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MID-WESTERN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCHER

• Official Publication of the Mid-Western Educational Research Association •



Indiana University Purdue University Fort Worth

On the Cover

Indiana University Purdue University Fort Worth

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MWER Publication Address

Deborah Bainer Jenkins
State University of West Georgia
228 Education Annex
Carrollton, GA 30118
Phone: (770) 836-4461
e-mail: djenkins@westga.edu

MWER Subscription & MWER Membership Information

Jean W. Pierce
LEPF Department
Northern Illinois University
DeKalb, IL 60115
Phone: (815) 753-8470
Fax: (815) 753-8750
e-mail: jpierce@niu.edu

Other Voices in Educational Research

The special issue of the *Mid-Western Educational Researcher* that you now hold in your hands represents two years worth of dialog between the editors. We first met at the 2002 annual meeting of the Mid-Western Education Research Association when Glenda attended Annie's presentation of "Talking an Article." The paper was well received, and based on that positive reaction, Annie and her co-authors set out to find an outlet for their work. Although the manuscript's format represented a practice of empowerment, at every turn, they were asked to revise the manuscript to follow a more traditional format.

"Other Voices in Education Research" offers an outlet to educational researchers who have something to say, or a way to say it, that may not be readily accepted by mainstream education publishers. The issue begins with "Talking an Article," the paper that started it all, where Chandler, Stinson, Wendling, From, and Gruetzmacher illustrate the empowerment that can be realized, by faculty and students, within the dialogical classroom. Talbert-Johnson, Tillman, and Simmons follow; having had a very similar experience when exercising their voices, they challenge colleges and universities to recognize the interplay between cultural and social variables in the actual experiences of faculty of color as these same institutions are engaged in efforts to diversify their faculties.

Next, Beeler, Hayes, Lewis, Russell, and Moss, four African American teacher-researcher-participants and their teacher educator, tell their stories of learning to teach, becoming certified, teaching, and teaching teachers at a time when African Americans are underrepresented in the teaching field. Kawamoto and Shimizu follow with a description of recent developments in *burakumin* study. This interdisciplinary educational approach in Japan is an attempt to more accurately inform about, and thus reduce discriminations against, *burakumin*, Japan's largest minority group; the authors illuminate broader implications for multicultural educational studies by moving the academic discourse beyond a discrimination/human rights dichotomy.

Finally, we close this special issue with Sanders commentary on his attempts to encourage graduate students to engage with each other and their instructor in confrontational interaction to expose and examine held values and construct new meaning, and to facilitate change toward a more egalitarian and just society through education and social action. And that brings us back to Stinson, et al., and the emancipatory pedagogies called for by Paulo Freire and Myles Horton, and referenced in our call for papers.

We hope that you enjoy reading this issue. We certainly enjoyed putting it together for you. We would like to thank the following for their help with the editorial process: Freda Brisco, Virginia Epps, Nomsa Gwalla-Ogisi, Ellen Smith, and Tony Truog, all of UW-Whitewater; and Joe Nichols from Indiana University Purdue University Fort Wayne. We would also like to thank all of those authors who submitted manuscripts that we were unable to publish. The sheer volume of submissions speaks to the need to listen closely for other voices in educational research.

Anne D'Antonio Stinson
University of Wisconsin-Whitewater

Glenda Moss
Indiana University Purdue University Fort Wayne

Talking an Article: A Conversation on Empowerment and Education

William Chandler

Anne D'Antonio Stinson

Holly Wendling

University of Wisconsin-Whitewater

Lillie From

School District of Beloit Turner

Beth Gruetzmacher

Sussex-Hamilton School District

Abstract

Emancipatory Pedagogies is the capstone experience for our Alternative Education Programs Licensure program. Employing non-traditional pedagogies, we taught Emancipatory Pedagogies for the first time in the summer of 2002. The reading list included several chapters from The Paulo Freire Reader (Freire and Macedo, 2001) and We Make the Road by Walking, the text spoken by Freire and Myles Horton. Recognizing the potential for powerful and empowering classroom dialog in the Freire-Horton model, our culminating activity was the "talking" of an article. That extended conversation is presented here. The reader will find that our dialog presents issues that Freire raised in his writings; the dialog represents a practice of empowerment that can be realized within the dialogical classroom. We offer it here as a part of the risk-taking that comes with growth and so that the reader can participate in both the theory and praxis of emancipatory pedagogy.

In December of 1987, Paulo Freire, considered by many people to be "the most significant educator in the world in the last half of the twentieth century" (Kohl, 1997), and Myles Horton, the founder of Tennessee's Highlander School, sat down together for the purpose of "speaking a book" (Horton and Freire, 1990, p. viii). Recognizing the difficulty many students experience when first encountering texts concerning critical theory and teaching for empowerment, especially Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1990), Freire and Horton set out to make their ideas more accessible by inviting the world to sit in on their conversation. The resulting text, *We Make the Road by Walking*, represents the potential for powerful and empowering classroom dialog. The article you are reading was inspired by that text.

At the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, in-service teachers can enroll in a 15-credit graduate course of study that leads to a license endorsement for teaching in alternative education programs such as schools-within-schools, work site schools, special alternative settings, etc. The planners of the Alternative Education Programs Licensure program believe that the non-traditional nature of these settings should be approached via curricular planning and instructional adaptation rather than through the typical practices of labeling and remediation.

In all, the course of study consists of five courses intended to take place over two consecutive summers and the intervening academic year. The first summer includes two courses that are intended to investigate how experience is codified and represented and how culture has an impact on

those acts of meaning making. The full year course considers the role contextual environment plays in learning; this experience is also intended to serve as a field practicum component, as well as build participant networking. The final summer involves a review of emancipatory pedagogy and the characteristics of students who can become marginalized by the traditional learning environment and activities.

The fifth and final course in the program is titled *Emancipatory Pedagogies: Teaching and Learning for Empowerment*. In this, the capstone experience for the Alternative Education Programs Licensure program, perhaps more than in the other four courses in the program, students can expect to encounter the non-traditional pedagogies called for in our program philosophy:

Teachers in alternative education settings need to employ non-traditional pedagogies in order to reach their marginalized students. Consequently, these teachers will benefit from non-traditional methods of teaching in their own programs of study. (Chandler, Freiberg, Stinson, and Nelson, 2002, p. 39)

They can also expect to become intimate with the works of Paulo Freire.

We taught *Emancipatory Pedagogies* for the first time in the summer of 2002. The reading list consisted of several chapters from *The Paulo Freire Reader* (Freire and Macedo, 2001), a number of articles from *Breaking Free: The Trans-*

formative Power of Critical Pedagogy (Leistyna, Woodrum, and Sherblom, 1999), as well as the aforementioned *We Make the Road by Walking*. We employed numerous strategies to make the texts accessible and to facilitate dialog, among them a unique team-teaching approach that eliminated the power dynamic found in most classrooms: Our “class” consisted of two professors, three students, and three A’s assigned on the first afternoon of class.

The process of education is one of engaging learners and encouraging them to venture into uncharted territories. Educators committed to teaching for empowerment recognize that perceiving and confronting new ideas is critical to our construction of a worldview. Thus, learning and growing are acts of risk-taking. Recognizing the importance of supporting students as they venture out, Bill and Annie, the instructors of the course, attempted to create a safe environment for the complex act of “worldmaking” (Goodman, 1978). The teaching methodology employed in the course modeled critical theory; both students and faculty were engaged in reading, writing, reflecting, and reporting on their own lives in the classroom. This paper is a description of how these readings and activities led us toward the risk-taking necessary to reconfiguring our own personally held worldviews. It is also a window into the course itself.

The Participants

As indicated above, five educators participated in this course. Bill, the senior member of the group, is a full professor at UW-Whitewater. He describes his evolution as a teacher:

My own teaching has been changed by my encounters with the writings and personage of Paulo Freire. I first read his work during my doctoral studies at Ball State University. A few years later I had the pleasure of spending a week with Freire at a seminar in Irvine, California. Then began the slow process of transforming my teaching into a form that was more compatible with Freire’s ideas. It took almost ten years to be in a position where I felt I was less the oppressor and more the teacher-student, less the didactic and more the dialogic, less the banker and more the problem-poser.

In the summer of 2002, Annie was a tenure-track junior faculty member in Bill’s department; Bill served (and continues to serve) as one of her informal mentors. She was close enough to her own graduate-school days that she still had the “floppy disks” on which she stored her first essays on Freire and his work. When she and Bill were putting together the reading list for the course, Annie rallied to include Horton’s text because it was instrumental in helping her make meaning of Freire’s works. Holly, a former preschool teacher, is a student at UW-Whitewater in the School Psychology Department; she is currently active with the UW-Whitewater on-campus childcare center and substitute teaching in the Whitewater Unified School District. Lillie teaches

visual arts at Powers and Townview Elementary Schools in Beloit. Lillie had been teaching for seven years; Beth teaches language arts for the Sussex-Hamilton school district; she was in her sixth year of teaching. Beth and Lillie are completing graduate degrees in curriculum and instruction.

The extended conversation presented here represents the culminating activity of Emancipatory Pedagogies in the summer of 2002. Instead of a final exam or culminating paper, we decided to “talk” an article. The reader will find that our dialog presents issues that Freire raised in his writings. More to the point, the reader will recognize that the dialog represents a practice of empowerment that can be realized within the dialogical classroom. We offer it here as a part of the risk-taking that comes with growth and so that the reader can participate in both the theory and praxis of an emancipatory pedagogy.

Talking an article

Annie: I think that the first thing we really need to do is talk about how this course came about. Bill, you were much more instrumental in getting the initial group together, so why don’t you talk about that.

Bill: It goes back probably about five years. The College of Education received an “invitation” from the Department of Public Instruction, as did every college in the state, to put together a course of study leading to licensure in alternative education. At that point and time I was chairing the Art Department and teaching in the Curriculum and Instruction Department. Some C&I colleagues and I sat down over lunch one afternoon and I rattled off five courses, the five that we now have, as a matter of fact, that would lead to the alternative education programs license. A committee was then developed through the C&I department that included Annie, Melissa, and me. We sat around talking for probably a good year about what the courses should be like and about entrance into the program and then, in a dire crunch, Annie, Melissa, and I, along with another colleague, Mike Nelson, were sent on retreat to write the program. We stayed in a hotel in Madison and wrote the program, all the bibliographies, and put together the curricular action packet.

Annie: The initial pilot courses were taught in the summer of 1999 and then we re-taught them in the summer of 2001, which brings us to the second two courses, which we offered this semester. The Marginal Student with Melissa Freiberg, which Beth participated in, and then this course, Emancipatory Pedagogies.

Bill: Right

Annie: I would like to talk a little bit about how the course is funded. Or not funded. We’ve joked around a little bit about it this semester, about how I’m being paid very little for teaching the course and Bill is essentially getting paid nothing once he pays for his gas from Milwaukee. All kidding aside, I think funding is an important consideration when

you have a course that's really relative and really powerful and yet the system does not support teaching this way.

Bill: We originally organized the program so that all of the courses would be team taught and there would be the opportunity for dialog and students would come to recognize the role that it plays. But that has not been supported. The other thing that we need to discuss is the fact that DPI has described our series of five courses as "elegant," but they have not required the alternative education programs license of teachers teaching in alternative settings. We haven't gotten a lot of support from them in terms of them telling people that they have to have an alternate education endorsement to teach in an alternative education setting.

"How did you come to find yourself here?"

Annie: Certainly, we designed the course to be a study of critical theory and to make the connection between educational practice and social change. How did you come to find yourself here in this little group?

Beth: I applied at Whitewater in the Spring of 2002. I was placed with Bill as my advisor and that's how I started down this path. I'm very interested in alternative education and when I came to campus to meet with Bill, he described the program to me. So, now I'm in the Learning Across the Lifespan Masters program with an emphasis in alternative education. I began to take my classes this summer; I took The Marginal Student with Melissa Freiberg prior to this one, and now I'm in this class and working toward my alternative education programs license.

Annie: So, you are really the student we're looking for. You're committed to alternative education.

Beth: Right. That's the area in which I want to teach.

Lillie: I was looking for an elective. Bill is my advisor as well. He told me about this course. It sounded like it would be very interesting and useful in my classroom. I teach in a small school district. Over the past few years the student population has grown more culturally diverse. That has caused some conflict and I thought this class would help me understand marginalized students.

Holly: I'm actually in the school psychology graduate program. I was a pre-school teacher quite a long time ago but I've never worked in the public schools. I need to take a certain number of credits in C&I and when I looked at the summer timetable this course just kind of jumped out: Emancipatory Pedagogies. I spoke to my advisor about the class and he spoke with Annie. After he did that, he enthusiastically suggested I sign up for the class and I'm really glad I did. It's really opened up for me how important critical theory is.

"I've never had a class that has been this open and casual, this conversational."

Annie: And that brings us to our first day, our first meeting. I would like to spend a little bit of time on how we came

together as a group. Personally I think the first day we came together very slowly and my sense was that students were taken aback by what may have seemed like silly banter between Bill and myself, which is really our "dialog," our style when we begin to talk about an idea. I'm sure it was a little bit more comfortable for you, Lillie, because you've been in class with Bill before.

Lillie: Yes. Bill usually does teach the class like that. He makes it comfortable to take risks.

Annie: What about you guys? Have you ever had a class experience that was so low key, so. . . .

Beth: I did. With Bill, actually, when I was an undergraduate here! I had him for Art Education, too, and it is a course that sticks out in my mind to this day.

Holly: I've never had a class that has been this open and casual, this conversational. In fact, I absolutely love dialoguing and speaking in classes and I have actually been told not to speak so much in class because it's distracting to other students, so this was such a welcome change.

Bill: Explain what you mean by "open."

Holly: We're able to talk about anything and it's funny because we specifically start to talk about what we've read and what Paulo has said, but we then begin to really relate it to our own lives, and that makes us think about. . . .

Beth: Reflect.

Holly: Reflect, exactly, on the situation in schools.

Beth: I also thought, after the first few days, that this was going to be the one course, undergrad through graduate, in which I wouldn't feel that I needed to know everything. I feel that I can come with questions and discuss them and I'll get my answers and if I need to ask a couple of times, "Will you re-explain it?" my question will be respected. We'll talk about it and I'll get four different perspectives on the same issue. It's liberating; I feel like I actually grasp the concept then. I don't feel it is stupid to ask anything. That has really opened my eyes. When I started taking classes, I felt I had to know everything, I couldn't ask questions or anything like that. Just opening up and saying, "Well, I didn't understand this," is powerful. And I need to make sure I do that in my classroom, too. We're always telling kids to ask questions, but to model asking questions is really important. When the first person asks a question it's like, "Oh, this is fine, everybody is okay with it, everybody has questions," which is nice.

Annie: A move that I made early on, which was difficult for me, was bringing in those papers that I had written after my first experiences with Paulo Freire when I was in school ten years ago. A participant in a study I did once said that when she read the case study that I had written about her first year of teaching, it was like looking at her seventh grade school picture, you know, when she had funny teeth and funny hair and it was just funny to see herself that way. It was funny for me to see myself taking those baby steps, and painful in a way. But, I think it was useful for you.

Holly: Paulo talks about evolving and always re-evaluating and changing your way of thinking. When I first heard that, I was like, “Oh, I’ve read all this stuff but do I really understand it? What’s going on?” As we’ve talked, I’ve been very open with what I’ve been thinking and I’ve been welcomed. Each of us has his or her view, and that has made me re-evaluate what I was thinking as well.

Beth: I think that reading them showed us that everyone starts at one point and then gradually gets to the point to where you are now. It’s nice to know you started at Point A at one time in your career. It kind of equals it out for me.

“I was able to read for what you’re supposed to be reading for.”

Bill: A lot of time in classes that might not be so open, there is something hanging over you, something that comes at the end of the semester: the grade. We did away with that at the very beginning of the term by giving you all A’s.

Beth: It took the pressure off for me, I think. When I read, I didn’t have to understand everything *before* the discussion the next day. I was able to read for what you’re supposed to be reading for: to gain knowledge and to begin to *make* understanding. I wasn’t reading to make an A in the course.

Holly: I kept looking for Bill and Annie to tell us what we were supposed to be doing! I’m used to professors saying, “Ok, this is what you have to do. Here’s the paper and when it’s due. You’re going to have this exam on this day and if you study this, maybe you’ll do well on it.” I kept thinking, “What, exactly, are you expecting me to do *for you*?” You never did tell me *exactly* what you wanted, but as the course progressed, it became so apparent that this is what you wanted us to do: really talk everything out and share what we’re thinking and relate it to an educational setting.

Bill: Do you think that some of that might have led you to read the entire book? I mean, I don’t remember the exact words of the assignment, but instead of reading one chapter, you read the entire book!

Holly: Well, we had a free day, remember that? I thought that free day was to read the entire book, not just one chapter.

Bill: That fits in with some of your educational or academic expectations. You said to yourself, “I’ve got a free day to read. I better read the whole book. That must be what they’re asking.”

Holly: Exactly.

Annie: We couldn’t possibly spend two and a half hours discussing twenty pages.

Bill: No!! (laughing)

Holly: And, as it turns out, we need more time than that to discuss a couple of pages!

Bill: As I tried to share early on, I had to learn how to put these ideas into use. But it’s worth it. It’s worth the work, and it’s worth sharing.

