

ALL ABOUT

MENTORING

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*“May your hands always be busy
May your feet always be swift
May you have a strong foundation
When the winds of changes shift
May your heart always be joyful
And may your song always be sung
May you stay forever young.”*

*– Bob Dylan
“Forever Young”
from Planet Waves (1974)*

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MENTORING

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EDITORIAL



Transform!!?

“Myself, I’ve always held the number of sacred words down.”

– Saul Bellow
Humboldt’s Gift (1975)

“Our deep need, then, is to embody in our ... work our good reasons for doing as we do.”

– Alan Blum and Peter McHugh
Self-Reflection in the Arts and Sciences
(1984)

There are a number of moments here. I hope the implied connections will make some sense.

1) Over the winter, Xenia Coulter and I wrote a review of a new book, *The Handbook of Transformative Learning*, published by Jossey-Bass (2012). The word “handbook” suggests the hope of a distillation, a handy compendium. It assumes that a set of ideas has both gained legitimacy and can be offered in some nugget form. Well, this is a 575-page book with 34 essays! And while the goal of “transformation” is one that has animated so much imaginative thinking and so many programs focused on adult learners – like our own – after wading through all of the words, there was something disconcerting about not ever precisely understanding what the term means.

2) Throughout our history, there have been many efforts to think about our students and their learning; certainly, for example, over the last decade, the institutional research output has gained a head of steam. Without doubt, we have more information at our fingertips. Still, I think that our understanding of our students’ learning remains thin and anecdotal. What is learned? How? Does it stick? Does it “transform”? We have a good deal of very important thick description, but (as also was very evident in the *Handbook*) a paucity of systematic empirical research and of conceptual analysis and explication. What do we mean, anyhow, by using the word “transform” instead of humbler words like “change” or just “learning” by itself?

3) Along with other colleagues, Lee Herman and I have been trying to describe the mentoring process for a long while. I thought Lee once nailed it when I heard him describe the work as our ongoing effort to do a “PLA on mentoring” – to excavate the work we do with our students and to make explicit the values upon which it is based. It’s in this sense that we’ve tried to articulate a set of mentoring principles that can guide our distinctive mode of “teaching and learning.” In this spirit, about 15 months ago, we offered a workshop at the annual CAEL conference that brings together faculty, professionals and administrators of adult-friendly institutions in which we asked participants a simple question: Can you describe a significant learning experience in your own life? The spontaneous responses were wide-ranging and fascinating. The word “transform” came up a lot. Our favorite came from a faculty member who told us how, as a little girl in rural Texas, she watched her grandmother decapitate and dismembered chickens for dinner while patiently and carefully describing her every move. Now five decades later, she wanted

us to know how that experience of learning (and all of its profound influences) had never left her.

4) I had my own learning moment. While a first-year undergraduate, I was taking a history course focused on the close reading of primary materials. One morning, the professor walked in, placed her book on the table and in one little swoop, opened her blouse and began to breast-feed her tiny son. No explanation; no excuse. The class went on without comment, as we all did our best to concentrate on the textual exegeses we were invited to practice together. I’ve never forgotten that history teacher’s perfect double attention. In a single moment, she showed me that thinking about the French Revolution and attending to the basic life needs of her child could be one. In my 18-year-old head (and I’ve thought of the image *thousands* of times since), this is what learning was about: the personal and the political; the scholarly and the immediacy of daily life: all were brilliantly intertwined. I felt transformed.

5) We all think about our students. We often wonder what they are really thinking, what they are taking in, how they are making sense of a reading or an activity: whether and how they are grappling with the myriad questions that inevitably arise from the studying they are doing. And, too, we think about what they will remember in a week, in two months, in a year. Will it be some idea, a new concept, that helped them integrate what they already knew? Will it be their acknowledgement of a capability they never recognized they had? Might it be the pride of grit upon which they depended to complete their degree? Has their learning “transformed” them? We look for clues in what our students say and what they don’t. We imagine new ways to recognize their distinctive voices and trace their feelings and thoughts. We guess and hope, but what do we *really* know? What can we find out? How elusive and illusive is all of this stuff?

6) Some months back, Tom Grunfeld emailed us a petition from academics across the New York City area protesting the planned \$300 million renovation of the famed 100-year-old main branch of the New York Public Library at 5th Avenue and 42nd Street. According to the plan, the library would sell the buildings of two Manhattan libraries (including the mid-Manhattan library just across the street) and use that money to create a new circulating library within the 42nd library location. The Norman Foster-designed building also would remove the stacks holding some three million volumes and ship them off to New Jersey. The library claimed new access and “democratization”; those circulating the petition (I signed) argued that the plan would make a stunning collection less immediately available to researchers and scholars – certainly a transformation, but not a good one.

7) What I quickly recognized was that the petition was written by the teacher who had nursed her baby in that history class more than 40 years before. She is now a well-known scholar, the author of many important works, and someone whose stellar academic career I am very much aware of. How incredible, I thought, that I had just been thinking about her – and there she was! I sent her a friendly email, thanked her for the petition, and told her how important her work had been to me as a young kid trying, bumpily, to find his own intellectual way. She quickly replied, sending her regards. (It was not completely crazy that she claimed to remember me; her then-husband, it happened, was my advisor, so we had had pretty regular interactions.) But, now, given this opening, I couldn’t hold myself back. “I’m not sure if you’ll remember this,” I excitedly wrote,

“but you once breast-fed your baby right in the middle of a class when we were pouring through some text by Saint-Just.” I explained how transformative this has been to me and how, even now, in struggling to understand “learning” and its potential transformative dimensions, the image of her – text and baby in hand – came to mind. It seemed only seconds had elapsed when she replied: “I would *never* do such a thing. Your memory is completely faulty. Under no circumstances would I nurse my child in class. Do you remember someone else who was there? Check with them. I know you are wrong. Nice fantasy.”

8) In 2001, Oliver Sacks, the eminent neurologist and amazing chronicler of medical case histories, wrote an autobiography, *Uncle Tungsten: Memories of a Chemical Boyhood* (Knopf) to which he returns in a recent *The New York Review of Books* essay (“Speak, Memory” 21 February 2013). In the memoir, he had described how in the winter of 1940-1941, two bombs, part of the London Blitz, had exploded in his family’s neighborhood. His description of the second bomb was stunning and had made an indelible mark on his seven-year-old psyche: “... an incendiary bomb, a thermite bomb, fell behind our house and burned with a terrible, white-hot heat ... the bomb was melting its own casing and throwing blobs and jets of molten metal in all directions.” Months after his book was published, Sacks discussed the bombardment with his brother with whom he had been during the Blitz. “I remember [the first bombing incident] exactly as you described it,” his brother responded. But in regard to the second bomb: “You never saw it. You weren’t there.” For Oliver Sacks, the image of this second bomb was “very vivid, detailed, and concrete,” but, as he

concludes: “[i]t is startling to realize that some of our most cherished memoirs may never have happened” (p. 19). Had the memory, even though completely false, even though the event never took place, been part of a transformative learning experience?

9) What do our students learn? Do *we* know? Do *they* know? Is it possible for real learning to happen through errant retrospection? What if we asked them more directly than we usually do? Would regular practice in self-assessing allow students the room to maneuver into some new territory and really try to find and describe what they are thinking and concluding without fear of being judged by some authority? And even if we encouraged this kind of reflection, what would we do with it? What if a student’s self-understanding seems to us to be limited, incomplete, even distorted? What if what a student deems important, even deeply personally transformative, does not match our expectations, our fantasies of such learning? What if their outcomes are so very different from our own goals? Are we aware of what our own, often tacit, agendas are?

10) And here’s what I’ve come to: We are in a tricky but crucial area here. Even as the advocacy of “transformation” increases, with all its normative fervor but conceptual mushiness, it is accompanied by a complementary and suspicious advocacy for narrow, rigid and reified definitions of learning. The champions of intricate latticeworks of learning rubrics and of transformation have this in common: They provoke us to think much more carefully and systematically about what we really mean by learning with any scraps of evidence, wherever they might lie.

Ann. Will.

War Stories: An Incredible Journey

Claudia Hough, Cindy Bates and Elaine Handley, Northeast Center

“So you asked me to tell you a war story. To be honest, I can’t be general about something like war. I also don’t want to be too specific. The story is always in the details: how something looked or smelled, or how it truly felt. That’s also where the pain is.”

– Sean Markham

“Dredging up those ghosts is not something any of us like doing. We lost friends. We saw things nobody should see. We did things we don’t really want to remember all that much. We survived and that should be the end of it. Yet, perhaps others should know what it was like. Maybe if they did see some of the things we still see in our sleep there would be fewer wars. They sure won’t get the truth from television or movies.”

– Bob Gerulat



At the Proctors performance. (Seated l-r): Jack Fallon, Deborah Smith, Sarah Wasserbach, Nadine Wedderburn, Cynthia Bates. (Standing, l-r): Elaine Handley, Claudia Hough, Isaac Newberry, Ryan Smithson, Patrick Rooney.

This is a report about an experiment. In November 2010, we three put out a call to the college community – students, staff and faculty – requesting stories about war. Seventy-five different stories, in the form of poems, memoirs, letters, short stories and songs came in. Our goal was to create from the submissions a performance piece about war that would be presented to the community.

Our teaching experiences launched us into this project, which deepened our understanding of the power of story to make meaning and allow for healing. Claudia Hough and Elaine Handley had co-created and co-taught the humanities course, War Stories: Reading and Writing About the Impact of War. We made writing an important component of the course. The stories that students shared in that class, both verbally and in writing, were potent and moving. Students went beyond answering the assignment somehow – they wrote honestly and humanly about their questions, their guilt, their horror, their

fascination with war, their patriotic feelings about war – all of which helped us to understand how incredibly complex war is.

Simultaneously, we found ourselves influenced by the work of psychologists Dr. James Pennebaker and Dr. Edward Tick. Pennebaker, a psychologist at University of Texas at Austin, has been exploring the connection between trauma, expressive writing, natural language use and the effect on mental and physical health. Tick, a psychotherapist and founding director of Soldier’s Heart: Veterans’ Safe Return Programs, focuses on community-based healing of veterans and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). We were particularly influenced by his chapter, “The Healing Power of Storytelling” in his book, *War and the Soul* (2005, Quest Books).

We were aware of how much our students’ stories affected us, and we took note of the student who had fought in the Iraq war

announcing to the class that when he came to the War Stories study group, he told his family he was going off to therapy. Students having the opportunity to tell about their war experiences and perceptions about war – and listen to others’ stories – seemed meaningful and important. We came to understand that veterans needed to tell about their war experience, so long as they felt safe doing so, and other people who had not been to war, including those who opposed war, needed to tell and have their stories heard, too. Tick (2005) wrote:

Like a hologram, one person’s story extends into others to reveal the larger story of what happened to us all and what meaning we might discover in it. A personal war story is always about everyone who participated in the war, as well as their family members, their friends, and their community. (p. 218)

After teaching the course several times, we agreed that we needed to get people's war stories out into the community. We called Cindy Bates, whose expertise is theater arts, and asked her if she would meet us and discuss our idea. Right away, she grasped why we needed to somehow create a public forum for these stories.

November 2010 - November 2011: Our Collaborative Process

One of the best things about working at Empire State is the opportunity, and the encouragement, for collaboration. Once, when at a conference where two of us were presenting on an interdisciplinary course we'd created with two other colleagues in different fields, people in the audience came up to us afterward and said such collaboration could never happen at their college – the disciplinary walls were too high to scale. It made us feel lucky. By collaborating on this project, we were able to learn from each other, bring our expertise and insights to bear and engender creative thinking and solutions in each other; we began and operated with the belief with three heads are better than one – or even two.

Collaboration went beyond the three of us. We eventually collaborated with the Office of Communications and Government Relations, who after meeting with us to gain an understanding of the project and our intent, developed flyers, posters, invitations and programs – and even set up a reception for the “War Stories” performance, as we were unsurprisingly calling our project. The college's talented videographers, John Hughes and Jim Merola, teamed up with Susan Eve LeClair to create a live feed version of the performance so people all over the country – even the world – could watch it. The Office of Veteran and Military Education, under the steady leadership of Linda Frank, generously gave the project money from the Ace-Walmart Grant for production costs. Our deans and colleagues were interested and supportive, and that meant a great deal to us.

Our first task after putting out the call for submissions was discovering what we'd received. We didn't really know what we were going to create. We were just driven

by the belief that we needed to craft some kind of performance piece that would be a public forum for stories about war. Cindy suggested we take turns reading the submissions aloud to each other and find a way to categorize them (by specific war, kinds of experience, gender). We knew we wanted this project to represent a wide range of experiences and attitudes, so we paid close attention to diversity of perspective.

It took us a couple of months to read aloud each of the 75 submissions we received; we had to carve out time from our other work to travel and meet – all three of us work in different locations, although we all work for the Northeast Center. Some things can be accomplished at a distance – working on this project together was not one of them. When we could, we holed up in a room and started reading aloud. Sometimes we were broadsided by the power of a submission and either the reader or the listeners (or all three) ended up in tears. Some of the submissions were carefully crafted, while others were less so. But they were all written and sent with an important intent: to share a deeply felt experience or an important story. We felt privileged to be the recipients of these stories, many of which will never leave our hearts. As we shared the work with each, however, we came to understand that the intensity of the subject matter would not permit a lengthy performance. This meant, unfortunately, that we would only be able to use less than a third of the submissions in the performance. (Thankfully, we were able to add all of the submissions to the Empire State College archive because every submission was a valuable record from our college community.) By the time we finished reading the submissions, we felt quite confident that we had plenty of good material to work with.

Over the next couple of months, we read and re-read the pieces aloud to each other. Eventually, we started to whittle down the list of pieces to include in the performance. Our choices could not always be based on the quality of writing; it was essential that we consider the point of view and the experience articulated. Then we had to decide on the order: what pieces worked well together, how we could create some

kind of narrative arc, how would the rhythm of the whole piece be developed, and how much could people bear to hear about war. Sometimes the grief, guilt and loss that were embedded in the material weighed us down. Sometimes the small triumphs over pain found in some pieces gave us hope. We tried to imagine the impact of this material on an audience who couldn't simply “take a break” from these powerful stories like we could.

A turning point came for us when we went on the Empire State College Writing Retreat in May 2011. For three days, we had concentrated time to pull a rough draft of a script together. We were aided by our generous colleagues there who one evening agreed to read sections of the script aloud so we could hear and feel what worked. The feedback of the readers and the others who listened was invaluable in helping us make editing decisions. As writers, we knew that it is easy to lose perspective when you are working intensely with language and story. And we knew that the stories would feel and impact us differently when they were read aloud in the presence of an audience.

A month later, we felt we had a solid first draft and we were ready to listen to the whole script being performed in the presence of others. We asked some friends to be readers, and the three of us sat and listened to what we had woven together. We could hear what worked well in a live performance and what needed more shaping or perhaps wouldn't ever translate to a live performance medium. The readers gave us feedback, too. Their passionate feelings about the work and their occasional differences of opinion gave us much to think about. The next day, we dove into the work once again, intent on revising the piece based on what we had learned.

Revisions at this point focused primarily on the need to make the piece shorter (the emotional journey was still too long). We also focused our attention on some pieces that were so compelling to us when we read them in our little work room, but fell flat when performed before a larger audience as part of a series of stories. For example, we all loved the short story “Buzzing Flies” by Robert Lamb. The simplicity of the story made a strong impact on us the very first

time we read it. After this reading, however, we wondered if the story would be clearer if it were translated into dialogue, where the characters in the story would be portrayed by different actors. We would need to get the author's permission and assistance to make such a radical change, but we wanted to try out some ideas before going to the author. We labored over how to adapt this story into a dialogue and gave it a try. In the end, we discovered that the story was just fine the way it was originally. And although we learned some valuable lessons about narration, storytelling and performance in this endeavor, this particular story is most powerful when we followed the lead of the author and kept things simple.

"Buzzing Flies"

He sat with me on the front porch of my home in New Egypt, New Jersey on a warm summer evening in 1970. We could hear the Army practicing just a few miles away on the artillery range. I asked if the sound and vibrations of the shells blowing up scared him. No, he said the sounds of bombs did not scare him.

