progressive era then as now. John Dewey, 1859–1952 reflected the progressive era in his educational writings. The Progressive Education Association was formed in 1918. Members sought to expand the role and function of education to include economic and social justice, which are currently popular themes in Schools and Colleges of Education. Dewey in his 1927 *The Public and Its Problems* as well as in other writings explored the question of "What are the conditions under which it is possible for the Great Society to approach more closely and vitally the status of a Great Community, and thus take the form in genuinely democratic societies and states?" These efforts have continued since Dewey's time as succeeding political leaders seek to create and maintain a society that responds to ever changing and emerging needs of Americans. Kilpatrick (1959) discussed Dewey's teaching method which was coming to class with a practical problem and thought aloud various solutions through creative thinking. Kilpatrick took all of Dewey's courses. Dewey influenced Kilpatrick's teaching and writing. Dewey frequently consulted Kilpatrick about ideas, concepts and chapters for his later books. Dewey's writings reflected his musings in his teaching and lecturing. Reconstruction, learning by doing, breaking barriers of dualism, and creative intelligence were trademarks of a progressive era in teaching future generations. Dewey engaged in social philosophy to address conceptual frameworks for a more open democracy. He once wrote about his teaching: "I have usually, if not always, held an idea first in its abstract form, often as a matter chiefly of logical or dialectic consistency or of the power of words to suggested ideas" (Schlipp, 1951).

He continued by noting that personal experience, talks with students, interaction with foreign people provide concrete significance. Dewey noted that there are no ideas which are original in substance, but a common substance unfolds new expression operating through individual temperament and the peculiar unique incidences of an individual life. He related that he was fortunate to have a variety of contacts that have put substance into form. "My belief in the office of intelligence as a continuously reconstructive agency is at least a faithful report of my own life and experience" (Schlipp, 1951, pp. 44–45).

George C. Stone (1994) reiterated Dewey's practical approach to social science noting that it was always centered on resolving immediate, real life, and social problems through the logical method of inquiry, the scientific method in a way so the consequences improve the quality of life for both the individual and the community.

Detlefsen (1998) discusses Dewey's bridge between individualism and community concluding that cosmopolitanism, better than any other political theory, supports Dewey's brand of multicultural education. Cosmopolitan is referred to by Waldron (1993) as individuals belonging to a multitude of groups, customs and associations, exhibiting a constant openness to new associations. The cosmopolitan individual utilizes multiple associations to inject newness in their lives and various communities in which they function. Reading Dewey's articles in the *Social Frontier* published during the decade of the 1930s, one cannot help but note the real struggle Dewey has with the pros and cons of rugged individualism. He speaks of collectivism, building a great community as well as the pitfalls of laissez faire but then supports the definition of rugged individualism in the sense of individuality. One needs to remember that Dewey lived during periods of economic turmoil. His era shaped a theory of progressivism that dealt with practical problems of men, unemployment, unfair labor practices, depressions as well as periods of prosperity. As most Americans he was a nationalist supporting the war effort in World Wars.

(School) classes . . . are regarded as modes of bringing people together, of doing away with barriers, of caste, or class or race or types of experiences that keep people from real communion, with each other . . . bigotry, intolerance, or even an unswerving faith in the superiority of one's own religious and political creed, are much shaken when individuals are brought face to face with each other, or have the ideas of others continuously and forcibly placed before them (Dewey, 1976).

Dewey did not face a society, a nation, with as much polarization as in our 21st century. This fragmentation is seen in our institutions and their critics. In recent years Supreme Court 5-4 decisions illustrate the divisiveness in society. Affirmative action, reverse discrimination, ethnic politics permeate our landscape. Yet in Dewey's writings and in popularism today progressivism flourishes. Attacks on progressivism then and now multiply. In the great depression Dewey saw a crisis of confidence in society and education.

Representatives of concentrated wealth . . . the ones who have steadily fought from the start all enrichment of the curriculum ... calling the things which they demand as a matter of course for their own children . . . fads and frills when they are to be made part of the educational facilities for the poor . . . to protect the tax bills of the concentrated wealth. (Dewey, 1986)

An examination of the journal, *The Social Frontier*, reveals the progressive spirit in Dewey's writings as well as a repeated call for more equal distribution of wealth. In October 1934 Dewey wrote "Can Education Share in Social Reconstruction?" in which he noted that the idea that everyone has an equal chance to succeed is a myth. Continuing he wrote that economic freedom has been either nonexistent or precarious for large masses of the population. In 1935 Dewey wrote *The Crucial Role of Intelligence* in which he noted that the press is a vehicle for social indoctrination on behalf of the current economic system. We need, he continues, to have school develop community vs. propaganda of the press and radio. Referring to Huxley's *Scientific Research and Social Needs*, Dewey agreed that one aim of education should be to teach people to discount the unconscious prejudices that their social environments compress upon them. In May 1935 in his *Youth in a Confused World* Dewey referred to the power of vested interest in controlling the careers of teachers. Dewey read a letter from a discharged junior college teacher.

I held before students' the ideal of intellectual integrity; of the scientific attitude of mind, of a social point of view, the development of a critical attitude toward modern society and its problems, but always with a suspended judgment until all the facts are available. (p. 9)

The junior college teacher was dismissed for undermining the school system and of ruining students. Dewey was instrumental in the founding and establishment of the American Association of University Professors. In May 1936 he wrote of *Class Struggle and the Democratic Way* and as war clouds encompassed Europe toward the end of the decade Dewey wrote *Education and Social Change* in which he noted that democracy also means voluntary choice, based on an intelligence that is the outcome of free association and communication with others. All progressive messages with underlying themes of economic and social justice address the need for providing protective networks for at risk, low income, disadvantaged populations. Volunteerism and governmental intervention are essential in meeting the needs of often marginalized segments of our democracy.

Progressivism Now, Another Look

As efforts were made at the turn of the century to ameliorate social injustice, so now there is a populism abroad in the land. How far it will go remains to be seen, but efforts are being made to expand health care, address issues facing the poor, unemployed, the elderly, and through a multitude of congressional legislative tax initiatives to distribute the wealth for the benefit of low income, at risk families and individuals. It is a historical fact that unbridled laissez faire philosophy has not worked in the past and as the sub-prime financial meltdown reveals it will

not work in the future. In a political system based on lobbying and the spoils system, one would be less than forthright if they did not predict future financial meltdowns. Meanwhile, in the field of education progressivism continues to hold sway in many efforts to address the need for diversity economic and social justice. Throughout the progressive educational movement critics expressed their concerns. William Bagley's 1935 *Education and Emergent Man* and his 1938 *An Essentialists Platform for the Advancement of American Education* addressed his concern about soft pedagogy. He and traditionalists advocated effort, discipline, authority and adhering to the best ideals of humankind. Progressivists at the turn of the 20th century were attacked by conservatives as they are at the turn of our 21st century. Critics of progressives see them as jumping on every new bandwagon that comes along. Financial analysts often criticize brokers for churning accounts to get more commissions, while educational conservatives see progressive educators as engaging in popular trends and fads. Social justice, nongraded schools, open classrooms, learning communities, diversity, technology, courses on women and minorities, emerging economics of developing nations, limited English language proficiency courses, affirmative action, disparate impact, distance learning, ethnic group courses, are examples given by conservative critics of fragmentation, and fads that became permanent growth areas at all educational levels. Critics of progressivism advocate home schooling, private schooling, and efforts to have teachers concentrate on subject matter rather than ideological movements that detract from learning and lead to lower nationally normed achievement levels. Dewey's response to the Economic Education Act of 1947 which proposed using public money to support private, religious schools was:

(That such an act was) anti-democratic in allowing one segment of the population to attend private schools of their choice at public expense generation after generation. It would be obvious that such a procedure would create divisions among our people and would lead to permanent conflicts among self-perpetuating blocks (Dewey, 1989).

At any rate, our educational institutions now as at the turn of the century reflect progressivism in theory and practice. We have always had divergent views in our society, however, recently the society has become more fragmented and divisiveness often replaces the need for consensus and unity within diversity essential for democracy.

Progressivism Explored

Progressive education focuses on real-world problem-solving activities in a democratic and cooperative learning environment. This view of education is grounded in the scientific method of inductive reasoning. As an educational theory, it encourages the learner to seek out processes that work and to do those things that best achieve desirable ends. Progressivism came about as a protest against the emphasis on universal truth and the past at the expense of experience and social relevance. The philosophy of pragmatism is embedded in the progressivist theory of education (Webb, et al., 2007).

Progressive education organizes schools around the concerns, curiosity, and real-world experiences of students. The progressive teacher facilitates learning by helping students formulate meaningful questions and to devise strategies to answer those questions. Answers are not drawn from lists or even Great Books; they are discovered through real world experience. Progressivism is the educational application of a philosophy called pragmatism. John Dewey and Nel Noddings are progressive educators (Sadker, D., Sadker, M., & Zittleman, K., p. 324).

Concerned about the direction society was taking in the early 1900s and fearful of radical remedies, middle class men and women from all professions became part of a widespread effort to bring about reforms. These reformers helped the needy, founded settlement houses, and called for child labor reform. Attorneys and judges reexamined the law to make it relevant to existing conditions. Educators and social scientists developed new ways to investigate and solve problems. Conscientious politicians passed laws to reform business and government.(Bragdon, et al., p. 677) At its March 15, 1919 organizational meeting the Progressive Education Association the eighty-five members adopted seven principles.

1. freedom to develop naturally
2. interest as motivation for all work
3. the teacher as a guide not a taskmaster
4. scientific study of pupil development
5. greater attention to all that affects the child's physical development
6. cooperation between the school and home to meet the needs of child life
7. the progressive school as leader in educational movements (Pulliam & Van Patten, 2003, p. 210).

The Future

History repeats itself as noted by President Harry S. Truman's 1947 Commission on Education that advocated expansion of community colleges and President Obama's request for \$12 billion over 10 years for an investment in community colleges (Investing Well, 2009). As in Truman's time so currently community colleges provide employment opportunities for low income, disadvantaged, at risk student populations as well as channels for individuals who want to recycle their careers. The GI Bill of 1944, like the community college support, reflects progressivism in theory and practice with another new Yellow Ribbon GI bill of 2009 (Smith, 2009) continuing the effort to expand educational opportunities.

The illusive search for unity within diversity is a compelling challenge in our society. Current progressivism and the turn of our 21st century were reflected in a one party sweep of the executive and legislative branches of government. The election of 2008 reflected increasing diversity and expansion of ethnic and minority group voter participation. As in the past pendulum swings between traditionalism and conservatism, progressivism and populism will be reflected in rise and fall of one or the other of our political parties. Dewey's interest in international education reflected his life long commitment to progressivism. It led to investigations by J. Edgar Hoover over his trip to Russia in 1928 to participate in education conferences. Accused of communistic leanings and carefully watched, the file on him was eventually closed. Prior to being closed, one source reported that

the subject had been living in an apartment house with his 40-year-old daughter, a school teacher in college. The subject, Dewey, pays \$150 a month for an eight room apartment apparently doing nothing but writing. During the past year he has been disabled by two operations and has spent much of his time in a hospital. Subject has few visitors except an occasional professor from Columbia University (Beineke, 1987, FBI file 1943).

The FBI terminated their file on Dewey noting that:

because of the subject's advanced age and the fact that there is no indication that he is presently engaged in any activity which would be considered inimical to the best interest of the internal security of this country, no further investigation is being conducted and this case is being considered closed (F.B.I. File 8, 1943).

This shows the emotional alarm at progressivism during the height of communist fears that were inflamed later by Senator McCarthy. Currently fear-mongering about efforts to expand economic and social justice nationally is seen in talk shows about European style socialism being imposed on the United States. O'Connor (2007) discusses the current richly endowed advocacy associations that consistently challenge progressive, liberal policy research. The debate between progressives and reactionaries over excessive conservatism continues in our era. In a larger sense there is a cultural war in our society between those who advocate limited government, free market, self-correcting capitalism, laissez faire, and individualism vs. active government involvement fomenting in economic and social justice. Whatever the future holds, educators will be adjusting and adapting to trends and policy changes. Waks (1998) notes that Dewey views three possible sources of collective authority for cooperative resolution of science-dominated problems in culturally diverse societies. First is a moralistic and religious approach that seeks to limit the innovations of science and technology. Second applied ethics is a step forward from absolutism in a culturally diverse society. It seeks institutional subordination to preaching from some arbitrary point of view. But experimentalism, Dewey finds, most applicable and appropriate for a new world of harmonious and cooperative social science where activities can ease into and enrich one another. This is what George C. Stone (1997) referred to as interdependence in Dewey's Theory of Community. Dewey believed that immediate action is the only attainable progress. It is better to travel than arrive because it is constant arriving (Dewey Middle Works 1, p. 147). The challenge of our day as in early times is to find unity within diversity so essential to democratic theory and practice. Dewey was influenced by the era in which he lived. His progressivism reflected the dismay over unequal distribution of wealth, the depression, and stressed the need for greater attention to economic and social justice. Writing in *The Social Frontier* in 1934, the title of the article reveals the trend of his philosophical perspective during that period; *The Age of Individualism and Laissez Faire in Economy and Government is Closing and a New Age of Collectivism is Emerging*. Dewey's philosophy of cooperative, collective, and interdependent efforts to build a great society has continued through the decades since his death. Johnson and Johnson (2009) illustrate how social interdependence and cooperative learning continue to make a positive difference in educational theory and practice. Laurel Schmidt (2009) reveal in *Stirring Up Justice* the importance of teaching students about interdependence and social action. Over a decade ago a group of intellectuals, historians and sociologists sought to analyze the growing spirit of meanness leading to violence, blocking social reform, and encouraging social fragmentation and gridlock in the highest reaches of government. The University of Pennsylvania President Judith Rodin, formed the Penn Commission on Society, Community and Culture to explore the growing challenge of incivility in our society and

world (Van Patten, Stone, & Chen, 1997). Tyson Corporation recently provided substantial funding for an endowed program entitled “The Tyson Center for Faith and Spirituality in the Workplace.” Human decency and civility are the hallmarks of a progressive society. Dewey’s faith in democracy depends on respecting and honoring open, free and respectful dialogue regardless of differences of belief, opinion, and philosophical backgrounds. Our instant media messages 24/7 make it difficult to ferret out truth from fiction and hype in order to make informed decisions as citizens. Sometimes we seem to be swept up by a wave of emotions ebbing and flowing as our information society inundates us in a myriad of hopes, fears, and aspirations. As educators we have a responsibility to help our students make informed decisions essential for the survival of our great, uniquely American style of the democratic experiment.

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ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION: NEW RESPONSES TO AN OLD PROBLEM

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Introduction

More than a million of the students who enter ninth grade each fall fail to graduate four years later. Seven thousand students drop out every school day (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2009). In the first half of the twentieth century, high school graduation was the driving force behind increased college enrollments. Its decline since 1970 (for cohorts born after 1950) has flattened college attendance and completion rates as well as growth in the skill level of the U.S. workforce. To increase the skill levels of its future workforce, America needs to confront a large and growing dropout problem. The origins of this dropout problem have yet to be fully investigated. Evidence suggests a powerful role for the family in shaping educational and adult outcomes. A growing proportion of American children are being raised in disadvantaged families. This trend promises to reduce productivity and promote inequality in the America of tomorrow (Heckman & LaFontaine, 2008).

The era in which a high school dropout could earn a living wage no longer exists in the United States. Not only do dropouts themselves suffer, but they add staggering financial and social costs to their communities, states, and country. Although graduation rates are a fundamental indicator of how schools are ultimately performing, recent research has exposed alarmingly low graduation rates that were previously hidden behind inaccurate calculations and inadequate data. Some recent findings:

- Overall, low-income and minority students fare the worst in the dropout epidemic. Each year, approximately 1.2 million students fail to graduate from high school, more than half of whom are from minority groups. (Editorial Projects in Education, 2008)
- Nationally, about 71 percent of all students graduate from high school on time with a regular diploma, but barely half of African American and Hispanic students earn diplomas with their peers. In many states the difference between white and minority graduation rates is stunning; in several cases there is a gap of as many as 40 or 50 percentage points. (Editorial Projects in Education, 2008).
- A sixteen to twenty-four-year-old coming from the highest quartile of family income is about seven times as likely to have completed high school as a sixteen to twenty-four-year-old coming from the lowest quartile. (USDOE-NCES Digest, 2007)

While no single reason stands out, research indicates that difficult transitions to high school, deficient basic skills, and a lack of engagement serve as prominent barriers to graduation.

Most dropouts are already on the path to failure in the middle grades and engage in behaviors that strongly correlate to dropping out in high school. Various researchers have identified specific risk factors, such as low attendance or a failing grade, which can identify future dropouts—in some cases as early as sixth grade (Jerald, 2006)

Ninth grade serves as a bottleneck for many students who begin their freshman year only to find that their academic skills are insufficient for high school-level work. Up to 40 percent of ninth grade students in cities with the highest dropout rates repeat ninth grade; only 10 to 15 percent of those repeaters go on to graduate (Balfanz & Legters, 2006)

Academic success in ninth grade coursework is highly predictive of eventual graduation; it is even more telling than demographic characteristics or prior academic achievement (Allensworth and Easton, 2007). Unfortunately, many students are not given the extra support they need to successfully make the transition to high school. As a result, more than one third of all dropouts are lost in ninth grade (Editorial Projects in Education, 2008)

The six million secondary students who comprise the lowest 25 percent of achievement are twenty times more likely to drop out of high school than students in the top-performing quartile (Carnevale, 2001). Since academic and social engagement are integral components of successfully navigating the education pipeline, a lack of student engagement is predictive of dropping out, even after controlling for academic achievement and student background (Rumberger, 2004)

Economic Implications

Rouse, (2005) indicates that dropouts suffer from reduced earnings and lost opportunities; there is also a significant social and economic cost to the rest of the nation. Over the course of his or her lifetime, a high school dropout earns, on average, about \$260,000 less than a high school graduate. Dropouts from the Class of 2008 alone

will cost the nation more than \$319 billion in lost wages over the course of their lifetimes (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2008). If the United States' likely dropouts from the Class of 2006 had graduated, the nation could have saved more than \$17 billion in Medicaid and expenditures for uninsured health care over the course of those young people's lifetimes (Wise, 2006a). Wise (2006b) also contends if U.S. high schools and colleges raise the graduation rates of Hispanic, African American, and Native American students to the levels of white students by 2020, the potential increase in personal income would add more than \$310 billion to the U.S. economy. Finally, he believes that increasing the graduation rate and college matriculation of male students in the United States by just 5 percent could lead to combined savings and revenue of almost eight billion dollars each year by reducing crime-related costs (Wise, 2006c).

Characteristics of At Risk Students

As students with varying degrees of ability pass through various stages of development, at-risk conditions may result (Dynarski & Gleason, 2002). These authors further stated levels of ability may be influenced by a number of conditions beyond the control of the student. Dynarski and Gleason asserted that students are considered at-risk based on a number of characteristics, the most predominant of which is the likelihood of not graduating from high school. The emphasis on testing and standardized assessment to measure academic achievement may contribute to student failure, both academically and socially (Amarein & Berliner, 2002; Kaufman, 2005). Kaufman reported those students who are most likely to drop out of high school are not necessarily failing due to low intellectual ability; other contributing factors such as behavior and socioeconomic status may outweigh academic ability.

After studying standardized test data, Azzam (2008) suggested average-ability and high-ability students can also become at-risk when teachers are forced to devote time and effort to low-achieving and disruptive students. Azzam examined NAEP data and found that although standardized test scores for the lowest-achieving students have shown improvement, high ability students' score gains were minimal. Leone and Drakeford (1999) conducted an earlier study and suggested that teachers, in their efforts to provide instruction to the majority, may create environments that breed at-risk students. In response to these and other concerns, educational reform measures have included alternatives to traditional classroom teaching and learning (Atkins et al., 2005).

Mayers (2006) examined the content of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 and found problems with school system interpretations and implementations. Mayers suggested the use of standardized testing instruments to determine student mastery of academic concepts may contribute to a cycle of student failure. Guerin and Denti (1999) found students who do not respond well to traditional organization often find themselves receiving instruction and assessment within confines that do not nurture or even allow freedom of expression, thereby denying students a sense of personal relevance. Atkins et al. (2005) found this lack of personal relevance often leads to further alienation on the student's part, and, in turn, may increase opportunities for the student's social failure as well. Further studies found many of these at-risk students become middle and high school dropouts (Barton, 2006b).

High school dropouts have shown significant differences in behavior, academic achievement, and grade retention rates early in their schooling, often by third grade (Lehr, Sinclair, & Christenson, 2004). Although grade retention continues to be a practice used to cure academic failure, repeating a grade level is strongly related to dropout rates (Barton, 2006b).

A decade ago Kaplan, Peck, and Kaplan (1997) conducted a longitudinal study of middle school students to determine the causal relations of motivation, peer associations, and perceived rejection to dropout behavior. They found cyclical development of poor academic ability, motivation, and perceived rejection by teachers and other students are significant influences on development of deviant peer associations and dropout behaviors among high school students. They further reported feelings of alienation, brought about by negative school experiences, can be observed in students as early as middle school.

Katsiyannis and Williams (1998) reported the population of students served in alternative education programs was diverse and included students who were truant or had dropped out of school as well as those who were disruptive, migrant, pregnant, homeless, unmotivated, and academically deficient. Powell (2003) examined available studies to develop a rubric for alternative education programs. She found teachers' perceptions of students who are at risk for academic failure and dropping out of school are as varied as the programs designed to meet the needs of these students. Tobin and Sprague (2000) reported that referral and suspension rates, grades, and attendance are good indicators of students who are at risk of academic failure and should be considered as candidates for alternative education programs. Lago-DeLello (1998) examined teachers' perceptions of at-risk students and the amount of time

spent academically with these students. Teachers in the study rated at-risk students lower on ideal pupil attributes and teachers spent less time academically engaged with at-risk students.

Alternative Education

The term ‘alternative education’ has evolved to describe education delivered outside of the traditional school setting. Such programs began to develop in the late 60's and early 70's with initiatives developing as parents, students, and professionals in the field began to realize that new and varied approaches would better meet the needs of students. Educators and researchers have generally used the term alternative education program to refer to an instructional program that is *different and separate* from regular classroom instruction (Foley & Pang, 2006). The movement grew exponentially during the 1980s and 1990s in response to high dropout rates, truancy, school failure, substance abuse, juvenile delinquency, and other factors. Alternative Education continues to thrive as social problems including school violence and dysfunctional families create new challenges for communities and states. Its aim is to provide students who do not thrive and succeed in the traditional school setting with other opportunities to receive an education. Most state adopted definitions include components such as location, instructional methodology, and desired outcomes.

During the past decade, educational reform measures have attempted to address the needs of an increasingly diverse student population and the effectiveness of regular education classrooms in meeting these needs (Atkins, Bullis, & Todis, 2005; Lehr & Lange, 2003). Kleiner, Porch and Farris (2002) reported alternative education programs, aimed at addressing the challenges of students who are at risk for academic failure, are being designed and implemented through such initiatives as magnet schools, charter schools, vocational programs of study, technical programs of study, and others, any of which may be considered alternative education programs. After studying alternative education programs to determine the need for such programs, models of program delivery, and recommendations for alternative education strategies, Tobin and Sprague (2000) concluded that alternative education program models are as varied as the diverse populations they address. Examining the diversity of alternative education programs, Lehr and Lange (2003) reported although instructional materials and curriculum content may be the same as or very similar to those of regular education, the delivery model, student involvement, and assessment may vary.

The concept of alternative education can be traced to the 1930s and the teachings of John Dewey (Neumann, 1994). According to Neumann, the progressive education movement of that time recognized that some students benefitted from direct, active involvement with their own education. He also found public alternative education programs during the 1960s and 1970s generally relied on a humanistic approach to instructional delivery in high schools. These early alternative education programs believed many students who were not successful in regular education classrooms were meeting with failure because of flawed instructional delivery models that did not allow for student creativity because of their primary concern with creating conformity (McGee, 2001). In the alternative education programs discussed by McGee, instructional plans emphasizing students’ personal experiences were often developed in collaborative efforts between students and teachers. According to Neumann (1994), another type of alternative education program sought to redefine a fundamental approach to academics. Neumann found discipline was literally incorporated into the academics that were taught in these schools. Reflecting other educational practices, alternative schools became focused on remediation in the 1980s (Raywid, 1998). This focus evolved to include programs designed to educate those students who were removed from regular education classrooms due to disciplinary problems and academic failure (Lehr & Lange, 2003). Lehr and Lange found that, increasingly, alternative education programs emphasize an innovative instructional approach as well, while others are designed to alleviate disciplinary problems in regular education classrooms. Although a uniform definition for alternative education does not exist, the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE), National Center for Education Statistics has defined an alternative education school as a “public elementary/secondary school that addresses needs of students that typically cannot be met in a regular school, provides nontraditional education, serves as an adjunct to regular school, or falls outside the categories of regular, special education or vocational education” (2002, p.55).

Early limited data made it difficult to determine the efficacy of alternative education programs (McGee, 2001), and investigators have increasingly begun to develop assessment instruments or rubrics to evaluate the effectiveness of alternative education programs (Jackson, 2002; Morley, 2002). Morley has developed a checklist of indicators designed to serve as a framework for establishing quality learning environments in these settings, as well as descriptions of the components necessary for effective programs. Among the various evaluation instruments, Reimer

and Cash (2003) concluded there is still no clear measure that determines the success of a program; the measure of effectiveness depends on the mission of the school or agency itself and/or the community it serves.

No Child Left Behind and Alternative Education

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2003) recognized the necessity of a highly skilled labor force to maintain prosperity in a global economy. It pointed out that unemployment rates among high school dropouts were more than 1.5 times higher than those of high school graduates. This development underlines the imperative to meet the needs of students at varying levels and in a variety of manners (Barton, 2006b). As reported by Hilliard and Ortiz (2004), (NCLB) includes provisions designed to expand educational opportunities to address the needs of students who are at risk of academic failure for a number of reasons, including low socioeconomic status and minority students. Greater attention has been given to low achieving students, many of whom were often ignored in earlier school reform efforts and typically dropped out of high school (Hilliard & Ortiz; Jennings & Rentner, 2006).

Another component of No Child Left Behind allows parents of students enrolled in low performing schools to use the "public school choice" option (USDOE, 2004). Within these provisions, parents with children enrolled in schools that are low performing for at least two consecutive years can transfer the children to a public school that performs well, or to a charter school within their district.

A study conducted by Hess and Finn (2004), found flexibility, as evidenced by the changes in management of federal funds at local levels, allowed school systems to be responsive to the needs of their individual communities. This often translated into innovative educational models for delivery of instruction, including alternative education programs (Howard & Rice-Crenshaw, 2006). This flexibility gave local school systems the ability to transfer funding among several sources without separate approval, thus providing a possible source of funding for alternative education programs (USDOE, 2004).

Alternative Education Models

The basis of design for alternative education models has been the creation of an environment that is conducive to learning and meets the needs of the student (Quinn, Poirier, Faller, Gable, & Tonelson, 2006). Lange and Sletten (2002) further explained this concept necessitates the development of a classroom in which the student-teacher ratio is low, instruction is individualized, and assessments are varied and noncompetitive. Tobin and Sprague (2000) found a climate of student ownership, including studies that are relevant to student interests, flexibility, and school pride, is a positive predictor of success.

Researchers have attempted to determine student perceptions of support availability and the source of the support. Tobin & Sprague, (2000) found students not at risk identified receipt of social services from friends and teachers while at-risk students did not identify receipt of these sources. Neither group of students in the studies identified receipt of tangible support services from their parents. These researchers suggested parental provision of tangible support was so commonplace for the students that its receipt was unconscious, and thus not recognized.

Tobin and Sprague (2000) also found community support was often evident in successful alternative education programs and suggested that community involvement in academic programs can set in motion a series of events that improve the self-esteem and academic achievement of students.

Selected Programs

Given the descriptions of the varying alternative education programs that have been in existence and developed over the past decades, one can see that alternative education programs are as diversified as the population they serve (Powell, 2003). Furthermore, Reimer and Cash (2003) reported statistics for academic performance seem to be as varied as the instructional approaches embraced by each county and each state. A brief review of existing programs indicates an interesting mix of public schools, charter schools, corporations, and school/business partnerships.

The Check and Connect Program High School Completion Initiative in Minneapolis Public Schools utilizes adult mentors. Beginning with ninth graders from two Minneapolis high schools, students showing warning signs of withdrawal are targeted for interventions. Referral criteria include: absenteeism, academic failure, suspensions, and/or being new to the district. In the context of smaller learning communities, the schools integrated three complementary strategies: the Check and Connect model of engagement, the Attendance Liaison personnel to make contact immediately following initial absences, and a School Attendance Review Board model to bring in community resources. To date, about one quarter of each cohort is served by these targeted interventions. (Anderson, Christenson, & Sinclair, 2004). Anderson et al. found personal contact not only helps to reduce dropout rates, but also helps to reduce delinquency among the students served.

Hamilton Alternative School, located in South Bend, Indiana, investigated the effect of its alternative education program on students' self-esteem. (McGee, 2001). Students responded to a survey and participated in advisor/advisee interviews where they were asked how they felt about themselves in regard to attitudes and ability, and which elements of support they found most influential. Students participated in a weekly session with their advisor in efforts to develop their intellect, emotion, and motivation. Seventy-seven percent of the students reported an improvement in self-esteem and a belief that they were capable of success. These students indicated both the sense of family and active involvement in their instructional activities had a positive influence on individual student success. Educators associated with the Hamilton Alternative School believed that meeting the basic needs of students is necessary before students can concentrate on achieving at advanced levels.

Schools Without Walls, an alternative education program developed and implemented in Mesa County, Colorado, served approximately 50 students from the surrounding area (Schweikert-Cattin, & Taylor, 2000). This program focused on teaching students how to become self-directed in order to become successful learners. The program consisted of six components: voluntary student participation, individualized learning styles, a nurturing environment, adult facilitators, safety in a dignified approach to learning, and learning focused on credibility and meaning. At the conclusion of the study the researchers reported students were initially apprehensive about being allowed greater control in their learning, but developed positive attitudes toward the freedom they were allowed. They also found the participants went through definite stages of development in their motivation. Initially they needed direct assistance in becoming self-motivated, but over the life of the study developed a strong sense of security.

The Commonwealth Corporation and the Portland Oregon School System have developed a system of comprehensive and innovative educational alternatives to re-engage dropouts and other at-risk youth. State legislation allows a portion of per-pupil funding to follow students to alternative settings and to award credit based on proficiency. Portland views its 19 community-based providers as partners, and is an important part of the system's strategy to retain at risk and re-engage dropouts. The programs are diverse and enroll up to 754 students per year. They offer support services for homeless youth, teen parents, recent immigrants, and English language learners.

Communities and Schools for Success (CS²) is a Massachusetts-based educational initiative that seeks to transform the educational experience for those young people who are most under-served and disconnected from traditional educational and career paths. Started in 1993, CS² is managed by Commonwealth Corporation and develops collaborations between communities and school districts through small teams of change agents at CS² sites, known as "CS² Entrepreneurs." Twice designated by the U.S. Department of Labor as a national model, CS²'s activities are grounded in research and promising practices from the education, workforce development, and youth development fields. (Abramsen, 2009).

New York City's Comprehensive Development, Inc. (CDI) is a nonprofit organization teaching eight hundred older, nontraditional students, ages seventeen to twenty-one. Students can attend either night or day classes, while working full-time and attending to adult responsibilities. More than 90% of our seniors graduate (one of New York City's highest rates), 60% go to college immediately, virtually all others finish high school already employed. Manhattan Comprehensive is the first night-and-day high school in the country to offer a full, academic Regents diploma instead of a GED. Their graduates attend CUNY and SUNY, as well as private colleges. The organization provides social supports which are beyond the responsibility of public education.

Life Skills Center, a division of White Hat Management works with at-risk and high school dropouts to earn a high school diploma and get placed in a job. In 2005 there were 24 centers educating nearly 10,000 students in Arizona, Michigan, and Ohio. Their tuition-free program uses a specialized curriculum combining academics, life-skills preparation, and workplace training. State certified teachers assist students to learn at their own pace using computer-based instruction. More than 5000 students have graduated from Life Skill Centers with both a state-recognized diploma and a job.

Discussion

Society demands that all levels of public education exhibit accountability most recently viewed as improved test scores and encompassing all educational programs, including alternative education (Barton, 2006a). In this context educators need to be actively involved in an ongoing effort to design alternative programs that focus on the long-term advantages of intervention (Quinn et al., 2006). Finally, it is important to keep in mind that youth do not disconnect from traditional developmental pathways (or high schools for that matter) because of the failure of any one system. Aron (2006) of the Urban Institute suggests that reconnecting youth requires collaboration and

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coordination among multiple youth-serving systems. These certainly include school and youth employment and training programs, but also child protective service systems, the juvenile justice system, and a variety of health and human services agencies, such as mental health and substance abuse treatment agencies, crisis intervention centers, runaway and homeless youth shelters, and others. (Aron., 2006)

ENDNOTE

For a more detailed look at unique and innovative dropout recovery initiatives in twelve disparate communities across the U.S., readers may wish to download the *American Youth Policy Forum's* report, "Whatever It Takes," by Martin and Halperin. This study was done in cooperation with the National Conference of State Legislatures, the National League of Cities, the National School Boards Association, the National Association of Secondary School Principals, and the Council of Great City Schools. This 2006 publication can be retrieved at: http://www.aypf.org/publications/WhateverItTakes/WIT_toc+chap5.pdf

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TECHNOPOLIC FUNDAMENTALISM, DATA-BASED DECISION-MAKING, AND THE END OF EDUCATION

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Introduction

John Dewey says that the act of thought begins with the encounter of a problem. (1998) The problem I've been struggling with, which has provoked my thinking, is the role of digital technologies in education. For existential reasons, it is higher education that has been the center of most of my thinking on this, but one might suspect that the fundamental issues are the same for public education.

To set the context, let me tell you a little bit about my own history with digital technology. I took my first computers in education class in 1982. I soon bought my own Apple II and was one of the first in my college in Virginia to have one. Later, at my current institution, I was one of the first faculty members to use the Internet, before we had any kind of graphic interface. My department was second only behind the Department of Information Technology to have a department website, of which I was the webmaster. I was among the first on my campus to create and use my own podcasts in my classes. Today I am part of a team that goes into public schools and trains teachers in the use of computers in the classroom. I feel a need to say all of this because on my campus, on occasion, I have been viewed by some colleagues and administrators alike as one of the anti-technology voices on our campus—an enemy of progress. Those who read this might reach a similar conclusion, but I think it is not an accurate one.

Technocracy, and Technopoly

In *Technopoly: The Surrender of Culture to Technology*, Neil Postman (1993), despite his colorful rhetoric style and periodic lapses in to smile-inducing sarcasm, has some very important things to say about technology's role in our world. He argues that there are three ways that cultures relate to technology: tool-using cultures, technocracies, and technopolies. In tool-using cultures, their tools are by and large invented to solve specific physical problems of everyday life or to “serve the symbolic world of art, politics, myth, ritual, and religion.” Those tools do not attack “the dignity and integrity of the culture into which they were introduced.” Rather the beliefs and values of the culture directed the development and use of tools (p. 23).

In technocracies, on the other hand, “tools play a central role in the thought world of the culture. Everything must give way, in some degree, to their development. The social and symbolic worlds become increasingly subject to the requirements of that development.” (Postman, p. 28) In technocracies, tools attack the culture and bid to become the culture. The two exist together in uneasy tension (Postman, p. 48). Postman continues,

In technopolies, the battle is largely over and technology has won. Technopoly eliminates alternatives to itself in precisely the way Aldous Huxley outlined in *Brave New World*. It does not make them illegal. It does not make them immoral. It does not even make them unpopular. It makes them invisible and therefore irrelevant. And it does so by redefining what we mean by religion, by art, by family, by politics, by history, by truth, by privacy, by intelligence, so that our definitions fit its new requirements. Technopoly, in other words, is totalitarian technocracy (p. 48).

Since we are here discussing the relationship between two world-views, one that places culture first and one that allows technology to rule over culture, we should note that the key indicators of cultures' status are not their technologies, but their attitudes toward their own historic culture and values. Postman argues that one of the most critical symbols of the transition from technocracy to technopoly was a series of hearings in 1910 over the railroad's request for an increase in rates. Luis Brandeis, arguing against this on behalf of the trade association brought forth expert witnesses who testified that the railroads could increase both their wages and profits by functioning more efficiently using Frederick W. Taylor's principles of scientific management. It is Taylor, Postman, argued, who first articulates the assumptions of the technopolitic thought-world.

These include the beliefs that the primary, if not the only, goal of human labor and thought is efficiency; that technical calculation is in all respects superior to human judgment; that in fact human judgment cannot be trusted, because it is plagued by laxity, ambiguity, and unnecessary complexity; that subjectivity is an obstacle to clear thinking; that what cannot be measured either does not exist or is of no value; and that the affairs of citizens are best conducted by experts (p. 51).

Most dangerously, Taylor's work puts forth the idea that "society is best served when human beings are placed at the disposal of their techniques and technology, that human beings are, in a sense, worth less than their machinery" (p. 51). Brave New World, indeed!

This introduction of Taylor's thinking into a discussion of technology was to me quite provocative, because at the same time that my institution has been enthusiastically embracing digital tools, we've also been pushing hard to create a more efficient organization. We are in the throes of a massive reorganization of academic affairs to be more efficient. In the face of upcoming SACS and NCATE accreditation visits we are imposing formal structures on every informal process, requiring explicit "paper trails" for everything we do, and converting everything into digital data for storing on centralized databases. The buzz word for almost everything is "data-based decision-making," by which we must justify everything. On the surface data-based decision-making and all of the organizational shuffling make perfect sense. We don't have enough resources to do everything well, so we must do our work in the most efficient way possible. Similarly, one should make decisions about our work, not based upon personal prejudices and hearsay, but based upon whatever factual data is available.

Bureaucracy and Technopoly

The problem is, as Postman has noted, that sometimes the organizational processes become ends in themselves, and people come to serve the bureaucracy rather than the bureaucracy serving the people. Using readily available data to inform ones educational decisions seems like a no-brainer, but when educational decisions are driven by the quest to create readily accessible data, the cart is before the horse.

Both quick organizational fixes and data-based-decision-making suffer from a dangerous reductionism. It is one thing to say that we should make decisions based on the best information available; it is quite another to reduce the complexities of human physical, social, and intellectual development to an exit exam, a GPA, or even a portfolio. Surely anyone who has read anything about neuroscience knows that human learning cannot be adequately described by simple cause and effect quantification. Surely anyone who has read anything about quantum mechanics knows that even the most simple physiological processes are complex beyond the wildest imaginations of all but a few of our most creative thinkers. Surely anyone who has read the physics of liquid motion and knows about chaos theory and the butterfly effect can appreciate the folly of simple cause and effective relationships. And yet we act as though we can easily evaluate how good a teacher education program is by doing things like examining their syllabi for references to national standards and a local conceptual framework. Of late I find myself regularly quoting in my head H. L. Mencken's (1982) famous observation, "There is always an easy solution to every human problem—neat, plausible and wrong." (p. 443).

In the midst of all of this, David Tyack and Larry Cuban bring the good news/bad news that educational reforms, particularly top-down bureaucratically and technologically driven educational reforms, almost always fail. When those reforms are bad ones that is good news indeed. All we have to do is wait it out—this too will pass. Of course the problem is that it is almost impossible to get good reforms to succeed as well.

In *Tinkering Toward Utopia*, Tyack and Cuban (1997) show that despite all of the hype of paradigm changes and educational revolutions, educational change is generally more evolutionary than revolutionary. In *Oversold and Underused* (2003) and *Teachers and Machines* (1986), Cuban shows how that works itself out with regard to specific technological innovations that have repeatedly been touted as the saviors of education and amounted to nothing.

While Cuban's research may offer some hope that bad reforms will fail, it does not address the larger problem of technopoly as described by Postman. The problem is that technocratic and technopolic change are not innovations in the schools, not the top down instructional reforms Cuban discusses, but changes in the worldview of the larger culture that could change the schools in ways that transcend any historic educational reform or render their historic work as irrelevant.

Traditionally, schools were supposed to help young people become wiser, more virtuous, and happier, to use traditional terms, although today we might say we want them to become better decision-makers, to develop their character, and to become self-actualized. In my state, in order to promote the virtues of education, the government adopted the slogan "Education Pays," and many of our students seem to see little point of education beyond preparation for careers—and the more efficient that process the better. To talk about virtue, goodness, and happiness comes across as an exercise in naivete—what I call the quantification of education.

Modern versus Information Age

At the risk of seeming naive and quaint, I would like to suggest a model for technology in schools that might help respond to the technopolitization of schools. I borrow it from a historian of technology, Thomas P. Hughes, whose *Human Built World: How to Think about Technology and Culture* (2005), to the best of my recollection, makes no mention of technology in schools. His is a careful scholarly discussion of the philosophy of technology, beginning with the theme of technology as second creation rooted in ancient thought of Cicero and culminating in the enthusiasm of the nineteenth century elite—folks like young Harvard trained attorney Timothy Walker who saw no need to reconcile machinery and nature. Machinery “forces nature to toil for man” and “emancipates the mind.” (p. 41). It is the likes of Walker, however, who anticipate the naive technophiles of modern education.

Hughes further discusses the social aspects of the emerging technological mindset and explores how it led to a heavy focus on systems, control, and information. Like Postman, he identifies Frederick Taylor as a major contributor to this part of our technological history and characterizes Taylor's view as one in which systems must be given priority over people (p. 78). I found particularly provocative his characterization of the hallmarks of the second industrialization as “hierarchy, specialization, standardization, centralization, expertise, and bureaucracy,” but of the subsequent information age as “flatness, interdisciplinarity, heterogeneity, distributed control, meritocracy, and nimble flexibility” (p. 101). So it would seem that the problem with much of our modern educational management is stuck in pre-information age functioning.

As provocative as all of this is, the chapter of Hughes book that I found most helpful was one that focused on some civil engineering issues in twentieth century America, and how technology is sometimes applied in ways that make things worse instead of better. He explores the history of canal development in Florida that was supposed to ease flooding and make more land habitable, but that ultimately damaged the ecosystem in intolerable ways. Now we are committed to spending billions of dollars to undo the damage that our “solution” created.

Reading Hughes work evokes two responses in me: One is that there are lots of examples of technological innovations that had a very destructive side, usually unanticipated consequences. Why, then, do the technofundamentalists in education pretend that technology can do no harm? Postman makes a similar point when he writes,

Every technology is both a burden and a blessing; not either-or, but this-and-that. Nothing could be more obvious, of course, especially to those who have given more than two minutes of thought to the matter.

Nonetheless, throngs of zealous Theuths, one-eyed prophets who see only what new technologies can do and are incapable of imagining what they will undo . . . , currently surround us. They gaze on technology as a lover does on his beloved, seeing it as without blemish and entertaining no apprehension for the future (pp. 4–5). Postman calls these folks technophiles. I am inclined to invoke Eric Hoffer (2002) and call them “true believers,” or perhaps even technological fundamentalists, for there are disturbing parallels to the fundamentalists of a variety of religions.

What are we to do in light of this current dilemma? If Postman is right, there may not be anything we can do—the ship of humanistic culture has not only sailed, but sunk, and there is little hope of raising it. Hughes' outlook is not nearly so bleak, and he offers a model for solving technological problems in civil engineering that might provide a useful starting point for schools and universities everywhere before we spend our next billion dollars on technological innovations. Hughes (2005) believes that poorly chosen, technology can be terribly destructive. He writes, “Technologically empowered, we have reason to doubt our values and competence as creators of the human-built and as stewards of the remaining natural world” (p. 153). But he also believes that “people in the industrialized nations, especially the United States, do not grasp the large range of possibilities for creative action that technology offers” (p. 153).

So my second response is to seek a way to use technology that exploits its positive creative potential without invoking its potential for mass destruction? Hughes' answer is the creation of an “ecotechnological” environment. What might the attributes be of such an environment? How can humanism and technopoly coexist?

Ecotechnology

As I read him, there appear to be several key factors in the creation of an ecotechnological environment. First we must reject the conventional wisdom that technology is value free, and recognize that it is complexly value laden. Technological choices are value choices. Second, since technology choices are value laden, they must be made relative to the larger humanistic values of the culture, not adopted ad hoc based upon the coolness factor or wishful thinking. This is no small matter. To use technologies based upon their contribution to our core values, presumes

that we have some core values that we agree on and to which are committed. It seems to presume some shared definition of the “good life,” in light of which a technology's contributions can be weighed.

Third, we should recognize that physical and social realities are ecological—that is, they consist of a zillion fundamentally interconnected variables that cannot be readily or even possibly sorted out. Hughes argues that technological fixes don't work, indeed are the sources of many of our problems, because they are reductionist. They reduce complex problems down to single variables and imagine that changing that one variable will fix everything. This gets at the very essence of what ecological means—everything is interconnected, and a change in one part of the system can reverberate throughout the whole. Hughes does not mention chaos theory here or the Biblical metaphor of the yeast in the loaf, but both seem to me appropriate. Our decisions about technology can affect parts of our world that we never considered. So we better consider as much as possible. I would also, note, in light of Cuban's (2003) argument, that the technology might change the whole ecology of school, or it might simply be overwhelmed by other variables, and die a slow death. We should be carefully about naively underestimating or overestimating a technology's potential for inducing change.

Fourth, we need a very widespread technological literacy that allows widespread democratic participation in technological decision-making. Technological decisions are becoming exponentially complex (my term, not his), and if we are not careful, only a small number of experts will be qualified to engage in these decisions. To avoid this democratically destructive trend, we must make sure that high levels of technological literacy are widespread.

Conclusion

I am almost as disheartened about all of this as Postman sounds, but in truth, neither he nor I would be writing about this unless we held out hope for change. Deep down inside I am apparently perennially hopeful. A geographer professor I know who is an expert on weather, and its attendant theory of chaos, says that you cannot clap your hands in Mexico City without affecting the weather in Saudi Arabia. Let that be our inspiration, and clap winds of learning that might someday change the world.

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ONE STATE'S JOURNEY TOWARD MODIFYING PRINCIPAL PREPARATION PROGRAMS: DEVELOPING PARTNERSHIPS?

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Introduction

In May of 2008, the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), which regulates the K-12 public schools, and the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) which regulates the public and private universities in Illinois initiated a process to revise the universities' preparation programs for building level principals across the state. These state agencies were reacting to two separate issues when the decision was made to begin the revision process. First, they were addressing the Levine Report (2005) which criticized principal preparation programs, nationally, for having inadequate curricula, low admissions and graduation standards, faculties disconnected from the K-12 schools, and insufficient quality control. Second, ISBE and IBHE were reacting to the fact that in fiscal year 2007, 2402 principal level administrative endorsements were issued in a state that had just more than 400 administrative openings at the principalship level (ISBE, 2008). These agencies also touted the need to shift the emphasis of these administrative preparation programs from a management approach to more of a leadership approach.

A task force was initiated, which subsequently met several times over the next year, to propose improvements and revisions in the principal preparation programs across the state. There are currently thirty-two public and private institutions of higher education which operate principal preparation programs in Illinois. Many of these institutions were represented at the inaugural meeting of the task force which was held on May 29 and May 30, 2008 in Bloomington, Illinois. Other participants included teachers and public school administrators, Regional Superintendents of Education, representatives of the two major Illinois teachers unions, the Illinois Education Association (IEA) and the Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT), and representatives of the Illinois Principals Association (IPA) and the Illinois Association of School Administrators (IASA), which represents superintendents in Illinois.

The first two-day meeting was utilized to establish the rationale and to lay the groundwork for the future work of the task force, which operated under the title of "Working Together to Prepare School Leaders." A historical background was given which outlined the findings of a report released in August of 2006 by the Commission on School Leader Preparation in Illinois Colleges and Universities entitled, *School Leader Preparation: A Blueprint for Change* (2006). This Commission submitted its report to the Illinois Board of Higher Education. The Illinois Board of Higher Education joined forces with the Illinois State Board of Education and the Governor's office to initiate a joint resolution in the Illinois General Assembly. This resolution created a task force charged with moving the *Blueprint* agenda forward. This task force entitled "The Illinois School Leader Task Force" met six times between October of 2007 and January of 2008. When this task force submitted its report to the Illinois General Assembly in February of 2008, the report contained three major recommendations:

1. State policies must set high standards for school-leader certification that align principal preparation, early career mentoring, ongoing professional development, and master principal recognition with those standards, so that by 2013 all new principal preparation would be taking place through programs approved under these new standards (Report to General Assembly, 2008, p. 7).
2. Formal partnerships must be established between school districts and principal preparation programs affiliated with state-accredited institutions to support principal preparation and development (Report to General Assembly, 2008, p. 8).
3. Refocused principal preparation programs must demonstrate that they develop and rigorously assess the capacities of aspiring principals that are most likely to improve student learning in PreK-12 schools. These capacities should, a. form the heart of the new Illinois School Leadership Standards previously recommended and b. reflect the vision of school leadership identified in the Illinois Distinguished Program (Report to General Assembly, 2008, p. 8).

The "Working Together to Prepare School Leaders" task force, addressed in this paper, was formulated to address the recommendations to the General Assembly and to flesh out the skeleton developed by the previous task force.

National Reform Efforts

Illinois was not the first state to address the issue of principal reform programs and other states have been concurrently reviewing their programs in the same time frame as Illinois. During the initial May 2008 meeting of the

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new task force, participants were given information regarding the reform of principalship preparation programs in Alabama and Iowa. The principal preparation reform movement in Alabama began in November of 2004 when Governor Bob Riley and State Superintendent Joseph B. Morton convened a Governor's Congress on School Leadership in Montgomery. The hard work on this process began in earnest in September of 2006 when all thirteen Alabama principal preparation institutions were invited to participate in a two-day training workshop based on lessons learned from redesign efforts conducted in other states. This training was conducted by the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB). It was determined that through collaborative K-12 university partnerships, all universities in Alabama should work with local school districts to redesign their instructional leadership programs to address new state requirements. Four institutions, designated lead institutions, were to submit their revised programs for approval in 2008 and the remainder were to submit their programs for approval in 2009.

Reform of principal preparation programs in Iowa began in 1999 with the development and adoption of the Iowa Standards for School Leaders (ISSL), an adaptation of the ISLLC standards (Hackman & Wanat, 2007, p. 8). All Iowa programs interested in certifying principals had to submit proposals to the Iowa Department of Education which met the new Iowa requirements. This proved to be a very rigorous process. According to Hackman and Wanat (2007),

Nine applications were submitted in May 2003: seven proposals from higher education institutions currently offering approved programs, one new proposal from a higher education institution, and one new proposal from a state professional organization. One higher education institution currently offering an approved program did not submit an application, thereby terminating its program. The national panel reviewed programs through multiple program drafts and meetings with program faculty. By August 2003, they had recommended five programs to the Iowa Department of Education for approval: four from universities and one from an in-state professional organization. The four unsuccessful applicants were provided an opportunity to withdraw their submissions rather than to have their programs officially denied; all four elected to withdraw their applications (p. 9).

Armed with this backdrop of information from two other states, the new Illinois task force began the process of developing recommended changes in the requirements for principal preparation programs in the state. Illinois differs from both Alabama and Iowa in terms of population. Not only are there many more students and schools in Illinois than in the other two states, but Illinois also had thirty-two principal preparation programs at the beginning of this process, which was more than triple the number of programs in Iowa and nearly triple the number of programs in Alabama.

Illinois Revision Process

After the introductory meeting held in May 2008 in Bloomington, Illinois, the facilitators asked for volunteers that would be willing to continue working on the revision process in subsequent meetings. A core group of individuals agreed to continue serving as members of the new task force and subsequently met another half dozen times over the ensuing summer and the next academic year. All meetings were held in Bloomington, Illinois, which was centrally located in the state.

In order to better manage this major revision effort, it was decided to distribute the work among five distinct subcommittees. Each of the following five subcommittees was co-chaired by a public university representative and a private university representative:

1. New Structure for Leadership Certification & Endorsements.
2. School/University Partnerships & Selection Process.
3. School Leadership Standards.
4. Residencies and Internships.
5. Assessments of Candidates & Graduates.

All of the ten co-chairs of the subcommittees were members of the Illinois Council of Professors of Educational Administration (ICPEA). Many other subcommittee members were also ICPEA members. The ICPEA, an affiliate of the National Council of Professors of Educational Administration (NCPEA), is a collegial group of educational administration professors which meets quarterly to work on the betterment of educational administration programs throughout Illinois. The group works cooperatively on a variety of topics. The ICPEA positioned itself to play a critical role in the redesign of the principal preparation standards.

The thirty-two principal preparation programs in Illinois are very disparate in nature. In 2008, the enrollment in these programs ranged from a low of four students in one program to a high of 1063 in another (ISBE, 2008).

Perhaps ironically, the three universities with the largest enrollments were small private universities. While a few universities offered their programs primarily online, a significant majority still offered traditional face-to-face programs. Other universities offered a combination of face-to-face instruction and blended coursework, which included both online and face-to-face instruction. A clear trend in principal preparation programs has been the move to off campus cohort or satellite programs. There has also been a move to an increasing percentage of online and blended instruction. Both the off campus courses and the online instruction have been seen as ways of attracting graduate students in an increasingly competitive market in Illinois. In order to staff the increased number of off campus sites, in particular, many universities have moved to an increased use of adjunct professors in their principal preparation programs.

During all of the half-dozen work sessions, each of the five subcommittees typically had eight to a dozen individuals actively involved in the work effort. In addition to the subcommittee members, ISBE and IBHE staff circulated among the five groups and acted as ex officio subcommittee members. The typical process for task force work involved working in independent groups for several hours, and then returning to a plenary session to share the subcommittee work products with the entire group. There were often modifications made in the respective subcommittee work products as a result of the plenary sessions. Periodically, throughout the process, ISBE and IBHE staff would communicate with the various subcommittee co-chairs between task force meetings and modifications would be made in the subcommittee work products. However, these proposed changes were subsequently sent to all task force members for comment and input. A somewhat unique strategy employed by the ISBE and IBHE was to bring in constituent groups, after the task force had done its work, to critique the proposed principal preparation changes and to give input regarding the recommendations. One of the most active constituent groups was the group representing students with special needs. This group was successful in inserting a number of items regarding dealing with special needs students.

During the summer of 2009, the ISBE and IBHE leadership held a number of informational meetings across Illinois to share the recommended changes with interested parties. The ISBE and IBHE leadership continued to receive input and recommended changes and modifications from the participants in the regional meetings. The agendas of these meetings were all based upon a PowerPoint document included on the ISBE website (IBHE, 2009).

Major Illinois Modifications Recommended

Some of the recommended changes for Illinois principal preparation programs proved to be fairly noncontroversial. For example, it was recommended that principal certification should be expanded to cover Pre-Kindergarten through grade twelve, rather than K-12. There was also a decision to incorporate the five major strands of the Illinois Principal Association's "Distinguished Principal Program" (IPA, 2009) into the new requirements. These strands include items such as creating and living mission and vision, leading and managing change, developing deep knowledge about teaching and learning, building and maintaining collaborative relationships, and building and sustaining accountability systems.

Another area in which it proved to be fairly easy to achieve consensus was the number of years of teaching experience needed before a candidate could be granted principal certification. Virtually all task force members believed that the existing requirement of two years' teaching experience was totally inadequate. Task force members believed that as long as all programs were held to the same standards, then the number of teaching years required prior to certification should be increased. The primary discussion revolved around whether the minimum required should be four years, or five. Four years of teaching experience was ultimately selected.

Other recommended changes proved to be much more controversial and generated hours of conversation and discussion among the task force members. Some of these were structural, in terms of the delivery models to be employed by the state's principal preparation programs. One issue addressed by task force members was that of online instruction. It was determined that 51% of the program, exclusive of field experiences, clinical experiences, and the residency experience, must be conducted in a face-to-face fashion. Another area of initial disagreement was whether programs should meet the Educational Leadership Constituents Council (ELCC) Standards or the new 2008 Interstate School Leader Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) Standards. Ultimately, it was determined that the ISLLC Standards would be better aligned with the needs of principal preparation programs, so the ISLLC Standards were recommended by the task force.

Another delivery-oriented issue addressed by the task force dealt with staffing levels for the state's principal preparation programs. Previously, the levels of staffing and the faculty status and qualifications of instructors had been left to the respective institutions. This area would change radically under the proposed guidelines developed by

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the task force. Somewhat in reaction to lightly staffed programs enrolling large numbers of candidates, the task force recommended the following guidelines in terms of staffing,

1. There must be a minimum of two full-time (as defined by the institution's faculty handbook) faculty dedicated to the program for the first 50 candidates and the institution must add one full-time additional faculty member for each additional 25 candidates.
2. The total faculty must be based upon the number of principal preparation program completers.
3. No more than one-third of a candidate's experience with the curricular program can be taught by any one instructor (excludes clinical experiences).
4. No more than one-third of the program can be taught by adjunct faculty.
5. University field supervisors must hold the equivalent endorsement to that which candidates are seeking (general administrative or principalship).
6. Adjunct faculty must be engaged in the program.

These new recommended requirements would require substantial changes in those programs relying heavily upon adjunct professors and those programs delivering a majority of their programs with one or two instructors (ISBE, 2009, p. 15).

In another change, which was implemented after outside groups were brought into the process, ISBE and IBHE recommended that universities needed to strengthen content understanding in their programs by increasing their foci upon school law, special education law, use of technology for administration, teaching and learning, social emotional learning standards, and bullying and school safety. Additionally, universities were encouraged to include instruction on a three-tier instruction and intervention model, commonly called Response to Intervention (RTI) in the United States. This model is used primarily with students with special learning needs. In a very bold move, ISBE and IBHE went on to require the following components in all coursework: PK-12 focus, focus on all students (special education, bilingual education, and E.S.L.), and working collaboratively, building teams to focus on instruction, curriculum, assessments, and district needs for school improvement (ISBE, 2009, p. 11).

New principal preparation programs would also have to include formal partnerships with one or more public school districts. While universities may have previously been involved in partnerships with particular school districts, the newly required formal partnerships would be much more rigorously defined than in the past. Historically, much of this type of work was primarily completed by the higher education institution, with public school input coming later. Now, the public schools must be truly involved from the beginning of the process.

Candidate selection would also become much more rigorous under the new system. Students would only be admitted to a principal preparation program after a face-to-face interview with program faculty members. In another major change, candidates would need to submit a comprehensive portfolio, demonstrating their competence in the following eight areas:

1. Commitment to supporting all students to achieve high levels of learning
2. Accomplished classroom instruction
3. Significant leadership roles in the past
4. Strong communication skills (oral and written)
5. Analytic abilities and dispositions needed to collect and analyze data for school improvement
6. Demonstrated respect for family and community.
7. Strong interpersonal skills
8. Demonstrated knowledge about curriculum and instructional practices (ISBE, 2009, pp. 16–19).

Obviously, it may prove difficult for some inexperienced teachers to meet all eight of the portfolio requirements listed above.