Annie: In the very beginning of the class we had a number of activities such as the word wall, different vocabulary exercises and charts and things, that we provided because we thought there might be this reluctance to just jump in and talk. So the first week was heavily supported with activities, or “interventions,” as we called them in our planning, compared to the second two weeks. Were these things helpful to you or did they get in the way?

Lillie: I thought they were helpful because they helped break the ice. We put the words and phrases up there and we could discuss them and dialog about them as opposed to just pulling something out of the air. Also, for me it was visual. I’m an artist and an art teacher, so I need the visual!

Holly: I think it was helpful to me, not being in the teaching realm at the moment. One of the questions we were asked to consider was, “What does our teaching look like?” Then, “What does ideal teaching look like?” By discussing the contrasts we were able to adjust our thoughts and look at what was really relevant.

Beth: I agree. I think it is nice just to have the list up here so that we can write it down at our leisure. A lot of times we’re not transcribing what we’re saying in the discussion, so this was something that was visual that we could write down at the end of class and then come back to and reflect on in our notes and journals.

Bill: Yes, the journal entries were really another way of taking our dialog outside of the building, so to speak.

“I viewed it as cracking a code.”

Annie: So that brings us to our next bullet point. How did the reading affect us? We’ve read a lot of stuff: *We Make the Road by Walking* by Myles Horton and Paulo Freire, a number of things from *The Paulo Freire Reader*, and *Breaking Free: The Transformative Power of Critical Pedagogy*. So what do you think? What’s really sticking with you, what’s really had an effect on your thinking?

Beth: I really enjoyed the excerpts from *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. I enjoyed it. I *did*! You know you have to change your thinking; you can’t view it as you’re *reading* something. I viewed it as cracking a code. Once I actually did that, I found it so applicable to all areas of my life, to different relationships, even within marriages, in my family. Then when we read the excerpt from *Education for Critical Consciousness*, seeing some of Freire’s ideas in action in a classroom really gave me a sense of what he was trying to get to and what his theory was.

Lillie: *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* made more sense to me after reading the Myles Horton book because I wasn’t wading through the complicated vocabulary. Also, *We Make the Road by Walking* is a dialog, which is the way Freire wants us to learn; actually seeing it in action was really helpful. It made everything else make more sense, and to go along with what Beth said, you do see it in relationships. I think it’s more than just a way to teach and learn; it’s more like a

philosophy for life: that you should respect other people, love human beings. That's part of being humanized, part of being authentic, and part of being all those things that Freire and Macedo and other authors are espousing.

Holly: At first I was a little frustrated because I was trying to understand how this would work in an educational setting. I kept thinking, "Well, everything in the world is just going to have to change if this is going to happen," and I kept looking at it one-sidedly and I was frustrated until we really opened that up in class and talked about how everything needs a balance, the educational system, or anything really. As Beth said, it really does apply to life as well. I think within the past couple of days I really had my "ah-ha" experience with Paulo Freire; I really understand what he's trying to say, in an all-encompassing manner, the "perfect life" and what is involved in that.

Beth: I know what you mean. I think Paulo addresses that in his later works. You know, "This is so radical; how would this look?" He addresses that later on so I think that helped you get to your "ah-ha" moment. He realizes this can't happen in a split-second, that it could take decades to get to this point.

Holly: If ever.

Beth: Right, if ever.

Annie: I was surprised at how much of it I had internalized. When we read that one line from *Breaking Free*, where it said "There's a shift from the characteristics of the child as the source for school failure to the school process itself," or something of that nature, I mentioned to the group that this was really the idea on which Bill and I and the others based the course. So much of what I had read in Freire and Horton and other authors has been internalized to be the way I teach. When we first started reading *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, and sure, I read it ten years ago but haven't looked at it, *seriously* looked at it in a long time, I found myself once again thinking, "How could this possibly happen?" And the answer became very apparent after a couple of days: Yeah, it can happen, it's happening right now; we made it happen by writing this program and having this course. That was a real eye-opener for me.

"We don't normally see our teachers struggle."

Holly: That was an interesting aspect of the course as well, to see you grow and understand. As students, we don't normally see our teachers struggle. It's good to see that ongoing struggle in an instructor.

Annie: The banking approach that Paulo Freire talks about, where the instructor has the knowledge and dispenses it, you know, that's a hard cycle to break. A lot of times I feel, "Should I go in class and be that open about not knowing. Maybe I should hide the fact that I don't really know." I think that at the end of the day I really do believe that when students see me struggle, it teaches them how to struggle.

When students see me make meaning, it teaches them how to make meaning, and that is a really powerful way to teach.

Beth: I think seeing you struggle with it made it okay for me to struggle. I was able to say to myself, "Okay, this is hard and you're not going to get it right away and you are going to struggle with this" and that's what really made me relax about the whole topic and the readings and everything. I did not feel like I had to have this perfect idea when I came into the classroom, but that I could struggle. Even people who have worked with Paulo and read Paulo for years still struggle with what he means at times and with the vocabulary that he uses.

Bill: I think it's fun playing in spaces where the content is different. The content here is not quantifiable, as in many of the courses we teach. It's more of a process thing.

Annie: Exactly. In reading methods there are things you need to know.

Bill: We think there is something someone needs to know. In art methods, we think there's something people need to know. In reality, it's the reflection of my current condition that is really the content that needs to be known. So you really have to throw everything over and that's the fun part. The fun part of this is seeing that the three of you [the students], especially, have been able to cope with that because it's not as finite as what other courses are all about and that can be scary.

Annie: Are there any other aspects of Freire's work that really jump out at you as really critical to teaching in an emancipatory way? For instance, this notion of taking sides really sticks out for me because so often in teacher education we hear that you really shouldn't let kids know how you feel about abortion or religion or politics. It seems to me that Freire is saying that the way to move away from the oppressor role is to say, "Yeah, there are sides and everyone has a side and if I pretend to you that I don't have a side, then I'm being disingenuous. I'm not giving you access to my argument." That's what really sticks out for me.

Holly: What really sticks out for me is that we need to start where the children are, to start at the point where they understand what's going on instead of starting a book in third grade where *all* third graders should be in math or reading, to really understanding each individual student in order to teach them to read or to do math, etc. All children are not going to be on the same page, so to speak, on the first day of school, or on the last day of school. Each child gains knowledge through his or her own eyes and experiences, each according to his or her own unique understanding.

Beth: I agree with you because for me that is exactly what stood out. The school setting is the only place where we assume students have gotten to this point and we will all now go on to the next point. Anything else you learn in the world, you start where you are. You access your background knowledge and you start from that point. But teaching in a school setting is the only place where we say, "Ok, we're

assuming you're at this point, or at least we believe this is where you're supposed to be, and now you're going to move to the next point" instead of looking at all of our students to see where they are and moving them on from there.

Bill: This is going to be compounded by the pressures that are out there in schools, by things that you know about, things like standards, like the kids who appear to be too lazy in your classroom when the principal walks down the hall. Somehow that is still a part of the big equation that we have to deal with.

Beth: That's the point where you say, "Ok, you need to cover all this stuff." But if the students aren't "there", they can't go beyond "there." So what good is it to bank the students with all of this knowledge if they're not going to accept it because they're not at that point where they *can* accept it?

Holly: Learners can't accept or understand new ideas if those ideas aren't meaningful to them.

Lillie: Exactly. I use a holistic approach to education, rather than the presentation of a bunch of unrelated segments. We, the teachers, need to help students create meaning.

Bill: An aspect of the process of dealing with new content is revelation. Annie alluded to this earlier, that as we worked together, the five of us, part of the revelation of you recognizing and coming to an understanding is that we've come to a revelation about who we are as well. We have a better understanding of who you are as students and participants, but that also reveals who we are. We experienced a certain level of vulnerability. That's something that doesn't always happen inside a classroom

Beth: It's part of the risk taking.

Bill: Yes, and if we don't want to go there, then we end up short-changing everyone who's participating in the experience.

Lillie: It's not authentic.

Bill: Exactly.

Beth: Someone talked about that. We have to make a leap of faith and that's a whole new way to look at a classroom. The teacher has to give up a lot of that power and control and give it to the students for solidarity to occur, for the students to truly learn what you want to teach them; however, that's a huge jump from how we've been taught in school and probably how, at least for myself, we've taught in the past.

Holly: And how children internalize the educational process. They're conditioned to sit in class and have the teacher say, "Ok, here's the information. Catch it."

Beth: Right.

Holly: And here we see a totally different way of thinking, even for us.

Beth: Paulo talks about that, how you couldn't do this right away. You have to ease into it within the classroom. And it was reassuring to see that he realized that this wasn't something that could happen overnight.

Lillie: It took him more than thirty years, though, from *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* to our last reading, *Pedagogy of Hope*, for him to realize it. It was useful to see that he went through a learning process, too.

"*What is the perfect life?*"

Annie: So what about this notion of the perfect life? You brought this up a couple of days ago, Bill, and Holly mentioned it earlier. What is the perfect life?

Holly: Well the first thing is the willingness to engage in dialog and risk-taking, saying, "We are going to do this!" Wouldn't you agree, Bill?

Bill: Well, I think that this concern comes up in the conversation that Paulo is suggesting when he asks us to become fully human. It is the root of this particular question, "What does it mean to be fully human?" which suggests the perfect life (Freire and Macedo 2001). We've used the model of the fellow who, in one of the writings, was a street sweeper and he said, "Well, I'm able to leave now and I'm going to hold my head up high when I go and sweep the streets." The analogy that Paulo raises is that this man moved into the perfect life; but some of us would say he is only a street sweeper so how could he have the perfect life

Annie: It's not his problem; it's ours.

Bill: Yes

Annie: If we can't respect that, then *we* don't have the perfect life.

Bill: So being fully human isn't about being able to have all sorts of objects. It's not buying the boat, the new digital camera, or at least the tripod or whatever the case may be; rather, it's about *how* someone is human?

Beth: I thought of it as coming to the realization that no one can hold you back. That you can do whatever you want to do and if that guy wants to be a street sweeper, then he's a street sweeper and he takes pride in his job and realizes he has a place in society. Someone has to have that job or society couldn't go on, the garbage would build up. I think that when you realize that everyone, no matter what his or her job is, no matter how much money he or she makes, is as important as anyone else, solidarity occurs. And freedom.

Holly: I think the point you're trying to make is that everyone must think critically about things, that the street sweeper sees himself, and we see ourselves, *in* a society. We see how everything is so intertwined. Having the perfect life would include being able to think critically about the process, about where each of us fits into society.

Lillie: You create your own world.

Holly: Right.

Lillie: It's different for you than it is for me and for everyone else.

Beth: And we can't impose our worldview on anyone else.

Lillie: Freire wrote, "the pursuit of full humanity, however, cannot be carried out in isolation or individualism, but only

in fellowship and solidarity; therefore it cannot unfold in the antagonist relations between oppressors and oppressed. No one can be authentically human while he prevents others from being himself" (Freire and Macedo 1998, p. 79). And therein lies our challenge; striking the right balance.

Annie: Value in the United States is pretty much shown by how much we pay. There is a lot of lip service paid to the value of teachers and teaching. You know, "teacher's are the most important people" and "if you've touched a child, you've touched the future." But in America we pay for things we value and we don't pay teachers very much; in this state we certainly don't pay teachers very much. So, can we ever have a perfect life and be fully human if we don't get to a point where the doctor and the teacher and the street sweeper make the same, have an equal existence? Can live as comfortably? Can live without having to worry about paying bills and having food and having medicine?

Bill: I think there is confusion, or there is a potential for confusion, when we anticipate that being fully human means we make a lot of money so we can buy a lot of stuff.

Annie: Then let's talk about the worry. You have to worry about things if you don't make a lot of money. I come from a working class background. Worrying about whether or not you can have something besides eggs every night for dinner this week is very real for some people. Worry is very powerful for some people.

Bill: But can people who have eggs every night be fully human?

Annie: I don't know.

Bill: I think that Paulo would say yes.

Beth: I agree. Because I think that if they see their value in society, they might see that they aren't getting paid as much but they can still feel good. I think that being fully human comes from the inside, not from how society looks at you but how you feel about yourself and your place in society. So I would say that, even as teachers, can we buy boats and take cruises and buy mansions? No, but I still feel good about the job that I do even though I don't make as much as a doctor.

Annie: Someone told me a story recently. It seems there was a man who had a job working under the table because he could have what he thought to be a better existence if he worked under the table and didn't have to pay taxes. It's very immediate, living on the edge like that, but it's what a lot of people do. At any rate, this man's wife discovered a lump in her breast and what did she do? What would you do if you discovered a lump in your breast? Would you call your doctor immediately? In some circles that's not what you do immediately. What this man did was quit the job where he was being paid under the table, got another job with benefits, worked for six months, and then they called a doctor, at which point the cancer was advanced to the point where the woman was seriously, seriously ill. I was being

facetious before about the eggs, but some people do worry in a very serious way.

Beth: But I think that Paulo would address that by saying there are agencies out there that could help people in that situation. He would say that we need to inform the oppressed of different avenues available to them.

Lillie: Could be pride, too, that prevents them from seeking help.

Holly: Maybe they didn't see themselves as being in a position to know.

Bill: I think we need to recognize that a part of being oppressed is buying into the oppression; the oppressor is one who is willing to encourage our acceptance of oppression. So then patronizing things can be said like "you'll be better for this in the long run" or "well, you didn't need that anyway." That's a way of being encouraged to stay (I've used the term settled) where you are. Our acceptance of oppression is subtle, but it's a process where we are almost willingly staying in a state of oppression.

Beth: Paulo addresses this and says that the oppressors do things that make them appear to be concerned with helping the oppressed rise above their situation; but their concern is disingenuous. If the government wanted everyone to take advantage of all of the social programs available to them, people would know more about them. They would be advertised on television and radio more so than they are now. The programs would be talked about in every school by every teacher and by every social worker. We would all know of them and know how to access them and that's simply not the case. Obviously, the oppressors want to keep the oppressed down, but the existence of these inaccessible programs make it *seem* as if they're trying to help people rise above their situation.

Lillie: That's what Paulo Freire called false generosity (Freire and Macedo 2001).

Bill: My anticipation would be that even a program like W-2, where we take people off of welfare but they have to work, is a similar form of false generosity. Because now "we're not just giving you money, you're working for it." But they're still potentially only working at a minimum wage job.

Annie: Perhaps for the State of Wisconsin?

Bill: Perhaps for the State of Wisconsin.

Annie: We've talked before about some of the custodial positions with the State of Wisconsin paying a wage that is actually at or around the poverty level. I think at one point, it was about two years ago, the cover of the Union magazine boasted that for the first time Union wages were above poverty level. *For the first time Union wages were above poverty level.* I'm repeating that because it is just mind-boggling to me, having been a card-carrying member of a union since I was sixteen.

At any rate, what about the notion of *conscientiazação*? I think if we talk about the perfect life that certainly is one

aspect of it that can't be overlooked. This notion of, as I understand it, knowing and acting upon that knowledge. Knowing what's right and acting upon it. Simply knowing is not enough. I think many people who read these books get to the point of knowing, but they don't get to the acting part, which is much more difficult. It takes a leap of faith.

Lillie: More risk!

Annie: Yeah, more risk.

Lillie: But there's the accountability issue in your classroom; you're accountable to the students, to the parents of these students, your principal, and your district. So you're going to be cautious about taking risks. You can only push so far.

Bill: Well, if conscientiousness is a sense of responsibility for the people with whom you are dealing, then it's because of that sense of responsibility that you're not going to encourage the oppressed's acceptance of their oppression.

Annie: So this is not the notion of empowering people, but rather providing the context in which they can empower themselves. Which is not something brilliant I thought of, it's pretty much the language that is in all of these texts.

Bill: But it's still pretty brilliant if you come to recognize the idea. The problem, regularly, is that we'll move into a position and not encourage other people. For us as teachers it's easy to say, "You are just students," and to hold students at a lower level of status, in a position where they are vulnerable to being oppressed. Annie and I have worked hard to move beyond that state, to lower that wall between student and teacher; and that's consistent with what Paulo has been saying about this situation. It's all about how to construct a playing field where oppression is done away with, or at the very least, minimized. It's about responsibility.

Annie: So what is it that's happening in our country to prevent people from living the perfect life?

Lillie: Well, some educators believe it's because business interests have seeped into education. We are training tomorrow's labor force. Not necessarily for them to be critical thinkers, but to be good workers. Good workers do pretty much what they are told and don't think about the best way to do something; they simply follow orders or direction.

Beth: And perhaps are chastised if they do try to. . . .

Lillie: . . . come up with an original thought, right.

Bill: That's really interesting within the context of the bankruptcy that was announced on Sunday [July 22, 2002] with WorldCom and thinking about how some officials distorted the sense of responsibility, of *conscientiazação* itself, and became oppressive to at least all of the stockholders, all of the customers, all of the employees, tens of thousands of employees; these are big problems. It's like you said, though. It's done in the guise of economics; this is good business. One of the terms that blows me away is "aggressive bookkeeping." Aggressive bookkeeping? That's just downright cheating.

Annie: Talk about a false consciousness.

Holly: Well, I often think about the story that Annie told, on the first day of class, about a river where people were being pushed into the water and drowning. Some other people, people who knew how to swim, saw what was happening and decided that they must do something, so they began jumping into the water to save the non-swimmers.