I was young and preparing to go to war just like most of my friends. I had already lost cousins and friends in the war, so I participated in Civil Air Patrol searches, took ROTC classes and tried to harden myself to the horrors of war. I was asking him about his experiences and "What was war like? What was the worst part of being in combat," I asked, "was it the bombs? Was it watching people around you get shot or blown up? Was it the fear of being killed?" He sat for a long while before he spoke. "No," he said. It was not the fear of dying nor the scenes around him that was the worst thing about battle. It was not the smell of bodies being blown apart or bloating in the heat. It was the silence after the battles that bothered him most, he said. "How could the quiet after battle be so bad?" I asked. He started to cry as he told me that it was the buzzing of flies on the corpses that bothered him. It was the sound that he heard in his sleep and in his nightmares. He said that was why he slept with the radio or TV on, so he wouldn't hear the flies.

– Robert Lamb

After a month of working on the piece as a whole, we were ready to hear the piece performed in front of an audience again. A few professional actors that Cindy works with agreed to read the script for our Northeast Center colleagues. Without any rehearsal and by simply sitting around a table, we listened to these incredible stories and poems in their new order and sometimes new shapes, once again. We were profoundly grateful to our colleagues for giving us not only their time and attention but also their honest reactions to various pieces. The actors also talked with us about which stories they felt a strong narrative connection with and which stories seemed to need more editing. We discovered that our current draft was getting closer and that the narrative arc of the piece was beginning to become clearer. A lingering problem remained, however. It was still too long. How would we ever be able to cut more of these powerful stories, poems and songs? Yet, everyone agreed that it needed to be done. So, we continued to refine the script.

Throughout our process, we worked to create a balanced script in terms of the kinds of different voices, the tone, written style and the emotional impact of the pieces. We edited lightly, trying very hard not to tamper with the writer's voice or intent. We were disappointed that we did not get a submission about actively protesting war, and we wished we had more pieces from a female perspective; we especially wished we'd received a submission from a woman soldier. Nonetheless, we felt very fortunate to be working with so much excellent material. We continued to move pieces around, further editing some and eliminating others to see if we could achieve a cohesive, moving collage of voices and experiences that would help us all think more profoundly about war.

**November 2011:
Our First "Performance"**

In early November 2011, the Northeast Center held an Arts Residency at the Schenectady Unit and at a nearby historic theater complex called Proctors. "War Stories" was a scheduled part of it. The residency, co-created by Anastasia Pratt, Lisa D'Adamo-Weinstein and Cindy, was interdisciplinary, designed so that various

disciplines could have a chance to consider how they interact with the arts. The leader of each study group was asked to "require" their students to attend the "War Stories" performance and to create one assignment that connected in some way to the project.

This performance, held in a small room at Proctors, was a "staged reading," meaning that the actors did not memorize their parts but rather they had rehearsed their parts but they referred to the script when necessary. They used music stands for their scripts and they stood when it was their turn to perform. Cindy asked six actors with whom she had worked to participate in this reading: Sara Fittizi, Aaron Holbriiter, Ian LaChance, Isaac Newberry, Philip C. Rice and Sara Wasserbach. Hearing professionals verbally interpret the stories created more insights and made it clear where we still had changes to make. One of the songs submitted was especially poignant, and we had initially envisioned including music and even dance in the piece. But in this reading, we realized that having one original song without any other music didn't work. We either needed to incorporate more music and some dance, or we needed to stick with a purely spoken-word performance. Given that the piece was still too long, we decided to simplify and cut the song.

The audience at this residency performance gave us more useful feedback. We started off the post-show discussion with the question: "What pieces were most memorable to you and why?" The general response was "All of them!" Eventually, though, people began to talk about specific pieces and what stood out to them. They also agreed that the intensity of the material meant that the whole piece should be no longer than 75 minutes and that it should not be

We started off the post-show discussion with the question: "What pieces were most memorable to you and why?" The general response was "All of them!"

interrupted by an intermission. Thankfully, we also recorded this reading, which allowed us to revisit certain pieces visually and aurally.

November 2011 - March 2012: Finalizing the Script

We proposed to the college that we offer a kind of dress rehearsal of “War Stories” at the All College Conference in March 2012. It allowed us to not only see the performance all the way through, but to have an audience, so we could see how they “received” the stories. Before that performance, we did decide to add music at the beginning and end, as well as short interludes between some pieces. This was no small decision; we knew that music could powerfully set a mood and we had to try to figure out what mood we wanted set.

Because the script was crafted from people’s written stories about war, and not a single narrative, we elected to make “War Stories” a dramatic reading performance. Elaine came up with the idea of having the actors read from journals rather than paper scripts. We bought a bunch of journals and asked each actor to choose one that suited him or her. They “read” from the script as though reading from their journal, which we felt maintained the spirit and personal nature of the project.

The performance at All College was, like the performances that preceded it, powerful and moving. The room was packed with around 100 people. We held a discussion with the audience afterward and gained many useful insights from the reactions of our colleagues. In particular, from the responses we received, we knew that the music we had selected didn’t work and we needed something else. A colleague of ours from the Metropolitan Center and one of the contributors, Gennaro Bonfiglio, was in the audience that day. He had written about his experience as a fire department captain the morning of 9/11 at the Twin Towers, and we wove his piece together with another contributor who wrote about his experience as a police officer in Manhattan that same morning. Gennaro confided in us that his piece was the first time he had ever written about 9/11 and that simply writing the

piece was an important step for him. Seeing his piece performed and appreciated by an audience was even more of an honor.

The local media had learned about “War Stories” by this time, and the three of us engaged in an interview with reporter Elaine Houston from our local NBC station following the performance. While we were all a bit shy about being on television, we were thrilled to have yet another audience with whom to share the work of this project. Shortly after that, we had the honor of talking about “War Stories” on our local NPR radio station, WAMC, during the Roundtable hosted by Joe Donahue. Once again, our passion for the stories and images created by the “War Stories” writers drove our energy as we nervously but excitedly discussed the project live on the air.

April 2012: The Big Performance

Proctors Theatre in Schenectady is a special venue. It was built in the 1920s as a Vaudeville stage and is now the premiere theatre in the Capital District, hosting several Broadway plays a year, as well as many other varied performances. We felt very lucky to procure the GE Theatre at Proctors for one night in April 2012 to present our “final” version of “War Stories.” This was a place where the community often came together – it was well known, it was familiar and we could seat up to 500 people. It was a great place to bring our collected stories to the community. We had a script, we had the venue; now we needed actors.

When we decided to collaborate on this project, we understood that while we brought different skills to the process, we were in this together. While, naturally, Cindy would take the lead when we got to the production end of the project, since it was her expertise that enabled the stories to become a performance, Claudia and Elaine participated in the casting and most of the rehearsals.

Casting was fun and fascinating, and we were lucky to find actors who so willingly volunteered their time. The cast we selected included one student alumni, Ryan Smithson, who also was one of the writers and a veteran; two faculty colleagues, Nadine Wedderburn and Deb Smith; and four professional actors, Isaac Newberry,

Patrick Rooney, Sarah Wasserbach and Jack Fallon. Scheduling rehearsals was tricky because many of them were in other productions and everyone had complicated schedules. While this project was firmly a collaboration among the three of us, there really can be only one director in the rehearsal room. The three of us constantly consulted and shared ideas, but Cindy worked directly with the actors and created the staging for the piece. Claudia and Elaine had an excellent front row seat, however, as they watched Cindy in action and tried to help with the multitude of creative decisions she had to make.

Cindy knew that, theatrically, the piece needed to be simple. Her goal throughout the rehearsal process was to keep the focus on the words, the images that the words create and on the people in the stories. She wanted the actors to feel comfortable – physically and emotionally – so she gave them enough structure to accomplish this without shutting down their opportunities for creative ideas. She also knew that she had very few rehearsals and that she would not get a rehearsal in the space until right before the show. All of this helped her to keep things uncomplicated and to map out each scene of the performance. Recognizing that sometimes it builds energy to have more actors on stage even when only one is performing, Cindy incorporated groupings of actors in the space when necessary while clearing the space for only one performer at other times.

As April 24th, the night of the performance at Proctors, got closer, there seemed to be more and more details to attend to. In the last month or so, this project felt like a full-time job on top of a full-time job – something we did not anticipate. We were still searching for the right music to open and close the show. And did we want music anywhere during the piece to give the audience a chance to breathe? We negotiated lighting options with the Proctors’ staff and edited slides that would be shown to tell the audience the name and author of each piece. This theater has a huge screen but we didn’t want the screen to overpower the actors. We discussed costume choices with the actors, and helped them deal with tricky places in the script. Every day seemed to bring

another challenge, and we became eternally grateful to our colleagues who helped us every step of the way.

When the performance finally arrived, we were elated. Around 300 people came and about 120 people viewed the performance through the live feed on the Internet. As the house lights went down and the audience hushed, the actors came out on stage and got into their first montage positions. When the stage lights came up, we could feel 15 months of work – our “labor of love,” as we called it – coming to fruition. The audience’s eyes were glued to the stage throughout the now 70-minute show. We heard laughter, tears and gasps when we thought we would. But we also heard the sound of silence – that special silence when people’s hearts are being moved and when you know that this story, this character, has touched their lives forever. Cindy was too nervous to sit for the show and she wanted to help seat latecomers, so she stood on one side of the theater. As it turned out, she was standing next to one of our authors who had chosen to remain anonymous. As his piece was performed, he and his family all fought back tears as they held hands and tried to comfort one another. The piece tells the story of the author’s experience in Iraq and the sequence of events that led up to him killing another person. The story itself was gripping, but to watch the author listen

The story itself was gripping, but to watch the author listen to his own words – to have his personal experience become a shared experience, to have his nightmare be understood rather than condemned – was one of the most powerful moments Cindy had ever witnessed in a theater.

to his own words – to have his personal experience become a shared experience, to have his nightmare be understood rather than condemned – was one of the most powerful moments Cindy had ever witnessed in a theater. In talking with the author afterward, he told us that it actually felt good to hear his words aloud and that this performance definitely helped him recover in some way from what he had experienced.

“Purple Heart Boulevard”

I remember sitting there scanning every inch around me. The last thing you want to do is stop a convoy in the middle of downtown Baghdad; you’re just asking for trouble as you are sitting ducks.

I was 19 years old in the 3rd Infantry Division, 92nd Engineer Company, Combat Heavy. We were on our way to a small camp located about 30 minutes from where we were stationed. I was in the back of the convoy in the last gun truck. I had an MK19 [“mark 19”], which is an automatic grenade launcher, but I held an M-16, as you cannot use the MK 19 [“mark 19”] on people, only equipment such as trucks.

I was very scared praying to God a suicide bomber did not come barreling at us. A car bomb would take out half of our convoy. I had a headset on because I am a gunner; I needed to hear orders to shoot or cease fire. I could hear all transmissions over the radio as the convoy commander radioed the situation. I could hear the nervousness in his voice, as well. We had just found out the convoy that left 5 minutes after us ran over a 10,000 pound bomb just outside the gate. Everything you should not be doing, we were doing.

It was no longer a question of if, but when we were going to get hit. That is a very scary feeling to have. You think in a situation like that you would reflect on your life, but as a soldier, and being a gunner, I could not. I had to stay focused on my environment as I was the first line of contact with any enemy. Then it was there, Sofea Street, or what we called Purple Heart Boulevard due to the number of soldiers who earned that medal after going down that street.

I had my M-16 raised in the ready position and my finger on the safety ready to flip it to fire. We were driving about 50 mph down this road that resembled a street in Albany. At the end of the road, there was a protest going on and the street was filled with civilians. We were forced to stop; as we did, people started approaching our vehicles. A lot of them were just looking for MRE’s [Meals Ready to Eat] and water. Unfortunately, we did not know who the enemy was.

As the people started to surround our convoy, I yelled for them to back up. They did not listen and started to climb on the vehicles. I had to think fast. I put down my M-16 and ran the charging handle back on the MK-19 [“mark 19”]. When I did, you could hear a loud clank as the round came back. It was loud enough for them to hear it and they quickly stepped back saying, “No, no, no.” Fortunately, to lock and load the MK-19 [“mark 19”], you have to charge it twice. They did not know this. So, the weapon was never hot; there was just the illusion that it was. I felt relieved because I do not know what I would have done if someone tried to climb up to me. They finally made a hole for us to pass through, out of danger.

Just then, to my right, I could see a couple of gentlemen with AK-47’s. The Iraqis are allowed to carry weapons, and we cannot act unless they point them at us and imply they are going to fire. There are so many things you have to be aware of before firing because you do not want to shoot someone who is not a threat, yet any hesitation can mean you’re dead. As we were going by, three of the men brought their weapons up – one, pointing right at me. Two other gunners in front of me saw this, as well, and without hesitation, I heard the lead gunner give the command I never wanted to receive: “Open fire!” Without a thought, my finger switched the safety off as I slowly squeezed my trigger, and just as my shoulder felt the reflex from the coil, I watched the man drop, then the other two. Then we heard nothing, it was

silent. I felt the world stop spinning, my brain not able to comprehend what just actually happened. We kept driving; we could not sit still, in case there were more.

I used to tell myself it was not my shot that hit him; it was probably one of the other gunners. I told myself this for a year, and then one day out of nowhere, I was driving and a tire blew out on a truck behind me. It sounded like a loud gunshot and I freaked out. I pulled over, shaking convulsively. I was having a panic attack. I dealt with severe panic attacks and PTSD for a year before I went and got help. Since then, I have been forced to face this situation, accept it and move on. But I have not fully moved on.

I wonder, every day, if God can forgive me. I have dreams about this faceless man. I wonder if he had a family and if his family was waiting for him to come home, but he never did. I wonder if he had a picture of them in his pocket when he died. Were his last thoughts of them? I wondered if he survived. I have never told this to anyone, not even my wife. I live with this burden. I respect my enemy, that's what makes a good warrior. I pray for this man every night and pray that I someday find closure. I do, however, try to lead a better life. I realize that if I had hesitated, this man could be having these thoughts about me.

It feels good to share this with you, although I am slightly ashamed. I am 25 now. It has been 6 years. Even though we are portrayed as fearless warriors, we are scared. Even though we are portrayed as savage killers, we have morals, and it probably hurts us more to pull the trigger than it would to get shot.

– Anonymous

Conclusion

This past October, we had another opportunity for a slightly shortened version of the performance, which was mounted at the New York State Military Museum in Saratoga Springs, where a meeting of military educators was being held. An

audience of approximately 50 people gathered in a cozy performance space in the back of the museum. Despite the lack of space on stage and not having lights or a sound system like at Proctors, the performance was just as powerful and was appreciated just as much by this audience as prior audiences. And we appreciated the opportunity to share the piece with educators who focus on working with the military.

Thanks to the work of John Hughes and Susan Eve LeClair, an edited version of the Proctors “War Stories” production will soon be available on the college website. The college also is looking at options to broadcast the production to local access news channels across the state. When the DVD of the production is ready, we also will be sharing it with the contributors and with others who might be interested.

When you are involved in a creative project, you hope that what you create will have a vital impact on your audience. We invited people from the Empire State College community into this project because we wanted them to have a way to give voice to their experiences and feelings about war. By creating a performance that was open to the larger community, we hoped that the stories we presented would be heard on many levels and that they would provoke more stories and conversations, and maybe that this could be the root of understanding and healing. We do know from the feedback that audience members and the actors shared with us that this piece succeeded in this way. Some of the writers told us that to hear their words read/performed was an extraordinary experience. Audience members reported to us what pieces made them weep, and which ones they especially related to. The actors reported how much it meant to them to be part of this kind of endeavor – and that they would be available to perform again because they believed in what the performance was trying to engender. Inevitably, every reading or performance of this piece caused the people who witnessed it to want to share their stories with us, and we know that this is a sign of hope for a humanity that values empathy and discourse.

And what did *we* learn? Well, that's where we can only speak as individuals.

Claudia: In most of the writing studies I teach, I witness students writing about difficult life experiences and the effects of those emotional upheavals. When they tell their stories, they are able to shift their perspective on events, surface insights and deepen the connection to others who hear them.

During the process of creating the “War Stories” project, I felt firsthand the healing power of these stories for the writers and all of us who heard them. I saw how important it was for the community to hear the words of those who had been at war and the ones who waited at home. My views of war have been forever changed.