The area of change with the most impact upon students, principal mentors, and perhaps universities would involve modifications in the nature of the internship. Historically, a vast majority of principal candidates in Illinois have come from the ranks of full-time teachers. Thus, the internship has usually proven to be problematic in terms of length and quality. Interns have found it necessary to gain their experience working with mentor principals before and after school, during their planning periods and during school breaks. Most Illinois universities have required interns to acquire between 150 and 300 clock hours, typically spread over one or two semesters. Many programs have also required a varying level of other clinical experiences, often imbedded in program coursework. University

supervisors would typically visit each intern, in the field, between one and four times (ICPEA, 2007). It has not been unusual for universities to require interns to address either ELCC or ISLLC standards during their internships.

The proposed new standards would thrust all university principal preparation programs into a totally new universe. There would be a variety of multiple field experiences spread across the program connected to courses. These accumulated hours could not be counted toward the internship year. The actual internship would be spread over a 12-month period and would include a minimum of four weeks of full-time residency experience. Each of those four weeks would consist of a minimum of five consecutive days and the weeks may or may not be consecutive. An additional minimum of 200 clinical hours would be required throughout the 12-month internship year. Principal candidates would need experiences working with all levels of teachers, including prekindergarten, kindergarten, elementary, and secondary, as well as all levels of special education teachers. Candidates would also be required to be involved in the hiring, evaluation, and supervision of special education teachers during their internships. Principal candidates would be required to have experiences working with schools with cultural and economic diversity, preschool through high school students, and parents, school boards and community partners. No university supervisor would be allowed to work with more than 36 interns during any one year period, and the assessment process would be very prescribed by ISBE and IBHE.

Discussion of Implications

Many of the changes proposed as a result of the principal preparation revision process in Illinois make theoretical and educational sense. The move to expand the training and certification to include preschool education is very logical, since many Illinois principals already have preschool and early childhood special education programs in their buildings. This trend is likely to continue in Illinois, as well as in other states. It is also difficult to argue with the move to require four years of successful teaching experience before allowing an educator to receive certification as a school principal. Educationally, expanding the required experience level made sense, and politically, it was not an issue if all programs were to be held to the same standard in this area.

The proposed requirements regarding staffing levels and structures among principal preparation programs generated a considerable amount of discussion throughout the process. A number of issues were addressed in this area. Two of the most prominent were thoughts regarding actual staffing levels and discussions regarding the use of adjunct professors. There was ultimately a consensus that a minimal level of staffing was necessary in order to provide candidates with a diversity of opinion and experience in their programs. No matter how excellent a particular professor might happen to be, having one or two professors deliver an entire program was not considered pedagogically sound in this type of program. The requirement that no more than one-third of the coursework could be taught by any one individual was an attempt to establish a baseline, or floor, in this regard. In terms of adjuncts, there was strong sentiment that adjunct professors add richness to principal preparation programs. Most of these individuals have traditionally been current or former practitioners and often share first hand knowledge with the principal candidates. However, there is also a need for a sound theoretical basis in principal preparation programs. The requirement for adjuncts to become fully engaged in the program was a reaction to past experiences in which adjuncts were employed to teach and were sent forth with little direction and little contact with the university program. There is little doubt that the staffing levels and adjunct guidelines will have a major impact upon the smallest principal preparation programs across the state.

The requirement for partnerships between the universities and the public schools is also very logical in the theoretical sense. While many universities have been involved in partnerships with school districts, some even operating under formal memoranda of understanding, few have allowed the degree of public school input called for in the newly proposed guidelines.

Finally, there can be little doubt that the greatest impact on candidates and public schools would be the new internship requirements. These new requirements would place a significant workload on the mentoring principals in the public schools. The required activities are so specific that it may be impossible to address all of them, even in a year. While admirable, the goals on diversity may prove to be virtually impossible to meet in some geographic locations. It would also be very unlikely that any one principal could mentor more than one candidate in a twelve month period. This could have the impact of denying the opportunity for some candidates to engage in their internships in a timely fashion.

In conclusion, Illinois is a very political state. It will be instructive to see whether any interest groups are able to successfully lobby against parts or all of this reform package when it reaches the Illinois General Assembly. It the event that it does become law, it will be interesting to determine whether the new process will reduce the number of

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candidates being prepared by the various programs and whether the quality of the principal candidates improves over time.

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A HISTORY OF PAULO FREIRE'S IDEAS IN ART EDUCATION

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Introduction

Critical theory and cultural studies are undeniably foundational to the new conception of art education as “visual culture studies” that has swept the academic intellectual discourse in the last decade and has influenced many teacher education programs. “Visual culture” is a debated term, and has been defined by one of its leading proponents and theorists, Kerry Freedman (2003), as “all that is humanly formed and sensed through vision or visualization and shapes the way we live our lives” (p. 1). This expansion of traditional art education content can include a variety of forms such as advertising, popular film and video, television, housing and apparel design, as well as the museum-based Western canon of art.

This merger of popular and fine art forms, when applied to art education practice, does not necessarily include a social reconstruction component or a Marxist social theory. Nevertheless, a critical view of American society and culture is common among various conceptions of contemporary pedagogy. As Paul Duncum (2003), another leading visual culture theorist, asserts, “visual culture studies adopts a critical view of society” (p. 22). However, it is Paulo Freire’s pedagogy that calls for a change in the relationship of students to teachers, and of both to knowledge, power, and reality with the aim of a revolutionary society populated by “beings for themselves” (Freire, 1970/2000, p. 61).

A paramount question remains, then: To what extent can these ideas be found in the history of art education pedagogy? This study will attempt to find an answer based on a descriptive analysis of articles in two leading art education journals, *Studies in Art Education* and *Art Education*, both published by the National Art Education Association (NAEA). In order to present a history of Freire’s ideas in art education theory, I will focus on three central concepts: liberation, dialogue, and conscientization, which are the most commonly referenced in the literature.

Paulo Freire’s Influence

Freire’s ideas are necessarily controversial in both educational application and social reconstruction. I have catalogued and analyzed the history of their presence in the literature. However, I intentionally do not advocate on behalf of Freire’s theories nor is my purpose to indicate the direction I believe the field of art education should take in the future but will hopefully shed some light on how the field has incorporated, reinterpreted, or rejected Freire since the introduction of his theories to American readers in the early 1970s, in order to inform and influence the debates of the future. I have inevitably filtered that light through the lens of interpretation, presenting what I intend as a holistic, consistent reading of Freire’s works.

Citations in the Field

The overwhelming majority of citations are from Freire’s classic book, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, which has been revised and reprinted numerous times in the 41 years since it was first published in 1968. In these two journals, this highly influential work has been cited and discussed 43 times. Freire’s 10 other works cited in the literature receive a total of 24 citations, with all but four of those occurring in 1999 and later. The biographical explanation for this is apparent, as many of them were written in the last decade of Freire’s life between 1987 and 1997, and several were published posthumously.

Although “critical pedagogy” does not appear until 1990 that phrase occurs in 91 entries, and “visual culture” appears an astonishing 361 times in the literature. Over time, the frequency of all these terms has increased, with the greatest jump concerning “visual culture” in the early 2000s. Whereas the previous 50 years yielded only 40 references, the current decade has witnessed an explosion of 321 articles.

A similar, though less dramatic, situation exists for the other two terms. References to Freire gradually increase in both journals through the 1990s, while citations after the millennium outnumber all previous years together. “Critical pedagogy” occurs only 16 times until the turn of the century, soaring to 75 references thereafter.

An interesting trend is that although citations of Freire increase with time, the number of references to “critical pedagogy” increases even more. Fully 63 articles refer to critical pedagogy but do not actually cite Freire after 1999. By comparison, there were 39 total citations of Freire for the same period. Whom would authors cite in reference to critical pedagogy if not the grandfather of the same? Principally, no one. I assert that by this time in the development of the literature on critical art education and visual culture studies, some authors believe there is no need to cite specific theorists, mentioning the name *critical pedagogy* is assumed to have enough gravitas to stand on its own.

Some art educators, however, do cite Henry Giroux, who is mentioned 56 times after 1999. However, these two giants of their field often appear together. After eliminating these overlaps, 47 articles cite neither major theorist.

Freire's ideas that have received the most attention from art educators, in descending order, are: a broad category of liberation, into which I have lumped a number of vaguely Freirean references; dialogue; conscientization or critical consciousness; the concept of students and teachers as co-investigators of reality; and, the related concept that the students' reality should form the basis for education. Several other phrases make it into the discourse, e.g., praxis or problem-posing education, but in more limited numbers. Most of these ideas are not separated but closely related to one another in Freire's overall philosophy, and dividing them up in this way is somewhat problematic. Many articles, however, only deal with one or two of his themes at a time.

Conscientization

Myra Bergman Ramos, the first translator of *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* into English, defined conscientization in a footnote as "learning to perceive social, political, and economic contradictions and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality" (Freire, 1970/2000, p. 35). This process of emergence from a dehumanized consciousness submerged in the world, coupled with a dialogical relationship, formed the basis for Freire's literacy methods. Interestingly, Freire actually abandoned the use of this term, though not the concept, in 1974 due to criticism that it was idealist, based on a misunderstanding of his meaning (Mayo, 2004). Some critics, and even supporters, had substituted "consciousness-raising" and thus collapsed the second half of Ramos' definition into the first as though increased awareness was action unto itself. This occurred despite Freire's explicit denial of idealism in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* and later works. As Collins wrote, "change of consciousness must be accompanied by actions for liberation which are ultimately political" (Collins, 1977, p. 66).

Vincent Lanier (1974), a consistent provocateur of art education regarding social issues, called for a theory of art education that is engaged with social issues of the present, citing Freire's *conscientização* as crucial to making art education "humane" (p. 15). Then in 1979, Lanier took an opportunity to criticize the 1977 NAEA Commission Report, an art education position paper, for its limited use of the term "critical consciousness," another translation of the Portuguese *conscientização*, by not employing it as Freire had done and Lanier himself had cited in earlier works. The report had restricted its use to "expand[ing] [the students'] awareness of the world and of the sort of influences with which they need to cope" (Lanier, 1979, p. 11). Lanier called for broadening this project to critique other more "vicious" areas of exploitation in society than simply advertising as the report had implied, but even he stops short of the full revolutionary intent of Freire's pedagogy by focusing only on children and largely avoiding the social class implications.

Freirean Dialogue

In the introduction to the 30th anniversary edition of *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Freire's collaborator Donaldo Macedo explains, quoting from an article by Freire, that dialogue is an "epistemological relationship," and not simply a teaching method; it is not a "mere tactic to involve students in a particular task" (Freire, 1970/2000, p. 17). This epistemological relationship is defined by Freire, as "the encounter between [people], mediated by the world, in order to name the world" (1970/2000, p. 88). As Jesuit Freire scholar Denis Collins points out, Freire's "naming" draws on the Old Testament story of Adam's dominion over creation by his activity of naming the animals (Collins, 1977, p. 51). Collins also notes that to speak authentically as subjects is to give human meaning to history, thus, "naming the world." So important is this process for Freire's pedagogy that he counts dialogue as "an existential necessity," "by which [people] achieve significance as human beings" (Freire, 1970/2000, p. 88). Of the three central ideas I have isolated for this study, dialogue is the most practical and methodological. Dialogue stands at the very center of Freire's educational practice, and is the vehicle by which conscientization travels toward liberation and revolution.

The appeal to a dialogical pedagogy in the literature began modestly with the earliest Freire citation in 1973. Peter Schellin (1973), writing on the possibility for art engaged with social issues to affect positive change, called for unspecified "experts," presumably aesthetic and cultural elites, to "partake of dialogue with their fellow human beings," those being the "man from Watts," "Chicano migrant worker," and "the lost, middle-class drug freak" (p. 9). Schellin's conception of dialogue appears to lack the full employment of a Freirean epistemology, but certainly supports the idea of valuing the knowledge and life experiences of subordinate groups in society.

Kristin Congdon (1986; 1989) employed a Freirean idea of dialogue in a particularly insightful way. She writes of preserving the authentic language of students, dialect and terminology, in conducting art criticism. She cites Freire's idea that dialogue is an encounter between people to "name the world" that requires each person to do their

own naming, not simply accept the naming of others. Quoting Freire, she writes that dialogue would be an “instrument of domination” if that were the case. Thus, rather than force students to adopt the cultural patterns of the dominant group, Congdon allows them to utilize the cultural knowledge they bring with them to the classroom when analyzing and criticizing art, especially those works from outside their cultural experience.

Several articles in the literature elaborate on a theory of service-learning as a vital form of educational practice. Freire’s idea of co-intentional learning and the dialogical relationship between students and teachers of which it consists is cited as one theoretical basis for this, along with Dewey’s philosophy (Dorfman, 2008; Hutzel, 2007; Taylor, 2002; Taylor & Morris, 2004). For Taylor and Morris (2004), the most important aspect of service learning is the language of “we,” adding the school and the community agency to Freire’s central pedagogical relationship.

Freire’s Liberationist Education

Although 15 articles discuss liberation or emancipation directly, and six more contribute “empowerment of students” to the discourse, conspicuously absent from the citations are references to the revolution intrinsic to Freire’s theories and historical context. Only five articles in the journals even contain both “Freire” and “revolution.” In none of those do the two words refer to each other. Naturally, one can bring dramatic change without using the word “revolution,” and certainly in practice critical pedagogy has been revolutionary to educational theory. Nonetheless, authors in the mainstream art education literature have largely avoided Freire’s radical politics.

By contrast, Freire used “revolution” at least 33 times in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* to describe the action necessary to achieve the type of political and social transformation he sought. Additionally, Marx and Engels, Lenin, Che Guevara, Fidel Castro, Mao, and commentators thereon, are featured prominently, positively, and repeatedly in many of Freire’s works, but especially in his most famous and widely-read. The discussion of liberation in the art education literature, however, largely involves stripping away Freire’s revolutionary intentions, leaving the anthropological and epistemological bases for his work unexamined, and extracting a liberal pedagogy of progressivism.

Treated this way, Freire’s pedagogy comes to resemble John Dewey’s ideas about utilizing student knowledge and experience for personal and social growth in a democratic classroom. Moacir Gadotti, a Brazilian colleague of Freire, provides a brief though useful analysis of the influence and overlap of Dewey’s and Freire’s ideas in his 1994 book, *Reading Paulo Freire*. Although the two philosophers may have some pedagogical features in common and share many criticisms of traditional education, Gadotti argued that Dewey did not include “structural change in the oppressive society” as a goal for education, in clear contrast to Freire (Gadotti, 1994, p. 117). Moreover, Gadotti asserts that Dewey’s simplified notion of culture even prevents structural considerations (Gadotti, 1994).

Thus, Freire’s Marxist reading of the world is precisely what distinguishes him from the pedagogical progressives. Without the radical reorientation to knowledge, authority, and power, there would be no *critical* pedagogy, but rather Deweyan progressive education. This view of Freire as the “Latin John Dewey,” to quote Stanley Aronowitz (1993), has been prevalent in the mainstream education literature and also in art education. However, this is not entirely true to Freire’s work. As radical adult educator and Freire scholar Paula Allman (2009) notes, “if you abstract Freire’s ideas from their Marxist theoretical context, you will miss the precision of his analysis and ignore the revolutionary intent of his work” (p. 420).

However revolutionary his politics, Freire was not, and never claimed to be, an Orthodox Marxist. His influences were much too diverse for that to be the case: existentialism, phenomenology, Christian personalism, Liberation Theology, and classical humanism, for example (Collins, 1977; Mayo, 2004). He has received much criticism from those who do claim Orthodox Marxism. Without responding directly to specific critics, Freire wrote generally about his divergence from their “dogmatism” in *Pedagogy of Hope*. In this work, he recounted his life as a world traveling speaker and activist in revolutionary societies, as well as first-world democracies, while exiled from Brazil after the 1964 coup that brought an abrupt end to his nationwide adult literacy efforts which utilized the philosophy and methods later outlined in his most famous works (Freire 1994).

Freire rejected the determinism of the Orthodoxy, upholding the role of human consciousness in shaping history and a view of human nature and the future as an open possibility, rather than a foregone conclusion. Freire also plainly rejected one of its central tenets when he claimed that “the class struggle is not the mover of history, but is certainly one of them” (Freire, 1994, p. 76). It should further be noted that Freire was critical of “vanguardist” leadership not in dialogical relationship with the people, but instead treated them as receptacles for deposits of knowledge, especially in the form of propaganda and slogans. Freire was also sharply critical of those

revolutionaries who thought that his pedagogy only applied to “bourgeois” societies and not their own (Freire, 1994).

After Freire’s return from exile in 1980, and with the end of the dictatorship in 1985, it could be argued from his later writings and his work as education minister for the city of Sao Paulo’s schools that Freire shifted away from revolutionary Marxism toward radical democracy (Aronowitz, 1993, p. 9). While his language may have tempered some with age, and he may have tactically agreed to work in the government formed by the workers’ party he helped to found, Freire never gave up his strategic goals and continued to “fight for the socialist dream” (Freire, 1994, p. 82). As late as 1994, he spoke of the “democratic struggle against the wickedness of capitalism” (Freire, 1994, p. 82).

A few examples will shed light on the role of revolution and liberation in art education literature. A 1983 research study by Alison King demonstrated the positive effect of “free choice” on achievement and attitude in art education lessons (King, 1983). In a pattern to be frequently replicated, she cites Freire in her introduction as one who “warned of the need to preserve a strong sense of personal agency in individuals to help them counteract the growing forces of external control in our society and to ensure their active participation in the new information age,” diminishing aspects of his philosophy in the process (p. 187). Student choice of activities and materials in an art lesson, though excellent in itself, may not be deserving of support from Freire’s radical pedagogy of liberation.

Similarly, Pamela Taylor (2000) described a hypertext-based art education, which she conducted, that appealed to liberatory education for its basis. In describing the results, Taylor asserted that “the students involved in this study were liberated to learn in ways that would not have been possible through a traditional or teacher-directed approach to art education” (p. 377). While this may be true and good, and the results are compelling, it is individualistic and has no social component. Thus, it is not the type of liberation Freire advocated.

Finally, Harold Pearse surveyed the field to construct a model of contemporary paradigms of art education in a 1983 article, “Brother, Can you Spare a Paradigm?” Pearse argued that although some authors had called for a critical social orientation to art education, they had “tended to stop short of any politically overt praxis that would lead to revolutionary liberation or emancipation like Freire envisioned” (Pearse, 1983, p. 162). This is perhaps the strongest language in the literature describing Freire’s educational and revolutionary ideas together. However, Pearse is making a descriptive observation, not calling for its adoption. I assert that his description of the field would still hold true today.

As a counterpoint to the above interpretations, however, it may need to be asked what role social and political context should have in the application of Freire’s ideas. Perhaps the introduction of Freirean education to the field of art education in America requires a different interpretation than literacy programs in newly independent post-Colonial states or countries ruled by military dictatorships. Would this mean so-called first-world democracies are exempt from the revolution?

Certainly, the American situation vastly differs from totalitarian states or thoroughly repressive societies. Perhaps, U.S. art educators have the freedom to utilize Freire’s pedagogical ideas to their own purposes because our situation is not as politically dire as most or all of the countries in which he worked. Conceivably, this reinterpretation would even justifiably bear strong resemblance to a multicultural John Dewey. Freire himself supports reinterpretation in new contexts, as he did exactly this in establishing new literacy programs in several countries (cf. *Pedagogy in process: The Letters to Guinea Bissau* and *Pedagogy of Hope*). Freire also appealed to first-world educational theorists specifically not to simply ‘import’ his ideas, saying, “it is impossible to export pedagogical practices without reinventing them” (Freire & Macedo, 1998, p. 6), and subsequent theorists have expounded upon that theme (Mayo, 2004). Some have warned that any attempt to apply Freire’s ideas must “proceed cautiously” in the first-world, due to the specificity of Freire’s aims and methods in his historical context (Roberts, 2000, p. 7).

Additionally, Freire’s educational context is well-known to have been very different from K-12 public schooling in America. Translating Freire’s “culture circles” with illiterate adults in Brazil and other countries into a form that could be utilized here requires that certain aspects be lost while others are gained. If, for example, his ideas about the relationship between students and teachers are worth utilizing, as many have found, they still must be theorized in their new context. Conducting a co-investigation of the oppressive elements of reality with impoverished adults outside and opposed to formal, state-operated schooling remains a very different activity than its polar opposite, a co-investigation at an elementary school with children in America, especially if those children are white, middle-class, and live in the suburbs.

What survives in the translation, whether political revolution or pedagogical methods, depends on one's view of the essence of Freire's philosophy. Were his radical politics a local phenomenon confined to a totalitarian context as Aronowitz (1993) speculates, consistent with many American applications of Freirean education? Or do they remain the universally applicable heart of Freire's work as Mayo (2004) contends, echoed by many other critical pedagogues and neo-Marxist theorists? In either case, the lack of social and political context in the discussion of Freire's ideas in mainstream art education literature is sharply exposed on this point. The focus on adult critical literacy for political and social revolution in Freire's work has not been thoroughly discussed.

Conclusion: Or the River and the Flood

What began as a trickle of references in the early 1970s has grown into a raging flood of citations in the present. The 1980s and 1990s featured a steady stream of references, some highly theorized and relevant, some barely connected to liberationist pedagogy. Around the turn of the millennium, likely resulting from Freire's death following a highly productive decade of publications, and certainly due to popularization of new art education theories, art educators created a river of Freire's ideas in the literature. Now, a torrent of critical pedagogy annually washes over readers of the NAEA's two journals, *Art Education* and *Studies in Art Education*.

A sizable percentage of these articles still refer to the most widely-known and influential critical pedagogue and while references and citations of Freire's theories continue to grow, they are outpaced by the assumed and understood notion of critical pedagogy, which had not even appeared in these journals until 1990. Interestingly, there has been very little contention over what these terms mean or their implications for the field, compared to the overwhelmingly positive, if perhaps misunderstood, treatment by art educators.

I assert that until a new paradigm shift occurs in art education, the golden age of theorizing about Freire's ideas has already come and gone. No longer do outliers call for their inclusion into academic theory and classroom practice, and neither do the journals feature entire articles elaborating many aspects of Freire's theories. Rather, they are simply assumed and unquestioned in the new visual culture era.

Along the river of research, authors rushed downstream with particular aspects of Freire's educational philosophy or allowed others to languish in the eddies, but the ideas most consistently stuck in the muddy banks or stranded on the sandbars have been the half of his pedagogy devoted to cultural and political revolution. It seems the art educators who have contributed to the literature in this way have comprehensively theorized *how* to conduct a Freirean classroom, but have transformed Freire's *why* into something new, perhaps untrue to Freire's intentions, but nonetheless, true to their own time and context.

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NEITHER ESTABLISHING NOR PROHIBITING: EXPLORING SOME OF THE COMPLEXITIES OF TAKING A NEUTRAL STANCE TOWARD RELIGION IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Introduction

There is a broad consensus that the First Amendment requires public schools to be neutral with regard to matters of religion, neither promoting any religious belief nor inhibiting the religious beliefs of students. As stated in *A Teacher's Guide to Religion in the Public Schools*, a publication of First Amendment Center, "Teachers must remain neutral concerning religion, neutral among religions and neutral between religion and non-religion" (Haynes, 2008, p. 6). While I agree with this position wholeheartedly, I believe that putting this recommended neutrality into practice is much more complicated than is generally recognized. In this essay, I will focus on three factors in particular that make the taking of a neutral stance both complex and difficult: the ontological status of any alleged spiritual reality, the ineffability of spiritual reality attested to by at least some major religious traditions, and the potential for a hidden bias toward a reductionist materialism inherent in our current cultural mindset.

The complexities posed by the ontological status of any alleged spiritual reality arise from the fact that there *is* some ontological status, that "God," for example, either does or does not exist. Thus, beliefs about "God" are beliefs with reference to some actual state of affairs, which complicates the issue of how such beliefs are referenced and discussed in educational settings. Matters are further complicated by the ineffability attributed to ultimate spiritual reality in at least some major belief systems. Educators are faced with the task of thinking about and taking a neutral stance toward that which, according to some beliefs, is ultimately unknowable and indescribable. Finally, the ability to take a neutral stance is further complicated by the fact that there is no neutral starting point, as each individual begins from a particular, inherently biased, position, and all individuals are enmeshed in a particular, inherently biased, cultural framework. I will argue that our particular cultural framework has a bias toward a reductionist materialism that makes it difficult to consider questions of the existence of non-material reality with the sort of seriousness that would be necessary to provide a genuinely neutral approach to matters of religious belief or unbelief in schools.

Ontological Status

The ontological status of any alleged spiritual reality complicates the taking of a neutral stance because it deepens the nature of any disagreements. Simply put, an ultimate spiritual reality, whether called God or identified in some other way, either exists or does not exist. Differences of belief about the nature of this reality, and about whether or not it exists, are not just differences among themselves, but differences with reference to some objective reality. The fact that human beings cannot come to universal agreement, or prove, anything one way or the other about this ontological situation changes nothing about the ontological status itself. Furthermore, the ontological situation in question encompasses differences of belief about, for example, God, tends also to encompass differences of belief about the nature of our own being and the world we inhabit. Ontological status and its implications do not seem to have been adequately addressed by philosophers of education dealing with the issue of religion in public schools. An examination of Nel Noddings' landmark work, *Educating for Intelligent Belief or Unbelief* (1993) can illustrate the sort of problems that arise from inadequately accounting for the question and implications of ontological status.

While Noddings takes what seems to be a sympathetic, even an advocacy role with regard to the issue of including religion and spirituality in public education, she seems to think of such things primarily as personal states, ways that individuals think and feel within themselves; she neglects the issue and implications of ontological status, the idea that religion and spirituality involve questions about the nature of reality that need to be taken into account. Noddings (1993) writes, "I confess that I, too, find spirit in thundering waves (or merely lively ones in which I can frolic), in the bravery of seedlings pushing up under the mulch, in the warmth of my pet cat, in the love of my children" (p. 73). Noddings does not appear to be granting "spirit" any ontological status here, much less the sort of pre-eminent ontological status spirit is granted in some systems of religious belief. Noddings also argues that "one purpose of education should be to develop an understanding and appreciation of existence, of life lived fully aware—'wide awake,' as Maxine Greene (1978) puts it" (Noddings, 1993, p. 14). However, Noddings only refers this being aware or awake to the physical environment and the people in it. I would argue that being awake is different from being conscious. One can be conscious in sleep during a dream, aware of various things one is seeing,

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hearing, etc. One can even, in a lucid dream, be aware that one is asleep, i.e. not awake. One is awake when one is conscious of the “real” world, not the world in one’s dream, but the common world that we share. What then, does it mean to talk of being more or less “awake” in a context when it is given that we are all awake in the ordinary sense? To take a neutral stance with regard to religion when addressing such questions, it seems that the idea of being awake to some different reality, one that might transcend ordinary shared reality in the way that ordinary shared reality transcends a private dream state, needs to at least be explicitly considered as a possibility.

Noddings (1993) states that “New Age criticism of traditional religion is often superficial” (p. 39). It seems, however, that she is guilty of her own charge throughout the discussion leading up to that statement, in which she compares the merits of monotheism, dualism, and polytheism (pp. 18–39). Noddings seems to treat religious belief as a matter of intellectual convenience, a question of what the benefits and problems are for us if we think of God/gods in this way as opposed to that, as if there is no ontological reality or truth that matters, just a set of symbols and myths we can sort through to find the intellectual stance most satisfying to us. This is not a neutral stance, but rather one that would seem to be acceptable only to those whose true religion is Rationalism, those who could agree on a shared belief in the primacy of the rational over everything else before engaging in any discussion.

Noddings (1993) also asserts that students need to be able to think about the meaning of life as a context for being motivated to work and learn in school (pp. 78–79). Questions about the meaning of life seem to be inseparable from questions about the ontological status of God and/or spirit. An atheist existentialist may believe that one creates meaning oneself, while a Christian may believe that meaning emerges from a relationship with a Divine Reality. In order to take both of these views, and others, seriously, one must be able to consider what it means for God to exist or not exist. Unless we are to presuppose a materialistic position as the only context in which students are allowed to create meaning (clearly not a neutral position), we must be able to seriously consider ontological questions about the existence of spirit, God, etc.

Further, Noddings (1993) states, “In particular, the gentler message of Christianity has often been overwhelmed by the realization that the kingdom is not, in fact, at hand” (p. 28). This seems a rather cavalier claim. Serious discussions of whether or not the kingdom is “at hand” require us to think about the various meanings the phrase can have, what it might mean to say that the kingdom is, or is not, “at hand.” Noddings, here as elsewhere, seems to presuppose her own definitions of spiritual realities, definitions that avoid important issues of ontological status, as the only way of thinking about spiritual matters.

Ineffability

A further complicating factor for taking a neutral stance toward religion is the ineffability at the core of many religious beliefs. Central to many (if not all) major religions is the belief that the ultimate reality at the core of the religion, God, Tao, Buddha nature, etc., cannot be fully comprehended by rational thought or fully expressed in language. Here, too, Noddings (1993) seems not to recognize, or perhaps acknowledge, the complexities inherent in dealing with religious matters. Noddings (1993) proposes, “What we, as educators, must do is to acquaint students with some of the major conflicts in monotheism . . .” (p. 18). Later, she states, “We should not expect teachers to handle these problems in sophisticated theological or philosophical ways” (p. 31). Among the topics she seems to believe can be considered in this manner are “the matter of God’s presence or absence” (p. 21) and “the problem of evil” (p. 28). These matters require tremendous complexity and subtlety to be taken seriously. To pretend that we can raise them in a simplistic, purely rational manner without distortion seems absurd. Central to the religious traditions Noddings is skimming through here is the ineffability of God, a God who is “not only beyond knowledge, but also beyond unknowing.” (Gregory Palamas, 1983, p. 32).

A more sophisticated, tolerant, and respectful approach to accommodating religious views in a diverse public space is advanced by Jurgen Habermas. Habermas (2006) proposes the notion of “translation” to achieve neutrality with regard to religion in the “public sphere” of democratic political discourse. The public school and its classrooms can legitimately be seen as extensions, or as parts, of the “public sphere,” and Habermas’ ideas provide some useful guidance for how we might work toward achieving a neutral stance toward religion in public schools. According to Habermas (2006), “The institutional precondition for guaranteeing equal freedom of religion for all is that the state remains neutral towards competing world views” (p. 9). Further, Habermas argues that religious citizens in a secular state “should therefore be allowed to express and justify their convictions in a religious language if they cannot find secular ‘translations’ for them” (p. 10). However, even for as open and tolerant a position as that taken by Habermas,

the issue of ineffability seems to pose problems. Lovisa Bergdahl (2009), in critiquing the inadequacies of Habermas' model, appears to be bringing in the notion, and importance, of ineffability:

So, how can religious ways of life be translated without, at best, being reduced to something familiar or, at worst, being ignored or rejected? What needs further attention, in my view, is what gets lost in Habermas' model—that is, those aspects that do not lend themselves to translation and therefore continue to be sites of conflict and tension (p. 34).

Reductionist Materialist Bias

An endemic reductionist, materialist bias in the mindset of our culture has been identified and discussed for decades by scholars in the fields of history (Roszak, 1972) and philosophy (Barrett, 1986), as well as by those working specifically in the philosophy of education (Nord, 1995, Nord & Haynes, 1998). The problem is essentially a misapplication, or over-extension, of the scientific worldview. Roszak, taking a phrase from William Blake (1972), refers to this phenomenon as “single vision” (p. 76), while Barrett (1986) calls it “scientism” (p. xv). None of the authors in question, nor the author of this essay, opposes science as such. The question is rather whether the realm of science, the material world, is one aspect of reality, or the whole of it. The problem, for those who assert that such a problem exists, consists of applying the scientific worldview beyond its scope, beyond the range of what science can legitimately address, and thus distorting human understanding and discourse related to such questions as the existence of a nonmaterial mind, or soul, or, for the present essay, what it means to take a neutral stance toward religion in public schools.

The diverse population of public schools includes students with a wide variety of religious, or nonreligious, beliefs. There are students who are materialists, believing that the physical world, the world of science, is the whole or reality, and there are students who believe that reality includes aspects that fall outside or beyond the realm of science, aspects that may be called such things as “spirit” or “God.” When the hegemony of “single vision” or “scientism” holds sway over teachers and schools, the materialistic, scientific worldview becomes, for the institution of the school, *the* way to view reality, rather than as one alternative among many. According to Nord and Haynes (1998):

The problem isn't so much the specific facts or beliefs or theories that are or aren't taught, it is that public education nurtures a secular mentality. It assumes a secular, largely scientific worldview, and teaches students to make sense of their lives and the world in terms of that worldview (pp. 41–42).

I have referred to this view as a “reductionist, materialist” bias because it “reduces” anything, such as “spirit” or “God,” that might be seen by some as being other than material, to material terms. Hence, according to the reductionist, materialist mindset, “God,” for example, is nothing other than a creation of the human mind, which is nothing other than a state of the human brain, which can be ultimately reduced to physical components and their processes. Further, when this particular worldview is taken uncritically as the only valid way to view the world, it comes to be seen as neutral, thus creating a bias that marginalizes and trivializes any religious point of view that differs from it. The point here is not to argue that this reductionist, materialist view is wrong, but rather, that it is one way of viewing the world among many, and that if teachers and schools are going to take a neutral stance toward religion, this particular worldview must be seen as one among many, and not as the only legitimate view. Here again, a look at Noddings can provide some examples of how this bias can affect one's views toward how to deal with religion in public schools. Noddings (1993) writes:

Although it is certainly true that religious belief keeps many young people from committing deeds that are unhealthy, unlawful, or harmful to others, often it keeps them from reflecting deeply on the nature of the deity in whom they believe. It is in this area that the school has a special obligation. Without endorsing belief or unbelief, the school should be sure that students hear the eloquent objections of great thinkers (p. 117).

The materialist bias I am concerned with seems evident here. Why not, “The school should be sure students engage with the profound and subtle writings of great mystics and theologians?” If the school is to not endorse belief or unbelief, it seems that it is important to be sure students hear the most articulate voices of *both* believers and nonbeliever. Noddings (1993) also says, “Clearly, it can be very hard for teachers with strong religious commitments to maintain pedagogical neutrality” (p. 123). I would argue that it would be equally as difficult for a confirmed atheist to be neutral as it would be for a person who had a strong commitment to religion, and therefore that to single out only the religious as having difficulty with neutrality betrays the sort of reductionist, materialist bias I have been discussing.

Conclusions and Recommendations

**THEODORE: NEITHER ESTABLISHING NOR PROHIBITING: EXPLORING SOME OF THE COMPLEXITIES OF TAKING A
NEUTRAL STANCE TOWARD RELIGION IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

As the population in our public schools becomes increasingly diverse in many ways, including diversity in religious belief, it will be increasingly important, and challenging, to provide equal, nondiscriminatory education to all students. With regard to religious diversity specifically, I have attempted in this essay to examine some of the factors that make the task of being neutral with regard to matters of religion more complex than it is generally recognized to be, and to reveal some of the often unacknowledged biases that inhibit the ability of teachers and schools to respond to all students in ways that are just and that accord with the demands of the First Amendment.

The solutions to this problem will not be simple or easy to construct, but I believe that an important first step is to recognize the complexities that exist and to uncover and interrogate the biases that are active. None of us can ever be without bias. We all operate from a particular perspective, with a particular set of influences that tilt our thinking one way or another. However, in matters of religious belief, as with matters of race, class, gender, and sexuality, we can move toward socially just educational practice by recognizing and acknowledging the biases that exist in us so that we can account for them in our thoughts and actions.

For this to happen there must be a new commitment to intelligence, a new fidelity in communication, a new regard for imagination. It would mean fresh and sometimes startling winds blowing through the classrooms of the nation. It would mean the granting of audibility to numerous voices seldom heard before, and, at once, an involvement with all sorts of young people being provoked to make their own the multilinguality needed for structuring of contemporary experience and thematizing lived worlds (Greene, 1988, pp. 126–7).

I hope to have laid the groundwork here for further exploration of this issue by myself and others, and to have encouraged continued dialogue on this topic. It seems clear that dialogue, and a great deal of it, will be an essential piece of finding answers. An important part of addressing the challenge of a public space, such as a school, that needs to be a unified whole while maintaining the diversity and integrity of the individuals who comprise it, is to provide abundant opportunities for people, including students, to listen to each other and to have their voices be heard.

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A VYGOTSKIAN APPROACH TO ADD/ADHD: SCAFFOLDING WITH MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES

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Introduction

With American culture highly directed at the importance of education, it is important for schools and educators to investigate avenues of education, and curriculums that foster academic support and success for all students. This is especially true for students with learning disabilities, especially attention disabilities like Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). “Students with ADHD are a ‘frequently encountered problem in the regular classroom’” (Francis, as cited in Dyson, 2000, p. 3 as cited in Schirduan, 2004, p. 88). School pedagogies must compensate via curriculum to help these students flourish in the academic careers in and beyond the school environment.

If one of the important aims of education is the cultivation of the student’s unique capacities, then acknowledging differences in the ways in which children and adolescents are smart would, one might think, be of extraordinary importance. This recognition has implications for curriculum. No longer would a one size fits all curriculum be regarded as an option. Individualization would not simply reside in the pace at which all children moved through the same goals; children would be offered the opportunity to pursue studies that suited the kind of intelligence that they possessed in abundance. They would have an opportunity to play to their strengths” (Eisner, 2004, pp. 32–33).

However, curriculum leadership has not moved beyond the accountability features of the prevailing standards-based movement (Schirduan, 2004, p. 87).

Statement of the Problem

Schools seem to take a singular approach to educating. This does not work for students with attention learning disabilities. The inherent disadvantages are that their disabilities leave them to learn in a conventional, well-practiced classroom setting. “There is a problem, however, namely, that children whose strengths are in other kinds of skills may be shortchanged by this system. These children might learn and test well if only they were given the opportunity to play to their strengths rather than their weakness” (Sternberg, 2005, p. 200). Often they require a more dynamic learning environment that can provide the tools and techniques that can help transcend their disability allow academic retention and scholastic self-efficacy. “These students not only experience academic and social difficulties but often disrupt classroom activities but often disrupt classroom activities and other’s learning” (Bender, & Mathes, 1995; DuPaul & Stoner, as cited in Dyson, 2000, p. 3 as cited in Schirduan, 2004, p. 88)

Traditional curriculum in schools is problematic because it caters to only certain types of learners. “An evaluation of intelligence should not focus on what goal is chosen but rather on whether the individual has chosen a worthwhile set of goals and is shown the skills and dispositions needed to achieve them” (Sternberg, 2005, p. 189). It is true that there are interventions for students with attention disabilities, but these interventions are often not progressive or effective enough in design and still leave these students with difficulties for reaching their full academic potential and success. “The educational systems in many other countries place great emphasis on instruction and assessments that tap into two important skills: memory and, to a lesser extent, analysis” (Sternberg, 2005, p. 200).

I am suggesting the use of a Vygotskyian approach to teaching in congruence with Gardner’s Theory of Multiple intelligences. “There are many definitions of intelligence, although intelligence is typically defined in terms of a person’s ability to adapt to the environment and to learn from experience” (Sternberg and Detterman, 1986 as cited by Sternberg, 2005). This developmental strategy provides the information necessary to build the appropriate curriculum that outlines the scaffolding that children with disabilities need to be educated to their far-reaching potential.

Elementary school curriculum leaders can be mindful of student intelligences and use the strengths of their student populations. Schools using a curriculum based on multiple intelligences (MI) theory improved the self-concept and positive learning outcomes of students with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)” (Schirduan, 2004, p. 87).

Scaffolding can greatly assist students learning ability. “Interweaving scaffolding and diverse texts in meaningful tasks can encourage students to learn.” (Cumming-Potivin, 2007, p. 499).

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Vygotsky's theory works because it provides the traditional scaffolding that we have seen work in previous curriculums, but also because it implements a relatively newer principle of learning that can be catered and demonstrated on a more individualized level."The notion of sustained scaffolding across tasks and relationships at home and school appears fundamental to facilitating students' access to being legitimate and confident members of a literacy community, especially for students . . . who struggled to fit in" (Cumming-Potvin, 2007, p. 500). Individual support is most effective when learning new skills, and in this case it is especially relevant to children that have difficulty learning or concentrating to acquire the new skills or information. Identifying at least two developmental levels to describe children's learning capabilities, Vygotsky (1986), in his seminal work, explicated the metaphor of scaffolding. The first or actual developmental level indicates a child's level and measures a child's accomplishments with the assistance of others. The zone of proximal development, argued Vygotsky, was the difference between a child's independent and potential levels of functioning, the latter being triggered through scaffolding" (Cumming-Potvin, 2007, p. 487). "Scaffolding through a range of literacy strategies has become increasingly important for twenty-first century classrooms" (Cumming-Potvin, 2007, p. 488).

Proposed Solution

I am proposing that new curriculum and teaching strategies be provided at teachers' personal-development days to educate or reeducate teachers on strategies that can target all students and improve learning, especially those with attention learning disabilities. This would provide a more dynamic classroom that would excite student learning and environment, all the while making a more positive learning environment where the children can better manage behavioral issues related to the disabilities and thus produce greater academic success and self-efficacy among students.

Mindful curriculum ... should focus on ability, or the student's predominant intelligences. MI curriculum provides ways to personalize education for students with ADHD, many of whom find it difficult to succeed in school. In traditional schools for example, of the 11-year-old, 80% of students with ADHD were two years below grade level in reading, spelling, math, or written language" (Anderson, Williams, McGee & Silva, 1987, as cited in Zentall, 1993, as cited in Schirduan, 2004, p. 92).

Good teachers figure out their strengths and try to arrange their teaching so that they can capitalize on their strengths and at the same time either limit their weaknesses. Team teaching is one way of doing so, in that one teacher can compensate for what the other does not do well" (Sternberg, 2005, p. 190). "A conception of multiple intelligence employed as a guide to curriculum policy would undermine any approach built on the idea that a single type of program was suitable for everyone. One size does not fit all if one embraces the notion of multiple intelligences as a basis for making curriculum policy" (Eisner, 2004, p. 36). By embracing the concept of MI, a curriculum could be altered to enhance the learning styles of all students. "It is not only the current educational policy that complicates the concept of multiple intelligences in schools and classrooms; it is our embedded assumptions about how schools should operate" (Eisner, 2004, p. 34).

It has been suggested that students with ADHE have a different pattern of intelligences than those without. "Quantitative findings suggest that over half of the students with ADHD reported that they possess the naturalist (30.8%) and spatial (21.8%) intelligences as their predominant intelligences" (Schirduan, 2004, p. 90). "The patterns of intelligences of students with ADHD ... are not intelligences that are emphasized in the traditional school setting" (Schirduan, 2004, p. 90) which leads to the low achievement of many ADHD students. "Mindful curriculum leaders can utilize the intelligences of the student populations to improve learning outcomes. Such mindful curriculum leadership is a way of providing a positive learning environment for students with ADHD" (Schirduan, 2004, p. 92) and the curricular response needed to further the goal of students with ADHD "living up to their fullest intellectual and emotional potential" (Schirduan, 2004, p. 92). The potential of this curriculum to help all students may provide ways for students to discover new ways of learning.

Aims of the proposal

The overall information and academic requirements taught to all students (i.e., they all would be taught English and math skills) but the avenue in which the information is articulated to them is different. This can be done through the individual's intelligence type, or even a combination or two or more intelligences in which they show a proclivity toward.

The theory of MI will guide the team to explore the students' multiple abilities within perceived or diagnosed disabilities. This is a positive direction moving away from the traditional within-child deficit syndrome, which sends signals blaming an individual student's inability to perform school tasks" (Chang, 2002, p. 27).

Addressing the education of young children with disabilities through the multiple intelligences may help us discover or “awaken” hidden talents. It is important for all young children to discover their own interests and abilities and this is no less true with young children with disabilities” (Rettig, 2005, p. 256).

These are not necessarily new ideas. “In fact, many early childhood educators are probably teaching a number of the multiple intelligences already by organizing toys, centers, and lesson plans around multiple intelligences” (Rettig, 2005, p. 259).

Gardner’s Multiple Intelligences

The theory of multiple intelligences was created by Howard Gardner. “Intelligence involves formulating a meaningful and coherent set of goals, and having the skills and dispositions to reach those goals” (Sternberg, 2005, p. 189). This theory proposes eight different types of human intelligences. Arguing that “reason, intelligence, logic, knowledge are not synonymous . . .,” Howard Gardner (1983) proposed a new view of intelligence that is rapidly being incorporated in school curricula. In his *Theory of Multiple Intelligences*, Gardner expanded the concept of intelligence (Brualdi, 1996).

The eight intelligences Gardner defines are:

- Logical-mathematical intelligence—the ability to detect patterns, reason deductively and think logically. This intelligence is most often associated with scientific and mathematical thinking.
- Linguistic Intelligence, having a mastery of language. This intelligence includes the ability to effectively manipulate language to express oneself rhetorically or poetically. It also allows one to use language as a means to remember information.
- Spatial Intelligence, the ability to manipulate and create mental images in order to solve problems. This intelligence is not limited to visual domains—Gardner notes that spatial intelligence is also formed in blind children.
- Musical Intelligence, encompassing the capability to recognize and compose musical pitches, tones, and rhythms. (Auditory functions are required for a person to develop this intelligence in relation to pitch and tone, but it is not needed for the knowledge of rhythm).
- Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence, the ability to use one’s mental abilities to coordinate one’s own bodily movements. This intelligence challenges the popular belief that mental and physical activities are unrelated.
- Personal Intelligence includes interpersonal feelings and intentions of others and intrapersonal intelligence—the ability to understand one’s own feelings and motivations. These two intelligences are separate from each other. Nevertheless, because of their close association in most cultures, they are often linked together” (Brualdi, 1996).
- Naturalist intelligence enables human beings to recognize, categorize and draw upon certain features of the environment. It ‘combines a description of the core ability with a characterization of the role that many cultures value’ (Smith, 2002).

Gardner offers a new definition of intelligence, a “biopsychological potential to process information that can be activated in a cultural setting to solve problems or create products that are of value in culture” (Willingham, 2004, p. 19). Early childhood educators can and should make use of the multiple intelligences to promote learning and development and a growing number of curriculum sources are available to assist with this (Chen, 1998; Rettig & McCarthy-Rettig, 2003, as cited by Rettig, 2005, p. 255). Some see Gardner’s multiple intelligences as a new expression of ideas that have existed for a long time. Sleggers said, “Gardner’s multiple intelligences are linked to ideas put forth by early childhood educators as long as 160 years ago” (1997, as cited by Rettig, 2005, p. 255). It offers an explanation of individuals who excel in some areas and not in others and applies to a broad spectrum of tests of intellectual ability” (Willingham, 2004, p. 20).

Stone claimed that the potential for learning within the zone of proximal development was not dependent of fixed attributes of the learner, but rather varied as a function of interpersonal relationships and interaction between participants (Cumming-Potvin, 2007, p. 488). “Through a process of guided participation, partners creatively and jointly construct new understandings, drawing on their previous knowledge of society’s cultural tools” (Leont’ev, 1981; Rotgoff, 1990, as cited by Cumming-Potvin, 2007, p. 488).

Scaffolding

Scaffolding is known to improve children’s learning development. “The notion of sustained scaffolding across tasks and relationships at home and school appears fundamental to facilitating students’ access to being legitimate and confident members of a literacy community, especially for students . . . who struggled to fit in” (Cumming-

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Potvin, 2007, p. 500). They are given the tools to build upon and advance in knowledge. “As a result, teachers began to consider the importance of modeling scaffolding for students” (Cumming-Potvin, 2007, p. 489).

We know that the effective teachers of young children possess a keen understanding of child development, teaching and learning theory, curriculum development and implementation, family and community relationships, assessment and evaluation, and professionalism” (DeJong, 1999, p. 329)

If teachers can give individual intelligences scaffolding like the memory aids, speech, signs and symbols that are specific to the student’s type of multiple intelligence, these two theories (Vygotsky’s and Gardner’s Multiple Intelligences) can merge to create an extremely supportive learning environment and structure for the attention disabled children, because the curriculum would be structured in such a manner that the curriculum would be in the most attractive and easiest for the child to concentrate on. “An MI Curriculum not only provides ways to personalize an individual’s education, but also it can be used to cultivate desired results such as a passion for life goals and career. As students with ADHD enter their final years of education, 33% failed to finish high school” (Weiss & Hetchmen, 1986 as cited in Zentall, 1993, as cited in Schirduan, 2004, p. 93). “Results from such studies reinforce the need for teachers to be aware of and draw on students’ out of school literacy experiences to provide scaffolding in classroom pedagogy” (Cumming-Potvin, 2007, p. 486). “Students construct their identities as literacy learners, they benefit from social interaction and tasks that are scaffolded in home and school contexts” (Cumming-Potvin, 2007, p. 487).

As such, it can be argued that further research is needed to explore the processes through which factors such as setting (e.g., informal, formal), relationships (e.g., peers or adult-child) and differences in tools (e.g., conventional or multimodal texts) influence student learning in scaffolding literacy” (Cumming-Potvin, 2007, p. 490).

Vygotskian theory gives consideration to the impact of the methods of school instruction in relation to the mind of the developing child. He claimed that instruction moves the child’s mind forward, and this observation can be utilized when teaching. However, “Without a strong commitment from school personnel, such students’ typical school day can be filled with missed learning opportunities, such as chances to improve language and literacy school” (Chang, 1995, as cited in Chang, 2002, p. 26). This theory is widely acknowledged in educational circles, and that influences other areas of practical activity, such as teacher lesson plans. These insights of sociocultural learning as proposed by Vygotsky have inspired new teaching methods that can help impulsive children like those with ADD or ADHD. For example, scaffolding instruction can awaken new paths such as learning through multiple intelligence. “When implemented properly, this scaffolding process will also generate a workable model for school personnel to forge a multi-level collaboration within and beyond school . . .” (Chang, 2002, p. 27).

Intelligences vary from student to student. Vygotsky believed that development doesn’t follow instruction in a straightforward way, a teacher can’t predetermine the manner in which a child learns, and development has its own course to follow with each child.

Teaching with multiple intelligence tactics may allow students and teachers to better access what Vygotsky referred to as the zone of proximal development. The zone of proximal development indicates “the distance that children can perform beyond their current level” (Crain, 2000, p. 239). More so, it is the “distance between development as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential developments through problem solving under adult guidance or with peers” (Crain, 2000, p. 240). This zone, especially when observed in the appropriate intelligence for the child would “give educators a much better indication of a child’s true potential” (Crain, 2000, p. 240).

Practical Applications

Scaffolding allows assistance until concepts are grasped, promotes reciprocal teaching, allows after time for student learning responsibility, and can be applied to the principles and determinates of multiple intelligences. Combining scaffolding and diverse texts through meaningful tasks, can encourage agency in student learning across contexts” (Cumming-Potvin, 2007, p. 502)

Classroom behavior can be improved by recognizing and applying a varied-intelligence instructional approach. Highland, McNalb and Peart (1999) reported an improvement in student behavior by emphasizing the multiple intelligences. Twenty children from Pre-K grade showed a 77% improvement in behavior that included behaviors such as talking out, not co-operating, not keeping hands to self, and off-task behaviors” (Rettig, 2005, pp. 256–257).

Individual Education Programs

Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) for learners with disabilities, including preschool-aged children, is one of the major provisions of Public Law 105–17: The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). By law, the IEP requires schools and families to create an instructional environment where teachers, parent/guardians, school administrators, physiologists, advocates, related services personnel, and students (when encourages to participate) work together to provide multiple opportunities for the student with special needs in order to achieve their IEP goals and objectives” (Chang, 2002, p. 26). There is a correlation between the individualism of the teaching through the multiple intelligence theory, and the Individual Education Programs (IEP). Using a MI curriculum, those involved with the students educational endeavors can create and evaluate the student IEPs, and track the effectiveness of their progress and evaluate what other measures need to be taken to optimize learning and academic success.

An IEP team may be scaffolded using six strategies while developing and implementing an IEP in a school

If the Sociocultural Theory of Education is valued and practiced in schools, then it will generate strong support for all participants in an IEP meeting to focus on what is best for kids with special needs To fully align the special education placement with the delivery of quality services, all participating members in an IEP meeting must actively engage in sociocultural activities. Administrative requirements for schools, but also establishing a blueprint to guide the school intervention and assessment predicted in the district’s general core curriculum. Therefore, all members participating in an IEP meeting must come together to clarify and brainstorm ways to generate meaningful educational goals and objectives. All interventions must be supported by best practices that address the learner’s unique needs within his or her present levels of educational performance” (Chang, 2002, pp. 26–27).

Cultural competencies

Using Vygotsky’s socio-historical theory of cognitive development and Gardner’s multiple intelligences, teachers can provide a culturally competent education for all students. “Solutions to problems that are considered intelligent in one culture may be different from the solutions considered to be intelligent in another culture, the need to define problems and translate strategies to solve these problems exists in any culture” (Sternberg, 2005, pp. 190–191). “Having diverse groups of members, we are more likely to brainstorm suitable entry points to a students attention in a given lesson, culturally appropriate metaphors for trying new concepts with the old ones, and presenting core concepts across many contexts many contexts to enhance student learning” (Chang, 2002, p. 30).

Schools provide education related to larger cultural values and pragmatic interests of the American public. The American public values calculus more for students than the ability to read or write poetry (Eisner, 2004, pp. 37–38). Gardner says that curriculum developers have not been cognizant of the ways in which basic inclinations of human learning “turn out to be ill-matched to the agenda of modern secular school” (Jordan, 1996, p. 32 as cited by Schirduan, 2004, p. 88). Organizing literacy events that draw on students’ cultural and intellectual resources in purposeful and pleasurable ways may assist to reinvigorate school curricula (Cumming-Potvin, 2007, p. 502). Vygotsky’s theory and Gardner’s multiple intelligence theory can also help younger children. “Four ways that early childhood educators can address the multiple intelligences and these include an emphasis on toys and playthings, lesson planning, and the use of centers, and a focus on career education” (Rettig, 2005, pp. 256–257).

Conclusion

Combining documented human development theories with new angles on learning and education can produce curricula which are advantageous to students with learning disabilities or special needs. Recognizing the uniqueness of every student and their individual learning styles can promote not only personal development but classroom development as well. Implementing teaching styles with these things in mind can produce a dynamic learning environment well supported by our society and culture.

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EDUCATION, EXISTENTIALISM, AND FREIRE: A JUXTAPOSITION

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Introduction

Many diversely inspired writers—including novelists, dramatists, philosophers, psychologists, psychotherapists, and theologians—have been interpretively defined as “existentialists,” or of at least finding common cause with the implications of existentialist thought. Attempting to define “existentialism” does, of course, create interesting dialectical possibilities and challenges. There are elements of intellectual dissonance raised when trying to connect varying interpretations of the human condition to an existentialist philosophical posture. Certain core concepts, however, may be seen as consistent in a broadly defined “existentialist” interpretation of the *what, how,* and *who*—perhaps even *why*—of Life and living. There is an existentialist “core” of key concepts that converge in these thinkers’ writings, even though they may diverge widely in other aspects of their approaches to illuminating meanings related to the self, others, and the world.¹

Although there are many differences among these existentialist thinkers, there are common elements of existentialist thought. The human condition in which we all find ourselves is one, according to the existentialists, in which we are forced to make momentous decisions or choices about how we will live our lives. These choices are momentous because they . . . affect the welfare and lives of other people. (Harris, p. 63)

Many of these thoughtful observers of the cosmic situation and the human condition have found reason to weave education, educators, and teaching into the fabric of their writings. They have interpreted ways in which an existentialist system of thought may be used to explore the various factors—particularly the human element—which make up any educational system. This paper attempts to explore another path toward understanding how the core premises of Existentialism may be used as reflective opportunities in an inquiry into the meaning and purpose of formal education.

It is a premise here presented that the writings of the Brazilian educator, philosopher, and political activist, Paulo Freire, may be mined for gems of thought that are existential in both their theoretical possibilities and their practical application to the purposes, practices, and content of education. It is in the mining of the existentialist core from Freire’s writings that nuggets of thought are exposed for interpretation and reflection.² In this intellectual digging, “Freire’s work continues to be reinvented and reclarified according to changing political and intellectual thought and social movements” (Bentley, p.3).

An Existentialist Core

In interpreting Freire as an existentialist educator, it helps to investigate the core concepts that connect divergent intellects to existentialism. This connection represents a nucleus of ideas that links the thinking of philosophers, theologians, psychologists, and educators, also novelists and creative minds from other artistic genres. This linkage draws together those with a noticeable existentialist lean, even as other aspects of their individual worldviews may tend to diverge. We see this paradox of convergence and divergence perhaps most vividly in the atheist and the Christian thinkers who—in spite of significant metaphysical differences—weave elements of an existentialist core into their writings. In spite of metaphysically differing theological views, Jean-Paul Sartre and Martin Buber shared an existentialist core. The writings of Albert Camus and Gabriel Marcel represent how the atheist novelist and the Catholic dramatist may, paradoxically, be philosophical partners who draw on existentialist thought in seeking answers to Life’s persistent questions. The iconic protestant theologian, Paul Tillich, and the literary/philosophical deconstructionist, Jacques Derrida, definitely modeled an existentialist sensitivity, and wrote accordingly. The list goes on.³

Similar paradoxes of thinking are found in those defined as existentialist therapists. Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers shared certain humanist/existentialist values, yet invited differing interpretations into their therapeutic settings. Erich Fromm intertwined existentialism with psychiatric practice, and Viktor Frankl drew heavily from the existentialist core to advance his concept of logotherapy. And, we can find extensive existentialist thought patterns in the educational pragmatist, John Dewey; even in the father of philosophical idealism, Plato. W.E.B. Du Bois, although defined by Cornell West as an organic pragmatist (West, pp. 138–150), spiced his voluminous writings with concepts from the existentialist core.

The above only begins to address the issue of how existential ideas paradoxically penetrate the wider intellectual marketplace. The stage has been set, however, to ask the question: what are core concepts in existentialism which

may be used to explore educational issues? Those who have a superficial academic exposure to existentialism as a “school of philosophical thought”—or as a literary phenomenon embraced by seemingly pessimistic writers—may tend to be overwhelmed by such terms as existential angst, anxiety, the absurd, meaninglessness, despair, no escape (from responsibility), psychological nausea, nihilism, dread, nothingness, guilt, alienation. Ah, the gloominess of it all; even Nietzsche’s “God is dead” becomes, by inference, an existentialist expression.

The concepts that portray each individual as alone in a meaningless universe with “no way out” (Camus) are, however, only scattered pieces in the larger existential puzzle that we are challenged to put together. There are other core concepts that provide for a paradoxical tension in existentialist thought; counterpoint concepts that open-up more hopeful possibilities for reflecting upon self, others, education . . . and the broader dimensions of Life. We are reminded that “with all their moral and artistic differences, existentialists come close to unanimity in recognizing the virtue of acting in freedom, of taking responsibility for decisions, of being and becoming an authentic self” (Shinn, p. 22).