Annie: And the story goes on that the swimmers decided that what they needed to do was teach the non-swimmers how to swim, to give them that knowledge; and then, when they fell in the river, they would be able to save themselves. However, if you take that one step further, they really needed to look at why people were being pushed into the river. That's the problem; too often our social policy is merely a band-aid to fix things up, but we don't really address the socio-historical and cultural aspects of what's happening. We don't look at our own history and how we act as groups of people to figure out what the real problem is.

Holly: We're so used to the band-aid that we don't think critically about where we really sit in relation to outside forces. Maybe it's because of the way we are educated. Maybe the problem with education is that so many people are so used to that banking concept of "Here you go, here's the knowledge. Now learn it," rather than, "Now, what do you think we should do with this? What do you think about it? What does it mean to think critically?" We need to encourage students to think critically. People must come to understand how important that is for society.

Annie: Freire talks about self-deprecation as a "characteristic of the oppressed which derives from their internalization of the opinion the oppressors hold of them" (Freire and Macedo 1998, p. 61). Because of your age, Bill (you're certainly a generation older than I am), and because you have read extensively in this field, because you've done more work in this field, all of us, not only the students, but myself included, have at times said to you, "What do you think, Bill, because you know Paulo Freire?" And that's kind of like, "Please excuse our ignorance. We will keep quiet and let you talk." As one of the peasants Freire worked with stated, "You are the one who knows and we don't know anything," (Paulo Freire, 62). We've all said things like that, myself included. "Please help us; you are our expert." So there's this notion of self-deprecation. We have internalized that. We think we don't know.

Bill: That's part of the oppressed/oppressor relationship.

Holly: That is what allows things to continue the way they are. If you feel bad about yourself, of course the oppressors are going to take advantage of that because then you're easier to control.

Annie: Also there is this notion, I think, and I've talked about this before, of the oppressed not knowing they're oppressed. I've mentioned a couple of groups, for instance cigarette smokers who are addicted to a drug, a drug that's known to be more addictive than cocaine, who are paying, I think an unconstitutionally high rate of taxes on those cigarettes, will fight for their right to smoke. I mean, they think they are

participating in the democratic process and they don't see what's being done to them. Or, Latino parents arguing that their children don't need bilingual education services; they need English, because they need to compete in this world. They don't see that their culture is being stolen from them and that their language is being stolen from them, because the oppressor has convinced them that English is what they need. The system convinces them that the American Dream is the way to go. Or senior citizens supporting a Republican agenda that costs them thousands, millions of dollars in health care costs, specifically money paid to drug companies. I mean we just don't see ourselves as oppressed in a lot of ways.

Bill: Paulo would suggest that we're emotionally dependent; that dependence pushes us deeper into a sense of oppression.

Annie: I'm reminded of the Inuit teacher in Lisa Delpit's (1995) *Other People's Children* who encouraged her students to acknowledge a place for standard, formal English, but not to allow that acknowledgment to diminish their sense of pride in their heritage language. That does not happen in many of our schools. We don't respect heritage languages; therefore, people don't respect their own heritage languages and they can't have a perfect life. And neither can we, not if we contribute to their state.

Beth: We've discussed textbooks and how they come from the white perspective, and being a white person, I had never really thought about this. I was given knowledge and I accepted it, and even though there was some focus on critical thinking, I was never really confronted with different perspectives. I never thought about how the story of Christopher Columbus discovering America might change if looked at from different vantage points.

Lillie: It's historical amnesia, the idea that the dominant culture writes history from its own perspective, ignoring the contributions of other ethnic groups.

Holly: I made a point in my journal last night about how in education today we're teaching to the test, about standardized tests. About going back to the basics in which books are being taught or read in school. Well, who is writing the standardized tests and who is writing those books? So isn't that, once again, teaching the dominant ideology of what "America" stands for? Instead of encouraging students to think critically, we focus on holding them accountable according to the standards. But whose standards? The standards of the dominant ideology.

Beth: Right.

Bill: The decision of Brown County [Wisconsin] to have English as the official language of the government fits in there, too. Such a decision tells anyone who doesn't speak English that they are subordinate to the English speakers. So, could someone from the subordinate culture, who speaks only partial English, even contemplate being a member of the county board? Probably not. So he or she is even more greatly diminished by that kind of action.

Annie: Freire writes about the fear the oppressed has of the oppressor. This fear is very real. There's a bit of folk wisdom that is passed around campus every year at contract time, or whenever contracts come up, that the custodians are going to have their benefits taken away and they will have to pay 100% of their health benefits. As State of Wisconsin employees, that's not going to happen. It certainly seems bizarre that that group would be singled out as the only group of Wisconsin employees who are now going to pay for their benefits, yet they react to this every year saying, "We won't take a raise, we'll just keep our benefits." Why? Because these are people who are desperate. They need that job and they need those benefits. There's no safety net for them. There's no, "Well, I'll just collect unemployment for six months." No, you can't pay the bills that way, and if you don't have any kids, there's no welfare that pays the bills for you either. That's where homeless people come from. We have this illusion that all these safety nets exist and they don't for a lot of people; that fear is very, very real for a lot of people.

"By doing nothing you've made a choice."

Bill: We should talk about the idea of neutrality and what it means to be political. We function in constructed sorts of environments: classroom, family, social order, social structure. How do you feel about neutrality and are there times when things truly are neutral? Are there times when things are truly apolitical?

Beth: We discussed this once when Lillie talked about her experiences in Cuba, about how her family tried to remain neutral, but I think society makes you choose a side. They assume you're with this side or that side, so even in you try to remain neutral, I think the people around you will put you into a group; give you a side even if you choose not to take it.

Lillie: Well, I was thinking about that. Inaction is not always the answer even though you don't want to go with one side or the other; by doing nothing you've made a choice. And with this "choice" comes risk. Do you endorse the status quo or opt for change?

Bill: Which gets back to Annie's question from before: What is this thing called *conscientiazação*? If we remain neutral and we don't make a choice, we actually do choose and fly in the face of our conscientiousness. Scary.

"What's the outcome of this?"

Annie: So, I guess that brings us to the big questions: How will you use the content and experience of this course? What are taking with you, what does it all mean?

Bill: We've been together for two and a half weeks. Will you change your teaching or your learning? What's the outcome of this?

Annie: If you're asking me, I really have gained a renewed faith in my methods. You know, it's very easy to slip back to old ways when the University says you give too many A's.

Or the University says you have to assign a certain number of papers or you have to have so many assignments or you have to have these assignments tied to the Wisconsin Teacher Standards. They put all these restrictions upon you, and in trying to meet them, it's very easy to lose sight of your goals. I really do feel renewed confidence that 'Yeah, I'm doing the right thing.' I'm showing people how to engage in inquiry, I'm modeling and they can grasp that and do with what they will and that's valuable and that's powerful. But it's so easy to lose sight of that. I've told you before of an incident that occurred very early on in my career. I was teaching a class that I myself had never taken and had shared with the class that I had never taken it. We were going to engage in this discovery process together. A student who was accustomed to the banking approach to education complained to an administrator and that administrator told me never to admit to students that I didn't "know" something. That took me aback. Why wouldn't you admit that to students? Why would you pretend you have something you don't have? It's easy to begin, especially as a non-tenured person, as a new person, to say, Am I crazy? Am I like that? But I feel confident now, I feel really confident that I'm doing the right thing.

Beth: I had reached a point in my career where I was trying to do exactly what the administration wanted me to do and had really reverted to what my own experiences in school, as a student, had been. I've been teaching for five years now, I'm starting my sixth year, and I think that entering into this program really came at the right point in my career. I feel that I was getting into the banking type of student-teacher relationship, depositing knowledge into the students. Now I'm excited to go back to my classroom and model what you have modeled for us here and to change a lot of what I had done in the past.

Bill: How do you think you'll do that?

Beth: Well I think one of the biggest things is the way I relate with the students. I've talked about and had so many ideas about different things that I want to change in my classroom, even as simple as the seating arrangements. I would like for my classroom to be more open. I want to engage students in more of a dialog about the things that are going on. Another change I want to make is to explain to the students why what we're learning is applicable in their lives instead of saying 'Well, this is the curriculum and I need to follow the curriculum so we're going to do this,' to join in the venture together to find and discover different ways to make mechanics and usage, for example, exciting and applicable to their lives.

Lillie: I was thinking that I already use dialog. I do a small demonstration, usually five to ten minutes or so, and as I'm demonstrating I'll talk about what I'm doing but often I'll engage the students in conversation. If we're working on a landscape, I might ask where they've been outdoors so I get to know a little bit more about them and their observations about what summer trees look like and so on, so it's more

than just this is how you do it. I learn a little bit about them, especially if they are very young students; they'll tell you their whole life story! I was thinking too about graphic organizers, how they're very visual. I think I'll use them as starting points for dialogs. But also, I think I mentioned this before, it's more of a personal philosophy. It's not just in the classroom. It's the way you treat students as individuals, human beings rather than a collective group who think alike and do things the same way. Then there is also the idea that Myles Horton mentioned:

You have to enjoy teaching and learning and loving people first. I think the best advice is not to sweat the small stuff. Myles often said if we can do something overnight, it's not worth doing; because if it's that simple and that easy it'll take care of itself. There will be plenty of people who will see that it happens. Tough problems take time and you have to struggle with them. (Horton and Freire 1990, p. 216)

I think for me that's what it's going to be; it's going to be a struggle to try to bring this into the classroom and to do a little bit at a time and maybe by the time I retire, I'll have gotten a quarter of the way there.

Bill: Wow.

Holly: Seeing as I'm only partially through my studies, I'm not even in the schools right now. What I plan on doing this year is substitute teaching and getting some experience with children in public schools. I can use a lot of what we learned in this course. Just the dialog, modeling dialog. Perhaps I'll be going to five different school settings in a week and just talking about what they're learning, maybe just reiterating. Also, just as a person in society, this experience has really opened my eyes to how important it is to just sit around and discuss ideas. How else do we learn things but through dialoging with other people? In the field of school psychology, we talk about being effective agents of change in the school and I think that it really emphasizes the fact that you need to know your students and what's going on. This includes the different groups I meet: teachers, parents, and children. Just getting people to open up and really get to know them by using, not a method, but using this philosophy.

Bill: I think I just died and went to heaven.

Concluding Thoughts

"Talking an Article" presents the transcript of an exercise that concluded a three-week summer seminar conceived to consider the rationale and practice of pedagogies intended to empower. Interestingly, the dialog reported here was not an activity either planned or anticipated by the course instructors. Instead, and importantly, it was an activity generated by the course participants, in part by those participants who in another setting might be considered "only students." Apparently, the dialogical manner of engagement fostered within the classroom setting encouraged the students to see that their

own conversation and dialog was a vibrant vehicle for exhibiting their held thoughts and understandings as well as their continuing struggle to comprehend and assimilate text.

The transcript itself can be engaged at multiple levels. In one way it is only a production, a record of an event in a classroom. In another, it is a production that came about at the instigation of the learners themselves. Additionally, it is a production that was intimately shared: All of the participants took part in the conversation as well as the editing. Lastly, it is a production of thought. Readers will likely confirm that the works of Freire and Horton are not easily dealt with during a first read. The transcript is evidence of the participants' determination to respond to and act upon text in ways beyond reading and understanding. The participants felt responsible for engaging in the dialog and then producing, for external consumption, a document sharing their own words and ideas.

The real dialog presented in "Talking an Article" provides a lens for interpreting the internal struggle to create meaning. The participants have offered their own interpretation of what Paulo Freire and Myles Horton have written. Their dialog provides a lens for interpreting the internal struggle to make real the unknown that is realized by all readers of unfamiliar text. Because this is real conversation, the participants have made themselves vulnerable to a host of interpreters, not only to each other but also to those who will read this article. And because these are actual words, we ask our readers to engage in interpreting how ideas are grappled with. Time and actions will provide the only gauge to indicate if interpretations have any lasting effects.

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Sharing Our Voice: Experiences of Faculty of Color in a Private University

Carolyn Talbert-Johnson
Beverly Tillman
Llewellyn Simmons
The University of Dayton

Abstract

Colleges and universities are engaged in efforts to diversify their faculties, as faculty of color continue to be underrepresented in higher education. Challenging higher education to recognize the interplay between the cultural and social variables of education is an arduous process and warrants further investigation. The authors explore the unresolved and emerging issues that must be confronted and propose an interrogation of policies and practices.

We [professionals] have moved on, but we cannot honestly say. . . .that racism moved into the past. It is harder to point to it now, people are more careful in what they say and maybe in what they think, too. And yet one senses it there, in the shadows, lurking perhaps around the next brightly lighted corner as one walks the corridor of one's office. (Stephen L. Carter, 1993)

As the quote implies, race continues to be a critical and pervasive problem in education today. Several years ago, two of the authors submitted an article to one of the respected journals in higher education on the topic of race relevant to their experiences in higher education. The authors shared stories and personal insights into the dilemmas, challenges and inequities that were evident; however, they were admonished by the editor who stated that the 'topic was not relevant to higher education.' We were strongly encouraged by an administrator at our institution to redirect the focus of our original premise to ensure that a mainstream approach was presented. Once we complied, the article was published by another journal; however, the silencing of our voices reduced the opportunity for critical perspectives and analysis of our personal journeys. In this article, the authors share their poignant 'stories' relevant to their roles in higher education. A call for a transformative process in the thinking, behaviors, and dispositions of "others" in the academy is warranted, if important intercultural dialog is to be sustained.

It is imperative that all constituents learn to listen and acknowledge alternative discourses and incorporate them into the existing structure of the university. Multiple perspectives must be heard, since it is apparent that prejudicial beliefs about individuals and groups are usually based on social constructs such as race, culture, language, and social class (Pang and Park, 2003). Educational research has increasingly reflected on the use of personal narrative as an expression of the interplay between the social, political, and cultural variables of education (Errante, 2000). Therefore,

personal narratives will be used to provide insight into the experiences of faculty of color in a Catholic Marianist institution. The authors assert that the voice of faculty of color is almost nonexistent in research, and schools of education are struggling in their efforts to address this complex issue. The authors' voices are presented within the context of identified quotes and are supported by relevant educational research. The American Association of University Professors (2001) "argues the necessity of diversity is stronger in higher education than in any other context, but only if diversity is understood as a means to an end" (p. 1).

Teacher education is at a critical juncture as it attempts to address diversity at all levels. For more than a decade, a debate has raged about the roles of diverse faculty in higher education. Therefore, an examination of past and present efforts to reform the enterprise is quite appropriate. Boyer (1990) states that "concerns about tomorrow's professoriate cannot be seriously raised without focusing with special urgency on minority faculty, since the next generation of scholars will be challenged, as never before, by diversity in the classroom" (p. 66). Despite Boyer's call to action, we have yet to see such diversity reflected in the professoriate, as African American faculty are present in disproportionately low numbers in higher education. Today, we represent 2.3% of the faculty at predominantly white colleges and universities (Trower and Chait, 2002). Researchers have explored the meaning of the reported differences in the academic experiences among faculty of color and white faculty (Vargas, 1999). Unfortunately, there is little research in higher education that specifically examines the teaching experiences of faculty of color, as the majority of the research has focused on faculty in preschool and K-12 settings. However, the literature does support that recruitment of faculty of color continues to be a major crisis in higher education (Talbert-Johnson and Tillman, 1999).

Even though strides have been made in addressing the issue of diversity and to increase the number of faculty of

color, the situation is still bleak. Not only are shortages of faculty of color evident, there is not an appropriate supply of new applicants to be recruited into available positions. As faculty of color in a Catholic Marianist institution, the authors provide insight into their experiences and share their narratives as a first step for developing institutional change. Furthermore, the authors propose a critical analysis and examination of factors that influence the recruitment and retention of faculty of color and call for radical change that is inclusive of all members of the community. For instance, at the University of Dayton, efforts have been made to design diversity initiatives by creating of a task force, surveying the community, and the implementing an institution-wide policy, in an attempt to assist in the eradication of prejudicial and biased behaviors. These steps have taken more than a decade, which is evident in the consistently low numbers of faculty of color during this same time period. While new faculty members have been recruited, we have failed to retain them within our learning community; thus, there has been little change in our efforts to be an exemplary institution of diversity. Obviously, race does matter. DuBois (1986) notes that faculty of color in predominantly white institutions encounter “double consciousness.” Faculty of color are always aware of the dualities of race and their place in the development of critical consciousness, as they strive to maintain their cultural identity.

Race is the least reliable information you can have about someone. It's real information, but it tells you next to nothing. (Toni Morrison, 1998)

It is not surprising that many institutions are utilizing alternative routes to attract faculty of color. For example, the University of Dayton in their efforts to increase the pool of potential professors, is aggressively recruiting seasoned persons from urban public school districts. Some of these individuals have obtained terminal degrees, and are adjunct instructors. Additionally, tenured faculty engage in the mentoring of new faculty members and assist them in the teaching and research experiences that will lead to the development of requisite skills needed to teach, conduct research, and participate in scholarly activities in academic settings. Talbert-Johnson and Tillman (1999) assert that such relationships have the potential to provide both mentor support and the emotional support for dealing with the challenges to one's personal and professional self-image when teaching in a majority institution.

Our voice: Each of us has had experiences involving both graduate and undergraduate students who consistently avoid interacting with us during a given term. Typically, we try to take some time before reaching this conclusion, even if our gut feeling is that there is an “avoidance issue.” Sometimes, however, the circumstances are too powerful to ignore.