Cindy: This project was incredibly powerful for me, personally. I have family members who have served in various wars and family members who talk passionately about how relieved they were to not have been drafted. With the exception of a period when my cousin was serving in Afghanistan a few years ago, I tend to live my life without really knowing what soldiers and people on the homefront go through during war. Working on this project changed all of that. I am profoundly grateful to everyone who contributed their work to this project, even if we weren't able to use it in the final performances. I have been forever touched by the images and emotions in these stories.

As a theater person, I believe strongly in the value of telling stories and sharing those stories in settings where we have a shared experience. I believe that when an audience sits through a production, they go through a journey together that is unique to that time and place. It can never be recreated. It can never be taken away from them. This is the miracle of performance, and I saw it happen time and time again while working on this project. Audiences became communities, joined together by having witnessed these incredible stories. I know that the actors who worked on this project also were deeply moved by the stories and poems. Isaac Newberry will forever be the quintessential reader of the poem “Sole Surviving Son” by Daniel Reinhold. I can still hear him using the alliteration of the poem's title to share much more than information with the audience. I will forever think of the story “Denny” by Carla D'Ambra when I see or

work with Sarah Wasserbach. Sarah's tears during the piece were real, not something manufactured by an actress.

I also want to comment on what I learned from collaborating with Elaine and Claudia on this project. As noted earlier in this piece, collaboration across disciplines is encouraged here at Empire State College and I was incredibly fortunate to work with these two very talented and passionate writers/educators. They taught me skills for editing and helped me see my "theater world" through new eyes. We also became closer colleagues during this time. Not only did the shared experience of this difficult subject matter bring us closer together, but this project spanned a long time in our lives. Close relatives died, my daughter was born, and the daily grind of life as an Empire State College mentor didn't stop despite everything else we had going on. We took the time we needed to care for each other while we quietly yet persistently shepherded our project and moved it forward. Now that it is over, I miss our long sessions agonizing over a few words or the cadence of an actor's voice. But most of all, I miss the opportunity to share our work and our lives while creating something incredible.

Elaine: Pedagogically, I think more than ever before I am aware of the empowerment that comes when students write about what they know of difficult and powerful experiences.

Because we are lucky enough to work with adults, they come to us with rich life experience and have a great deal to express. More than ever, I want to facilitate their expression; I want to listen better and more, and I especially want to be a support for our students who have been to war.

As a creative writer, I am used to most often working on a creative piece alone. I typically feel lost at certain points when I am writing a poem or a story – I am not sure of what I am trying to express, if I am using language effectively, and I wonder if the emotion or experience I am trying to get down on paper will have any meaning beyond me. It's a lonely business.

*We took the time we
needed to care for each
other while we quietly
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This project was exciting because I had companions on the journey, and I didn't know what was going to happen or if it was

going to work at all. I was a little out of my comfort zone and that was exhilarating – I knew I would learn a lot. At no time did I regret this collaborative project: I found Cindy and Claudia easy to work with, as committed as I was and equally invested in the purpose. I know that in the end, the performance was much better than it ever would have been if we hadn't collaborated. My respect, which was already high for each of them, grew as a result.

**

So was our experiment a success? Certainly it was for the three of us.

We believe it was for the writers and actors who contributed to the project, too. And we heard from audience members time and time again how powerful the stories were. It was certainly interesting to move from one art form (writing) to another (performance) and to see what happens to language as a result. It also was interesting to see how the piece evolved over time and how it felt in the different physical spaces that each incarnation brought to us.

Ed Tick talks about the American divide between our warrior class and our civilian class. We'd like to think that we played a small role in mending that divide and helping us all acknowledge how we are affected by war.

Agility

Robert Clougherty, Office of Research, Innovation and Open Education

Agile development, scrum, 3.0 practice – all of these terms are usually thought of as having their origins in software development, but their practices are rapidly being deployed in other sectors. These contemporary usages, however, are too narrow, both in scope and paradigm. Agility represents the current model of economic production. Just as some parts of the agrarian economy persisted into the industrial age, practices of the industrial age are lagging over into the agile age.¹

Agility, however, not only refers to methodologies and means of production, but it also (like agrarianism and industrialism) represents an ideology and ethos – it is directly connected to Openness (in this usage, with a capital “O” – the larger philosophy). At the core of agility is a structure of networked relationships wherein all participants have value and a voice, as opposed to the managed, command and control mind-set of the industrial age. Agility embraces complexity and its possibilities, not the linear assembly lines of industrial thinking.

From a macroscopic perspective, agile modalities apply to the entire semiosphere, including higher education. Additionally, agile is not new; there have been applications of agile methodologies (and their underlying philosophy) throughout the industrial age. A clear example can be found in Empire State College. The college was founded in 1971, at the beginning of a decade that saw command and control systems raise their shrill voices to their loudest volume with countless manuals of Japanese management practice. This cacophony carried through countless iterations of command and control fads until it hit practices like Six Sigma at the end of the century. Despite this, Empire State College began and existed as an agile organization.

The agile practices of Empire State College can be seen specifically in the core/root document of agility as it is practiced in software development: “The Agile Manifesto” (<http://www.agilemanifesto.org>). This document was developed in 2001 by 17 members of the software development community. Since that time, it has been translated into 48 languages, and has received so many individual signatories that they must be broken down into two-week increments. At the macro level, agile shifts the focus from products to processes, and from things to peoples – as Empire State College does with learning.

The Agile Manifesto (2001) itself includes four simple points and a statement:

Individuals and interactions over processes and tools
Working software over comprehensive documentation
Customer collaboration over contract negotiation
Responding to change over following a plan
 That is, while there is value in the items on the right, we value the items on the left [in bold] more. (Manifesto for Agile Software Development section, para. 2)

While agility was originally based in software and application development, it is beginning to find its way out in many different directions including higher education.² One of the challenges for traditional universities is that the agile ethos, as the name implies, also places a great value on speed – an ideal to which higher education seems averse. (There is a general belief that slow equals quality.³)

In a similar vein to “The Agile Manifesto,” Anderson et al. (2005) published a document called “The Declaration of Interdependence” in which they, as project leaders, claim that agility provided many benefits that also could benefit higher education. (Their applications reach to



Robert Clougherty

postsecondary education, as well.) They claim that agility leads to a constant stream of value – that is, for example, when too much emphasis is placed on the planning stage, value is lost at that front end. Second, agility delivers reliable results because the customers (in higher education’s case, students and other stakeholders) are engaged in frequent interactions. If a new degree program spends two years being planned and approved, delaying the offering, students have no opportunity to offer feedback, nor do faculty members have the opportunity to better their courses or continue in their own lifelong learning through interaction with their students. Third, those who subscribe to agility expect uncertainty and are prepared to make the necessary changes. As the half-life of knowledge continues to accelerate downward and the world in which our students live continues to change, all programs and courses of study need to be able to evolve. The practices of Empire State College allow the learning process to follow these agile practices. Fourth, Anderson et al. (2005) note: “We unleash creativity and innovation by recognizing that individuals are the ultimate source of value, and creating an environment where they

can make a difference.” An agile college supports its faculty in their endeavors and allows them the flexibility to better meet the needs of their students and to develop their own academic careers. Fifth, performance is boosted through group accountability; an agile organization quickly establishes teams (and preferably, self-organizing teams; see Appelo [2011] and Denning [2010]) and think tanks to complete tasks and to conceive new ones. It shuns committees, as committees are designed to maintain a status quo. In a rapidly changing world, status quo and change are no longer binary antitheses. Finally, the authors argue that agility improves effectiveness and reliability.

In an open and agile work environment, all individuals have not only the right to participate, but the responsibility, too. Julie Greenwald, chairwoman and chief operating officer of the Atlantic Records Group noted in an interview with *The New York Times*: “I constantly talk about how we have to be vulnerable, and that it’s not fair for some people in meetings to just sit or stand along the wall and not participate. If you’re not going to participate, then that means you’re just sponging off the rest of us” (Bryant, 2011). Ernest Boyer (1971) made a similar statement in the “Prospectus for a New University College,” wherein he wrote: “In using the available educational resources within the State and elsewhere in various combinations, depending on student need and motivation, to achieve an open process of learning, this new educational process will exact responsibility from students in return for freedom” (p. 3). The very essence of agility is here in Empire State College’s founding document. An agile college must be structured into what John Kao (2007) calls a “decentralized cyber-nervous system” (node theory); it depends on each node being active and participatory. Like the synapses of the brain, the strength of the brain/network comes not from the potential connections, but from their use. Thus, active participation of all is required.

As Empire State College follows the principles of agility, let us then consider a “restatement of the Agile Manifesto” in learning terms. As with the manifesto, there is value in both sides of each statement; however, we value those items on the left side (in bold) more.

Individuals and Interactions Over Processes and Tools

While Empire State College has policies and processes and frames itself as an institution that values those processes (for example, we have tools for course delivery and we have policies covering degree completion), we value the individual and interactions (mentoring) over those processes. The individual learner is the basis for establishing processes and determining which tools to use. The tool selection is driven by the need as opposed to the tool driving the available means. Faculty should have available to them a range of tools to support a range of teaching methodologies to meet learner needs. The choice of individualized studies, online courses, PLA, cross registration, etc. are all determined by the mentor to meet the needs of the individual student, and those are determined by interactions with and input from the student.

Active and Intuitive Learning Over Comprehensive Content

In the Agile Manifesto, this principle is framed as: “Working software over comprehensive documentation.” We have seen the results of this in the software we purchase. The first version of Microsoft (WORD) was, I believe, on seven floppy disks, which had a huge manual to accompany them. If I needed to find out how to do something, it was my responsibility to look it up and determine how to do it. Consider new variations of the software wherein the system is intuitive in knowing what I want to do, and notice how the evolution of the product has been increasingly designed to meet user needs as opposed to force the user to do the work to use the software. Now, switch to learning. Once upon a time, as a student, my courses consisted of a person giving a lecture and my being responsible for “écoutez et répétez” on a test. That was considered the dynamic framework no matter what else existed in that universe. It was my job to adjust to the class. In agile and open learning, the class adjusts to the learner.

Today, the “manuals” are no longer necessary and there are quick help areas that allow me to find out what I need at the moment I need it. The interface, the

process, and the structure have all been redesigned. But, it is not just the same material in a different room. Therefore, beyond simply moving learning to different modes of delivery, we also need to change the very shape of learning, particularly as we move away from the Carnegie unit. Competency based learning, adaptive learning, and the like, are all gaining increasing national attention. All of these practices were referenced by Boyer (1971) in the “Prospectus for a New University College.” As institutions across the United States begin to explore ways of measuring learning beyond the credit hour, they also are beginning to realize that there are colleges like Empire State College that have known how to do this for years.

Learner Collaboration Over Syllabus Presentation

Empire State College allows learners the opportunity to collaborate in determining their particular learning and entire degree program, whereas in many institutions, the syllabus is the binding document. In most instances, the learner is not provided an opportunity to collaborate in its development. In an agile context, the curriculum must wrap itself around students rather than requiring students to contort to the curriculum. Overall, there is a danger in saying that an institution should be able to change at every moment, but it must be prepared to evolve; likewise, it will not be able to meet the needs over every learner to a T, but a focus on learning as opposed to content helps.

Responding To Change Over Following a Plan

Empire State College’s individualized degree programs and learning contracts allow members to respond to changes in learner needs, professional development, etc. much more quickly than many other institutions. This is a unique ability and a strength that many outside the institution don’t always understand. Too often it is believed that slow and careful is the best approach, but if we return to parallel software development, Eric Ries stated: “People believe that if you go slower, you will get a better outcome – you can fix the bugs. But that’s not true. The slower you go, the bigger the batch

size and the more things go wrong” (Adler, 2011, para. 11). An institution where an individualized mentor can develop or revise a student’s degree program based on the student’s immediate need can quickly respond to changes in a way that a traditional institution layered in committees cannot.

Agility is now considered the model of the 21st century, and while a large portion of higher education has yet to latch on, it is not only at the core of Empire State College today, but has been present since Ernest Boyer first designed this institution. As the higher education community continues to define the institution of a new millennium and the use of agility, they will discover that Boyer had the foresight to create such an institution over 40 years ago.

Notes

- ¹ There are many terms used which can be considered interchangeable here. I do, however, reject the term “information age” and, therefore, specifically avoid it.
- ² For a fuller discussion of agile as an administrative process, see my blog post at http://openinnovativeandagile.blogspot.com/2012_10_01_archive.html.

³ Of course, Sun Tzu (2005), in *The Art of War* (II.5) notes that “cleverness has never been associated with long delays.”

⁴ “Keimenography” is a list of texts, as opposed to “Bibliography,” which, literally translated, means “a list of books.”

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How They Named the Baby

Robert Congemi, Northeast Center

We had gone to the Catskill Mountains for the weekend, George and I, to visit our good friend, Robert. The early May weather was gloriously sunny on the tree-lined, mountain road, and when we reached the top of the mountain where Robert had his summer home, he was waiting for us on the path that led from the house to the large area he had cleared for cars at the edge of his property. We exchanged hellos and greetings, and then Robert led us back to his house where he had prepared, along with his daughter who was visiting from the Midwest with her own daughter, a lunch of sandwiches and cold drinks. For some reason, George went on about serendipity, calling his chance meeting with Robert at a conference last month an excellent example of such.

“But how do you mean the word, George?” I asked him. We were outside now, behind the house, on Robert’s deck, which overlooked a broad garden, where the sunlight played on beds of pansies and petunias.

“I simply mean causing a happy accident. Causing something good to come to us that really is outside our control, which by the way proves an old point of mine, that the world contains a powerful positive in it somewhere. A gift from the gods, so to speak.”

“Oh, George,” I protested. “You are such a romantic.”

George shook his head. “No, Peter, I’m not. I am a scientist, an empiricist, simply reporting on a phenomenon.”

While we were talking, Robert’s attention seemed to withdraw from us, until he had been silent long enough for George to say to him, “Robert, our good host, what’s the matter? Where have you gone to?”

Robert turned in his chair slightly away and looked in the direction of his daughter, who was below us in the garden weeding one of the pansy beds, dressed in a light, flowery summer dress. She was a beautiful young woman, perhaps 30, with long brown hair flowing behind her. “George’s talk of serendipity got me thinking. It reminded me of a long time ago when my wife and I were first married and expecting our daughter. God, it was long ago.”

“Does it involve serendipity?” George asked him.

“Well,” Robert began, “It was in the springtime, just like now. Though we were so young then, and it was in a small city and very far from here.”

I leaned back in my chair and wiggled the ice cubes in my glass and prepared to hear a quick explanation from Robert regarding his remembrance. But, luckily, it turned out his story was longer than I expected, and made the time of our visit even more pleasant. When George and I returned to the city and bid each other goodbye, I found myself in my apartment recounting what Robert had said, which I present here.

Robert’s Story

Life was not easy for Doris and me in those days. We had met, and married soon after – two young grad students, without money, far from home, with few real prospects. We were drama students – and drama students at that time! And, as if that weren’t enough, one noontime, when I had returned to our little apartment between classes, Doris announced to me that we were to have a child. To our surprise, once we discussed the



Robert Congemi

situation, we decided that we loved it. We did not have a keen sense of what it took to have a child, and we were so much in love that having a baby just seemed to add a third person to our happiness, another one of us, as Doris observed. Indeed, the more we thought about having a child, the happier we became, and it wasn’t long after that we were telephoning our parents long distance and telling them the good news.

In the next few days, Doris and I found a doctor in the neighborhood we liked, and began learning from him and from reading about having a baby and bringing one up. I took a job for extra money as a bellboy in one of the hotels downtown in the business district, and we began carefully saving for our child to come. We saved money on clothes (I was happy in my jeans, jacket and loafers). Our little apartment suited us fine. When we entertained, we were glad of the student tradition where guests brought something to the party.

One thing, however – nothing severe, really – bothered us, and that was that we could not decide what to name the child. It was not that we had to deal with all the names for boys as well as names for girls. Doris said she just knew she was having a girl, and even if she didn’t, the boy would be named after me, Robert. We had only to deal with

girls' names. But try as we may, we couldn't come up with a name that satisfied us – that we loved.

"But, Doris, why can't we name the child Doris?" I asked again and again.