Rooted within Freire’s writings are penetrating observations that help an educator to define, and to find personal meaning in, basic existentialist core concepts; i.e., the self, authenticity, becoming, freedom, decision-making, responsibility, emotions. Freire also incorporated the existentialist core elements of awareness, relationships, encounter, and change (process) into his worldview and his philosophy of education. For Freire, these concepts were not peripheral to a philosophical understanding of life’s deeper meanings. Rather, they were substantive to finding ways to deal positively with the paradoxes, conundrums—even “fanatical radical ambiguities” (Freire in Gadotti, p. 140)—that are basic to each and every person’s lived reality.

A Caveat

Some academic interpreters of Paulo Freire have indicated that he did not outline his educational philosophy in a systematic, methodological manner.

There is a sense that he has developed only those parts of his theory that are relevant to the social situation in which he was working; consequently there is only a synthesis of perspectives on education that relate to those areas of concern rather than a fully developed sociology of, or philosophy of, education.

What he has written is related to his convictions, rather than always being carefully argued within the confines of the more traditional academic framework. (Gerhadt, p. 458)

This lack of a more traditional, formally orchestrated “system” actually fits an existentialist mindset. One of the existentialist paradoxes—and there are many—is that those who have been defined as “existentialist” are very likely to chafe at being labeled as such. For an existentialist thinker, to be classified in such a manner is to be fenced-in intellectually. It is to be defined with a semantic rigidity that negates the fluidity of human possibility. It is to be depersonalized.⁴ The existentialist (excuse the label) is likely to say, “I am ME, I am unique, and I cannot be pigeonholed into your arbitrary, definitional classification of who you think I am.”

It is advisable to “be wary of succinct definitions when dealing with a rich and fertile notion” (Hare, p. 40) and existentialism, as an interpretive thought process, is bountiful in intellectual fecundity and possibility. Of course, even the concept of an “ism” is rejected by most thinkers who draw upon the existentialist core in framing personal responses to life’s important questions. There is recognition that “isms . . . pretend to know the mysteries . . . the secrets of the past, the intricacies of the present, the uncertainties of the future” (Arendt, pp. 275–76). An “ism” suggests a dogma, an orthodoxy, an adherence to a changeless reality. It suggests unquestioned absolutes. It suggests being given an answer, when the existentialist favors the challenge of a personal wrestling with the question, and living the encounter into a personal answer. The existentialist thinker gives serious thought to the idea that you should “live the questions now. Perhaps you will then gradually . . . live some distant day into the answers” (Rilke, p.35). So . . . with this in mind—and with the reality of imprisoning definitions and the hazards of “labels” being recognized—the terms “existentialism and existentialist” are here used as descriptive designations which have permeable boundaries. But, even within the fluid parameters of such a philosophical thought process there are core tenets that form a prism through which to view the self and the world.

Mining Existential Nuggets from Freire’s Writings

Perhaps the most recognized, and oft-quoted, existentialist epigram is “existence precedes essence” (Sartre, p. 13), followed by, “I exist, therefore I am.” Here are recognitions of the significance in existentialist thought of the unique, self-creating individual. There is an embedded nucleus of existentialist philosophical thought in Freire’s self-descriptive analysis:

I am a being who makes things, knows and ignores, speaks, fears and takes risks, becomes angry and is enchanted. I am a being who rejects the condition of being a mere object. I am a being who does not bow before the indisputable power of technology . . . I was realized as the I who made things, the thinking I, and the speaking I (*Heart*, pp. 35,38).

Freire gave implicit meaning to an existentialist credo that reality exists within human subjectivity. He foresaw the power of unrestrained technology, and recognized that the self as subject must continually strive against the objectification of human possibility, the mechanization of the human mind, the automation of human desires, and the standardization of educational purpose; “the peril of a mechanistic objectification” (*Hope*, p. 21). Freire wrote with existentialist fervor: “I could never treat education as something cold, mental, merely technical, and without soul, where feelings, sensibility, desires and dreams had no place” (*City*, p. 129).

For the educator, the importance of individual uniqueness is noted in Ralph Waldo Emerson’s phrase, “That which we are, we shall teach” (Emerson, p. 182). Freire understood this, and wrote with existentialist understanding: “I cannot be a teacher without exposing who I am” (*Freedom*, p. 97), and “I have never lost anything by exposing myself and my feelings” (*Cultural Workers*, p. 48). To expose the self is to take risks; to allow oneself to be vulnerable; to be open to questions, challenges, uncertainties, and the educational ambiguities that make teaching a continual adventure.

Many teachers are unwilling to take the risk of being “uncertain of certainties.” In Freirean terms they have “the arrogance of the sectarians who are overly certain of their certainties” (*City*, p. 109). They prefer the security to be found in conformity to rules, regulations, pedagogical recipes, and administrative directives. To be an authentic individual in the classroom requires that which the existentialist theologian, Paul Tillich, defined as creative courage—“the self-affirmation of one’s being” (Tillich, p.3). To be self-affirming is to engage in the willingness to be “who I am” despite significant pressures that would make me a standardized, replaceable part in a uniform educational system. After all, “the best teachers . . . are poets in their personalities; they love the unpredictable” (Meier, p. xi). They are not those who lose the creative-self in strict adherence to the call for predetermined, predictable, prescriptive outcomes as classroom expectations. Educationally, poetic personalities understand the inherent meaning in Freire’s existentialist warning that, “when men try to save themselves by following the prescriptions, they drown in leveling anonymity . . . domesticated and adjusted” (*Critical Consciousness*, p. 6).

The teacher who challenges a standardizing status quo and creatively maladjusts to a domesticating system, is the one who strives to understand his/her self and to be authentic to that self-understanding. He/she recognizes the importance of being an intellectual midwife to an individual student’s unique self. He/she will seek ways to give birth to that which is unique and authentic to the student. This may seem counterproductive to the “teach-to-the-standardized-test” expectations that permeate American education today. And it may result in teacher anxiety and “existential angst.” It is, however, the responsibility of the teacher—in existentialist terms—to relate to the student not as an object (product, consumer, customer, test-taker), but as a subject, an “I”: an individual with unique potentials, motivations, and values; with highly personalized hopes, dreams, and visions for the future; intellectually capable of self-reflection. In the words of Freire, “human beings are active beings, capable of reflection on themselves, and on the activity in which they are engaged” (*Critical Consciousness*, p. 105).

The teacher attuned to existentialist thought understands Freire’s admonition that “we must start from some very, very concrete piece of people’s reality . . . humanity is Mary, Peter, John: very concrete” (*We Make the World*, pp. 87, 101). Here is an echo of John Lennon, of *Beetles* fame: “Yoko and me, that’s reality.” Freire helps us to understand that the student’s “lived reality” must be infused into an ongoing classroom dialogue. “The educator must not be ignorant of, underestimate, or reject any of the ‘knowledge of living’ experience with which students come to school” (*Hope*, p. 58). Teachers are encouraged to help students find a sense of inner-directedness, to help them seek out ways of self-expression, and to find personal meaning in the subject matter and in the educational environment. Freire’s existentialist orientation allowed him to recognize that “the content of education springs from the students themselves and their relation with the world” (*Critical Consciousness*, p. 159). Freire wrote frequently of the importance of “generative themes”: those ideas, thoughts, interests, expectations, experiences, values, and questions that a student—if encouraged—brings into the classroom learning environment.

Freire understood these student-generated themes to be part of the student’s existential self, an expression of *who* he/she is as a unique, unrepeatable individual. For the existentially oriented teacher, “generative themes are the heart of methods” (*Walking*, p. 19). They are the *why* that motivates a teaching *how*. Here is where the teacher has an opportunity to reach out to the student, to engage in a mind-meeting-mind encounter.

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In order to help the realization of the best potentialities in the pupil's life, the teacher must really *mean* him as the definite person he is in his potentiality and his actuality; more precisely, he must . . . be aware of him as a whole being and affirm him in his wholeness. (Buber, p. 132)

Freire understood the importance of "meaning" the student as a whole being. This understanding grew from his personal struggle with existential self-understanding. "I must know with my entire self; with my critical mind, but also with my feelings, with my intuitions, with my emotions" (*Cultural Workers*, p. 30).—"I know with my entire body, with feelings, with passion, and also with reason" (*Heart*, p.30)—"I cannot in the name of exactness or rigor, negate my body, my emotions, my feelings" (*City*, 105). The teacher who understands herself in holistic terms will educate the student as the subject of his own expectations, inner drives, and potentials, not as a mere object of institutionalized priorities and demands.

For Freire, the educator is one "who is involved as a Subject with other Subjects" (*Critical Consciousness*, p. 135), with the "thinking I and the speaking I" (*Heart*, p. 38). Subjectivity is the essence of the teacher's art. The teacher must not only try to understand his/her own self—with all of its ambiguities, paradoxes, and possibilities—but also relate compassionately to the student as someone enmeshed in the unique intricacies of her/his own search for a unique self. "What the educator does in teaching is to make it possible for the students to become themselves" (*Walking*, p. 181). To objectify the student by making him simply an "object" of the teacher's goals and methods—and of the educational system's expectations—is to negate the student's freedom, and the student's authentic becoming. To objectify the student is to negate her subjective dreams. As Freire reminds those who teach: "Dreaming is . . . an integral part of being a person" (*Hope*, p. 90), and "The dream which moves [the student] is a possibility for which I must fight" (*Letters*, p. 152).

Schooling today is effectively in the grips of a behaviorist psychology which in its attempts to bring scientism (not science)⁵ into education, minimizes—perhaps even challenges the very existence of—the freely choosing individual. B.F. Skinner's interpretation of the human condition—the antithesis of existentialism—echoes throughout the halls of America's schools. "The hypothesis that man is not free is essential to the application of the scientific method to the study of human behavior" (Skinner, p. 447).⁶ We can recognize varying degrees of Skinner's behaviorism in our measurement obsessed, testing dominated, and standardized system of education. And we may reasonably interpret that this behaviorist trend is antithetical to an existentialist worldview: "There can be few themes, if any, nearer to the heart of existentialism, than freedom" (Macquarrie, p. 177).

Freire understood the importance of the existentialist concept of freedom, not only as a personal capacity but as that which was the innate right of individuals within a society. About Sartre, who expressed a form of "radical freedom," Freire once wrote: "I remembered Sartre's letter published in *Le Monde* . . . It was critical, energetic, and lucid . . . (It was) one of the important records of this century, of intelligence against stupidity, of freedom against despotism, of hope against fatalism" (*Heart*, p. 48).

Freire related intellectually and emotionally to Sartre's belief in freedom as important not only to social justice, but also to self-creation. Freire's writings give credence to how the existentialist core concepts of freedom, decision-making, and responsibility should play significant parts in the educational process. "One can realize the importance of education for decision, for rupture, for choice" (*Heart*, p. 44). "My students become actors in their own learning . . . My role as a teacher is to assent to the students' right to compare, to choose, to rupture, to decide" (*Freedom*, p. 68).

This Freirean understanding of education runs counter to bureaucratic efforts to create a standardized, conforming, facts absorbing, test-prepared student. To "rupture" is to burst forth as self-affirming subjects of our own becoming. Freire cautions us to be aware of

the tendency to transform (students) into objects of the "knowledge" imposed on them. Hence the haste to make them the docile and patient recipients of "communiqués" which are injected into them, while on the contrary the act of knowing and of learning requires of people an impatient, unquiet, indocile attitude. It requires a seeking . . . which cannot be reconciled with the static attitude of one who merely acts as the depository of the contents delivered by another. (*Critical Consciousness*, p. 118)

This pedagogical process of knowledge transmission is a "banking model" of education where teaching "becomes an act of depositing, in which the students are the depositories and the teacher is the depositor" (*Oppressed*, p. 53). It is a behaviorist approach to education, and runs counterpoint to Freire's existentialist belief in education as a

humanist and liberating praxis . . . (that) enables teachers and students to become subjects of the educational process by overcoming authoritarianism and an alienating intellectualism (*Oppressed*, p. 67).⁷

To be a subject of the educational process is to defy the process of objectification. It is to refuse to be defined by bureaucratically imposed authoritarianism and pedagogical intellectualism. It is to struggle for personhood. For the teacher it is to infuse personal meaning into the phrase, “I teach who I am.” For the student (and teacher) it is to be “constantly in the process of *becoming*” (*Freedom*, p. 92)—to engage in a continuing “quest for myself” (*Hope*, p. 41). It is to bring the changing—yet unique, unrepeatable, authentic self—into the classroom learning experience.

And who is authentic?—the individual who is free and knows it, who knows every deed and word is a choice and hence an act of value creation, and, finally—and perhaps decisively—who knows that he is the author of his own life and must be held personally responsible for the values on behalf of which he has chosen to live it. (Morris, p. 48)

Freire understood that as authentic individuals, we—both teachers and students - “can only consider ourselves to be the subjects of our decisions, our searching, our capacity to choose” (*City*, p. 25). We are “capable of observing, comparing, evaluating, choosing, deciding, intervening, breaking with, and making options” (*City*, p. 92.) And here we come face-to-face with personal responsibility for that which we consciously decide to do. It is a moral responsibility that extends beyond the teacher—and even the student—and into the larger world. In the words of the existentialist philosopher, Jean Paul Sartre, “Every man ought to say to himself, ‘Am I really the kind of man who has the right to act in such a way that humanity might guide itself by my actions?’” (Sartre, p. 20). Freire understood the moral dimensions of Sartre’s above restatement of Immanuel Kant’s “categorical imperative,”⁸ when he wrote:

I cannot hope to escape my ethical responsibility for my action in the world . . . It is essential to the learning experience of decision making that the consequences of any decision making be assumed by the decision maker . . . I believe in freedom, and how fundamental it is in the exercise of freedom, to assume responsibility for our decisions . . . Consequences are what make decision-making a responsible process. (*Freedom*, 25–26, pp. 96–97)

For those who *choose* to be teachers, Freire’s writings are reminders of the existentialist ethical demands implicit in the educational concepts of freedom, responsibility, authenticity, encounter, awareness, and becoming. Each of these existential core concepts is (or should be) a continual reminder to the teacher that “true education incarnates the permanent search of people together with others for their becoming fully human in the world in which they exist” (*Critical Consciousness*, p. 96).

The “search of people together” for a humanist-inspired understanding of both self and the world, is a reminder to teachers that they engage in “a practice of co-intentional education” (*Oppressed*, p. 51) in which “the teacher is no longer merely the one who teaches, but the one who is himself taught” (*Oppressed*, p. 61).

Freire reminds us that the teacher/student relationship is one of pedagogical togetherness. It is a mind-meeting-mind encounter.⁹ It is a mutual give-and-take dialectic of continuing dialogue in which each (student and teacher) becomes a co-teacher and co-learner. And, Freire reminds us of an existential reality: “The more people participate in their own education . . . the more people participate in the development of their selves” (*Make the Road*, p. 145). It is this *self-development* that is the real (metaphysical) meaning of why schools exist, and teachers teach. The purpose of education is defined by more than the market-driven motivation to prepare students “to compete and win in the global economy.”¹⁰ The American school system exists to prepare students to be existentially authentic human beings who grow in their understanding of who they are, and who they have the potential to *become*.

Expanding Upon the Core

In academic, philosophical terminology, Freire’s metaphysical and epistemological understandings connect easily with an existentialist worldview. This is a worldview that—if lived by a teacher—allows him/her to be flexible, creative, and innovative; motivates one to challenge the concreteness of the “given” and the inflexibility of the standardized. Living authentically with such a view leads to an open-minded, free-thinking—even questioning—way of responding to educational responsibilities. Here is the recognition that reality—including educational “truth”—is not absolute, unchanging, and static. It is fluid and changing. Knowledge exists within a changing process, ever open to revision and continual renewal. In Freire’s words: “Knowledge is always becoming . . . is changed to the extent that reality also moves and changes” (*Make the Road*, p. 101). As educators, we build upon the past, and we learn from the handed-down wisdom of those who have gone before us. But . . . “it is through changing the present that we make the future” (*Make the Road*, p. 148); and “the future is created by us through transforming the present” (*Heart*, p. 79), even as “the world in order to be must be in the process of being” (*Heart*, p.30).

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Education is itself a process, an open-ended way of changing people and events. And, like Freire's conception of the world, both student and teacher are in a shared educational "process of being," of continual becoming. This is what education is about—becoming, changing, self-reinvention. "It is man . . . who constructs himself" (*Reading Freire*, p. 72), and it is the self-constructing teacher who provides an example, who is model and mentor for the student. It is the "question of the unfinishedness of the human person" (*Freedom*, 21) that is a motivating factor for the existentialist teacher. To be unfinished is to be in process. It is to be open to possibility and to transformation. It is to be "engaged in a permanent act of discovery" (*Critical Consciousness*, p. 119). And . . . in this process of intellectual- construction, transformation, and discovery we understand that "education, to be authentic, must be liberating" (*Critical Consciousness*, p. 148).

Freire believed in the power of liberation, even though he also understood the paradox that "liberation is like childbirth, and a painful one" (*Oppressed*, p.31). A liberating education takes one from the comfort of handed-out certainties, and opens the mind to conflicting, paradoxical realities. A liberating education encourages the student to question orthodox answers, whether these answers respond to cultural, political, social, economic, or religious questions. A liberating education encourages one to take risks, to begin to ask "why?" to challenge the "what is" of a world in need of, and "susceptible of, transformation" (*Pedagogy*, p. 66)—and to look toward the "what should be." Freire's concept of liberating education connects directly to an existentialist value orientation. The existentialist axiology—an ethical response to the contingencies of life—is based on human freedom and decision-making, coupled with the personal acceptance of responsibility for decisions made. Our values and *who* we are become implicit in our personal choices. For the existentialist, "I am my choices." Education should liberate the student to understand the power of his/her choices, to make decisions, to "assume an increasingly critical attitude toward the world, and so to transform it" (*Critical Consciousness*, p. 34).

Concluding Remarks

It is the premise of this discussion that teachers-to-be should have at least a minimal exposure to the core elements of a philosophically existentialist thought process. All too often the education of prospective teachers reflects the expectations of a competitive, materialistic, technological, the-real-is-what-can-be-measured, empiricist worldview. There is a mechanistic rigidity that accrues from such thinking. Such rigidity creates a thinking process that disconnects philosophical thought from the pragmatic, day-to-day, technical aspects of teaching. As important as it is, an emphasis on what to teach and how to teach, needs to be continually reinforced by a philosophical why.

Paulo Freire, as an educator, philosopher, and activist for social justice provides an existentialist model for rethinking why we teach, and why a professional career choice should be first considered as a way of *being*, as an expression of who we are. This discussion has suggested how a foundations-of-education classroom might use interpretive reflections on Freire's core existentialist leanings as a way to massage a future teacher's latent potential and unfinished possibilities into birth. The existentialist educational quest recognizes that "man is always in the making" (Sartre, 1957, p. 50). Based on an interpretation of Freire, the teacher may build on an understanding that the "human being is unfinished, constantly in search" (*Walking*, p. 234), and that "education affirms men and women as beings in the process of becoming—as unfinished, uncompleted beings with a likewise unfinished reality" (*Oppressed*, p. 65). This means that "the educator should discover education as possibility" (*Walking*, p. 149). It is the discovery of education as possibility, and an understanding of the student as a unique, self-defining being in a continual process of becoming, that provides a motivational stimulus for those of us who call ourselves "teacher."

ENDNOTES

1. Maurice Friedman, in discussing the Jewish theologian, Martin Buber, has written that "Buber's thought is part of that confluence and divergence of streams known as 'existentialism' (Buber, 1998, p. 1)."
2. The English novelist, Virginia Wolfe, reminds those of us who are teachers that it is our duty to metaphorically "unearth in each class session a nugget of shiny thought for the student to wrap-up between the pages of a notebook, and place on the mantelpiece forever." And Robert Pirsig encourages us to "have a list of valuable things to remember that can be kept in some place for times of future need and inspiration (Pirsig, p.34)."
3. We have been reminded that
due to the world wide readership the plays and novels of Jean Paul Sartre and Albert Camus have received, existentialism has been firmly identified . . . with an uncompromisingly atheistic stance. This is especially

unfortunate, since Soren Kierkegaard, the father of existentialism, was a devout Christian . . . Hence, to equate existentialism with atheism is to disregard, not only Kierkegaard, but also such great theistic existentialists as Gabriel Marcel, Martin Buber, and Nikolai Berdyaev. (Lescoe, 5)

4. The possibility of depersonalization raises concern for “what is good for man; not machine-conditioned, system regulated, mass-man; but man-in-person, moving freely over every area of life (Mumford, 21).”
5. “Scientism” has been defined as actually pseudoscience; as use of scientific terminology and technique in inappropriate ways, and “using methodologies applicable to sciences to understand phenomena that lie beyond the reach of empirical study (Suchismita, 89).” In furthering this definition it has been noted that such “scientific fetishism . . . atomizes educational activity, and takes away from the organic concept of the schooling enterprise (Roberts, 213).”
6. We may contrast Skinner’s concept of freedom with that of Sartre, who wrote: “We are not free to cease being free (Sartre, 1966, p. 537).” On a continuum, from determinism to indeterminism, Skinner’s “Freedom is an illusion” is on one end, and Sartre’s “We are condemned to freedom” is on the other.
7. We may be reminded that much of the accountability model of education today is “dominated by an intellectualism that has grown too narrowly rationalistic and too narrowly empirical (Macquarrie, 249).”
8. Kant’s categorical imperative stated: “Act only on that maxim of which thou can at the same time will that it should become a universal law.”
9. Here the term “encounter” takes on the existentialist meaning of “one mind penetrating another mind.” Or, as noted in an existentialist writing: “The term ‘encounter’ now expresses a reality, a ‘we’ with a more profound meaning, permeated with genuine affectivity and humanity (Luijpen & Koren, 172).”
10. In his 1994 State of the Union address, President Bill Clinton declared that we should measure the success of America’s schools by how well they prepare students for a dual role: to “compete and win in the global economy.” A similar thought was expressed by the newly appointed U.S. Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan (June 13, 2009, CNN news): “Our students have to be prepared to compete in the global economy.” Barack Obama, speaking at the National Hispanic Prayer Breakfast, noted on June 19, 2009: “If our children can’t get a first class education, then they can’t compete with other countries.”

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**THE FUTURE OF SOCIAL NETWORKS AS VIRTUAL LEARNING COMMUNITIES: ADOPTING A
“CULTURAL WEALTH CURRICULUM” FOR COLLABORATIVE LEARNING ONLINE**

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Introduction

In the twenty-first century Blogs, Wikis, news aggregation, opinion sites, video sharing, music sharing, livecasting, virtual reality, and social networking have become powerful and diverse educational agents. Nevertheless, educators are neglecting a unique educational opportunity in these media—specifically, using the growing popularity and features of social networking sites to enhance the educational experience of learners while expanding their understanding of “cultural wealth and liabilities” (Roland Martin, 2002). Social networking sites like Myspace, Facebook, Twitter, Elgg and Ning, to name a few, are hubs for the exchange of information, opinions and ideas. The popularity and social impact of these sites is reflective of a shift from teaching and learning that once took place solely on-site from educational agents like museums, schools, and town hall meetings, to the online or virtual learning environment (Andrews, 2007; NSBA, 2007; O’Hare, 2006; Prell, 2003). Many teachers and learners have one if not more online profiles on social networking sites and are members of online communities (NSBA, 2007). Communicating via tweets, blog essays, micro-blogging, vlogs and status updates, is commonplace and can create a comfortable environment for expressing and conveying one’s sense of self. Online social networking can also have a significant impact on the identity, ideas, choices, and beliefs of participating learners (Donath, 1999; Turkle, 2005), which mirrors the notion that “all communication (and hence all genuine social life) is educative” (Dewey, 1916). As educators with a long history of engaging students in learning communities, it is important that we recognize the emergence of the online learning communities on these sites as a popular and effective way to engage learners outside the traditional, onsite, learning environment. This inquiry explores the multidimensional nature of learning communities provided by online social networking and argues why educators, formal and informal, should adopt a “cultural-wealth curriculum” when using social networking sites as learning communities online (Roland Martin, 2002; 2007).

Social media

Social media and networking have emerged as leading forums for communication. For Solis, “Social Media is, at its most basic sense, a shift in how people discover, read, and share news and information and content. It’s a fusion of sociology and technology, transforming monologue (one to many) into dialog (many to many).” (2007) Social media also describes the various online tools available for people to use to share content, opinions, profiles, experiences, perspectives and media, like music and video, that in turn facilitate conversations and interactions among groups of people online. Examples of social media and social media tools include, but are not limited to, Blogs (which use tools like Blogger, Xanga, Vox), Vlogs, Microblogs (Twitter), Wikis (wikipedia), news aggregation, opinion sites (yelp, opinions), video sharing (You Tube), music sharing, livecasting, virtual reality (Second life) and social networking (Facebook, Myspace, Ning, Elgg, Plaxo). For the purpose of this inquiry, I have chosen to focus on the phenomenon of “social networking,” which encompasses blogs, vlogs, microblogs and social networking sites as an emerging educational agent and forum for online learning communities.

Online social networking garnered limited interest in the 80s with the introduction of ~~the~~ one of the first online chat systems, the CB simulator, which cost \$6 an hour plus long distance fees (which often added up to more than \$30–40 per hour online) and was hence exclusive due not only to the high monetary cost, but also the inaccessibility of the technology, compounded by the mass’s lack of digital literacy at that time. Social networking today, however, is more widely accessible, user friendly, and popular, catering to a growing population of digitally literate participants. In 2008, social networking as a means to communicate, share ideas, and learn gained international attention and became more “mainstream” when celebrities took to Twitter to share their thoughts and ideas via tweets. Following Ashton Kutcher’s success of obtaining more than one million followers on Twitter, he stated “We now live in an age in media that a single voice can have as much power and relevance on the Web, that is, as an entire media network And I think that to me was shocking.” Many were shocked that social networking could become not only a social trend, but a global phenomenon that brings people and their ideas together in a forum where each has the opportunity to share. Following Kutcher’s Twitter activities and the media frenzy, Pete Cashmore, a social media site entrepreneur and expert who focuses primarily on social networking, became a leader in social networking and social media news and guides, with more than seven million monthly viewers on his

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blog—that describes for users how to engage in social networking online. Through widespread discussion, social networking language is becoming more commonplace and widely understood (Example: “Now you can tweet your tweeps on Twitter” is a phrase that was incomprehensible two years ago). In the last year alone, social networks have seen a dramatic increase in single participant users and institutional use; many universities are now creating pages on social networking sites to connect with present, prospective, and past students, faculty, and staff. Researchers attribute this increase to the power of social media identified in Kutcher’s previously stated social media milestone.

Personal expression and identity online

Online learning communities are described as communities where individuals form groups to share their experiences, beliefs, opinions, ideas and information to learn from each other. Social networking sites like Twitter, Myspace, Ning, and Elgg, to name a few, facilitate many of these communities. Recently the elections and protests in Tehran were shared and discussed on social networking sites around the world. Through the use of cell phones many were able to convey their thoughts and ideas and share their reactions to the elections. Simply by googling the Iranian elections, you can find discussion forums on social networking sites that serve as learning communities for those interested or immersed in the social, political, and personal effects of Ahmadinejad’s recent reelection. Individuals express concern, fear, bravery, and anger online in what has become an outpouring of personal feelings that reaped worldwide attention and facilitated continued discussion. Those who traditionally felt that they could not have a voice found one online. Finding a voice online when feeling silenced has been described as a liberating event.

A recent study of identity and online learning in the age of Facebook, Myspace, and Twitter reveals that many students share Kutcher’s sentiments about the power one can have by sharing his or her thoughts with others on the web. In one study, a woman stated that she felt her identity was best reflected online because she feels that she is heard online better than on-site, in classrooms or group discussions, where her voice is often lost in discussion to those who are perhaps less shy (Daine, 2010). She maintains that this is, “because a large part of my identity comes from my mind and heart—how I think and feel. [O]nline . . . I am able to express my thoughts and feelings, and people get to “hear” me speak from my true, inner voice” (Daine, 2010). This participant continued to describe how being soft-spoken can interfere with her participation in onsite discussions, but online she feels that she has the opportunity to share and is actually heard. This sentiment is shared by many individuals who when comparing their onsite participation in discussion to an online discussion, feel that they are more themselves online. According to Donath and Turkle online social networking can have a significant impact on identity, beliefs, values, and choices of participants. Online learning communities facilitated by social networking sites give those who do not feel like they have a voice offline, for whatever reason, an opportunity to share and engage others in an environment conducive to mutuality and learning.

Social networking sites and a cultural wealth curriculum

Studies on media literacy reveal that teachers expect students to be media literate when using the Internet and computer-based programs, but many do not incorporate online media literacy into their curriculum. This is becoming increasingly important for educators, as much of what is “learned” is learned online through online news sources, online television, blogs, social networking sites and more. I think in order to engage students in discussion about the complexity of life and human culture we must first explicitly address what is portrayed in popular media to enable them to better critically analyze and reflect on the “facts” they know to be true by revealing through discussion that many of these “facts” are possible derivatives of gross generalizations and hidden agendas or hidden curricula and are often cultural liabilities. I propose that this can best be accomplished by answering Jane Roland martin’s call “for a cultural wealth curriculum in school and society” by incorporating a “cultural wealth curriculum” into online learning communities that are supported by online social networking. Martin asserts that the hidden curriculum in many educational agents, like school and I propose social networking sites, pass “down undesirable traits, attitudes, worldviews, and the like—in other words cultural liabilities” to the next generation. She continues that schools cannot afford to continue this trend “nor can a society that aspires to be educative allow such vast numbers of its educational agents to engage in miseducation (Martin, 2002, p. 97). While some online learning communities fostered by social networking sites are by their nature already challenging what is believed (consider the learning communities on Twitter that surround the Iranian election) others are communities of learners that share similar interests and do not actively engage participants in reflection about their worldviews and attitudes. In fact, many

such learning communities foster, either intentionally or unintentionally, participants' commitment to views that can be considered racist, sexist, ageist and the like. According to Martin, a cultural wealth curriculum has three phases:

1. raising consciousness;
2. developing an understanding of racism, anti-Semitism, homophobia etc.;
3. encouraging cultural wealth research projects (i.e. to determine what should be passed down to the next generation and what should be kept within ourselves) (Martin, 2002, p. 99).

Conclusion

Online learning communities facilitated by social-networking sites are multidimensional, providing many individuals with the opportunity to share their ideas, beliefs and information. They allow those who do not feel like their identity or sense of self is adequately conveyed onsite a chance to show people "who they are" online. These learning communities are educational agents, often worldwide agents that provide people who share similar interests an opportunity to learn from each other, and in the process transmit cultural wealth and cultural liabilities. Online learning communities on sites like Twitter, Ning, Elgg are also growing in popularity and are therefore attracting more participating learners each day. Given what we know about the power of social networking, we can ill afford to neglect the opportunity that a cultural wealth curriculum provides. The combination of cultural wealth curriculum and social networking in online learning communities, would engage learners and address issues like sexism, racism, homophobia, and ageism.

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JUST BECAUSE A POTATO IS CALLED A GOOBER DOESN'T MAKE IT SO; THE ASSAULT ON "COMMUNITY" IN EDUCATIONAL DISCOURSE

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"Community" became a standard expression in American educational discourse during the past several decades. Its use in speech and text promotes a sense of "progressiveness" as well as the attractiveness of an earlier era. It now seems to be used more prevalently, even, than was "democracy," clearly a front running term during most of the twentieth century. Community appears as commonly in the educational discourse about curriculum, for example, as it does in the language about leadership, policy, and foundational studies. Popularity, however, is a particularly fragile and inadequate criterion for a term that possesses ready viability, but that has become invested with so many varied and often contradictory meanings.

This paper offers analyses of several prominent uses of community in educational discourse. These probes of usage call attention to some of the implicitly asserted and symbolic meanings as well as actual components of meanings and realistically possible relationships carried by the term. Admittedly a short and exploratory inquiry, this paper notes both dead ends and possible paths to increased understanding of the nature of community in education. It utilizes several examples, hypothetical and real, to illustrate the variety of meanings that Americans have invested in the term community. Also, it proposes a set of initial and tentative limits to the term's general use. It does not advocate a single meaning of community, but it suggests some common elements that inhere in a community rather than in any other kind of group, however formed and continued.

A Hypothetical Case

A short report of activities, absolutely hypothetical, during one of the days of teacher orientation prior to the beginning of the current school year launches this exploration of "community."

The opening of the current school term occurred before students shuffled into their classrooms for their first engagement with this year's courses or topics. Their teachers, more likely than not, had begun their school year by assembling, perhaps in a hired convention hall, and listened to an intentioned welcome address by their superintendent of schools.

Underneath and alongside the jokes and probable reference to a winning football season most likely ran a not-so-subtle insistence by the superintendent that the schools in the system must change—no leeway this year. The previous May was the end of teachers' concerns that pupils learn subject matter important in the school's offerings. The primary, if not the only, concern of teachers in "our great school system this year," the superintendent made clear, was to be that student scores on the state tests must improve in order for each school in the system to be rated "exemplary" or, at least, "recognized."

In closing, the superintendent surely expressed confidence in teachers' and principals' achievement of the schools' overriding objective for the year . . . because, as he stated, he was convinced that the schools' professional personnel constituted a genuine community united by each person's commitment to high academic achievement of their students.

Conventional applause signaled the session's conclusion. Some teachers in several groups strolled off to lunch. Others hurriedly returned to their assigned classroom to complete during the noon recess the bulletin boards that they had begun and to prepare for the afternoon session about some new approaches to the teaching of one of the topics or processes chosen by central staff members to be emphasized this year. Several newly employed teachers walked by themselves to the parking lot, located their car, and wondered how they might fit into the community that the superintendent had mentioned and had so proudly praised.

Too many of the teachers likely missed the superintendent's use of the term "community," but a large number may have accepted the opening address as hyperbole typical of speakers who address teachers at the beginning of the year. Veteran teachers seemed all too happy not even to comment about the term; across the years, they had listened to opening day speakers employ a host of exhortations about the year ahead, almost all of which they found to be empty. At least some of the first-year teachers, on the other hand, understood something personal was missing: they were alone. Most of the veteran teachers, however, likely recognized that the administrative demand about priority objectives, although not detailed, likely foreshadowed a series of surprises as the school year continued and that they should be alert and to expect these unknowns. Nevertheless, lunch beckoned and some teachers wanted to tell their friends about their family's summer trip or about their luck in finding a short-term job in a depressed economy that enabled their family to survive until late August.

What was the nature of community that the superintendent identified? Without additional evidence, a community's very existence was only his assertion. He did not identify the human relationships necessary to the existence of any real community of persons. Likewise, he withheld any prospect of time available to teachers to work together. Significantly, he stated his overriding objective, one that reasonably was not the objective of most teachers, but neither central to the work of a community. He failed to identify whose ends would be served by teachers' work to meet his objective. In particular, his ambiguity reasonably but not necessarily could be understood by teachers as an invitation to join in mutual work, but only as an administrative mandate.

What Constitutes a Community?

This short account and analysis suggest several key aspects of an actual community of persons in relation (See, also, Davis, 2006). A community is not created by demands by others. Rather, it is constituted by a group of persons in relation. These individuals need not just like one another. They may, in fact, not be or become fast friends. However, they recognize that their joining together with others may better advance their shared concerns or interests. Over time, persons in a community typically are ones who earlier have developed shared interpersonal sentiments, ones who deeply trust one another, and express, in actions, their personal concern for other community members. Likely, it comes together (is formed) on its own terms, its purposes, its concerns and not at all on the terms, purposes, or concerns of others, certainly not external, status superiors. Also, a community resists external imposition of structures, requirements, and orders as alien to its members' understandings of their priorities for their community. A community may decide to consider and, even, to accept as important suggestions by other individuals, but they also may not accept external proposals, orders, or demands in any other than some minimal fashion.

This paper's use of additional examples and analyses extends the conception of what a community of persons in relation is, how it is constituted, the possible length of its existence and its probable size, and something about how it works. Also, the paper identifies various types of groups too generously and improperly called communities, but which, properly, can be recognized only as societies, groups of individuals who are allied or known by special features (e.g., assignment, political, economic, faith, virtual, practice). In conclusion, it raises crucially important questions.

- Can schools foster for both faculty and students the development of communities relevant to their own lives and educational purposes? I assert that schools can and must.

Or,

- Should educators accept a lesser and probably corrupt set of meanings for communities?

I hope not. If they did, they very well might recognize that they were attempting to enact a fraud. All groups of persons clearly do not qualify as communities. This situation may be understood easily in gardening terms. Calling a potato a goober is unacceptable. A goober, of course, is a peanut and no peanut is a potato.

Communities and Societies

This differentiation of "community" and "society" is based on the groundbreaking work of the Scottish philosopher, John Macmurray, and, especially, in his *Persons in Relation* (1961/1991). His conceptualization seems not obtuse, but he used non-education or non-school examples to illustrate his carefully constructed distinction. Consequently, for the enterprise of education/schooling and for educators, clarification and differentiation of "community" and "society" must employ sets of examples extracted from schooling and from some other elements of our culture as well as extension and, perhaps, minor modification of Macmurray's meanings. In pursuit of the needed clarity, I have chosen a set of diverse examples that I confidently believe **are** true communities, others that only **may be** communities, and some that **cannot** be considered to be communities. My analyses and conclusions, to be sure, are open to dispute. I welcome the participation of additional scholars in the continuing study and research that this problem merits.

At the outset, please recall an earlier comment that I made in my remarks about the hypothetical example with which I began this analysis. The Superintendent in that anecdote asserted that the teachers in the district constituted a community because of their shared belief in a particular sentiment, high academic achievement. Also, recall the reported actions and feelings of some of the teachers as they left the preschool meeting. Now, attend to John Macmurray's notion of community.

Easily stated, Macmurray requires that a community's members be individuals in personal relation. Further, a community is a reality; it is not an asserted reality. Note, also, a community cannot exist if individuals in the group are not in personal relation; such a group, according to Macmurray, properly can be known only as a society.

Please consider at this point another school situation. It derives from my personal experience.

**O. L. DAVIS, JR.: JUST BECAUSE A POTATO IS CALLED A GOOBER DOESN'T MAKE IT SO; THE ASSAULT ON
"COMMUNITY" IN EDUCATIONAL DISCOURSE**

During my first year of teaching, our superintendent announced that our high school faculty would go through a self-study, an initial step toward the accreditation of the school by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). What a good idea, I remember thinking. Surprising to me, an enthusiastic first year teacher, however, was my awareness that most of my fellow teachers only modestly applauded, that a few shrugged their shoulders, and that almost no one smiled in happiness. Each of us teachers self-selected one of the problems set for self-study. I chose the group that was charged to write a statement of purposes for our high school. More than a half-century later, I still have not decided whether or not I made a wise choice. I quickly learned, on the other hand, that my choice led me to certain frustration, confusion, and loss of enthusiasm. Most of us in this group knew one another by name only. Almost all of us were new to the school system. We surely were ill-prepared to work with other adults, certainly our fellow teachers. That work included, for example, that we consider others as individuals with reasonable ideas and a sense of purpose, that we not marginalize individuals whose ideas were discrepant with positions held by others, that we need not believe that we actually had to meet the quite early deadlines imposed by the SACS consultant, and more. Very quickly, I realized that most of the others in the group believed that I, the only one in the group with no regular teaching experience, really did not qualify to comment nor to discuss any subject of consequence. I never remember anyone in our group even having a coke and informal conversation with another in our group. Still fresh in my memory is that after a couple of meetings, some in our group began seriously to dislike others in the group. Essentially, I came to understand that our group existed as window dressing for the assertion of a statement of purposes for our high school that was similar or identical to ones similarly asserted by committees at other schools that previously had sought accreditation.

Surely, our group never was a community. To be sure, the term was seldom if ever used when I began my teaching career. Still, Macmurray had formally and publicly advanced the basic nature of his conception of community more than twenty years previously. Even had we known about Macmurray's formulation, we likely would have dismissed it. Most of us had not read even one of John Dewey's slim volumes, but, of course, most of us might claim, at least socially, to recognize one or another idea as attributed to Dewey. Even had we known of Macmurray, which I assure you none of us did, what could a philosopher, and a foreign one at that, offer to a group of American school teachers in west Texas, flushed with the arrogance that the US had won WWII and one of whose number actually had flown sorties over Germany and destroyed German rail transportation. After a number of frustrating sessions, our group finally agreed to some statement of purpose that fit our high school only in an administrator's wish. And most of us swore never to submit ourselves to such a committee's work ever again.

Other groups' experiences in this particular Self Study differed little from those of ours. The Self-Study was a disaster to almost all of us teachers in all of the groups. Nevertheless, the school's final report was satisfactory enough that the Southern Association granted accreditation to our entire school system.

My experience probably did not differ strikingly from that of many other educators as they have worked on school-wide curriculum committees, as members of designated policy and/or strategic committees, or as a member of a group assigned to plan a special program for a school's PTA meeting. A major and wrong-headed assumption in educational administration insists that an administrator's announcement or command that several or all teachers in a school or district [or since the NCLB legislation, all teachers within the nation] will do a particular something and, thus, their "doing" constitutes accomplishment not only of the task, but, also, the achievement of the leader's goal. Specific focused teachers' (and administrators') efforts, so many bureaucrats and enthusiasts believe, will yield a particular desired result, specific improvement.

Communities and Groups

In most school situations, the unlucky individuals assigned to a group simply deliver the administratively desired product . . . and on time. How did the group achieve this result? On too many occasions, the individuals gained the key to the situation: they learned what the administrator wanted and provided just that, little more, almost never less. Even so, the group cannot be known as a community; it remains a grim version of a society.

These two examples, I realize, are idiosyncratic to my experience. In the educational literature of some 70 to 40 years ago, a number of reports of teacher-administrator cooperation in curriculum improvement and school management describe quite different procedures and very positive results as a result of changed theory and about democratic involvement and participation (See, for example, Caswell, 1950; Foshay, 1980; Koopman & Miel, 1943; Miel, 1946). In each of these studies, leaders accorded attention to enhanced group processes in the conduct of staff and school development and school administration.

Two reasonable but tentative generalizations seem appropriate to these illustrations. First, assertion neither creates nor describes reality. Second, tight managerial control of expectations for study reports and plans and/or recommendations reasonably cannot create conditions that foster development of a community and can corrupt and/or destroy even nascent communities.

Very important, communities sometimes do form, some with status leaders and others without appointed leaders. They also conduct mutually supportive and productive work. Also, communities throughout their existence, for short or long periods, may be fragile or develop increasingly strong relationships. Some communities, therefore, reasonably may disintegrate although others may endure. Obviously needed is research focused on conditions under which communities may or may not be fragile or strong as well as conditions which appear to be important to their disintegration or endurance.

I confess that I have been a member of very few communities, both in my professional as well as my personal life. To be sure, I have been a part of and, sometimes, an elected leader (officer) of a number of professional societies, from groups with memberships of about 15 to approximately 175,000. None of these groups properly constituted a community; at best, they were societies. To be sure, members of these societies were loosely structured for program and governance, in which members shared some sentiments (e.g., the importance of research in education), but developed very few relationships other than acknowledgment-relations with other persons. In most of these societies, I have been only a nominal member; I paid my dues.

Not dissimilarly, I have been and currently am a member of some very large groups, for example, our nation and state. Some people ordinarily call such groups “political communities.” As well, I am a member of a “faith community” (my church), “scholarly communities” [e.g., a university faculty], a “geographic community” (e.g., “the western world”), and “communities of interest” (e.g., curriculum historians). Such *named-communities* remain societies with very few individuals or none in personal relation. On the other hand, I have been included in a few exceedingly strong and productive communities.

One of these began as a professional group of three persons. We taught and wrote together for only a couple of years before we took posts at widely dispersed universities. We used the postal service and, sometimes, long distance telephone connections to stay in touch during most of the year, but, at annual conferences of three societies (professional associations), we renewed our relationships—friendships in a variety of ways. We took some meals together, reviewed and planned papers for subsequent professional meetings, kept up with our growing families, told jokes that had a profound insider quality, went together to art galleries, baseball games, and receptions, and just “hung out.” Also, from time to time, we brought one (or no more than two) of our very strongest graduate students to share our relationships and, on other occasions, to become a member of some particular project led by one of us. Our scholarly production increased over the years and we were invigorated by our collaborations as well as our contributions to one another. This wonderful community of persons, deeply committed to one another, continued for more than twenty years. It had no leader. We were more than colleagues. We enjoyed our interactions. Our community disintegrated soon after the death of one of our number. The remaining two of us attempted to continue the community, but we failed. But what a special community it was for a time!

Another very special professional community was one composed of only two of us. After we participated in a somewhat casual meeting at a research conference, we agreed to work together on a project initiated by my new friend. During the next several years, when we were teaching at universities some distance from each other, we exchanged letters, gathered data for one another, and read and edited each other’s reports and essays. We met together only briefly for too long a period. Then, we became interested in an idea . . . on which we decided to work for an extended period . . . as it turned out, some ten years. We wrote and talked to one another more and more regularly. We participated in workshops together and managed to meet not only at state and national meetings, but in each other’s homes. Our families became good friends. We became much more than good friends. In some respects, we became like amazing brothers. We argued with passion, sometimes even hostilely, but each of us always understood that the other likely was more important than oneself. Across the years, each of us developed interests in new ideas and, to the extent that we could, we found some few ways to continue our collaboration. Even when we couldn’t, our community continued to develop along different lines until this colleague and dear friend died.

For a little more than a year, another person and I, both of us retired, have become a special community. Not at all professional, he and I have developed close and personal relationships. We have no common projects underway. Once each week at 1:30 p.m., we meet at a coffee shop on the town square to sip some special coffee, to share our current interests, to reminisce, to laugh, “to solve the world’s problems,” basically just to be together. It so happens

**O. L. DAVIS, JR.: JUST BECAUSE A POTATO IS CALLED A GOOBER DOESN'T MAKE IT SO; THE ASSAULT ON
"COMMUNITY" IN EDUCATIONAL DISCOURSE**

that we are in the same Sunday morning class and are members of the same so-called "faith community." At the same time, we recognize that our church is not a community except by assertion, but we find helpful our shared beliefs in the possible expansion of our "gang of two." We really haven't worked another person into our group. In our conversations, however, we seem to have decided to accept an arbitrary number of a dozen as the limits to our community's size. Our decision was based on our separate experiences in our quite different personal careers. At this time, however, our community continues to number only two.

Community Longevity

At this point, another issue seems important to consider. How long does or should a community exist? Does (or, Should) a community have an optimum period of existence?

I am reminded of the commendation that accompanied the Congressional Medal of Honor posthumously presented to a US soldier killed in Afghanistan. This sergeant attempted to rescue a severely wounded comrade in his unit. In those efforts, he suffered life-threatening wounds from a Taliban unit's marksman and his comrade died in a fusillade of enemy fire. The sergeant would not leave his comrade's body on the battlefield and, continuing to bleed profusely, he pulled his comrade to a medic who sought to help them board an evacuation helicopter. In the ensuing minutes, both the sergeant and the medic were killed as rescue personnel attempted to pull them aboard the departing aircraft. I contend that the sergeant, his comrade, and the medic were members of a community that existed only for minutes. To be sure, this time may have been the only period during their entire combat tour during which they may have been in the same place at the same time. Also, each might not have known the names of the others.

I know of a doctoral advisor and his advisees who are establishing what they call their community. This university professor understands the possible feelings of some of the students with whom they and he have agreed to work together during the student's doctoral journey. They are not "his." That is, they do not belong to him. They agree to accept his supervision, but not his ownership. He agrees to consult with them about their course program, schedule, ideas and plans for short-term research projects as well as their dissertation study. They agree to work with him on conference presentations and subsequent publications. Across time, they likely will become in closer relation as they talk together, take meals together, review each other's work, deliberate about research and development projects—indeed, as they travel with one another in the other's personal journey. Furthermore, the doctoral students in this community are and will be encouraged to seek and develop friendships with others in this group, to expand their relations with others who currently are and others who will become members of this community. No one can know now, even in hopeful anticipation, if this currently asserted community will jell or, if sufficiently formed, how long it may endure. On the other hand, efforts to date appear *to point in the right direction*—a particularly strong omen of success.

What length of time should or may a community endure? This question's response bears kinship to the answer that Abraham Lincoln uttered when asked about how tall a person should be. Lincoln responded, "Tall enough for both feet to touch the ground," and for our question about the endurance of a community? As long as the community—the persons in relation—understands it is necessary or desirable for the community. Minutes? Days? Years? When community members are no longer in relation, the community dissolves. When the community concludes the task it originally undertook it no longer exists in the same way. It might decide to continue on the basis of some new rationale or to exist without a task agenda—possibly because these persons in relation simply want to continue their association. Or, members may accept the reality that a community's continuance cannot be fixed arbitrarily.

Conclusion

The nature of community can be corrupted to be sure. Too often, it is. For example, individuals can call a group a community and they do. Invoking the name of community, however, cannot convert a perfectly acceptable "group" or "society" into a community. Only individuals in relation can achieve this transformation for and by themselves. No one can command or order a community into existence. Communities truly vary in size, but some experience suggests that a community is small. Too, communities exist for various periods of time, from only minutes to a number of years.

Actually, too little is known about communities. Much more information is needed. Just because the nature of community remains largely unmapped, however, is not sufficient justification for either uninformed or deliberate confusion of meanings about its basic concept. Words are important. To call a society a community is nothing less

than an assault on reality and reasoning. My grandfather Maxwell, a careful farmer blessed by an uncommon sense of logic, might remind us about our inquiry, "You can call a potato a goober, but calling it so doesn't make it so."

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AT THE CROSSROADS: ALTERCATIONS AND TRANSFORMATIONS IN PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

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Introduction

In many institutions philosophy of education has been intentionally eliminated, or at least reduced from its former place in the curriculum by a variety of people or entities. Or, stated more accurately, groups of loosely knit people, whose primary element of solidarity is the wish to purge an unwanted contributor have been largely successful. However, we cannot entirely blame those outside our discipline for our increased marginalization. We speculate that altercations in the field of philosophical inquiry are contributors to the current state of our influence, and that hope is not lost as the field of philosophy and education has been, is, and will continue to be in the process of transformation rather than having experienced a termination. Before analyzing these ideas we need to make clear that philosophy of education has not been totally eradicated from colleges of education. Our depiction of the current state of educational philosophy assumed that our field, while admittedly often marginalized, is only perceived as being dead. We include these elements in the form of two simplified hypotheses for critique and, when merited, further investigation and action. First, we suggest that the evolution of educator preparation is a major factor in the perceived death of philosophy of education.

The Evolution of Educator Preparation

Philosophy, of course, is considered one of the longstanding disciplines of the liberal arts. These have evolved and grown since their origins in a variety of settings, including, among others, the ancient scholars of Greece, Rome, Europe and America. Some people, mostly within the field, have considered philosophy to be the pinnacle of the disciplines. But like many other disciplines, philosophy has often been understood as a field of study intended to transmit knowledge, foster rational thought and critical inquiry, and contribute to one's overall well being. Likewise, philosophy has provided students with a foundational knowledge base that serves as an underpinning for lifelong inquiry, critique, and construction. At various times in history and in particular countries, philosophy has been seen as a conveyor of metanarratives that provides an explanation for all of life and thought. Conversely, the aforementioned conclusions have been challenged, rejected, re-envisioned, and reconstructed by alternatively thinking philosophers, including educational philosophers.

We may wonder, given the diverse if not conflictual history of philosophy, how it, an ancient and contemporary form of inquiry, found its way into the preparation of future and practicing educators. The influence of the inquiry genre is probably nearly as old as teaching and learning, understood in both formal and informal ways. This genre usually includes,

- Philosophical questions (e.g., Who should be educated?),
- Assumptions (e.g., Are not the sciences the most important subjects to study?),
- Themes (e.g., Which types of effective pedagogy are to be rejected on ethical grounds?),
- Arguments (e.g., If we have a limited amount of time and resources, we have a cogent reason for excluding certain content from the curriculum, don't we?),
- Topics (e.g., How do we know when our students have adequate reasons for their educational and political beliefs?),
- Controversies (e.g., Why should we spend so much money on certain populations who will contribute so little to society?)

These have seldom been absent from educational discussions—or at least the minds of those educating and those providing for it.

As formal settings and institutions for educator preparation gradually evolved in scattered locales of the world, the term “philosophy of education” was used less commonly than phrases such as educational aims, principles, and values. When normal schools—institutions designed largely for the preparation of future and aspiring teachers—emerged in France, the USA, Mexico, and many other countries, the term, while not necessarily the concept, was still missing in many cases. Most normal schools were considered chiefly practical institutions that were designed to help teachers learn how and what to teach students, not emphasize how educators might or should think about broader professional questions and responsibilities, e.g., philosophical, political, curricular, theoretical, scientific, or fiscal matters. But embedded in their pedagogy courses, in many cases, were the philosophical questions, assumptions, and themes noted heretofore. In time, both the phrase “philosophy of education” and related subject matter were made explicit in many normal schools and their descendants, e.g., normal colleges, teacher

colleges, state universities—as well as in educational literature. For instance, Barnes (1920) complained that “obfuscated philosophy in education” was responsible for much of the lack of progress in schooling. (p. 144) The subtitle of the magazine, *Education*, in which Barnes published his article indicates that philosophy had a voice in educator preparation programs—*A Monthly Magazine devoted to The Science, Art, Philosophy and Literature of Education*—but was not, apparently, deemed the dominant one or the soul of preparation programs.

In the middle and late twentieth century, “philosophy of education” and “philosophy and education” as terms and courses appeared more frequently, especially in the middle two quarters of the century in English speaking countries; however, there was also competing content from other academic areas. By way of illustration, education courses were sometimes labeled to convey the fact that more than one discipline was a contributor to the study, e.g., school and society, foundations of education, history and philosophy of education, culture and education, introduction to education. As the century moved closer to the twenty-first one, philosophy of education as a distinct course was less frequently found in many public universities although private, especially religiously-oriented ones were more inclined to retain the course because of their founding principles, or because some philosophical perspectives were considered particularly congruent with religious beliefs. During this time studies in philosophy and education seem to have shifted in large part to the graduate level where the form of inquiry may or may not have been welcomed. Actually, its welcome may have depended basically on traditional, contextual and personnel considerations, not exclusively or even mainly on academic and professional considerations.

In the last quarter of the twentieth and the early part of the twenty-first centuries, the field of educator preparation has experienced an ongoing evolution in at least two major directions, ways that we label for convenience as a. disciplinary and interdisciplinary and b. structural and accountability. The disciplinary and interdisciplinary evolution is manifest and influential. In part, the disciplinary evolution has been fueled by the maturing inquiry of other disciplines such as history, sociology, psychology, and anthropology into questions of how we can and should prepare future teachers to teach P-12 students. In addition, the development of the field has been nudged by realms of inquiry that focus on the practical sciences and arts of teaching mathematics, science, language arts, and social studies. School law also injected its right to be heard into the curriculum, especially in undergraduate teacher preparation programs and in graduate administrator education programs. Moreover, the emergence of feminist, multicultural, and diversity studies and their relevance to educator preparation have caused colleges of education to reconsider their offerings. Likewise, the appearance and flourishing of critical theory, critical pedagogy, and related subjects in many colleges of education has moved discussions and curriculum development in still other directions. Additionally, the paradigm shifts that are evidenced by the controversies connected to modernism, postmodernism, and post-postmodernism have unsettled the canonical views of teacher and administrator preparation and opened the door for a variety of new perspectives into the curriculum.

The structural and accountability evolution of educator preparation programs is no less important. Indeed, a strong argument can be made that this evolution or, perhaps, revolution, has outweighed the influence of disciplinary and interdisciplinary developments. The creation of state requirements for teacher and administrator certification or licensure and national accreditation agencies, e.g., National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), The Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC), and Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP)—injected voices that now and again led away from philosophy and education or transformed a subfield of philosophy such as ethics into specific professional preparation programs, e.g., ethics and counseling, ethics and educational leadership, ethics and school psychology, ethics and teaching, so forth. Critiques of educator preparation programs also impinged upon curricular offerings by demanding that competency-based and outcome-based questions be raised and answered. Some institutional program developers used these new guidelines to eliminate nearly any subject that could not be readily transformed into a measurable, observable, and behavioral performance. Others assumed that the guidelines were both prescriptive and definitive even when they were not. Combined with restrictions on the length of degree programs by higher education governing bodies, these critiques and accountability steps led to less emphasis on education coursework and more study in teaching fields. Hence, performance—and skills, dispositions, understandings, and attitudes—as a philosophically thinking future educator often disappeared from the legislative and policy literature in any explicit sense.

The Altercations in the Field of Inquiry

While the previously mentioned developments emerged and grew, the well-documented debates in philosophy and education regarding, a. the nature of philosophy, b. the roles of philosophers of education, c. the expected

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relationships between philosophers of education and schools, and d. the connections between philosophy of education, educational theory, and educational practice thrived. However, these altercations raised meta-questions that were rarely of interest to large numbers of practicing teachers, principals, and superintendents or to legislators, policy makers, and school board members. Much of our attention and energy was directed toward asking questions about, proposing answers regarding, and delineating how educational philosophers could help in significant and immediate ways both aspiring and practicing educators. We often asked ourselves, among other questions, the following ones: What is philosophy of education? Should there be an expectation for educational philosophers to examine in accessible ways “practical” P-12 issues? What should philosophers’ contributions be to the field of educational theory? How should philosophy and education adjust its agenda in a postmodern setting? With some exceptions, our search for clarity about what we were well advised to do in our courses for future and practicing educators excluded understanding their perceptions and feedback.

The significant debates between loosely and often pejoratively labeled analytic and continental groups of philosophers and among educational philosophers at least drew considerable attention away from what some considered burning issues in education even when the ideas debated were worthwhile issues. Plus, neither arguments about historicism, romanticism, scientism, nihilism, and post-structuralism (Glendinning, 2006) nor summaries of debates between realism, idealism, existentialism, and pragmatism (O’Neill, 1981) seem to have convinced many teachers, administrators, teacher educators, and policy makers that we had much to offer the profession. If scarce programmatic space was to be devoted to questions of diverse cultures, language and mathematics literacies, or classroom management, or to ontology, aesthetics, epistemology, or logic, there were few who chose to support the later cadre of studies. Endless conceptual analyses seemed to have garnered little if any more support. Rightly and wrongly, possibly, we were critiqued and, worse, stereotyped as twiddling our “concepts and arguments while schools and society . . . [went] up in flames” (Simpson, 1994, p. 135).

Altercations within philosophy and education circles and within colleges of education also took other forms. These altercations were in part related to what was claimed regarding philosophers in colleges of education and those in departments of philosophy although there has never been a strict dichotomy between the two spheres. To begin with, the partial split between the two academic domains and related ways of thinking seems tied to whether we saw ourselves primarily as philosophers or largely as teacher educators. Philosophy, of course, has its roots in the liberal arts, and education has its in a professional field. A professional program is not a liberal art but is rather contributed to by the liberal arts and sciences in varying proportions. Education, as a professional area of study, is most heavily influenced by disciplines such as psychology, sociology, philosophy, politics, and economics. The purpose of educator preparation, as a professional program, is to develop skills, understandings, attitudes, and dispositions by those who plan to be teachers and administrators and to enable them to function reflectively, pedagogically, and ethically in classrooms and schools.