Beverly collaboratively taught a first year experience course with a colleague of European

American heritage. Early in the term, she noticed that some students consistently avoided her. Before she could share her observation with her colleague, the colleague pointed it out, stating “I've noticed that [several students] avoid interacting with you in and outside of class. They come to me even though you are warmer, approachable, and much more experienced at teaching this course. What gives?” If her colleague was off campus on a day that they had questions, these students would wait until she returned rather than to see Beverly. She shared that she had heard of this sort of thing, but had never seen it so clearly demonstrated. For the remainder of the term, the two tried to structure the class interactions so that these students could not avoid some interaction with Beverly, e.g., monitoring and questioning students during small group work; facilitating whole class discussion, etc. When the time came for individual conferences at the end of the semester, both professors met with the students to review their work and final evaluation of the course. Even then, we observed that the students in question gave more of their attention to my colleague and would only respond to me when “pushed” to do so.

If indeed these students were hesitant to respond to Beverly due to race, they missed an opportunity for a powerful learning experience: getting to know a real person, educator, and potential mentor. Unfortunately, they focused on one overt characteristic. Events such as these are disheartening, to say the least. However, as disturbing as this experience was, we are more disturbed at the prospects that these education candidates might interact with their colleagues, future students, and families of color in similar ways. When directed toward P-12 students of color, the behaviors and discomfort of these teacher candidates could limit access to learning within their classrooms.

The challenges do not stop with students. Carolyn vividly recalls a colleague stating that, “the *only* reason you have your position is because of affirmative action!” This has happened on more than one occasion. In fact, we would venture to say that one would be challenged to find faculty members of color in higher education who have *not* been on the receiving end of statements such as this. Regardless of our direct or indirect responses to these insults, the impact upon one's morale and feelings of belonging in the academy are powerful. If faculty of color are treated in this way, how might these same individuals treat students of color who are in a far more vulnerable position? It is incumbent upon more open-minded members of the academy to join faculty of color in working toward inclusive environments in higher education in the

true spirit of “learning communities.” The creation and implementation of diversity initiatives for which *all* entities are accountable is a start, and may result in ‘structural diversity.’ However, the greater challenge is to impact the ways in which individuals interact with each other on a daily basis.

We can embrace our diversity, find strength in it, and prosper together, or we can focus on our differences and try to restrict access to resources by members of ethnic and racial groups different from ours and limit prosperity for all. (Andrew Young, 1996)

We can embrace diversity when all stakeholders are willing to promote change. If change is to occur, we must acknowledge the efforts of “others.” As Lee (2003) explains:

Despite long-standing efforts to pluralize our way of thinking about diversity, the field remains caught in a web of assumptions, that are infrequently articulated or critically examined. . . they are folk theories about groups in the human family that are inextricably tied to relationships of power and dominance. (p. 3)

Higher education has a responsibility to interrogate systems and organizational frameworks that disenfranchise certain members of the community. Future research must move beyond the rhetoric to a new paradigm that truly represents the increasing pluralistic look of predominantly white colleges and universities (Tyson, 2002).

Our Voice: The authors teach numerous courses with a focus on inclusive education (e.g., multicultural education). We try to scaffold learning for our candidates, keeping in mind that they might have limited prior experiences with various diverse groups, especially persons of color. The demographic data, both nationally and within our university and school of education, support the limited multicultural experiences reported by education candidates (Nieto, 2000; Cochran-Smith, 2000). We try to create non-threatening learning communities within our courses while also challenging candidates to be reflective about many of the inequities that occur in society and within educational settings. Many students respond to this approach, but some are openly resistant to the course content.

Carolyn had a European American male graduate student in her Learning Theory and Education course who constantly challenged her teaching, and made it known that he resented having to enroll in this required course. Whether in small groups, cooperative learning groups, whole-class discussions, or class assignments, he actively resisted the course information, as the course provided multiple perspectives to the learning process. During one class discussion, he finally stated to the whole class, “I

just don’t believe in multicultural education.” He continued by adding, “I think it is the white male who is discriminated against!”

Our concerns in these all-too-frequent instances, have to do with professional dispositions. First, we believe that all educators should be open to learning in their licensure courses. Given the changing demographics within P-12 educational settings, educators must acquire knowledge of the student populations that they will serve. Lack of knowledge and insensitivity to the various backgrounds of learners may result in lack of opportunities to learn within educational settings. This prospective teacher or administrator declined to learn information that could lead to improved learning outcomes for his future students, and appeared to be at peace with that decision. Second, the lack of professionalism in these behaviors is evident, and is disrespectful of the instructor. We have had our credentials called into question many times, in ways that our colleagues have not. Carolyn had a student question her professionalism because she adhered to the guidelines stated in her course syllabus regarding late or incomplete work. The student was irresponsible and was shocked to discover that Carolyn actually held students accountable for the work.

Sometimes change comes not in the first round, but at the second, third or fourth. Change starts with one person questioning, challenging, speaking up and doing something to make a difference. We can each make a difference. . . because each of us is already part of the community where racism exists and thrives. (Paul Kivel, 1993)

If colleges and universities are sincere in their commitment to improve the current climate in higher education, faculty of color must become a more integral part of these conversations and change efforts. Banks (1994) provides an excellent framework for defining the aspects of the transformative process. His taxonomy includes four categories: the contributions approach (e.g., focuses on heroes, holidays and individual cultural events), the additive approach (e.g., adds content, themes and perspectives to the curriculum without changing its structure), and the transformational approach (e.g., changes the structure of the curriculum to provide concepts, issues, events, and themes from a diverse ethnic and cultural perspective). The last approach is social action that enables individuals to make decisions on important social issues and to take actions to solve them. His framework is relevant as institutions restructure their agendas in the elimination of contentious discriminatory practices in higher education.

An investigation is warranted in the discernment of practices that perpetuate racism, in whatever form. Nieto (2000) suggests that if we expect teachers to venture on a journey

of transformation, teacher educators must be willing to join them. Until we, as a profession and within our individual schools of education, take stock of ourselves by questioning and challenging our own biases and values, little will change. Similarly, Jay (2003) reports, we are exhorted to shift from a passive stance (i.e., reflection, identification, analysis) to an active one (i.e., transformation) if we are to effect the kind of change necessary to provide a better vision for higher education. It is time to move beyond the rhetoric to practice; therefore, the time to act is now.

Talbert-Johnson and Tillman (1999) posit, "Inappropriate or insensitive faculty comments relative to diverse members should be challenged whenever and wherever they occur, not just by faculty of color but by any individual who has a concern for equity and personal responsibility" (p. 206). Cochran-Smith (2000) asserts:

Despite my deep commitments to an antiracist curriculum for all students and despite my intentions to promote constructive discourse about the issues in teacher education, I realized I didn't "get it" some (or much) of the time. I admitted that these things were hard, uncomfortable, and sometimes even devastating to hear, but we needed to hear, to listen hard, and to stay with it (p. 162).

The authors caution that it is appropriate to state, "I don't get it." Additionally, faculty must recognize that it is not just the problem of faculty of color, but others as well. We caution that this is our voice and, therefore, note that all faculty of color may not have the same experiences, as substantial differences exist in the resources available, the risks encountered, and the climate of the institution. We also recognize that the general faculty may have issues; however, we contend that faculty of color experience inequitable practices and behaviors more consistently.

Our Voice: Llew, as a new faculty member in Educational Leadership, found his graduate students very confrontational in many of the courses he taught. Many of the students not only demonstrated collective resistance to the course content, but also challenged Llew's teaching style and class structure. One student in particular comments, "The other professors don't require this much work." Is it possible that what these graduate candidates perceived as "this much work" may have been the taxation of wrestling with sensitive issues that can leave one feeling emotionally drained and somehow not quite comfortable with "business as usual?" The loss of innocence can be quite disconcerting. One of Beverly's former professors used to say, "Once you *know*, you can never be innocent again." It is our collective responsibility to help guide education students from innocence, to awareness, to transformative action.

We have found that one of the more promising avenues toward greater understanding and accep-

tance within our programs is collaborative teaching. Carolyn, Llew, and Beverly all teach some courses collaboratively within various licensure programs. We believe that this approach has many benefits. First, each of us has gotten to know colleagues better through the process of planning and teaching together. Our colleagues express the same sentiment. The time- and labor-intensive nature of collaborative work affords us opportunities to see aspects of each other's backgrounds, experiences, and beliefs, that might go unnoticed when we teach independently. As we facilitate class discussions, personal examples are shared, emotions evolve, and risks are taken. This provides a unique experience for the students in our professional courses. They have opportunities to see collaborative teams of faculty *model* the dispositions of openness, acceptance, and mutual respect.

The Dialog Continues

Researchers have explored the meaning of the reported differences in the academic experiences among faculty of color and white faculty (Vargas, 1999). The discussions of these differences, however, is still largely limited to occupational stress, as it relates to teaching, research, and service. Unfortunately, existing university structures do not adequately recognize the tremendous emotional and physical burdens confronting faculty of color, especially when compared to needs of the general faculty. The authors suggest that the following recommendations be considered: (a) vigorous recruitment *and* retention of faculty of color; (b) implementing policies and practices that are inclusive of all members in a culture of openness, and (c) facilitating opportunities for constructive dialog.

We believe the recruitment of faculty of color will continue to be a problem of critical magnitude in teacher education until teacher education begins to address societal and racial issues. It is vital that schools of education strengthen their resolve to identify, recruit and retain promising faculty members with effective mentoring strategies employed. There is a dire need for colleges and universities to engage in more deliberate recruitment efforts.

Policies and practices must be adopted that are inclusive of all members of the academy. Ultimately, stakeholders must support the efforts of faculty of color. No longer can we ignore the pernicious impact of discriminatory practices, silencing of voices, and inequitable treatment of 'others'. We must accept the realities of the situation and attempt to change the status quo. In addition, it is imperative that faculty must model genuine respect for diversity in their own lives and professional practice.

Faculty should be encouraged to use intergroup dialog sessions as an opportunity to discuss their personal stories. Autobiographical narratives should be encouraged. Faculty of color can share their experiences at the university rel-

evant to their professional role and function, as well as the social and political constructs. These sessions also provide opportunities for the development of professional networks that assist in negotiating within the context of the university (Clark, 2003). Intercultural dialog must be sustained. If teacher education is to move beyond the rhetoric to a new paradigm with a broad-based view of practices that promote varied philosophies, all stakeholders must become agents of change.

Conclusion

If transformative dialog is to occur, an interrogation of assumptions must be revisited. Ladson-Billings (1999) asserts that stories “provide the necessary context for understanding, feeling, and interpreting. . . .The use of voice or ‘naming your reality’ is a way to link form and substance in scholarship” (p. 15). Listening to the narratives of faculty of color is an effective strategy to communicate the realities of their experiences. If colleges and universities are interested in moving beyond the rhetoric, concerted efforts must be made to pursue faculty of color. Awareness of the professional and personal issues of these faculty and other factors that may impede progress, should be investigated.

The following poem by Paul Lawrence Dunbar provides insight into the realities of faculty of color in higher education and the need for knowledgeable, passionate, and committed professionals in the transformative process:

We wear the mask that grins and lies,
It hides our cheeks and shades our eyes –
This debt we pay to human guilt;
With torn and bleeding hearts we smile,
And mouth with myriad subtleties.

Why should the world be overwise,
In counting all our tears and sighs?
Nay, let them only see us, while
We wear the mask.

We smile, but O great Christ, our cries
To thee from tortured souls arise.
We sing, but oh the clay is vile
Beneath our feet, and long the mile;
But let the world dream otherwise,
We wear the mask!

As faculty of color, we suggest a removal of masks can occur when colleges and universities promote a commitment to act toward the goal of equity and social justice for *all* members within the educational community.

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African American New Teachers' Critical Stories: Learning to Teach, Becoming Certified, and Teaching

Lichelle Beeler

Paul Harding High School

Christina Hayes

East Allen County Schools

Felicia Lewis

Timothy L. Johnson Academy

Alicia Russell

Paul Harding High School

with

Glenda Moss

Indiana University Purdue University Fort Wayne

Abstract

Four African American teacher-researcher-participants contributed to this self-reflective autobiographical, narrative analysis of learning to teach, becoming certified, and teaching. Each participant reflected on her educational stories of experience, as all four were educated on White university campuses and transitioned to teaching in predominantly African American teaching settings. The primary question this paper addresses is: What can be learned from African American teachers' stories of experience about recruiting and maintaining African Americans in the field of education?

The irony of it is that while I retake this test over and over, my high school students are missing out on an educational opportunity of a lifetime. –Christina Hayes

Although I am thankful for all of the teachers I have had, I always found it to be kind of strange not seeing more teachers who looked like me, who shared a similar background and interests as me. –Lichelle Beeler

I am proud to be bi-racial; and my students appreciate that no matter who I am, I will give them the best education that I can. –Alicia Russell

Now that I am older and more educated, I ask myself "Why weren't middle schools built within the inner city of Fort Wayne?" –Felicia Renee Lewis

Prologue

Felicia Lewis and Christina Hayes have both successfully completed their course work and field experiences in learning to teach secondary social studies courses and secondary language arts and English courses, respectively. Neither has attained teacher certification as both have failed multiple times to pass the math section of the PPST. These two preservice teachers' stories are among the critical stories of learning to teach and becoming certified told in this critical narrative research project. Two other stories are told by Alicia Russell, who has completed her first year teaching

English 11, and Lichelle Beeler, who has completed five years of teaching English 10.

The purpose of this project is to create space for African Americans entering the teaching field to contribute to the discourse on African American teacher recruitment and retention. Four African American teacher-researcher-participants contributed to this self-reflective autobiographical, narrative analysis of learning to teach, becoming certified, and teaching. Each participant reflected on her educational stories of experience, as all four were educated on White, university campuses and transitioned to teaching in predominantly African American teaching settings. The primary question was this: What can be learned from African American teachers' stories of experience about recruiting and maintaining African Americans in the field of education?

This study contributes to the field of education on multiple levels. First, it provides a professional development opportunity for the participating African American teachers who are new to the field. It further creates an opportunity for the participants to develop a supportive research community that might contribute to supporting and maintaining their presence in the field of education. On a broader scale, the work contributes to the construction of new knowledge from authentic experiences in learning to teach. Similarly, the critical stories have the potential to inform policy makers as they consider the ways that standardized testing policies impact some African Americans trying to enter the field of teaching.

Theoretical Frame

This research project is framed by the problem of shrinking representation of African Americans in the teaching field and the corresponding negative impact of standardized testing on African Americans. These problems are reflected in research literature addressing the issues of recruitment, retention, and teacher preparation programs (Cartledge, Gardner III, and Tillman, 1995; Dillard, 1994; Gay, 1993; Gordon, 1994; Hood and Parker, 1994; Hudson, 1998; Jacullo-Noto, 1991; and Shen, 1998), drawing attention to the needs of African American students desiring to become teachers. These problems are also reflected on the university level, where raised standards have insured only students with academic ability as defined by standards-based assessment are certified as teachers. It appears the trade off is a minority teacher shortage at a time when the public school population in many cities is increasingly minority (Talbert-Johnson and Tillman, 1999).

The project is further framed by the learning-to-teach context of the participating teachers in this project. Four of the researcher-participants, Lichelle Beeler, Christina Hayes, Felicia Lewis, and Alicia Russell, are African Americans who were educated on predominantly White university campuses by White professors. The fifth researcher-participant, Glenda Moss, is a White female teacher educator who has transitioned her English and social studies methods course to a high school campus where Lichelle and Alica are full-time English teachers and where Felicia and Christina completed their student teaching experiences in social studies and English, respectively. The four participating classroom teachers and university professor have an instructor-student relationship. Lichelle and Alicia are graduate students; Felicia and Christina completed "Secondary English and Social Studies Methods" and "Critical Reading in the Content Area" while undergraduates in the teacher education program where Glenda teaches.

Design of the Study

We drew from the work of Clandinin and Connelly (1991, 1994) to construct autobiographical stories of African Americans learning to teach in predominantly White universities and predominantly Black first year teaching settings. The storytelling process was critical in that it created space for four African American teachers embarking on careers in education to authentically critique teacher education practices and hopefully authoritatively engage teacher educators in an intersubjective conversation about teaching and learning to teach in a multicultural society.

Autobiography: Christina Hayes

My name is Christina Hayes, and I was born on October 31, 1976. Although I am considered a resident of Fort Wayne, I am a native of Richmond, Indiana. I am the young-

est of three children raised by our mother. By all standards, I can be statistically labeled as a "young Black female from a single-parent home who grew up on the lower class South side of town." I was raised to appreciate what I had (no matter how little it was) and to work hard for what I wanted.

Never can it be said that my childhood was easy. Although I never fell victim to a stray bullet or a random stabbing, I did experience my fair share of bumps and bruises. As a child growing up in poverty, I learned to survive the streets. In order to avoid stray bullets, I had to remember which streets not to explore. In an effort to avoid random stabbings, I had to learn how to protect myself. With a mother who worked 2-3 jobs at a time, my siblings and I spent a lot of our time alone.

Not much can be said about my high school years; they came and they went. To be honest, I don't really recall much about them. Quite frankly, I didn't care about high school. I found it insane that the state was forcing me to learn about math and dissecting frogs while the real world was passing me by. Outside those schoolhouse doors, I found acceptance in my neighborhood. I found excitement in the streets, where I was home. I often compared my home life to that of my school life in an effort to find similarities. Needless to say, I found none. The two worlds were like night and day.