"Absolutely not. I will not name a child of mine Doris, if I have three girls, five girls, 10 girls. I hate the name Doris."

"But, Doris, if it's a boy, you'll name him after me, Robert."

"Of course, because I love the name Robert. Your name is Robert."

One night, at a rehearsal for a play I was in, where I played a minor part (one of the drunkards in Eugene O'Neill's tragedy, *The Iceman Cometh*), I was a little bored watching my cast mates do a scene I had watched many times before, so I went to the back of the college playhouse, and led Doris from her seat where she had been sitting, keeping me company, outside onto the front steps of the theater.

"Look, Doris, I've got nearly 20 minutes before I go on again. What do you say we give this naming the girl thing a try?"

"OK," Doris said, sitting carefully on one of the steps.

I thought for a moment, and then said, "How about Debbie or Bonnie? Those are real popular names these days. Lots of people are naming their little girls Debbie or Bonnie."

Doris looked up at me with her large, brown eyes. "You want your child to have everybody else's name?"

"Well, no ... but they *are* nice names." I thought some more. "What about Dawn or Amy? They're popular, too, but not *everybody's* naming their daughter Dawn or Amy."

"Uh-uh."

"Same reason?"

"Same reason."

I sighed. "Well, look, what are we going to do then?"

Doris thought for a moment. "I think we ought to do this less informally," she said. "And especially not when you're at rehearsal. This is your professional training, you know, my darling."

So that weekend, we went out to the tiny backyard of our apartment house, to where there was a little garden and a bench, alongside the fire escape that rose up the back of the house. Doris had Saturdays and Sundays off from her part-time waitressing job at the diner that was just before the entrance to the thruway. I had no Saturday classes and my studying had been going fairly well, and I wanted a break before beginning a paper for my Shakespeare class.

"What I think we should do is to think of people we know and like, family and friends, and see if that gets us anywhere, Doris."

"All right."

"Well, what about your mother, Beatrice?"

Doris shook her head. "You've got to be kidding."

"Well, I thought I should start there. Your sister, Dolores?"

"Dolores and Doris. Like two peas in a pod."

"Your aunt?"

"Agatha?"

"No, I guess not. What about your other one, Teresa?"

"Nice name, and nice lady. But uh-uh."

"Why?"

"I don't know. Too formal maybe."

"How about my aunt, Constance? Constance is nice."

"Connie. She'd be nicknamed Connie, and I hate the nickname Connie."

"Not *my* mother, Helen?"

"Not your mother Helen."

"Well, what about friends? What about Lynne?"

"People will think it's short for Linda, and Linda's drab, Robert."

"What about Penny, your best friend? What about Penelope, Doris? You like the name Penny. I know; I can hear it when you say it."

"Penny's all right, but it's my feeling about that particular person you're feeling. Anyway, Penelope is too old fashioned."

"What about Gabriella? You like Gabriella a lot, and, I think, the name, too. I like Gabriella."

"Oh, Robert, please, Gabriella is too foreign sounding."

"Rose?"

"A flower."

"Then you won't like Jewel."

"I won't like Jewel."

"Nor Faith ... nor Hope ... nor Joy."

"Nor Faith, or Hope or Joy."

"I won't say, Olive."

"Don't say, Olive."

"This is getting to be funny."

Doris did not laugh.

"I would have said pathetic."

"Look, then, darling, let's get a book."

"It's OK by me."

Later in the week, we went to a used bookstore in the neighborhood and looked around for books devoted to collecting names of children. In those days, the numbers of books we have today on this subject were not available, a fact that we quickly learned after talking to the book seller. But someone who happened to be in the store suggested that dictionaries sometimes had collections of names, and with that clue we found a Webster's at the back of the old bookstore and then one that indeed had names. Buying the dictionary for a mere dollar, Doris and I went to the city's public park, Doris starting to wobble noticeably now from her pregnancy.

The city's park had always been one of my favorite places, and we wandered about it to find the most congenial spot for our task. Pathways crisscrossed the park, and it was filled with hills. But the best spot of all, and our favorite, was upon the crest of the hill

overlooking the park lake. There we settled down, and opened the dictionary to where there were the names of girls.

“OK, this has got to be it,” I said. “All the girls’ names in the world seem to be in this book.”

“Fine then,” Doris said, sitting down with her belly sticking out in front of her.

“Now, let’s see,” I said, to an open page. “What do we have here? Maybe we can do this the way they named Dada, by just putting a finger down on something.”

“Maybe,” Doris said.

I put my finger on Cleopatra.

“Try another method,” Doris said.

“Maybe different parts of the alphabet.” I jumped around the list. “Anita ... Eunice ... Magdalene ... Shirley ... ”

“Next, darling.”

“Etymology. I know, etymology will do it.” I read an entry. “Henrietta ... diminutive of Henry. Hildegard ... battle maiden.”

“Keep going.”

“Entries next to each other? Ramona? Reba?”

“And I thought I loved you.”

“How about far out? Like Theodosia.”

Doris just looked off into space – at the blue lake in front of us, the grassy rise beyond, the trees beyond that.

“We could combine two names. Mandy Mae? Rhoda Mae?”

“Dear God, he’s the father of my child.”

“Something American? Sadie? Something we’ve never heard? Eulalie?”

I closed the dictionary.

“Something we make up? Moonglow?”

At Doris’s work, the other waitresses advised her. A big, tired-looking woman, named Belle, told her, “Doris, you gotta have a name. Everybody’s gotta get a name.”

A tiny girl, nicknamed “Bitsy,” sat on a stool one late afternoon when the diner wasn’t particularly busy and said, “Dor, they don’t let you have a baby unless you got a name.”

At school, in the section of the cafeteria where the graduate drama students sat, they kidded me. I was taking a literature course that semester and stopped in for coffee before the class every morning. It was an 18th century novels course, and the professor, a Dr. Jarman, was wonderful. We did all the great novels, and pretty soon I came to love the period. We did Humphrey Clinker, Tom Jones, Joseph Andrews, The Castle of Otranto, The Man of Feeling, Pamela, The History of Rasselas, Tristram Shandy. In his classes, Dr. Jarman evoked a times of sunlit English countrysides, traveling companions, good conversation.

“I think you’re romanticizing the period, Robert,” Doris said to me one night while I studied.

“No, no, Doris. It really was a much simpler world then,” I told her. “No world wars yet, no Great Depression yet, no atomic bombs, no hydrogen bombs. Just great estates and fabulous gardens, love affairs. I wish I lived then.”

Doris groaned.

After an 18th century class, a chain-smoking, leading man type, who called himself Julian, but was named Ted, told me, “Hey, guy, tell your wife to wrap the business up. You got a graduate program to get through.” A couple of classes afterward, Malcolm Ames, an older student, who always played the father, or the grandfather, or the butler, said, “Robert, we’re all so ... exhausted ... by your ... situation ... please tell your pretty wife she can have my name for the child. Either one of them.”

And then one night, a few weeks later, when I was in a stagecraft class – on stage, actually, helping to paint flats that were going to represent the living room of the Loman family in *Death of a Salesman* – Doris showed up, her belly huge, hardly able to walk down the theater aisle, looking scared.

“Robert, I think I’m going to have the baby. I’ve been having pains for about two hours now. They’re starting to get bad and come more often.”

Panicky, I came down off the stage.

“You’re sure, huh? This is it?”

“Yes, I think I’m sure.”

“We gotta get to the hospital.”

“That’s right.”

I turned back to the other crew people. They were painting, or nailing, or tying flats together.

“We gotta go. We gotta go to the hospital. I’ll see you later.”

We walked, fast. In those days, they hardly had taxi service in our little city, or Doris and I were too poor to think in terms of taxis, or maybe the hospital wasn’t that far away. Anyway, we walked, me holding Doris by the elbow, moving her along, talking about I don’t know what. On the way, a bus passed us, but we were in the middle of a block, and it was too dark for the driver to see us. A couple of times, Doris stopped.

“I have to rest,” she said, pulling away from me a little, annoyed.

“I don’t think you should,” I told her.

“Well, I do.”

“You want to have the baby right here? I don’t know how to have a baby right here.”

“We’re not going to have the baby right here.”

“Did you rest enough yet?”

But we got to the hospital in time. Doris didn’t have the baby until many hours later. After she was checked in and wheeled away, groaning, I stayed in the hospital lobby. A while later, a nurse came up to me and said I could speak with Doris by phone. She was still having labor pains, but, apparently, they weren’t that bad, and a doctor said she could talk to me if she wanted to.

“Hey, Doris,” I said into the phone to her. “You want to play a game?”

“A game?”

“Yeah, it’s called naming the baby,” I said.

“Oooooowwwwww,” Doris said.

I have never been certain, but I have always thought that this remark of mine brought on the baby. Doris continued in labor for another 18 hours, all through that night, into the late afternoon of the next day, howling mostly, but after this she delivered a 5 pound, bouncing baby girl, 21 inches long. With my first look at the child, I fell madly in love. She was a blond, rosy-cheeked girl with very dark eyes. Doris, for her part, looked drained.

“She’s so beautiful, Doris,” I said.

“You like her?” Doris asked weakly, staring up at me from her hospital bed.

“Yes, you could say that. She’s ... she’s ... ” I wanted to use a name instead of “she’s.”

Doris smiled, beatifically, I thought.

“Hey, Doris, do you have a name yet?” I asked her. “You really ought to have a name pretty soon.”

Our doctor and other people at the hospital, especially a few of the nurses, said the same.

“She’s such a lovely thing,” a bossy nurse named Gretchen said.

“She deserves a name,” our doctor, Dr. Goldberger, said.

“They won’t let you leave the hospital without giving her a name,” Gretchen said. “That’s the rule.”

Doris held the baby in her arms, and suddenly I thought to myself that no other females on God’s earth could be more stunningly beautiful than the two of them lying there in that bed.

With the baby’s birth over, I turned most of my attention back to my graduate studies. I just didn’t know what to do about the naming-the-baby business. To my horror, I

realized that my final exams were upon me, that my exam on all of Shakespeare’s major plays was only a week away, for instance.

One afternoon, three days after the baby’s birth, I went to the park to study. There couldn’t have been a better setting, I decided. The sunshine was glorious again: it bounced off the lake, like blue jewels, and made the greens of the trees shimmer, too. I sat on the crest of the hill where Doris and I had sat with the dictionary, and opened my copy of Hamlet. On this afternoon, sitting there in the park, the play struck me as dreary – all that political intrigue and pain. Alas, poor Hamlet; I didn’t want to know him or Yorick well. Instead, my thoughts, looking down on the park lake and the full, rich trees surrounding it, kept going back to my 18th century novels course and the simple, country world the novels inhabited. Again, in my mind’s eye, I saw men and women on horseback wending their way toward an English village. I saw an old squire sitting in a chair in the middle of a spacious lawn with his grandchildren playing all around him. I could see a young girl, from an upper window of a great estate, looking off to the distant mountains, watching for the return of her lover.

“Edward, my darling, you have come back,” I heard inside my head, making up dialogue for my 18th century people.

“Yes, Claire, mother will be so happy now.”

“And your father. He has moped and sulked by the fireplace since you’ve been gone.”

“And grandfather?”

“He lived only to see your return.”

“Don’t think it was hard to come back, Claire, to come back here to these fields, these trees, those mountains. I saw them from the Holy Land.”

Oh, to be there, I yearned, back 200 years, not to be retreated, hidden away, even in a pretty little park in the middle of a city, in the middle of a city of scores of hurrying cars and people.

Closing my book, I visited Doris. The hospital was nearby.

“Doris, we’ve got to finish this thing,” I said. She was beside her bed now, sitting in a chair, rocking the baby. She looked pretty good.

I also thought Doris looked abashed.

“I have an idea. I have a name. I have ... a ... name.”

“What?” she asked, seeming hopeful.

I took a deep breath. “What about ... what about ... what about ... Pamela?”

“Pamela?”

“Yeah. Pamela.”

“Where’d that come from?” The baby turned her eyes to me, I thought, and watched me.

“From a book. From a novel I just read in school. In my 18th century novels class. Some people think it’s the first English novel.”

“Pamela.”

“Pamela.”

“From a book in a college course?”

“Uh-huh.”

“I like it,” Doris said.

And so it was.

Reflection on Teaching and Learning: Culturally Responsive and Feminist Approaches

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Introduction

My year-long sabbatical leave, from 2011 to 2012, offered me much needed time and concentrated energy to embark on a few research and writing projects. While my specialized areas of multicultural art education and online learning continued to be the focus of my scholarship, I also delved deeper into my latest academic interest in feminist studies. Internally, self-discovery and self-improvement motivated my multicultural and women-centered inquiries. Externally, recognizing that my courses often consist of students of diverse ethnic groups and women – who not only are the major student population in Empire State College (SUNY Empire State College, 2013) but also higher education and online learning (Aud et al., 2011) – further inspired me to look deeper into ways of enhancing learning experiences for these groups of students. In this essay, I discuss three projects accomplished during the sabbatical that examined teaching and learning from multicultural and gender perspectives.

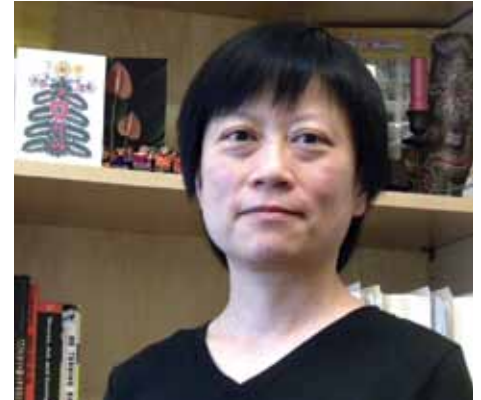
Culturally Responsive Art Education

I started a new project responding to a call for papers on culturally responsive teaching announced by the journal, *Art Education*. This project prompted me to carefully examine my teaching philosophy and methods in relationship to student learning and outcomes in my online course, *Artistic Expression in a Multicultural America*. As educators (Gay, 2010; Taylor & Sobel, 2011) assert, culturally responsive teaching improves academic success through embracing and integrating students' home and community cultures, socio-cultural schemas, artistic expression, and life experiences into the curriculum and learning environment. Using an Artist Interview assignment as an example, I analyzed how "micro-ethnographic" (Powell, 2010) inquiries can be strategically implemented for enhancing culturally responsive art

education. In this assignment, students took such micro-ethnographic approaches to explore artistic expression of a self-selected ethnic or local cultural group. Students also were expected to explore multicultural issues surrounding the artists, their groups and/or artworks. Following my recommendation, most students took the chance to explore the art and craft of their respective groups or art and craft made locally. Actively connecting to artists, students learn to use "insider" language to describe a particular artistic expression and its creative process. Most students became more aware of multicultural issues, while many expressed strong pride in their ethnic or local culture. Reflecting on the students' work, I further suggested that culturally responsive teaching in the 21st century needs to instill in students a local-global consciousness so that appreciation of art and culture is not conducted in a vacuum free of global influences and power structures. While it was exciting to see my article, "Culturally Responsive Art Education in a Global Era" (Lai, 2012a) published in the journal, a greater sense of achievement came from the fact that I was able to undertake rigorous reflection of my teaching and students' learning, and meanwhile, engage with a pedagogical theory of culturally responsive art education to support my teaching philosophy and methods.