As such, professional education programs have traditionally placed more emphasis on practice rather than theory. Theory has usually been considered less important than application and practice. The purpose of theory is more often than not seen as the handmaid of practice. In other words, theory has to justify itself, in the minds of many if not most, by showing how it is relevant in terms of explaining and suggesting ideas regarding practice. The weight of this tradition is still felt today although it is more common to hear discussions of theory in particular realms of teacher and administrator preparation programs, e.g., reading, learning, and leadership theories. But theories of education, including the contributions of philosophy, have been seriously neglected. As a consequence, we may often feel like we live on an island of unsolved and unsolvable questions, surrounded by a sea of practitioners who seem to need only answers, not more questions.

Philosophy and education as a field is also distinct from many other professional education studies in that it frequently identifies the unknown, uncertain, or undecided rather than on the known or well substantiated. Thus, many future and current educators—who have a need and bent for knowing how and knowing that—find philosophical reflection tedious if not worthless. The question “What should be the form and purpose of education in society?” probably has much less appeal than “How can I address the needs of an autistic student?” As Bredo (1982) has pointed out, education focuses on practice and tends to be cautious of abstraction, while philosophy focuses on the abstract and has generally little interest in practice. The fundamental differences between these fields make it inherently difficult for the two groups of scholars to communicate with each other. Or, stated differently, the purposes of philosophers and teacher educators are frequently so different that neither teacher educators nor would-

be educators see the value of philosophy of education. Such breakdowns in communication easily result in misperceptions and, eventually, disvaluing philosophy and education. This reality places those of us who are committed to educational philosophy, or the intersection of any of the disciplines with professional education studies, at a distinct disadvantage. But educator preparation programs are not completely unlike other professional preparation programs in this regard. Perhaps we might be able to learn from these other professional preparation programs how they treat philosophical issues or concerns. Conversely, they might have much to gain by our history and practices.

The emphasis educational scholars have placed on practice has regularly resulted in their looking to the social sciences for guidance, rather than to philosophy. We should not be surprised that those who prepare and who are practitioners look to fields of study such as psychology or sociology, as these disciplines, though they do have a strong theoretical component, are equally interested in the practical. It is only logical that our colleagues in colleges of education should turn to these disciplines for affinity. The social sciences have, after all, focused on bridging theoretical understanding with societal application through the development of both qualitative and quantitative research. We might ask ourselves if philosophers of education have much to learn from educational psychologists, sociologists, and anthropologists.

In addition to the core differences between philosophy and education, there exists another factor that creates tension between the two. Scholars refer to this as the provincialism of time. This term refers to the idea that newer scholarship and ideas are generally considered better or more valuable than what preceded it, for no other reason than the fact that it is new. While we do not impugn the credibility of recent scholarship, the idea that it may be better because of its newness is problematic.

That provincialism of time is accepted by so many people is partly our own fault. Like much of the academy, we have regularly placed too much emphasis on writing for each other rather than for a more general audience in education. Nearly all of our most prestigious journals are published primarily for specialist in educational philosophy, and emerging scholars in our field are encouraged to read and publish in them because they carry the most weight in the tenure and promotion process. Journals that appeal to the broad spectrum of educational researchers are often devalued. A second problem concerns the claim that we have allowed philosophy and education to focus on topics of little relevance to educational studies. The growth in the attention that is given to epistemological controversies as an area of study within educational philosophy is an example of this problem. Emphasizing the notion that we can claim to know very little if anything and that the unknown, uncertain, and undecided reign supreme in educator preparation, schooling, and life offers exciting intellectual possibilities but few suggestions for dealing with an angry parent, an abused student, or an irate board member. While these topics are worthy of study and have important implications for evaluating knowledge claims in classrooms and qualitative research in education, the value of such in an overcrowded preparation program probably does not generate much support for its inclusion in many colleges of education. For a variety of reasons, then, philosophy and education have undergone a transformation.

The Transformation of Philosophy and Education

For good and ill, philosophy and education have been and continue to be transformed. We could not expect less of a dynamic and controversial form of inquiry although we may wisely or unwisely mourn certain permutations. Nevertheless, understanding that there is an unending transformation of the field of philosophy and education may be helpful in realizing that the perceived crossroad that split into two roads—a boulevard to the revitalization of philosophy and education and a highway to the eradication of philosophy and education—for colleges of education was, perhaps, a misperception. Perhaps the perceived crossroad was a roundabout or rotary that offered multiple options for re-envisioning possibilities for philosophers of education. Perhaps it was an opportunity for philosophers to enter different highways in educational circles and to see emerging freeways to unexamined educational communities and issues. Perhaps it was a narrowing but not a closing of what may have been some regularly traveled routes.

Examples of transformation are plentiful. For example, Schiro (2008, p. xiii) noted in his curriculum theory volume that it is “intended to help both experienced and preservice educators understand *the educational philosophies* [emphasis added] . . . they are likely to encounter in their everyday lives.” But there are many other examples. That is to say, philosophers of education are examining numerous issues related to education, such as academic freedom (Simon, 1994), administration and ethics (Wagner and Simpson, 2009), constructivism in the science curriculum (Matthews, 1998), learning theory (Phillips and Soltis, 2003), moral education (Noddings, 2002),

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politics and education (Gutmann, 1999), school choice (Dwyer, 2002), sex education (Archard, 1998), teaching and ethics (Strike and Soltis, 2004), and teaching mathematics (Steiner, 1998). In one sense, the aforementioned studies are neither new nor surprising. Philosophers of education have long inquired into nearly any realm that is in need of examination. Raising questions, seeking clarification, and searching for justifications are a part of engaging in philosophical inquiry, historically and presently.

Whether or not these and other (Curren, 2007; Kohli, 1995) alleged and actual shifts or adjustments in philosophical inquiry into education are reaching diverse audiences such as teachers, administrators, and teacher educators is an empirical question. Whether they ought to address these and other audiences raises philosophical and ethical questions too. Whether we as philosophers of education want a future in colleges of education is an issue that no doubt will be debated for years to come, unless of course our courses are eradicated from the halls of the academy. Our immediate wish is merely to suggest that the teaching of philosophy and education courses in colleges of education has been transformed in many cases, and, therefore, the strength of the field in colleges of education cannot be determined by a cursory search for courses that are labeled with explicit philosophical terminology.

Conclusions

In spite of the aforementioned complex and, often, uncontrollable considerations, there are those of us who appear to wish to return to a rather straightforward argument that we think should convince any reasonable person that a course in philosophy and education should be required of all aspiring and/or practicing educators. We, much like Rescher who echoed Aristotle's notion that we must philosophize whether we wish to or not, may believe that arguments and programmatic offerings should and can be settled by rational discourse. Hence, we might argue that our profession ". . . can abandon philosophy, but . . . cannot *advocate* its abandonment through rational argumentation without philosophizing" (2001, p. 10). We may note the inconsistency between philosophizing in order to abandon philosophy and education courses in colleges of education and, worse, the lack of philosophizing and still eradicating educational philosophy course offerings. But if we take this approach, we seem to overlook at a minimum the differences between understanding the rational desirability of studying in a field of inquiry and the existential realities that preclude acting on every desirable course of action. This is not to say, that we should cease offering, we hope, cogent arguments for the inclusion of philosophy and education courses in colleges of education. We think such courses are as needed today as they have been in prior times. It is to say, that we should consider being more creative and comprehensive in our view of philosophy and education. Taking fundamentalist and essentialist views of the field of inquiry may be academically satisfying but professionally unsatisfactory.

What does this say for those of us who work in colleges of education whether we are in departments or programs of educational leadership, curriculum and instruction, educational foundations, or educational policy? At the moment in many institutions, our field seems to have become less important than it has been in decades, perhaps in the last century. Partly we have ourselves to blame. That we have spent too much of our time writing and examining questions only of importance to other educational philosophers has resulted in comments by colleagues that our course content is antiquated, obsolete, or irrelevant. There is, of course, a vital difference between philosophical and educational content that is antiquated and taught in pedagogically traditional ways and philosophically and educationally important content that is taught in pedagogically stimulating ways. So, we may need to ask ourselves, Have we done the best we can to make clear to our students and peers these differences? Colleagues may continue to judge us and our courses by what they experienced a decade or two or three ago unless they have at least anecdotal and environmental evidence for thinking otherwise. They can continue to misjudge our courses because they know neither us nor our field. At a minimum, then, a case can be made for being better at publicizing and clarifying what it is we do as philosophers and why what we do and teach is pertinent to beginning and practicing educators. On the other hand, if our major contribution to educational discussions is to create doubt about ever educational policy, protocol, and pronouncement, then we need not wonder why our colleagues and students doubt our professional practicality.

In addition, we seem well advised to look for other inroads into educator—especially teacher and administrator, preparation—programs. We mention just two potential inroads we can make as educational philosophers to develop connections with our educational colleagues and to help make the field of educational philosophy better understood and more valued in the profession. The first of these is to reconnect with and update some of the philosophical ideas and thinkers that have done much to link philosophy and practice. While there are many possibilities, we mention just one person: John Dewey. Dewey (1915; 1916; 1948) was likely one of the most effective voices in

demonstrating how educational philosophy can inform and shape practice. But in doing so, he saw the necessity of an ongoing reconstruction of our views of philosophy, society, education, and schools. The fact that he is widely admired and criticized today makes him an even better choice for some of us. But we should not stop with him. The search for ideas and educational philosophers who connect in accessible ways with the concerns of practitioners is too important to begin and end with him.

Second, we may be well advised to reexamine the way we view and interact with people in other education preparation fields. Standing outside the worlds and work of our colleagues and criticizing them appears largely unfruitful. Entering into their realms of professional perception and activity and joining with them in their research and teaching may be challenging but also holds the promise of greater influence in colleges of education and improved contributions to the fields of educator preparation and P-12 teaching. For instance, rather than standing alone to critique, say, certain policies implemented by administrators, specific kinds of diversity discourse, questionable claims of some critical theorists, particular feminist dichotomies, and individual learning theories, we might be better advised to see issues through their eyes, understand their paradigms, appreciate their findings, and collaborate with them on projects that are mutually informative.

An example of entering into the worlds of our colleagues may be found in the field of educational research. Think for a moment about the contributions an educational philosopher could—and actually does—make if she or he taught in the area of qualitative research. With the increasing sophistication of qualitative research, questions about the nature of meaning and scholarship and the requirements for knowledge discovery and construction have become important discussions for social science researchers. This change opens the opportunity for us to examine epistemological questions in a way that is relevant to educational research and practice of aspiring and practicing classroom teachers, district administrators, and education professors.

Of course, there can be a distinct cost to pay for tying philosophy to other fields of study. If we are to claim that philosophy, or even philosophy of education, is a distinct field of study we must be able to demonstrate a knowledge base and form of inquiry of intrinsic value, rather than basing the justification of our existence entirely on providing assistance to other fields. This dilemma requires a careful balancing act for us to follow, to make ourselves relevant, without losing our own identities and unique contributions. In order to retain credibility in educational philosophy circles and, perhaps, with general philosophers, we must continue to embrace and expand our knowledge base. This unending reflective balancing process calls for us to claim a standard of inquiry that is both philosophy and education. Some argue, perhaps correctly, that this is an impossible demand to place on philosophers of education. We differ in that we think doing philosophy of education is adding to the knowledge base of philosophy as well as contributing to the knowledge base of education just as doing philosophy of science adds to both domains. In closing, we wish to note a comment by a former colleague that is only partially recalled: “Philosophers have it relatively easy if they limit their inquiries and teaching largely to theoretical matters which seldom influence the everyday lives of people. Educational philosophers seldom if ever have this luxury.” We might add that educational philosophers who claim this luxury frequently contribute to the demise of philosophy and education in colleges of education.

ENDNOTE

This paper is based substantially on a forthcoming chapter entitled “Philosophy of education: Looking back to the rotary and forward to the possibilities,” in R. Hewitt and J. Kincheloe (Eds.), *Whatever happened to soul: The eradication of philosophy from colleges of education*. New York: Peter Lang.

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TWO PERSPECTIVES ON EDUCATIONAL THEORY: THE MARX-HESS DEBATE

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Introduction

In his work, *The Great Cat Massacre*, intellectual historian Robert Darnton states that it is near impossible to comprehend life outside the boundaries of one's culture, boundaries such as social classes, language, economics, religion, etc. He goes on to argue this is precisely what brought on the French Revolution of 1789. There was a breakdown of the pre-existing cultural framework, supported mainly by the *ancien regime* and Christianity.¹ Yet, in such an uncertain time, there is an institution which forms another crucial cultural boundary—that of education. What became evident to some thinkers of this time was that education had the power to either stymie or engender new cultural frameworks. This work will examine this dual aspect of education in the post-revolutionary setting. It will conclude by drawing some implications for the present.

Hegelian Background

The German thinker, F.H. Jacobi, a contemporary of Maximillian Robespierre, was one of the first thinkers who recognized the presence of this historical and cultural void during the late 18th century. As the Reign of Terror ensued, where thousands of Frenchmen were carted off to the guillotine, religion was purposely subverted and private property forcibly taken, it was evident to Jacobi that man needed to believe in God, because without this belief, chaos ensued. Jacobi described this deplorable condition as nihilism; it was the eradication of all traditions, beliefs and foundations; a debilitating skepticism. In 1799, the Terror and the religious and political instability in Europe had finally convinced Jacobi that the notion of Enlightenment reason had been taken to its limit. Jacobi believed the modern world faced an "ultimatum." As he saw it, there were only two options for Europe after the Reign of Terror, that of faith or nihilism.²

His ultimatum between faith and nihilism for the modern era called into question for many European thinkers the entire revolutionary project and its ideals of reason and self government. One response to Jacobi's ultimatum was put forth by the German philosopher, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel. Hegel rejected both faith and nihilism. He did not believe that man had to regress to a state of blind faith, or give up meaning altogether. Instead, he believed that history was teleological, that it appeared random, but that it was guided by reason. The Reign of Terror was part of a much grander, rational and discernable plan. Teleology is defined as the purposeful movement of history toward a goal. Hegel saw history directed toward the "absolute," a state of total freedom. Yet the teleological process, for Hegel, was a process not consciously taken by man. Rather it was pursued by the rational spirit of which all men, by virtue of their intelligence, were a part of. In short, the progress of history was largely outside of man's conscious control.³

In the early nineteenth century, Hegel stood at the precipice of a historical crossroads. The problem was that the legacy of the French Revolution was still in question, the cultural framework of the *ancien Regime* had been destroyed, but instead of a permanent one to replace it, there was only a conglomerate of competing and contradictory ideologies. As late as 1820, after the defeat of Napoleon, the conservative Austrian diplomat, Klemmons von Metternich wrote: "My most secret thought is that old Europe is at the beginning of the end Between end and (the new) beginning there will be chaos."⁴ In this time of chaos and uncertainty, Hegel's teleological theory sparked an intellectual movement over the next two generations. It became a symbol of optimism and social action for many thinkers. Some of these thinkers adapted education to their belief in teleology, casting education as a progressive force oriented for activism.

Young Hegelians

Two later followers of Hegel, Moses Hess and Karl Marx, furthered Hegel's idea of teleology by crafting a new radical alternative, communism. The boundaries of Jacobi's ultimatum had changed in light of the growing tide of industrialization. Across Western Europe and North America, the rise of factories, booming industrial centers and the wealth of the middle class was accompanied by the growth of the poor working classes. The divide between the working classes and the much more well off upper middle class became painfully apparent.⁵ Yet the misery of the poor was not an accidental by product of industrialization, but rather a direct and necessary result.⁶ Hess and Marx both looked to aspects of Hegel's historical progress and teleology in order to rectify this misery of the working classes; they both looked to history for justice.⁷

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Both Hess and Marx's teleological theories are also inexorably intertwined with education, but for different reasons. Hess thought communism could be voluntarily established through education and moral upbringing. Conversely, Marx argued that communism would come about largely outside of human control through the teleological progression of history and that any educational system was predominantly a slave to any given state's economical situation. Both Hess and Marx examined the movement of history. The next step was to articulate exactly how history "moved," in the new industrial setting. In their answer to this question of historical movement, each thinker saw education playing its part, Hess saw it as positive, Marx negative. This paper will argue that in a wider sense, Hess saw education as an instrument to overcome the nihilism of the present, albeit not without a hard fight. Conversely, for Marx; education could only be part of the framework that was superseded; it would never give meaning—only reinforce the status quo.

In his work *Education in the Forming of American Society*, Bernard Bailly delineates formal and informal structures of education in American colonial society. Informal structures included the family, church and the community. Formal or deliberate structures of education, such as schools and universities, were not the main transmitters of culture. However, by about 1800, this had changed. He wrote: "The whole range of education had become an instrument of deliberate social purpose."⁸ The same delineation can be applied to Europe as well. In Prussia, as a result of a century's worth of educational reform and government control, by 1850, 80% of school-aged children were receiving some form of public education.⁹ By the later half of the nineteenth century, formal educative institutions were gradually becoming the main mode of cultural transmission in the old world and the new. Hess and Marx had different attitudes toward the newly dominant institutions of formal education, education as "an instrument of deliberate social purpose." It was this instrument that Hess believed could create a more beneficial cultural framework and that Marx rejected as always being a form of exploitation.

Hess versus Marx

The Hess Marx debate has been dealt with by four recent thinkers; John Weiss in his *Moses Hess: Utopian Socialist* published in 1966, William Brazill in his *The Young Hegelians*, published in 1970, Isaiah Berlin in his *Against the Current: Essays in the History of Ideas* published in 1979, and most recently Warren Breckman, in his *Marx, the Young Hegelians, and the Origins of Radical Social Thought*, published in 1999. Weiss's small book examined Hess's utopian ideas regarding communism in contrast to Marx's more scientific rigor. However, Weiss writes with a clear bias for Hess. His aim is not to present an impartial picture of the debate on teleology, but rather to exalt what he argues are forgotten merits of utopian socialism. In the conclusion of Brazill's *The Young Hegelians*, he discusses how the teleological theories of the first generation of Left Hegelians influenced the thinkers of the second generation, specifically Hess and Marx. Berlin's treatment of the Hess Marx debate is more impartial than Weiss's treatment, but nonetheless the bulk of his work is devoted to Hess. It is located in an essay entitled "The Life and the Opinions of Moses Hess," which is part of the larger work, *Against the Current*. Berlin's aim is as the title implies simply to survey Hess's ideas and how his ideas ranked with his contemporaries. Berlin argues that Hess, despite the scorn he suffered at the hands of Marx and his neglect by historians, nonetheless made some critical contributions to his time period. Breckman's work does not deal specifically with teleology, but rather with questions of individuality during the nineteenth century. He examines Hess's ideas as an influence on Marx. Both of their thoughts regarding the movement of history are nonetheless discussed.

What separates this examination of the Hess and Marx debate from the four previously mentioned works is the fact that the present work situates their debate as part of a larger intellectual movement that appropriated Hegelianism as a way to navigate between faith and the nihilism. In addition, the present work will draw on a little examined aspect of their debate, the role of education in teleology.

Moses Hess

Hess was a social critic and free lance writer who spent most of his life in self-imposed poverty.¹⁰ In addition, Hess's first work was published in 1837, which was just prior to the full emergence of industry in continental Europe. However, this work is crucial to an understanding of Hess's later theories because in it, he is already a full-fledged socialist and his affiliation with Left Hegelianism is made clear. With his publication of the *Holy History*, Hess is regarded as the first German socialist. His later works expand more fully on his socialist and communist leanings, especially with regards to the rise of industry on the continent.

As Hess saw it, the ownership of private property was the chief source of misery for the poor, because private property unnaturally divided man. Instead of fostering social unity and cooperation, Hess argued that the desire for property and the arbitrary despotism of those who owned it over others who did not own it kept humanity in an all

consuming competitive state. He wrote: "What is he who . . . accumulates for himself alone the products of society? He is a robber; he takes away from society what belongs to it . . . he is a murderer." When one man accumulated wealth at the expense of his fellows, he murdered them, he took away their ability to be free and develop their talents. True human flourishing was simply impossible in the present state of things because only a few could benefit.

Like Hegel, Hess saw history as a progression of definite phases and the final stage was one of unity and freedom.¹¹ In his first work, *The Holy History of Mankind*, Hess wrote that all living beings, whether consciously or unconsciously, strive toward perfection. Hess believed that all men were part of the same Spirit. Yet, since this was an unconscious unity, man remained animal-like and unable to comprehend himself as a progressive, united whole. Instead he enslaved and killed his fellows, whom he saw as enemies. Yet all of history was a process; it was the process of mankind becoming conscious of its latent unity. Hess wrote that mankind would probably reach a state of equality one day far off in the future, but this was of little solace to the struggling masses in the present.¹²

Hess's treatment of the present, namely his belief that it could be changed with conscious and direct human action, illustrates that his adaptation of Hegelian teleology was blurred and at times contradictory. He held that since the beginning of time, as society enlarged and man became aware of and chased different interests, he was increasingly taught to accumulate at the expense of others. In reality, these others were his brothers. In fact, the present state of competition could have been avoided "had mankind been highly educated right from the beginning."¹³ Modern man had been *taught* how to be immoral and exploitive of his fellow man; it was not an inevitable consequence of the present. The industrial present for Hess no doubt exacerbated the problem. In the present education system, Hess held that these robbers and murderers who exploited their fellows were hailed as gentlemen to be emulated.¹⁴ If one agrees with Hess, then this is an ominous warning of the misuse of education.

Thus, equipped with new knowledge, it followed that mankind could *choose* to rectify the present ills of industry and reunite with his brothers, if it could break out of its present thought process. This became the crux of Hess's communism; especially in his later writings, it was his philosophy of the act.¹⁵ Once modern man finally learned that he was Spirit, then communism would be opted for; it would be actively imposed by all because it would be the most logical choice to all educated people. Most importantly for Hess, the transition to communism would be done peacefully and without violence.

Community and cooperation between men had to be taught to children; they had to be raised in the spirit of community. Hess wrote: "How does one guarantee people's freedom? This happens primarily through education."¹⁶ Hess believed proper education was the key to societal regeneration and the true establishment of human unity and ultimately God. Specifically, the young had to be educated to the worth of the human being, which when united with its brothers, was divine. As human beings gained in worth, as people were taught to value others and to cooperate with others and not exploit them, then money and private property would become worthless. The things that many in society held to be of the most worth only appeared so because people had been taught to view them in such a way. He went on to argue that with proper education, it would only take one generation to rectify the present ills of capitalist society.¹⁷ Modern man did not have to wait for equality; he could choose to create it through education.

As all Left Hegelians, Hess saw the French Revolution as the major turning point in modern history, leading to a purposeful existence. Yet, it was not complete. He scorned "weak souls" like Jacobi who "tearfully lament the horrors of the great French Revolution."¹⁸ He failed to realize life's true aim. The revolution, despite its violence and excess, was a part of the process of man achieving his true salvation and purpose, the unity and freedom of all. Yet the Absolute would not magically manifest for the present. The Hegelian apocalypse which would redeem the present needed to be brought about through tireless work. Hess declared that it was modern man's duty, through education, to arouse the indignation of his fellows to the plight of their fellow man. True human salvation and, in a wider sense, purpose in the void, lay within their reach, if only they had the knowledge, dedication and the strength to take it. Thus, modern man had to be educated to his purpose in life, which was solidarity and Hess saw the progression of history, which was a mixture of unconscious and increasingly conscious striving on the part of humanity, having led to this point. In short, education could establish meaning, but it would be a struggle.

The French Revolution was a monumental event; however, there were earlier, more gradual antecedents for Hess's theories. Since the 1690s, the religious notion of pietism had taken root in the German lands. Pietism was a reformatory measure directed at Protestantism. It mainly entailed education as means to building a better, more moral world. This was usually called *Bildung*, which has only an approximate English equivalent, but is usually translated as educational community.¹⁹ In addition, from the 1750s onward, there were fundamental political changes

in Prussian, Austrian, Bavarian and the other German city-states. As James Sheehan argues in his *German History: 1770–1866*, there was a drive toward centralization and absolutism. While the course differed in each of the individual states, Sheehan points out a weakening of traditional institutions over all, such as the landed aristocracy, the church and the guilds at the hands of the increasingly powerful central governments. Obviously, it was in the state's interest to monopolize education and produce men loyal to the emergent state.²⁰

Hess and Marx were reared in this state-driven education system; both thinkers saw education as nothing but a bureaucrat producing entity, not aimed at true change, but only an instrument to secure the survival of the state. Gradually, politics and bureaucracy overtook education and the survival of the state, not the true enlightenment of children, became the object of state education.²¹ Nonetheless, Hess saw deliberate education, at least in its purest form, as an institution which was capable of transcending its present societal limitations and positively changing society. Marx, as we will shortly see, did not afford deliberate education an active role in changing society. Rather, he saw it as ancillary to the productive forces of society.

Karl Marx

In 1847 Marx was asked to write a pamphlet for the semi-clandestine organization, the Communist League. In it, Marx poured derision on Utopian socialists like Hess and made public the rupture between his own and Hess's "utopian" communism as Marx called it. In the *Manifesto*, Marx sarcastically wrote "historical action is to yield to their (the utopian socialists) personal inventive action . . . future history resolves itself, in their eyes, into the propaganda . . . of their social plans."²² He chided the utopian socialists for their insistence on fantastic conditions, concocted out of their own heads, based on nothing but personal whims and desires. Their deliberate educative means paled in comparison to the awesome economic conditions of any society. He wrote that history was nothing but the history of class struggles between exploited groups of people and their exploiters. In the present society, the bourgeoisie class or industrial capitalists exploited the proletariat or the working class. Only after the conditions of the proletarians became intolerable, would they overthrow their oppressors.²³ For Marx, the communist society would be the result of historical forces and, more importantly, economical forces driven by the exploitation of certain groups of people, not the airy abstractions of philosophers or educative measures. In short, education did not have the power to regenerate society.

While Marx never set out a definitive theory of education, he did reference education on a few occasions; in fact his lack of educational analysis is in some ways indicative of his low valuation of education. In the *Communist Manifesto*, far from the notion that education can institute communism, he scathingly remarked that only communism, which was the most beneficial and final economic arrangement of society (because it dispensed with economics), can "rescue education from the ruling classes." In the communist state, education would no longer constitute dreary and seemingly endless classroom hours, but rather be a combination of traditional schooling (half the day) and education in a specific trade.²⁴

While Marx did see the proletariat eventually reaching a state of awareness of his situation and while this awareness is a form of non deliberate education, it nonetheless rests on the economic configuration of any given society. For Marx, education did not cause the economic condition of society (although it helped to reinforce it to later generations), but rather was the result of it. Human beings were not robots; they applied their knowledge to the world. But it was always knowledge applied to and in reference to the material conditions of their existence.²⁵ In short, human knowledge and eventual awareness were dependent on economics and it could never be anything more than a reflection of this. Specifically, any education system could never circumvent the economic and productive conditions of its given society.

In his earlier unpublished work "The German Ideology," written with Friedrich Engels in 1845, Marx wrote that the historical progression was not the result of a Hegelian World Spirit or Hess's philosophy of the act, but rather, that history was driven mainly (but not totally) by economic factors. Specifically, historical events ensued from any given society's adaptation to newer economic conditions.²⁶ Simply put, when an earlier form of intercourse (cottage industry) could no longer keep pace with the new productive powers (industrial technology of the late 18th into the 19th century), a new method of social intercourse developed over it (the factory system and bourgeoisie society as a whole) to accommodate the new form of production. The modes of production of any particular society determined that society's actions or intercourse, in the form of religions, laws, ideologies and the education system. This production consisted of all of man's material needs, from the necessities to luxuries. Thus ideology, including education, of any given culture stemmed from its material conditions. There was no magical force driving history, no

divine spirit; it was simply the exchange between individuals and the ensuing results of this exchange, compounded with increasingly advanced technology, unleashed forces ultimately out of man's control.

Marx and Engels' treatment here is not solely doctrinaire. Hess and similar Utopians as they came to be called, had been dealt a hard blow by the criticism of another Hegelian-minded thinker, Max Stirner. In his work *The Ego and Its Own*, published in 1844, Stirner accused the socialists of simply replacing the Christian God with another transcendental entity, that of the community. Marx and Engels sought to extricate themselves from Stirner's criticism and Utopian Socialism in general. They did this by appealing to science.²⁷ Thus, Marxism was indicative of a larger movement in the nineteenth century, the increasing appeal to science for validity. While the Scientific Revolution had seen the application of reason to the natural world, during the Enlightenment, many tried to apply reason to human behavior. With its reliance on reason, data, facts and numbers, science seemed to lend certain infallibility to any theory. Marx believed that he had finally rendered Hegelian teleology into a scientific fact for a scientific age. For Marx, there was no historical void, because all events were part of the historical progression, which Marx elevated to a scientific fact. Marx did not feel the pressures of this void as Hess did. Purpose was prefigured into man's existence and did not have to be fought for; modern instability was not something to be feared, but rather indicative of man's ultimate purpose.

Here is the crux of Marx's teleology and his chief rupture with Hess and his devaluation of education. The forces engendered by the increasing human dominance of nature and human interaction between individuals were the source of history's teleological movement. They forced outdated modes of intercourse to be destroyed. The present mode of intercourse, the bourgeois-capitalist society, was no exception. Marx wrote "In its economic movement . . . private property (wealth, money etc.) presses toward its own dissolution, but it does this only by means of a developmental course that is unconscious and takes place independently of it and against its will."²⁸ In Marx's view, the entire bourgeois society was predicated on competition and the ever increasing desire of wealth on the part of the bourgeoisie. Contrary to any moral revolution, it was this ever-increasing accumulation of wealth that eventually would destroy bourgeois-capitalist society. As an increasing number of weaker members of the bourgeoisie could no longer compete with the more powerful members of the bourgeoisie, they would swell the ranks of the proletariat and overthrow capitalism by the necessity of their economic position.

Marx aimed his attack at the very foundations of utopian socialist thought, the notion of human morality and the belief that one could be brought to his moral senses through education. In an assessment of African slavery, Marx wrote in one cynical passage "slavery cannot be abolished without the steam engine and the mule and the spinning jenny."²⁹ Thus, he argued that slavery in England was not ended by any humanitarian movement, or change of heart, but only by an improved mode of production that made the slave uneconomical. The plight of the modern proletariat was similar. The evils of the present capitalist system would not be rectified through education, morality or humanism. Only when the capitalist system could no longer operate effectively due to its irreconcilable contradictions would the proletariat be vindicated. To the chagrin of Hess, Marx recast morality and humanitarianism as economic adaptations to the specific stage of development within a given society. Morals and education, far from being the most effective tools to establish the true meaning of man, were simply the spawn of any given society's economic condition. Education could be nothing more than a backwards looking relic which tried to prop up an outdated system.

Conclusion

So what can the intellectual historian take from the Marx-Hess debate? If we view the ideas not as immutable and opposed (as Hess and Marx no doubt would have), but fluid and part of a bigger whole, education in the early nineteenth century and really in any era can be seen as a volatile entity. Education can be a rigidly conservative institution, resistant to most types of social change (at least change that will upset the established order), or in its most advanced form, an institution that encourages, that is fundamentally geared toward, creating a higher, more beneficial cultural framework. Of course, this does not have to be an either/or choice between two extremes, there could be varying degrees of flexibility within a given educative institution, depending on politics and local circumstances.

I do not propose Hess's vision of education as some culmination of a teleological past. Rather, I see it as an opportunity afforded to us by circumstance, one we must be strong enough to seize. This will be no easy task. Only through unthinkable mental perseverance and ultimately a willingness to fight for it, can we make our history, as well as our present and future, purposeful in the void. Unfortunately, as Marx's position illustrates, education is usually used for the opposite purpose, that of justifying the status quo. But what if the status quo is one that is

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ultimately nihilistic? Today, public education in America, is increasingly reduced to drilling information into students. They are then taught to regurgitate uncritical answers to uncritical questions. They do this for an arbitrary mark on some standardized test and then are categorized and ranked according to these arbitrary marks. Students in American schools are taught that the only way to succeed is to accumulate arbitrary and ultimately meaningless marks on meaningless tests. They are taught to internalize nihilism; it becomes their cultural framework; it becomes the stuff of their thoughts.

Bailyn and Sheehan argued that by the early nineteenth century, education in Europe and America had been dislodged from its informal setting. Bailyn specifically argues that it became an instrument of deliberate action. I would argue that 200 years later, this ability of education remains largely untapped. At least in the twenty-first century, education is increasingly mired in standardized testing, capitalism, overbearing technology, bureaucracy, and subjugation to big business.³⁰ Perhaps we must widen the scope of this initial transition made in the nineteenth century by once again dislodging education this time from its current impotence, and realize in it Hess's ability to move history forward and in the process, make the student and history, mean something.

ENDNOTES

1. Robert Darnton, *The Great Massacre and other Episodes in French Cultural History* (New York: Basic Books, 1999), 6 and 261.
2. Frederick Beiser, *The Fate of Reason: German Philosophy from Fichte to Hegel* (Massachusetts: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 129.
3. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A.V. Miller, with an foreword by J.N. Findlay (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), 357.
4. Klemmons von Metternich, quoted in: James Sheehan, *German History: 1770–1866* (New York: Clarendon Press, 1989), 392.
5. Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Revolution 1789–1848* (New York: Vintage Books, 1962), 209.
6. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Revolution*, 209.
7. William Brazill, *The Young Hegelians* (Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1970), 271.
8. Bernard Bailyn, *Education in the Forming of American Society* (North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 1960), 21.
9. Sheehan, 435.
10. Moses Hess, *The Holy History of Mankind* in *The Holy History of Mankind and Other Writings*, trans. Shlomo Avineri (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 60. Berlin, 218
11. Moses Hess, "Socialism and Communism," in *The Holy History of Mankind and Other Writings*, trans. and ed. Shlomo Avineri (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 102.
12. Hess, *The Holy History*, 66.
13. Hess, *The Holy History*, 62.
14. Moses Hess, "A Communist Credo," in *The Holy History of Mankind and Other Writings*, trans. and ed. Shlomo Avineri (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 120.
15. Hess, "Socialism and Communism," 98.
16. Hess, "Credo," 120.
17. Hess, "Credo," 123.
18. Hess, *The Holy History*, 41.
19. Laurence Dickey, *Hegel: Religion, Economics, and the Politics of Spirit, 1770–1807* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 34.

20. Sheehan, 291.
21. Sheehan, 365. Of course prior to 1800, the informal educative structures were usually just means of transmitting the cultural status quo.
22. Karl Marx, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, in *The Marx-Engels Reader*, ed. Robert Tucker, 2d ed. (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1978), 487.
23. Marx, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, 485.
24. Marx, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, 487–490.
25. Marx, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, 487. In his work *A History of the Western Educational Experience*, Educational Historian Gerald Gutek reiterates Marx's view on education. Gerald Gutek, *A History of the Western Educational Experience*, 2d ed. (Illinois: Waveland Press, 1995), 291. for a discussion on Marx's alleged materialism, see Allan Megill, *Karl Marx: The Burden of Reason* New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc, 2002), 201.
26. Karl Marx, *The German Ideology*, in *The Marx-Engels Reader*, ed. Robert Tucker, 2d ed. (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1978), 137.
27. R.W.K. Paterson, *The Nihilistic Egoist: Max Stirner* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), 309.
28. Marx, *The German Ideology*, 186.
29. Marx, *The German Ideology*, 190.
30. Alfie Kohn, *The Case Against Standardized Testing: Raising the Scores, Ruining the Schools* (New Hampshire: Heinemann Books, 2000), 15. Kohn shows how most schools in the United States are solely driven by a quest for high scores on standardized tests, efficiency, accreditation, in short, everything not conducive to Hess's vision of education. He also writes how big businesses are pressuring schools and governments.

CREATIVITY SPACES: MAKING ROOM FOR AMBIGUITY AND FAILURE

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Introduction

Students arrive on college campuses excited and ready to embrace new experiences and ideas. They have little or no concept of what makes higher education different from their experience of education at the secondary, middle, and elementary levels. Parents and guardians have made known their performance expectations, often translated as get good grades, graduate, and get a good job. Students often choose a major area of study because they believe there are careers associated with the major that promise immediate monetary rewards. Only a few students consider following what the heart desires, and choose to follow the path that promises intrinsic satisfaction.

The bright high school graduates, those who were identified as gifted and talented, arrive with the tools to be successful in the “game” of schooling. They can write good essays, have developed good study skills, and, in general, know how to satisfy teacher expectations. They can make high grades on assignments and do quite well on tests. The average students arrive with a sense of awe and trepidation. They may not have any study skills, and may see themselves as talented in only one area, if any, such as sports, music, or art. These average students may not play the “game” of school as well as the gifted and talented freshmen, but have a pretty good idea it involves getting good grades and providing the teacher with the “right” answers. Unfortunately, for all but a few of the gifted and talented and average students, creativity has been all but extinguished by the time they reach college.

Many of our students were creative thinkers when they first entered our educational system, but as Jonathan Kozol (1985) told us in *Death at an Early Age*, most of that natural childlike creativity is systematically destroyed by the educational system itself. Our challenge is how to revive this “spontaneous, curious, imaginative, creative state of mind” (Atkins, 1993, p. 51).

The challenge for educators, especially for those in higher education, is to create an environment wherein students are able to reconnect with their creative selves. This paper looks at creativity, creative thinking, critical thinking, the creative process, the role of ambiguity, uncertainty, and the fear failure in the creative process, and offers suggestions for creating space within the classroom to nurture the process.

Creativity

Humans are creative beings. Our creativity is connected with our need to make sense of our world, to find meaning, to sort out contradiction and confusion, to make connections between the seemingly unrelated experiences and information that flood our existence. According to Havelka creativity is that “unique mental process leading to the expansion of experienced reality beyond the already established category and classification of it” (1986, p. 156; in Morgan, 1997, pp. 351–352). Csikszentmihalyi notes two main reasons why creativity is a central source of meaning for humans.

First, most of the things that are interesting, important, and *human* are the results of creativity What makes us different—our language, values, artistic expression, scientific understanding, and technology—is the result of individual ingenuity that was recognized, rewarded, and transmitted through learning.

The second reason creativity is so fascinating is that when we are involved in it, we feel that we are living more fully than during the rest of life Perhaps only sex, sports, music, and religious ecstasy—even when these experiences remain fleeting and leave no trace—provide as profound a sense of being part of an entity greater than ourselves. But creativity also leaves an outcome that adds to the richness and complexity of the future.

(1996, pp. 1–2)

However, there is more to creativity than just the mental process. Csikszentmihalyi views creativity from a systems perspective. “Creativity does not happen inside people’s heads, but in the interaction between a person’s thoughts and a sociocultural context. It is systemic rather than an individual phenomenon” (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996, p. 23). It is an interaction or process between a culture/domain and its symbolic rules, the individual who adds something new to the domain, and experts who validate the innovation. According to this view, without all three elements, nothing creative—idea, product, or discovery—has occurred (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996). For Swede (1993) the creative process results in a unique outcome that “must be ‘universally’ recognized” (See Reid & Solomonides, 2007, p. 28). Groups as well as individuals may be creative, which implies creativity may be socially constructed (Reid & Solomonides, 2007).

Critical Thinking

To those outside of a domain, it may seem odd that an idea, process, discovery, or product is deemed creative only after the outcome is universally recognized as such. The element of validation by experts in the field of the domain brings the role of critical thinking into the creative process.

To live productively, one needs to internalize and use intellectual standards to assess thinking (criticality).

Individuals also need to generate—through creative acts of the mind—the products to be assessed.

That minds create meanings is not in doubt; whether they create meanings that are useful, insightful, or profound is. Imagination and reason are an inseparable team. (Paul & Elder, 2006, p. 34).

Critical thinking is cited as an important learning outcome in the classroom; too often, critical thinking and creative thinking are not regarded as interrelated. They are, however, inseparable. If, as Csikszentmihalyi and others maintain, validation is the crucial third element of the creative process, then student-creators must master and use the intellectual standards of the creative domain as part of his/her creative process of making or producing.

Creativity masters a process of making or producing, criticality a process of assessing or judging. The very definition of the word creative implies a critical component (e.g., having or showing imagination and artistic or intellectual inventiveness). When engaged in high-quality thought, the mind must simultaneously produce and assess, generate and judge the products it fabricates. In short, sound thinking requires both imagination and intellectual standards. (Paul & Elder, 2006, p. 34)

Teaching creative thinking alongside critical thinking is necessary if students are to be successful in the global information society. Atkins believes the United States' education system, created over a century ago to prepare workers for an industrial society, no longer provides the skills workers in the information age require.

The skills needed by the information worker include creativity, cooperation, and communication. Education has moved from the 3 Rs to the 3 Cs. Previous generations of American students were trained to follow directions, to accept authority, and to behave like everyone else; these people must be retrained if they are to adapt to the 'information society' (1993, p. 49).

She describes creative thinking as "future-oriented" and critical thinking as past-oriented because "this process uses as its material specific past acts for analysis The ultimate goal of this process of critical thinking is understanding" (1993, p. 50).

The Creative Process and the Importance of Tolerating Ambiguity

The creativity literature covers several approaches to the creative process. There is ongoing debate regarding whether creativity is a personal attribute, a result, or a process, as well as whether or not creativity is subject to external influences (Dineen, Samuel, & Livesey, 2005; Treffinger, 1993). Several researchers have identified key stages, dimensions, or conditions for creativity. Wallas (1945), Kirschenbaum (1998), and Lucas (2001) all include the concepts of challenge, preparation, toleration of ambiguity, and verification. Wallas's (1945) four phases of creativity are preparation, incubation, illumination, and verification. Kirschenbaum (1998) lists nine dimensions of creativity:

1. Contact (approaches new situations, takes risks to learn new things, looks for details and patterns),
2. Consciousness (aware of contrasts/boundaries of situation, aware of aspects of situation that present a problem, tends to delay closure when problem-solving),
3. Interest Activity (wants to emulate successful participants in field(s) of interest, intense involvement in field),
4. Fantasy Life (uses as source of imagination/dreams/ hopes, generates ideas),
5. Incubation (able to redirect attention away from problem and attends to other problems/relaxes),
6. Creative Contact (happens when a transformation of awareness occurs, knows what needs to be done),
7. Inspiration (feels empowered to begin working on solution),
8. Production (gathers materials and human resources to construct the working solution),
9. Verification (seeks evaluation of results against standards of excellence and personal criteria).

Bill Lucas (2001) believes creativity can be learned and has developed four conditions for such learning to occur: students need challenge, feedback that allows them to develop critical thinking/internal feedback strategies, tolerance for ambiguity/uncertainty, and the capacity to eliminate negative stress (Dineen, et al., 2005). Tolerance for ambiguity is linked to the capacity to work with ill-defined problems, the uncertainty regarding which of many options should be pursued, and the willingness to delay closure (Basadur, 1994; Runco, 2007; Runco & Basadur, 1993). A low tolerance for ambiguity may result in accepting the first solution that appears.

They are uncomfortable with the uncertainty that is a part of not having a solution ready at hand. This may lead them to "satisficing," which is the tendency to take the first adequate solution that comes to mind (rather than

postponing judgments and considering a wider range of options. Tegan (1990) offered evidence that the *Tolerance of Ambiguity Scale* was positively correlated with a creativity style index. (Runco, 2007, p. 297) Runco also notes that tolerance of ambiguity may be a good characteristic when it comes to group projects and problem-solving.

Perseverance and persistence have been identified as characteristics of creative people, and may be related to a tolerance for ambiguity. Research and sifting through the circumstances and situation take time. More time is needed to allow the subconscious to “perk” on this information. Conversation, relaxation, and thinking about other things allow the mind to grasp the real problem and make connections.

We must sometimes just relax, and turn our heads away—pretending that we are thinking about something else.

Then our peripheral vision—visual, intellectual or emotional—will see what is most vitally necessary. Reverie gives us the clue to the subtext that is alive in the unconscious mind. The melding of the two texts, be they visual or verbal or both, gives us access to our creativity (Graves, 2008, p. 14).

Perseverance, persistence, and toleration of ambiguity imply a willingness to fail. Parents and teachers tend to emphasize grades, leading to students’ concern for right answers leading to higher grades rather than the satisfaction and joy that creative individuals find in a job well done.

When all goes well, the drudgery is redeemed by success. What is remembered are the high points; the burning curiosity, the wonder at a mystery about to reveal itself, the delight at stumbling on a solution that makes an unsuspected order visible. The many years of tedious calculations are vindicated by the burst of new knowledge.

But even without success, creative persons find joy in a job well done. Learning for its own sake is rewarding even if it fails to result in a public discovery (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996, pp. 4–5).

Unfortunately, the modern classroom is driven by time and the clock on the rear wall. Chapters must be covered, assignments must be completed, tests must be passed, and reports must be completed. There is no provision for “perking” with the result that perseverance and persistence are sacrificed for the immediate. Schools, teachers, and students are not afforded the luxury, or rather the necessity, of learning in spite of or as a result of failure. Students have no experience with tolerating ambiguity as they are pressured to recite the “right” answer “right” now. This pressure translates into a fear of failure. We say we often learn more from our mistakes than our successes. Discovering the right question may indeed be more important than regurgitating someone else’s “right” answer.

Divergent and Convergent Thinking

Guilford (1950) was among the first to separate creativity from IQ or intelligence. He identified nine factors that constitute creativity. By 1956 Guilford (1956) stressed five factors he viewed as critical to thinking/cognition and creativity: discovery, production, divergent thinking, evaluation, and symbolic factors (Hendricks, 1999). He was the first scientist to distinguish between divergent and convergent thinking and to see the value of ideation (Runco, 2007). Convergent thinking leads to discovering/remembering the correct or conventional answer, while divergent thinking leads to numerous ideas. Typically, convergent thinking is emphasized in our educational systems. Divergent thinking, which leads to creative problem solving, is often neglected (Runco, 2007). However, it is probably more accurate to view convergent and divergent thinking as a continuum, rather than a dichotomy.

Throughout the 1950s Guilford studied divergent thinking in depth and eventually came to view originality as a temperament or motivational characteristic. He (Guilford, 1959) was convinced temperament, tolerance for ambiguity, and motivation were essential to the creative process (Hendricks, 1999).

Motivation

Motivation might be considered the engine that runs the creative process, especially the elements of perseverance and persistence. Motivation, as some research has indicated, may have a genetic component (Runco, 2007) with intrinsic motivation being identified as a trait (MacKinnon, 1962, in Runco, 2007) rather than a state. Intrinsic motivation comes from within the individual, i.e., joy in the task, learning for the sake of learning, while extrinsic motivation is imposed from outside the individual, i.e., grades, threats. Intrinsic motivators aid the creative process, while extrinsic motivators inhibit the creative process (Amabile, 1996; Dineen, et al., 2005; Hill, 1991; Talbot, 1993). However, other researchers suggest extrinsic motivation that creates tension, such as an imminent deadline, may increase creativity late in the creative process. This tension is not helpful during the incubation or illumination stages (Kohn, 2003; Stenmark, 2003, in Dineen et al., 2005; Wallas, 1945).

Motivation can be viewed as a continuum with intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation at opposite ends. Proactive creativity is associated with intrinsic motivation, and reactive creativity is associated with extrinsic motivation (Heinzen, 1994, in Runco, 2007). Many researchers have identified proactive creativity as a way to help

society cope with contemporary global problems (Runco, 2007). This relates to Atkins's (1993) assertion that education must teach the 3 Cs of creativity, cooperation, and communication. It becomes more important that students learn how to think critically and creatively, not just repeat facts and "right" answers. Information, technology, and software are changing daily. Students must learn how to adapt, and the creative process and critical thinking are major components of the ability to adapt.

Creativity Spaces—Making Room

Developing Purposeful Thinking and Motivation

We must teach the knowledge base for the domain or area of our discipline or field of study, as well as develop students' creative and critical thinking skills (Paul & Elder, 2006). One challenge we may face is the student who does not believe he/she is creative or that creativity is within reach. The goal in the classroom is to stimulate creative behavior and present the creative process in such a way that students are motivated to engage in it. Creativity, as a process, must be demystified (Paul & Elder, 2006). Purposeful thinking is required to navigate through the information, situation, and confusion inherent in ill-defined problems found in real-world scenarios. Students often find purposeful thinking difficult.

However, individuals often have trouble in purposeful thinking; especially purposeful thinking that requires posing problems and reasoning through intricacies. Such thinking requires both critical and creative thinking. Both are intimately connected to figuring things out. Indeed, all truly excellent thinking combines these two dimensions. Whenever thinking excels, it excels due to successful designing, originating, or producing results and outcomes appropriate to ends of that particular thinking. It has, in a word, a creative dimension.

To achieve any challenging end, though, *criteria* must be applied: gauges, models, principles, standards, or tests to use in judging that end. What's more, criteria must be applied in a judicious manner. (Paul & Elder, 2006, p. 34).

The key, then, is to help students discover the challenge in the task at hand. At the beginning of the semester students in the public relations capstone course often do not realize the challenge inherent in the client's need. As they begin to research the client, it seems little more than another tedious research assignment. They must prepare questions for the client interview, which may also seem to be another exercise in creating a list of questions that lead nowhere. However, once the client visits the class and tells his/her story and situation, the "assignment" begins to come alive. After we visit the client's place of business and the students interact with volunteers, employees, and those served by our client, the "assignment" begins to take on meaning beyond a grade.

But when thinking takes on a challenging task, the mind must come alive—ready itself for intellectual labor—until such time as it succeeds in originating, formulating, or producing what is necessary for the achievement of its goal. Intellectual work is essential to creating intellectual products, and that work, that production, presupposes judiciously applied *intellectual standards*. When this happens, creativity and criticality are interwoven into one seamless fabric. (Paul & Elder, 2006, p. 34)

Now the creative process begins in earnest, as the students become fully engaged in the preparation process and move toward incubation. This is a critical stage in the process, for it is during the incubation period that ambiguity and uncertainty make students highly uncomfortable. They want desperately to find the "right" answer and get on with the process of developing the materials to implement the campaign plan proposal. Motivation to achieve, to persevere through this difficult time may make the difference between settling for the first idea that seems plausible, especially if it has been used successfully elsewhere and waiting for the "aha" moment of illumination. If we are serious about encouraging students to embrace ambiguity and uncertainty, we must also teach students to build in time for the incubation process to yield results. The process takes time to yield multiple possible answers. Students have to become aware of the process and the importance of "perk" time, otherwise, they will continue to wait until the deadline arrives, and lose the benefits of working through uncertainty.

Supporting Through Ambiguity and Uncertainty

Ambiguity and uncertainty are alternative forms of creative thinking. Students have little experience with the concept of ambiguity as creative thinking. Most of their education has been about quickly reducing ambiguity. We often imply that thinking—good thinking—is that which is logical and linear. Students are not rewarded for any other form of thinking (Atkins, 1993). We can help students realize the value of ambiguity, and emphasize that there are numerous right answers. We must also eliminate as much of the fear of failure as possible. "Fear of failure, fear of exposing one's limitations, and fear of ridicule are powerful deterrents to creative thinking, or at least to public exposure of creative efforts" (Nicker son, 1999, pp. 413–414).

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This requires an environment and teaching style that builds confidence; however, it is important that students grasp and utilize the concept of learning from mistakes and failures. In their study of *The Promotion of Creativity in Learners* Dineen, Samuel, and Livesey (2005) found the art and design lecturers interviewed “considered that their primary aim was the development of the individual’s innate creative potential” (p. 161). Several findings from this study may prove useful when creating spaces in the classroom for ambiguity and uncertainty during the creative process. Students preferred teaching styles that were “friendly (69 percent), encouraging (66 percent), and enthusiastic (66 percent)” (p. 163). In particular, “lecturers were keen to encourage students to redefine their notions of success and failure Student responses suggest that they were aware of this view of failure as a learning process” (p. 165). Humans tend to learn more from what didn’t work, than from what did work. We grow when we deconstruct solutions that did not accomplish our purpose. The goal should be mastery of task and competition with self (Nickerson, 1999). Intrinsic motivators aid the creative process. In the beginning external motivators may help. However, students whose only motivators are external may not be able to persist and persevere through uncertainty. Students must understand that motivation and effort work together in the creative process (Nickerson, 1999). Motivation to achieve can help students through the morass of uncertainty.

Conclusion

The possibility for creativity exists in everyone. Providing psychological, temporal, and physical spaces for students to engage in creative and critical thinking is important. Mark Runco lists ten ways educators can create such spaces:

1. Be explicit. Let students know creativity is good, give good directions, and criteria for judging success.
2. Target originality and flexibility. Flexibility is important for problem-solving because it helps avoid looking at a problem from only one point of view.
3. Don’t use a curriculum or assignments where there are clearly defined answers. Use open-ended, divergent thinking tasks.
4. Start with tasks that have fewer demands and constraints, working toward more realistic, constrained tasks.
5. Aim for transformational thinking. Students need to consider alternatives.
6. Optimally challenge students.
7. Use intrinsic interests. Emphasize pre-solution planning, problem identification, and problem definition as equally important as problem solving.
8. Allow time for incubation and insights.
9. Educators must serve as models by being creative themselves.
10. Immunize students against “the potentially harmful effects of extrinsic motivations and incentives (Hennessey, 1994)” (Runco, 1991, in Runco, 2007).

These suggestions may guide educators as they seek to empower students’ creativity. Emphasizing purposeful thinking, problem-finding, the importance of allowing time for incubation and perking on the situation and research findings, and the role of ambiguity and uncertainty as part creative thinking will help students find and sustain motivation to persevere and persist through the creative process. Providing an environment where ideas are welcome and evaluation of the creative outcome utilizes critical thinking that is rooted in the principles and standards of the domain may lessen the fear of failure, especially when solutions that do not work are not derided, but deconstructed for understanding and improvement. Creative thinking and critical thinking are the tools our students must develop to be successful in the “information age.” Creativity is not just an individual endeavor; it is socially constructed making the 3 Cs of creativity, cooperation, and communication essential for our students, our creative domains, and ultimately our local and global communities.

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WILL MORE MEAN WORSE? KINGSLEY AMIS, NOËL ANNAN, AND THE DEBATE OVER THE REFORM OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN BRITAIN IN THE 1960s

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Introduction

Looking back from the vantage point of 1990 on the years when his generation attempted to reform education in the United Kingdom, Lord Noël Annan wrote that “Like Faust we discovered that *Zwei Seelen wohnen ach! in meiner Brust . . .*” The proponents of reform had the “soul of justice.” They expressed the desire for more children to be educated through the sixth form in order to that they could proceed to higher education. They wanted to reduce the inequality between children who attended public schools (elite private schools) and those who left school at fourteen. For all children, they wanted the schools to offer instruction on art, music, and literature. “This was the soul,” he said, “that, analyzing statistics was shocked to see how the scales were weighted against the poor and later the blacks.” The opponents of reform had the “soul of excellence.” They wanted to raise the standards for entrance to the universities and to ensure there were more studies in the sixth form and that all of the studies at that level continued to be demanding. “This soul,” recalled Annan, “dreamed of a society in which merit replaced privilege, longed for boys and girls to study whatever subject stirred their imagination, and admired the high standards achieved by early specialization.”¹ The struggle between the two souls in the breast of Britain was most apparent in the debate over the expansion of higher education during the post-World War II era. The public became acutely aware of the struggle as the arguments over a series governmental reports appeared in newspapers and periodicals for the general reader. The debate intensified in the early 1960s when a select governmental committee chaired by Lord Lionel Robbins, a prominent economist at the London School of Economics, recommended a dramatic expansion of higher education in the United Kingdom.²

Historiography of British Higher Education Reform

Historians increasingly have paid attention to the postwar reform of British higher education since the late 1980s. They have provided a larger perspective on the history of universities in Britain by placing them in the context of their modern development, in order to devote considerable attention the universities in the second half of the twentieth century. We can now see, according to Robert Anderson, the expected evolution of universities from autonomous corporations to dependents of the state is now in question and, more importantly for this essay, that the familiar question of the relationship between research and teaching looks very different in the long view. Anderson notes that serving the state and educating the national elite historically has kept universities close to the seat of power. Amid industrialization and democratic political reform in the nineteenth century, the function of British universities evolved from promoting religious conformity to “. . . forming an intellectual aristocracy through a common elite culture. In doing, he says, they developed “a distinctively British university ideal” joining the idea of a liberal education with the exactitude of academic specialization, issues with which the Robbins Committee wrestled.³ Thomas William Hayek adds that usually seen as complementary in theory, these activities have been in conflict in practice: research is “pure” not “applied” and teaching is providing students a liberal education. Consequently, they have guided British university development away from “liberal arts colleges, research institutes, and purely postgraduate universities.”⁴

In addition to the tension between research and teaching in universities and the question of their relationship to the public and private sectors of the society, universities also became critical to the development of national identity in the United Kingdom. Post-war efforts at university reform saw the emergence of concerns for social justice. In particular, says Anderson, “. . . university policy was dominated by social and economic issues—equality of opportunity, social mobility, access for the poor, and the contribution of science and technology to national prosperity.”⁵ At the same time, the issue of financing university expansion increasingly affected the outcome of the reform. Harold Silver described the problem as a movement “from great expectations to bleak houses.” Within a few years of the publication of the Robbins Report, a declining economy began to affect the expansion of higher education, so that by the early 1980s the Conservative government of Margaret Thatcher engaged in what historian Stefan Collini calls a *Kulturkampf* against the universities.⁶

For more than twenty years, both Conservative and Labour governments have had to deal with the difficulties of financing a system of higher education that was twice as large as it was at the outset of the 1960s. By the early twenty-first century, Britain began to undertake a drastic reconstruction of what in some circles has come to be

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known as the “HiEdBiz.” Unfortunately, remarks Collini, the public view of the current overhaul of universities [2003] overshadows the debate about the reform of universities that began in the late 1940s and made “. . . the 1960s and 1970s the last decades in which Britain tried to sustain a substantial but still rigorously selective, wholly state-funded system of high-quality, undergraduate-centered universities.”⁷

Although historians have mentioned the debate over the reform of higher education in their attempts to explain the postwar growth in the number of universities and the elevation of the Colleges of Advanced Technology (CATs) to university status, as well as the crises these changes have produced, with few exceptions they have not closely examined what the opponents were saying about the changes except to refer to such slogans as “more will mean worse” and place prominent intellectuals and governmental officials within the struggle. By analyzing the arguments of these adversaries, we can come to a better understanding of their concerns, but more importantly, how they tried to influence the public and the government regarding the outcome of the effort to expand higher education. Investigating their exchanges also will illuminate the social and political issues affecting postwar Britain that prompted this long-running public dispute.