My junior year in high school was perhaps the most life-changing one. It was then that all of my friends had their babies (I felt like an outcast because I didn't have my son Zaire until I was 26 years old), my best friend lost her mother to a drunk semi-truck driver, and I lost several friends to violence. There is something almost haunting when a child (which I considered myself to be) experiences death. As children, we thought that nothing could touch us. We felt almost invincible. To lose one classmate to suicide, two classmates to drunk driving, and several others to gun violence was shocking. It was at this time that I decided that my life had to change.

During my senior year, I floated from class to class. The only thing that I enjoyed was my English class. I loved to read and write. When I read, I was transported to an entirely different world. I recall my unforgettable experiences with the likes of Shakespeare, Chaucer, and Faulkner. It was then that I pondered the thought of attending college.

Exactly one year after I completed high school (and that was indeed a miracle because I only earned Cs and Ds with one A in English), I applied to a university outside of Fort Wayne, and by some miracle, I was accepted. Due to the fact that I did so poorly in high school, I had to finance my college years with student loans. Being the first and only individual in my family to attend college, my family offered me very little assistance both financially and emotionally. Despite my upbringing, I was academically successful. I earned nothing less than a 3.0 GPA during my 4-year university reign. The only problem that I had occurred during my freshmen year when I ran out of loan money well into my second semester. I was on the brink of being sent home

when a university official offered me an emergency grant. This saved my university-education life; in 2000, I graduated with honors from the university.

Upon my completion of the B.S., I moved back to Fort Wayne. I quickly found my own apartment and took a job at Lincoln National Life. Although this job had nothing to do with my degree, it paid the bills. After this temporary job ended, I picked up several secretarial positions and decided to go back to school. I saw a lot of things wrong with the school system (via my nieces and nephews); instead of complaining, I decided to do something about it.

Learning to Teach

My journey toward secondary education began at Indiana Purdue Fort Wayne (IPFW). It was different from and similar to my prior university experience. The campus was smaller and the professors were fewer; but similar to other experiences, the minority population was virtually non-existent (especially in the education department). I learned to never be surprised when I was the only Black person in my class. I just focused on the fact that I was there to succeed and to be better than the rest in order to be considered average. That's what it's like to be an African American in college: You must be better than the majority in order to prove that you deserve to be there. You must earn an A.

For the most part, I learned new material at IPFW. I was fortunate enough to encounter some professors who knew their subject matter and who were not afraid to share it. I learned about classroom management, educational theories, and theorists. Sadly, I didn't learn much about inner-city schools (which is where I wanted to teach) or disadvantaged minorities. Sure, there was a paragraph here or there, but nothing elaborate. I can honestly state that I learned a lot about education, but I don't feel that it was geared toward minorities or their unique views and lifestyles.

Perhaps the most important parts of my teacher preparation were the observation and student-teaching experiences. I enjoyed observing various schools because I was able to see the major differences in educational opportunities. At first, I went to a youth correctional facility used to house juvenile offenders waiting their trial dates. I witnessed kids who were in lock-up but still willing to learn. The atmosphere was one of authority and order; had they removed the bars from the windows, it would have been the perfect school setting.

My second and third experiences differed like night and day. At a predominantly White middle school there was a very small minority population. In fact, I only saw two biracial girls and one Black boy in the 30 hours that I was there. The principal explained that this school system did not have to bus in minorities and this made for a scarce minority population. The school was very modern, clean, and well-equipped. Needless to say, the high-priced lunches, multiple computer labs, and elaborate sports opportunities impressed me.

The high school where I completed field observations was the complete opposite. The student body population was African American-dominant, the resources were limited, the testing scores were minimal, and the discipline problems were numerous. I soon discovered that this school was in need of minority teachers and extensive resources. Strangely enough, I felt at home there. In fact, I enjoyed the student body so much that I requested the school as my student-teaching site.

Student teaching was an exciting experience. I felt free. I could teach some African American literature without administrative restraints. I enjoyed the staff, the principal, and the multicultural student body. I enjoyed it so much that I decided that I wanted to teach there. The principal was excited about my decision and the only hurdles that I had to overcome were a variety of standardized tests for licensing purposes.

Becoming Certified

To become a licensed teacher in Indiana, a candidate must pass four exams: the PPST for reading, writing, and mathematics, and the content-area Praxis. These tests can be somewhat difficult for students who were not allowed the opportunity to take academic math classes in high school. As a high school student, I did exceptionally well in English and literature, so I was not surprised when I scored well on the PPST reading and writing segments. By the same token, given my past performances in math, I was not surprised when I was unable to pass the mathematics segment.

As a high school student, I never took algebra, much less geometry or trigonometry. These three areas were the basis of the mathematics segment of the PPST. Honestly, I had no idea what the test was asking me because I had no knowledge of the terms and concepts. I did astonish myself by scoring a 172 the first time that I took it. I needed a 175 to pass, so—in the test scorer's eyes—I flunked the exam. The second time that I took the exam; I scored a 168, still not passing. Needless to say, I now was becoming frustrated. Here I was, stumbling over a subject that I was never going to teach and that had nothing to do with my content area. Out of desperation to complete the testing, I went ahead and took the content-area Praxis. This test focused on English, language, literature, and comprehension. I scored a 166 out of a possible 200 and I only needed a 153 to pass. I knew my content area; the problem was that I couldn't pass the mathematics segment.

I am now at a crossroads with my teaching career. I cannot earn my license without passing the mathematics portion of the test and I cannot pass the mathematics segment since I was never offered algebra, geometry, and trigonometry. Many have suggested that I go back and take these courses in college. The idea seems almost laughable since I'd have to borrow more money to do so. I am a student who has earned a bachelor's degree from one of the top schools in the country, whose name is a constant on the Dean's list,

and who has completed her secondary education requirements with flying colors. My only downfall is mathematics, which is something that has nothing to do with my area or teaching goals. I have now been accepted to the School of Education graduate program in order to earn a reading minor. While there, I will continue to take the PPST mathematics segment in hopes of passing. The irony of it is that while I retake this test over and over, my high school students are missing out on an educational opportunity of a lifetime. As for the last segment of this paper—teaching experience—I have none, that portion will have to be written once I pass the PPST math test.

An Experience to Remember: Lichelle L. Beeler

As long as I can remember, I always wanted to become a teacher. I perceived it to be more than a dream or goal—it was my destiny, my purpose in the Divine plan and will of God for my life. I don't have a lot of stories to share as for previous teachers that I may have looked up to or tried to pattern myself after. The few stories I have to tell are critical stories of educators who saw my gifts and nurtured them, or who saw inequalities and intervened on the side of justice. Mrs. Davis, my fifth grade teacher, saw my desire and gift for learning early on. She nurtured that desire and gift and helped me to truly believe that I could do anything that I set my mind to do. What sets this experience apart from what should be the norm for a teacher-student relationship in any classroom was the fact that I was Black and Mrs. Davis was White. We still live in a time when one can act as an agent for social justice by simply treating a child with respect and equal to their White counterpart.

There was my eighth grade language arts and novels teacher, Mrs. Boyd. It was at the end of my eighth grade year, when the high school guidance counselors were making out our class schedules for our freshman year, that Mrs. Boyd intervened and insisted I be enrolled in honors English. At the time, in 1990, students were tracked: honors, college prep, general, basic, and special education. Although I had excelled in language arts and obtained outstanding academic achievement for many years, the counselors enrolled me in the college preparation version of English 9, which sounds solid but under-prepares students in comparison to my White classmates enrolled in the honors program. Mrs. Boyd encouraged my mother to request a change in my schedule, which resulted in my enrollment in four years of honors English.

Finally, I remember Ms. Gwen Mosely, who was not my teacher but my high school counselor. It was toward the end of my senior year. Students were applying and completing for scholarships to attend college. I remember one particular scholarship that required a minimum grade point average of 3.5 on a 4.0 scale. Ms. Mosely recommended that I be considered, even though my grade point average was only 3.1. Many of the students were furious, but Ms. Mosely insisted that I had accomplished more than any of the other applicants with higher GPAs. They had not been

involved in any extracurricular sports activities nor worked a part-time job, as I had, throughout all four years of high school.

Ms. Mosely said that I was a “well-rounded” student. I was captain of the dance squad, a member of the color guard, secretary of Student Council, a member of Tri-hi-y (a service organization), Vice President of Concert Choir, worked a part-time job 20-25 hours per week, and was a good role model for my peers. I really can't remember, now, whether I received that award or not. What I do remember is Ms. Mosely, who like Mrs. Boyd, stuck her neck out for me in the name of justice.

All three of these educators who took a special interest in me were White. Throughout my 14 years of schooling, P-K through grade 12, I had only three Black teachers: preschool, fourth grade (reading and math only), and sixth grade reading. Although I am thankful for all of the teachers I had, I always found it to be kind of strange not seeing more teachers who looked like me, who shared a similar background and similar interests as me. I attended a majority Black student population elementary school, yet there was only one Black teacher in the building. In middle school, I was bused (a 40-minute trip to and from school) out of my neighborhood to a school with only one Black teacher who taught sixth-grade reading.

Following middle school, I attended the only high school in my hometown. Again, there was only one Black teacher in the entire school building of 2000-plus students. I held onto my experience with Mrs. Davis, my fifth-grade teacher throughout middle school and high school as no one else really inspired me or encouraged me as she had. I was determined to achieve my destiny of becoming a teacher. Upon graduation, I attended a university outside of Fort Wayne, which was much like my high school. The population of Black students on campus made up about 10 percent of the entire student body. Throughout my four years of university study, I had only one Black professor, and he was the professor for my multicultural studies classes, which I took independently.

I was not impressed with my multicultural classes. I felt that the classes were trying to teach things that I already knew about: how to teach minority students. I was a minority student. I knew what it was like to be taught by White teachers who had not a clue about my experiences and interests. Perhaps it was a good class for the White students; for me it was something to look good on my transcript and resume.

Overall, my university experience was comfortable. I obtained the knowledge, resources, and methods and strategies that I needed to teach, but my personal experience growing up Black has helped me the most in my teaching position in a predominantly Black high school. None of my university classes really focused on teaching students who are Black or from a different racial or socioeconomic backgrounds. I am concerned, however, about my co-workers who are White, teaching in a school with predominantly Black stu-

dents. I would probably be safe in saying that very few to none of them are prepared to teach the students that we have at our school.

Many of my White colleagues experience discipline problems that I do not experience with the same students. There are White teachers who have been teaching for ten or more years longer than I have who seem to neither “understand” our students nor know how to teach them. It disappoints me that we do not have more Black teachers in the field of education, particularly in my building. Maybe this is why I have chosen to become a college professor, where I can make an even greater impact in education by helping to prepare future educators for our diverse society. The problem is not always with our students; sometimes the problem lies in those who are in the position to teach them.

Critical Story of Becoming a Bi-racial Teacher: Alicia Russell

My dad was Black and my mom was White. My parents divorced when I was three. When I was six, my mom remarried; my step-father was White. My brother was born a year later. Contrary to what society would have me do, I am very close to all my grandparents. My mother has always allowed me to form my own opinions of others. I was allowed to develop my own relationship with grandma and grandpa without having to take sides.

During school one of my close friends asked me if I was adopted. I didn't know what that meant, so I asked Mom. She was upset! Once she calmed down and explained what adoption was, I knew I was not adopted. Little did she know; she would be explaining that to people for years to come. When my brother was about five, we were sitting down to dinner as we did every night, and he said, “Mom, why is Alicia brown?” Once again my Mom had to explain.

Middle school was fairly uneventful. A lot of my classmates would try to make me choose sides, but growing up in a world in which I did not have to choose, made me equipped to not choose at school either. My family believes that it takes a village to raise a child and has always done everything possible to show me how many opportunities the world has to offer as long as I take advantage of them. Since I had never had to choose before, those classmates who wanted me to choose were not my friends; and I was okay with that.

High school was a different story. By this time I had been figure skating for quite a few years; I was the “diversity” at the rink. When I got to high school, I associated with most of the same friends from middle school; but two of my friends, who happened to also be mixed, moved out of our district. My freshman year the majority of my social circle was Black, but they were all seniors. After they graduated, I went back to socializing with my middle school friends who were almost all White. Since my high school was about 40 percent African American, I was still around Black people, but I was out of my comfort zone. Yes, I am half Black, and I am very close to my Black family; but in high school it was

my White friends who never tried to make me choose sides or become something I was not. It was my White friends who supported me in everything. I am still friends with those people today.

College was also monotonous. I knew why I was there, and I went to class with one goal in mind. I was never forced to decide if I was Black or White there, and I didn't care. I just wanted to get my degree so that I could teach.

Teaching

My aunt called me one morning and told me to get dressed and go to Harding. She had called the principal and told him her niece had just graduated and was looking for a job. I needed a job, but I was leery of going to Harding. When I was in high school, I was not allowed to go to games at Harding because the school had a reputation of being unsafe. Paul Harding High School is 76 percent African-American. I got the job and it has been the best place for me to teach. I love my students, and they are very accepting of me. Prior to teaching at Harding, many Black people would tell me I acted too ‘White’ or that I was not being true to what society expected of me. My students have not done the first things to make me uncomfortable. They tease me, and I tease them. I am proud to be bi-racial, and my students appreciate that no matter who I am, I will give them the best education that I can. They also seem to appreciate the level of honesty that I use with them. I am the teacher who is not afraid to tell the kids exactly how I feel about a racial subject.

My Overall Beliefs

Growing up bi-racial has not been difficult for me. Many people that I have encountered have tried to make it difficult for me, but I have just looked past their insecurities and continued forward. The truth is this: I have been afforded many of life's blessings and I am thankful for each and everyday. Yes, I have had my share of unpleasant experiences, as anyone does, but I choose not to let those experiences define who I am or what I can accomplish.

Critical Biography: Felicia Renee Lewis

Hello, my name is Felicia Renee Lewis, and I am a twenty-eight year old African-American. I was born and raised in what is called the inner city of Fort Wayne, Indiana. I was not as fortunate as many other children who had the opportunity of being raised by both their mother and father. My mother and father abandoned their responsibility of parenting right after the birth of my seven siblings and me. However, each and every one of us was truly blessed because my grandmother put her retirement life on hold and decided to take the full obligation of raising all eight of us. Now, I am fortunate to look back on my twenty-eight years of life and feel truly blessed.

My grandmother struggled financially to raise all nine of her children, my siblings, and me. However, in spite of living in a predominately African American neighborhood

infested with drug dealers, gang banging, and low-income families, through the grace of God and her continuous prayers, she accomplished her goal of raising us. Our society has portrayed many neighborhoods, like the one where my grandmother raised me, as no-win situations for many minorities. My grandmother, a strong believer of the idea—you can do whatever you put your mind to do—raised all of us to believe in ourselves. She also taught us to appreciate an education because during her time period, she was not given the opportunities to receive a quality education.

We, too, were brought up to appreciate life, what we have, and remain content with all of this because God has truly blessed all of us. From time to time we were reminded that many children are less fortunate than us and we should just be thankful for a precious life. My grandmother informed each and every one of us about the reasons why we were abandon by our mom and father. My mother was a heroine addict, and my dad was a 100 percent disabled veteran. My mom has struggled throughout life, to this day, to become clean.

To support her habit (buying drugs), my mother became a serious shoplifter. Her daily employment consisted of the following: going to any store, such as, a department, drug, or grocery store, to steal whatever she got her hands on and sell it on the street to whomever. This allowed her to make “easy money” to support her drug habit. My mom has been doing this for 33 years, ever since my oldest sibling was born. This caused her to be in and out of prison on a consistent basis. This also required my grandmother to take the full responsibility to raise us. All of us still continue to pray for my mom and hope that she will realize that it is never too late to change your way of living. Without a mom or dad to help take care of me, I managed to live and become educated.

Schools Days

I attended a predominately African-American elementary school from kindergarten to fifth grade. Overall, I could say I received a quality education from this school. After grade school the school district that I lived in decided to restructure the entire system, but a visitor might think that the entire city’s ethnic background is White, as it continue to be segregated for the most part.

When it was time for me to enter junior high, there were no middle schools within the vicinity of my neighborhood. My school district came up with this idea to racially balance the schools. This required many Blacks to be bused thirty minutes each day outside of their neighborhoods and attend schools that were at one time completely White. I was too young to understand what exactly was going on here, but I can say that it was an excellent learning experience for me.

I hated getting up in the morning to catch the bus at 7:05 a.m., but looking back at the whole picture, I would say that district’s idea was worthwhile. It allowed me to learn about a different race’s culture, receive a basic education,

and be exposed to things that many inner-city Blacks were not exposed to. Now that I am older and more educated, I ask myself “Why weren’t middle schools built within the inner city?”

After completing middle school we moved across town, but remained in the inner city. However, the community we moved into was a lot safer than the previous neighborhood. Our new school district fed straight into a predominately White school high school. Looking back on my education, I could say that this school prepared me for the basics, but not for college. In order to graduate, everyone was required to take four years of English and two years of math. I ended up taking four years of both, but I’m not sure my effort paid off.

My English experience in high school was lacking. My first year of English was a nightmare because the English teacher had poor classroom management skills and taught the class as if we were in grade school. The rest of my high school years of English were better but still focused on basics with a spelling and vocabulary every week. We reviewed a lot of grammar, read a couple of books, watched videos, and did a Senior Project that consisted of partners reading a book and writing a summary of what we read. This project was required for graduation.