Feminist Teaching

I finished a co-authored manuscript, "Resistance and Tension in Feminist Teaching" (Buffington & Lai, 2011), which was published in *Visual Arts Research*. In this article, Buffington and I each examined our own challenges in developing a feminist classroom, reviewed the feminist movements with a focus on today's young women's socio-cultural reality and preferences, and made pedagogical suggestions for art educators to exercise feminist teaching. In Buffington's classroom, pre-service teachers



Alice Lai

resisted not only association with feminism but also feminist research methods. In my on-line study, while students were not hesitant to discuss feminist topics or identify themselves as feminists, tension between the supporters of the so-called "second" and "third wave" feminists was evident. Different feminist values have led to heated debates and judgmental comments. Buffington and I examined the "chilly political climate" (Copp & Kleinman, 2008, p. 101) including negative stereotypes that prevented students from associating with feminism. We reviewed and compared different agendas and socio-cultural realities among different feminist movements/waves. To better understand our students, we paid much attention to postfeminists' and third wavers' call for a new feminist movement that reflects their reality, time and psyche. We then looked into efforts and approaches that our fellow art educators took to support feminist teaching. We suggested that art educators incorporate into their teaching a visual culture art education paradigm, "girl power" strategies (Smith-Shank, 2000), and learning technologies, all aiming at enhancing critical thinking, culturally responsive art, assertive expression, connectivity, interaction, collaboration and visual presentation. We considered technologies such as the Internet, Web 2.0, social media, and 3-D immersive learning

or gaming environments particularly responsive to our students' everyday life experiences and preferences as they are surrounded by multimedia, social learning, networking and dynamic communication modes. Our collaboration later led to a panel presentation, "Girl Power! A Cultural Conversation" (Smith-Shank, Delacruz, Staikidis, & Savage, 2012), with other art educators at the annual National Art Education Association convention. Collaborating with other art educators provided me with an opportunity to see how they work to create an empowering learning environment, challenges they have encountered, and steps they have taken to resolve teaching and learning problems.

Online Learning: A Gender Perspective

While working on the culturally responsive art education project, I came across learning surveys I implemented in my courses. Re-reading those learning surveys, I decided to take on a "data analysis" project to sort out and analyze the surveys. This seemingly small exercise turned into a more complex case study of gender, technology and online learning. While still fresh from writing about feminist teaching, I inevitably reviewed the survey outcomes and all the texts in my online courses from a gender and feminist perspective. The courses were delivered via ANGEL and utilized a range of learning and communication tools such as the assignment drop box, discussion forum, Course Mail, Course Announcements, Bulletin Board News, Student Lounge and so forth. Seeing struggles that some students had with these tools, I even began speculating about the gender implications of online learning technology. Moreover, a preliminary literature review affirmed that technology significantly affects students' success or satisfaction of online learning. Thus, I branched out to consider the subject of technology in the case study. In the end, I wrote up the case study and its findings and presented them at the 2012 International Conference on Applied and Theoretical Information Systems Research in Taiwan (Lai, 2012b). My paper was included in the conference proceedings (Lai, 2012c).

As these proceedings may not be easily retrievable, I provide a detailed report of this case study below.

To examine online learning and technology from a gender perspective, I reviewed relevant literature and conducted a case study. In the literature review, I surveyed national reports regarding enrollment trends in higher education in the United States, which indicated that women were major participants in online learning in postsecondary education. I looked into various research regarding women's perceptions and experiences of online learning and sought to explore the following questions: Why do so many women choose online learning? What challenges do women face in online learning? What are the gender issues in online learning? Regarding technology, I focused on feminist research of technology and encountered such recurring topics as: gender inequality and imbalance in the technology-related academic fields and industries; gender stereotypes and metaphors associated with the usage of and attitudes toward technology; gender differences in the design of technology; and third wave feminists' reflections on popular online learning technologies (e.g., Web 2.0, social media). While much of the research was based on empirical studies, I came across more than a dozen feminist theorizations of gender inequality and disparities in technology. From essentialist feminism and psychoanalytical feminism to postmodern feminism, it was astonishing to see what feminist scholars have to say about the development of gender identity and stereotypes. It was intriguing to read about how design of technology might change if more women join the technology industry as designers. For example, Colley and Maltby (2008) speculated that caring, social and low-hierarchy tendencies brought in by women may increase or improve technology's capacity for expressing emotion, networking and dynamic interactive communication. Women may contribute a greater attention to users' preferences and abilities than designers' or technology's preferences and capacity, which in turn could strengthen user-friendly technology and interface design.

Through comparison and analysis of the first survey, the Learning Experience survey distributed in the beginning of the term, and all the texts produced by the students in the two courses I taught in the September 2010 and January 2011 terms, I was particularly intrigued by gender differences in online learning. In what follows, I highlight the different online learning experiences, online discussion experiences and technology-related problem-solving approaches between 23 female and nine male students.

Prior Online Learning Experiences

In the Learning Experience survey, students were asked to indicate the amount of college-level online course(s) completed (see Table 1, next page). The results showed that six out of nine (66.7 percent) male students completed at least seven online courses. The rest of three male students completed one or two online course(s). Eleven out of 23 (47.8 percent) female students completed at least seven online courses. The rest of 12 female students completed from none to six online courses. Among these female students, one had not completed any online course and two had no experience in asynchronous online class discussions. I gathered that, proportionally speaking, more male than female students had prior online learning experiences.

Online Discussion Experiences

In another question asking students their levels of experience in the use of asynchronous online class discussion (see Table 1), five students claimed that they usually take a leadership role to get the class discussion started. Among these five students, two were male and three were female; that is, two out of the total of nine (22.2 percent) male students claimed to regularly assume a leadership role, while three out of the total of 23 (13 percent) female students agreed with the same statement.

Although both female and male students were willing to initiate online discussion, further examination of these five students' online learning experiences indicated that female students had more extensive online or technology experiences than male students. Of the three female students, one

	#	%
College-level online course(s) completed. (N=32)		
None	1	3.1
1-2	7	21.9
3-6	7	21.9
7-10	9	28.1
11 or over	8	25.0
Describe your level of experience in the use of asynchronous online class discussion. (N=32)		
I usually take a leadership role to get the class discussion started.	5	15.6
I usually post to the class after others have begun the class discussion.	23	71.9
I usually sit back and observe to see class discussion progress.	2	6.3
I am uncomfortable with asynchronous online class discussion.	0	0.0
I don't have such experience.	2	6.3
Describe your participation in asynchronous online class discussion. (N=32)		
I read and post to the class at least 7 times a week.	1	3.1
I read and post to the class 4-6 times a week.	18	56.2
I read and post to the class 1-3 times a week	10	31.2
I would avoid it if at all possible.	3	9.4

Table 1. Excerpt of three items from the Learning Experience Survey.

completed more than 11 online courses, one had a master's degree in educational technology, and one solely claimed to participate in asynchronous online discussion at least seven times a week (the highest number of frequency on the survey). On the other hand, the two male students had completed less than two online courses. From this, I speculated that female students might need more online learning or technology experiences in order to routinely initiate online class discussion, while male students took on a leading role in online class discussion regularly in spite of limited online learning experiences.

Problem-solving approaches

Another area where I observed gender differences was linked to technology-related problem-solving approaches. I noticed that significantly more female than male students requested help with the technology. While female students tended to contact the instructor with a brief description of the problem as the first step, male students tended to figure out solutions for the problem on their own. Of the only two male students who contacted me about the technology problems, one described the problem (related to the assignment drop box) and steps he took to solve the problem. He also suggested an alternative way to submit the assignment, if he failed to solve the problem. Another male student described the problem (related to a certain ANGEL function) and possible solutions including contacting the helpdesk. Noticing the different approaches, I observed that more male than female students were willing or able to take an active role to resolve problems with technology.

Final Reflection

As a final reflection, I would highlight a few ideas I have learned from my research of culturally responsive art education and women's (online) teaching and learning experiences.

I have learned that in both culturally responsive and feminist learning environments, students will most likely be exposed to different or conflicting beliefs and interests. While developing positive intercultural understanding is strongly advocated by multicultural and

feminist educators (Keifer-Boyd, Amburgy, & Knight, 2007; Shin, 2011), this does not mean that educators need to avoid or soften students' engagement with difficult issues and conflicting ideas; nor need they downplay the importance of "conflict" in any learning setting. In fact, Smith-Shank (2000) argued that a provocative, visual-oriented teaching style as displayed by Guerrilla Girls – a well-known artist group devoted to pursuing social justice and fighting against sexism and racism in the art world – can effectively raise awareness and incite further dialogue. bell hooks (1989) also advocated a confrontational classroom style where students were guided to exercise an active and assertive way of dialogue. In doing so, students learned to talk beyond their comfort zones. However, it should be noted that in supporting purposeful confrontation in the classroom, these educators proactively practice critical pedagogy and feminist teaching in that they establish a tone in the beginning of the class that encourages critical analysis, consciousness raising, debates and multiple personal narratives. Seymour (2007) maintains that a safe and empowering classroom does not manifest by itself. Educators need to be aware of students' readiness and awareness of feminist teaching styles. She suggested that educators include explanations, activities or learning materials in the beginning of the class to cultivate students' willingness and ability to engage with critical issues and conflicting ideas. It is particularly inspiring for me to learn how other educators handle conflicts or heated debates in classroom. Thus, for example, in my course, *Images of Women in Western Civilization*, I have found it useful to include materials that have explicit feminist voices to help students become familiar with the critical tone embedded in feminist critique. In one of the earlier on-line discussions, I prompt students to discuss their thoughts about the critical tone and feminist approaches and values of such approaches. By doing so, students seem to be more prepared to engage with difficult issues and opposing ideas. As I continue facilitating student discussions, I also highlight different ideas and raise questions to get the students to explore different ideas further.

While my case study of online learning from a gender perspective had limited participants, what I learned from the study closely reflects my online teaching experiences and can be supported by other long-term research. Kramarae (2007) asserted that while women in her study were enthusiastic about online learning, when taking online courses, more women than men requested technological help, were less confident in initiating online activities, spent more time to complete online activities, and showed noticeable stress in learning to use new technology. Furthermore, she found that more men than women owned a personal or better computer for online learning. On the other hand, women were often asked or willing to share a computer.

I have seen many women struggle with online learning and technologies in my classes. As technology is an essential part of our online courses, I feel a need to cultivate women's ability and confidence in learning to use technology. Yet, I do not believe that there is a need to incorporate ungainly or a large amount of technology in online courses. The learning surveys created for my class appeared to be quite helpful; thus, I will continue to use them. From the survey, I am able to know each student's online learning experience. Earlier in the course, I can pay more attention to the students who have little online learning experiences and offer timely help. When a new technology (e.g., a scanner, image attachment tool) is required for an activity, I would make sure to remind the students earlier. As I continue seeing students having trouble using ANGEL discussion forums, I realize that the discussion forum is not necessarily intuitive to all students. Thus, I would encourage students to "experiment" with the discussion tools and tolerate mistakes that others make. However, if a student persistently showed trouble using the required technology, I would contact the student to offer help or direct the student to the helpdesk.

My sabbatical turned out to be quite fruitful. I truly appreciate the opportunity. Reflecting on the projects accomplished, I gather that my scholarship is centered around teaching and learning. There is still a lot to learn and it will continue to be the focus of my research.

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The Servant Mentor: Where (and When) Might This be Leading?

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While the process of mentoring is understood differently – depending on tradition, context and organization – there is general agreement that it is a managed process: involving human behavior and relationships; incorporating elements of planning, organizing, directing and leading. It is the last element, that of leading, that is the focus of this article.

Servant leadership as concept and practice was first suggested as a viable alternative to autocratic leadership approaches by Robert K. Greenleaf in a short essay published more than 40 years ago (Greenleaf, 1970/1991). At first sight, the term seems to be an oxymoron: aren't the ways of servants and of leaders diametrically opposed? Yet, focusing on the ethical and moral responsibilities that accompany the power differentials inherent in leading, Greenleaf proposed a radically new role for leaders that recognized the dignity of the person, the well-being of the organization, and an appreciation of the broader community within which the organization is embedded. He was not talking about a theoretical perspective; instead, he based the concept on his 40-year experience as a manager with AT&T. Upon retiring, he devoted his efforts to exploring and promoting the concept, and his continuing contribution to this other-framing of leadership, and his other-response to it, has significantly influenced leadership scholars, management gurus and practicing managers (Spears, 2005).

In this essay, I would like to sketch some of the central tenets of Robert Greenleaf's approach to servant leadership. Having established this frame of reference, I will reflectively consider my own mentoring practice; hopefully, this will not be an exercise in self-indulgence, but will suggest broader questions about the mentoring relationship that may be of use to others, whether first-time or experienced mentors. In doing so, I am conscious of a number of

things. First, mentoring is an individualistic and often idiosyncratic pursuit and mentoring relationships are personally unique. Second, my own mentoring work takes place within a specific context and the dynamics involved may be quite different from campus-based mentoring. Third, my interest is in exploring and sharing the mentoring relationships that I experience, not in promoting or prescribing a particular approach.

Qualities and Enactments of the Servant Leader

Leadership theory has changed a great deal over the years. Early work was firmly rooted in behavioral approaches and personality traits. There does appear to be a connection between innate predispositions and leading behavior; although the relationship is now considered more subtle, nuanced and mediated by context. A recent meta-analytical study of personality traits and leading suggested that although "having certain traits may predispose individuals to certain behaviors, behaviors are the more important predictor of leadership effectiveness" (Derue, Nahrgang, Wellman, & Humphrey, 2011, p. 40). Those behaviors are shaped and expressed differently, and leadership theory has expanded to include a more eclectic recognition of the contribution and mediation of ethnicity and culture, situation and context, process and purpose (Ayman & Korabik, 2010). After a great deal of leadership research, a number of things are clear: there is no single model of leadership; there is no simple prescription for effective leadership; and leading qualities and behavior can be significantly encouraged, nurtured and developed.

It is contestable whether the term "servant leadership" is descriptive (referring to the leading style naturally adopted by someone possessing these attributes), or whether it is prescriptive (recommending that these attributes be employed). Its associated



David Starr-Glass in front of the National Museum (Narodni muzeum), Wenceslas Square, Prague.

literature is often very enthusiastic, sometimes evangelical. In this essay, my primary interest is in a description of servant leadership. It is acknowledged that not every innate servant leader will be able to use her personal qualities effectively in all leading positions, and that not every leading position is made more effective if servant leadership is assumed.

To assume a role – personal, social or organizational – the individual has to enact a set of attributes, making them evident to others and bringing them to bear on the situations and relationships encountered. Greenleaf (1970/1991) considered a set of 10 interlocking qualities, which may be the natural predisposition of the leader but which he certainly understood to be the desired enactments in most leading roles and relationships.

- *Listening actively to others.* Leading involves communicating, but it often resorts to telling. Communication

is more properly understood as a process in which conversation, dialogue, and shared meaning can lead to different perspectives and changed understandings. The servant leader appreciates this, realizing that “communication is the generative mechanism of change that gives people the reality in which they live...rather than serving as simply a tool for representing and transmitting people’s understanding or knowledge” (Ford & Ford, 1995, p. 560). The leader has the capacity to listen, approaching communication openly and actively, looking for meaning and nuance, rather than for agreement and confirmation. She attempts “to understand the speaker’s own understanding of an experience without the listener’s own interpretive structures intruding on his or her understanding of the other person” (Weger, Castle, & Emmett, 2010, p. 35).

- *Displaying genuine empathy.* In listening and acting, the servant leader demonstrates empathy toward others included in the process. She accepts others, making a conscious effort to identify with them and acknowledging their unique concerns without being judgmental. Empathy is a conscious concern, which recognizes and appreciates the other. It does not impose solutions on perceived problems, or intrude on selfhood. Robert Starratt (2004) understood that in listening and engaging, the leader must be actively present, which “implies a level of concentration and sensitivity to the signals the other sends out ... an unspoken message, responding to the other from your own spontaneous authenticity” (pp. 86-87). Empathy communicates recognition, concern and an enabling presence: a presence that “starts with this premise; I can’t do it alone; you can’t do it alone; only *we* can do it” (p. 99, emphasis in original).
- *Caring for wholeness and healing.* The servant leader is concerned with the well-being of those who constitute her organization. Individual wholeness and healing are not instrumental issues related to performance; rather, they are

expressions of a shared humanity and an inclusive compassion. Boundaries and limits are important and should be recognized: not all personal problems can, or should, be addressed. But organisations and institutions can produce dis-ease that manifests itself in behavior and resentment. These outcomes are only a manifestation of the dis-ease in the relationship. The servant leader fosters a pervasive “organizational virtuousness,” equally concerned with human impact, moral goodness and social betterment, and a foundation for healing (Cameron & Caza, 2004; Cameron, Bright, & Caza, 2004; Powley & Cameron, 2006).