A study of the writings and public pronouncements of most of the leading adversaries in the debate would not be feasible in a brief essay. Consequently, I have attempted to compare the arguments of two well-known intellectuals who were on opposite sides in the dispute: Kingsley Amis, novelist and lecturer at University College of Swansea and later Peterhouse, Oxford University, and Lord Noël Annan, former don at King’s College, Cambridge University, and by the mid-1950s, vice-chancellor of University College London. From their respective professional posts, they attempted to persuade colleagues, the public, and the government to reject or support the proposed and actual reforms. For nearly forty years, Amis adamantly opposed the expansion of the British universities because he was convinced it would lower academic standards. Annan, on the other hand, consistently, although not uncritically, supported the opening higher education to all who were qualified, first, as a means of promoting social justice and, second, as a necessary condition for meeting the needs of postwar Britain.

The debate between these two men reveals the clash of perspectives on a number of issues facing post-war Britain. The issue of class, for example, becomes readily apparent in the comments of those who believed the pool of capable young Britons was limited and was being tapped in admitting students to the universities. Until the 1960s, middle- and upper-class families were the ones best able to afford to send their children to grammar schools and to the sixth form to ensure their university entrance. A university education was thus beyond the means of most working-class families. Ironically, sociological studies by prominent British scholars at that time belied the claims of these opponents of reform. Investigations of post-war British society showed there was no evidence the middle- and upper-class students in the universities were the only ones in the society capable of pursuing a bachelor’s degree. Another issue was the disagreement about the relative importance of subjects in post-secondary education and their place in British higher education. British universities were bastions of the arts and sciences dominated by the humanities. Many of the dons did not see applied science and technology as worthy of university status. As for the social sciences, they begrudgingly accepted them as part of the curriculum, although prominent academics, such as Kingsley Amis and Malcolm Bradbury, openly dismissed sociology as a legitimate academic discipline. Bradbury, for instance, caricatured sociology and the new so-called plate glass universities, Sussex, York, East Anglia, Essex, Lancaster, Kent, and Warwick, that opened in the early to mid-1960s in his novel *The History Man*. A third issue related to science and technology was the lack of scientists and engineers in British society, which threatened the technological advancement of the nation in a time when its empire was moribund and its status as a world leader was threatened. Even before the Second World War, scientists and academic leaders recognized there was a shortage of people in scientific and technological fields of work. After the war the voices became louder to the point that Harold Wilson ran his parliamentary campaign in 1964 on a platform that called for the development of science and technology.⁸

The debate over the reform of higher education in Britain that actually began in the 1940s reflected these issues as those with souls of justice and excellence clashed. The arguments implied that proponents against expansion of higher education believed justice and excellence in higher education were mutually exclusive. Those who supported university expansion, however, thought the two values were necessary and complementary for higher education. As I argue, therefore, Kingsley Amis cynically claimed that “more will mean worse” because he believed university expansion would destroy the standards for cultivating human minds to the highest level, but Noel Annan saw university expansion as a necessary condition for achieving social justice by making it possible for more young

Britons to achieve excellence of mind and thus become better citizens who could help the nation meet its needs in a scientific and technological age. The irony of this story, however, is *more did become worse*, not as Amis thought it would, but because few of those with either the soul of justice or the soul of excellence anticipated the effects of an economic heart attack just a few years after the concerted effort at university reform began. Consequently, successive Conservative and Labour governments significantly modified many of the recommendations of Robbins and never implemented others.

Origins of the Clash of Souls

The events that created this clash of souls actually began during the Second World. The reorganization and expansion of education in the United Kingdom began when Parliament, at the recommendation of the coalition government led by Winston Churchill, mandated that free secondary schooling be made available to all children in Britain. Supplementing the law was a series of reports from committees commissioned by the Coalition, Labour, and Conservative governments between the late 1940s and early 1960s. The Butler Act of 1944 and the Barlow Committee Report of 1946, for example, set forth plans for elementary and secondary schooling, and scientific and technological education in universities during the late 1940s and throughout the 1950s, respectively. In its principal thrust, the Butler Act called for the expansion of educational opportunity at the secondary-school level under the control of local educational authorities through three types of schools: grammar schools with a curriculum aimed at entry into higher education, technical schools providing vocational instruction, and secondary-modern schools. Indicative of the class-bias of British society, the reformers expected a division of 5:15:80 percent of the school-age population. What in fact occurred was a division of 25:5:70 percent as a result of parents pressuring officials to provide schooling that would prepare their children to enter a university, thus increasing the college-bound students and decreasing the number attending other school types. Working-class parents, for example, recognized that secondary-modern schools aimed at conditioning their children for working-class jobs belied the government's claims of equal status among secondary schools. Such dissatisfaction with British schools spread among the public as sociologists and educationists revealed the inequities of the educational system produced by distorted curricula from the primary school through the sixth form, the "jungle" of competitive student awards—state scholarships, local authority awards, scholarships and bursaries given by universities and colleges," and the resulting struggles of many young people seeking admission to the limited number of places in the universities, respectively, in a series of reports that exposed the inadequacies of British schools. Many teachers, moreover, thought the narrow tip of the educational pyramid wasted talent that led to the universities. Thus by the 1960s with the support of the Labour government, under Harold Wilson, the Department of Education and Science, led by Anthony Crosland, and subsequently continued under the conservative minister of education, Margaret Thatcher, increased the number of comprehensive schools to 2000 by 1974, which then served 60 percent of the secondary-school pupils.⁹

This "revolution [in higher education] of the nineteen-sixties," as Annan called it, had originated with the work of Sir David Eccles who issued a White Paper in 1956 calling for technological education. Since the universities refused to accept the challenge, the Ministry of Education took on the task of establishing the CATs as sophisticated institutions that would advance technological education beyond that of the polytechnic institutes, yet not quite a university. Then came the Crowther Report on education of young Britons age fifteen to eighteen years old, the Plowden Report on primary schools, Newsom and Martin on boarding schools, Anderson on competitive student awards, and culminating the push for reform of the sixties, the Robbins Report on higher education.¹⁰

On October 23, 1963, Lord Lionel Robbins, chairman of the Committee on Higher Education in the United Kingdom, announced the results of what was to become the most famous study of British higher education in the post-war era. The Robbins Committee proposed a significant alteration of British higher education that included, among other things, elevating regional colleges and colleges of technology to university status and the establishment of "Special Institutions for Scientific and Technological Education and Research." Although the report confirmed efforts already underway, such as the establishment of several new universities, the report clearly reflected many of the political and social issues that had dominated the United Kingdom since the war. Britain had experienced the paradox of near economic collapse and the emergence of a welfare state, both of which raised questions of social justice; weakness of its scientific and technological sector, which had both domestic and international ramifications; as well as the loss of empire and the question of its status among the nations of the world. By the early 1960s, amid the growing pressure for reform and the recent growth of the economy, the Macmillan government had concluded there was a need to examine the whole of post-secondary education as a basis for potential reform ". . . in light of national needs and resources."¹¹ What had concerned the Robbins Committee most were the problems of social

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justice in post-secondary education and the need for scientific and technological development with their implications for the other issues of the era. For instance, as the Robbins Committee was deliberating and the new universities were opening, university vice-chancellors spoke of the ideal size of universities in Britain as having 3000 students, but the Committee surprised everyone by optimistically called for 10,000 students in an average institution. They also supported the idea of upgrading the polytechnics to CATs with university status and the expansion of opportunities to study science throughout the entire system as a means of fostering growth of science and technology.¹²

The public response to Robbins was generally positive, at first. The *Times* headlines and articles outlined the results and recommendations of the report and complimented the Robbins Committee's on its accomplishments. Although the coverage was considerable, it was not wholly enthusiastic; the editorial page contained skeptical commentaries, echoing Kingsley Amis' warning about the likelihood of declining standards discussed below. In contrast, Noël Annan recognized the historical significance of the report, noting that Robbins was the first comprehensive national report that examined higher education as an interrelated system of institutions ". . . not a hierarchy of institutions headed by Oxford, Cambridge, and London. . . ." Since then, historians have noted the gradual shift in language from "universities" as an all-encompassing word for post-secondary education to "higher education," implying a system of various types of educational institutions.¹³

Soon after Lord Robbins presented the report, the Conservatives government quickly announced support for the expansion with a recommendation for initial funding to start the effort, and then in 1964, Harold Wilson led the Labour Party to victory in the national election on a platform touting a new era a science and technology, one fostered by an expanding system of universities. Not two years later, the euphoria had subsided as the economy began to sputter and Labour became very tentative about carrying out the recommendations of Robbins.¹⁴ This effort aimed at dramatically reforming education in Britain, formed the context of the debate about higher education between Kingsley Amis and Lord Noël Annan.

Kingsley Amis

Kingsley Amis was born on April 16, 1922 to a lower middle-class family who lived in Norwood, south London. Educated at Norbury College and City of London, he earned an exhibition to St. John's College, Oxford in 1941 to read English literature. Following military service, he returned to Oxford and completed baccalaureate studies in 1948. There he developed a friendship with the two people in the world he most admired, poet and librarian, Philip Larkin, and Hillary (Hilly) Bardwell, whom he soon married. From Oxford he obtained a post as a lecturer at University College of Swansea, a civic university located in Wales.¹⁵

At Swansea, Amis experienced university education from the other side of the desk, as it were. There he formulated a critique of British university education that had two themes—first, the universities consistently admitted the limited number of students in the population of the British Isles capable of benefiting from the ultimate purpose of a university education—the cultivation of the mind. Second, given that the pool of students had already been tapped, an increase in the number of places for students in universities would inevitably lower the standards of higher education. Soon after the debate over the reform of higher education spread to the public at large in the late 1950s, he sought an audience for his views in the popular periodicals, and thereafter repeated them for the rest of his life in newspapers, pamphlets, and his *Memoirs*.¹⁶

Already widely known for his popular comedic novels such as *Lucky Jim*, a satire of the pretentiousness and snobbery of dons in civic universities, apparently coming from the Left, he also was a member of the "Angry Young Men" of British literature in the 1950s. He confirmed his political position in 1957 when he supported the Labour Party in a Fabian pamphlet. His skepticism and anti-establishment attitude, however, belied a gradual shift to the Right that first appeared in a critique of the 1950s published in the July 1960 issue of *Encounter*. In "Lone Voices: Views of the 'Fifties," Amis presented the clearest statement of his views on university reform. He began with a cryptic critique of sociology by lamenting the "sociologizing" of society with its penchant for labeling every aspect of the culture:

Human spontaneity may well appear to have been worse damaged by the labellers than by any of the spectres they so clamorously and repetitively labelled—mass culture, herd values, conspicuous consumption, status seeking, success ethics—and the multiplication of diagnosis itself is coming to the point where it obstructs cure.¹⁷ He objected to characterizations of society and human behavior in the cinema and on television, as well as the popularity of descriptions of society in contemporary sociological studies by David Riesman, Vance Packard, and

William H. Whyte as substitutes for creative literature. Although Amis admitted there were problems with the decade of the fifties, he thought the descriptions of the decade as “. . . the worst, falsest, most cynical, most apathetic, most commercialized, most Americanised, richest in cultural decline of any in Britain’s history . . .” to be excessive and exaggerated. What he wanted was a lone voice who presented a viewpoint based on experience instead of some sociological study, which was what he purported to do in his soon-to-be famous critique of the reform of British higher education.¹⁸

His characterization of British society saturated with sociological pap and philistinism that an anonymous wag labeled “Hoggart-wash,” a pejorative reference to Richard Hoggart's *The Uses of Literacy*, provided Amis with a context in which to flay postwar British education at all levels, but particularly higher education. Writing as a university lecturer, he complained of widespread “ignorance and incapacity,” ranging “from the kindergarten to the House of Lords.” Alluding to the increase in the number of British universities already underway by 1960, he reserved his most vehement criticism for those who worried about the nation falling behind the United States and the Soviet Union and used statistics as a basis for calling for more universities and university graduates, technologists, and schoolteachers.¹⁹

Amis insisted that the expansion of higher education would result in a lowering of university admission and examining standards. In other words, “MORE will mean WORSE,” an assertion he repeated several times in the essay and that became the slogan for the “soul of excellence.” He wrote that lowering admission standards would “. . . wreck academic standards beyond repair,” as the result of hoards of ignorant students being admitted to universities—people who intended to study English literature would come to the university with no knowledge of meter, rhyme, poem, and sentence. Consequently, he cynically wrote,

Not only will examining standards have to be lowered to enable worse and worse people to graduate—you cannot let them all in and then not allow most of them to pass—but the good people will be less good than they used to be: this has steadily been happening ever since I started watching in 1949.²⁰

Amis then admitted that he did not want to be forced to teach in a second-rate college masquerading as a university. Thus despite his flawed logic, he feared expansion represented the society’s rejection of “the idea of a university as a centre of learning.”²¹

In response to the growing calls for more scientists and technologists and for the substitution of curricular breadth in place of early specialization in the sixth form, Amis worried about the detrimental effects of such changes on instruction in all disciplines at the undergraduate level, but especially in the humanities. He contended, furthermore, that general courses really meant “. . . diluted, science and arts, more science for the arts students—oh, and arts for the scientists to, naturally.” He then expressed the ubiquitous fear of humanist everywhere: “. . . the demand for more science . . . [would mean] less arts.” Malcolm Bradbury, then at Birmingham University, later expressed the same concern in an essay on one of the “redbricks,” Leicester University, in the November 1964 issue of *Holiday*.²²

Throughout the 1960s, Amis continued to argue against university expansion. In 1969, for instance, he joined Angus Maude, Robert Conquest, and other opponents, including one familiar to many American academics, Jacques Barzun, in a series of pamphlets called “Black Papers.” Edited by C. B. Cox and A. E. Dyson, the “Black Papers” were written in an effort to counter the introduction of progressive educational methods in schools and what the authors continued to believe were the detrimental effects of admitting more students to the universities.²³

As time went on, Amis continued to drift toward the Right, a shift he explained in an essay entitled “Why Lucky Jim Turned Right” and in a chapter of his *Memoirs*, he wrote about supporting Margaret Thatcher. Furthermore, he was still ranting about the dangers of expanding universities in his recollections, ironically even in the face of growing sociological evidence to the contrary. Recalling his time at Swansea in 1991, Amis complained that “. . . there were quite enough [students] there in the university who should not have been there, in the sense, that they were not capable of benefiting from that kind of education. They had not wanted to be there and did not know what to do when they got there.” He also praised the good students whom he taught whose quality did not diminish, except when the degree requirements were lowered.²⁴

Amis' complaints reflected his perspective as a lecturer. Like most faculty members, he worried about having to deal with unqualified students coming to the universities, but he also was dismissive of the serious problems facing British society in the late 1950s and 1960s. He was myopic about the scientific and technological needs of the United Kingdom, and he was particularly dismissive of the need to expand opportunities for advanced technological education that would have gone a long way toward keeping the society growing and improving the quality of life for

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the average British citizen. Amis was like many dons whose legitimate professional concern centered on their teaching and research. Many of their letters to the editors of newspapers and periodicals such as *The Spectator* concerned the quality of instruction in the universities, the need to preserve the strong tradition of the tutorial characteristic of Oxbridge, whether certain tutors were effective, whether the new universities ought to have tutorials at all, and other professional concerns. With the exception of comments from Peter Townsend of the University of Essex who ironically saw the Robbins reforms potentially furthering class divisions, most dons failed to mention the proposed expansion of opportunities for more qualified young people, particularly those of the working class. They seemed blithely unconcerned about promoting social justice. Most of the correspondents were humanists who said nothing about the society's scientific and technological needs, let alone fostering the expansion of education to meet those needs.²⁵

Not all dons opposed university reform, however. After Amis had issued his slogan, the well-known historian Asa Briggs wrote an essay entitled "Universities for Tomorrow" that appeared in the March 1961 issue of *The Spectator*. There Briggs described plans for Brighton University, the newest of the "plate-glass" institutions, which he said would entail ". . . re-arrangements of the map of learning in universities." Brighton was to have schools of English studies, European studies, Asian studies, and social studies. In their first year, students would take general studies, after which their curricula would be interdisciplinary. For example, in European studies they would learn a foreign language in association with history, contemporary economy and society, and patterns of culture, all linked with non-European studies in another school. He also mentioned plans to add scientific studies in 1962. Unlike his fellow dons, Briggs saw great promise in university expansion and curricular reform.²⁶

Nevertheless, many dons expressed concerns that reflected what they saw as a threat to their prerogatives. Historically, the dons "ruled" British universities. University provosts and vice-chancellors had very limited power even though they were responsible for convincing the University Grants Committee and through that body the Exchequer of the resources needed to enable the universities to function and the dons to meet their professional responsibilities. In postwar Britain, it was the dons, particularly at Oxford and Cambridge, who resisted efforts to reform the universities and to expand opportunities for more young people to pursue a degree. In advance of Robbins, even some vice-chancellors agreed with the dons. Echoing the vice-chancellors, they saw the ideal size of a university as having 3000 students and a faculty-student ratio of 1:10 until Lord Robbins and his committee recommended that there be 10,000 students in a typical university. In other words, expanding the number of places in universities and reforming the curriculum clearly threatened the power of the dons, and Kingsley Amis became a prominent voice for them.²⁷

Although Kingsley Amis was not alone in his criticism of the proposed expansion of higher education, the British public appeared to be of two minds about university reform, particularly the recommendations for significant expansion in the Robbins Report. Beginning the day after the Robbins Committee issued its report in October 1963, newspapers and other periodicals began to carry expressions of support for most of the recommendations of Robbins, including reports that the Conservative government welcomed the report and intended to move quickly to implement some of its recommendations. Many on the Left and the Labour Party also hailed the report, and Harold Wilson later campaigned particularly on its emphasis on science and technology. At the same time, there were expressions of concern about the potential lowering of standards coming, for example, from the editors of the *Times*, comments that they frequently reiterated.²⁸ Nevertheless, there were strong prominent voices calling for the reform of higher education. One of the leading proponents of reform was Lord Noël Annan, and it is to his thoughts about changes in higher education that we now turn.

Noël Annan

Noël Annan was born in London on December 25, 1916. The son of a successful businessman, James Gilroy Annan, and American-born, Fannie Quinn, he was educated at public schools, including Stowe, and King's College, Cambridge, where he read history. After distinguished service in the British army during World War II, he returned to Cambridge as a fellow in the field of politics. He made his reputation as a historian, academic administrator, and a public voice calling for widespread educational reform. His administrative service began at age thirty-nine, first as provost of King's from 1956 to 1966, as provost of University College, London from 1966 to 1978, and then as the first full-time vice-chancellor of the University of London from 1978 to 1981. Annan became Lord Annan at the behest of the queen in 1965.²⁹

The next year, Lord Annan joined the debate over the reform of education on the side of the “soul of justice” when his international reputation took him to New York where he addressed the Modern Language Association on the subject of recent changes in British higher education at its annual meeting. There he sought to inform his listeners of the struggle then underway in the wake of the Robbins Report, and immediately it became clear where stood in the debate then raging in his home country. With an air of great satisfaction, Annan recalled the visits of more than a hundred American academics in 1964 who had come to observe the first significant results of the post-war reform movement that had occurred just as the work of the Robbins committee was heating up—seven new universities. By then, he said sardonically, the only opponents of expansion left, still muttering “more will mean worse” were “. . . that daring, unconventional, swinging novelist, Mr. Kingsley Amis, and that great British daily newspaper which proclaims ‘Top People read the *Times*.’” Annan went on to note the irony of the changes occurring in British and American universities in the mid-1960s. He saw academics in both countries taking trips “Through the Looking Glass”: While the British Alice found a land desperately trying to rid its universities of the traditional hierarchy of Oxbridge at the top followed in order by the “Redbricks” and the so-called “White-Tile” (another term used to identify the new universities) and to eliminate the overspecialization of the sixth form, the American Alice entered a land where the university teachers were finding their students already familiar with the arts and literature, the social and natural sciences, and advanced mathematics.³⁰

Lord Annan endeavored to explain to his American audience why the British faced a daunting task attempting to achieve the reforms recommended by Robbins. In doing so, he showed not only a thorough understanding of British universities, which one would expect of a high-level university administrator, but a clearer conception of the role of higher education in the nation and why the expansion of the system was necessary to meet the growing needs of Britain, particularly in science and technology, than Kingsley Amis. Annan believed that for the expansion of higher education then underway in Britain to provide equality of opportunity to as many qualified young Britons as possible and to protect the ultimate goal of preserving the life of the mind, the “machinery of academic life” needed to be refurbished.

To that end, Annan began with the toughest problem facing Britain: the need to change its way of life. He prefaced his remarks by telling his audience that university provosts and vice-chancellors in British universities had little power in comparison to presidents, provosts and, even deans in American universities, although he implied in later comments that actions to bring cost effectiveness to the universities would eventually change the power structure of British universities. Then proceeding with an explanation of the difficulties facing the reforms of any sort in Britain, he said although the British were trying to change the nation’s social and political structure, it was hardly democratic. England was the “mother of Parliaments,” but contemporary Britain was not a democracy. Its educational system was only partly the product of conservative politics. The primary force behind it, he lamented, was

the middle-class intelligentsia—an intelligentsia which has always thrown up many liberals and radicals politically opposed to Conservatism. But until recently Matthew Arnold was, whether acknowledged or not, their undisputed paragon—the aristocrat in culture, an elitist in education, the protagonist in spreading an official culture of the upper classes to the lower, the defender of Oxford as the last barricade of age-old prejudice and untroubled somnolence against the inroads of applied science and of the scientific method.³¹

This “aristocratic notion of learning and culture,” he continued, was manifest in British universities in myriad ways, which led many dons to fear having to give up the rewards of seeing very high performance of their students in traditional subjects for what they thought was the “dubious advantage of increasing the number of students.” To illustrate his point, Annan chose a recommendation of the Robbins Report that had significant implications for the entire system of higher education. The Robbins Committee recommended that all institutions of higher education come under the control of the universities. Neither the Conservative nor the succeeding Labour government was willing to endorse this provision because, he said, “. . . British universities were psychologically unprepared for such a change in their social function.”³²

Annan explained the problem by describing the effort to overcome the inertia of a binary system of higher education, which Anthony Crosland, Labour minister of education, ironically worked to preserve against the recommendations of Robbins: Forty-five universities that educated less than half of the students in Britain; institutions *outside* the university system, colleges of education, polytechnics, and technical colleges, educated the rest of them. Complimenting Americans for providing a second chance for those students who at first failed to enter a university for whatever reason could do so later in life, he explained why the British were only slowly coming to

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recognize the value of a second chance. Since the bachelor's degree was the “totem” of the universities, the British expected all universities to apply same standards for the degree. Obviously, that posed a problem for institutions such as the polytechnics becoming degree-granting Colleges of Advanced Technology and colleges of education becoming universities as Robbins recommended. What would happen to the standards of the bachelor's degree?

Unlike Amis who thought the standards would be utterly destroyed, Lord Annan was hopeful there would be only a slight drop in the standards. He was willing to accept that sacrifice in order to provide opportunities for the seventy percent of the students who had failed the eleven-plus examination and were thus precluded from attending a university to earn a university degree in the type of institution they thought most promising for advanced learning. Annan went on to described other changes aimed at gradually expanding higher education: being cost-effective in expenses and using the extensive governmental committee system—that is, to use the partial state control and influence of the universities to get the University Grants Committee (UGC) to acquiesce to the demand that the egalitarian aspirations of most of the universities to be achieved. He also mentioned the work of finding ways to prevent high-quality scientists from seeking higher pay and support in American universities by improving the quality of university life in Britain. This goal, said Annan, meant British universities would have to change their academic culture from one in which the oligarchy of dons control the university and more often than not resist any sort of change to their way of life to one led by academic administrators whose task would be to foster improvements in the universities and enable the dons who already communicate with a wide public to continue doing so. In the end, he showed how the two souls of British higher education could avoid being in conflict by recognizing that the importance of equality of opportunity had to be secondary to the preservation to the life of the mind. He clearly believed that unless the life of the mind were protected, true equality of opportunity to enjoy that life would not be possible.³³

In 1967, Lord Annan continued promoting university expansion in a long article describing the development of the reform to date, which, much to his chagrin, was suffering the effects of the vagaries of a declining economy. In 1982 and again in 1990, he looked back on the successes and failures of the effort to expand higher education in Britain in the sixties and seventies. Still believing that the apparent clash between equality and excellence was a false dichotomy, that each was a necessary condition for the achievement of the other, he lamented the effects of the economy on achieving the goals of expansion proposed by Robbins.³⁴

Conclusion

The debate over the reform of higher education in Britain pitted the “soul of excellence” whose carriers opposed university reform against the “soul of justice” whose carriers promoted the expansion of opportunities for a higher education. Representing the two souls respectively were Kingsley Amis and Lord Noël Annan. Like other opponents of reform, Amis, along with some of his fellow dons and the editors of the *Times*, insisted that “more will mean worse” because he was convinced, despite sociological evidence to the contrary, that increasing the number of places for students in universities would seriously undermine the standards for educational excellence. In contrast, Annan, along with some prominent dons, journalists, and governmental officials, held that university expansion was necessary for achieving social justice through expanding educational opportunities aimed at achieving excellence of mind and thereby helping to solve the pressing needs of the United Kingdom. Both of these men naturally reflected their professional experiences. Amis and his fellow dons tended to have a limited, sometimes myopic, view of university education because their professional experiences centered on the tutorial, lecture, and scholarship, and until the era of reform, they had ruled the universities while provosts and vice chancellors endeavored to keep them happy with sufficient resources to teach and conduct research. Annan and other university administrators, on the other hand, by virtue of their positions in the universities had a broad perspective due to the nature of their responsibilities, including meeting the expectations of the dons, for keeping the machinery of the university well-maintained and operating efficiently. As Annan foresaw, moreover, the reductions in financial support because of the declining economy and the resulting demands from both Labour and Conservative governments for cost effectiveness would of necessity increase the power of university administrators. Neither the dons nor administrators, however, should have been blind to the political, social, scientific, and technological needs of the nation. Yet that certainly was the case for Kingsley Amis whose claims about the threat to a university education carried an unfortunate message for efforts to uphold standards of excellence. Noël Annan, on the other hand, argued for university expansion from the perspective of a university administrator with the mind of a historian. He

understood the principle of social justice that university expansion would foster and the potential of increasing the number of highly educated people in the society as a means of meeting national needs.

Unfortunately for both souls in this debate, British higher education has never achieved all of the dreams of the Robbins committee. In the last three decades of the twentieth century and the first decade of the twenty-first, the woes of the economy and the policies of some governments have dramatically reduced the financial support for all of higher education, universities, colleges, and polytechnics. Furthermore, the struggle continued as of 2003 when the government issued a White Paper entitled *The Future of Higher Education* in an effort to improve the HiEdBiz.

In such power struggles as we have explored in this essay, we should keep Lord Acton's dictum in mind: "power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely." Although none of the players in this drama ever had or could achieve absolute power, their sense of the power they had—the dons who traditionally ruled the universities and the administrators who had to have more authority amid the changing circumstances of British higher education—could corrupt either one and distort his or her vision of the idea of a university. As Stefan Collini recently pointed out, the extreme versions of these opposing visions of university education can be magnetic, pulling academics, governmental officials, and the public in opposite directions and thus distorting the real issues in the effort to achieve educational excellence for the benefit of the citizenry and the nation alike.

ENDNOTES

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2. Committee on Higher Education, *Higher Education: Report of the Committee Appointed by the Prime Minister under the Chairmanship of Lord Robbins* (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1963).
3. Robert Anderson, *British Universities Past and Present* (London: Hambledon Continuum, 2006), VIII-IX.
4. Thomas William Hayek, "The Idea of a University," *History of European Ideas* 8 (1987): 219.
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ARISTOTLE ON VIRTUE: THE CASE OF GOOD LISTENING

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Introduction

The *Nicomachean Ethics* is widely regarded as comprising Aristotle's lecture notes on a range of issues connected with virtue: the role of virtues in promoting a well-lived life, the acquisition of virtues, and the conditions necessary to sustain the practice of virtues. It was apparently not Aristotle's aim to provide a fully developed account of these issues, but rather an outline. Early in the collected notes he says: "This, then, is a sketch of the good; for, presumably, the outline must come first, to be filled in later. If the sketch is good, then anyone, it seems, can advance and articulate it, and in such cases time is a good discoverer or [at least] a good co-worker."¹

Listening is the sort of activity that might be studied in order to flesh out the "sketch of the good" that Aristotle provides. That outline is concerned with aspects of human experience of great importance to most: birth and death, sickness and health, the distribution of scarce resources, and the like.² Virtues are attributes that enable people to cope relatively well with experiences related to such processes. Communication, of which listening is an essential aspect, is central to a wide variety of human undertakings and it is the principal means by which we organize social life.

Before discussing listening, an overview of Aristotle's theory of virtue and related concepts is needed. If there are listening virtues, they will have many of the same characteristics as virtues more broadly.

The Idea of Virtue

Aristotle begins his inquiry in the *Nicomachean Ethics* with a question about the ultimate good for human beings. Pursuing that question, he examines goods that humans typically desire, including health, skills, knowledge, wealth, and power, among others. Some of these goods, such as wealth and power, are usually desired as means to some other end. Other goods, such as health, friendship, and knowledge, are desired both as means to some other end and as ends in themselves. Aristotle concludes that there is only one good that is desired for its own sake and nothing else, and that is *eudaimonia*, often described as happiness, thriving, flourishing or well-being. Other goods are pursued as means to well-being; well-being itself is the ultimate good for humans. In Aristotle's account, achieving overall well-being requires virtues, but virtues are not merely a means to this end; virtues and well-being are deeply and inextricably intertwined.³

We are accustomed to seeing various traits described as virtues—honesty, punctuality, responsibility, etc. And there seems to be a fairly widely shared (if overly-general) understanding of what these terms mean. According to this understanding, honesty is telling the literal truth; punctuality is being on time, as determined by the clock; responsibility is doing as one is told. Aristotle's conception of virtue is quite different from that with which most moderns are familiar. A virtue, Aristotle says, is a state of character intermediate between two extremes, one of excess and the other of deficiency. Take as an example "generosity," which along with Aristotle many contemporaries would see as a virtue. Over time, people may find themselves in numerous situations that call for generosity and "discovering the mean" requires careful attention to each particular case. A person who possesses this virtue may find himself or herself acting quite differently in each of these cases; volunteering time, giving cash or material goods, and even offering a kind word are all seen as examples of generosity. Further, what are recognized as instances of generosity may entail great or little sacrifice or effort on the part of the giver. The point is that the virtue tradition provides no rule or formula that specifies what is required in each and every particular case. Aristotle describes this context-sensitivity of virtues—and the challenge of exercising virtue—thus: "So . . . giving and spending money is easy and anyone can do it; but doing it to the right person, in the right amount, at the right time, for the right end, and in the right way is no longer easy, nor can everyone do it."⁴

Two Kinds of Virtues

Aristotle thought that there were two kinds of virtue, one pertaining to intellect and the other to character. As expressed in one translation:

Virtue, then, is of two sorts, virtue of thought and virtue of character. Virtue of thought grows mostly from teaching, and hence needs experience and time. Virtue of character [i.e. of ethos] results from habit [ethos]; hence its name ethical, slightly varied from ethos.⁵

This passage indicates that the distinction Aristotle makes hinges on the perceived origins of different good qualities. Intellectual virtues are those resulting mainly from teaching, while moral or character virtues result from a process usually translated as “habituation.”

The relation between intellectual and moral virtues is not as straightforward as it may first appear in part because it is not always clear where teaching begins and habituation ends. In a typical childhood, at least short intervals of fairly direct instruction are imbedded in longer stretches of habituation, where habituation comprises the customs and other features of a way of life. Aside from the difficulty of trying to separate clearly teaching from habituation, having made the distinction between two types of virtue, Aristotle qualifies the relation between them in several different ways. At one point Aristotle contrasts his theory with Plato’s, which identified virtue with the exercise of reason. Socrates thought that

the virtues are [instances of] reason because he thought they are [instances of] knowledge, whereas we think they involve reason. What we have said, then, makes it clear that we cannot be fully good without intelligence, or intelligent without virtue of character.⁶

At another point Aristotle says:

Intelligence is yoked together with virtue of character, and so is this virtue with character. For the origins of intelligence express the virtues of character; and correctness in virtues of character express intelligence.⁷

There may be good reasons to distinguish intellectual and moral virtues, but it seems apparent that Aristotle saw these as necessary companions. As we will see when the topic of listening is taken up, this complex and multifaceted activity would seem to require both sorts of virtues—if the hope is to cultivate good listening.

Character

In any particular instance, it often appears that conduct is informed by an array of virtues. Dewey helps clarify this matter when he makes the Aristotelian observation that certain traits are called “virtues” not because they alone are of great importance, but because of their connection with a whole complex of related attitudes which, together, inform conduct:

To call [certain traits] ‘virtues’ in their isolation is like taking the skeleton for the living body. The bones are certainly important, but their importance lies in the fact that they support other organs of the body in such a way as to make them capable of integrated effective activity.⁸

A few isolated traits, no matter how well developed, are often insufficient to guide a person in any particular case, let alone in the numerous and distinctive situations she will encounter throughout life. Over time, and in relation to varied situations, one is called on to exercise a range of virtues.

At issue is not merely the value of cultivating many different virtues, as important as that is. The catalogue of essential virtues that is now popular in many schools gives the impression that character is nothing more than the assortment of discrete virtues and vices. While such programs may mention Aristotle in their teachers’ guides or related literature, they may misconstrue his thought. A more adequate conception would locate virtues (and vices) in complex, web-like relations where each individual virtue is shaped by, and partly shapes, others. This conception helps to illustrate why the exercise of virtue does not require such an intuitively problematic response as maintaining a bland attitude of “tolerance” toward, for example, hate speech. A virtue such as “tolerance” may exist in relation with, say, the virtue of “kindness,” among others. A person who is tolerant *and* kind may choose to assert his or her opposition to verbal cruelty without diminishing either virtue; generally, a person who refuses to tolerate racial or homophobic slurs and other forms of abuse is not considered to be either intolerant or unkind. While (in English) we lack a common word for the quality observed or sensed in such a person’s conduct, that quality seems to constitute an interaction of tolerance and kindness. Borrowing a term from Dewey, it might be said that the original qualities under consideration in this example are “interpenetrating.” Dewey, of course, believed that all habits, of which virtues are a special subset, exist in a state of interpenetration. Such interpenetration constitutes character:

Were it not for the continued operation of all habits in every act, no such thing as character could exist. There would be simply a bundle, an untied bundle at that, of isolated acts. Character is the interpenetration of habits. If each habit existed in an isolated compartment and operated without affecting, or being affected by others, character would not exist. That is conduct would lack unity being only a juxtaposition of disconnected reactions to separate situations.⁹

A Note on Moral Luck and the Material Aspect of Virtue and Character

In Anne Tyler’s novel *A Patchwork Planet*, the character Barnaby Gaitlin wonders what makes some people more virtuous than others, asking, “Isn’t it possible, maybe, that good people are just luckier people? Couldn’t that

be the explanation?"¹⁰ Aristotle does not believe that good people are "just" luckier than others, but he does recognize that developing virtues in the first place and then maintaining them over time requires a supporting environment and other goods—and a measure of good luck:

[The] happy person needs to have goods of the body and external goods added [to good activities], and needs fortune also, so that he will not be impeded in these ways. Some maintain, on the contrary, that we are happy when we are broken on the wheel, or fall into terrible misfortunes, provided that we are good. Willingly or unwillingly, these people are talking nonsense.¹¹

In contemporary, popular discourse, virtue has been conceptualized in a way that makes the factors with which Aristotle is concerned largely irrelevant; being virtuous, as that has been defined recently, has nothing to do with whether one has a fulfilling job, decent place to live, or access to health care. In contrast, as indicated by the quote above, Aristotle argued that whether a person can live a good and flourishing life is, in some important respects, beyond his or her control. To begin with, we require certain resources, such as food and shelter, in order to live at all. In the world Aristotle inhabited, as well as in our own, many die for lack of these necessities. Even under less severe circumstances, whether a person can develop virtues in the first place depends to an extent on being born into a decent society and living among others who themselves possess virtue. Beyond that, all sorts of problems can intervene to diminish a life that was once good and happy. In short, from Aristotle's perspective, virtues are necessary for human well-being, but so are good luck and various other goods.

Becoming Virtuous

Above all, Aristotle seeks to actually promote human well-being—a state in which the virtues are central. Surveying the range of popular beliefs regarding the source of virtue, Aristotle concludes that most observers believe that people are made virtuous by nature, by teaching, or by habit. Nature is out of our control (so Aristotle thought) and teaching, he noted, is effectual only when certain habits are present. Thus, of the three sources commonly endorsed, Aristotle concentrates on the last two, especially habit. His inquiry leads to the seemingly paradoxical conclusion that humans become virtuous by *being* virtuous:

Virtues, by contrast we acquire just as we acquire crafts, by having previously activated them. For we learn a craft by producing the same product that we must produce when we have learned it, becoming builders, e.g., by building and harpists by playing the harp; so also, then, we become just by doing just actions, temperate by doing temperate actions, brave by doing brave actions.¹²

How does a person become good without already being good, Aristotle wondered. His answer is that virtue formation is first sparked when children act in ways that resemble or approximate more mature embodiments of virtue but are not identical to these more mature embodiments. A child cannot be virtuous to the same extent or in the same way as the mature person of good character, any more than he or she can build something or play the harp as well as someone who has had many years of experience at building or harp-playing. For example, at an immature stage, the virtue of truthfulness may be manifested when a child, say, admits to doing something she knows is wrong. One would not expect the child to have very well developed or sophisticated reasons for telling the truth or to express this virtue in a way that a mature person would. Maybe she admits the wrongdoing only to avoid being punished. Time, practice, and guidance are required to help the child to become more and more like a person in whom truthfulness is a settled state of character.

With the term "habituation," Aristotle appears to be getting at a distinction between learning that results primarily from didactic instruction and that which occurs in ordinary kinds of associations with others over extended periods of time. Didactic instruction *alone* is not particularly conducive to virtue; close and meaningful involvement in relations that are themselves expressive of virtue is more so. As noted previously, however, the line between habituation and instruction is not always bright and we find that often there are moments of didactic instruction embedded in ongoing relations with others who are habituated in particular ways. This is rarely a straightforward and unproblematic process; as described by one commentator: "[The virtues] take form (if they do at all) over time, by fits and starts, through many different kinds of contacts and interactions."¹³

It might be said that a person's character is in process in the sense that throughout life virtues tend to develop more fully or to diminish. Aristotle recognizes that at any point up until death, the quality of a life can change radically. Yet Aristotle leads us to pay special attention to the development of children because, in his view, in most cases, basic tendencies and characteristics become fairly well formed in youth. This helps to explain why Aristotle thought that most people are unlikely to acquire virtues on the basis of arguments or in light of persuasion. Arguments that might convince someone of the value of virtues are beyond the comprehension of young children

and once a person is old enough to understand the arguments, lacking the right tendencies and dispositions, he or she is not likely to find such arguments compelling.

Having examined Aristotle's theory of virtue and related concepts, we are in a better position to consider what an Aristotelian conception of good listening might involve.

Good Listening

Virtue ethics depends on moral exemplars for guiding conduct. A person wondering how to act in particular situations is advised to follow the example of others who are regarded as upstanding actors in such situations. Thus, the identification of listening virtues should start by examining the conduct of people recognized as good listeners.

Experience tells us that good listening is valued in different contexts for different reasons. For those living in close proximity with others—in the urban world where most live today—values associated with good listening are those most pertinent to listening to other people in the various situations in which they interact—the workplace, family, school, businesses, etc. While it is not a focus of this essay, where people live very close to nature, hearing and accurately interpreting its rumblings and silences is no doubt highly valued. Musicians could, no doubt, name virtues associated with listening to and performing music. Any number of additional “special cases” would likely generate some corresponding virtues.

The last main section discussed the fact that Aristotle conceived two classes of virtue, moral and intellectual. Among the virtues associated here with listening, some, say, patience and caring, may seem aligned more with the moral virtues, while others, such as discrimination and astuteness seem more intellectual. As helpful as it is for some conceptual (and other) purposes to make this kind of distinction, in many, perhaps most, situations, the moral and intellectual dimensions of listening are inseparable.¹⁴ Even the (usually split second) decision—if it can even be called a decision—to listen can be seen to reflect both moral and intellectual virtues, and likewise the decision about how attentively to listen. As one struggles to understand a student whose language is different from one's own, is the effort primarily moral or intellectual? It would seem that in most cases it is both. It takes patience to give the student the time she needs for self-expression; but it also takes cleverness to piece together what she says in a way that advances mutual understanding. One may have a caring and patient moral character, and yet not have the intellectual wherewithal needed to avoid manipulation or deceit. Conversely, one may have the intellectual capacity to hear what is literally said, but lack moral traits that would support the depth of communicative engagement appropriate in trying circumstances. How should a friend's statement that his job is killing him be heard? As a report of actual fact? A plea for support? An effort to manipulate? Such determinations depend on the willingness and ability to sort out numerous cues, and this requires both moral and intellectual characteristics. How one eventually responds, if one responds at all, will depend not only on how one understands the initial communication, but also on the whole complex of responsive attributes possessed.

On first thought, one tends to equate good listening with paying very close attention, even being engrossed in what is heard. Certainly sometimes this depth of attention is a hallmark of being a good listener—but not always. For those living in modern cities and suburbs, a typical day offers a veritable aural stew. Cars and other machines, television, cell phones, radio, and personal computers, store clerks, casual acquaintances, strangers, and occasionally even sounds of nature compete for attention. Even if it were possible, it most certainly would be undesirable, to listen carefully to all that comes within earshot. The cacophony would be paralyzing. Good listeners are able to discriminate between that which *deserves* relatively more and less attention. For mature listeners under normal circumstances this sort of discrimination occurs with little conscious thought, but there are times when it requires quite an effort. When to listen (and how carefully), and when to refrain from listening altogether, become real questions under some circumstances. For example, there are times when good listeners actively shut out utterances—say racist slurs or sexist jokes, the hearing of which would be demoralizing or self-diminishing. There are other occasions when good listeners make a great effort to hear, particularly when that to be heard is psychologically painful or difficult in some other way, but important—that, for example, the listener's own conduct has been hurtful or needs improvement in some way. Summoning the will to listen can be similarly difficult when the listener is confronted with a perspective she or he does not hold and would prefer not to consider—that, for example she or he enjoys unearned advantages on the basis of skin color or sexual orientation. The point is that a good listener will listen with varying degrees of attention and care depending on the situation in which listening occurs.

In light of Dewey's observations (discussed previously) it could be said that we have a “listening character,” which is comprised of a wide variety of qualities such as attentiveness (or inattentiveness), curiosity (or incuriosity),

patience (or impatience), and so on, all of which are mutually shaping or interpenetrating. This might help explain why there is such great variety among people regarded as good listeners (as well as bad ones).

The words used to describe virtues cannot quite capture the qualities they try to name because what, in real time, constitutes a virtue is determined partly by the circumstances immediately at hand. Aristotle's point in relation to generosity is applicable in the case of listening as well. To paraphrase, "So . . . listening is easy and anyone can do it; but listening to the right person, with the right amount of attention, at the right time, for the right end, and in the right way is no longer easy, nor can everyone do it."¹⁵

So just what are the listening virtues? To recapitulate, from an Aristotelian vantage point, that all depends on the context where listening occurs. Sometimes a good listener will be empathetic, patient, or caring. Other times she will be critical, astute, or discriminating. Sometimes the good listener will be engrossed, and some times shut out to the extent possible what is being said by another. Very often more than one of these virtues will influence conduct at any given moment. To be a virtuous listener is, in short, to listen in ways and with the depth of attention recommended by the situation at hand.

Acquiring Listening Virtues

A previous section addressed Aristotle's ideas concerning the acquisition of virtue in general. His account should lead us to expect that the listening virtues are acquired like other virtues—that is mainly in the course of interaction with others who already possess them. In countless and usually subtle ways, the child is drawn into a way of life in which listening is experienced and practiced in a particular way. In relation to listening which occurs in social situations, a child, whose efforts to communicate are met with the appropriately close attention of parents, teachers, and others, has good models upon which to base her own listening. She may at times be told that she should listen with special care in certain circumstances and told not to listen at all in others. She will likely be praised when she acts in accord with the needs of different listening situations and may well experience pleasure when she recognizes the rightness of her own listening conduct. The child will also likely experience the pleasures that arise from communication itself as well as the pains that are caused from communicative breakdowns.

The aim of habituation and teaching in relation to listening is that young people will more and more closely approximate listeners who possess well-developed virtues. Increasingly, they will come to express the listening virtues knowingly, for good reasons, and to do so consistently. If Aristotle is correct, this outcome will follow the formation of listening habits. Among other facets of listening, these habits concern what and who are listened to, the depth of engagement appropriate in different situations, thoughts, emotions, and feelings appropriately attending different situations, and whatever conduct that might issue from these generally interior phenomena.

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VIRTUAL SCHOOLS: THE NEXUS BETWEEN PARENTAL AUTONOMY AND CENTRALIZED MANAGEMENT OF K-12 EDUCATION

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Abstract

This paper investigates the growth of State sponsored virtual schools and their role in providing for parental choice in the face of limited access to high quality public education in certain areas. Furthermore this piece explores the increasing competition faced by the traditional “neighborhood school” from more centralized districts based and/or State sponsored virtual schools. Implications for the control of public schools remain critical to in what appears to be a struggle between centralization and decentralization that virtual schools represent.

Introduction

In the face of recent reports that online and hybrid learning programs are proving to be more effective than traditional face to face programs at the post secondary level (USDOE, 2009) it is not surprising that online learning¹ is increasingly becoming a rapid growth area in education in the USA. A few recent studies also find that, online learning by itself is more effective than traditional face-to-face instruction in raising student academic performance in the areas of (Sivin-Kachala Jay and Bialo Ellen, 2009).

To be sure, the rapid growth in k-12 online learning preceded these emergent research studies. Faced with failing, resource strapped public schools in urban areas; and limited access to resources among rural as well as special-needs populations; school administrations since the 1990's have attempted to increase access through online learning programs. In many states these programs have now become fully accredited schools that admit students from kindergarten to high school (Watson et al., 2009).

Due to the rapid rise of these programs and schools, there is a dearth of evidence with regard to their efficacy. What is clear however is that the virtual school is rapidly becoming an important aspect of the American education landscape. For the purposes of this examination a virtual school is classified as a state and/or regionally approved school that offers k-12 credit courses/programs through distance learning methods that include internet-based delivery (Barbour and Reeves, 2009).

Virtual schools represent an important and ambitious departure from traditional approaches to schooling. Virtual schooling is a cross between home schooling and traditional “brick and mortar” schooling. In a virtual school a k-12 learner logs into a learning management system in which they are able to work through units and modules of assignments. The system tracks attendance, keeps grades and logs communication with teachers as well as peers. The curriculum is pre-loaded into the system and learners with assistance of their parents or home-based-learning coach are responsible for working through the curriculum over the assigned period.

A school appointed teacher works with the learning coach parent to ensure that the learner is on pace throughout the curriculum. Teachers also supervise assessment and provide direction for remediation and curriculum focus. In some cases, teachers ensure that learning coaches receive supplementary materials. They are also responsible for fostering learning communities through field trips and other activities in order to increase learner participation.

The curriculum of the virtual school is typically developed by a private company, a state agency, a school district or a college or university. In the case of public virtual schools the curriculum is aligned with state standards for grade level expectations and benchmarks.

Theoretical Framework – Diffusing Control and Management of Schooling

In the United States virtual schools represent one element in the current round of school reforms. In the face of increasing global competition, state governments are under a great deal of pressure to increase the quantity and quality of educational services. As international assessments become the basis on which we evaluate educational performance and attainment, school governance has become an important focal point. In this regard the decentralization of school-based management and the decentralization of schooling has gathered a great deal of attention (Barrera-Osorio et al., 2009; Ouchi, 2009; Brown, 1990).

A recent World Bank-sponsored publication defines school-based management as “the decentralization of authority from the central government to the school level” (Barrera-Osorio et al., 2009, p. 2). It goes on to suggest that, “There is a strong positive relationship between school autonomy and student performance” (p. 6). The prevailing ideology being advanced in liberal democratic states particularly those comprising the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries is for an increase in decentralization of school

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management. According to the proponents of decentralized educational systems, research suggests that these systems can lead to:

- more input and resources from parents (whether in cash or in-kind)
- more effective use of resources because those making the decisions for each school are intimately acquainted with its needs
- a higher quality of education as a result of more efficient and transparent use of resources
- a more open and welcoming school environment because the community is involved in its management
- increased participation of all local stakeholders in the decision-making processes, leading to more collegial relationships and increased satisfaction
- improved student performance as a result of reduced repetition rates, reduced dropout rates, and (eventually) better learning outcomes (Barrera-Osorio et al., 2009, p. 6).

Virtual schools represent one attempt at fostering greater decentralization of school management. Virtual schools in fact account for a greater degree of decentralization than other types of school organization. Despite a lack of uniformity in organizational structure, virtual schools are, to a large extent, home schools. In a virtual school program, instructional time, student behavior and learning expectations are managed in the home setting under the locus of control of the learning coach. As is the case with the divisionalized organizational structure that defines schools (Mintzberg, 1979 cited in, Brown, 1990), other aspects of the educational service continue to be managed by the state agency.

Virtual Schools Implications for School-Based Management

Contemporary models of school-based management (SBM) see the infusion of autonomy and accountability as the hallmarks of a successful educational system. In a recent World Development Report, 2004: Making Services Work for Poor People the ideal formula for decentralization envisioned the provision of quality and timely service to clients (WDR, 2004). This ideal formula is seen as being actualized when clients have direct access to the decision making in the local school and the central state agencies that typically manage them.

Barrera-Osorio et al., describe this structure of autonomy along a continuum from weak to strong. In this framework school-based councils manage some decision-making in the schools. The development model of SBM endorses the need for high degrees of autonomy in the school reform effort. Barrera-Osorio recognized the following typologies of autonomy on the continuum.

4. Weak: Limited autonomy over school affairs, mainly for planning and instruction
5. Moderate: School councils have been established, but serve only an advisory role
6. Somewhat Strong: Councils have autonomy to hire and fire teachers and principals and to set curricula
7. Strong: control substantial resources (for example, lump-sum funding)
8. Very Strong? Parental or community control of schools . . . and any choice of models, in which parents or others can create a school

Virtual Schools and Autonomy

With more than one million enrolments in state funded virtual school programs nationwide, it is important for us to explore the implications of virtual schools in light of school-based management (SBM). Virtual schools present the possibility of centralization of schooling in unprecedented ways. However, virtual schools also present the possibility of decentralized schools in equally unprecedented ways.

Using the virtual approach federalized or state run schools can be developed across geographical boundaries and maintain massive levels of enrollment (one student taking one semester-long course) in a way that was not possible before. If a state or the federal government wishes to create its own school it could attract students from across wide geographical borders. The Florida Virtual School for example, is the largest high school in the state with more than 154,000 half-time enrollments in 2008–2009 (FLVS, 2009). Currently the school is providing a tuition-based service for students outside the state of Florida. This enrolment structure and global market-based approach underscore the ability of virtual schools to extend beyond the local district space.

Ironically however, the reality of parent as learning coach (teacher) and home as the site for school does provide a level of decision-making that is highly democratic. Parents retain some degree of control over the social interactions, instructional method and “school setting” of the learner. This model provides a framework in which parents and learners access educational services directly from state-based entities. In a sense also it becomes a direct co-sharing arrangement between the state and the family.

In a virtual school the selection of the curriculum, provision of materials, governance structure and high-level management of virtual schools rest in the hands of a state, district or private entity. In this sense virtual schools are the most decentralized of school models yet at the same time they contain an inherently centralizing tendency. Virtual schools therefore turn traditional concepts of school-based management on their head.

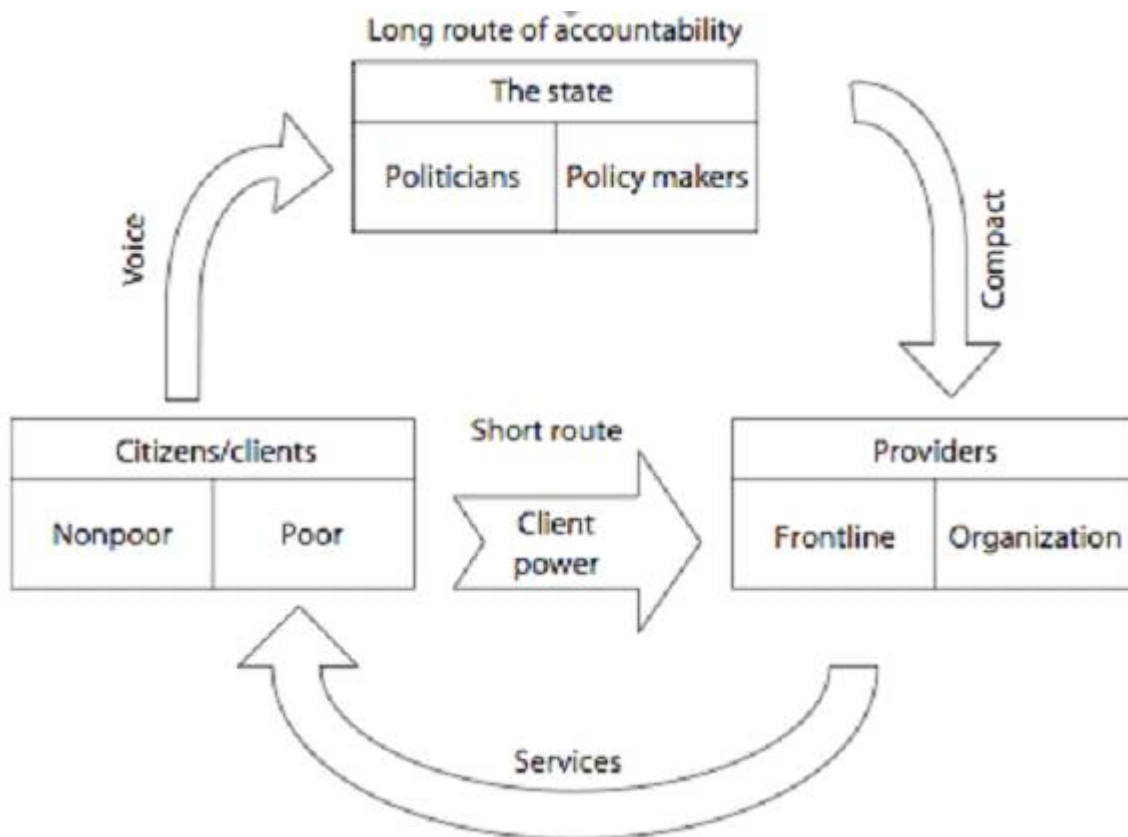
In a very real sense virtual schools are not controlled by parents or communities. However the role of the teacher is minimized and there is no principal in the traditional sense. Other than curriculum and funding the central administration has very little to do with the day-to-day administration. Since there is little to no use of facilities and site-based resources, the elements to be managed in virtual schools are not brick and mortar in the traditional sense.

Parents in virtual programs have high degrees of autonomy over curriculum delivery, instructional time, supplementation and site. Since in most cases they are co-teachers with the traditional teacher from the central administration, virtual school parents share in the accountability.

Virtual Schools and Accountability

As service entities virtual schools provide a unique approach to accountability. The World Development Report (2004) School-based Management (SBM) model sees the shortest route to accountability where clients (parents, families) have direct voice to front line service providers as sanctioned by the state (Fig.1). In this sense parents have a direct line to service providers not through a council or other form of representation but via direct communication. This means that changes in the system are possible in a more flexible and accelerated way as clients have a direct voice to those most accountable.

Figure 1. World Development Report 2004 Accountability Framework



In the case of virtual schools parents become a part of the service provider mechanism as well. Furthermore, this accountability framework is perhaps most ideally implemented in the context of virtual schools. Considering the configuration of virtual schools, no other model of schooling can provide this direct line to service providers in the same way.

Virtual Schools, Centralization

RODNEY: VIRTUAL SCHOOLS: THE NEXUS BETWEEN PARENTAL AUTONOMY AND CENTRALIZED MANAGEMENT OF K-12 EDUCATION

To be sure, virtual schools provide a tempting tendency to centralized management. In this regard virtual schools are more easily able to provide for streamlined curriculum and resources. Furthermore they are able to provide a uniformity of content while at the same time tailoring it for the pacing and needs of individual learners. Through the online delivery mechanism virtual schools can at the push of a button roll out curricular changes from one central point to all clients. Moreover the curriculum can be the same for all or be customized for each one.

However, from a governance standpoint, virtual schools are able to be the sole authority over curriculum and school management. If for example, if the US Department of Education had a desire to start its own virtual school and directly provide this service to all the families of America, the only thing stopping them is our culture of district-based schools. In 24 states plus the District of Columbia there are significant state-based multi-district virtual schools now in operation (Watson et al., 2009). Currently there are more than one million k-12 students in various online programs. The largest single entity being the state of Florida (154,000 enrollments) followed by the state of Alabama (28,000 enrollments).

It is part due to this level of state-based competition that many local districts are now establishing their own virtual schools. This type of competition is unprecedented in part because the state is funding the virtual school even while it is funding community-based schools.

In a very real sense these 24 states including both Florida Virtual School (FLVS) and Alabama's ACCESS represent an important point of departure in state-sponsored education. They now manage and operate their own multi district k-12 schools. This has implications for local control of schools. If a state is running its own school, this is in direct competition to local and district schools. Furthermore, state-based schools puts management and control over curriculum and other high level resources in the purview of a state administration.

Additionally, the most prominent Education Management Organizations (EMO)s in the area of virtual schools is K12 Inc. and Connections Academy. Between these private entities they account for 76,000 enrollments of virtual school students in 2008–2009 (Watson et al., 2009). This is a large number of curriculum and educational services being provided by just two private entities.

Parental Autonomy and Centralization or Shared Accountability

In this environment, parental autonomy has become blended with parental accountability in providing for k-12 schooling. Prior to virtual schools parents supported schooling with their tax dollars and participation in the local school. In the era of the virtual school parents still support education with their tax dollars but they are not necessarily participants in a local school. They in fact provide an additional service—that of learning coach. This means that they are more active participants in providing educational services directly. Since parents now occupy the role of learning coach, they must also make decisions about instructional methods, curriculum and learner attendance time. This type of control represents a different layer for parents. Despite the obvious added responsibility, students and parents report high levels of satisfaction (Watson et al., 2009). This shared model of decision-making puts management of student learning opportunities within the reach of all individual households.

In a sense therefore in the virtual school model, both parents and governments share in the management and accountability of the educational program. This shared sense of accountability gives both entities direct access to each other. The voice of the client is therefore directly transmitted to the government.

Conclusion

Contemporary efforts at school reform have culminated in a desire for decentralization of school-based management (SBM). Virtual schools provide a unique bridge between the government, its contractual front line agencies of educational services and parents. The virtual school model blends the best in parental autonomy where parents are in control of learner time, instructional approaches and accountability along with centralized management. Developments such as state-based schools continue to support this model with the caution that state-based schools as well as private providers of virtual education have a potential to become large scale entities in this sector. The shifting locus of accountability to parents presents a unique reality in modern education. In this structure parents share in the attainment of educational objectives and student achievement in much the same way that traditional schools have done. The phenomenon of the virtual school has implications for altering the nature of educational accountability in ways we have not yet explored.