Looking back at all of this, I was not amazed when I received a “D” on my first research paper in college. This made me feel cheated out of a quality education. Coming out of high school, I thought I was prepared for college. When I entered a university classroom with students who came from rural areas, suburban, and private schools, I realized these students knew how to do research, write correctly in Standard English, and organize and structure papers. Although I did not have excellent skills in this content area, I knew I was a strong fighter and a hard worker. I realized that I had to do what was necessary to reach my goal to be a quality teacher.

My major was Secondary Education. In grade school I had decided what my career was going to be—a middle or high school teacher. Growing up, I did a lot of volunteer work at youth recreation centers. I even worked for our local Parks Department from 1992-1999. I definitely knew then that I had a love for kids. I knew that it was important to give back to my community. Where I come from, many children are classified as at-risk students. I saw a problem with this picture and felt that it was important for me to remain in my hometown after graduation and teach at an inner-city school.

Critical Story of Preparing to Teach: Learning to Write and Taking the Praxis I and II

During my undergraduate university years, most of my homework assignments consisted of writing. It was not just my English courses that required me to write, but others as well. Standard English usage was central to all of my classes. I was not prepared for this. I used whatever resources the

school offered to college students, such as, the Writing Center, grammar courses, classmates, and helpful professors. The fact that I am writing this story today shows how far I have come. I can write my critical story of how standardized testing is getting in the way of my final certification to teach.

The Praxis I and II are standardized tests that education majors are required to take and pass in order for them to receive certification (licensure) in education. When I decided to major in Education, I did not know that I had to take two standardized tests in order to teach. Even if I had understood this, I probably still would have majored in Education because I had always passed required standardized tests in public schools.

After completing my junior year, I was informed by my advisor that I needed to take the Praxis I—a reading, writing, and math test—and make certain scores in order to continue with my Secondary Education major. At the time, I felt confident. I registered to take this expensive test; and when I took the test, I thought it was a breeze. When I received my test scores back for all three areas, the scores were not passing scores. My math score was a 163, and I needed a 175; the English score was a 167, and the required score was a 174; and my Reading score was a 175, but I needed a 176. After reviewing those scores, I became highly upset—I felt stupid because I knew that math and reading were my strong areas. I could have taken a reading or math class under any professor, and I would have come out receiving a letter grade of an A or B.

I did not give up. Since the test results stated that one of my weak areas was probabilities, I enrolled into a statistics class because I believed that this course would have helped me to prepare for my second time around. The class was excellent; I ended up receiving an “A” at the end of the semester. Then, I registered to retake the math section. I took the computerized version and received a 315 on the test, but a 320 was required for passing the computerized version. Again, I became frustrated and upset because there went my hard earned dollars—\$75 for the test and \$360 for the statistics course. Words cannot express the way I felt. I knew that my career was going to be put on hold because the minimum score requirements had to be met before taking education courses. I believed I would be kicked out of the Education Department the next semester.

One of my closest friends helped me to write a letter to the Dean of Education asking her if she would allow me to enroll into my methods courses as long as I re-registered to take the exam over. Her response to my letter was “No.” This put me back two semesters because I had already completed all of my courses except for my method courses. I would not give up, so I started to receive late-night tutorial services from a math teacher who attended my church. Also, I took a basic grammar course at the university. It was hard for me to stay dedicated to the tutorial services and taking the grammar course because I was a single mom, went to school, and worked full-time. I managed to accomplish all

these jobs. I faithfully attended my tutorial sessions for 4 months and felt confident taking the test over.

I retook the math, reading, and writing tests. This time I scored 172 on the writing, 174 on the math and 175 on the reading. I felt good for raising my math score from a 163 to a 174, but I was still one point short of passing. My writing score had improved from 167 to 172, but I was still two points short of passing. My reading score stayed the same at 175, one point short of passing. I cried because I had worked so hard and failed by so few points. I felt discouraged. It seemed like the entire Indiana State Board was out to get me.

Because those scores were passing based on requirements when I began my education program in 1997, I was allowed to enroll in education classes, but I understood that I did not fall under the grandfather clause and would have to retake the tests and pass at the new, higher requirements before being certified to teach. I continued to seek tutorial services in math but stopped retaking the test in order to focus on graduation, since my scores on all three tests were high enough for me to graduate. I completed my student teaching with excellent evaluations, received a 167 out of 168 on my portfolio, and graduated in December 2002.

After graduation I started to work as a full-time substitute teacher while continuing to study for the PPST and the Praxis II, the social studies content exam, which I took on June 28, 2003. Similar to my pattern on the PPST tests, I scored a 146 on that test—one point short of the 147 needed for passing. I’ve re-registered for the Praxis II test and hope to pass the second time around. Until then, I have accepted a teaching position at a local charter school.

I spent seven years in college to become an effective teacher, but due to a standardize test that determines whether or not someone is a good teacher or not, I am held back. Through the grace of God I will not give up on this struggle. I will continue to spend money on these two tests and tutorial services until I pass. It’s hard to understand why I cannot become certified after successfully completing my course requirements for teacher education. I will continue to tell myself the words of my grandmother: I can do whatever I put my mind to do, and someday my prayers will be answered.

Researcher Narrative Reflection: Glenda Moss

The dialog in my mind tells me, on the one hand, to step back and be the objective researcher—analyze the narratives. The stronger voice from my intersubjective self, who cannot objectify Christina’s and Felicia’s stories, cries in outrage at the very system of which I am a part. I am a White, female teacher educator. Christina and Felicia are two of only three African American preservice teachers I have had in my classes during my first two years as a teacher educator. Presently, I have no African American preservice teachers in my classes.

As one who is ever conscious of my responsibility to bring a multicultural lens to preparing secondary teachers, I continue to struggle since I have never had a professor who was not White, and most of my preservice teacher-students are White. Felicia boldly challenged my White students to experience their Whiteness as “other” in relationship to her cultural perspective in a methods class. Claiming cultural privilege to the use of the word “nigger” and denying my White students the privilege made many of my White students uncomfortable. Similarly, Christina’s presence in two of my classes disrupted our mindsets and worked as a catalyst for critical reflection.

It was painful to work within an education system in Texas from 1988-1998, where my low socio-economic middle school students, mostly African American, were disadvantaged by components of a standardized writing test based on the dominant cultural language patterns. As an educational researcher, I am very conscious of the ways African American public school students have been short-changed by curriculums that have not prepared them for college. Likewise, I am conscious of the shortage of African American teachers at a time when African American student populations are on the rise (Stephens, Sadler, Moss, 2002). While I am committed to recruiting African Americans into the teaching profession and working towards learning how to prepare all my preservice teachers to teach in a multicultural context, I continue to be baffled by policies that appear as mechanism to reproduce a monocultural education system.

While I perceive Christina and Felicia to be well-prepared to teach, I face the reality that neither will be certified to teach until they pass the math part of the PPST. I feel outraged, knowing that the education system failed to provide these two preservice teachers with the math education they now need in order to complete a requirement for teacher certification. I am faced with reconciling the complexity of my knowledge that many White preservice elementary teachers are able to pass the math part of the PPST, but do not know math well enough to adequately prepare students like Christina and Felicia during their elementary experiences.

I am reminded of the voices of some of my White preservice teachers who argue they should not be held accountable for the inequity of our social system that overtly enslaved African Americans by law until the 1860’s and subvertly-overtly enslaved African Americans during the reign of the Jim Crow laws for another 100 years. The Civil Rights Movement is inaccurately taught as an historical event, relieving many from engaging the inequities of new laws and policies that subvertly-overtly continue to enslave minority populations to a monocultural education system. As educators, we must all take up the cause of social justice and resist policies that subvertly-overtly under prepare African American students for college and often times work

towards locking them out of the teaching field at a time when there is a growing population of African Americans in North American schools.

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Burakugaku (Buraku Study): A Paradigm Shift for Education

Yoshikazu Kawamoto
Rikkyo University
Hidetada Shimizu
Northern Illinois University

Abstract

Burakumin, Japan's largest minority group, have been discriminated against throughout Japanese history for engaging in jobs that were considered to be defiling, e.g., slaughterers, tanners, and undertakers. Specifically, burakumin played the social and occupational roles despised by the majority Japanese, but those without which the Japanese society as a whole could not maintain its viable function, i.e., actual and symbolic processes of recycling whereby those which are dead and polluted were transformed into living and holy. In recent years, however, some burakumin scholars have begun to recast their identities; instead of examining the problem of being burakumin (the deficit model), they now look to burakugaku as the key to understanding the cultural development of larger Japanese society. This paper examines ways in which this new understanding suggests a paradigm shift from a dualistic-materialistic to a cosmic-ontological view of minority education in Japan and elsewhere.

Burakugaku is not a special function of education, but it is the dimension of depth in all of its functions.¹

In this paper, we describe the recent development of *burakugaku* (*burakumin* study), an interdisciplinary educational approach in Japan, as an attempt to more accurately inform about, and thus reduce discriminations against, *burakumin*, Japan's largest minority group. Many scholars from around the world have already studied the history of *burakumin*'s attempts to achieve educational equity. We show ways in which this field has broader implications for multicultural educational studies by moving the academic discourse beyond a discrimination/human rights dichotomy. This field of study has the potential to inform educational policy by providing research that critically analyzes currently implemented policies, such as the Japanese Ministry of Education's *jinken kyoiku* (Human Rights Education). Specifically, we review and analyze the two dominant paradigms for *burakumin* education in the past, the "deficit" and "contribution" models, and then propose a cosmic-ontological model as the third alternative.

Historical and Theoretical Frameworks

Following the landmark 1969 legislation that made the improvement of *burakumin*'s social, economic, educational, and civil rights statuses an "urgent task of every Japanese citizen," the Japanese government implemented the nationwide "assimilation policy" (Shimahara, 1984; Hawkins, 1983). The policy had decisively positive effects on the lives of *burakumin*: While majority of them used to be on welfare, they now maintain standards of living and education nearing the national averages. The success of the assimilation policy (Hirasawa, 1989; Shimahara, 1979) led the na-

tional government to refocus its attention from *burakumin* and other "old" immigrants (e.g., Koreans) to their new and "emerging" counterparts (e.g., immigrants from the Middle East) (Tsuneyoshi, 2001). Consequently, the Assimilation Education Policy (*dowa kyoiku*) will be integrated only as one element of Human Rights Education Policy (*jinken kyoiku*) (Mori, 1995).

While the noble goals of Human Rights Education Policies are more global and inclusive than those of the Assimilation Education Policy, we argue that these goals also present a critical limitation: Framing *burakumin* (and other minority groups) solely as objects of discrimination, it overlooks the roles *burakumin* played throughout Japanese history to lay foundations for some of the most fundamental functions of mainstream (non-buraku) Japanese society. Specifically, both English and Japanese literature on *burakumin* to date focused on problems of being *burakumin*. The most notable example in the English-speaking world is the work of George DeVos and Hiroshi Wagatsuma. Framing *burakumin* as an "outcast" (DeVos and Wagatsuma, 1966; DeVos, 1971), they looked at the effects of (supposedly) fixed status and occupational roles ascribed to *burakumin* (i.e., of "untouchables" who come in contact with the "defiled") on their psychological and behavioral adjustments (DeVos and Wagatsuma, 1966; DeVos and Suarez-Orozco, 1990) and patterns of social cohesion and alienation (DeVos, 1992). Most of the remaining English language literature has also focused on the impact of discrimination against this "invisible" (since they are physically indistinguishable with the rest of Japanese) group (e.g., Hayashida, 1975; Mihashi and Goodman, 1987; Scherdin, 1994; Murphy-Shigematsu, 1999).

Until a decade ago, the majority of the Japanese *burakumin* literature also dealt with the issues of discrimination against *burakumin* (e.g., Naramoto, 1975; Buraku

Liberation Research Institute, 1976; Harada, 1984; Kashiwahara, 1988; Tsuji, 1992; Matsui, 1983). In recent years, however, a number of scholars of *burakumin* descent have shifted their attention away from the problem of being *burakumin* to the positive contributions they have made to the construction of mainstream Japanese society (Watanabe, 1996, 1998; Noguchi, 2000; Fujisawa, 2001). Kawamoto (Kawamoto, 2001) in particular advanced this new perspective as the main goal of a new academic field: *burakugaku*, or *burakumin* studies.

A central focus of *burakugaku* is *bunmei*, or “cultural systems,” which refers to any tools (physical) or social (institutional) and cultural (symbolic) organizations that are designed to maintain functional interdependence between humans and nature. Indigenous modes of production, such as hunting and gathering at sea, mountains, and fields, allowed the integration of these and other elements of daily subsistence in symbolic forms as arts and religious rituals, thus uniting essential constituents needed to form *bunmei*. Kawamoto (2001) has argued that *senmin*, *burakumin*’s predecessors in pre-modern times, laid the foundation for the development of some highly recognized examples of Japanese cultural achievements such as *no* and *kabuki* play, medicine, and the criminal justice system.

Paradoxically, however, creating these cultural systems required *burakumin* to come in contact with *kegare*, or defilement, that which desecrates or profanes the life-producing and life-sustaining properties of nature (e.g., deaths, natural disasters, process of decay), and by-products of this process, e.g., animal and human corpses, or excrement such as feces, menstrual blood, etc. Engaging in occupational activities that were considered defiled by the majority of Japanese, *burakumin* were dissociated from their previous positive aspects of *bunmei* and symbolically and physically ghettoized in Japan for their association with defilement.

Methods

This paper is a collaborative work by Yoshikazu Kawamoto, an ethnologist of *burakumin* heritage who is a *burakumin* himself, and Hidetada Shimizu, a Japanese-born cultural psychologist. Kawamoto draws his evidence from historical texts and socio-cultural analysis of local folktales, folklores, and associated artifacts throughout Japan. Shimizu has conducted ethnographic fieldwork with members of the Buraku Liberation League in three prefectures in central Japan during the summer of 2000, 2001, and 2003. His method is person-centered ethnography—a methodological hybrid of the (Freudian) psychoanalytic observations of individual experience (e.g., Kohut, 1971; LeVine, 1982) and the (cultural anthropological) ethnographic descriptions of a small-scale community. In person-centered ethnography, the data is generated through interviewing and participant-observation from persons describing themselves as social (i.e., domain of cultural anthropology) and individual (i.e., domain of psychoanalysis) actors alternatively, as they os-

cillate between the two roles. The person taking the role of the social actor is an informant, a knowledgeable witness about some community procedure and knowledge; and the person taking the role of the individual actor is a respondent, an observer of his and her own personal responses to such publicly organized activities and ideas (Levy and Hollan, 1998).

New Perspectives

One domain of *burakugaku* is to examine the role of *burakumin*’s cultural traditions, particularly their occupational roles (*yaku*) for creating and maintaining some of the major cultural and religious systems of Japanese society. While much is discussed concerning the untouchable nature of *burakumin* status, for the jobs they engaged were considered polluting, little is documented. One exception in the recent *burakumin* literature about the roles *senmin* played to purify and sanctify the defiled materials so as to “recycle” them into pure, useful, living, and even sacred substances. Below are three such examples.

For example, the report compiled by *danzaemon*, the governor of all *senmin* in the nation, and presented to Shogun during the years 1715 to 1736, summarizes the following as the basic duties (*yakume*) of *senmin*: processing of leathers and enforcing of laws and punishment of criminals (Nakao, 1994). Despite the taboo assigned to these labors, animal corpses produced many useful and valued items. Dried meat and organs were used as fertilizers as well as adhesives called *nikawa* which were then used for painting. Some organs, such as the gall bladder, were used for producing medicine. The leather was often used to produce various musical instruments. Cat skin was used to produce *shamisen*, a traditional string instrument; cow skin was used to make *taiko*, a drum. In many instances, these instruments were also used for religious purposes such as for rites of purification in a Shinto shrine. In addition, *senmin* was assigned the role of the janitor who cleaned and purified the shrine for the sake of religious ceremonies.

Other occupational functions performed by *senmin* were several criminal justice roles: mountain guard (*yamaban*), looking for thieves and animals that tampered with crops; water guard (*mizuban*), ensuring that every farmer had a fair share of water in his rice field; fire guard (*hinoban*); and regular police work of arresting and executing criminals as well as burying their bodies (undertakers). These police works were also considered unclean because the performers of these tasks were required being in contact with the defiled materials and other disrupters of normative human activities. In short, much of *senmin*’s work involved turning something lifeless (in the case of dealing with the dead or defiled objects) or life-threatening (in the case of their criminal justice works) into something living and life-supporting.

Senmin’s skills and expert knowledge in processing dead animals also helped the development of modern medicine in Japan. In a standard Japanese history textbook, the physi-

cian, Genpaku Sugita, is generally given credit for dissecting a human body based on the Dutch medical text on human anatomy and introducing Western medicine to Japan. Little known is the fact that the record of this historical event, engraved in the stone monument placed in the cemetery where the dissection took place, states that it was an “old man” (*okina*) of *senmin* status who actually dissected the body and told Genpaku the location of each organ depicted in the Dutch text based on his knowledge from dissecting dead animals. Genpaku himself is suspected to have refrained from touching the body for fear of being polluted.