- *Being aware of self and the other.* Servant leaders exhibit and actively cultivate awareness. Awareness is openness to surrounding reality and complexity, and Greenleaf (1977/2002) reflected that it “is not a giver of solace – it is just the opposite. It is a disturber and an awakener. Able leaders are usually sharply awake and reasonably disturbed” (p. 41). Awareness of the complexities of the organization is essential; however, many suggest that the critical factor is a high level of self-awareness: “the ability to recognize one’s feelings... not only the ability to be aware of one’s feelings and emotions, but also to differentiate between them, to know what one is feeling and why, and to know what caused the feelings” (Bar-On, 2004, p. 15).
- *Persuading as a preferred option.* Leaders are invested with power, and power-differentials are often utilized in bringing about change. Rapid change, which leaves no time for negotiation or education, can prompt the use of coercive power. The servant leader is aware of power differentials, coercive implementation, and the legacies of power manipulations. She prefers to approach change situations through persuasion. She is aware that just as there is resistance to change, there is resistance to persuasion (Ahluwalia, 2000), but prefers engagement and persuasion to reach common, renegotiated goals. Robert Greenleaf (1996) understood persuasion a little

differently: “arriving at a feeling of rightness about a belief or action through one’s own intuitive sense ... but the person being persuaded must take that intuitive step alone, untrammelled by coercive or manipulative stratagems of any kind” (p. 129).

- *Conceptualizing the vision and the future.* Positively-orientated leaders have a vision of the future, of potentials that can be actualized: leading is about sharing visions and articulating dreams. The servant leader sees the future in terms of increased inclusion and stronger community, rather than in personal success or organizational pre-eminence. Kathleen Patterson (2003) suggested that the “focus is on the individual member of the organization and the vision component is about the organizational member’s future state ... the leader looks forward and sees the person as a viable and worthy person and seeks to assist each one in reaching that state” (p. 4). Leaders originate vision, but when shared by followers it “continues to take shape and clarity as everyone engaged in the process speaks to it and owns it... the vision becomes a powerful motivator to take action” (Laub, 2004, p. 5).
- *Possessing foresight.* Visions provide a sense of what might be accomplished and are idealized projections, not bound by the immediacy of the moment. Greenleaf recognized this, and felt vision should be complimented – not restricted or inhibited – by a realistic appreciation of the here and now. The servant leader has to inspire by presenting realistic goals, and by assessing the degree to which they have been achieved. Greenleaf (1970/1991)

The servant leader is aware of power differentials, coercive implementation, and the legacies of power manipulations.

called this reality-check “foresight”: an ability to see outcomes and to develop contingency plans. He considered it “a wholly rational process,” and wrote that foresight “means regarding the events of the instant moment and constantly comparing them with a series of projections made in the past and at the same time projecting future events – with diminishing certainty as projected time runs out into the indefinite future” (p. 18).

- *Recognizing the responsibility of stewardship.* Servant leadership is grounded in a nuanced understanding of human relationships, organizational purpose and social contribution. To a great extent, this reflects Greenleaf’s philosophy and world view, but it also accords with his deep Quaker faith and conviction. He was concerned with the leadership practice, rather than theory; with enriching the well-being and resilience of the organization, rather than profit accumulation; with contributing to a wider ecology of local community and civil society, rather than the isolated firm. Stewardship acknowledges transience and replaceability, responsibility and a duty to care, conservation and extended property rights. Service, a defining attribute of stewardship, addresses a multitude of human concerns. Stewardship implies the leader’s recognition of temporary connectedness, personal responsibility and a duty to care (Anderson, 2008).
- *Committing to the growth of people.* Servant leaders respond to people rather than institutions, seeing institutions as peopled-places rather than symbolic abstractions. When organizations talk of “human resources” the emphasis is usually on the “resources,” but the servant leader understands the human element. She values people, and their contribution toward the organization, rather than short-term instrumentality that might result in long-term erosion of humanity or selfhood. Servant leaders tend to understand themselves as catalyst in human growth: creating the conditions in which this might occur, enabling pro-social behavior and

empowerment, and measuring their own accomplishments in terms of the way in which others have developed.

- *Building community.* Carolyn Crippen (2005) noted that the servant leader recognizes both the internal community of the organization and its connectedness to the broader community within which it is situated, and “seeks to identify some means for building community... giving back through service to the community; investing financially into the community; and caring about one’s community” (p. 10).

Greenleaf considered these 10 attributes to characterize the servant leader and her behavior. Some attributes might be more accentuated than others, but collectively, they constitute a cluster of interconnected qualities that differentiate servant leadership style from other approaches. They are not fuzzy ideals, but expressions and enactments of a deeper sense of what it is to lead. Servant leaders have been increasingly identified with new organizational perspectives, which recognize a changed relationship between organizations and the social, cultural, and ethical matrix that creates them and gives them legitimacy. Servant leadership is not only a perspective within some universities and NGOs; it also has been adopted by major for-profit corporations such as 7-Eleven, Southwest Airlines and Starbucks.

Mentorship Through a Prism of Leading and Serving

Mentors lead in a multitude of ways: inspiring mentees and making new directions and journeys possible; setting out on their own journeys and encouraging mentees to follow, to catch up and to continue their personal pathways to discovery. The initiative is generally with the mentor, and the journeys taken, postponed or missed are very much determined by her. The mentoring relationship is built on trust, anticipated benefit and interpersonal engagement. The mentee is often seeking direction and challenge, not just affirmation, and trusts that the mentor will lead her in constructive and fruitful ways. If it is true that “mentors provide their expertise

to less experienced individuals in order to help the novices advance their careers, enhance their education, and build their networks” (Sherman, Muñoz, & Pankake, 2008, p. 244), then leading is a necessary, perhaps defining, aspect of the mentoring relationship.

My mentoring is a little different. First, it is done in a transnational setting, with the Empire State College International Program in Prague (Czech Republic), dealing predominantly with Central and Eastern European students. The significant contextual dimension is that it operates across national cultures. Second, because of prior experience – personal or vicarious – most of my mentees have a predetermined cultural understanding of the role of faculty in higher education. Their understanding and expectation of leadership in the mentoring relationship is deeply colored by status differentials, power distance and the lack of inclusion that is the norm in most (but certainly not all) Central and Eastern Europe universities. Third, while I visit Prague several times a year to meet mentees, most of my ongoing work with them is done at a distance from Israel, which introduces another set of dynamics and challenges in the mentoring relationship. Fourth, most of my mentoring is associated with the creation of the mentee’s Senior Project: a capstone exercise that takes the form of an extended undergraduate dissertation, which explores an agreed-upon topic in business, management or economics.

Listening, empathy and caring

The mentoring relationship grows out of trust, and for trust to develop, there usually has to be sufficient time for both parties to understand and to test one another. In my mentoring practice, face-to-face time is limited and distanced communication (email) lacks media richness. Cross-cultural work requires alertness to difference, other values, differing assumptions, and cultural structures of power, authority and credibility. I recognize this, and the mentee is normally equally attuned to the cultural divide. I engage in what might be called threshold work: creating a liminal space for the relationship to develop, a space in which old rules and assumptions (especially about social order and power differentials) are

temporarily suspended. Critically, I avoid the imposition of solutions to assumed problems or unarticulated difficulties. I listen. I actively listen to the mentee's experiences, concerns and expectations. Dialogue is silenced if the other believes she is unheard. Dialogue is ritualized if questions are answered and not questioned.

As an instructor, students look to me for knowledge. I hate to disappoint them, so I try to provide it. Sooner or later, I tell them that knowledge transmission is a useful short-term expedient, but in the long-term, knowledge has to be created. They smile, but most of them begin to understand that in the engine of learning, I am more like the catalytic converter than the fuel tank. As a mentor, mentees generally look to me for experience. They know that I am not going to write their Senior Project dissertations, but appreciate that I can be a catalyst in the process: making things happen more effectively. In sharing experience and in guiding, I am conscious of the need to be actively present, even when physically distanced. It is often a matter of asking what *she really wants to do*, rather than telling her what I would do. Experience has to be reflected upon, shifted and sorted, and shared appropriately. My mentoring is not centered on the knowing expert, but on the *bricoleur* who uses an accumulated inventory of bits and pieces, found here and there, to respond to the stated needs of mentees. It seems to me that this is an invocation of empathy: responding to the determined needs of others. I understand what Starratt (2004) is saying when he talked about an enabling presence based on "I can't do it alone; you can't do it alone; only *we* can do it" (p. 99).

Each mentee is a real and authentic person, and has to be respected and valued as such. Increasingly, I explore with them their journeys, geographically and educationally. They are often challenged by language dislocation and cultural strangeness, yet by and large remain resilient and focused. As the mentoring relationship becomes comfortable for them, they often share their dreams and aspirations. Sometimes, there is a problem present but unarticulated. The mentor is not a social worker, and boundaries are important, but sometimes the problem is intrusive: the mentee's work

is slipping away, grades are sharply down, and there are dark circles under eyes. I have often been profoundly humbled when mentees sense a dimension of compassion and healing in the mentoring relationship, and unburden themselves: a younger sister dying of inoperable cancer; mothers and fathers with a few months to live. To share is the first stage in healing, but usually not the last (Starr-Glass, 2006).

They smile, but most of them begin to understand that in the engine of learning, I am more like the catalytic converter than the fuel tank.

Awareness, persuading and vision

The concept of servant mentor, as with servant leader, is problematic because it invites a dichotomy. Does the mentee in such a relationship become the master? Or perhaps the mentor comes to see herself assuming a self-serving role, in which the decision to serve only affirms her control? It is a false dichotomy, based on a premise of hierarchical power. Perhaps it is easier to consider the verb rather than the noun. Serving is rooted in an acknowledgement of both the self and the other. It is an acknowledged awareness of co-presence, based on a shared humanity rather than on assumptions of difference, power or authority. Serving is a voluntary recognition of the other, a reciprocation of the other's shared presence, a response to a connectedness with the other. It is an extension of self, not its contraction. The servant mentor responds to an awareness of self and awareness of the other in the mentoring relationship. This is often a profound, but difficult, concept for mentees who have experiences or cultural assumptions in which a power differential is a rigid and inevitable consequence of social order. The servant mentor negotiates power difference, moving beyond dominance and subservience.

Similarly, servant mentorship avoids using power to coerce or demand. As has been mentioned, coercive power is often a short-term expedient, but should only be resorted to when there is no time for negotiation or for the creation of a learning process that will bring about change. The problem is that coercive power is remembered (by the mentee) and it can be addictive (for the mentor), corroding both parties. If mentors are educators, it seems reasonable that they should adopt dialogue, persuasion and increased learning rather than power play.

In my mentor work, I also tend to conceptualize and articulate visions of what can be, and futures that might be. The mentee is sometimes doubtful, which often means that she is fearful. She is not sure whether the Senior Project dissertation can be written: she has no prior experience. She admits to being excited, but confesses to being concerned. Here, my experience can be provided freely, because I have had the experience of hundreds of mentees arrive in the same condition, only to leave a year later with pride and satisfaction in their completed dissertations. The vision has to be presented realistically. I also have the mentee grade a couple of the published dissertations from past students, allowing her to develop the critical skills required and to realistically assess the virtues (and flaws) of those who have come before her. But there is a future vision and it includes the mentee. It is the shared goal toward which we set out.

Foresight, stewardship, growth and community

To counterbalance the vision, there is foresight. If the mentoring relationship is a journey, then it has stages, obstacles and detours. These have to be communicated and shared with the mentee as they develop. The servant mentor thinks ahead, anticipates, responds, shares, supports and encourages. Foresight is anticipatory, but its horizons are usually closer than imagined. Communication is critical and, since my mentoring practice is distanced, it is essential to develop an effective ongoing flow of information. Simple things, but meaningful things: prompt responses, adequate discussion, detailed and actionable points raised, and thoughtful attentiveness.

The concept of stewardship also might need some elaboration. As an aside, it is useful to remember that the word “economy” is derived from the Greek *ekonomus*, which means someone who managed a household or estate: a steward. The role of the steward was to plan, organize and conserve the estate. The goal was to make it more productive and effective, but the estate did not belong to the steward; it was held in a relationship of beneficence and trust. While there might be some question about the practices and attitudes of present day economics, the word does convey a responsibility to accrue benefit, reduce harm and recognize other-ownership.

The mentoring relationship is not my private property with which I can do as I think fit; rather, I am mutually included in a relationship of responsibility and beneficence to optimize good. In stewardship, there is a responsibility to recognize the rightful inclusion of others in the “household,” and to exercise care and concern. That raises the question of the ultimate ownership of what is entrusted. Different people will have different perspectives: some might explain this in terms of religious or moral duty; others might see it in a duty toward a particular discipline, institution, knowledge, communities or society. But whoever, or whatever, is the ultimate ownership of mentoring, its practice is within the domain and stewardship of the individual mentor.

In that experiential domain of mentoring, whatever the ultimate goals, the immediate concern is the growth of the mentee. Over the course of the year, I see changes and development. Not all are attributable to the mentoring engagement, but within the engagement, there are always signs of new-found confidence, growing awareness and increased independence. Recognition of the mentee’s academic growth certainly provides me with an intrinsic reward. The servant mentor includes herself in the cycle of growth and renewal. While recognizing the mentee’s unique ability to change and mature, the mentor appreciates that her provision of support, guidance and energy in the mentoring relationship has contributed to the mentee’s growth.

Adding value – or better, assisting in a process where increased internal value is generated – takes place within the mentoring relationship itself, but it does not remain there. It spills over into the broader community within which mentee and steward mentor are embedded. A recurring theme from my Central and Eastern European mentees is about returning to their homelands and contributing to families, family businesses and civil society. They have all taken journeys, not random wanderings, but temporary sojourns in distant places. The themes of journeys and strangerhood are central parts of my mentoring approach, because they recognize the nature of the mentee’s experiences and expectations. Journeys can change us, strangerhood can be empowering. For these students, there is almost always the dream of returning changed and empowered.

The servant mentor understands the expanded nature of her practice; it has an effect on things beyond the boundaries of the mentoring relationship. There is the particular and the generalized, the dyad and the community. Perhaps this is something more immediately obvious in higher education than it is in the world of business. Reaching beyond the boundaries of the particular and impacting what lies beyond seems natural to colleges, because they are “the cradle of the professions and the primary socializers of future professionals... making any profession more community-oriented must, therefore, begin with making universities more community-oriented” (Klay, Brower, & Williams, 2001, p. 46).

Ernest Boyer (1996) stressed that all forms of scholarship are part of a unified “scholarship of engagement.” At the college level, this means “connecting the rich resources of the university to our most pressing social, civic, and ethical problems, to our children, to our schools, to our teacher, and to our cities... campuses would be viewed by both students and professors not as isolated islands, but as staging grounds for action” (pp. 19-20). For the mentor, engagement begins with the connection between her and her mentee; however, this initial dyadic is not an isolated island, but part of extended communities of inquiry, of practice and of service. Servant mentors, like servant leaders, seem to

recognize and affirm that they are bound into a greater community, seeing their efforts as eventually permeating into it and transforming it (Drury, 2005).

Servant Mentoring: To What Extent Does This Ring True?

This article has tried to present a framework that represents the attributes and the enactments of what have come to be called servant leaders. Using that prism, I have examined and reflected on my own mentoring practice, recognizing that it may be contextually different or idiosyncratically constructed. It has been an attempt to describe and make connections, not to prescribe and repackage.

But these are only my reflections. Or perhaps they are only reflections of me. Or perhaps they are only reflection of an idealized process. Yet, when I consider what I do, what I experience, and what my mentees tell me they experience, it does seem that the cluster of values that Robert Greenleaf attributed to servant leadership is congruent with the mentoring that I try to practice. To a fair degree, leadership is not an innate quality, but a skill that can be learned, improved and changed. That also seems true of mentoring. I certainly recognize that the context of my mentoring has changed and that, to a degree, at least, my mentoring approach also has changed.

In a transnational context, given the cultural assumptions and experiences of my mentees, and in a situation where the mentoring relationship is attenuated by distance, there does seem to be a clear resonance between servant leadership and what I have called servant mentoring. Leadership is contextually situated and needs to be contextually viable: one size does not fit all. Good leaders intuitively sense that and try to remain authentic, while adapting to the task environment. Perhaps mentors are no different. For me, the role of servant mentor represents an authentic presentation of self, but it also seems to be contextually viable. But, here again, these are only my thoughts and experiences.