ENDNOTES

1. "The terms "online learning," "virtual learning," and "elearning" are interchangeable." (Watson et al., 2009)

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PHILOSOPHY, SCHOLARSHIP, AND THE PROFESSORiate

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[O]ne way to understand the difference between knowledge and information was to realize that while you can inform people, you can't knowledge them. That is one of the great truths in education. The integrative, synthesizing activity that produces knowledge takes place in someone's mind. You can't buy knowledge or receive it as a gift; it is a personal possession obtained by an active process. You have to do it yourself. (Lapidus, 1996/2000)

Introduction

Although formal study of philosophy/philosophy of education is a prerequisite to having a formal philosophical attitude or orientation toward study and research, in this essay we argue that doing philosophy is a defining orientation for educators toward their work at all levels of educational practice, but particularly as it relates to scholarship in higher education. In addition, we explore the relationship between doing philosophy and the role of scholarship in the professoriate.

We all have conceptions of our world and how it operates, and we act on these conceptualizations; we pronounce our understandings and explanations of social issues and our circumstance through knowledge statements, and we act on this knowledge; and we make multiple decisions everyday based on some value position. We do philosophy every day. Doing philosophy starts with asking fundamental questions about experiences of everyday life. For educators, doing philosophy is indispensable to our life in academia and our orientation to the world around us. Asking good questions leads to the possibility of good scholarship.

Jules B. Lapidus (2000), a former President of the Council of Graduate Schools, wrote a brief essay on the notions of scholarship and research. He made the following distinctions between the two concepts: "Research is something you do. Scholarship is how you think about it . . . Research is a process for obtaining information and (that) scholarship is a process for turning information into knowledge" (p. 90). The distinction between information and knowledge is important, as we connect knowledge within a philosophical context and information with data or facts. A further distinction Lapidus made centers around the nature of the questions asked by researchers and scholars:

Researchers usually ask questions like where, when, who, what, how many, how big, or how fast. Scholarly questions are different. The most common undoubtedly are why and how, usually accompanied by two others.

One is a critical question, "So what?" The other is a visionary question, "What if?" (Lapidus, 2000, p. 91) In the context of this essay, scholarly questions go beyond the data/information and connect to philosophical questions and positions.

The distinction between scholarship and research may seem oversimplified, or perhaps much ado about nothing. However, we argue that scholarship is a form of philosophical inquiry, and "to engage in philosophical inquiry is to theorize, to analyze, to critique, to raise questions about, and/or pose as problematic that which we are investigating" (Koetting & Malisa, 2004, p. 1017). Building on the notion of scholarship we discuss doing philosophy as a way to bring scholarship into all facets of our academic life and suggest it is the very foundation of our practice.

Doing Philosophy

Philosophical issues are inherent in our everyday work as educators. When we talk about the curriculum, what to teach, and pedagogy, the praxis of being with others in an educational setting, or the purpose of what we do, we are engaged in doing philosophy. In doing philosophy, we are concerned with the theory/practice dialectic. As Gutek (1997) asserted

Blending theory and practice, teaching has both a reflective and an active dimension. It has effects that transcend the immediate instructional episodes of the classroom. The way in which teachers relate to their students depends on their conception of human nature. Instruction is about something: it is about a skill or about knowledge. One's view of reality shapes one's beliefs about knowledge. When the teacher begins to reflect on conceptions of reality, of human nature, he or she is philosophizing about education. (p. 1-2)

The notion of reflection and action mentioned in the quote suggests the dialectic between theory and practice, a conscious decision. Reflection on our practice is important (and necessary) because it allows us to raise questions about our work.

For Maxine Greene, doing philosophy means that we become more "aware" and "intentional" about our work. It means "confronting issues as they emerge in our consciousness and our lives; interrogating our situations carefully

and responding thoughtfully to what we uncovered and discovered” (Lapidus, 2000, p. 5). As we confront issues and interrogate situations, what is the nature of the questions asked? As an example, Greene cited Isaiah Berlin who spoke of philosophers asking queer questions, questions that are not ordinary, factual, easily answered questions explained through logical argumentation and mathematical inquiry. She provided the following examples of queer questions: “How are we to understand freedom? How are we to understand fairness, and how can it be reconciled with individual rights? How can we justify a commitment to critical reflection, aesthetic awareness, open-ended growth, or intercultural understanding to a public preoccupied with the need to focus on skills and proficiencies alone?” (cited in Ayers, 1998, pp. 4–5). These are the questions of interest to philosophers.

Greene told us we do philosophy when, for whatever reason, we are aroused to wonder about how events and experiences are interpreted. We philosophize when we can no longer tolerate the splits and fragmentations in our picture of the world, when we desire some kind of wholeness and integration, some coherence which is our own (1974, pp. 10–11).

The splits and fragmentations come from living in a world that is primarily fabricated by others. Doing philosophy, critically inquiring into the nature of the world, engaging others in the inquiry can provide a sense of coherence which is our own, and helps us as educators claim our own voice in our work. Hence, our concern as educators, must remain normative, critical, and even political. Neither the teacher’s colleges nor the schools can change the social order. Neither colleges nor schools can legislate democracy. But something can be done to empower teachers to reflect upon their own life situations, to speak out in their own ways about the lacks that must be repaired, the possibilities to be acted upon in the name of what they deem decent, humane, and just (Greene, 1978, p. 71).

The study of philosophy, doing philosophy, can provide the empowering possibilities and practices Greene identifies: reflection on one’s own life situation, one’s own voice with which to speak, and the possibility for action based on decency, humaneness, justice, and moral discourse.

Doing philosophy with our university students engages them in the language of theory. Antonia Darder stated that

In order to create the conditions for students to determine their own lives genuinely within a multiplicity of discourses, teachers [professors] must introduce their students to the language of theory. The language of theory constitutes a critical language of social analysis that is produced through human effort to understand how individuals reflect and interpret their experiences and, as a result, how they shape and are shaped by their world.

Although it is a language generally connected to the realm of abstract thinking, its fundamental function of praxis cannot be fulfilled unless it is linked to the concrete experiences and practices of everyday life. (1991, p. 104) It is in doing philosophy that our students can learn to examine theories that impact their daily lives and how those theories can help them consider their responses to complex educational problems. (See Koetting & Combs, 2002). Boyer’s (1990) vision of scholarship within the university setting provides a framework for examining deeper philosophical meanings of our work.

Scholarship and Higher Education

Scholarship Reconsidered, the 1990 report of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, was “intended to be a heuristic, . . . to reframe the discussion and to open a lively conversation across campuses and disciplines about what faculty members do as scholars on a broad range of fronts” (Rice, 2002, p. 9). Boyer defined scholars as “academics who conduct research, publish, and then perhaps convey their knowledge to students or apply what they have learned” (1990, p. 15). For Boyer, being a scholar involved “a recognition that knowledge is acquired through research, through synthesis, through practice, and through teaching” (1990, p. 24).

There has been an ongoing issue within the university regarding the relationship between research and teaching. Lapidus (2000) suggested the real question is about the relationship between scholarship and teaching. He argued that although the latest research findings are important, more important is the scholar’s stance toward the research, how important questions are raised about the research, what results mean, etc. Again, we suggest scholarship is a form of philosophical inquiry, and “to engage in philosophical inquiry is to theorize, to analyze, to critique, to raise questions about, and/or pose as problematic that which we are investigating” (Koetting & Malisa, 2004, p. 1017).

Boyer stated “Surely scholarship means engaging in original research. But the work of the scholar also means stepping back from one’s investigation, looking for connections, building bridges between theory and practice, and communicating one’s knowledge effectively to students” (1990, p. 16). We would also add the importance of communicating to others within the profession; that is to make our work public. This “stepping back”-and-

questioning attitude is a philosophical stance. In Boyer's view, scholarship can be seen as serving at least four separate, but overlapping, functions: discovery, integration, application, and teaching.

Scholarship of Discovery

Boyer (1990) described what faculty (and institutions) typically refers to as research, as the *scholarship of discovery*. While Boyer suggested that scholarship was much broader than just original research, he viewed this quest for new knowledge as a process that can fuel intellectual excitement, enliven faculty and invigorate colleges and universities (p. 18). "Rather than research as something rote and mundane, the scholarship of discovery challenges scholars to maintain an enthusiasm about their work and the contribution it will make to the profession" (Braxton et al., 2002, p. 39). To maintain a discipline, generating new knowledge and understandings is absolutely vital. "Because the nature of research requires researchers to be fully informed of developments in their field, discovery keeps the individual informed of new knowledge" (Braxton et al., 2002, p. 39). For Boyer, the new knowledge informed other functions of scholarships: integration, application, and teaching.

Scholarship of Integration

The *scholarship of integration*, as proposed by Boyer, provided a new dimension of scholarship involving "serious, disciplined work that seeks to interpret, draw together, and bring new insight to bear on original research" (2009, p. 19). As Scott (2005) suggested the scholarship of integration provided a dynamic among discovery, application, and teaching, the other three forms of scholarship suggested by Boyer. For example, Boyer explained that "Those engaged in integration ask, 'What do the findings *mean*?' Is it possible to interpret what's been discovered in ways that provide a larger, more comprehensive understanding?" (p. 19). Thus, through integration, scholars overcome the isolation and fragmentation of the disciplines, by making connections within and between them (Glassick et al., 1997).

Scott (2005) further suggested that fundamental changes in the ways that knowledge is produced are not only integrative, but also transdisciplinary. A transdisciplinary approach involves multiple disciplines and the space between those disciplines where new knowledge and understandings may exist. A transdisciplinary view of knowledge has as its goal "the understanding of the present world, which cannot be accomplished in the framework of disciplinary research" (Nicolescu, nd, p. 3). Conner (2003) predicts that "the next few decades will witness an historic shift in the circumstances and conditions of the production of knowledge . . . addressing new, especially transdisciplinary, questions and for the development of new paradigms" (cited in Scott, 2005, p. 50).

Scholarship of Application

The *scholarship of application*, according to Boyer, focuses on applying knowledge to consequential problems. In this process "new intellectual understandings can arise out of the very act of application . . . theory and practice vitally interact, and one renews the other" (1990, p. 23). Exploration of the application of understandings developed through discovery of new knowledge advances ideas within a discipline. Within the academy, however, these actions are typically viewed as outreach or service, not scholarship, if not exhibited within a public sphere.

Expanding Boyer's conception of a scholarship of application, Rice (2005) described a scholarship of engagement, a broader view of the scholarship of application. "This new designation can serve as an umbrella category encompassing what in the past has been pursued under the rubrics of outreach, the scholarship of application, and professional service" (p. 29). According to Rice, the scholarship of engagement moves a scholar beyond service to genuine collaboration in which "the learning and teaching become multidimensional and the expertise be shared. This represents a basic reconceptualization of faculty involvement in community-based work and will require our working in new ways across disciplines and institutional sectors" (p. 28). As scholars engage in community-based collaboration, they must reflect on their "rationales for decisions, interpretation of successes and failures, and implications of work for future agendas. Those reflections affirm the continuing passion that characterizes faculty engagement in community" (Driscoll, 2005, p. 41).

When comparing the scholarship of application to the scholarship of engagement, Rice (2002) explained "Although honoring what can be learned from practice, the scholarship of application assumes that the established epistemology—where knowledge is generated by faculty members in the university and applied in external contexts—remains undisturbed and unchallenged. The scholarship of engagement requires going beyond the "expert" model that both informs and gets in the way of constructive university-community collaboration. (p. 13) He argued that the scholarship of engagement "calls for a major epistemological challenge to the more traditional view of scholarly work of faculty members and the dominant way knowledge is generated in the academy" (Rice, 2002, p. 13). Examples of the scholarship of engagement suggested by Rice include engaged pedagogies such as service learning, community-based research, and collaborative practices to solve community problems.

Scholarship of Teaching

Boyer (1990) identified the *scholarship of teaching* as “not only transmitting knowledge, but transforming and extending it as well” (p. 24). Boyer described teaching as a scholarly enterprise, “a dynamic endeavor involving all the analogies, metaphors, and images that build bridges between the teacher’s understanding and the student’s learning” (p. 23). He hoped that our understanding of teaching as a form of scholarship would move us toward “a recognition that knowledge is acquired through research, through synthesis, through practice, and through teaching” (p. 24). In the scholarship of teaching, teaching becomes “scholarly inquiry which becomes subject to empirical evidence and the focus of collaborative intellectual inquiry” (Rice, 2002, p. 12).

During the 1990s research in a number of related areas (e.g., assessment, learning, teacher knowledge, and evaluation of teaching) began to converge, resulting in discussions of the scholarship of teaching being expanded to the scholarship of teaching and learning (Huber, Hutchings, & Shulman, 2005). While scholars in various disciplines may hold different views and understandings of teaching and learning, differing perspectives can promote dialogue and cross-disciplinary collaborations. Faculty who engage in the scholarship of teaching and learning, however, often face institutional hurdles with structures that have not yet transcended “the older content/process, theory/practice, teacher/student dichotomies that usually shape our thinking” (Rice, 2005, p. 2). Huber et al. suggested hurdles such as “gaining eligibility for additional resources of time, money, or assistance, or to finding recognition for their work in the system of faculty roles and rewards” (2005, p. 38).

What does it mean for faculty to understand scholarship more broadly? How might a broader perspective of scholarship impact the work of faculty? We explore these ideas in the next section.

Doing Philosophy and Scholarship

We believe the nature of scholarship impacts the ways in which faculty think about their work, particularly the scholarly questions they ask about their work. We have argued that doing philosophy is about asking good questions. Good questions allow faculty to speculate, to argue, to keep pushing their work by continually questioning the nature of their work. As we argued at the beginning of this paper, this questioning is doing philosophy: “to engage in philosophical inquiry is to theorize, to analyze, to critique, to raise questions about, and/or pose as problematic that which we are investigating” (Koetting & Malisa, 2004, p. 1017).

As an outgrowth of scholarship, the ways in which faculty engage others reinforces the importance of how they think about their work. Knight suggested that

Thinking is an ongoing process, and one of the most beneficial results of the study of educational philosophy is obtained if students reach the place where they are unable to think of educational practices in isolation from the basic questions of life and meaning that give those practices significance (1998, p. ix). Faculty, who have engaged deeply in the scholarship of teaching and immersed themselves in their own scholarly agendas, have intimate understanding of ways that knowledge can be transformed and extended through learning. They have most likely engaged in philosophical inquiry within their disciplines that may not yet be public. It is moving this philosophical inquiry into the public sphere and opening oneself to scrutiny of one’s peers that becomes scholarship.

To make an analogy to Eisner’s (2001) work in *The Educational Imagination*, he introduces the notion of educational connoisseurship and criticism. To be a connoisseur suggests deep understanding and active participation. One can be a connoisseur of fine foods, of the cinema, or, as Eisner argued, of education. Connoisseurs are not required to make themselves public. In contrast, being a critic is a public endeavor—making one’s perspectives public through media or other means and opening oneself to scrutiny by others. A true critic must first be a connoisseur.

Like Eisner’s (2001) notion of connoisseurship and criticism, scholarship is both a private and a public endeavor. We believe institutions of higher education have the responsibility to foster a culture of scholarship that actively supports the public representation of faculty work, both within the institution and in the broader community. Professional organizations have the responsibility to maintain public forums for the dissemination of and open debates of scholarship within and across disciplines. And we believe individual faculty members have the responsibility to do philosophy; that is, to ask significant critical questions within their disciplines and to engage in scholarship; that is, to make their deep understandings and questions of their disciplines public, to make connections across disciplines situating their ideas in the larger context, and illuminating their work in a revealing way.

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POST-SECULAR SYMBOLISM AND COMMUNITY PASSION (COMPASSION)

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Introduction

This paper presents the early stages of an attempt to organize some ideas I have been thinking about over the past several months. This is what I hope is a first step in a much larger inquiry. To begin, it is increasingly clear to me that symbols are more relevant to the way we behave, structure, and function in organized relationships than is recognized in organizational/ leadership theory. I acknowledge that the view I am articulating here is fundamentally different from the prevailing thought in my field. Thus, my humble goal here in the next fifteen minutes is to crumble the theoretical foundation of my entire field. Further, since I am going to argue that the theoretical foundation of my field is constructed on unstable epistemological sand, I might as well wash the sand away while I am at it. Seriously, I am developing an argument here that is at the beginning stages and will need much more development and support to have much credibility. Nonetheless, I think the key points are sound. In this brief time, I first want to explain and then present arguments I am developing in support of my claims.

Educational Leadership and Open Systems Theory

Starting with the current foundational theoretical assumptions in my field, it is accurate to state that the knowledge base in the field of educational leadership that is supported by a majority of scholars in the field is grounded in open systems theory (Hoy and Miskel, 2008). Hoy and Miskel, authors of the best selling theoretical text used in the education of educational administrators, state:

Open-systems theory is our general framework for exploring the conceptual foundations of educational administration (T)he open-systems perspective is the overarching framework that underscores four internal subsystems that interact to influence organizational behavior: the structural, cultural, individual, and political systems. (p. 20)

I want to suggest that the centering of systems theory as the foundational assumption in understanding organizational behavior, and thus organizational change in schools, is a problem. Metaphorically, it has us stuck in a rut we are only digging deeper as we try to fill it in. I view it somewhat like this: the more we use systemic approaches to solve systematic problems, the more we become dependent on the very systems that are the problem as the solution to the problems.

My argument is based on a different set of epistemological assumptions; or, it might be more accurate to say a rejection of epistemological assumptions (or metaphysical assumptions)—this is one area of my argument I am not going to explore today. Nonetheless, for purposes of branding (my iron is red hot), I will broadly cast the epistemological framework of open systems theory and my field in general as post-positivist. I will refer to the orientation I am assuming as post-secularism (ouch, that burns). I will explain what I mean by post-secularism in a minute but first I want to get to my thesis which has to do with the role and meaning of symbols. We have a language, or more accurately, a symbol problem. The symbolic language we use in schools, to talk about schools, and with which we attempt to reform schools is disconnected from lived experience, it is inauthentic. My thesis is that this situation is the result of the dominance (albeit, most educators are completely unaware that there is even an alternative possibility here) of post-positivist epistemological worldviews. In short, our symbol systems are assumed to be objectively real and, our meta-symbol (or meta-narrative) in understanding school organizations is systems theory.

The Inadequacy of Symbolism

A central premise here is that symbolism is the deepest ground of meaning in human social communication and behavior. A point in understanding this premise as I am using it in my argument is that while we have and use multiple symbolic systems (alphabets, mathematical symbols, road signs), symbols in and of themselves are not systems. Rather, symbols are the foundational device or language we use to construct representational systems. Granted, there are multiple issues in trying to discern and articulate the relationship between symbols and systems but the idea I want to focus on here is an assertion that symbolic meaning is embedded in the individual rather than the system or a leader in the system; thus, a leader or leaders who construct or use symbols of any type, including oral language and narrative text, cannot control what the symbols actually mean to each individual. Further, I suggest that the relationship between the lived experience of an individual and the symbols used to represent and make meaning out of those experiences determine the level of congruity between the intended meaning of the

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symbol and the meaning constructed by the individual as a listener, hearer, or viewer (that was a complex way to say that actions speak louder than words). Here is an example to explain what I am trying to articulate here:

A principal goes before a group of new sixth grade students at middle school and tells them that they are special and loved, that all the adults are there for them, and that their welfare and future success in life is the reason the school exists (powerful symbolic language). The principal here knows the meaning he is conveying with his language and most likely assumes that the audience is receiving the meaning he intends. Then, little Johnny leaves the assembly and needs to use the toilet. He goes into the boys' bathroom that is poorly lit and where there are no doors on the stalls, there is urine all over the broken toilet seats, none of the toilets have been flushed, the only toilet paper is strewn around the floor, and there is no soap or hot water. Even worse, there is a group of eighth grade boys in the bathroom who slam little Johnny up against the wall, steal his lunch money, and tell him that if he snitches he is finished at that school and no girl will ever talk to him.

For Johnny, what might the principal's symbols (words) mean? My claim here is that this happens with all symbols and symbol systems. The meaning of everything a principal, or anyone, says or does is meditated through the experiences of the viewer, hearer, or listener. Symbols do not construct reality; rather, they represent, or represent reality. Stated differently, for each individual, experienced reality mediates and ultimately determines the meaning of symbols.

This simple example exposes the fatal flaw of grounding our conceptual frameworks for organizations in systems theory. Causal assumptions of human behavior in organizational systems, a fundamental precept in systems theory, assume and depend on a stable field of meaning for the symbolic representations (language) used to influence organizational behavior. Meaning is assumed to be objectively independent of the source of symbols and symbolic text and the receiver of the symbols or symbolic text. In my opposing view, I am arguing that stable fields of symbolic meaning do not exist a priori to the interpretation of symbols and as a result, they are never objective; rather, the meaning of symbols that represent organizational or community life must be developed, nurtured and sustained. In the case of Johnny, the symbolic language of caring presented by the principal was not developed, nurtured, or sustained for five minutes after Johnny left the auditorium. Johnny did not experience authentic actions of caring. Rather, he experienced a horrible ordeal just to attend to his most basic bodily needs. The principal can say all he wants and use all the words he wants but for the language to have any power of meaning, the community must care enough about Johnny to provide him with a safe and clean place to pee!

Lived Community Experience Perspective

Earlier, I stated that symbols do not construct reality but, the grounding of educational leadership in systems theory attempts to do just that. The conceptual framework labeled open system is a symbol that is presented as reality. School administrators are taught, and when employed expected, to govern by a systems perspective. I want to detour at this point to be clear about of a couple of points. First, I am not claiming that we do not need organizational systems to provide educational services. We need organizational structures to provide systematic education to students. Second, I also believe, in contrast to some of postmodern colleagues in my field (English, 2006), that we need standards to "orient" our systems. For example, in my field, it would be difficult, and pointless, for me to argue that school organizations do not need a shared commitment to a clearly articulated purpose (vision), an organizational culture that supports teaching and learning, community (stakeholder) involvement, or ethical professional practice. Nor would I suggest that efficient management of operations is not necessary or that school leaders do not need to understand the social, political, and economic contexts of their institutions. In my view these standards are both positive and potentially useful symbols. Nonetheless, something is being lost in translation. In essence, we teach leaders that these standards (symbols) are embedded within a meta-symbol (meta-standard) called systems theory. Thus, the symbolic foundations for practice are the structures and processes of the system.

As suggested in my title, the focus of my argument here is that the existing system's perspective be replaced with what I call the "lived community experience." Again, I am not talking about getting rid of systems; rather, I am talking about where we ground practice and how we approach making schools better places for human beings to live, learn, and participate in. Many authors in my field have articulated similar values: Nel Noddings' ethic of caring (2006), Michael Fullan's moral leadership (2002), Robert Evans' *The human side of school change* (1996), John Hoyle's *Leadership and the force of love* (2002), Tom Sergiovanni's use of the work of Jurgen Habermas to call for the life-world of schools to drive the systems-world of schools (2000), Terrence Deal and Kent Peterson's *Shaping school culture* (1999), and many others too numerous to name. All of this is important and valuable work that, as a whole, presents a powerful set of symbols that promote and develop the human side of our field.

Nonetheless and acknowledging that I am getting out my really hot branding iron, for the most part these scholars base their arguments on post-positivist epistemological assumptions.

Positivism and Post-positivism

The distinction between positivism and post-positivism is a different set of assumptions on achieving objectivity, and the level of objectivity possible. Briefly, post-positivism assumes there is an objective reality independent of human perception that scientists can study and know. Post-positivism contrasts with this view and questions the possibility of true objective knowledge. Post-positivists' argue that it is impossible for any scientists to put aside their beliefs in order to see the world as it really is (Trochim, 2006). Because post-positivists believe that no individual can view the world as it really is, they argue that objectivity is a social phenomenon of group consensus. Post-positivists admit that because of errors in measurement and other human factors, true objectivity is impossible; nonetheless, the systemic processes supported by group consensus allow scientists to get as close to real objectivity as possible (Trochim, 2006). For post-positivists, getting it right is seen as a group effort but because it is a group effort, the "right" that is agreed upon is in fact, "objective." In the end, post-positivism is an epistemological adherence to the possibility of objective knowledge, or knowledge independent of human construction, interpretation, or manipulation. Regardless, while it is believed objective knowledge exists, we can never fully access it, but we can get close.

While similar in their critique of positivism, post-secularist differ from post-positivists in many ways that are relevant to my systems theory argument. The core difference, however, is on how post-positivism and post-secularism view objectivity. Post-secularists reject the privileging of secular language, or any language or symbol systems, as a lens to objectivity or, in the case of the post-positivists, collective objectivity. The heart of the issue is language, specifically the relationship between language, reality, and knowledge or, the relationship between symbols, reality, and knowledge.

Following is a one paragraph summary of a complex philosophical history focused on the role of the Enlightenment (research in progress) in the development of secular and non-secular epistemology (or language). The Enlightenment entailed, among other things, a whole-scale shift in the meaning of language. The epistemological shift toward positivism, objectivism and the scientific method was also a linguistic shift; or, a shift in the relationship between symbol (language) and knowledge. Through science, the scientific method, and the corresponding positivist epistemology, language became real; symbols became real. One result of this change was the development of two types of symbol systems; secular and sacred, logos and mythos, and objective knowledge and metaphysical belief. Before the Enlightenment, there was no understanding of language as objective or secular. Language was metaphorical, allegorical, and mythical (granted, there was a long history of philosophical development beginning with Aristotle that led to the Enlightenment; nonetheless, the ideas did not achieve broad cultural acceptance until the Enlightenment). Language was story and its relationship to reality was symbolic. As modernity progressed, however, the epistemology of logos, or objectivity, became dominant in the use of all language.

One result of what has become an implicit and unconscious assumption of objectivity in the use of language, is the interpretation of pre-secular narrative through a secular lens. Thus, pre-secular narrative is understood as grounded in mystical beliefs that are based on metaphysical knowledge assumptions; while secular language is viewed as objectively real. A key point raised by post-secular scholars (Caputo, 1997; 2006; Kearney 2001; 2003; 2004) is that this is not how human societies prior to the Enlightenment understood the narrative they were using. Rather, pre-secular people, not possessing the concepts of objective or secular, viewed language as symbolic and it never occurred to them that it was not metaphorical, allegorical, or mythological. But, and here is the key point for my paper, they viewed the metaphors, allegories and myths as representing reality, especially in regards to human beings living in relationship to the natural environment, families, larger social groups and still larger communities. Nonetheless, the reality represented by metaphors, allegories, and myths was not thought to be objective or subjective but simply real in the lived experiences represented by the myths, allegories, and metaphors.

From the post-secular perspective, a perspective that has unabashedly evolved from modernism (there is no call here to return to the days when Apollo rode across the sky pulling his chariot the sun), the form of our most basic knowledge of how we live together in loving, nurturing, and caring communities is not objective, rather, it is the wisdom of human experience historically expressed in the symbolic language of pre-secular belief traditions. Certainly, scholars such as Noddings (2006), Evans (1996), Hoyle (2002), Fullan (2002), Deal and Peterson (1999), and Sergiovanni (2000) are tapping into wisdom traditions when they call for human-centered educational organizations; yet, it seems they are making this call from within a post-positivist, systems-orientated symbol

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system. Simply, the arguments, if not explicitly assuming an objective orientation, are presented in a form that situates community life within an objective systems framework. In other words, the secular/sacred distinction is not challenged and as a result, calls for a centering of values emanating from the wisdom traditions is done with a tone of apology.

Thinking back to the example of Johnny, the symbolic language of the principal had no meaning grounded in either objectivity or lived-experience. From the point of view of Johnny who was afraid to pee, it was all talk. This disconnection between the language (symbols) and reality is huge and obvious and there is no common *mythos* to pull the two together. While my example is a case of a single boy, my point is that this type of disconnect between what is said, orally or symbolically, and lived experiences of people in schools is the norm.

Conclusion

I am concerned that the predominance of systems theory is actually making this situation worse. Under the bureaucratic weight of the takeover of education by the federal government, schools and schooling have never been so completely modern in form, structure, curriculum and pedagogy. Bureaucratic systems and processes, entirely dependent on assumptions of objectivity, have been strengthened and embedded with increased power to control everything that happens in schools. The impact of this for students, teachers, and parents is an overemphasis on measurement. Measurement has become the controlling symbol (language) in schools and the lived experience of individuals in schools is secondary to the symbolic meaning of getting the required measured results. In this environmental context, any linguistic or symbolic attempt to suggest that the purpose of school is anything other than systemic is inauthentic.

The central problem with the systems approach to educational change is that communal purposes of education are difficult to define and even harder to measure; they are not objective. As a result, the demand for measurement has done catastrophic damage to authentic teaching and learning as schools have become dominated by quantitative symbol systems focused on the need to score increasingly higher on standardized tests. Thus, test scores and measured performance are the symbolic purpose of the entire system. In addition, the rationale of the system is to sustain an economic system that is dependent upon ever increasing production and consumption of goods, services, and resources. It matters little that the economic system driving our educational system seems increasingly untenable as a viable option for the long term, and perhaps even the short term, survival of the human race. Regardless, we continue to prepare our children for a modern, objectively dependent, secular worldview. Meanwhile, education is eschewing any effort to prepare children to live in relationship to the land and people they will live with. Norman Wirzba in his introduction to a collection of essays by Wendell Berry (2003), explains:

Our unprecedented prosperity, rather than being founded in convivial wholeness with the earth and with others, is predicated on the systematic exhaustion or destruction of life's sources—soil, water, and air—as evidenced in flights to virtual worlds and growing reliance on “life-enhancing” drugs, antidepressants, antacids, and stress-management techniques—suggest pervasive unwillingness or inability to make this world a home, to find in our places and communities, our bodies and our work, a joyful resting place. Perhaps even worse, we are training generations of children to see our anxiety-ridden ways as the norm.

A characteristic of modernism is the embracing of science as truth. On the other hand, the wisdom of the world's sacred traditions is viewed as mythic belief. Modern institutions of the state, corporations, and public education have dismissed sacred texts as mere metaphysical musing while at the same time declaring scientific knowledge to be objective and universally true. One result of this is the acceptance of secularism as the only worldview appropriate for public institutions. Regardless, the problem with objective truth claims and the privileging of modernism through secularism is that these claims are unsupported with their own logic. Simply, the history of science has failed to provide a stable foundation for objectivity through science; in fact, with increasing levels of discovery in physics, chemistry, biology, and mathematics, science has actually become more complex and uncertain. The logic of modern truth claims cannot support objective truth claims with assumptions independent of their own conclusions. In other words, in order to prove that science represents objective knowledge, one must a priori assume that the scientific method itself is objective. One must assume objectivity to argue for objectivity.

This raises the question of the possibility that educators and educational scholars who usually distance themselves from anything theological or sacred may be missing one of the main currents of contemporary philosophy with profound possibilities for educational dialogue and change. In thinking about the oldest and most foundational philosophical questions in education, why are we educating and what are we doing when we educate, post-secular philosophy offers intriguing new insight for meaning and purpose in education. Post-secular philosophy

recognizes open systems theory as a descriptive belief system and as a result, its status as an objective, scientific foundation for the field of educational leadership loses all grounding. On the other hand, while the relevance of post-secular philosophy to education is in the early stages of development, the themes presented for discussion and conversation here actively quest for and believe in the possible impossibility of true and sustained social transformation; of developing communities with passion, of compassion.

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THE CALIBANS OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS: “AT RISK” STUDENTS PLACED AT RISK

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Introduction

Unlike criteria for categorizing within philosophy or within the physical and biological sciences, the criteria for systematically categorizing students are often socially, politically, and economically driven so that students may fit into the “at risk” or “troubled” category based upon such conditions as their home addresses, the “feeder schools” they attended, their English-communication proficiencies, their race, and/or their ethnicity. Moreover, school administrators, counselors, teachers, education researchers, and those in related fields often go beyond mere classifying and labeling, for they hierarchically arrange categories of students so that “gifted and talented,” “advanced,” “leader,” “good boy,” and “good girl” top the hierarchy while the Calibans¹ of the school system, especially the “troubled,” “disturbed,” “disruptive,” and “at risk” form the lowest academic, social (Foucault, 1977, p. 275; Ferguson, 2001), and political tiers of this hierarchy of “haves” and “have nots.” Contributing to social constructions of gender, this vertical arrangement of children differs according to sex so that the criteria for the “good boy” may be the same or similar to the criteria for the “bad girl.” Similarly, and contributing to social constructions of race, criteria for the “Good-Bad, White Boy” that place him at the top of the hierarchy may be the same criteria that position at its base the “Bad-Black Boy,” the “Disruptive-Black Boy,” and especially the Black boy “at risk” (Ferguson, 2001).

Pathologizing and Objectifying

Acts of symbolic violence, categorizing, labeling, and arranging children by socioeconomic and political pedigree metamorphose over time into actual physical, psychological, intellectual, and emotional violence against children. This categorizing and labeling position children to be observed, studied, known, and treated often pathologizing them into particular kinds of subjects suited to particular functions or dysfunctions (Foucault, 1977). The label serves to discipline and normalize in order to control (Foucault, 1977), serves to represent children in a preordained manner so that they become what the label represents them to be: detestable, abject, and monstrous (Kristeva, 1983/1987). One especially sees this kind of social, political, and economic violence against children located within the “at risk” label. Indeed, according to the U.S. Department of Education (Kleiner, Porch, Farris, 2002; U.S. Department of Education; Paglin & Fager, 1997),² 612,900 youth in the U.S. are labeled, documented, and reported as “at risk” students, are represented as putting others at risk, and are isolated and contained in alternative school buildings, detention centers, or school-within-a-school (SWS) classrooms. Paradoxically, 84% of school administrators connect these students to the juvenile justice system rather than to educators, mentors, education, and possibilities (Kleiner, Porch, Farris, 2002; U.S. Department of Education; Paglin & Fager, 1997). Although the U.S. Department of Education (Paglin & Fager, 1997) defines “at risk” to mean “at risk” of educational failure “as indicated by poor grades, truancy, disruptive behavior, suspension, pregnancy, or similar factors associated with early withdrawal from school,” one need only open such journals as *Urban Review*, to see that scholars researching various phenomena in youth liberally attach the “at risk” label to all kinds of children attending public schools.

Although the concept and application of “at risk” as category and label merit extensive investigation, here, I merely begin the investigation by challenging the “at risk” category and label. After defining Kristeva’s (1983/1987) ethics of love and of difference to illuminate the representational power “at risk” exercises through the images it creates and evokes, I identify four of many social and conceptual images the “at risk” symbol projects, images that individually and collectively represent children as monstrous aliens—exterior, abject, detestable and unlovable (Kristeva, 1983/1987). I then return to Kristeva’s (1983/1987) ethics of love and of difference, her “outlaw ethics,” for practicing Kristeva’s (1983/1987) ethics “outside” law subverts or at least opens an exit route from the prison house of “at risk” language. Finally, I suggest following her steps for social change by first working through the abjection of the “at risk” container without abjecting the child as child, student, and human being whom current language, imaging, and action have *placed at risk*.

The Power of Representation

In her ethics of love and of difference, Kristeva (1983/1987) theorizes that labels, linguistic symbols in particular, create social and conceptual images that pervade and influence society. Kristeva, (1983/1987) emphasizes that one is able neither to change these social and conceptual images nor halt their reproduction and influence without removing the labels—the symbols themselves—that beckon these images and initiate their reproduction and influence. Citing the pregnant mother as her example, Kristeva (1983/1987) points to western society’s historically

imaging pregnant mothers as detestable, radical others—exterior, abject, unlovable, unidentifiable, and monstrous. Kristeva (1983/1987) contends that this view of the pregnant mother as detestable other will not change until society *re-presents* her using symbols that call forth positive rather than monstrous social and conceptual renderings of the pregnant mother. Kristeva's (1983/1987) theory helps make sense of the way federal, state, and district policy makers, and school and district personnel act to control those categorized and labeled "at risk," for school personnel increase discipline (Ferguson, 2001), decrease tolerance for disciplinary infractions (Ferguson, 2001), hide those placed at risk from view (Paglin & Fager, 1997), isolate them, push them out of school, and hide them from such accountability mechanisms as national, standardized tests, at least in part so that the school and district won't look bad. We in U.S. society warehouse children we deem undesirable, abject, or monstrous.

Why has this label, this linguistic symbol, "at risk," come—not to represent children in danger of educational failure—but to represent children as dull-minded, lazy truants, as poor academic performers, and as disruptive, promiscuous, and dangerous to themselves and others? Why does "at risk" exercise such representational power even as it fails actually to represent the children imprisoned in the category? I examine four of the many images "at risk" summons in order to demonstrate through example that the images "at risk" darkens reproduce themselves in ways that support Foucault's (1977) notion that manufacturing delinquents, the detestable, abject, and monstrous (Kristeva, 1983/1987), and especially the institutional manufacturing of delinquents, is socially useful.

Representation 1: Intellectually Challenged and/or Behaviorally Disruptive

Rather than galvanizing school administrators, counselors, and teachers to work together with students labeled "at risk," their parents or guardians, and the community at large, the linguistic symbols forming the term, "at risk," apparently incite school personnel to make particular assumptions that cause them to work against these students, to translate "at risk of educational failure" into "void of brain power," to focus on behaviors rather than academics (the area in which they are, in principle, "at risk" [Ferguson, 2001]), or to assume "at risk" students are both intellectually challenged and behaviorally disruptive. The disconcerting assumption that "at risk" means mentally and/or intellectually challenged means that highly intelligent children categorized and labeled "at risk" have Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and Behavior Improvement Plans (BIPs), are placed in special education classes, are excluded from school activities, and have been (at least before No Child Left Behind, NCLB) exempt from taking national achievement tests that could alert school personnel to many "at risk" students' high levels of intelligence. "At risk" often means that school personnel do little to enhance these children's intellectual growth. In many cases, teachers magnify their focus on behaviors to the exclusion of academics once a child is placed in the "at risk" category (Ferguson, 2001).

Although such behaviorists as Lee Canter (1993), creator of Assertive Discipline, maintain that children cannot learn if they are misbehaving or acting out and that "nothing is going to stop me, the teacher, from teaching," many administrators and teachers move far beyond Canter's (1993) premise in fact to stop teaching those they perceive as lacking in discipline (Ferguson, 2001). They focus instead on disciplining and therefore prevent these same students from learning the content, concepts, and skills they are in school to learn (Ferguson, 2001). They teach lessons in social, educational, and political injustice. Although the disciplining one often sees in schools in no way leads to students' self-discipline in academics (Ferguson, 2001), teachers sometimes make the decision to discipline first because they also believe that "at risk" students are not smart enough to learn unless sitting motionlessly and silently while the teacher pours information into their heads (Ferguson, 2001). Such teachers often unfairly discipline children placed "at risk" while ignoring the same behaviors in others (Ferguson, 2001). These actions communicate to all members of the class that the teacher is prejudiced against particular students, "doesn't like them," or even "hates" them (Ferguson, 2001). Teachers resorting to discipline rather than providing academic assistance and rewarding students' academic efforts and triumphs reason that disciplining the "at risk" into docility will lead to their learning and ultimately to educational and academic achievement rather than failure (Ferguson, 2001).

Representation 2: Dangerous to Self and Others

The "at risk" symbol has created and evoked social and conceptual images of students' endangering themselves, their siblings, and their parents, and endangering and negatively influencing teachers, other students, counselors, administrators, and those in the community at large (Ferguson, 2001). In fact, school personnel systematically separate "at risk" students from others by containing them within punishing rooms (*In House/School Suspension* classrooms), school-within-a-school (SWS) alternative classrooms, alternative school buildings, and detention centers where they separate the "at risk" from others (Worley, 2006; Ferguson, 2001; Paglin & Fager, 1997). School personnel then isolate the "at risk" from each other by assigning them to individual carrels where they are to work

independently, eat their school meals, and, in principle, spend seven or eight hours per day learning and practicing obedience (Worley, 2006; Ferguson, 2001). Separating, containing, and isolating "at risk" students, controlling their movements and behaviors, and curtailing their socializing are to discipline those categorized and labeled "at risk" in order to protect them from each other and to protect others from them. These disciplinary and protective techniques also limit "at risk" students' access to information and knowledge, hinder their learning academic content, concepts, and skills, and impede their learning positive social and workplace skills (Worley, 2006). This limiting, hindering, and impeding thereby arrest these students' educational and academic successes, curtail the possibility of their learning to think, problem-solve, act, and live creatively (Winnicott, 1990) and independently, and reduce the possibility of their self-empowerment (Worley, 2006).

Representation 3: Mentally and Physically Ill

Perhaps because researchers for the U.S. Department of Education (1997) define "at risk" as "at risk" of educational failure, the "at risk" label has caused, it seems, factors associated with "educational failure" and educational failure itself to mutate. Specifically, although "at risk of educational failure" subordinates such factors as pregnancy, alcoholism, and drug abuse that may contribute to educational failure, in the mutation, such indicators as pregnancy, alcoholism, and drug abuse subordinate "at risk of educational failure." These factors associated with early withdrawal from school and therefore with educational failure imbue the "at risk" category and label so that the indicators themselves become objects of psychological, sociological, special needs, and health studies, objects to be medicated, treated, reformed, and transformed (Foucault, 1977). Thus, this third image that "at risk" summons is of children placed in the "at risk" category because they are at least perceived to be mentally and physically ill and therefore children to be studied, treated, and known. With this knowledge of "at risk" pathology, school personnel may then control the "at risk" and use knowledge of their "at risk" pathologies to identify Others school personnel might categorize, label, and indeed pathologize as "at risk" (Foucault, 1977).

Representation 4: Criminal and Potentially Criminal for Capital

Not only do those characterized by such indicators as pregnancy, alcoholism, and drug abuse associated with early withdrawal from school become objects of observation, surveillance, and study—objects or illnesses to be treated and known—they become capital for researchers who, when publishing their findings, profit from the "at risk" label's representation of "illness to be studied." For business people, those pathologized as "at risk" become monetary profit. Representing "at risk" as adolescent thorns in their parents' sides, as children their parents fear, as sullen, talking-back, and moody child-adults helps businesses peddle "at risk" to middle-class parents struggling with their adolescent children, children who are often simply being the adolescents they are. Offering boot camps, military schools, and other "cost effective and immediate solutions" (*Help My Teen*, p. 1) that low-income parents cannot afford and probably do not discover because they may have neither computer nor internet access, such organizations sell the "at risk" category and label to middle-class parents concerned about their child's moodiness, "moping around the house," and "talking back." These businesses sell "at risk" as representing these middle-class children just as these children are bought and sold into "at risk." Those in the business of selling the "at risk" label to concerned parents underscore for parents that they may choose to intervene—with *Help My Teen*'s assistance, for example—or choose instead one of the following less desirable options: they may adapt the *laissez-faire* stance of letting their "at risk" child experience life and "ride out" the bad, hoping she/he survives; decide to get therapy, family counseling, and other short-term mental health or drug treatments while they "wait and see" if their child emerges from the criminality of being "at risk"; by letting the experts on the crime of being "at risk" take care of their problem, involve police, foster care, or state placement agencies thereby freeing themselves of this "at risk" child, saving themselves from further embarrassment. With such choices, parents are sure to hand over their personal information in order to get the free catalogue and to learn the price of purchasing intervention. Agency employees in such businesses first pin the "at risk" label on the child, then sell the label to concerned parents, and finally sell the parents a "long term treatment plan" for their child, a plan to be administered in a location where the child *placed at risk* will have time to internalize "changes in attitude and behavior" (*Help My Teen*, p. 2). These typically white, middle-class children join the at-risk-delinquency-production-line schools have set in motion, fall onto conveyor belts with those children school personnel have already *placed at risk* when they recognized their resemblance to Representation #1, intellectually challenged and/or behaviorally disruptive, to Representation #2, a danger to self and others, to Representation #3, mentally and/or physically ill, and/or to Representation #4, criminal or potentially criminal. Together with concerned, unknowing parents, these for-profit agencies apparently place many children who would have grown out of adolescence "at risk" of never escaping the reality that the "at risk" category and label

create through the negative images they impel, images of the detestable, abject, and monstrous (Kristeva, 1983/1987).

“At risk,” apparently meant to represent those “heading for” educational failure, meant to be the red flag educational lifeguards notice, the flag a child drowning in a sea of educational troubles uses to hail the lifeguard to save him/her, has instead created social and conceptual images of delinquency. These images have deeply embedded themselves in cultural, social, economic, and political reality so that the detestable, abject, and monstrous, the delinquents “at risk” evokes and creates, are a societal need that schools fulfill in ever more expedient ways given their current reliance on testing, state-mandated methodologies, materials, and curricula. Representing and reproducing images of children as detestable, abject, and monstrous others (Kristeva, 1983/1987), “at risk” creates a delinquency production line, a circuit of delinquency (Foucault, 1977, p. 278), a homogenous population devoid of imagination, creativity, and independent thought, and ultimately a nation of delinquents within the nation (Foucault, 1977, p. 281) called the USA: the united states of at risk.

All four representations I have outlined call forth images that reproduce themselves, pervade and influence society, and transmute schools’ *in loco parentis* discourse into hegemonic discourse and practice. “At risk,” made to represent all that it as symbol has created, comes next to run its own production line without assistance from school personnel, parents, and community members (Foucault, 1977).

Outlaw Ethics: Changing Representations

Much like the public school-place itself, “at risk” becomes a socially, economically, and politically constructed place of isolation, ignorance, and illness, a place where children are kept under the scientist’s microscope, held in place on the slide by the slide plate for observation, monitoring, surveillance, study, diagnosis, treatment, and the scientist’s coming to know (Foucault, 1977). School children are indeed *placed at risk*, formed into particular kinds of object-subjects. Many educators would agree that the “at risk” category, itself a prison for those *placed at risk*, has failed to decrease educational failure (Foucault, 1977, p. 272). Many too may ask if failure is built into the “at risk” category, for the images the “at risk” symbol paints rarely resemble its official definition: “at risk of educational failure” (Paglin & Fager, 1997). Schools seem to have become a closed milieu of delinquency (Foucault, 1977, p. 281) where students *placed at risk* are normalized into delinquency (Foucault, 1977), where enclosure, loss of liberty, and the surveying, all-seeing eye are omnipresent (Foucault, 1977), where the delinquents are inside not outside the law (Foucault, 1977, p. 281). Foucault (1977) reminds his readers that although “outlaw” often inspires images of a social nomad on the fringes of a docile, frightened order, criminality, in this case, “at risk,” is not born on the fringes, but born under “ever more insistent surveillance by an accumulation of disciplinary coercion” (p. 301) and often under the guise of safety. If Foucault is correct, given the current public school environment where disciplinary mechanisms of space, time, and movement enforced by omnipresent surveillance systems reign supreme, most children in public schools are in the process of being normalized into delinquency and certainly organized into educational—if not school—failure. Perhaps, then, the only way to escape such normalization is through an ethics that functions outside the law, “outlaw ethics” (Kristeva, 1983/1987).

Seeking the power to transform society from the inside out, Kristeva (1983/1987) finds her outlaw ethics on “love that which is different” and “love alterity because alterity is within” (Oliver, 1993, pp. 186, 188). In direct opposition to Kant’s ethical imperative, “do unto others as you would have others do unto you”; “love thy neighbor as thyself,” Kristeva’s “outlaw ethics” operates on loving the other *in oneself* rather than on loving the other *as one loves oneself*.³ Substituting “at risk” for Kristeva’s example of the pregnant mother and following her steps for social change begins with working through the abjection of the “at risk” container without abjecting the “at risk” as child and the “at risk” as student, and without abjecting those *placed* in this location, *at risk*. I have begun this process illuminating, in part, the economics of, politics of, and societal investment in “at risk.” I conclude with the reminder that children are *placed at risk* daily, are regularly normalized into delinquency, and are regularly represented, treated, and then known as monstrous, unlovable others we must hide from public view. Who, then, will be hidden from view once anonymous school powers have *placed at risk* all children who cross public school thresholds?

ENDNOTES

¹Caliban, a character from Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, is a base, lowly creature representing "pure flesh," the purely carnal in human nature (devoid of the spiritual), or "earth" with little or no evidence of the other three elements – fire, air, and water.

²The U.S. Department of Education and the National Center for Educational Statistics seem to gather information for different kinds of statistics annually, so that one cannot trace annual differences in the number of students "at risk," incarcerated, or dropping out of school, for example. Thus, while I recognize that the statistics I cite are old, they are the only ones currently available. In a special edition of *Review of Research in Education* (vol. 33, 2009) on risk, schooling, and equity, I noticed that many bibliographical references come from the late 1990s and earlier.

³Kristeva does away with the solipsism that threatened Descartes and Husserl.

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STANDING OUT WHILE OTHERS WERE SITTING IN: A UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT'S REFLECTION ON LEADING DURING CHALLENGING TIMES

Jill Cabrera, The University of Mississippi

Introduction

Experienced educational leaders have a wealth of wisdom to share from their individual stories. Current and future educational leaders can benefit from hearing these stories which enhance formal educational experiences through practical examples. These valuable stories and the life lessons emanating from them will be lost if they are not recorded. The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore the perceptions and reflections of an experienced leader in higher education related to conflict management and resolution.

In the fall of 2008, I had the privilege of interviewing a career university president as part of my ongoing study to learn about conflict resolution in the context of higher education and K-12 educational leadership. During this interview, I opened up the floor for the participant to reflect on his experiences and share the wisdom he gained as a K-12 public school educator and as the president of four large public university systems.

Early on in the interview, the participant emphasized the pervasive nature of conflict, "It seems that every place I was hired as a president or as a senior official involved conflict resolution."¹ He humorously remarked, "I was sued so often that my mother introduced me as my son, the defendant"² because his role as the chief executive officer exposed him to disputes of all types. However, this career university president exemplified qualities of optimism, keen intelligence, humor, and charm throughout the interview which provided the researcher a glimpse into why he excelled in his leadership and in his ability to mediate and resolve conflict.

A University in the Northwest

The participant described two major conflict situations that occurred during his tenure at the first university. One conflict centered on his appointment to the position of president. The other conflict was related to a larger societal issue in the early 1970s – student rebellion on college campuses – and how he applied conflict resolution skills to deflate a sit in.

Prior to becoming university president, the participant had been a teacher, football coach, and administrator in K-12 public education. He explained how his background as a coach was perceived by some of the faculty at the university and how he addressed that conflict.

Some people think that the people who are jocks are semi-bright . . . they have a low estimate of their ability, and so they don't really associate them with serious education sometimes. Well, I hope that there's a difference. I love to play football. I enjoy coaching football. I also taught English, and I thought I was well-qualified for the job, but some of the faculty vocally disapproved of my appointment. The way it was resolved, I hope, was that I simply got to the people who were critical. I knew who they were, and I sat down, and I talked to them, and I told them the circumstances under which I coached football and was a teacher and went into higher education . . . that I did not think that was going to impair my ability to do the job, that I hoped they would make their judgment on other things that happened at the institution rather than [my coaching]. That is not a gilt-edged credential in academia, I found out, to be a former coach.³

He added, "I assured the [concerned people] that we would do our best to have a program and that our athletes would be scholars."⁴

As time passed, the participant's commitment to the whole institution and high priority for academia was evident. During his ten years at that institution, the university grew from four thousand five hundred students to at least eight thousand five hundred and went from having virtually no graduate programs to offering the Ph. D. in education, biology, and pharmacy. The size of the campus (in acreage) doubled as well as the number of buildings, which included a new library. It was the first of any college campus in the country to construct a covered football field.

In the era of the early 1970s, many colleges and universities were struggling with the management of student rebellion and sit ins. The participant shared his view that acting on freedoms of speech and expression did not rationalize unlawful acts or infringement on the rights of others, saying that he had looked to the model of Father Hesberg, then President of Notre Dame. In his account, the participant describes the assertive actions he took to diminish conflict and student rebellion.

**CABRERA: STANDING OUT WHILE OTHERS WERE SITTING IN: A UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT'S REFLECTION ON
LEADING DURING CHALLENGING TIMES**

When I was president . . . (it was during the time of student rebellion and closing down of campuses and so forth) a professor in the art department was riding his motorcycle around the balcony of the theater. His department chair and fellow faculty members remembered that he was a non-tenured appointment, and decided that they didn't want him back the next year. And the department chairman so informed him. Since the faculty backed up the department chair, I did not offer him a contract. I came to school the next morning, and here were 50 students sitting in my office protesting the fact that this faculty member had been dismissed. So I invited the leaders of the group into the conference room, and they said, "Well, we're going to sit in your office until this is resolved." And I said, "No. I've called the district judge, and I've got a court order coming in saying that anyone who's in here will be arrested and put in jail for violation," I said, "You all are all suspended from this institution immediately and will be suspended until you come back and bring your fathers and your mothers and this is discussed with our dean of men and the dean of women." At first they weren't going to leave; then they decided to leave . . . and all of them were suspended. Well, this killed them that they had to bring in their fathers and mothers. They were very angry about this, but the families came in, and we discussed it with each one of them. It took a little time, because, as I said, there were 50 of them. Nonetheless, we were not turning the school over to a mob of angry students. I was very embarrassed for higher education that some 400 institutions shut down that spring. We didn't. And again the mediation was that we'd be glad to shut the university down, except we wanted them to know that all pay would stop that day other than for the security people necessary to keep the campus safe and that there would be no work, no credit given for any work done that semester. There would just be a blank semester, so all of the work would be gone the day we shut the university.⁵

The university president's adept use of negotiation skills to maintain order for the academic benefit of the students was rewarded. He concluded by stating that "there was unanimous support to keep the university open."⁶ He summed up by emphasizing the need to keep an even temper, use a sense of humor, and maintain one's perspective in navigating conflictual situations.

A State University System

The participant provided an example of conflict resolution within a larger context during his time as chancellor of a state university system.

One of the conflicts that had to be resolved [was] a class action suit with regard to discrimination in pay. A math professor felt that many males in the department were receiving a much higher salary than she; this spread to all eight institutions there. They all have the same governing board. This went on for nine months, and the burden of proof for the institutions was to show that the differences in salary were due to differences in terms of qualifications for the job, the degrees that the people had, or the experiences that they had had, or when they were hired and so forth. Pay was determined by something other than sex. Well, this was a federal case and a woman was judge. When all the testimony was in, everyone went out feeling good about the outcome. The university did not have to pay huge penalties, but the women were confident that the university gave this serious attention and that they respected the women's employment and that the ills or the wrongs or the disparities would be corrected without the federal government having to impose a decision upon the institutions.⁷

While he indicated that the case demanded a great deal of time and energy, he expressed satisfaction with the outcome which he believed both constructive and fair.

A Southern State University

The participant described a critical event that occurred during his presidency at a university in the southern United States. In this situation, he gave credit to the strong student government for effectively managing the conflict in which an ex-Klansman intended to speak at the campus. As he explained:

We had an open speakers policy on campus, so political candidates were permitted to speak on the campuses. But this was all run by the student government. In issuing these permits to speakers, they were told not to put up posters, or not to say that the university was the sponsor of this. [The ex-Klansman] came in and started . . . plastering posters all over. The information they put out on the campaign was that he had been invited by the students to speak on the campus with the idea that the speakers were supported and authorized. Well, the student policy was an open policy. The president of our student body . . . I remember we called her the Steel Magnolia . . . She was a beautiful, very intelligent young lady . . . she just informed everyone that he would not be speaking on the campus and that he'd not observed the rules that they had put out. I [received] a phone call from the president of one of the national television services. He said, "We put a lot of money into sending a crew down

there to cover this and we're going to have this on national television." And I said, "Well . . . you may have something . . . but, not on this campus." And he said, "Who . . . is running that place anyhow?" I said "[the name of the student body president]." She was the student body president, and she stood right up to that.⁸

The participant briefly mentioned a conflict related to a contingent that advocated flying the Confederate flag beneath the Stars and Stripes. He indicated that he met with the parties involved and resolved the issue.

A Common Theme, Valuing People

A common theme emerged from this leader's reflective discussion about resolving conflict in higher education institutions – that of valuing people.

The participant consistently conveyed that he valued the people with whom he interacted while university president. When he discussed his role as a mediator, he explained the importance of affirming the value of the parties in the dispute. He described the importance of the constituents as resources in preventing and/or resolving conflict as well as fostering the success of the universities.

The best thing I can say is have your relationship with these constituencies solidified so that you can activate them when you are in crisis. I estimated at one time there were 132 internal and external constituencies with which a president must interact in a given year. I've made lists of those, and as I've said, I've also found when you overlook one of these constituencies, you pay a big price.⁹

Among those constituencies listed were groups such as the faculty senate, distinguished professors, and retired faculty and staff. He conveyed that those individuals and groups provided great suggestions and brought reason and good will to resolving various conflicts. Furthermore, he expressed high confidence in his student government leaders and emphasized their important role in providing information that helped him make informed decisions on behalf of the student body.

Another aspect of his value for people was evident in his reflections – that was the value for people of varied cultures and races. He referred to a "mosaic of culture" at a southwestern university where he served because it represents to him a place where people of many cultures can feel at home and comfortable. The president described how extensive and successful efforts were made to prepare hundreds of Native American teachers for the Navajo Nation. The university also published and housed an extensive collection of literature written by Hispanic authors; this was important because the population of the state was 55 percent Hispanic. A graduate program for creative writing was established, and highly renowned Hispanic writers were added to the faculty. As he described the university, "all of the people fit in and feel at home, feel it's their campus – the architecture, the art, the poetry, the literature . . . revolves around these native people."¹⁰ These examples illustrate how valuing others was inherent in his leadership.

Interpretation of Results

Through his stories, this successful and effective leader revealed wisdom about dealing constructively with conflict. Underlying the use of sound principles and strategies supported by theory and practice in the field of conflict resolution were his own beliefs and values about people. Many factors contributed to this president standing out as a leader, and as I heard his reflections I recognized that most people walking away from him must have felt better after being in his presence.

ENDNOTES

1. Unnamed University President Interviewed by the author, November 5, 2008
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid.