Relevance of *Burakugaku* for Education

As mentioned earlier, the past public policies for *burakumin* focused on the problem of being *burakumin*. They were based on the assumption that the prejudices and discrimination against *burakumin* were affected by their lack of economic and educational resources. Not only did the policymakers adhere to this deficit model, but the Burakumin Liberation League themselves followed this logic as they aggressively pursued the path to socioeconomic reform through public funding for housing projects and education. While the policymakers assumed the success of these programs and moved on to address the needs of other formally unrecognized minority groups, *burakumin* themselves were left with the sense of ambivalence that while their socioeconomic and educational status improved vastly, prejudice and discrimination against them remain unsolved.

Out of this climate of disillusionment, particularly among some *burakumin* scholars and activists, emerged the effort to formulate a model that can effectively address and combat the persistent psychological stigma attached to their identity. There are two major thrusts of this movement which appear to have much potential in education: (1) education about the accomplishments and contributions of the *burakumin* in the past and present as a subject matter of educational curriculum (the extant approach formally called, *dowa kyoiku*); and (2) a call for fundamental paradigm shift in the existing form of minority education by moving beyond merely focusing on the consequences of social injustices and addressing instead the root cause these problems, i.e., the dualistic categorization of people as belonging to minority and majority groups.

Education about Burakumin

Since the average Japanese person prior to the implementation of the Burakumin assimilation policies either knew little or had misconceptions about the *burakumin*, the goal of *burakumin* education in the past was to inform students accurately about the origin, formation, and nature of *burakumin* identity. While serving the purpose of providing more correct information about the historical origin of *burakumin*, this curriculum often preserved or reinforced the exiting stigma against the group as being “polluted” in

that it pointed out how *burakumin* took up the role of coming in contact with dead or defiled materials.²

The current approach to education about *burakumin*, of which *burakugaku* is the major thrust, takes a step further to demonstrate that in principle, the contact with that which is rejected or avoided on the ground that it is defiled (i.e., dead or polluted) will later become the foundational structure of a larger process or function, which is no longer perceived as defiled, but even as having the very opposite characteristic of being clean, alive, or even holy and sacred. This paradoxical and dialectical process works much like the Taoist interplay of *yin* and *yen* in which the diametrically opposing elements, of the clean and unclean, dead and alive, and untouchable and holy, cyclically influence each other to complete and advance the whole cycle of life (Kawamoto, 2001).

One can identify this pattern either as a creative eco-cycle of life (creating life out of non-life), or a magico-religious rite of purification (creating the holy out of the non-holy). Either way, it demonstrates a principle of cosmic-ontology, realities of being in this universe. In the earlier examples, for instance, *senmin* converted dead animals into what would later become nutrients for plants (fertilizers), the ingredients and instruments for the fine and performing arts (*nikawa* for painting, and *shamisen* and *taiko* for playing music, respectively), and the medium of religious rite of purification (use of *taiko*, or the drum). With their criminal justice occupational roles, *senmin* also contributed to the process of sustaining food production (e.g., *yamaban*, *mizuban*). With their knowledge of animal anatomy, they took part in the process of dissecting a human corpse, which later contributed the development of Western medicine in Japan as another life-saving endeavor.

Paradigm Shift in Minority Education

All of the above examples describe a process of life, of birth and death, which are two sides of the same coin. When examining the contribution the *burakumin* have made to the mainstream Japanese society, one is presented with a model of holistic life process, i.e., a creative ecosystem of life, whereby birth (creation) takes place through death (coming in contact with the defiled), and vice versa. This cycle is a natural part of the physical and biological worlds, as well as of their spiritual manifestations (e.g., religious ceremony), which are cleansed by the rite of purification performed by *senmin* (and the emperor) with various items they produced.

Using this organic metaphor as a point of departure, we shall call for a paradigm shift in minority education, which may be defined here as both education about and for minority groups such as multicultural education in the U.S. and Human Rights Education in Japan, from a material-dualistic to a cosmic-ontological perspective. From the dualistic perspective, categories of thought and existence are divided into two opposing and antagonistic elements. The category of “minority” in and of itself follows the dualistic logic; for the

so-called minority to come into existence, one must assume the existence of the non-minority, or the majority. Furthermore, for the so-called minority education to legitimize its existence and goals, it not only has to presuppose this category but also affirm associated values assumptions and ideological perspectives. These include the idea of the majority group being in the more privileged position than the minority with the former expected to either exploit or aid the latter.

We argue that the dualistic approach to minority education has helped accomplish the practical goals of providing material resources to those who lack them (through public housing projects, affirmative action policies, and scholarship), but falls short when it comes to capturing the ultimate reality of the life processes implied in *burakugaku*: that there is no divide between the minority and majority in the cosmic-ontological dimension of our existence. All beings are subject to the creative life cycle of birth and death; this process, in and of itself, is life-sustaining. However, it can be corrupted where divisions (dualism) are created from within so as to designate a given segment of the system as separate from others (dualistic split), as in the case of the separation of minority and majority.

From the cosmic-ontological viewpoint, for example, the material, social, psychological, and spiritual well being of every member of Japanese society, not just *burakumin*, depends on the vital function of *buraku bunmei*. *Harukoma*, the buraku-based performing art, is a case in point. Prior to the spread of mass education in the late nineteenth century, the majority of Japanese citizens, including farmers, were illiterate. When most farmers could not read, they relied on the street play performed by traveling *senmin*, called *harukoma*, for farming instructions. Since *senmin* were given no land of their own due to their defiled status, many of them sought performing arts as their means of living. *Harukoma* traveled from one village to another demonstrating the process of the farming cycle, from seeding to harvest, as a dance; in the mean time, the performance included the element of pre-celebrating the harvesting of abundant crops a magical-religious ritual of bringing about a plentiful farming season.

Notice that the work performed by *senmin* sustains the life cycle that involves every member of the community, *senmin* or non-*senmin*, for everyone's life depends on food. It was not *senmin* alone who sustained the production cycle; many other factors contributed the crop production: seeds, land, water, wind, right temperatures, human labor, etc. However, throughout much of Japanese history, the contribution made by *senmin* and *burakumin* alone was almost never given due credit. For example, few Japanese are aware of the integral agricultural and spiritual roles *harukoma* played in the traditional farming villages. Nor are they informed about the connection between *harukoma* and the two major theatrical arts of Japan, *no* and *kabuki*, since no Japanese textbook mentions this link.

Thus there is a deep gaping hole in the current presentation of the cultural history of Japan, and we argue that much of this omission is created by both conscious and subconscious efforts to write history without any references to *senmin* and *burakumin*. Stories of such mass-level denial abound within today's *burakumin* communities. Shimizu's interviews with *burakumin* youths revealed the following anecdotes as examples. First, since most *burakumin* families could not afford textbooks, the Burakumin Assimilation Education Policy mandated that textbooks be given to all students in the compulsory education free of charge. While all children benefited from this program, no credit was given to the *burakumin* who worked for decades to pass the law. Additionally, most *burakumin* lived in lowlands close to a river plagued by constant flooding; they were forced to live in such areas because they were prohibited from making living from farming. Most of these communities did not even have bridges connected to the non-buraku areas. As a result of the Assimilation Law, however, many such communities were connected through bridges, a development that strengthened the entire communities' infrastructure. While the industry and commerce flourished in these communities as a result of the public projects, many non-*burakumin* stigmatize these bridges as "buraku bridges," as if they were polluted by their mere association with *burakumin*.

Cosmic-ontological Model of Healing and Pathology

From the viewpoint of our cosmic-ontological model of minority education, the existence of the whole organism, both at the societal and individual level, depends on the work of all of its constituting parts, of both clean and unclean. Drawing on the ancient text, Kawamoto (2001) describes his theory of the dialectic ecosystem of how the living and the dead mutually influence each other to complete a whole life cycle. His analysis shows that in the ancient times (before the 500s), the word defiled, or *kehare*, literally meant the state of the life force of *ke* (written as *ki* in Japanese, or "chi" in Chinese, which means life) being dried up (*hareru*). The major areas of such a defiled state were: (1) illness, injury, and death; (2) natural disaster; (3) breaking of rules and laws. Historically, both the emperor and *senmin* played the role of transforming the lifeless state of *kegare*, or defilement, back to the state of "life-full-ness," or *ki*. The emperor did so by ways of religious rites of purification, and *senmin* by ways of producing technologies and labors necessary for the emperor to perform this role. For our discussion, it is crucial to point out the necessity of defilement (*kegare*) to set the stage for the beginning of a new life, and additionally the inevitability of all life to decay and die. Both the emperor and *senmin* contributed to this process, while the contribution the latter is almost never given due credit.

What then disrupts and then corrupts such a cycle? Our cosmic-ontological paradigm suggests a rather ironic and paradoxical answer: i.e., the corruption is not caused by the objects that are considered defiled, but people's fear of such

defilement and subsequent use of their (1) psychological defense mechanisms, and (2) the institutional structures and processes that legitimize these defense mechanisms, the process which the psychological anthropologist Mel Spiro referred to as *culturally constituted defense mechanisms* (Spiro, 1994, pp. 145-159). In other words, the two objects which people normally consider defiled, the defiled materials and those who come in contact with them (*senmin-burakumin*), are not the actual sources of defilement. Rather, defilement springs from within the mind of people who fear these supposedly defiled objects and people, and from the society that institutionalizes such collective fear as a cultural system.

The following evidence from Kawamoto's (1994) folkloric investigation illustrates this mechanism. In a rural Japanese village of Hidaka, a local folk tale (*ii tustae*) describes *yamaban*, *semin* who performed the duty of mountain guard, saving the lives of villagers at the times of famine. Being assigned the role of controlling the animal population as well as processing their corpses to produce usable materials, the *semin* had a constant stock of animal meat of which their regular staple consisted. Not only did the commoners detest *semin* for eating the meat, but the government authorities prohibited the commoners from eating the meat. Meanwhile, the ruling class freely made use of various products made from the animals by the *semin*. At the times of famine, however, a young *semin* messenger would go from door to door to all the households of the village. He invited people to the house of *semin* to secretly eat from and be nourished by a large pot of "animal soup" (*niku jiru*), without the fear of being reported to the authorities for this illegal conduct.

This example shows that the detested object (meat) and the people who came in contact with it (*semin*) did not cause the actual defilement, or, *ke-hare*, i.e., the drying up of the life-force of *ki*. Rather, it was the deliberate avoidance of the meat provided by *semin* for fear that both the meat and *semin* are polluting, which could have been fatal. The defilement thus emerges from people's psychological state, rather than the objects of perceived defilement (meat and *semin*). It is essential to understand that *semin* and *burakumin* were discriminated against not because they themselves were contaminated (still a widely-held view to justify the discrimination against *burakumin*), but because the minds of the people who separated themselves from the detested object and people were "contaminated" with fear.

What then brings the healing so as to eradicate the root cause of prejudice and discrimination against *burakumin*? We suggest that healing starts with an honest realization of and confrontation with one's own fear. Take Freud's reference to the ancient tale of King Oedipus, who slew his father and married his mother for fear that his fate predicted by the oracle would materialize. Seeking his enemy outside, he ended up fulfilling the prophecy, while the true enemy was inside him. Similarly, the past policies and programs of minority education in Japan sought the cause of prejudice and discrimination against *burakumin* outside the etiology

of human fear and in the various socioeconomic and educational factors that plagued *burakumin*. Again, while acknowledging the practical legitimacy and immense utilities of these programs, we argue that they scratch the surface of a more fundamental problem: internal fear and the projections of this fear onto an external object, *burakumin*.

In closing, we would like to present stories of young *burakumin* who transcended the prejudice and discriminations against them, not by correcting the wrongs of their oppressors, but by confronting and moving beyond the fear and prejudices that existed in their own minds. Kenji (pseudonym) is a member of the Buraku Liberation League in the Central City. He is in his early thirties and was once the director of the youth program. His role in the office has been to help children and adolescents from *burakumin* family in the process of discovering their identity and coming to terms with it. Recalling how he came to know his *burakumin* identity, he told Shimizu how he "hated" being a *burakumin*. He learned at school that *burakumin* engaged in dirty jobs like killing animals. He was horrified to discover that he was one of such people. Yumiko, a mother of two in her early thirties on the other hand, said she was changed positively after she discovered that she was a *burakumin*. She said that she used to bully her peers in high school because she thought she was such a *bijin*, a cute and sexy girl. Being so arrogant, when she was upset over something, she would find easy targets, her innocent classmates, and project her frustration onto them. But after she came to work at the Buraku Liberation League, she realized that what she used to do to her peers was what the Japanese society has done for *burakumin*. She realized that she herself was as "dirty" (*kitanai*) as those who discriminate against the *burakumin*. She was then able to be more understanding of and compassionate toward other people's pain.

Many young *burakumin* interviewed by Shimizu talked about critical encounters they had with mentoring figures, most of who were older members of the Buraku Liberation League. The mentors took the younger members under their wings, shared their own lived experience to show that there was no need to feel afraid or ashamed of being a *burakumin*. Rather, they suggested that egoistic self-seeking of *burakumin* themselves, for example, hiding one's *burakumin* identity to pass as a "normal" Japanese, helped perpetuate the negative stereotypes about *burakumin*. When some of these young *burakumin* realized their own egoistic fears and desires, they began to transcend them by dedicating themselves to causes greater than their individual selves, e.g., working to help other *burakumin* and other minority groups.

To restate our basic argument, the current approach to minority education, of which the Human Rights Education of the Japanese Ministry of Education is the most current and widely implemented example, takes the *dualistic* position that separates a given segment population as belonging to the minority, and the other to the majority group. Furthermore, it takes the materialistic position that the lack of the socioeconomic and educational resources contributed to dis-

crimination and oppression against *burakumin*. While acknowledging the positive outcomes these approaches have created for improving the external aspects of *burakumin*'s lives (e.g., housing, education, income, etc.), they do not penetrate deeply enough to set in motion the more fundamental healing mechanisms of *buraku bunmei*, the eco-system of life on which all the inhabitants of the cosmos depend.

Within this life system there is no part that is less or more than the other. It is an all-for-one-and-one-for-all system, undivided and unranked by the dualistically conditioned classification systems such as majority vs. minority and clean vs. defiled. Herein, birth, death, and rebirth indiscriminately affect all members of the eco-system. In this cosmic-ontological realm, death is not defiled, as it is a cradle for the rebirth. Symbolically stated, it would take the death of the egoistic pride of *burakumin*, who subjected themselves to the detested tasks, to bring life to others. The more fundamental and truer death, of hatred, prejudice, and oppression, and the subsequent human suffering they create, arises from the very fear that perceives other human beings to be the threat to one's own ego, e.g., a father who refuses to let his son marry a *burakumin* girl for fear that the marriage will contaminate the family blood. *Burakugaku* thus calls for a Copernican shift in the way one frames minority education in Japan and possibly elsewhere. Ultimately, who is to call anyone to be different, separate, or even defiled when one's own material and spiritual existence and well-being is preconditioned by the so called other?

Footnotes

¹ Inspired by Paul Tillich's (1959) line in *The Theology of Culture*, "When we say that religion is an aspect of the human spirit, we are saying that if we look at the human spirit from a special point of view, it presents itself to us as religious. What is this view? It is the point of view from which we can look into the depth of man's spiritual life. *Religion is not a special function of man's spiritual life, but it is a dimension of depth in all of its functions*" (pp. 5-6, italics added).

² See for example the testimony of one burakumin, "Kenji," in the later section of this paper.

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Social Issues and Education: Commentary on the Use of Freirian, Hortonian and Boalian Pedagogies in a Graduate College Classroom

Michael Sanders
Cleveland State University

Abstract

My purpose for writing this commentary is to reflect on how one teacher attempted to utilize the philosophies and practices of Paolo Freire, Augusto Boal, and Myles Horton in a graduate level, educational foundations classroom. I take as my premise the view that pedagogical practice is political and that the processes of studying and changing practice are also political (Kemmis and McTaggart, 2000). The commentary is a testimony about how I attempted to construct ways in which classroom relations would encourage participants to engage with each other and the instructor in confrontational interaction to expose and examine held values and construct new meaning. I encouraged class participants to be part of a social experience that emphasized intersections of political errors in relation to schooling in the United States and to seek ways to facilitate change toward a more egalitarian and just society through education and social action.

Introduction

As a professor in a college of education I have the opportunity to facilitate learning for many people each year. I try to create experiences for my students that challenge them to be critical, to think independently, and to work for a process of democratic liberation within schools and other sectors of their communities. My goal is to honor the ideals of egalitarianism and to work toward the equitable and just treatment of all human beings using a curriculum that emphasizes issues of social justice. It is projected that 2.4-2.7 million new teachers will be needed over the next eleven years (National Educational Association, n.d.). This presents educators an opportunity to work with a generation of teachers with the potential to redefine education to critically address struggles for social justice. If educational reform is not taught, the alternative is education that revolves around state-controlled testing and retesting, standardized curricula and meta-narratives that subvert the redefinition of education as both teachers' and learners' experiences are increasingly forced to conform to mandates.

I believe that teacher educators must prepare students with activist skills so they can act critically in the contexts in which they are employed. Many will be working in poor urban schools where they will be faced with unpleasant realities of the day-to-day working of schools challenged by poverty, social inequity, indifference, and misunderstanding. They must be able to bridge a gap that exists between the theories that they have learned and the realities of their practice. They will have to develop this praxis while walking the edge between critical and creative teaching and the pressure to conform. There are no maps for easily navigating this walk. Paulo Freire and Myles Horton (1990) cap-

tured this point in the title of their book, *We Make the Road by Walking*.