There is another avenue that I would like to explore, because an additional aspect of my mentoring is that just as it is distanced from learners, so it also is distanced from

colleagues and peers. I have proposed that, in many aspects, the model of mentoring engagement that I practice is similar to the normative one that is central to Empire State College. Obviously, all mentoring incorporates elements of the personal; however, I would like to better understand whether what I see as servant mentoring reflects the thoughts and practices of my peers.

Does the description of the servant mentor correspond to your approach to mentoring?

I would greatly appreciate it if you could consider sharing your thoughts with me in a collegiate endeavor to understand more about what we mean by, and how we practice, mentoring. If you would like to assist me in this project, please consider emailing me. It would be wonderful if you could tell me how long you have mentored, your academic discipline, and the points in which the picture that I have sketched here of servant mentoring agree, or disagree, with your own practice. I can be contacted by email at David.Starr-Glass@esc.edu.

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The Pearl of the Antilles, Take 2: Teaching Film in Cuba

Ruth Goldberg, Metropolitan Center

I first went to Cuba in 1999, lured by the prospect of attending the International Festival of New Latin American Cinema that attracts filmmakers, scholars and critics to Havana every December. For each of the next three years, I brought groups of our Metropolitan Center students to the festival as an immersive credit-bearing study of Latin American cinema. We organized these trips around screenings, encounters with filmmakers and historians, lectures and tours of the island.

In 2001, my relationship with Cuba and Cuban cinema deepened immeasurably when I was invited to teach an intensive workshop on the horror film at Cuba's renowned film school: The International School of Film and Television in San Antonio de los Baños (Escuela Internacional de Cine y Television, or EICTV). Since that first visit, The EICTV has invited me back to teach in Cuba biannually, and these teaching trips are among the highlights of my year.

The EICTV was founded in 1986 by Colombian author Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Argentine filmmaker Fernando Birri (widely known as the “father of the new Latin American cinema”) and Cuban filmmaker Julio Garcia Espinosa. In Birri's words, the school was founded “so that a Utopia, which, by definition, exists nowhere, might exist somewhere.” From its inception, the EICTV marked the creation of a space to mold a new kind of independent world cinema as a creative instrument for social change.

The school has flourished to become a destination for young filmmakers from 45 countries around the world. In the words of the current director, Rafael Rosal, “We have more than 800 graduates in seven specialties distributed around the world. I have no reservations when I say that our graduates have changed the panorama of Latin American cinema. There probably is no significant production in this continent



Ruth Goldberg (seated in left chair) and Edgar Soberon (seated in right chair) with students.

in which a student who graduated from this school does not participate. We have created an international network of solidarity, co-productions and relations among all those who have been involved in the school because, as Gabriel Garcia Marquez predicted, our inordinate purpose was, is and will be the integration of a politically-engaged world cinema. In this sense, I believe we are on a good path.”

And, as one might expect from a school founded by Gabriel Garcia Marquez and Fernando Birri, the EICTV is a completely magical place.

First, there is the strange matter of its location. The campus is roughly an hour's drive from the city of Havana, hidden away

at the center of an enormous working farm, and surrounded by miles of citrus groves, banana fields and pastureland. On the drive from the airport, it is not unusual to pause while a herd of cows crosses the road. This is deep country – not at all the location one might imagine for a cosmopolitan hub of international film production.

And yet, once inside the beautifully landscaped, state-of-the art film school campus, one enters an island within an island: a world entirely inhabited by filmmakers and dedicated to the worshipful study of cinema. The entryway to the main building is covered with inspirational graffiti left by visiting filmmakers and actors who have come to teach through the years:



PHOTO: NICOLÁS ORDÓÑEZ

Inspirational graffiti by filmmakers who have visited the school.

Steven Spielberg, Francis Ford Coppola, Isabelle Huppert, Asghar Farhadi, the Coen Brothers, Carlos Sorin, and dozens of others.

Next door, in the screening rooms, somewhere between 10 and 20 different films are shown every day. Here, in the middle of the Cuban countryside, with horses grazing in a nearby field and the sound of tractors in the distance, one can walk into the Glauber Rocha screening room and see the most significant new works of world cinema before they even have a chance to debut in New York – the very latest by Bela Tarr or Michael Haneke or Lucretia Martel, presented, in many cases, by the filmmakers themselves, as an offering to the school that has trained so many young artists from all over the world.

There are three other elements that, I believe, are essential to the particular magic of the EICTV. The first is the educational model. Students in the three-year program

are divided into seven areas of specialization: directing, screenwriting, production, documentary, sound, cinematography and editing. Throughout their foundational first year of basic film studies and subsequent two years of advanced specialization, students have a mix of hands-on training, practical exercises and classes on film history and theory. The schedule is intense: nine hours of class a day, five days a week – except on location, when the commitment increases to 14- or 16-hour days of shooting. But this is not what is so special about the model. What creates the unique experience at the EICTV is that aside from a core faculty of filmmakers who oversee each department, all workshops are taught by a revolving cast of visiting filmmakers who come to work with the students for short, intensive periods of time. As a result, the creative energy in the school is constantly

reinvigorated by the emergence of new learning opportunities and new mentor-student combinations.

As an example: on a typical Monday morning, the second year production students might be introduced to Charles McDougall who has come for a week to oversee their television exercises. Meanwhile, the directing students jump into a Meisner technique workshop with Stephen Bayly. A Cuban cinematographer kicks off a highly-anticipated week of exercises with the Red© camera. A composer arrives from Mexico City with a three-week sound design workshop. A French screenwriter coaches the third year students on pitching their thesis films. Daniel Minahan walks a group through the storyboarding technique he uses on *Game of Thrones*. By lunchtime, the school is buzzing with new ideas, half a dozen languages, and the spontaneous chemistry of mentor-student encounters between working professionals and young,

emerging artists. Many of these mentoring relationships continue on long after the students graduate, and visiting professors are aware that they are training soon-to-be colleagues in the industry.

The second ingredient in the EICTV experience is that everyone (students, visiting faculty, administration) lives together on that campus out in the middle of the country. Everyone enjoys a pleasant four-minute “commute” in the morning, walking from the faculty apartments and student dorms across a field, through a leafy walkway and into the bustle of the main complex. We all eat meals together in a communal dining hall, and grab a coffee or a swim between classes. Everyone unwinds over a beer on the patio at the end of the day, and everyone attends a range of late-night screenings, often staying to argue over urgent cinematic matters until well into the night. For visiting professors, this chance to live in a community of film people means that, however briefly, we, too, are back in film school, with all of the exuberance, intensity and fun of campus life.

None of this would matter if the students weren't so extraordinary. They come with different levels of preparation – many have studied for other careers before deciding to switch into film, so it is not unusual to have doctors or other professionals among the students – while some have already completed extensive arts conservatory training in their home countries. The basic entrance requirements include a completed undergraduate degree, a solid portfolio of work and a rigorous exam. The school accepts one out of every 10 applicants, admitting just 42 new students per year. The students come ready to work hard, aware that film is among the most competitive fields they could choose.

The age limit to enter the three-year program is 30 years old, and the students range in age across their 20s. Some are away from home for the first time, while others are married and well into their adult lives. They all share a wealth of creative energy and a distinctive sense of irreverence. Any free moment in film school is an opportunity for creative expression (read: hijinks). As one example, after a set of truly unfortunate, life-sized sculptures of seminal



PHOTO: BILL TOILES

Scarecrow

filmmakers was donated to the school, the students set about repurposing the statues around campus, where they could be tucked away out of sight but still form part of the landscape: here is a picture of one of the statues (above), now permanently employed as a scarecrow in the vegetable fields behind the student dorms. During one of his annual visits, co-founder Fernando Birri, in the same spirit, made an eloquent speech about the importance of artistic irreverence and then handed out hammers so the students could smash to bits the statue made in his

image. Some students grabbed their cameras and filmed the impromptu scene, while others wielded the hammers. Everyone found a way to join in.

As another example of the EICTV school spirit, every year on Halloween, the entire school (roughly 200 souls) gets into full zombie costume and makeup and participates in the annual “zombie walk,” terrorizing the sleepy neighboring town of San Antonio de los Baños. This is now an eagerly awaited annual event, and many of the folks from the town dress as zombies

and join in as well, starting in the graveyard at midnight, and lurching slowly, eerily, through the dark streets.

For me, the EICTV has been a wonderful place to experiment – to try out new ideas, new teaching material, and new workshops. I generally teach two different kinds of classes at the EICTV. Once a year, I offer an evening workshop that is open to the entire school: either a genre study (horror, silent comedy, the American *avant garde* tradition) or a director study (Bresson, Cassavetes, Haynes, Haneke, Hitchcock). And once a year, the screenwriting department invites me to teach a two-week intensive seminar on dramatic structure and “the hero’s journey” for the second-year screenwriting students.

The work of the Cuban students holds particular interest for me. I have a relationship with Cuba now, and with Cuba’s evolving national cinema as it slowly changes and shifts into a new form. I am deeply invested in seeing how this story will play out. I have begun writing about the work of some of the recent Cuban graduates of the EICTV, and I am particularly interested in tracking the experimental documentaries of Armando Capo Ramos and Jorge de Leon, as well as the experimental fiction works of Carlos Quintela Machado and Abel Arcos. The rest of the world also is starting to take note of these young artists. Armando was just in New York, showing his work at the Museum of Modern Art’s Documentary

Fortnight Festival, while Carlos and Abel brought their film, *La Piscina*, to the 2013 Berlin Film Festival.

I am proud that this generation is determined to work in Cuba and change the industry from within. Critics observe that the films of this new generation are “not typical” of Cuban cinema, in terms of their complex formal experiments and range of references and influences. Of course, this wide range of references comes in part from the training at the EICTV – from those three intensive years of exposure to films and filmmakers from all over the globe. With new Cuban filmmakers graduating from the EICTV each year, however, it is only a matter of time, really, before these worldly, audacious films are recognized as indeed being “typical” of a new Cuban cinema.

Emerging Computing Models and Their Impact on Organizations

Ivan I. Ivanov, Long Island Center

1. The Rationale for my Research Interest

In the late 1990s, when I was director of the largest University Data Center (UDC) and chaired the UDC Directors' council in Bulgaria, I was under ongoing pressure to find a way to keep my most talented information technology (IT) professionals working for the center to better utilize our existing computer and network resources, and to find sources for new IT investments. I shared my idea with the upper university management for adopting a "pay-per-use" model for commonly employed IT systems in the regional universities. I was very close to implementing a collaborative project with Sofia-based universities, running the same hardware platforms and similar information systems. We were well interconnected, and there were no critical technological complications. The project promised to be cost-effective for all participating institutions, and the savings from operational costs and downsizing the capital investment could be used toward developing new systems and for improving the IT infrastructure and quality of services. However, the idea was too new, the magnitude of the paradigm shift was too great for IT personnel and top executives, and to avoid mostly political obstacles, the project wasn't launched. The lesson from this endeavor, in combination with dynamic transformations in the information technology/information systems-environment, encouraged me to focus my research on advanced computing models and exploring further the complex forces *in* and *out* of organizational settings correlating to a success and acceptance of novel IT solutions.

Over the last decade, IT, as a business resource, pushed us to see a persistent problem: the creation and maintaining of hundreds of thousands of independent data centers, all using identical hardware and

for the most part running similar software and static applications. Two independent studies completed by IBM and Gartner Group in 2002 revealed an overbuilding of IT assets, resulting in an extremely low level of capacity utilization. Major corporate servers were using just 10 to 35 percent of their available processing power, and in most organizations, the majority of desktop machines were utilized less than 5 percent of the time. To better address IT utilization problems, similarities in delivery services and new IT models have been examined. IT, like steam power, electricity and telecommunications before it, is what economists describe as a general-purpose technology, which, because of the broad range of employments and a large variety of products and applications, proffers the potential of considerable economies of scale *if* its supply can be consolidated (David & Wright, 2003).

Consolidated Enterprise IT solutions have proven to enhance business efficiency when significant fractions of local computing activities are migrating away from desktop PCs and departmental servers, and are being integrated and packaged on the Web into "the compute cloud." Whether referred to as grid, utility or cloud computing, the idea is basically the same: instead of investing in and maintaining expensive applications and systems, users access and utilize dynamic computing structures to meet their fluctuating demands of IT resources, and pay a fixed subscription or an actual usage fee (Ivanov, 2009b).

2. The Evolution of Computing Structures and Models

While the number and variety of computer applications and services progressively elevates, the demand for faster, more powerful and capable dynamic computing structures increases immensely. According to the IBM Corporation (2009a) white paper "Seeding the Cloud," the evolution toward



Ivan I. Ivanov

more advanced computing delivery models such as cloud and utility computing started in the late 1980s with the concepts of grid computing.

Grid computing specifically refers to leveraging a massive number of computers in parallel to solve particular problems, or to run specific applications. The key element of grid computing is that computers (or nodes) in a grid are able to act independently without centralized control, handling requests as they are made and scheduling others. Grid computing is the underlying technology for utility computing. In the long term, grid computing is heading toward a convergence of utility computing from the pricing and delivery perspective, and Web services-based integration and virtual technologies to enable multiple, networked computers to be managed as one (The 451 Group, 2003). In the late 1990s, with the virtualization of systems, servers and applications, the grid model has expanded to a higher level of abstraction: virtual platforms, including storage and network resources, and subsequently virtual applications, which have no specific

underlying infrastructure. Service-oriented architecture has been the next software design approach established to dissolve business applications into separate functions or “services” that are used independent of applications and computing platforms on which they run. When individual functions within applications are all available as discrete building blocks, companies have the ability to integrate and group them differently in order to create new capabilities and align to business processes (IBM Global Business Services, 2006). This architectural approach is specifically applicable when multiple applications and processes running on various technologies and platforms need to interact with each other – a recurring scenario within the utility-based computing environment.

Utility computing has been designed to offer computing clusters as virtual platforms for computing services with a metered business model (IBM Corporation, 2009). Utility computing offers companies and private users access to hosted computing services, scalable and portable business applications through a utility-like, pay-on-demand service over the Internet. In the ultimate utility computing models, companies are able to acquire as much IT services as they need, whenever and wherever they need them (Ivanov, 2009a). Lately, software as a service (SaaS) has elevated the level of virtualization to software applications. The SaaS model has been developed to overcome common enterprise challenges in meeting fluctuating demands on software resources. Again, the business approach ultimately targets the cost-efficiency models: instead of buying, installing and supporting expensive packaged enterprise applications or systems, users can access and utilize advanced “externalized” applications over the network and pay a fixed subscription fee or an actual usage fee (Turban & Volonino, 2009).

The concept of **cloud computing** has evolved from the concepts of grid, utility and SaaS. In reference to the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) Computer Society definition, cloud computing “... is a paradigm in which information is permanently stored in servers on the Internet and cached temporarily on clients that include desktops, entertainment centers,

table computers, notebooks, wall computers, handhelds, etc.” (Hewitt, 2008, pp. 96-99). Cloud computing is an emerging model through which users can gain access to their applications and systems from anywhere, at any time, through their connected devices. These applications and services reside in massively scalable data centers, structured in public or private clouds, where computing resources can be dynamically provisioned and shared to achieve significant economies of scale. The strength of the cloud computing model is its infrastructure management, enabled by the maturity and progress of virtualization technology to manage and better utilize the underlying resources through automatic provisioning, re-imaging, workload balancing, monitoring, change request handling, dynamic and automated security, and resiliency platforms (IBM Corporation, 2009).

To design and deliver a future IT architecture that captures the promises and the benefits of cloud computing, the five core characteristics defined by the National Institute for Standards and Technology must be considered:

On-demand self-service. A consumer can unilaterally provision computing capabilities, such as server time and network storage, as needed automatically without requiring human interaction with each service provider.

Broad network access. Capabilities are available over the network and accessed through standard mechanisms that promote use by heterogeneous thin or thick client platforms (e.g., mobile phones, tablets, laptops, and workstations).

Resource pooling. The provider’s computing resources are pooled to serve multiple consumers using a multi-tenant model, with different physical and virtual resources dynamically assigned and reassigned according to consumer demand. There is a sense of location independence in that the consumer generally has no control or knowledge over the exact location of the provided resources but may be able to specify location at a higher level of abstraction (e.g., country, state, or

datacenter). Examples of resources include storage, processing, memory, and network bandwidth.