GUESS WHO'S COMING TO DINNER? WILLIAM A. WIRT, PROGRESSIVE EDUCATION, AND THE NEW DEAL

Sam Stack, University of West Virginia

Introduction

William A. Wirt was one of the most noted and respected educators in the early 20th century. His work at the renowned Gary Schools in Gary, Indiana, a US Steel town created to house blast furnace workers, was lauded in Evelyn and John Dewey's *Schools of Tomorrow* published in 1915.¹ According to historian Arthur Zilversmit, it was not the administrative efficiency and the use of the school plant that attracted Evelyn and John Dewey, but the "social and community ideas that were behind these features."² In Gary, the Deweys saw public service, community outreach, health and adult education, and improving the living conditions of the immigrants flocking to Gary. Progressive education historian Lawrence Cremin writes, "Dewey had argued in *The School and Society* that progressive education was essentially an effort to adapt the school to the circumstances, needs, and opportunities of industrial civilization."³ Wirt had studied Dewey at the University of Chicago and at Gary "had the opportunity to design a school system from the bottom up: and he began almost immediately to put his ideas into practice."⁴

John Franklin Bobbitt's article, "The Elimination of Waste in Education," published in 1912, outlined Gary as the ideal type in terms of scientific management and efficiency. Bobbitt referred to Wirt as an education engineer and wrote, "The first principle of scientific management is to use all the plant all the available time," including night, Saturday, and Sundays.⁵ Dewey critic and colleague Randolph Bourne referred to Wirt's accomplishment as an "admirable synthesis" of the best ideas of progressive education.⁶ It was most likely Bourne's discussion of the Gary Schools in *The New Republic* that cemented Wirt in the national arena. Bourne believed Wirt had solved the problem of industrial education, not merely becoming a fancy name for vocational training. "It had provided a large measure of individual instruction," wrote Bourne, "and it exemplified the education truth that learning can come only through doing." For Bourne, Gary was clearly a democratic organization, but what did he see? What was Wirt's view of democracy? How could he be perceived to be a true exponent of Dewey's view of progressive education when he held so conservative values about political, economic, and social life, and seemed to champion scientific efficiency? Attempting to make sense of these questions only brings attention to the complex nature of progressive education, which was far from a monolithic movement if a movement at all. Cremin writes that Bourne through his writing had given the Gary Schools the "stamp of progressive authenticity."⁷ Yet, regardless of that authenticity, Wirt experienced general failure in his attempt to put aspects of the Gary Plan in New York city schools. But by the time of the depression and in his mid-fifties, Superintendent Wirt could "look back on three decades of successful educational leadership."⁸ His popularity was running high. His family life was secure. He could look forward to his remaining years as superintendent, then quiet retirement. He could write his autobiography, perhaps the long-deferred history of the platoon plan, or even devote himself to his first love, economic theory."⁹ But William Wirt was far from content.

Education, Depression and the New Deal

Wirt's views on economic theory and his concerns about the influence of the social reconstructionists at Teachers College and their critique of capitalism pushed him to challenge them and eventually the New Deal. Historian Ronald Cohen notes that, "Wirt connected schooling with broader economic and political forces through informing students about economic theory and history, particularly price fluctuation and depressions."¹⁰ For Wirt the capitalist economy was merely experiencing a hiccup and that such thoughts as the workers becoming the owners of the means of production were foolish. Wirt attempted to share his economic views with FDR, but apparently was rebuffed, so he turned to American capitalists and those who held more conservative theories on the economy, in reality to those whose views were similar to his own.¹¹ During the Depression, even Wirt's renowned platoon system was becoming mired in debt, and he supported the magazine *The Platoon School* out of his own pocket, the magazine under the direction of long time Wirt associate Alice Barrows. While a supporter of the platoon school, Barrows was not a supporter of Wirt's politics and economic theories, and in 1931 she resigned as the editor of the magazine.¹² Barrows had always leaned to the left, strongly believed in the New Deal, and during the Depression worked for Harold Ickes in the Office of Education under the Department of the Interior. Barrows seemed to believe friendship and collegiality were more binding than political ideology. She would soon find out William Wirt did not hold those same views. Even though Wirt had been attacking the New Deal since the passage of the National Industry Recovery Act, Barrows invited Wirt to her home on September 1, 1933, just outside of Washington, for a gathering of friends and fellow colleagues. This dinner party soon became the talk of the nation as Wirt used the

dinner party as a springboard to attack the New Deal, its policies, and those he feared were interested in overthrowing the government. The dinner guests included Robert Bruere, David Coyle, Lawrence Todd, Hildegaard Kneeland, Mary Taylor, and Alice Barrows. Wirt used the dinner party as the focus of his attack on New Deal “brain trusters” and made it quite clear during the hearing that he was not a friend of Dr. Rexford Tugwell or Henry Wallace, Secretary of Agriculture. Wirt’s thoughts of the evening and his charge that the “brain trusters” were attempting to overthrow the government were soon in print and drew attention far from the shores of Gary, including Congress. Wirt sent a memo to more than a hundred people, including newspapers detailing the event and discussion at the dinner party.

Select Committee Hearings

On Tuesday, April 10, 1934, the Honorable Alfred L. Bulwinkle of North Carolina convened a select committee in the United States House of Representatives to investigate the charges made by Dr. William A. Wirt. Bulwinkle, who was a former prosecutor and World War I veteran, represented the 11th District and had served in Congress from 1921–1929], being reelected in 1931. Bulwinkle was southern democrat, one torn at times by the dilemma of states’ rights and the growing power of the federal government. He had previously served as a state prosecutor in the textile “mill strike of 1929, and had been a leading defender of the South against the invasion of labor organizers from the North.”¹³ What came to be known as House Resolution 317, the resolution authorized the summons of Dr. Wirt of Gary, Indiana to reveal the source regarding statements he had made to the “effect that the United States is in the process of a deliberately planned revolution” and that certain officials of the US government were attempting to undermine recovery efforts begun through the New Deal.¹⁴ Wirt’s memorandum had been read on March 23, 1934, by James Rand Jr., who chaired the Committee of the Nation, before the Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee of the House of Representatives.¹⁵ Appearing before the House Select Committee, Wirt willingly shared his dinner party memo. Wirt believed the “brain trusters” of the New Deal wished to destroy what Washington, Jefferson, and Lincoln had labored so hard to build and reconstruct their own America largely in their version of socialism. “I was told,” Wirt claimed,

that they believed that by thwarting our then-evident recovery they would be able to prolong the country’s destitution until they had demonstrated to the American people that the Government must operate industry and commerce. I was told that of course commercial banks could not make long time capital loans and that they would be able to destroy, by propaganda, the other institutions that had been making our capital loans. Then we can push Uncle Sam into the position where he must make these capital loans. And of course, when Uncle Sam becomes our financier he must also follow his money with control and management.¹⁶

Wirt also suggested that the planners had FDR under their control and that FDR was merely a Kerensky. “We believe that we can keep Mr. Roosevelt there until we are ready to supplant him with a Stalin,” Wirt claimed of the conspirators. “Eventually he can easily be displaced because of his bad decisions,” the conspirators continued, “With Mr. Roosevelt’s background we do not expect him to see this revolution through.”¹⁷ At this point in the conversation Wirt claimed he asked how the conspirators would explain all this to the American people. According to Wirt, the conspirators stated that they would merely “point the finger and scorn at the traitorous opposition. These traitors in the imaginary war against the depression would be made the goats. And the American people would agree that they, the brain trusters, had been too lenient and in the future they, the brain trusters, should be more firm in dealing with the opposition.”¹⁸ There would be a crackdown with the big stick.

Wirt reported that at the dinner party he had been told that he did not fully grasp the power of propaganda and that now it was virtually a science. The conspirators could use the media, “they could depend on the psychology of empty stomachs, and they would keep them empty,” the masses soon believing that any change is better than starvation. Farmers would align with the masses, “united for a redistribution of the wealth of the other fellow.”¹⁹

Following Wirt’s testimony, the Select Committee called Alice Barrows, who seemed dismayed and betrayed by someone she considered a friend. Barrows was working for the Office of Education as a specialist in school building problems and had worked there since 1919. By 1934 she had known William Wirt about twenty years. Barrows had asked Wirt to come to her home on September 1, 1933, to meet some of her colleagues and discuss educational theories, particularly Wirt’s. When asked by Chair Bulwinkle about the dinner conversation Barrows responded: “Mr. Chairman, as a dinner, it was not a success because Dr. Wirt talked practically all the time. I have known Dr. Wirt for 20 years and I think that everyone who knows him knows that he does have the capacity for talking three and four hours at a time.”²⁰ Barrows made it clear that at no time were the names of FDR, Kerensky, Tugwell, Stalin, or Wallace mentioned during the conversation. Following Barrows, the Committee called Miss Hildegaard

Kneeland, who was chief of the economic division on the Bureau of Home Economics in the Department of Agriculture. Kneeland admitted she tried several times to “interrupt the flow” of Wirt’s one way conversation, but failed. Kneeland did interrupt Wirt when he suggested a return to the days of the mid-1920s and prosperity. Kneeland claimed she objected to Wirt’s claim and told the committee as she implied to Wirt, “I am confident that this country is able to go on to a much greater prosperity than existed in 1926, although I recognize that there was a prosperity there that was much greater than this country had enjoyed in earlier times.”²¹ Wirt had considered Miss Kneeland as one of the primary conspirators, a charge she vehemently denied. When asked by Republican Lehlbach of New Jersey who she thought was the most reliable present day authority on political economy, Kneeland gave the name of Wesley Clair Mitchell, the husband of Lucy Sprague Mitchell. Lehlbach also probed Kneeland on her former association with the American Civil Liberties Union hereafter ACLU.²²

The next party guest called was Mary Taylor, who was employed in the Office of the Consumers’ Council of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration AAA. Previously employed in the export business in sales and accounting, Taylor now edited a bulletin published by the Consumers’ Council called the *Consumers’ Guide*. Taylor corroborated the testimony of Barrows and Kneeland, claiming that Wirt never engaged in any conversation on the Gary Schools or his experience in New York. The Republican members probed Taylor incessantly on whether Rexford Tugwell and a planned agricultural economy were ever discussed, a charge Taylor denied.²³

The journalist Lawrence Todd was sworn in next. Todd was presently employed by the Tass Agency, which he described to the Committee as the Associated Press of the Soviet Union. At the time of the dinner party Todd worked for the Federated Press as a correspondent. Todd was invited to the party to meet Dr. Wirt and admitted he had hoped to hear Wirt’s views on education. Todd believed his association with the Soviet news agency and previous labor papers had stirred the political pot and drawn the other guests into an unfortunate incident. Todd was also questioned about his earlier association with the ACLU.²⁴

Robert Bruere was the next guest sworn in. Bruere was an industrial relations counselor, and the Chairman of the Cotton Textile National Industrial Relations Board. A former teacher in Rockland County, New York, Bruere was also a trustee of the local school board and a member of the Vocational Educational and Extension Board of Rockland County.²⁵ Bruere had met Wirt, was cognizant of his reputation, and clearly wished to hear Wirt discuss his education ideas at the dinner party. “I had sought Dr. Wirt’s counsel as an educator,” testified Bruere. “I had listened to Dr. Wirt for several hours discoursing on money, and I was impatient of his insistence on monopolizing the evening by discussion on money . . . imposing on us his views of gold and money. My attempts were unsuccessful, to get a word in,” recalled Bruere, “and I think the attempts of others were equally unsuccessful.”²⁶ The committee Republicans attempted to tie Bruere to favoring the International Workers of the World and being hostile to the Wilson and Roosevelt Administrations and the Department of Justice. Bruere denied the charges. Of the dinner guests, Barrows and Bruere held the closest ties to education.

The last dinner guest called was David Coyle, a consulting engineer living in Bronxville, New York and consulting with several federal agencies on structural engineering. Prior to the dinner Coyle had met Alice Barrows, Mary Taylor, and Robert Bruere. Unlike the others Coyle recalled some conversation at the dinner table about the Gary School, but noted the overwhelming focus was on “the gold devaluation of the dollar, and explained to us at great lengths,” noted Coyle.²⁷ Coyle reiterated that no one mentioned Kerensky, Stalin, Lenin, Tugwell, or Wallace. Coyle testified, “I want to state for the record that neither of us had any idea that the place where these things were supposed to have happened had been in our presence. I was surprised when I discovered that I was supposed to have been present when these things occurred.”²⁸

Opinion of the House Subcommittee

Upon conclusion of the testimony, Democrats Bulwinkle, O’Connor, and Arnold wrote the majority opinion concluding, “From all of the evidence presented to the committee none whatever showed that there was any person or group in the Government service planning to overthrow the existing social order or planning to do any of the things mentioned in Wirt’s statement.”²⁹ The Republicans were furious. Lehlbach and McGugin argued that the committee had “booted away its opportunity to fully investigate the charges made by Wirt and that the committee nor the American people did not understand the purposes of the “brain trusters.” “We therefore take the position,” wrote McGugin and Lehlbach, “that the committee has not performed its duties under the resolution and that the committee should be directed by the House to proceed to complete its duties under the resolution.”³⁰

While Wirt’s critics proclaimed the Committee’s majority opinion, Wirt continued to press his claims that the “brain trusters” could not be trusted. Referring to Wirt, journalist Mary Heaton Vorse wrote, “He is absurd,

ridiculous, anything you like, but he has not been laughed off. He is putting doubt in the minds of hundreds of thousands.”³¹ Among the hundreds of thousands Vorse was referring to was a large radio audience that had listened to the hearings.³² Rabbi Joseph Zeitlin in his sermon at the Temple Anshe Chesed in New York City expressed that, “Untold unhappiness has been brought to man because of his (Wirt’s) tendency to defame his neighbors . . . to besmirch our beloved President and his aides came to no avail because falsehood has no leg to stand on.”³³ Within a few days of the closing of the hearing the Gary School Board refused to allow Dr. Frederick Schuman, thought to be a communist, to speak at the Horace Mann School. Wirt was well received by the American Legion on April 30, 1934, when he continued his attacks against the NRA, this time going after Rose Schneiderman. Wirt called Schneiderman the “red rose of anarchy.” Schneiderman was the only female member of the NRA’s Labor Advisory Board, and she was infuriated. She claimed the only person she wished to overthrow was Dr. Wirt. Wirt eventually offered a retraction following the advice of Harry Jung of the American Vigilance Intelligence Federation to be careful when speaking about a Jewess. Sued for his remarks, Wirt paid Schneiderman around \$200.00.³⁴

Nothing could stop Wirt, and he continued his attacks on the New Deal. He touched a personal nerve in the White House when he criticized the portion of the NRA that allowed President Roosevelt and eventually Harold Ickes to begin subsistence homestead projects for those unemployed so they could grow enough food for their subsistence. The first project approved and chosen, first called the Reedsville Experimental Project and later Arthurdale, was being created as Wirt testified before the Select Committee. During his testimony Wirt referred directly to the project and had met with Milburn L. Wilson, who headed the Division of Subsistence Homesteads, the same day as the infamous dinner party. Wilson and Dr. Robert Kohn, head of the Housing Division of the Public Works Administration, attempted to explain to Wirt that these homesteads were planned as demonstration communities, but they were also a relief measure. Wirt seemed to think the homesteads were designed to stimulate city dwellers to move to the countryside when in fact the federal planners hoped it would do the opposite, to keep those unemployed from moving to the city and stressing already overburdened relief agencies. Wirt had been asked to consult with the federal authorities because the Arthurdale project was to have a progressive school, and certainly Wirt was known in those circles, but Wirt was more interested in what the project planners were doing, in his eyes building a socialist community and seeking to employ the homesteaders in a government run factory. Wirt claimed he told Millburn Wilson, clearly one of Wirt’s “brain trusters,” “that the Arthurdale project was a communist effort . . . a community of the collective type . . .”³⁵ In his attack on Arthurdale, Wirt had stepped on the toes of First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt. Upon seeing the conditions of the future Arthurdale homesteaders, Eleanor Roosevelt personally adopted the project and the people, her compassion at times leading to a naive understanding of the political ramifications. Eleanor was infuriated with Wirt and his champion in Congress, Thomas D. Schall from Minnesota. Eleanor was often accused by her critics unfairly of communist sympathies and even so “she did not understand how Dr. Wirt could consider it communist to give people a chance to earn their own livings and buy their own homes.”³⁶ Wirt appeared on a roll, and nothing could get in his way to expose the “brain trusters,” and even some school administrators whom he believed were “turning red and using the schools to incite ultra-radical sentiment.” According to Wirt, some school administrators had pledged to push “the country over the precipice and into the abyss of communism.”³⁷

Gary Schools

While Wirt attacked the New Deal all was not well in Gary. While the Gary system remained intact through the Depression, Wirt had to cut programs, including night, Saturday, and summer classes. Teacher salaries were trimmed in the early 1930s and did not recover until the tax base allowed after 1935. Terms were shortened to the point that accreditation became an issue. Due to cuts in teachers’ salaries the teachers in Gary became more militant, seeking union representation to protect their interests. The business community which had championed Wirt began to fight increased taxes, thus impacting school finances. The Gary schools during Wirt’s tenure were segregated, with African Americans attending the Roosevelt School. In 1936 Wirt prevented Langston Hughes from speaking at the Roosevelt school due to his political beliefs, which of course were tied to communism in Wirt’s eyes. Wirt stated that his refusal to allow Hughes to speak was due to parental complaints that Hughes promoted atheism and communism. Hughes did speak, but at Croatian Hall sponsored by the Trinity Baptist Church.³⁸

The Gary Schools had actually received aid from the New Deal through the Civil Works Administration CWA for school plant improvement and for thirty-two teachers’ salaries from the Federal Emergency Relief Administration FERA for night classes and the nursery school. Wirt was not thrilled by having to make these concessions, but had little choice if these programs were to survive.³⁹

Wirt's Legacy

On March 11, 1938, the *Gary Post Tribune* announced the unexpected death of Dr. William A. Wirt, “founder and superintendent of the Gary Schools, whose celebrated work-study-play system became the steel city’s gift to the world.”⁴⁰ Wirt apparently died of a heart attack at the age of sixty-four. *The New York Times* obituary referred to Wirt as the “originator of the internationally known Gary School” who had begun his work in 1906. The article subheading noted that Wirt had caused a national uproar by making charges against the President and the so called “Brain Trust.”⁴¹ Only two years following Wirt’s death a survey of the Gary Schools by the Gary School Board of Education described the system as a shadow of the past, where teachers were now more concerned with subject matter than meeting the needs of the children. Written with progressive nostalgia, the survey longed for the “glorious and educational triumphs of the past.” As in too many schools,” the survey concluded, “an academic classroom is still regarded in Gary Schools as a recitation room requiring little else but neat rows of seats and a teacher’s desk in the center of the stage.”⁴²

William A. Wirt was a gifted school administrator in terms of organization, innovation, and efficiency, but this gift was undergirded by a “cult of efficiency” rather than nurturing students for participation in democratic society, a society that soon realized it needed problem solvers, creators, those not locked to the status quo who feared not to imagine. By the 1930s Wirt appears to have become a victim of his own success, believing in his own rhetoric which clearly showed he was out of touch with both teachers and school administrators. Appearing to live in his own world, he was also out of touch with most Americans. Both teachers and school administrators in the early 1930s chose safety over risk, something that both Dewey and Counts failed to comprehend. Willard Waller’s study of teachers during the depression showed that teachers were native born, lower middle class, far from the political left and the social activists of Dewey and Counts and those feared by Wirt. To view Wirt simply as an administrative progressive, a label that rarely describes most progressives, is to miss the complexity and significance of this troubled educator and his contributions and failure in the history of American education.⁴³

Conclusion

The late historian Arthur Schlesinger once wrote, “how odd it is to regard contention in American democracy as an occasion of concern.” Schlesinger noted that history has taught us that “the election of a progressive administration has a galvanizing effect, the radical right grows desperate. It feels that the nation is in mortal danger, that there is only a short time left to save the American way of life, that it is five minutes before midnight, that it must relay and resist before it is too late.”⁴⁴ During the Depression this included Dr. William A. Wirt, Alfred P. Sloan, Henry du Pont, and William Randolph Hearst on the attack. Post World War II the attackers included Joseph McCarthy, and more recently this ideology has undergirded much of educational reform beginning with Sputnik and later in *A Nation at Risk*.

Jefferson wrote in 1798, “A little patience and we shall see the reign of witches pass over, their spells dissolved, and the people recovering their true right, restoring their government, to its true principles.” Wirt did not have this faith in the common man and one wonders what conversation if any might have occurred if Jefferson had had the opportunity to invite William Wirt to Monticello for dinner.

ENDNOTES

1. John and Evelyn Dewey, *Schools of Tomorrow* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1915).
2. Arthur Zilversmit, *Changing Schools: Progressive Education Theory and Practice, 1930–1960* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1993), 57.
3. Lawrence Cremin, *The Transformation of the School: Progressivism in American Education 1876–1957* (New York: Vintage, 1964), 154.
4. Ibid.
5. Franklin Bobbitt, “The Elimination of Waste in Education,” *Elementary School Teacher* 12 (February 1912): 260. For Bobbitt’s discussion of Gary see Herbert Kliebard, *School to Work: Vocationalism and the American Curriculum (1876–1946)* (New York: Teachers College, 1999).
6. Randolph Bourne, *The Gary Schools* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1916), 144.
7. Cremin, *The Transformation of the School: Progressivism in American Education 1876–1957*, 158.

8. Eunice Bernard, "Classroom and Campus: Wirt in the Limelight," *New York Times*, April 1 1934. This article contains a brief sketch of Wirt's failure in New York.

9. Ronald Cohen, *Children of the Mill: Schooling and Society in Gary, Indiana*, *Midwestern History and Culture* (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University, 1990), 121.

10. Ibid.

11. This group included Henry Pope of Bear Brand Hosiery, W.W. Glasser of the Gary State Bank, General Robert E. Wood of Sears and Roebuck among others. See Cohen, *Children of the Mill*, 123.

12. Ibid.

13. "A.L. Bulwinkle. Congressman, 67," *New York Times*, September 1, 1950. For information on members of Congress with biographical information from 1774 to the present see <http://bioguide.congress.gov>. Other members of the Select Committee included Republican Harold McGugin of Kansas; Republican Frederick Lehlbach of New Jersey; and Democrats John J. O'Connor of New York and William W. Arnold of Illinois, *House Hearings*, 1.

14. Hearings before the Select Committee to Investigate Charges Made by Dr. William A. Wirt, House of Representatives, 73rd Congress, Second Session on H. Res. 317, A Resolution to Create a Select Committee to Investigate Certain Statements Made by one Dr. William A. Wirt and for other purposes. (Washington: D.C., United State Government Printing Office, 1934), 1. See also "Braintrust Faces Inquiry by House," *The New York Times* (March 24, 1934), 1.

15.. Wirt sent the memo to Robert Wood, of Chicago and president of Sears, Roebuck; James Goodrich, former Governor of Indiana; *The Chicago Tribune*, *The Chicago Daily News*, *The Chicago Record Herald* and the *Chicago Times*; Hearings Before the Select Committee, 8.

16. Hearings Before the Select Committee, 8.

17. Ibid., 9.

18. Ibid.

19. Ibid.

20. Ibid., 39.

21. Ibid., 56.

22. Ibid., 64.

23. Ibid., 67.

24. Ibid., 71.

25. Ibid., 81.

26. Ibid.

27. Ibid., 87.

28. Ibid., 91.

29. Ibid., 98.

30. Ibid., 108.

31. Mary Heaton Vorse, "Behind Dr. Wirt," *The New Republic* 78 (1934). See also Cohen, *Children of the Mill: Schooling and Society in Gary, Indiana*, 128.

32. "Today on the Radio," *The New York Times*, April 10 1934. A response to Wirt was given by Donald Richburg, National Industrial Recovery Administration General Council following Wirt's testimony on April 10, 1934.

33. "Rabbi Assails Dr. Wirt," *The New York Times*, April 23, 1934.

34. Cohen, *Children of the Mill: Schooling and Society in Gary, Indiana*, 128–29.
35. Hearings of the Select Committee, 21, 23.
36. Joseph Lash, *Eleanor and Franklin* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1971), 586. Also see Blanche Wiesen Cooke, “One First Lady to Another,” *The New York Times*, January 17, 1996. Cooke compares Hilary Clinton’s health care proposals in the mid 1990s to Eleanor’s problems in the 1930s.
37. Ronald and Mohl Cohen, Raymond, *The Paradox of Progressive Education: The Gary Plan and Urban Schooling* (Port Washington, New York: Kennikat, 1979), 151–54. Also see David Tyack, *Public Schools in Hard Times* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984), 66.
38. Cohen, *Children of the Mill: Schooling and Society in Gary, Indiana*, 140.
39. Ibid.
40. Ibid., 153.
41. “Dr. William Wirt, Educator Is Dead,” *The New York Times*, March 12, 1938.
42. Zilversmit, *Changing Schools: Progressive Education Theory and Practice, 1930–1960*, 58.
43. Raymond Callahan, *Education and the Cult of Efficiency: A Study of the Social Forces That Have Shaped the Administration of the Public Schools* (Chicago: University of Chicago 1962). See also Willard Waller, *The Sociology of Teaching* (New York: John Wiley, 1932) and John Dewey, “Can Education Share in Social Reconstruction?,” *The Social Frontier* (1934).
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CREATING SUCCESS FROM ADVERSITY: SUMNER HIGH SCHOOL AND AFRICAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY IDENTITY

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Introduction

This paper considers the story of Sumner High School, a segregated school in Kansas City, Kansas that operated from 1905 to 1978. I argue that while the nature of segregation created achievement barriers for African Americans, Sumner as a segregated school bolstered school and community identity, created strong leadership, and ultimately, produced successful black graduates. This study demonstrates that Sumner High School served as a source of both pride and shame. As the only segregated black high school in Kansas, Sumner acted as a reminder of racial tensions and unequal opportunities in Kansas City. However, as an excellent school with highly qualified teachers, motivated principals, and strong connections with the community it served, Sumner showed that the black community of Kansas City, Kansas could create an impressive institution from unfortunate beginnings. The concept of Sumner as an institution that served as a positive good amidst an unfair society is not my own creation, as the school was thus described by the African-American community in Kansas City itself. A former Sumner teacher wrote in 1935 a statement about the school that has become popular among Sumnerites. In that account he wrote:

Sumner is a child not of our own volition but rather an offspring of the race antipathy of a bygone period. It was a veritable blessing in disguise—a flower of which we may proudly say, ‘The bud had a bitter taste, but sweet indeed is the flower.’

This paper seeks to share the story of Sumner High and demonstrate that its existence was that “veritable blessing in disguise” even though it represented major inequalities in America.

Methodology

This article is a part of a project I have been working on for close to two years – my research comes from primary documents, some scattered histories of Sumner both published and unpublished, and interviews with Sumner alumni. The Spencer Special Collections Library at the University of Kansas holds an impressive amount of Sumner records, from school correspondence and personal histories to class schedules and school rules, to yearbooks for almost every year Sumner operated. The Kansas City, Kansas school district office opened their attendance and superintendents’ records to me as well. I also attended a Sumner reunion, interviewed alumni, and have since begun a project to record more complete oral histories from Sumnerites. Speaking with and learning from those who lived the history I am trying to record has made a strong impression upon me, transforming the story of Sumner High from a research topic into a personal mission. I have spent a lot of time with Sumnerites who are now or were librarians, principals, former teachers, CEOs, post office workers, lawyers, railroad workers, and restaurant owners. There is value in spending time with records and archives, and there is value in spending time with people – the records show a glimpse of what happened, while the personal memories and experiences help one realize why the story should be told.

Segregated Schools and the Black Community

In 1996, Vanessa Siddle Walker’s book, *Their Highest Potential*, significantly added to the story of segregated education by highlighting one specific school, Caswell County Training School (CCTS), in rural North Carolina. Walker’s study showed how the black community fought to create and maintain an educational institution within an antagonistic, segregated atmosphere. It also provided an insider’s perspective on the black school, as she focused her interviews on former students and teachers.¹ This portrayal of a type of southern black school allowed readers to better understand the actual operation of a segregated educational institution. Walker elevated CCTS to the status of a model rural black school in the south. Whether in Kansas City, Kansas or Caswell County, North Carolina, where segregated schools existed, black communities fought to keep them operational. In *The Black High School and its Community*, Frederick A. Rogers asserted that the segregated school served both as an educational and a social institution for African-American communities struggling against white oppression.² Rogers further elaborated:

The black high school was the only long-term publicly supported institution that was pervasive across the black community, and that was controlled, operated, staffed, populated, and maintained by blacks that has ever existed (or most probably will ever exist again) in the United States.³

Roger’s work concentrates upon the South, specifically North Carolina, and shows that the black school served a more important role than only a place for children to learn to read and write. It became a symbol of self-

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determination and improvement among an oppressed people. The black community fought to have and keep schools because even though black education was often underfunded, schools provided hope that the next generation could have a better life.

Walker pointed out that the Caswell County school board's neglect led to increased involvement by the African-American community in the education of their children at CCTS, which created an atmosphere that emphasized achievement.⁴ Walker commented that:

the community's work toward the common goal of helping African American students excel suggests that this segregated African American school had other resources that are not usually captured in public memories of the segregated schools.⁵

Walker followed this statement by referring to Charles Strickland's theories in calling this phenomenon a "human resource," explaining that the nature of the segregated school resulted in parents' desire to not only be involved with their children's education, but also to strongly support the school as an institution.⁶ In this sense, the segregated school became a center for the black community of Caswell County. Walker's analysis is valuable for this study, as this phenomenon appears also to have occurred among the African-American population in Kansas City, Kansas.

Sumner's Origins

Kansas prides itself on being the land of John Brown – he wasn't a Kansas native, but because of his violent opposition to slavery and his leadership in the anti slavery movement Kansans claim him as their own and have inserted him into state histories and imagery. Additionally, the state's flagship university celebrates Kansas' anti-slavery stance in the use of the mythical "Jayhawk" as its mascot. However, educationally and racially, Kansas has a less-than-spotless past. The "free state," that so readily embraces John Brown is also famous for a court case challenging the necessity of a student to pass one school in order to get to another simply because she was not of the approved race. *Brown v Board of Education Topeka* 347 U.S. 483 (1954) was the landmark decision that began the desegregation of the public schools of the United States, marked the end of *de jure* segregation and a significant step in movement toward the acquisition of social equality.

Following in the theme of contradictory events within the narrative of state pride, this study deals with segregated education in Kansas, with a focus on the only black high school that ever existed within the Sunflower State – Sumner High School in Kansas City, Kansas. While Sumner played an important role in Kansas City, its story remains largely unknown outside of the African-American community in the greater Kansas City area. Because Sumner's story does not fall within the traditional southern segregated school narrative, it is difficult to describe when attempting to understand race and education in America. Even though it was a small school set in a relatively unexciting or less controversial locale, Sumner was important. While the school operated for seventy-three years (1905 to 1978) as the only black high school in the district and only served a relatively small portion of the black student population in Kansas City, it had a meaningful impact on the lives of those it taught as well as the black community as a whole. For example, Sumner's influential principal, John Hodge, was determined to maintain a liberal curriculum in the face of school board pressure to emphasize manual training, which anticipated the change in future occupations and the socioeconomic status of African Americans in Kansas City. The pride the black community felt for the school fed the idea that blacks could gain an education and get ahead in a society dominated by whites, even if whites doubted their ability to do so. In short, Sumner exemplified and projected the hopes African American parents had for their children.

While Kansas had originally separated its elementary students by race and largely denied nonwhites further education, in 1879, legislators outlawed segregated high schools and allowed for mixed-race elementary schools in communities in which operating two elementary schools would be economically prohibitive.⁷ However, within thirty years of that decision, Kansas City re-segregated its secondary students, becoming the only city in the state to have and maintain a black high school.

The event which led to this re-segregation occurred on April 12, 1904, when a white student, Roy Martin, was shot and killed by a young man, Louis Gregory, who happened to be black.⁸ It is important to note that the circumstances surrounding the incident are a little "sketchy" at best—accounts disagree as to who started the altercation, and the motives for the violence—but all accounts do agree that Gregory did indeed shoot Martin. Also, while Martin was a student at Kansas City, Kansas High, Louis Gregory was not – he was an eighteen-year-old meat packer. The murder itself was not the reason Kansas City's leaders decided to separate black and white students; instead a student protest that arose at Kansas City, Kansas High the next day provided justification. The white

students blocked the entrance to the school and did not allow any black students to enter, which created a spectacle exacerbated by the eventual presence of the police, the school superintendent, the mayor, parents, and the neighborhood in which the school was located. Only one person, a teacher, attempted to stop the “blockade,” and was met with violence. Eventually, the white students entered the school of their own volition, and the black students were asked to go home in order to ease tensions. The school was then closed until the following Monday, in order to give time for the board of education to determine what to do about their “race problem.”

While the school board was attempting to address racial disharmony at the high school, the community was in uproar. Complicating the situation surrounding the black and white high school students’ clash was the fact that Kansas City had citywide elections the same year. The school incident and the gossip it spread combined with the murder led to general unrest in the city. Politicians, community groups, and even the churches began to express their opinions on the matters of the murder and whether black and white students should attend school together.

Monday the eighteenth came, and the school opened its doors to both black and white students, but was marked with protests from white parents and the refusal of some whites to even attend school at all. Even so, this furor did not last, as Kansas City, Kansas High School was able to finish out the 1903–04 school year with relative peace. The school board however, decided to divide the student body at the high school the subsequent academic year. While both groups would attend the same building, white students held class in the morning and black students came in the afternoon. In a move that precipitated an official segregated institution, the morning student’s school was called “Kansas City, Kansas High,” while the afternoon students attended “Manual Training High School.”⁹

After a certain amount of debate, intrigue, and political wrangling, on February 22, 1905 the governor signed into state law a bill that allowed for separate, racially based high schools in Kansas City, Kansas and only Kansas City, Kansas.¹⁰ While the African-American community fought the creation of a separate school, its existence was now a reality. Building a new school required money and thus an election to pass a school bond that would provide enough capital to begin construction took place in June of 1905. Although the black community opposed segregation, blacks joined whites in passing the bond, with 2,789 in favor and 554 opposed.¹¹ Voting for the bond was not proof black community members had admitted defeat so much as evidence that they made the best of what was otherwise a very bad situation. Kansas City Manual Training High School was constructed over the same summer and black students with their black teachers entered the new school in September of 1906.¹² One of the first things these teachers and students changed about the school was the name. African-American school leaders, students, and the black community were conscious of the connotation “manual training” carried, and were adamant in their desire to provide a liberal education that led to college attendance. Thus, Manual Training High School became Sumner High.

The Comprehensive High School

Understanding the leadership at Sumner High sheds light upon the school’s role within the African-American community in Kansas City. Specifically, two individuals at Sumner were instrumental in creating an exacting school atmosphere that offered manifold opportunities to its students. During its seventy-three years of operation, Sumner had six different principals. The most popular and influential, John A. Hodge (1916–1951) and Solomon H. Thompson (1951–1972), pushed for a college preparatory curriculum, created close ties with parents and community, and demanded professionalism from students. In terms of time spent as principal, both Hodge and Thompson each accumulated more years than the other four principals combined.¹³ Unlike the other school administrators, Hodge and Thompson worked at Sumner as teachers before they became principals; additionally, Thompson was also a graduate of Sumner High.¹⁴ Both men were highly educated, having received advanced degrees in chemistry and biology from major state universities, and both found extreme difficulty in securing employment after graduation. Teaching and then becoming principals at a segregated school was one of the few options open to them. Notwithstanding their own hardships, the dedication these two men displayed proved vital to the success of Sumner as a high school.

It was Hodge who was not satisfied with Sumner’s classification as a manual training school and when he became principal in 1916, he immediately emphasized a more liberal education that would prepare students for college.¹⁵ By the 1921–22 school year, Sumner had in place a mandatory college-bound curriculum that included three years of English, two years of science and history, and one year of math.¹⁶ Thompson was in many respects Hodge’s protégé, having attended Sumner as a student and worked as a science teacher under Hodge. Like Hodge, Thompson emphasized a liberal curriculum and preached the gospel of the college degree. In essence, these two men set the tone for Sumner High – both garnered reputations for being very strict and demanding high expectations from

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their students. Alumni largely remember both Hodge and Thompson with great affection for these qualities and for the opportunities they provided to otherwise generally disadvantaged teenagers.¹⁷

Providing a liberal curriculum and seeing results are, however, two different things. Yet Sumner was an academically successful school – always performing at least at the same level as its white counterparts, and usually surpassing most schools in the greater Kansas City area. Ironically, the segregated school whose existence was intended to keep black teenagers away from the whites became a flagship school for Kansas City. Looking at Sumner's record in science will help prove these points. In their study of science awards in Kansas City, Frank T. Manheim and Eckhard Hellmuth found that more students from Sumner won awards in citywide science competitions between 1952 and 1959 than any other school.¹⁸ The authors explained that the Kansas City Kansas and Kansas City Missouri school boards agreed to create a cityfied science fair that would then feed into the national science fair system that was concurrently coming together.¹⁹ It is important to note that African American students were originally to be barred from the cityfied science fair, until the national fair threatened to not recognize the legitimacy of the Greater Kansas City science fair winners until they complied with integration standards. This study did not limit itself to comparing Sumner to other white schools, but also included Lincoln High, a black school from the Missouri side of Kansas City. The fact that the segregated black schools outperformed the white schools in the field of science highlights Sumner's achievement, as Lincoln students won an award three times between 1952 and 1959, while ten students won from Sumner. No white school came close to this mark. Sumner students won every year from 1952 to 1958.²⁰ Additionally, nine of the ten students who won at the Greater Kansas City Science Fair went on to the National Science Fair and three won the fourth place award.²¹

Sumner's Impact

What accounts for this success? Surely, the students themselves deserve credit, but further investigation reveals a superior teaching force. For example, in 1930, forty-four percent of the teaching faculty at Sumner had Master's Degrees.²² By the 1950s, several among Sumner's staff had doctoral degrees, while advanced degrees were very rare among the white high schools' staffs. By 1959, even more teachers at Sumner had advanced degrees. Four out of the five science teachers at Sumner held Master's degrees and all had continued science training from the National Science Foundation.²³ As noted by alumni, teachers were generally unable to obtain jobs in the private sector or other schools because of their race.²⁴ America's social climate limited opportunities for these teachers, but at the same time, provided the opportunity for Sumner's students to receive a superior education.

Having highly qualified teachers at Sumner benefitted the students, but also bolstered the institution in the eyes of the community. For the black community in Kansas City, the professional services, such as teaching, symbolized some of the most prestigious and well-paying jobs an African American could have for much of the twentieth century, thus black teachers at Sumner garnered respect in part because of the profession itself. The fact that many Sumner instructors held advanced degrees allowed them to earn more money as teachers and acquire the status of having completed a graduate program. The esteem black educators held within the black community translated into support for the school itself. Also, these teachers lived within the community whose children they taught. It is important to remember that these teachers were also neighbors and relatives. Status combined with familiarity strengthened the bond between Sumner and the black community.

Ironically, Sumner's limitation as a segregated school became its distinctiveness. What made Sumner meaningful to the black community is that black teachers and black administrators worked hard to encourage black student success. Sumner's exceptionality came from its relatively successful effort in improving the conditions of African Americans through education. If a student succeeded at Sumner, he or she also succeeded within and often on behalf of the black community. When the Kansas City, Kansas district finally began an earnest effort to desegregate its students, sending black students to other schools helped fight against inequality, but it also served as a blow to Sumner's exceptionalism and to Sumnerites' community identity. In 1978, two decades after the *Brown v Board* decision, federal pressure resulted in the district's closing then reopening Sumner as a racially integrated magnet school. The transition Sumner High made to becoming Sumner Academy, a primarily white magnet school – destroyed its identity as an institution that thrived in the midst of adversity. More importantly, the black community in Kansas City lost "their" school—a sentiment often repeated by Sumner alumni and former teachers. The school building was partially redesigned, the large art-deco letters spelling Sumner High were chiseled away, and trophies, pictures, and wall decorations mysteriously disappeared. Even the school mascot changed. Over one summer break, Sumner High essentially ceased to exist in both physical and spiritual form.

Even with the bittersweet ending/changing of the institution, Sumner's story is poignant because of its contradictory quality. Sumner provided an excellent education for its students, due in large part to the leadership of John Hodge and Solomon Thompson, as well as the presence of an excellent teaching staff at the school. Yet many of these influential figures would not have been at Sumner if societal discrimination had not limited their occupational opportunities. Community involvement and the relationship teachers, students, and parents shared also played a large part in the success of Sumner High, yet this relationship was strengthened to a large degree by the fact that segregationist policies led to the creation of a distinctive identity both at school and at home. Former students and teachers of Sumner are proud of their school and largely unhappy that it no longer exists as they knew it, yet few or none would endorse segregation in society or in its schools. Essentially, Sumner's strength came from society's weakness. For the Kansas City, Kansas school board, *Brown v Board's* ruling (originating just down the road in Topeka) to fix society through the schools meant ending Sumner and some of the sources of its excellent reputation.

Sumner's success, however, came about because of the work of individual teachers, principals, students, and parents—their efforts to make the best of what was a bad situation show that African-Americans were actors within the story of segregation, not solely acted upon. However, the danger in showing how the Black community in Kansas City rallied around the school is to imply that segregated education was somehow positive, or worse, necessary. Glenda Elizabeth Gilmore addressed a similar issue when writing about African-American women who fought Jim Crow laws in North Carolina at the turn of the century:

This is certainly not to argue that disfranchisement was a positive good or that African Americans were better off with limited social services than they would have been with full civil rights. It means that black women were given straw and they made bricks. Outward cooperation with an agenda designed to oppress them masked a subversive twist. Black women capitalized upon the new role of the state to capture a share of the meager resources and proceeded to effect real social change with tools designed to maintain the status quo.²⁵

Much like their southern counterparts, the African-American community in Kansas City, Kansas found the means to create success out of hardship and inequality. Sumner was first envisioned as a place to keep black and white students separate, yet it became a flagship school for the entire Kansas City, Kansas school district. Whether using the analogy of lemons and lemonade, straw and bricks, or buds and juice, serious students of the history of education must recognize the value of Sumner High's story and its role in the community as well as the people that ran it, attended it, and supported it.

ENDNOTES

1. Walker was a student herself at Caswell County Training School and her mother was a teacher at the school. Vanessa Siddle Walker, *Their Highest Potential: An African American School Community in the Segregated South*. University of North Carolina Press, 1996.
2. Frederick A. Rogers, *The Black High School and Its Community*. Lexington, Massachusetts: D.C. Heath and Company, 1962, 75–80.
3. *Ibid*, 73.
4. Walker, 200–201.
5. *Ibid*, 201.
6. *Ibid*.
7. Laws of Kansas, 1879, Chapter 81, Section 1. "The board of education shall have power . . . to organize and maintain separate schools for the education of white and colored children, except in high school, where no discrimination shall be made on account of color."
8. Both David Peavler (article) and Dennis Lawrence (dissertation) provide full explanations surrounding the death of Roy Martin by Louis Gregory. See David Peavler "Drawing the Color Line in Kansas City: The Creation of Sumner High School," *Kansas History: A Journal of the Central Plains* 27 (Autumn 2005): 188–201, and David Lawrence *The Impact of Local, State, and Federal Government Decisions on the Segregation and Subsequent Integration of Sumner High School in Kansas City, Kansas*. PhD Dissertation, 1997, 305–307.

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9. John A. Hodge, *Some Facts About Sumner High School* date unknown. Sumner Collection, Kansas Collection, Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas. Lawrence, Kansas. Page 1. The title of the school does fit with the model of emphasizing industrial education, common among southern segregated schools such as Caswell County Training School.
10. Laws of Kansas, 1905, Chapter 414, Section 1. "The board of education shall have power to . . . organize and maintain separate schools for the education of white and colored children, including the high schools in Kansas City, Kan.; no discrimination on account of color shall be made in high schools, except as provided herein."
11. Lawrence, 91; Peavler, 198.
12. Hodge, 1.
13. Barbara Morris, chairperson, Sumner Alumni History and Archival Committee, *Sumner Alumni Association National Convention 1905–1978 Family Histories*. July 2000, 2. Sumner Collection. Hodge was principal for thirty-five years, Thompson for twenty-one. The other four principals' combined tenure is sixteen years.
14. Sumner High School *Sumnerian* (yearbook), 1952, dedication pages, 1–2. Sumner Collection.
15. Hodge, 2. A scarcity of records prohibits us from understanding the first two principals' views on manual training, but Hodge's codification of a college preparation curriculum was new to Sumner, indicating that he took a much more proactive position on liberal arts.
16. *Sumner High School Enrollment Guide Book*, 1921–1922, 1. Sumner Collection,
17. The members interviewed from the class of 1968 expressed great respect for Principal Thompson. Jacques M. Barber, David Berry, Joan Carter, Donnie Franklin, personal interview, August 11, 2008. Alumni recollections of John Hodge can be found in Barbara Rice Morris, chairperson "Sumner Alumni Association National Convention 1905–1978 Family Histories" July 2000. Melanie Bailey, April 7, 2009. Ronald Hartland, Jr., May 5, 2009. Dr. Jessie Kirksey, May 8, 2009.
18. Frank T. Manheim and Eckhard Helmuth. *Sumner and Lincoln High Schools: Black Schools That Dominated Science Awards in Greater Kansas City During the Decade of Brown v Board of Education*. Unpublished article, date unknown, 1.
19. *Ibid.*
20. *Ibid.*
21. Hartland Jr, 2009. There were winners afterward, but it occurred more sporadically. Alumni attribute this to the transfer of Sumner's Science teacher, William Boone, as in 1958 he became the principal of Northwest Junior High, an all-black segregated middle school. American Association of Physics Teachers Questionnaire, January 1960. Sumner Collection.
22. Manheim and Hellmuth, 3.
23. *Ibid.*
24. Morris, 155, 227. Barber, personal interview.
25. Glenda Elizabeth Gilmore. *Gender and Jim Crow: Women and the Politics of White Supremacy in North Carolina, 1896–1920*, 175.

ILLINOIS CHARTER SCHOOLS (1996–2009): PUBLIC SCHOOL REFORM LEGISLATION CREATING CHOICE OPPORTUNITIES TO PREPARE A COMPETITIVE WORKFORCE

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Introduction

The 1983 publication of *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform* catapulted public education onto the national radar screen, capturing the attention of political, business, and civic leaders, as well as the attention of the general public. There was concern for whether the United States could maintain its economic competitiveness without an educated workforce – a future workforce sitting in the K-12 schools deemed a “rising tide of mediocrity.”¹ Political, community, and business leaders began investigating how to improve our schools so as to better prepare our young graduates, the graduates that would enter the workforce and serve as the cornerstone for our future economic competitiveness. They wanted choice and accountability from the public schools. Thirteen years later, 1996, Illinois authorized public charter schools of choice to encourage educational excellence and promote new options.²

This essay examines the history of the Illinois charter school law – a law enacted and revised with bipartisan support-as a workforce investment supported by business and political leaders, especially in the Chicago Public School District (CPS) – the only Illinois school board to actively engage in charter school authorizing. It will show that Illinois charter schools have produced mixed academic and success results. Yet, the expansion of the number of charter schools in Illinois continues to have the support of business, community and political leaders. On July 30, 2010 Illinois Governor Pat Quinn signed the Charter School Reform Act of 2009 allowing double the number of charter schools. Illinois became the first state in the nation to respond to President Obama’s call for more charter schools as part of his vision for a strong national economy.³

Drawing on primary and secondary sources this paper will show that the business, civic, and political leaders have supported Illinois legislation designed to create and expand charter schools, public schools of choice, to help prepare a competitive workforce . . . an educated workforce prepared for the 21st century world of work.

An Educated Workforce: An Economic Resource

Many feel that America’s greatest economic resource is her workforce. For example, Thomas J. Donohue, President and CEO, U.S. Chamber of Commerce, has remarked, “We must understand that in the 21st century, the race for human talent will define the global winners and losers more than any other factor. America’s first priority must be to fully educate our people.”⁴ The number-one issue facing businesses today is the availability of high-quality human talent.⁵ An educated workforce is essential to America’s and Illinois’ ability to maintain economic competitiveness.

Our future workforce is the students in the PK-12 schools. They represent the reservoir from which business will draw future employees, the workforce that will help keep businesses competitive. Dana Brinson of the U. S. Chamber of Commerce says,

“Business leaders increasingly place improving public education at the top of their list of priorities because they believe the education system in the United States fails to produce graduates prepared to compete both locally and in a global economy.”⁶

Business leaders are not the only ones who recognize the importance of educating our future workforce. In a campaign speech President Barack Obama said, “Our future is inextricably linked to the education of our children.”⁷

Education is a workforce investment-an investment in the education of youth today to ensure a competitive workforce for tomorrow. Business and political leaders, including Presidents William J. Clinton⁸ and George W. Bush,⁹ as well as President Barack Obama,¹⁰ have supported charter schools, public, market-based schools of choice, as a venue for improving student academic achievement (i.e., producing graduates prepared to seek advanced training, attend college, or immediately enter the workforce).

The Nation at Risk Report had a clear message, “Our once unchallenged preeminence in commerce, industry, science, and technological innovation is being overtaken by competitors throughout the world.”¹¹ Something had to be done about the public education system, the system educating our future workforce. Business and political leaders understood that public education had to change in order for the United States, and in turn, Illinois, to protect its economic strength. The Nation at Risk Report became the impetus for the accountability movement and charter

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schools evolved from a single concept small in scope and narrow in impact to a national movement to create public schools of choice.

In *Creating the Capacity for Change: how and why governors and legislatures are opening a new-schools sector in public education*, Ted Kolderie, a charter-school pioneer, writes, “Politics is the art of making possible what is necessary.”¹² When the improvement of public education became a national priority, politicians and businessmen alike set about ‘making possible what was necessary.’ National leadership had to connect with state lawmaking, where public education is controlled, to make the necessary changes in how public schools operate. Initially, most state efforts were directed at getting the existing institutions to do better, but in the 90s the states began moving to change system arrangements.¹³ During her tenure, Education Secretary Margaret Spellings affirmed that the real action in the charter movement takes place at the state and local level.¹⁴

Charter schools are established through individual state laws. Illinois’ charter law was among the first major wave of state charter laws; however, it was not one of the first: Twenty states preceded Illinois in passing charter school legislation. Illinois’ law was effective April 10, 1996. Although Illinois was not a leader in the charter movement, the Chicago Public Schools (CPS), Illinois’ largest school district, has taken the lead to actively engage in charter authorizing.¹⁵ Today, fourteen CPS charters educating students at twenty-eight sites define their mission as providing students with a college preparation curriculum and seven charters serving ten school sites, list rigorous career curriculum, career exploration, job readiness, and/or work experience as part of their self-reporting mission descriptor.”¹⁶ These charter schools are clearly a workforce investment.

The Illinois charter-school legislation: the road to enactment and expansion

It is impossible to pinpoint the exact moment when Illinois business and political leaders became charter school legislation advocates. The General Assembly passed the Education Reform Act of 1985, which led to several educational changes. The 34 Goals for Learning were adopted. Two years later, just four years after release of *A Nation at Risk* report, then Secretary of Education William J. Bennett fingered Illinois’ largest school system, the Chicago’s public schools (CPS), as the worst in the nation!¹⁷ Being pinned with the “worst in the nation” label jumpstarted Illinois education reform, beginning with the CPS system where the critical mass of Illinois students attend school. Over the next 10 years, Chicago’s reforms paved the way for charter schools: In 1988, reform focused on decentralization, giving schools more autonomy. In 1995, the Republican-controlled legislature and GOP Governor Jim Edgar granted Democratic Mayor Richard Daley sweeping authority over Chicago’s schools. Accountability became the school system’s watchword.¹⁸ Autonomy and accountability are two cornerstones of charter school legislation. Chicago public schools were positioned to embrace the charter school legislation. One year later, the Illinois General Assembly and the governor, supported by the business community, passed the first law authorizing Illinois charter schools as public schools of choice to “encourage educational excellence and promote new options.”¹⁹

Business leaders throughout the state came together to advance education reform in Illinois. Three influential partners from business, the Illinois Manufacturing Association (IMA), the Illinois Chamber of Commerce (ICC), and the Illinois Business Roundtable (IBRT), were founding members of the Illinois Business Education Coalition (IBEC). The Illinois business community worked through these three core, founding members of the Illinois Business Education Coalition (IBEC) to garner political support for passing education reform legislation, which included the initial charter school law. In an open letter to Governor Jim Edgar, the Illinois General Assembly, and the Blue-Ribbon Panel on Education Funding, the IBEC wrote:

We must . . . work together to solve a crisis often overlooked as being of importance to business. A crisis threatening to stifle economic development in Illinois irrespective of any business reforms. A crisis threatening daily the economic livelihood of Illinois’ workers and the likelihood that their children will enjoy economic independence from state welfare programs. Education The quality of the workforce is an issue that can no longer be put off.

The failure of our public school system has been recognized for over a decade and is generally conceded by the citizens, civic and business leaders, and elected officials of Illinois. A consensus to act exists.²⁰

The Illinois Business Education Coalition recognized the need for a better educated workforce. In the Open Letter, the IBEC listed charter schools as a recommended innovation in public education. The charter schools were described as special schools that would be able to serve as local education laboratories: Laboratories to try innovative ways to better educate students, their future employees.²¹

Charter schools were part of a larger business-legislative education reform agenda, including education funding reform. Ed Harmeyer, former lobbyist of the IBEC during the charter school legislative journey, has commented, “Charters were/are viewed by business as a workforce investment. They represent choice, reduced red tape, improved local control, etc. Business got into the education fight over money and the quality of the workforce.”²² Harmeyer went on to note that the business community also supported vouchers. They believed full-blown competition in the education system would drive quality up and costs down. Although business would like to have had both vouchers and charters, Harmeyer wrote that the political reality was that charters were easier to pass. Without reform legislation, funding legislation would not be supported. In a letter to Mike Lynch of Illinois Tool Works (ITW), Harmeyer advised that “the IMA had taken the position of education reform first [in place, operating and verified], then the money.”²³

The business community contributed leadership, time, and fiscal support to Illinois education reform, including passing the charter school law. On December 13, 1994 M. Blouke Carus, owner of the Carus Manufacturing Corporation and a member of the IMA Board of Directors, distributed to twenty-four business and civic leaders an eighteen-point draft memorandum proposing to reinvent education in Illinois. He wrote that the world economy was changing at such an increasing rate that education reform was necessary to “achieve Illinois goals to educate our citizenry to be able to participate in the new economy and to prepare a work force equal to any in the nation by the year 2000 and to any in the world by 2010.”²⁴ Carus was not the only business leader with a passion to reinvent the Illinois public school system: Ron Gidwitz, former CEO of Chicago-based Helene Curtis, served as education chair of both the IBRT and the IBEC.²⁵ According to Harmeyer, Ronald Gidwitz held the IBEC together. Gidwitz hosted meetings in the corporate offices²⁶ and he dedicated time and expertise to the school reform/charter school movement in Illinois. (Eventually, Gidwitz was appointed chair of the Illinois State Board of Education under then Republican Governor George Ryan.)

At the request of Ron Gidwitz, James Roache, Helene Curtis Director of Public Policy, distributed an IBEC draft position paper as early as 16 December 1994. This paper outlined the business community’s commitment to education reform and strongly recommended openness to alternative solutions, such as charter schools. The charter schools were viewed as part of the decentralization, accountability, and innovation strands that the business community proposed for Illinois public school reform. The position paper draft and the final Proposal on Behalf of the Illinois Business Education Coalition to the Illinois General Assembly included a Chicago postscript statement, “Charter schools must become a force in Chicago—both to demonstrate program innovation and to spur deeper change in the public system.”²⁷ The CPS is the largest school district in Illinois and the third largest district in the United States.

Legislative reform can be expensive: Lobbyists, marketing, and publications require fiscal resources. The Illinois Business Round Table (IBRT), with the prestigious membership representing some of the most influential businesses in Illinois, raised the funds to pay for marketing and lobbying for Illinois school reform, including charter school legislation.²⁸

The Illinois charter school legislation had business and civic support. It did not, initially, have the union and school management associations’ support, which would prove to be an ongoing challenge to charter school growth in Illinois. According to Ed Harmeyer, the Republicans were willing to call the bill to vote-as long as a compromise was reached between the business community, the school management associations, and the teachers’ unions.²⁹ In 1996, after two years of legislative debate, the political battle was won by the charter school advocates when then Republican Governor Jim Edgar garnered enough political capital to pass charter school legislation: Legislation that authorized Illinois charter schools as public schools of choice to “encourage educational excellence and promote new options.”³⁰ According to the latest statistics available from ISBE, during the 2007–2008 school year, thirty-five charters served 25,000³¹ of the 2.1 million Illinois public school children.³²

Illinois Charter Schools: what are they?

A charter school in Illinois is a public school of choice supported by public dollars but administered and governed by its board of directors or other governing authority, not an elected Board of Education like traditional Illinois public schools. The governing body is subject to the Freedom of Information Act and the Open Meetings Act but otherwise, the governing body has the autonomy to govern as outlined in the school’s approved charter agreement. The charter is required to comply with all health and safety requirements applicable to public schools under Illinois State law, cannot charge tuition (but may charge reasonable fees, like any other public school), and is a

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501C-3 Not-for-Profit Corporation responsible for the management and operations of its fiscal affairs, including the preparation of its budget and an annual audit of its finances.

Charter schools in Illinois are exempt from many state laws and regulations in the School Code governing public schools and local school board policies; however, they are not exempt from those dealing with criminal history and sex offender record checks, discipline of students, the Tort Immunity Act, the Abuse and Neglected Children’s Reporting Act, and the School Code School Report Card requirements.³³ Charter schools must comply with all civil rights laws and federal special education requirements.

Part of the flexibility of charter schools is the freedom to select their own school calendar, hours of operation, and grades or ages they wish to serve. Illinois charter schools have autonomy in eight areas:

- To design curriculum independent from the school district
- To set educational priorities
- To set unique school and school year schedules
- To manage fiscal affairs independent of the school district
- To set employee compensation rates and/or to provide bonuses
- To contract with external providers: janitorial services; music, art, and gym; social workers; mental health services; nursing staff; special education services; and youth guidance, and;
- To design different, additional performance standards.³⁴

Illinois charter schools have greater autonomy than the traditional public schools. They experience flexibility and autonomy in exchange for increased accountability in areas such as student achievement and graduation rates established at the time the charter is granted.

The charter performance is evaluated by the authorizing entity at the end of the charter granting period or every five years, whichever is shorter. In addition to being accountable to the authorizing entity, charters are required to submit an annual report to the Illinois State Board of Education. The ISBE publishes an Illinois State Board of Education Charter School Annual Report available to the public on the ISBE Accountability home page.

Although not directly accountable to the Illinois business, civic, and political leaders, without measurable success that positively impacts the preparation of our future workforce, Illinois charter schools will lose the support of business, civic and political leaders.

Illinois Charter Schools: an investment paying dividends

Illinois charter school legislation is a little more than a dozen years old. Charter authorizations in Chicago have reached their legal limit, and the number of charter schools in and outside of the Chicago area grows annually. At the core of the accountability measures are the Illinois State Board of Education Annual Charter School Reports issued annually since the year 2000. CPS district has established its own comprehensive annual Charter School Performance Report, which provides data comparing charter school student performance with the performance of students in comparable neighborhood schools. Illinois charter schools – especially in Chicago – have captured the interest of researchers, and performance studies are being published that support the charter school initiative as a workforce investment – an investment resulting in increased academic achievement and positive impacts in areas such as increased graduation rates, improved American College Testing (ACT) scores, and interest in college admission. Increased academic achievement, greater graduation rates, improved ACT scores and interest in college are factors which positively impact workforce readiness and provide an improved candidate pool from which to hire the future workforce.