Philosophical Background

The assumptions and philosophical foundations for this commentary are based on the work of three critical theoretical educators: Myles Horton, Paolo Freire, and Augusto Boal. Paolo Freire is a well-known Brazilian educator who wrote extensively about the nature of freedom and oppression as well as revolutionary pedagogy. My intention as a teacher is to create an atmosphere of mutual respect in which class participants are treated as fully human rather than "dehumanized" (Freire, 1995 p. 26) and to offer the possibility for the transformation of consciousness for both the participants and myself.

Myles Horton was a contemporary of Paolo Freire. While Freire's ideas were developed within university- and state-sponsored programs, Horton's were developed within a small independent educational center initially formed to train labor leaders in the southeastern part of the United States (Horton and Freire; 1990, Horton, 1998). Both emphasized the creation of a pedagogy grounded in the experience of the learner that encourages people to work together to address issues of democracy and social change. Horton maintained that his role as an educator was to bring people with similar concerns together in a meeting place and to provide minimal guidance while they sorted through issues of interest and came to consensus (or did not) about actions that could be taken to correct problems as perceived by participants. He worked to found the Highlander Education Center, which became a critical meeting place in the southeastern United States. There Horton worked with the C.I.O. Workers Democracy movement, the environmental justice move-

ment in Appalachia, the movement for universal literacy and the right to vote, leaders of anti-poverty groups, and with civil rights leaders such as Martin Luther King, Rosa Parks and Ralph Abernathy. Work continues today at the Highlander.

Augusto Boal is a Brazilian actor/activist who developed a theatrical system that he called Theatre of the Oppressed (of which Forum Theatre was a part). Boal developed his theatrical/educational theories while working as an elected public official in Brazil. It was there that he used theatrical techniques to address social issues with the people from his district.

Theatre of the Oppressed promotes dialog and the process of change within groups of people with similar social and psychological issues. "Games" and other theatrical techniques are used to develop cooperation and consensus building along with observation and analysis. These games are also generated as interactive structures that allow actors to intervene in open-ended dramatic action. The goal is not necessarily to find the correct solution to particular problems but rather to explore and rehearse a multiplicity of possible solutions. The generalizations that arise through this process allow participants in the Theatre to see experiences in a new light by examining the present through a historical lens.

Description of the Class Readings and Discussions

The course was taught at a mid-size university as a required area class (from a list of several) for all people seeking a Masters degree in education. The university catalog notes that the course "focuses on the relationship of crucial issues in society to educational questions. Alternative purposes of education in light of the changing intellectual, social, and technological climate of modern America are considered."

The course met for three hours and forty-five minutes two evenings per week for six weeks during the summer. Thirty-three people were enrolled in the course necessitating a mixture of whole-class and small-group interactions. We were fortunate to meet in a double sized classroom that could have accommodated more than fifty people seated in rows of desks. We arranged a mix of desks and chairs in an oval around the perimeter of the room.

At the first class meeting each class participant was assigned the grade of A and was instructed that the grade was guaranteed regardless of their attendance or completion of assignments. This step was taken not only to put participants at ease but also as a sort of *de bricolage*, the taking apart of the menacing barriers among participants and between them and the teacher. Contrary to my expectation that some would opt to stop attending class and simply take the grade, all members of the class attended most class meetings and completed the assignments. In a typical class meeting we spent about half of our time in discussion, argument, and testimony, and the other half practicing theatrical games

and techniques described in Augusto Boal's (1992) book, *Games for Actors and Non-actors*.

Through our reading and discussion I hoped to introduce participants to social issues that have come to the forefront of educational discussion within that past fifty years. Having knowledge of the issues and points of intersection provides class members with a base from which they can easily make conceptual leaps to the arenas of public education and educational reform. I chose a reading list that included essays and books centered on issues such as racism, sexism, classism, ableism, sectarianism, and other forms of hate and prejudice.

We began our reading with the first two chapters of Freire's (1995) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. The first chapter includes an explanation of the relations between the oppressed and oppressors and the nature of liberation. The second chapter speaks of the "banking" concept of education and the reconceptualization of education as a mutual process between students and teachers. Participants were asked to bring five copies of a one-page reaction to the reading (for each of the readings) to class. They met in groups of five to read each other's work and to discuss their understandings of the reading. Each small group shared with the class as a whole some of what they felt were the most pertinent ideas brought forward by their colleagues.

The next assignment was to trade reactions with one another and bring a reaction to the reaction to the next class meeting. The reaction-to-reaction papers were designed to let participants see the reading through another person's eyes and to allow them to make comments on differences and similarities in understandings of the readings. This set the stage for the whole class to engage in discussion (seated in a circle) about the nature of oppression, (de) humanization and the prescriptive nature of traditional schooling. Participants were encouraged to agree, disagree, contest, or form consensus around various topics they picked from the text. At the beginning of the class they always looked toward me when they had a question or comment about the text. This presented me with the challenge of facilitating in a way that encouraged class members to address their questions and comments to those who were willing to engage with them or who were speaking.

The second reading for the class was from bell hooks' (1994, p.p. 177-189) book, *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*. Participants were asked to read chapter twelve, "Confronting Class in the Classroom." Many of my students were not familiar with the concept of social class. They were familiar with what is termed socioeconomic status, a phrase that inhibits a full investigation of how social class may be defined and understood as anything more than the ability to consume. Hooks, in writing about her experience as a non-materially privileged student at Stanford University, says, "It only took me a short while to understand that class was more than just a question of money, that it shaped values, attitudes, social relations, and the bi-

ases that informed the way knowledge would be given and received.” She states:

As silence and obedience to authority were most rewarded, students learned that this was the appropriate demeanor in the classroom. Loudness, anger, emotional outbursts, and even something as seemingly innocent as unrestrained laughter were deemed unacceptable, vulgar disruptions of classroom social order. These traits were also associated with being a member of the lower classes. If one was not from a privileged class group, adopting a demeanor similar to that of the group could help one to advance. It is still necessary for students to assimilate bourgeois values in order to be deemed acceptable. (p. 178)

Participants in the class were asked to engage in discussion regarding their experiences of education about class and the way they see class played out in their lives and in the lives of students in their schools. The discussion was soon confounded by the myth of meritocracy, the idea that people in this country get what they deserve, that people who work hard and avoid controversy will be justly rewarded. Most (but not all) of the students in the class agreed with this assessment.

That night I introduced my students to a game invented by Haggith Gor Ziv and presented at the 2001 meeting of the Pedagogy and Theatre of the Oppressed Conference. I also brought several small pieces of chocolate and one giant bar. I made a numbered paper trail (1-30) with index cards on the floor in the center of our circle of chairs. Small pieces of candy were placed randomly on some numbers and the giant piece on number thirty. Participants were proximally grouped in eleven groups of three. Each group gave me their playing piece (e.g., keys, a pen, a trinket etc.). I strategically placed the playing pieces on the first five squares—materially privileged white males occupied the number five square and non-materially privileged non-white females occupied the number one square. Other playing pieces were randomly placed on squares two, three, and four. None of the students questioned my placement of the playing pieces. One of the groups occupying the number five was given a six-inch foam rubber die and asked to use the die to move around the board. They were told that if they landed on or passed a piece of candy they could make a rule for the game and that the first group to reach the big chocolate at thirty would be declared winners. The first round of play was uneventful. On the second round of play, a privileged group passed a chocolate. They were asked to make a rule. They said, “We will move to the final square without rolling again and collect all the chocolate.” This, of course, ended the game.

There were a few mild protests around the room, though no one soundly contested the play. Perhaps the belief in the reality of meritocracy was so strong that participants did not feel oppressed by the way other players chose to interpret the game. However, in discussion after the game, members spoke about the game as a metaphor for meritocracy. Some

spoke about the harsh realities of a meritocratic social system in which those who start with privilege not only reap more benefits than those who start without it, but are also more likely to be in positions of power to maintain their privilege. Students also engaged in discussions about the reality of the “level playing field” mythology. One person, whose child had learning disabilities, was particularly vocal in the discussion.

For the next class meeting, participants were not given an assigned reading. We watched videotape by bell hooks titled “Cultural Criticism and Transformation” (hooks and Jhally, 1997). In the video hooks uses the popular medium of film to explore how oppressive themes pervade popular culture under the guise of entertainment. She explores contemporary film to speak to issues of racism, sexism, classism, and the objectification and commodification of humanity within the context of capitalist culture. I asked the members of the class to choose and examine a cultural artifact (a film, a television program, a bill board, a photograph in a magazine, or a website) with a critical eye, and to report back to the class. Several expressed an awareness of a new ability to decode popular cultural images.

Other readings included research-based critical theoretical texts, such as Jay MacLeod’s (1995) *Ain’t No Makin’ It: Aspirations and Attainment in a Low-income Neighborhood*. MacLeod’s longitudinal study of residents of a high-rise housing project deconstructs myths of the relation of effort to success, and leads readers to understand that race and ambition and schooling are vacillating factors in the prediction of material success. Douglas Foley’s (1990) *Learning Capitalist Culture: Deep in the Heart of Tejas* documents power shifts within a Texas community as the Latina/o community takes control of community government including schooling from the predominately Caucasian middle class. In the final chapter from *Pedagogy of Freedom: Ethics, Democracy and Civic Courage*, “Teaching as a Human Act,” Freire reiterates and extends his philosophy including “education as a form of intervention in the world” (1999; pp. viii, 85-124). Concurrently with reading, writing, and discussion, class members were taught games and techniques for the theatrical expression of those issues they considered pertinent to their lives as teachers and human beings. In short, students were taught to move their bodies to bring attention to their words as a prelude to the production of a Forum Theatre.

Description of “Games” and Forum Theater

I was first introduced to Boal’s work in 2002 at a Pedagogy and Theatre of the Oppressed conference. Boal and some of his workshop participants demonstrated the results of several days of work on a process he titled “Legislative Theatre.” At the following year’s conference, I participated in a workshop with Boal to learn the techniques used to produce a “Forum Theatre.” Forum Theatre is a sort of game (fight) in which a group of players develop a script around a

particular political error or the interstices of several errors. There are specific rules for dramaturgy, staging, and performance of the Forum Theatre which were described to members of the class well before they were asked, as members of groups of ten or more, to create a play and function as actors with the rest of the class acting as spect-actors (people who act as both spectators and actors). But the initial introduction to the Forum Theatre is the games portion.

Directions for playing the games developed by Boal (1992) are explained in detail in his book. Boal enumerates more than two hundred and fifty of these games. The purpose of playing the games in class was to develop the social skills of cooperation and consensus building along with those of observation and analysis. The games are generated as interactive structures that allow non-actors or spect-actors to practice openly intervening in open-ended dramatic action called Forum Theatre.

Class members played several games. The first few games were simple attention-focusing and trust-building games. For example, the participants were asked (either sitting or standing) to describe a circle with one hand and then stop. Then they were asked to describe a cross with the other hand and then stop. Then they are asked to do both at the same time. A few students were able to do it, but most are not unless they did it very slowly. In another game students were paired. One person held her hand with palm forward, fingers up, a few inches from the other person's face. She moved her hand, and the other person was required to keep his face in the same relative position to the hand while contorting his body to move as the hand moved. This exercise was done very slowly. In another pairs game participants were asked to face one another and draw an imaginary line between themselves. They grasped hands and pushed against one another, using all their strength, but not forcing their partner to cross the line. These games cause participants to move about the room and to interact with one another. Most of the games can be completed by most people, including, for example, a person using a wheel chair. These games allowed participants to become more comfortable with interpersonal interaction, to build trust and to become more confident in moving about and speaking or singing in front of a crowd of people.

The next Boalian technique utilized was that of Image Theatre (Boal, 1992). Participants were asked to self-group with five or more in each group. Each group was asked to choose one or more themes from their study to express in a visual form. They came, one group at a time, to the middle of the space. Using only their bodies in a sort of tableau vivant (without movement or speech), they expressed the theme(s) they had chosen. One group chose to illustrate oppression, imagined as an instance of high school sports hazing with one person on the floor frozen in a push-up while others stood above him pointing, laughing or with expressions of derision. Other groups were invited to walk around the actors to get a good view of the picture and to suggest ways that the image might be clearer or more powerful.

Whole group discussion followed each performance as participants discussed which forms of oppression were being illustrated. My role was that of what Boal (1992) calls a "joker." A joker is the person on the sidelines of the action who acts as a type of coach or supporter to let the spect-actors know if they start to veer from the course they have set toward the realization of their theme(s). The joker is the leader of the game, a wild card. Image building is the penultimate step before participants engage in the final game of "Forum Theatre."

A Final Game

The Forum Theatre is a blind-cast, scripted, theatrical production used to point out political errors within the social world of the players or spect-actors. Participants were divided into three groups of approximately eleven per group (though groups changed as they began to choose themes for production). They used part of their class time for meeting to come to consensus about topics to be address (students were free to move to another group if they were attracted to a particular group's topic), to write a script that presented the topic(s) as social problems, to assign roles, choose music, write and memorize dialog, and to choose what set, properties, and costumes were required for their production. The production date was set for the end of the class and a seldom-used stage on the campus was booked to house the action. The stage was independently lit, allowing the house lights to be dimmed, but had no special lighting effects nor sound amplification equipment. Participants were invited to practice on the stage in order to insure voice projection, to block movement, and to time the length of the production so that no one group took up a significantly greater portion of the allotted time. In the interest of privacy, only class members were invited to participate as spect-actors. After final rehearsals, the skits were presented one-by-one by the actors while the rest of the class acted as spect-actors. A skit was played out without interruption. Then the skit was played again in exactly the same way. During the second performance, the spect-actors were invited to stop the performance and take the place of the protagonist or antagonist of the play. The job of the spect-actors was to make some change in the protagonist's or antagonist's words and/or actions in such a way that the change served to end an oppressive situation or resolve a political conflict while preserving the humanity (Freire, 1995) of all characters.

The final plays were very different in character and in the political errors they addressed. I chose one to illustrate the type of issues chosen and how the errors were finally resolved. This play was one in which particular care was taken in set design, costuming, characterization, and written dialog. The plot involved a line of about five people waiting to pass through inspection at a metal detector in an airport. As the passengers passed through a boarding checkpoint, an officer was using a metal detector to check each person. The line waited silently, each person preoccupied with her or his own thoughts. The first passenger in line was a White woman

dressed in an American style business suit. When the metal detector sounded, she was pulled aside from, but in view of, the line. She was asked if she had metal items in her clothing that might cause the alarm. Searching her pockets she found a finger nail file. The file was taken from her, and after another metal check, she was allowed to proceed with the process of boarding. The second passenger was a man in western clothing wearing a turban. He passed through the metal detector without sounding the alarm. He was pulled aside in view of the group and told that he must remove his turban to be examined before he could board. The man politely refused to remove the turban, explaining that he was a follower of Sikhism and that a tenant of his religion is that he must wear the turban at all times when in public. The officer told the man that he must undergo a body search including the removal of the turban before he could board the plane. Once again he refused. The other passengers waited in line without comment as they saw and heard the checking of the first two. The officer told the man that he did not have a choice; he would either consent to a search or he would be taken into custody. The skit ended.

The skit was played through again. This time several participants stopped the action at several points to take the place of the other passengers including the businesswoman. Several players were replaced with spect-actors. In the final performance, the businesswoman declared that if the metal detector test was enough to allow her to board, it should suffice for the man wearing the turban as well. She exhorted the other passengers to follow her example as an act of resistance to what she saw as blatant discrimination. The other passengers joined her in vocalizing their resistance to the discrimination and their unwillingness to board the aircraft until the turbaned man was allowed to board.

After the final presentation of the play, participants (both actors and spect-actors) engaged one another in discussion. They identified political errors of the original production to be oppressive discrimination with its basis in genderism, racism, religious discrimination, and ethnocentrism. They spoke of the difficulty of finding the courage to take a stand in the face of injustice and inequity, and of the difference that many voices together can make in controlling and directing relations of power. Other plays dealt with similar themes including an incidence of racism coupled with violence at a high school football game, and class relations as a group of materially privileged women abused a female server in a restaurant. While only one play dealt with social issues and political errors in a school setting, the participants spoke about them with a clear awareness that schooling is a broadly defined social activity that is influenced by what happens within a broad socio-cultural context.

Conclusion

The pedagogical philosophies of Horton, Freire, and Boal are powerful technologies that allow educators to critically examine issues of oppression as they are exposed to

them through literature and their own experience, and as they develop consciousness around them. Exposure to the nature of oppression and liberation allows people to understand how they are alike, rather than how people are different and unique, and to use that as a point of departure for understanding social issues. "Citizen subjects have become so surrounded and 'trapped' in our own histories of domination, fear, pain, hatred, and hierarchy that the strategic adversary under postmodern times has become our own sense of self" (Sandoval, 2000, p. 164-5). While there is no guarantee that what is manifested on a micro-level will be practiced on a macro-level, people may be presented with the possibilities of alternative realities that internalize as shifts in paradigms of consciousness and offer hope for the genesis of egalitarian ideals within social contexts.

I have very few opportunities to know and to see how other people practice pedagogy in their college classrooms. This commentary is offered to other teacher/learners with the hope that knowledge will be shared more freely, that pedagogy in the service of human beings will prevail, and that we will all continue to learn, change, and evolve toward fairer and more equitable destinations.

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