As stated earlier, Illinois charter schools have more autonomy than traditional public schools; however, they also have a responsibility to produce academically successful students. “One of the basic premises of charter schools is that accountability for input is exchanged for accountability for results.”³⁵ The state board compiles annual charter school reports that compare the performance of charter school students on mandated state tests with the performance of students from the home school district(s) attending traditional public schools. The first Illinois State Board of Education Charter School Annual report titled, “Charter Schools: Seeds for Change,” was issued in 2000. It found a mixed review on assessment:

Some charter schools are doing better than similar grades in their home schools districts; others are not doing as well. No single generic statement about the 13 charter schools that completed 1998–1999 is appropriate.³⁶

When responding to the question, “Have charter schools been successful in Illinois?” the short answer was, “Yes, they have been successful for the students they serve. Although they have only been around for a brief period of

time, they are serving as seeds of change in their local communities.”³⁷ The initial investment was paying dividends—academic achievement, parent choice, and opportunities for increased flexibility in exchange for increased accountability. According to the ISBE, the initial charters were being successful.³⁸

The 2002 three-year evaluation of Illinois charter schools, contracted by ISBE with Western Michigan University’s Evaluation Center, summarized student achievement data for the 1998–2000 school years of Illinois charter schools on the Illinois Standards Assessment Test (ISAT), the Prairie State Achievement Exam (PSAE), the American College Test (ACT) and Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) for Chicago schools. On the ISAT, PSAE, and ACT tests charter school students performed at or just below the level of demographically-similar non charter school students. On the ITBS test administered to Chicago public schools, charter school students performed higher, on the average, than those students at the schools where the charter school students would have otherwise attended.³⁹

In July 2003, the Civic Committee of The Commercial Club of Chicago, the region’s oldest civic organization representing the business community, released *Left Behind: student achievement in Chicago’s public schools*. According to this report, in 2001–2002, 11 of the 13 Chicago charters, public schools without selective enrollment, evaluated by the CPS Charter Schools Office, outperformed comparison schools in their neighborhoods on most of the relevant indicators of quality.⁴⁰ *Left Behind* advocated for 100 Chicago charter schools as competitive alternatives to traditional public schools – schools that would give parents the right to vote with their feet and to accommodate more than 5,000 students on waiting lists seeking admission to the higher performing charter schools.

One year later, the 2004 ISBE Charter School Annual Report, chronicled the comparison of ISAT Meets/Exceeds percentages for the seventeen operating charters and their authorizing districts during the 2000–2003 school year. The report states, “ISAT results of charter schools in Chicago are mixed This is consistent with the results from last year.”⁴¹ The Annual Report mirrors the “mixed” performance of charter schools in relation to their home district averages on ISAT and PSAE tests in the rest of the state.

The 2004–2005 CPS Charter School’s Performance Report lists numerous “signs of success” for Chicago’s charter schools, noting that charter schools consistently outperform their comparison neighborhood schools on several measures, including ITBS scores and graduation rates. This report highlights that all eight Chicago charter high schools reported higher graduation rates than their comparison neighborhood schools.⁴²

The 2007 ISBE Charter Schools Annual Report provides the 2005–2006 Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) results for charter schools and local districts. Once again, the performance for charter schools compared to the sending districts is mixed. However, in the 2006–2007 school year, the charter schools performed at a higher level of achievement than the sending districts in both the Chicago and outside-of-Chicago districts.⁴³ Illinois charter schools in the Chicago area had been in operation over a decade. The charter schools were beginning to show improved academic success over traditional neighborhood schools that students would have attended.

When Kenneth Wong and Francis Shen conducted a five-year pilot study of Illinois charter school performance, they hoped to bridge the research-practice divide and provide a useful perspective for policymakers in the statehouse and charter practitioners at the schoolhouse. They reported that charter elementary performance improves over time, with longer running charters beating statistical expectations for their value – added to student achievement. Secondly, they found that charter high school performance is distributed roughly the same as traditional public schools, with most charters neither above nor below statistical expectations.⁴⁴ Illinois charter schools serving some of the most diverse, minority, socioeconomically challenged students from low-performing neighborhood school districts are making progress in academic achievement in the elementary schools and “holding their own” in charter high schools. Not all future workforce success factors can be measured by performance on mandatory academic achievement tests.

The nationally-recognized RAND Corporation Education Research Division conducted a study of comparative student enrollment, student achievement in charter grades 3–8, and charter effects on high school graduation, college entry and ACT scores. The 2008 published Rand Technical Report: *Achievement and Attainment in Chicago Charter Schools* states that:

Students who transfer experience rates of achievement growth that do not differ substantially in CPS schools and charter schools However; the analysis of the attainment effects of Chicago’s charter high schools . . . in contrast, breaks new ground and suggests positive effects for the average charter eighth grader who continues in a charter high school For charter eighth-graders in Chicago, continuing into a charter high school appears to increase ACT scores, improve the probability of graduating by 7 percentage points, and improve the probability

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of enrolling in a college by 11 percentage points The results here demonstrate that educational program and policy evaluations would do well to examine outcomes that go beyond scores on state assessments.⁴⁵ Test results and an analysis, such as that reported by the above study, provide evidence that charter schools, at least charter high schools in Chicago, are indicating a positive change in graduation rates, college entry rates, and increased ACT scores – all factors that impact the career success of our future workforce.

The success of Illinois Chicago Charter Schools was affirmed in the 2008 and 2009 Chicago Schools Performance Reports and in the recently released Center for Research on Educational Outcomes (CREDO) Report.⁴⁶ This was the first national longitudinal investigation of charter school impact on student learning gains. In 2008, Josh Edelman, CPS Executive Officer, Office of New Schools, highlighted that for the past six years charter elementary schools had made significant gains on the Illinois State Achievement Test (ISAT). He wrote:

In 2007, charter elementary schools outperformed the district on the percentage of students meeting/exceeding state standards [68.7% versus the district's 64.1%]. The high attendance rate [92% versus the district's 84.2%] and graduation rate [77% versus the district's 66%] for charter high schools provides evidence that the college and career preparatory instruction and additional supports available for students will prepare them for the future.⁴⁷

In the 2009 CPS Charter Schools Performance Report introductory letter, Edelman praised charter schools for continuing to “push academic excellence and strong culture-building among students.”⁴⁸ He congratulated the CPS charter schools for their strong attendance rates, increases in student achievement, and “continued efforts to prepare high school students for college and beyond.”⁴⁹

The success of the Chicago charter schools has been recognized by the CPS school district and acknowledged by the Chicago Civic Committee. In the 2009 *Still Left Behind: Student Learning in Chicago Public Schools* study, a followup to the 2003 Left Behind report, one of the key findings reported by the Civic Committee of the Commercial Club of Chicago is that:

Efforts to provide meaningful school choices to Chicago's families must be aggressively pursued – including expanding the number of charter and contract schools in Chicago. Most of these schools outperform the traditional schools that their students would otherwise have attended; and, the choices that they offer parents will help spur all schools in CPS to improve.⁵⁰

In the same month the Civic Committee released *Still Left Behind*, Stanford University published the CREDO Report – a report designed to examine student learning in charter schools and compare it to the experience the students would have had in the traditional public schools (TPS) they would otherwise have attended. The study's findings give the first wide-angle view of the charter school landscape in the United States.

Education Secretary Arne Duncan referred to the CREDO Report as a “wake up call” in his keynote address at the 2009 National Charter School Conference.⁵¹ The Report's scope—a longitudinal student-level analysis of charter school impacts on more than 70 percent of the students in charter schools in the United States—makes it the first national assessment of charter school impacts.⁵² CREDO shows that nationally, on the average, charter school students can expect to see their academic growth somewhat lower than their traditional public school peers, though the absolute difference is small.⁵³

The effectiveness of charters was found to vary widely by state. Illinois (Chicago) charter schools performed as well or better than the traditional public schools the charter students would have attended in reading and math: Illinois was one of five states where charter school students experienced significantly larger growth than would have occurred in traditional public schools (TPS) the students would have attended.⁵⁴

Authors of the CREDO report acknowledge that this study is silent on the weight that academic progress should carry in individual school choice decision. Illinois (Chicago) charter students do as well as or better than their peers attending the traditional public schools the charter student would have attended. In addition, Illinois charter schools are graduating a greater percentage of their students than traditional neighborhood high schools in the Chicago area. Those graduates leave high school better prepared to enter post graduation career training, college, and/or the workforce. According to the most recent Illinois Network of Charter Schools newsletter, “Charter high school students have a 77% graduation rate. Of those students, three-fourths go on to post secondary education, the vast majority to a four-year college or university.”⁵⁵

Charter School Graduates: a positive impact on community economy

Increased graduation rates and post secondary enrollment in institutions of higher learning impact the economic health of a community. The annual financial benefit to Illinois communities for turning one high school dropout into a graduate is \$13,200–\$14,900.⁵⁶ The annual financial benefit to Illinois communities for turning one high school dropout into a college graduate is estimated at \$38,400 to \$42,000 per graduate.⁵⁷ As described above, Illinois has charter schools graduating more students and those students are enrolling in institutions of higher learning at a rate greater than the traditional public schools the charter students would have attended.

The Illinois Network of Charter Schools (INC), the Illinois Chamber of Commerce, and the Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce have released a model developed by Public Impact, a team of national researchers, being used to help Illinois communities forecast how much they can benefit economically from creating charter public schools.⁵⁸ Jerry Roper, President and CEO of the ChicagoLand Chamber of Commerce has commented, “Innovation in charter public schools is producing results, and this model shows that the creation of more charter public schools could have a profoundly positive economic impact on our communities.”⁵⁹ Business leaders such as those in Illinois Chambers, members of the Civic Committee of the Commercial Club of Chicago, and politicians, like Illinois Governor Pat Quinn, continue to support charter schools—schools graduating a better-prepared workforce. President of the Illinois Chamber of Commerce, Doug Whitley, has commented, “Business leaders have always known that great schools produce excellent future employees.”⁶⁰

Summary

The Nation at Risk report captured Americans’ attention, and public schools were thrown into the limelight. Illinois, like other states, sought solutions for the mediocre educational performance described in the Report. Along with the Report, Illinois had to contend with the CPS being labeled, ‘The worst in the nation.’ No one entity could solve issues of this magnitude alone, and the condition of the public education system impacted the quality of employees entering the workforce. The business, civic, and political leaders joined forces and dedicated their resources—resources of time, expertise, and dollars—to initiating statewide education reform: Reform to produce a better-educated workforce, i.e., a workforce able to maintain the Illinois economic competitive edge, an edge that translates into profit and economic competitiveness in Illinois, the United States, and the global market.

The 1985, 1988, and 1995 Illinois education reform legislation positioned the CPS to embrace the 1996 Charter School Law. The CPS, with encouragement from organizations such as the Civic Club of the Chicago Commercial Club and the ChicagoLand Chamber, became the only public school district in the state to become an active charter school authorizer. A decade of State Annual Charter School Reports, CPS Charter School Performance Reports, contracted longitudinal studies, and prestigious research studies like the Rand Corporation Technical Report and the CREDO Report have consistently shown “mixed results” among charter schools. However, Illinois charter schools, collectively – especially those in the Chicago area – are showing success in improved academic achievement for charter elementary students, as well as, increased graduation, college entry, and attendance rates for charter high school graduates, as compared to students in comparable traditional public schools. After a decade of implementation, investors are seeing a positive return on their investment—a return that is impacting the quality of the workforce and the quality of life in communities where charter schools are located.

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COLLECTIVE OUTCRY: THE EDUCATIVE MEANING AND VALUE OF SPONTANEOUSLY-CREATED SHRINES

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Introduction

The film *Objects and Memory* (2008) documents the sudden, extremely difficult, and emotionally-charged curatorial processes of decision making as to what to save for posterity from the World Trade Center attacks of September 11, 2001 by the New York City Historical Society and eventually the Smithsonian Institution—particularly the difficulty of deciding what to save and why in the moment. From just after the first plane hit the North tower releasing clouds of fluttering office documents resembling flocks of birds, people in the streets of downtown Manhattan began collecting artifacts of that day, sensing the enormity and importance of the unimaginable event as it unfolded, “object eyewitnesses” (Fein & Danitz, 2008) to what happened there. Tangential to the curatorial study of what to “officially” preserve and memorialize, not just for the city of New York, but for the US and the world, are references to cityfied spontaneously-created shrines of such a number and size that the entire city was effectively transformed into the largest public shrine ever erected. Memorial shrines were constructed to mourn their city, mourn individuals missing and lost and the city’s firefighters and police, mourn a profound loss of safety, and mourn the beginning of fear. Theorizing the collective Manhattan post-9/11 city-shrine provides an opportunity to assess the educative meaning and value of objects of collective mourning for children we know will inevitably experience profound individual and collective loss—many of whom are the least able among us to cope with that loss. For, given the scope of loss we know children have experienced and must cope with over the past decade, educators and society at large are not, it would seem, facing squarely the need to work with children on loss and mourning (Otto, 2008), their potential to create new energy in the wake of these critical moments (Otto, 2000), their attendant emotions, and their effect on formation of self (Winnicott, 1971).

Whereas in previous work I have examined and theorized objects meant to mourn the loss of individuals—Manet’s paintings of bouquets of flowers presented him by friends on his deathbed, historic Victorian-era objects of mourning, and modern-day Washington, D.C. street shrines to victims of violence—in order to begin to build a philosophy of educating children for and during loss and mourning, in this paper I examine and theorize a community’s response to massive collective loss and what such a response might mean for the education of US children.

In the larger line of inquiry of which this paper is a part, I theorize that what I call the “pre-modern notion of loss” (Otto, 2008) that predates Freud’s (1961) theory on mourning and melancholia in which he assigns mourning a confining normalcy. Unlike post-Freudian-era mourners, mourners of the Victorian era were willing to feel grief, to remain tied to the lives of those grieved, and to be reminded of the physicality of loss, characterized by the making and keeping of objects of mourning: mourning samplers; jewelry, paintings and wreathes made from human hair; and memorial photography, among others. Of significance during this pre-modern period is not simply the scope of loss sustained, but just how adept Victorians and their predecessors were at incorporating loss and mourning education and rituals into their day-to-day existence. “Nineteenth-and twentieth-century mourners exhibit a relative willingness . . . to indulge in painful memories that sustained their grief” (Jalland paraphrased in West, 2000, p. 140), and thus reflects a conception of memory as bound up in the necessity, indeed the desirability, of mourning”(p. 140).

In contrast, what I characterize as the “modern notion of loss” (Otto, 2008) is abbreviated, cut off when an acceptable time period has elapsed, according to Freud, as “a way of divesting ourselves of pain, of getting it over and done with” (Steele, p. 93). Modern loss allows the mourner grief, but adoption of objects of grief is reinvented as pathological. Extended modern mourning is steeped in nostalgic, happy moments of lives lived together, captured in time, completely absent morbid overtures (West, 2000). “In this paradigm [of mourning], emotional and cultural maturity is measured in terms of the capacity to terminate a process of ‘mourning’ that links one to the past” (94) and in one’s ability to avoid pernicious descent into either melancholia or, for the family’s male heirs, into femininity (Steele, 1998). Today modern, sanitized mourning—a product of medical and scientific “progress”—is entrenched within the [dominant] white community, whereas the pre-modern notion of mourning remains reflected, for instance, in African-American mourning traditions.

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Since in the modern notion of loss humans seem to have lost or, at minimum, misplaced, their tolerance to sustain grief, in the long term we become willing only to feel a particular, peculiar and sanitized nostalgia for those lost, effectively and perfectly pathologizing sustained grief. In the modern conception of navigating loss and mourning, we approach grief as if we can cure it (Remen's idea as represented in Tippett, 2007), naming the parts of a rigid, linear process as clinical steps the one-grieving must endure. Consistent with Freudian norms of melancholia and mourning, once navigated, it is entirely behind us, the door swung tightly shut. Classifying grief as pathology to be cured, defies the pre-modern notion's logic of loss, for navigating loss "is not about eradicating our wounds and weaknesses, but understanding how they complete our identity" (Remen quoted in Tippett, 2007, p. 1). The pre-modern navigation of grief and loss is distinguished as a process rather than an event, a process that slowly encourages healing rather than insisting upon a miraculous cure, a magic hat trick. Clinical, scientific modern loss sequesters the one-grieving from the rest of the world, individualizes and isolates one inside a very private grief, whereas in the pre-modern process, the one-grieving mourns publicly, alongside and supported by their full community.

Victorian-era objects of mourning reflective of the "pre-modern notion of loss" (Otto, 2008) have taken many forms and serve as poignant collective or individual responses to public or private human loss. Tokens meant to evoke the one-lost, some merely memorialize while others offer an actual physiological referent—a relic—of the one lost. What I refer to as "objects of mourning" differ from objects one might cling to for cheer or comfort—those that belonged to the deceased—in order to remember them, in order to keep them present in a sense (Gibson, 2004). Such objects are steeped in nostalgic, happy memories and in a classic sense infected with nostalgia, stuck longing for a past that never was (Boym, 2001; Coontz, 1992), "for nostalgia is memory with the pain removed" (Caen, quoted in Davis, 1979, p. 37). In contrast to Margaret Gibson who conflates these two categories, I separate out those I call "objects of mourning," as objects purposefully created to memorialize a specific loss and which were indeed created to communicate to others the living one's grief over the one-lost. Whereas objects that belonged to the deceased, retained by the mourner, are steeped in nostalgia for the one-lost (much as are modern snapshot photographs), pre-modern-loss-era objects of mourning appear as distinctly un-nostalgic, unromantic memorials to the loss of the one-loved.

The spontaneously-erected island-wide memorial that, once amassed, formed what I call the "post-9/11 city-shrine" was made up of objects which were for the ones-grieving "irreplaceable carriers of identity, emotion, and memory—objects [meant to] help [the community] find [its] way forward" (Fein & Danitz, 2008). The collective need to grieve seems to have begun in two ways: first with the instantaneous posting of thousands—perhaps tens of thousands—of leaflets advertising the missing, and second, with tributes and thanks to firefighters, police, and other emergency personnel begun at fire stations, but that quickly spread. These small beginnings became an unprecedented city-shrine. For "something unfolded that really had never happened anywhere . . . anywhere in the United States, anywhere in the world before. It was this sense of everybody creating their own memorial wherever they were, just making the whole city a garden of memorials" (Fein & Danitz, 2008).

What began small grew quickly. The city-shrine was transformed by murals painted on walls and chalked on sidewalks (so many depicting the twin towers), by many thousands of candles, photos, posters, drawings, notes, flowers, stuffed animals, fire department uniforms and patches, papers retrieved from the World Trade Center, tee-shirts, flags, and rosaries. In the "frozen zone" and all through the city, the impromptu tableaux were propped against walls, spilling across sidewalks, seemingly taking up acres cascading across the middle of parks such as Union Square, balanced on barricades, and covering facades of buildings, store windows, kiosks, utility poles, and fences. In *Objects and Memory*, historians and curators of the New York City Historical Society boldly assert "surely no event in human history has generated so much physical expression as the response to the World Trade Center disaster" (Fein & Danitz, 2008). And its creation was purely impromptu:

Everywhere, without any script, without any instructions, without any organizer, without anything official, but spontaneously and in a way that [was] utterly self-organizing, there emerged an outpouring of grief, and mourning, and concern and it was expressed in a way that left all these material traces . . . a kind of total response on the part of an enormous number of people who felt a tremendous need to gather, to be together. (Fein & Danitz, 2008)

Even inside public places the city-shrine spilled over and grew, filling every available space. St. Paul's Chapel, across the street from the World Trade Center was miraculously unharmed in the buildings' collapse. It is the oldest extant building in New York City (and where George Washington went to church) and became a respite area and

relief center for recovery workers at ground zero. Enormous in magnitude and variety, every surface was covered, mostly with children's drawings, paintings and letters to rescue workers. Covering the backs and ends of pews where recovery personnel slept, ate, and prayed, covered every inch of wall space, a magnificent patchwork of children's wishes for their firefighting heroes, their lost parents, speaking equally loudly to the living and the dead that would grow over the next year and a half the center would operate.

Later, at ground zero, fencing was eventually erected to cordon off the site of the World Trade Center, cleared of rubble and a dangerous, deep cavern in the ground. For years this fence continued to be visited by mourners leaving objects for the dead. These objects were "curated" by construction workers on the site who organized the shrine, revering objects of mourning by designing and constructing altars and frames, laminating and waterproofing children's drawings, and hanging and meticulously arranging every object so that each piece could be seen by all. This, the last vestige of the post-9/11 city-shrine was finally dismantled and carefully archived to become a part of a traveling Smithsonian Institution exhibition.

Below Canal Street people did more than collect artifacts in the form of office documents that exploded from the towers upon impact, they collected physiological referents. For as the towers fell, a thick blanket of grey dust covered everything, turning the surrounding streets into moonscapes. And people, particularly those who lost loved ones, collected this ash because it was not just a reminder, but much more sacred than a memento: a relic. Collecting and enshrining relics of loved ones is a tradition of the Victorian era mourner, fashioning the one-lost's hair into a necklace or ring, grinding the one-lost's hair into a powder used to paint a tiny landscape. Not ignored or swept away, but sought out as a connection and willing remembrance a relic "convey[s] a reality that the past had material substance . . . it doesn't just exist in ideas, it doesn't exist in expressions of nostalgia, but that there was something that was real and something that was alive . . . it's what's left" (Fein & Danitz, 2008).

The Manhattan post-9/11 city-shrine surprises with its incongruence to current-day mourning practices, since objects of mourning have been taboo since Freud's (1961) science of the mind and normalization of human behavior forever changed the ways modern, "civilized" people would endure loss. Purposefully-created and maintained, memorials are tangible proof of lived lives, a community's sacrifice, and that community's Victorian-era-like willingness to remind itself of the pain their loss inspires (West, 2000)—and the outrage (Otto, 2004; 2005)—distinctly antiquated ideas given our culture's insistence that everyone get over mourning and get on with their lives (Steele, 1998). But what if the enormous, unprecedented Manhattan post-9/11 city-shrine signals a shift in the modern view of mourning, a tiny crack in the armor of our scientized worldview made when Americans experienced an epochal event and their collective outcry was one of rejection—if only for a moment—of the isolation and private grief inherent in the modern notion of loss? Historians call the people of New York City's response "a sign of where we are as a culture and how we respond to things and how we're likely to respond to tragedy in the future" (Fein & Danitz, 2008) and I posit that perhaps a hopeful sign indeed arises from our tremendous loss and ensuing grief, for suddenly people became willing to relive "moments [they] want to forget but . . . don't [even with] the heartbreak [they] bring" (Fein & Danitz, 2008).

Explosion and its aftermath can be viewed as a complex metaphor for the crack in our scientized worldview evidenced by the colossal Manhattan post-9/11 city-shrine. The fuel-rich explosion of the aircrafts' impact ultimately caused the collapse of both towers (miraculously falling nearly straight down upon themselves rather than toppling over, taking blocks and blocks of structures and their occupants with them), its unprecedented heat's molten steel crushing the massive structure as it fell. The explosive outpouring of grief and mourning by those who were, in essence, trapped on the island of Manhattan (in an explosion of suspicion, shock, and security) in the days immediately following 9/11 dramatically challenged the pre-modern, scientized notion of loss and its insistence that "correct," healthy mourning practices be private, contained to appropriate venues, and expeditious. Literal and figurative explosions led these two highly-charged bipolar concepts of loss and mourning (pre-modern Victorian and modern post-Freudian) to collapse upon one another, and out of the destruction a calling-into-question came, resulting in a re-humanizing of loss into a "garden of memorials." The Manhattan post-9/11 city-shrine could only happen when, out of the collapse of sterility and the Victorian, something new grew.

But, does it take large-scale disaster to make such a shift occur? The 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon are singular events in history in which American soil and the very concept of America were violated on a grand scale. Though similar in scope, the December 7, 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor did not occur on the US mainland as these terrors did, for Hawaii was far distant geographically and culturally—still the "exotic other" and still a US territory, not becoming a state until 1959. Also an attack on a military installation while a global war

raged, life at the Pearl Harbor naval station was distant from the lives of most even as it was “a day which [would] live in infamy” (The National Archives, 2009), an epoch-dividing event, and an act that would force the US into WWII. But, the Pearl Harbor attack mainly resulted in massive outrage and confirmation of the “stiff upper lip” required to fight for the American way, not as permission to redefine modern loss and mourning practices. In contrast, and an antidote for outrage, melancholia, and fear-mongering, I argue that the Manhattan post-9/11 city-shrine signals the beginnings of a shift in what the Western world considers appropriate for maintaining psychic health while navigating processes of grief and mourning.

The most compelling evidence of such a shift and arguably the one most important to educators, is evidence of children’s role in the public grieving process of the city-shrine, particularly since modern loss’ parameters place the “great equalizer” and its emotional navigation exclusively within the realm of adults and something from which children must remain protected as they are innocent and vulnerable (Stearns, 2003). In virtually every locale of the city-shrine children’s drawings, paintings, letters, and trinket tributes dominate. From a loss of this scope not even children were spared. For me as an artist and as an educator deeply committed to arts infusion, particularly in underserved schools, a second sign of revolution comes in looking at the way New York’s children expressed their grief, loss, wonderment, and fear: through art. For “ultimately in our world, in the secular contemporary world in which we live . . . art has become a response to death and to tragedy and art was very much a way in which people survived 9/11 and came together after 9/11 After such devastation how can humanity re-humanize a place? “And the answer is this: After 9/11“ . . . that garden of memorials re-humanized New York City” (Fein & Danitz, 2008).

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AFRICAN CENTERED EDUCATION AS A RESPONSE TO CULTURAL HEGEMONY: TOWARD A TEMPLATE FOR AFRICAN AMERICAN AND HUMAN LIBERATION

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Culture and Identity

Culture is one of the most fascinating things that humans produce. Both material and non-material, it engulfs, defines and imprints everything that we do. At the same time, culture, like the water that surrounds all sea creatures, or the air that surrounds all humans, is not well understood and generally taken for granted by most people on earth. One prominent anthropologist, Edward Hall, has said that:

Culture is man's medium; there is not one aspect of human life that is not touched and altered by [it]. This means personality, how people express themselves (including shows of emotion), the way they think, how they move, how problems are solved, how their cities are planned and laid out, how transportation systems function and are organized, as well as how economic and governmental systems are put together and function (Hall, p. 14).

Discussing the generalized concept of an "American" culture, Hall says that white Americans who have historically defined what American culture is, are like people around the world, imprisoned by their own culture, imprisoned by their own time and space systems. This sense of imprisonment is nothing new. What is new or significant is that Western culture has had such a great impact on the world that it has come to in many ways define world culture. The concept of time and space as being linked in a system, points to the fact that one cannot speak of time without implicating space, and one cannot speak of space without implicating time. In other words, for one to move in "time," one has to move in "space." And, for one to move in "space," one has to move in time. To exist, is to exist at some time and in some space. Extracting and examining one aspect of this system, namely time, for the purposes of analysis, Hall says "American time is . . . 'mono-chronic'" (p. 22); that is, Americans, when they are serious, usually prefer to do one thing at a time, and this requires some kind of scheduling, either implicit or explicit. He says that not all Americans conform to mono-chronic norms but that social pressures keep most Americans operating within this framework.

Contrasting mono-chronic time with what he calls poly-chronic time (M-time vs. P-time), he says that while mono-chronic time emphasizes schedules, segmentation, and promptness, poly-chronic time is characterized by several things happening at once. It stresses involvement of people (not individualism or individual accomplishment) and completion of transactions rather than adherence to preset schedules. By scheduling Western world compartmentalizes which makes it possible to concentrate on one thing at a time, but this also denies context. "Since scheduling by its very nature selects what will and will not be perceived and attended to and permits only a limited number of events within a given period, what gets scheduled in or out constitutes a system of priorities for both people and functions (Hall, p. 15)." This setting of priorities then comes to reflect the person's value system or the culture's value system. The denial of context then begins to show up as normalized behavior where motives and values are implicit and invisible to most "outside" viewers. Here mono-chronic time is equated with clock time and poly-chronic time is equated with event time.

Culture also fall along a continuum, says Hall, from Low Context to High Context. Most Western cultures which use mono-chronic time are low context, i.e. cultures who view time in a linear manner and communicate internally by placing more emphasis on the literal meanings of words; while on the other hand High Context cultures which use time in a non-linear manner, place more emphasis on symbolic meaning and non-verbal communication through the use, for example, of art and music. This is particularly true of African and Native American culture. In these cultures everything "speaks." In Western cultures, for the most part, only humans "speak."

Hall's discussion of high and low context cultures and how time and space function as a part of culture is what I have termed the phenomenology of culture. It is the interlocking, flexible and ever malleable parts of what makes up an entire complex of concepts and events consisting of everything that humans produce. It is an extension of those who created it, and they in a sense, are also an extension of it. Understanding how culture works and the significance of culture in human life are key factors, then, in understanding the consequences and legacy of slavery.

Cultural Genocide and the Consequences of Slavery

For African people and European people slavery represented a clash of cultures. And, insofar as Africans were concerned, cultures were violated and cultural codes were ignored or destroyed. People were placed in environments that were designed to denigrate or separate them from their culture. This has been called cultural genocide. Thus in defining the term genocide in its 1948 resolution, the United Nations said in Article II of its definition that genocide is:

any act committed with the idea of destroying in whole or in part a national, ethnic, racial or religious group. This includes: killing members of a group; causing serious mental or bodily harm to members of the group; deliberately inflicting on [the] group conditions of life calculated to bring about its destruction in whole or in part; and forcefully transferring children of the group to another group (UN Resolution 260–III, 1948).

One of the consequences of slavery in America was the creation of a fragmented people. People who have consciously or unconsciously been trying to put themselves back together again. People were lumped together under one nomenclature, blacks, and ethnic identities were erased. Thus, people who were Ibo, Yoruba, Twi, Hausa, Fulani, or Wolof, became blacks or the coloreds. Languages were erased as well as customs such as religious ceremonies, educational traditions, matrimonial traditions, ethical/moral traditions and burial rituals. They were separated from ancestral land considered sacred. They were taken away from sacred ancestral burial places. Individual names were erased as exemplified by a scene in the docudrama *Roots* which aired in the late 1970s. Kunta Kinte, a central character in the drama gets renamed Tobi by his master—a key factor in understanding what happened to all African Americans. Using Harvard University professor Orlando Patterson (1982) concepts of intrusive versus extrusive forms of social death in slavery, one can easily see that what happened to enslaved Africans in America was a form of intrusive social death. Patterson says that this occurred when:

the slave was ritually incorporated as the permanent enemy on the inside—the “domestic enemy,” . . . he was the product of a hostile , alien culture . . . his greatest misfortune lay in the fact that he had no ancestral home, hence no rights . . . he was a stranger in a strange land (Patterson p. 39).

This did not, however, destroy or eliminate the desire for education. Africans knew they were considered unequal and they came to consider themselves unequal because they did not know how to read and write. Over time this created within them a growing desire for literacy and education.

The Quest for Education During Slavery

The eminent historian Carter G. Woodson in his book *The Education of the Negro Prior to 1861*, addresses the issues that cultural hegemony raised insofar as the education of blacks was concerned. The central question facing plantation owners was whether and how the slave should be trained. Africans were brought to America to work, and it was only as manual laborers that they had value as property. Before and during the middle passage, no serious thought was given to their education. They came to constitute (along with poor whites) the laboring class. Eventually, however, the issue arose as to how they could be made to be even more valuable to their owners. This implicated some sort of training to meet the needs and demands of their new environment. Few disagreed with that. Plantation owners recognized early that those who understood the English language would be more valuable to their owners than those who did not. On the other hand there was the question of exactly how far this training or education should go.

There were those whites who believed that slaves could not be educated without creating in them a longing for freedom. There were also those who felt that the more ignorant and brutish the enslaved were, the more pliant and obedient they would be. And there were those who argued that the slaves should be educated or trained as far as their talents would allow. Woodson says that it was the second group—the class of slaveholders and plantation owners who argued for maintaining ignorance among the slaves—that finally won the majority of southerners to their way of thinking. Therefore laws were passed in most southern states that prohibited enslaved Africans from learning to read and write. Mitchell, quoting Whitaker (1990) says, that “Georgia passed laws prohibiting black education in 1830, and, in 1835, North Carolina outlawed all public instruction for Africans; and, in 1847, Missouri passed laws making it illegal to teach blacks” (Mitchell, 2008). This, however, also did not quench the desire for learning among Africans, and Africans both on their own, as well as with the assistance of some whites developed surreptitious means of acquiring knowledge. Woodson refers to this as stolen knowledge. Knowledge was considered stolen because it was against the law to have it. And being against the law the penalties for violating these laws were often harsh. Describing how knowledge was acquired, Woodson says:

Bishop Turner . . . purchased a spelling book and secured the services of an old white lady and a white boy, who in violation of the State law taught him to spell as far as two syllables . . . By hiding books in a hayloft and getting white children to teach him, James W. Sumler of Norfolk, Virginia obtained an elementary education . . . [and] a colored woman by the name of Deveaux . . . for thirty years conducted a [secret] Negro school [against the law] in the city of Savannah (pp. 212–217).

This pattern of “stealing” knowledge continued throughout the period of slavery. Woodson reports that many illegal colored schools were set up in violation of State laws. He says that more schools existed for slaves than

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whites knew about because the schools were placed in secret locations. The quest for education intensified even more after the end of slavery with more and more blacks finding ways to be educated. No amount of coercing could seem to prohibit this from happening.

The Quest for Education After Slavery

James Anderson (1988) in his book *The Education of Blacks in the South, 1860– 1935* details what happened with black education in the years immediately after slavery. While many types of schools were set up, it was the Sabbath school that reached the widest audience. Anderson says that frequently Sabbath schools were set up before “free” or “public schools.” These were church-sponsored schools that were operated mainly in the evenings and on weekends and provided basic literacy instruction. Quoting from John W. Alvord’s first report to the Freedmen’s Bureau submitted in January 1866, Anderson presents a vivid picture of the accomplishments of these Sabbath schools. Alvord, who was the national superintendent of schools for the Freedman’s Bureau, wrote in 1866 that:

Sabbath schools among freedmen have opened throughout the entire South; all of them giving elementary instruction, and reaching thousands who cannot attend the week-day teaching Indeed one of the most thrilling spectacles which he who visits the southern country now witnesses in cities, and often upon the plantations, is the large schools gathered upon the Sabbath day, sometimes of many hundreds, dressed in clean Sunday garments . . . intent upon elementary and Christian instruction (Anderson, p. 13).

Anderson says that these schools were set up and supported largely through African American’s own self-help efforts. And in 1866 when Freedmen’s Bureau officials closed all black schools allegedly to reduce the financial costs to the Bureau, the colored population at once expressed a willingness to be assessed the entire expense. Black leaders petitioned Yankee military officers to levy an added tax upon their community to replenish the bureau’s school fund (Anderson, p. 9).

The Freedmen’s Bureau was closed in July of 1868 after just three years of operation. Established in March of 1865 to provide “relief to black and white southerners who had been displaced by the civil war, . . . the bill was primarily aimed at ‘assisting the freed slaves in their transition from enslavement to liberty’ wrote Robert C. Kennedy (2001). The Bureau has generally been considered a failure due to non-governmental support. Twenty eight years later (in 1896) after the closing of the Freedmen’s Bureau, the U.S. Supreme Court delivered a landmark decision in the *Plessy v Ferguson* case. “Plessy,” as the case has come to be known, upheld a Louisiana law requiring separate but equal accommodations for blacks and whites on interstate railroads. It was the decision that laid down the legal basis for segregation throughout the country in public facilities. Separate schools and facilities were created for blacks and whites but these schools and facilities were never equal. Fifty-eight years after *Plessy v Ferguson*, in 1954, the U.S. Supreme Court in *Brown v Board* essentially overturned the Plessy decision and said the separate facilities and schools were inherently unequal and that public schools must proceed to integrate with all deliberate speed. (*Supreme Court of the United States*, 1954). Now, more than fifty years later we can assess the success or failure of the Brown decision to date.

The Legacy and Failure of Brown

Gary Orfield’s and Chungmei Lee’s (2004) report entitled “Brown at 50: King’s Dream or Plessy’s Nightmare?” and published by The Civil Rights Project at Harvard University details what has happened in the nation’s schools since the 1954 “Brown” decision. This report examines a decade of re-segregation from the time of the Supreme Court’s 1991 Dowell decision, which authorized a return to neighborhood schools, even if that would create segregation. In its executive summary the authors list their major findings. Among their findings were that:

- In many districts where court-ordered desegregation was ended in the past decade, there has been a major increase in segregation
- Among the four districts included in the original Brown decision, the trajectory of educational desegregation and re-segregation varies widely, and . . . three of the four cases show considerable long-term success in realizing desegregation
- Rural and small town districts are, on average, the nation’s most integrated for both African Americans and Latinos. Central cities of large metropolitan areas are the epicenter of segregation; segregation is also severe in smaller central cities and in the suburban rings of large metros
- There has been a substantial slippage toward segregation in most of the states that were highly desegregated in 1991

- American public schools are now (2004) only 60 percent white nationwide . . . most white students have little contact with minority students.
- Asians, in contrast, are the most integrated and by far the most likely to attend multiracial schools with a significant presence of three or more racial groups . . .
- The vast majority of intensely segregated minority schools face conditions of poverty, which are powerfully related to unequal educational opportunity. Students in segregated minority schools face conditions that students in segregated white schools seldom experience.
- Latinos confront very serious levels of segregation by race and poverty, and non-English speaking Latinos tend to be segregated in schools with each other. The data show no substantial gains in segregated education for Latinos even during the civil rights era . . .
- There has been a massive demographic transformation of the West, which has become the nation's first predominantly minority region in terms of total public school enrollment. This has produced a sharp increase in Latino segregation.

These conclusions do not give the picture that Brown has been successfully implemented. In fact one could make the case that in many ways the nation is worse off today both because of the closing of many of the infrastructure businesses that served the black community and because of the closing of all black schools in the name of integration. I would argue that Brown has failed and should be reexamined in the light of the knowledge of culture and resilience of racism that we witness today. I would argue that it has failed not just because it has failed to create quality education for black students across the country, but because the very premise of Brown was wrongheaded. Brown defined quality education for blacks in terms of integration or removing barriers of attendance and not in terms of using the cultural background of African American students as an instrument for achieving academic excellence (Ladson-Billings, 1992, Hilliard, 2004). This was problematic for black children given the impact of cultural hegemony on African American students and the fact that U.S. culture had historically been defined through the use of values from various European ethnic groups. In the language of the *Brown v Board* decision the Supreme Court said:

Segregation of white and colored children in public schools has a detrimental effect upon the colored children.

The impact is greater when it has the sanction of the law, for the policy of separating the races is usually interpreted as denoting the inferiority of the negro group. A sense of inferiority affects the motivation of a child to learn. Segregation with the sanction of law, therefore, has a tendency to [retard] the educational and mental development of negro children and to deprive them of some of the benefits they would receive in a racial[ly] integrated school system (*Supreme Court of the United States*, 1954).

Seeing racial segregation primarily as a denial of the rights of minority children under the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment to attend school wherever they wanted to, the court completely lost sight of how the very culture of the curriculum and the pedagogical techniques used within the public schools served to reinforce and reproduce hierarchal relationships based on race and racial hegemony. Additionally, it lost sight of or never considered the need for the restoration of a sense cultural identity for black students and other minority students based on their own traditional cultural values.

Racism, Cultural Hegemony, and African Centered Education

Semmes (1995) defines cultural hegemony "as the systemic negation of one culture by another." He goes on to say:

By this process I mean that the internal dynamics of one culture evolves in such a way that it calls into dissolution the independence, coherence, and viability of another culture to which it has a socio-historical connection. In a sense, the one culture bases its existence and well-being on the ability to absorb, redirect, or redefine institution building and symbol formation in the other (p. 1).

From Semmes' perspective, the impetus behind cultural hegemony is the historical phenomenon of European expansion and contact, which resulted in the exploitation of Africa for its human, mineral, and agricultural wealth. Racism then emerged from a cultural complex of psychological factors which included alienation, color prejudice and xenophobia and eventually became operationalized as white supremacist ideology. White supremacy ideology, sometimes implicit, sometimes explicit, has been the primary sabotaging force that has prevented the achievement of quality education for blacks, nonwhites and the poor in American society exhibiting a web-like nexus that corrodes progress. For African Americans specifically, the struggle for quality education has never addressed the impact of cultural hegemony on the black psyche (Woodson, 1991; Wilson, 1992; Hilliard, 1997). Many books now have been written on this topic. They all address African American psychology and the issue of the legacy of racism, education

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and cultural hegemony in the African American community (see for example, Hale-Benson, 1986; Hale, 2001; Jones, 2004; Lee, 2007). Most African American mental health professionals feel that this is still a central issue in the black community—exemplified by the good hair/bad hair syndrome, the skin color complex, the high rates of homicide and the high divorce rates that currently plague the black community. One of the earliest books to address this issue was W.E.B. DuBois' (1903) book *The Souls of Black Folk*. Another more contemporary book that addresses this issue is Frantz Fanon's (1967) book *Black Skin/White Mask*. Mental Health professionals first started to address this issue in more recent times in the 1970s with the publication of Reginald Jones' (1972) book *Black Psychology*. Charles White followed in 1984 with his book *The Psychology of Blacks*. In 1998 Kobi Kambon published *African/Black Psychology in the American Context: An African Centered Approach* and Wade Nobles in (2006) published *Seeking the Sakh*—a book he refers to as foundational writing for an African psychology. Robert Guthrie (1991) in an article entitled “The Psychology of African Americans: An Historical Perspective” said that the first conference on black psychology was convened in July of 1938 on the campus of Tuskegee Institute by Herman Canady and Francis Cecil Sumner—Sumner is generally considered to be the father of black psychology. Among many other concerns, Guthrie says that the psychologists attending this 1938 conference were concerned with the totality of the gestalt of the black experience (p. 41). This included the impact and legacy of slavery on the black community.

Over the past forty years, African centered education has gained increasing popularity in the black community. New Concepts school in Chicago has been in operation now for more than thirty-five years. African centered education focuses on developing cultural literacy as well as academic literacy among African American students. Gloria Ladsen-Billings, at the University of Wisconsin at Madison, has said that African Americans first need to be literate in their own culture. Of course there is a need to be literate in the larger American culture but, according to Ladsen-Billings and others, literacy in African American culture is a prerequisite for creating a groundedness in one's own identity based on one's own traditions.

Paulo Freire (1972) in his groundbreaking book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* describes explicitly what happens to oppressed people psychologically. He says that the oppressed internalize the value system of their oppressors and in turn become their own oppressors. Safisha Madhubuti (1994) in an article entitled “African Centered Pedagogy” argues that “African American people need an African-centered pedagogy because racism and world-wide Eurocentric hegemonic attitudes and practices are still the order of the day. The existing pedagogy in public education remains European-centered.” (p. 15) She quotes Lomotey (1990) that “Despite the upward mobility of many middle and upper-middle class African Americans, the majority of African-Americans remain in poverty and do not achieve educational parity in American schools (p. 15).” Finally, she argues that “The status of the majority of African-Americans relative to whites has not changed significantly throughout the history of the United States (p. 15). An effective African-Centered pedagogy she says would:

- legitimize African stores of knowledge;
- positively exploit and scaffold productive community and cultural practices;
- extend and build upon the indigenous services to one's family, community, nation, race, and world;
- promote positive social relationships;
- impart a worldview that idealizes a positive, self-sufficient future for one's people without denying the self-worth and right to self-determination of others; and,
- support cultural continuity while promoting critical consciousness. (pp . 15–16)

With the development of multicultural education beginning in the 1970s, Americans started to recognize what Pinar has referred to as the racial aspects embedded in the curriculum of the public schools.

Curriculum As a Racial Text

Pinar (1993) argues that all curriculum in American schools is a racial text. For him race, text and identity are all interrelated. We need all three to begin to understand the American national identity, he says. As mentioned earlier, curriculum is grounded in values and in turn reflective of the values of the individuals who created it. Historically, the curriculum of most schools in America have presented African Americans, Native Americans, Latino Americans and Asian Americans as the “other.” This has been both implicit and explicit. So, if we just return for a moment to the early 1970s, we'll return to a period when multicultural education was beginning to become known as an area to take seriously within the academy. And prior to 1968, black studies was “no-where” to be found within the academy (p. 58). Today, although black studies programs and departments exist in most colleges and universities, these

institutions do not see it as foundational to what goes on in the rest of the university. Similar situations existed with Native American Studies, Latino American Studies and Asian American Studies. This effectively meant that even though the “other” existed within society, their legitimacy as sources of knowledge did not exist. Pinar quotes Toni Morrison as saying “we are not, in fact, the ‘other’”(p. 61). We are the opposite side of the same coin. Pinar says that we are what we know, and that we are also what we don’t know. This means that subjugated knowledge has played a major role in controlling the American psyche and to a large degree still controls that psyche today (p. 61). According to Foucault subjugated knowledge is knowledge that is delegitimized, suppressed or erased because it comes from people who have had their identities delegitimized, suppressed or erased (1980). This was exemplified by the exposure of the Great Books canon in the 1990s (a canon which had been in place for over a century) which had no women and/or people of color in it. Today Africa is still largely absent from the American national curriculum. And the portrayal of Africa that most people get from watching television is the picture of an Africa that has been devastated by racism, colonialism and neocolonialism. Few programs go into an in-depth analysis of the impact of colonialism and slavery on the African continent. Few programs go into the existence of high civilizations and institutions in Africa prior to the European slave trade and colonialism. Implied in Pinar’s work is the idea that when we speak of Africa we’re not just talking about an arbitrary insignificant part of the earth. We’re talking about the home of humankind. We talking about the source of indigenous world culture and the source of indigenous world civilizations. We’re talking about “our” extended family members that are not a part of the discursive curriculum of American Studies. By ignoring Africa we’re leaving out a central part of who we are as a people. Thus we end up with what Pinar calls a fragmented self—a self that “contains” repressed elements which we fear. He says that such a “self lacks access both to itself and to the world (p. 61).”

Finally, Pinar argues that “understanding curriculum as a racial text means understanding America as fundamentally a racialized place, as fundamentally an African American place, and an American identity as inescapably African American as well as European, Hispanic/Latino, American Indian and Asian. African Americans, he argues, are the ego, superego and id of American society. Debates over the canon then are also debates over the constitution of the American self. African centered education is an attempt to liberate African people from oppression and in doing so restoring all of humanity to its sacred Self.

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**SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION AND EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES AFFECTED BY HELEN KELLER'S
CONCEPT OF EDUCABILITY**

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Helen Keller's obituary appeared as a special to the New York Times on June 2, 1968, after she "drifted off in her sleep" said Winifred Corbally, Miss Keller's 11 year companion who was at her bedside. "On This Day," New York Times, June 2, 1968

Abstract

This paper reviews Helen Keller's life—the beginnings, later life, image, works—and the implications they hold for disabled people and educational practices of teachers and school administrators. It deals with how contemporary the issues are which determined it. It explores her life and the relevance it holds in building a disability culture and the ensuing educational practices that emerged from how she was taught as it relates to educational programs, diverse students and mastering the English language.

Introduction

There is vast research about Helen Keller, so we begin with the end to review her life and works and how she influenced Education and the teaching of children, young people and adults during her life and in the present day. This research has influenced the teaching of educators and thus has had a far reaching effect on not just the teaching of handicapped students, but the way education is approached for all children and the "world of peoples" as Miss Keller used to say. Also affected has been the way programs are managed and directed by the supervisors, directors and principals leading the schools where children attend classes every day.

The Beginning

Helen was a normal infant the first 18 months of her life. She learned to recognize the voices of her parents, she cooed and cried, and she was joyous looking at her parents and things around her home. Before she was two years old, an illness came which closed her eyes and ears. Helen was said possibly to have had scarlet fever, but it came and went quickly. There was a very high fever during the illness. When the illness vanished, Helen's vision and hearing was erased, and her articulate speech was gone (Keller, 2007).

Life After

As a girl and woman, Helen's life became a triumph over adversity and affliction. She learned to overcome, circumvent and "see" with acuity. She learned to talk passably and dance. She had a remarkable mind which unfolded and she became in and of the world as a happy participant in the world. Alden Whitman (1968). stated that what set Miss Keller apart was that no similarly afflicted person before had done more than acquire the simplest skills. But she graduated from Radcliffe, became an artful and subtle writer, led a vigorous life, developed into a crusading humanitarian, and energized movements that revolutionized educational techniques and methods of teaching.

Finding Anne Sullivan (Teacher)

Helen's parents, Arthur Keller and Kate Adams Keller, realized they needed help. After Helen's illness, her infancy and childhood were filled with frustration, outbursts of anger and fractious behavior. The parents described Helen as "a wild, unruly child," who kicked, scratched and screamed. Her parents felt without hope until Mrs. Keller read a portion of Charles Dickens' "American Notes" describing the training of the blind Laura Bridgman. This led Mrs. Keller to Dr. Samuel Gridley Howe of the Perkins Institute in Boston. Dr. Howe was the husband of the author of "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," and a pioneer teacher of the blind and the mute (Blatt, 1985, pp. 405–6).

Soon the Kellers learned of a Baltimore eye physician who was interested in the blind, and took Helen to him. He told the parents that Helen could be educated and put them in touch with Alexander Graham Bell, the inventor of the telephone and an authority on teaching speech to the deaf. Bell told the Kellers to ask his son-in-law, Michael Anagnos, Director of the Perkins Institute, about obtaining a teacher for Helen. Anagnos chose Anne Mansfield Sullivan, a 20-year-old woman who was called Annie. This was networking at its best. Annie was partially blind and she had learned at Perkins how to communicate with the deaf and blind through a hand alphabet signaled by touching a patient's hand. From that point on, Helen always referred to Annie as "Teacher" (Blatt, 1985, p. 407).

It took a long time for Teacher to calm the fears in the child. Sullivan had been told at Perkins that if she wished to teach Helen, she could not spoil her. There were many times that Teacher and child were locked in physical

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combat. This portion of their lives was portrayed in "The Miracle Worker" by Anne Bancroft as Annie Sullivan and Patty Duke as Helen. This movie thrilled thousands of people and won many awards.

Jean Sherwood Rankin wrote an article for *Elementary Teacher* in 1908 which referenced Helen Keller in writing about the language-teaching problem. The article included methods that Keller adopted to take command of the English language. Rankin offered Helen as a most interesting character from an educational point of view. Rankin presented Keller's education as a way to solve problems of teaching the mastery of the mother-tongue to all children. She also cited other examples that Sullivan used to train Keller. These influences can be seen in classrooms and schools today.

Teacher's Devotion

With Anne Sullivan Macy as Helen's teacher, Helen's accomplishments indicated an underlying force of an assertive personality which was released by the devotion and skill of Anne Sullivan. Helen expressed herself through Sullivan. When Anne Sullivan died in 1936, she was succeeded by Polly Thomson, who died in 1960. After that, Winfred Corbally became Helen's companion (American Foundation for the Blind, p. 1).

Miss Sullivan understood that the deaf child does not learn as quickly as others (Keller, p.34). It is very difficult for some to learn the numberless idioms and expressions in the simplest of daily conversations. The knowledge of this difficulty has been transferred and used in early childhood, ESL, and developmental classes for students in diversified situations. Children learn from constant conversation and imitation. The conversation one hears in the home stimulates the mind and suggests topics and calls forth the expression of one's own thoughts. This natural exchange of ideas is denied to a deaf child, to many of the children speaking a different language and to children with varied backgrounds. The teacher should be determined to provide the stimulus that the child is lacking. The teacher should get the student involved and show the student how to take part in conversation (Arnold & Serpas, 1997, p. 82). It takes some students a long time to take the initiative, and then to learn the appropriate time to say the appropriate thing.

At the beginning, Helen was a little mass of possibilities. Teacher unfolded and developed those possibilities. After Teacher came, everything about Helen breathed love and joy and was full of meaning. She did not let an opportunity pass by to point out the beauty that is in everything, or to make Helen's life sweet and useful (Keller, p. 40). These are good lessons for all teachers and all school administrators in their day to day work with all children and young people.

Helen's life was crowded with many accomplishments, from horseback riding to learning the Greek language. She was very determined and she became a legendary figure. She had an unquenchable will (American Foundation for the blind, p.3). As people observed her, they found it difficult to believe that a person so handicapped could acquire the knowledge and the sensitive, perceptive writing talent that she exhibited as she matured. Her mind shaped her dark and silent world.

Helen Keller's Later Life

Helen did become socialized and she began to learn. Her thirst for knowledge was insatiable. Her progress was rapid. Helen began her formal schooling when she was 14. Sullivan was at her side. She wrote a total of 14 books in her lifetime. She made many appearances and gave talks. She was involved in socialist activities from 1909 until 1921. She traveled tirelessly and visited 39 countries before she died. At one point she fell in love, but her mother broke up the love affair. She grieved over the love lost, and claimed that if she had sight, the first thing she would do would be marry (Keller, 2007).

Other Reflections

The Time 100 (1999). listed Helen Keller in a category called Heroes and Icons. People whose only experience with Helen Keller and Anne Sullivan was through "The Miracle Worker" should be surprised to realize Helen's many dimensions. Working for the blind was not the center of her being. Her main focus was struggling for justice. She affected the course of education for people with handicaps, but her concern was for racial and sexual equality. She was tireless in these efforts. J. Edgar Hoover kept a file on her. She felt that Charlie Chaplin was one of the most important people of the century, and she did not think that appearing in vaudeville was beneath her. She was complex. She wanted to be herself. The stage appealed to her (*The Time 100*, 2009).

J. David Smith talks about the meaning of disabilities. He uses Trent (1995) as one approach, saying that mental retardation is a construction whose changing meaning is shaped both by individuals who initiate and administer policies, programs and practices, and by the social context to which these individuals are responding (p. 2). He

argues that the meaning of disabilities has sometimes been constructed in the name of science, in the name of caring for people with disabilities, and sometimes in the name of social, or economic necessity. Mr. Smith states that there have been exceptions to prevalent social constructions of the meaning of disabilities. These exceptions have mostly occurred when a person with a disability achieved prominence, and visibility, through extraordinary accomplishments. Helen Keller is an outstanding example of a person with severe disabilities but magnificent achievements who was, therefore, able to eclipse the prevailing attitudes about people with those disabilities (Smith, 1997).

Blatt (1987) wrote that Helen's voice of advocacy was bold for its time. It was focused on the potential for social intercourse and productivity in the lives of ignored, misunderstood, and exploited people. In that regard she moved beyond a social context that devalued many people with disabilities, and crusaded for their right to earn a place in society. She was a courageous advocate, and her efforts are felt in the educational area.

Rethinking Icons

More than 30 years after her death, Helen Keller is still known internationally as the little deaf blind girl, the 'the miracle child' who triumphed over adversity. Behind the image, hidden from public gaze, was a flesh-and-blood-woman, writer, activist, suffrage worker, and socialist. She lived to an old age, but is seen in the imagination as an eternal child (Crow, 2000).

We have an image of Helen Keller that pretends it is the truth. Instead, it presents an icon . . . a representation of the real person, a symbol, an idol, an object of devotion. An icon is built on socially valued status or behaviors, signs of success, attainment in career, wealth, ideals of beauty and so on. In its development, one or more of these factors is perceived as present to an exceptional degree. The icon becomes a symbol, of perfection. The iconic status imposed on Helen Keller was unfortunate. To expect her to live up to such an ideal was unreasonable.

When real lives of icons are examined, they too fall short of the image (Crow, 2000). When the icon of Helen Keller is taken apart and the woman emerges, so do her flaws, and often we feel she has let us down. But, her flaws reveal her as a complex, imperfect, struggling and *real person*. Her flaws helped her to survive.

We have made progress. She has influenced many areas of education and areas concerning disabled people. We can delve into the lives of icons and see an image of a three-dimensional life. We can delve into an old 'heart warming' story and retell it, and if people are appalled with what was done in the past, then we can discuss what needs to be done now.

Helen was resilient, inquiring, and intelligent. With the advantage of her class, it was those factors in combination with the impairment and disability that made her what she was and brought her public notice. As a disabled person, she was different. She did not want to fit the life to which she was born and, like so many others, was driven to invent another.

Educators had the opportunity to take advantage of her life experiences and transfer methods and techniques for use with children and young people, and even with students who are diverse or who do not know the English language. With those changes come training, involvement of parents, schools, communities, and lots of paper work for teachers and school administrators.

Concept of Educability and its Relationship to Teachers and School Administration

Children with disabilities and children from diverse backgrounds are becoming an integral part of public education, and spending increasing amounts of time in "regular" classrooms. Teachers, teacher educators, and principals are being confronted with the complex educational, social, medical, psychological, and language needs of these children.

When reviewing current best practices of school activities, it would be constructive for teachers, teacher educators, and principals to reflect on the story of Helen Keller and her example of educability. The concept of educability implies change. Textbooks write about Anne Sullivan teaching Helen Keller. Of course, it was a miracle, but the real miracle was not necessarily the result of divine intervention, but one of appropriate education and instruction in the face of unfavorable odds. Helen was involved in the changes brought about by appropriate instruction, which contrasted to the best practices of that day. Helen was able to take advantage of the talents and confidence of an educator, and she was empowered to achieve through instruction. Instruction must be relevant and functional (Brown, 1987). Relevant and functional instruction for children with disabilities, handicaps, or diverse backgrounds leads to independence (Alberto, P. A., Sharpton, W. R., Briggs, A., & Stright, M. H., 1986). Teacher educators must embrace the concept of educability so that public schools can include all students in a kaleidoscope of learning activities.

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Challenges

Through the memory of Helen Keller and Anne Sullivan, we are challenged to hold firm to beliefs and commitments that are unconditional and sustained . . . consistent. We need to remember also that historically contradictions characterize even the greatest personalities. The conquest of teaching the disabled, the non-English speaking student, students from diverse backgrounds, and the slower students is possible.

Helen Keller Quotes (Lewis, 2009).

Famous for her many achievements in life despite being both deaf and blind, Helen Keller has been a role model of achievement in the face of adversity. Selected quotations follow:

- When one door of happiness closes, another opens; but often we look so long at the closed door that we do not see the one which has been opened for us.
- The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen, nor touched . . . but all are felt in the heart.
- Keep your face to the sunshine and you cannot see the shadow.
- I long to accomplish a great and noble task, but it is my chief duty to accomplish small tasks as if they were great and noble.
- What we have once enjoyed we can never lose. All that we love deeply becomes a part of us.
- Be of good cheer. Do not think of today's failures, but of success that may come tomorrow. You have set yourself a difficult task, but you will succeed if you persevere; and you will find joy in overcoming obstacles.
- Although the world is full of suffering, it is also full of overcoming it.
- Optimism is the faith that leads to achievement. Nothing can be done without hope or confidence.
- We can do anything we want to if we stick to it long enough.
- While they were saying among themselves it cannot be done, it was done.
- Life is an exciting business, and most exciting when it is lived for others.
- Many persons have a wrong idea of what constitutes true happiness. It is not attained through self-gratification but through fidelity to a worthy purpose.
- Character cannot be developed in ease and quiet. Only through experience of trial and suffering can the soul be strengthened, ambition inspired, and success achieved.

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