Rapid elasticity. Capabilities can be elastically provisioned and released, in some cases automatically, to scale rapidly outward and inward commensurate with demand. To the consumer, the capabilities available for provisioning often appear to be unlimited and can be appropriated in any quantity at any time.

Measured service. Cloud systems automatically control and optimize resource use by leveraging a metering capability at some level of abstraction appropriate to the type of service (e.g., storage, processing, bandwidth, and active user accounts). Resource usage can be monitored, controlled, and reported, providing transparency for both the provider and consumer of the utilized service. (Mell & Grance, 2011, p. 2)

Besides the five core features listed above, there are favorable advances that focus on further strategies for adopting cloud-based services (Sosinsky, 2010):

- **Lower cost:** Consolidated cloud resources operate at higher efficiencies and with greater utilization, resulting in significant cost reduction. Though cloud vendors charge a premium for their services, the customers would save money by selecting the most needed options. Additionally, cloud computing deployment lets someone else manage the cloud infrastructure, while the organization will focus on managing their core activities, achieving considerable reductions in IT staffing costs.
- **Ease of utilization:** depending upon the type of services, there would be minimal or no hardware and software requirements, upfront costs or adoption time.
- **Quality of Service:** the higher cloud QoS compares to on-premises IT, and can be obtained under contract or SLA from the cloud vendor.

- *Reliability*: The scale of cloud resources and their ability to provide load balancing and failover makes them highly reliable, often much more consistent than IT service in a single organization.
- *Simplified maintenance and upgrade*: For centralized systems, all patches and upgrades are easily performed and users have access to the latest versions in a timely manner.
- *Low Barrier to Entry*: In particular, as upfront CapEx are dramatically reduced despite the institutional size, because of cloud computing, anyone can gain full access and services from it at any time.

The largest cloud category to date and an anticipated leader in the next decade is software as a service (SaaS). Customers use software applications, hosted by a cloud provider and available over the Internet. According to the Forrester Report from 2011, the SaaS revenue has reached \$21.2 billion from the total of \$25.5 billion from the public cloud. As a result of a strong demand from companies and organizations, Forrester predicts SaaS revenues to grow to \$92.8 billion by 2016, which would be 26 percent of the total software market (O'Neill, 2011).

The second largest cloud category, with a \$2.9 billion market size in 2011, is infrastructure as a service (IaaS). The IaaS provides computing power, storage, archiving and other fundamental computing resources to an organization with a utility pricing and delivery model. The consumer does not manage or control the underlying cloud infrastructure, but does have control over operating systems, storage, deployed applications and possibly selection of networking components.

The platform as a service (PaaS) is the third largest cloud delivery model with a market size of \$820 million in 2011, with a predicted growth from 2012 on. PaaS is the middleware of the cloud, and customers use infrastructure and programming tools hosted by the service provider to develop their own applications. The customer does not manage or control the underlying cloud

infrastructure, but has control over the deployed applications and possibly hosting environment configurations.

For many organizations, the primary question is not related to the computing delivery models, but is focused on the purpose of the cloud and the nature of how the cloud is located; in other words, the computing deployment model. According to the NIST, the four cloud computing deployment models are:

Private cloud. The cloud infrastructure is provisioned for exclusive use by a single organization comprising multiple consumers (e.g., business units). It may be owned, managed, and operated by the organization, a third party, or some combination of them, and it may exist on or off premises.

Community cloud. The cloud infrastructure is provisioned for exclusive use by a specific community of consumers from organizations that have shared concerns (e.g., mission, security requirements, policy, and compliance considerations). It may be owned, managed, and operated by one or more of the organizations in the community, a third party, or some combination of them, and it may exist on or off premises.

Public cloud. The cloud infrastructure is provisioned for open use by the general public. It may be owned, managed, and operated by a business, academic, or government organization, or some combination of them. It exists on the premises of the cloud provider.

Hybrid cloud. The cloud infrastructure is a composition of two or more distinct cloud infrastructures (private, community, or public) that remain unique entities but are bound together by standardized or proprietary technology that enables data and application portability (e.g., cloud bursting for load balancing between clouds. (Mell & Grance, 2011, p. 3)

Most IT and business analysts consider that the main stream of companies is focused on adoption of a hybrid cloud strategy that will split selected workloads in *off-premise* providers' clouds (hybrid, public

or community), and will keep *in-house* the core IT systems. The current cloud vendors' initiatives launched by formidable cloud players, including Amazon, IBM, Hewlett-Packard, Oracle and VM Ware demonstrate their readiness to build and to provide open or customized cloud architecture based on already developed OpenStack standard, VMware's vCloud, Amazon Web Services or Oracle Cloud Services.

3. IT/IS in the Organizational Context

To explore the complexity of the problems and avoid unrealistic expectations when shifting to and employing emerging technologies and new computing models, a formal methodology of examining and evaluating IT in the organizational context should be applied. The contemporary approaches to information systems, and more specifically, IT, encompass multidisciplinary theories and perspectives with no dominance of a single discipline or model. Gabriele Piccoli's (2012) book, *Information Systems for Managers*, features IT as a critical component of a formal, sociotechnical information system designed to collect, process, store and distribute information. The notion of this definition is based on the sociotechnical theory work developed by the Tavistock Institute in London in mid-1950s and 1960s. The IT sociotechnical approach not only pictures the concept, but reveals the impact of new technologies and processes on the entire work system, and the dependencies and interactions between all other components of the sociotechnical system.

According to Piccoli (2012), any organizational information system can be represented as a sociotechnical system that comprises four primary components that must be balanced and work together to deliver the information processing functionalities required by the organization to fulfill its information needs. The sociotechnical model validates not only the most important system components, but at the same time exemplifies the primary driving forces within organizations, such as: structure, people, process and technology. The first two – people and structure – shape the social subsystem and represent the human element of the IS. The latter two –

process and technology (more specifically IT) – contour the technical subsystem of the IS and relate to a wide range of IT resources and services intertwined with a series of steps to complete required business activities.

The sociotechnical system approach validates the four critical components of the information system interdependency and proves that none of them works in isolation. They all interact, are mutually dependent, and consequently are subject to “systemic effects,” defined as any change in one component affecting all other components of the system. Bob Napier, former CIO of Hewlett Packard, was credited in 2003 with the quote: “Every business decision triggers an IT event” (HP, 2003, para. 3). Certainly the quote was valid ten years ago; it can be argued that today it is even *more* important. The two occurrences should not be separated: when addressing business issues like productivity, service quality, cost control, risk management and return on investment (ROI), the decision-makers have to consider appropriate corresponding modifications in the IT domain. The process of changes and reciprocal adjustment of both technical and social subsystems should continue to interplay and grow closer until mutually satisfying results are reached (Laudon & Laudon, 2011).

However, in reality, the model cannot exist without subsystem changes. It should evolve from micro to macro level to reflect crucial influences of the external environment, including regulatory requirements, social and business trends, competitive pressures, interoperability with partnering institutions, especially when we analyze the role of the IT domain, and ultimately Michael Porter’s five forces of the competitive position model. The model comprehensively exposes not only a general view of the organization with its traditional direct competitors, but also the ongoing connection with four other forces within its market environment: new market entrants, supplier power, substitute products and technology development, and customer power (Brown, Dehayes, Hoffer, Martin & Perkins, 2011). Porter’s competitive forces model is truly important when strategic planning and managerial decisions are taken; however the impact of the key internal forces associated with

IT is particularly critical to organizational operational effectiveness. Actually, this impact forms the organizational business strategy, mounts the benefits and shapes the implementation processes.

A brilliant illustration of Porter’s competitive forces model and how emerging technologies and innovative ideas could transform large business organizations is IBM’s “Business On Demand” approach launched by CEO Sam Palmisano in the mid-2000s. Employing emerging technologies such as grid, virtualization, utility and later, cloud computing while they are still in their *hype*, the most innovative IT company aggressively expanded their products, services and operations across industries and globally, and made them available upon customers’ demand, market opportunity or external threat. Strictly focusing on the power and capabilities of emerging technologies, IBM sold its traditional personal computer business to Lenovo in 2005, and shifted sharply into higher-margin businesses, increasing recently its earnings per share fourfold. Continuing with this strategic transformation, IBM is building a government-funded private cloud in the Wuxi Industrial park in China, and is developing many other similar projects with emerging computing models. The China Cloud Computing Center in Wuxi is based on IBM’s “Blue Cloud” technologies comprised of IBM CloudBurst - PaaS, IBM Tivoli Service Automation Manager – IaaS, a full range of SaaS, including CRM and eCommerce solutions, open source software with capabilities to deliver Web 2.0 applications such as mashups, open collaboration, social networks and mobile commerce. IBM has a significant research, development and business presence in China and a potential expansion of this cloud initiative to hundreds more Chinese cities looks even more promising and favorable (IBM, 2009b).

The success of IBM’s business transformation and strategic advanced computing model utilization harmonized Porter’s competitive forces model in all principal perceptions. In addition, this case validates the fact that in order to execute a successful business strategy for rapid, right-size deployment of advanced transformations, comprehensive analysis and

repositioning IT capabilities in conjunction with precisely harmonizing to sociotechnical system components, results in enabling IT alignment with the organization’s business strategy.

4. The Scale of IT Transformations and Their Impact on Business – IT Alignment

With escalating IT operational costs and the inability to get adequate value from IT investments, firms are striving to convert their IT from a strategic liability to strategic asset. According to many recent surveys from Gardner Group, Forrester Research and MIT CISR, most of the IT budgets are spent for keeping existing applications and infrastructure running. Many firms typically spend over 80 percent of their IT budgets on supporting current systems, and the budget for renovation or new systems, if it exists, is below 20 percent. The widely adopted

Many firms typically spend over 80 percent of their IT budgets on supporting current systems, and the budget for renovation or new systems, if it exists, is below 20 percent.

piecemeal approach to build an ad hoc IT application for an emerging specific need results in set of isolated highly vulnerable systems that only “help” firms to create their messy legacy (Ivanov, 2013).

The digital economy has introduced a new urgency around the need to manage IT strategically. To succeed in this strategic approach for the benefit of the company and its IT domain, it is most important to define and establish the IT architecture underneath the organization’s business strategy. A well-formulated IT architecture typically consists of content and processes, and for the success of business-IT alignment transformations, many IT and corporate leaders consider a *federated IT model* as more appropriate

than a widely adopted centralized one. The federated IT approach naturally links IT competencies with the business strategy and processes, which motivates and demands IT professionals not only to be more business-savvy, but to stay focused on the business requirements and organizational needs, while designing and developing novel IT systems.

A different positioning of IT systems and resources in organizations reinforces a *structure* rationalization to transform IT from a *costs* center to strategic *assets* with business intelligence capabilities. The Gartner research on “Future Directions of the IT industry” from 2011 exemplifies several emerging IT-enabled initiatives including content-aware computing, social and cloud computing and information-enabled pattern-based strategies, all capable of increasing the revenue if appropriate structural changes are employed (McGee, 2011). The IT Money Spending Model charted by the Gartner survey illustrates that, in the last 50 years over 85 percent of IT spending is in *After the Sale* systems such as: purchasing, accounts payable and receivable, inventory, supply chain, HR, administration, general ledger and asset management, while *Before the Sale* and *The Sale* IT spending is split equally at 7 percent each. The new structure transformations require significant alternations in the enterprise requirements to support initiatives in the direction of lessening the *After the Sale* IT spending, to a substantial increase in the investments in IT systems and applications in *Before the Sale* and in *The Sale* sectors.

In today’s digital driven economy, every organization is challenged by continual IT innovations, and every business strategy should include taking a close look into emerging technologies and groundbreaking systems. The IT revolution is spawning new technologically-feasible businesses: the developments in *nano* technologies made mobile industry (products and services) possible. If we think about Apple and its i-products – they came as technological advancements – Apple did something unique and far smarter, making not only a great technology product with a flashy design, but wrapped it in a superb business model. Apple’s true innovation was to enter and

to gain a substantial market slice of the entertainment industry (customized and personalized entertainment) – utilizing technology innovations and making it easy and customer-friendly, while demanding control of all i-products and i-services. IT evolution creates new businesses within old ones. Many companies take advantage of the surplus capacity and expertise of its advanced IT platform, and provide products and services to others based upon them. Great examples are all key cloud providers, but especially Amazon, which emerged from the dot-com bubble. The company is now one of the prominent winners and continues its impressive steady growth from about \$4 billion in 2002, to \$20 billion in 2008, and \$120 billion in 2012. Amazon constantly complements and evolves the existing operational infrastructure with innovative computing and business models such as Amazon Web Services (a diverse range of cloud computing services), AmazonSupply, and Amazon Market Place – B2B services that all are based on Amazon’s highly expandable IT platform and technology expertise.

There are many other considerations and challenging implications in the business-IT alignment processes in difficult economic times that require more effort and analysis on how to integrate technology into the core business strategy, and to excel on IT-enabled capabilities. While thinkers are fascinated by the Latin philosophy “Ex Chaos Facultas” (“From chaos comes opportunity”), converted these days by some IT experts to “From cloud comes opportunity” to reflect the current technology trends, we may need to take a fresh look at Peter Drucker’s (1980) pivotal statement: “In turbulent times, an enterprise has to be managed *both* to withstand sudden blows and to avail itself of sudden unexpected opportunities. This means that in turbulent times the fundamentals must be managed, and managed well” (p. 9).

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“Technology may be our new Crystal Palace; it not only makes certain tasks easier in the present, but holds great promise for the future ... We read that technology – especially mass personalization – is transforming our very conception of school. Mass personalization is under rapid development and has the power to influence culture, education, and individual life. It is dangerous because it is not personalization at all; it is streamlining and standardization in disguise. At the same time, disturbing as it may be, it will not go away; we have to learn about it in order to use and criticize it well.”

*– Diana Senechal, Republic of Noise:
The Loss of Solitude in Schools and Culture
Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2011, p. 139*

Coping in the Aftermath of Hurricane “Sandy”: Considering an Immigrant Perspective

Lear Matthews, Metropolitan Center

The devastation caused by natural disasters in the Caribbean, the Gulf and eastern coasts of the U.S. has exposed the vulnerability of both economically advanced and impoverished nations. The unprecedented havoc wrought by Hurricane Sandy and the merciless “after strike” from a nor’easter, tested the will and faith of tens of thousands of people. The capacity of survivors to cope is not only determined by their resilience, but intimately connected to the response of the community and mitigating efforts by government and relief organizations. For many immigrants, this monster storm has temporarily transformed the American Dream into an American nightmare. It is within this context, informed by my research on the adaptation of immigrants, cultural retentions and experience in working with survivors of natural disasters, that I present this perspective.

There has been escalating scrutiny of the policies and actions of public officials regarding appropriate disaster planning and response to the needs of survivors. The poignancy of lessons learned in its wake is clear. For example, the non-existence or collapse of water control systems, the questionable evacuation based on a “zoning system,” the capability (or incapability) of utility companies, the contentious debate about global warming, preferential treatment of certain communities and the tacitly demeaning sentiment expressed by some overwhelmed observers: “This is like a Third World country,” all mark new realities in assessing cause and effect of a disaster of this magnitude.

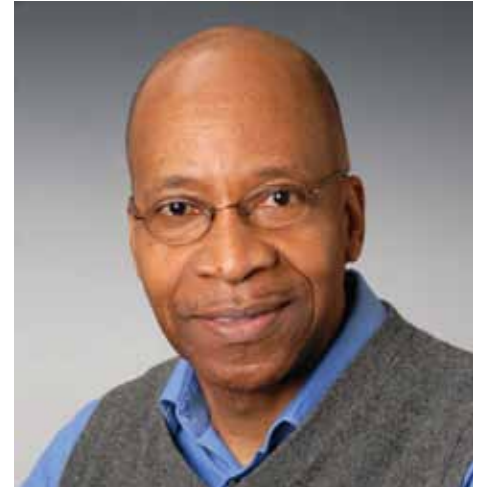
As city and state officials grapple with explanations and possible solutions, factors such as geopolitics, socioeconomic exigencies, the influence of the media on public consciousness and the intersection of the disaster with existing inequities, feature prominently in decisions about resource allocation for recovery and reconstruction.

Some of the hardest hit communities, including those with large immigrant populations, appeared not to have been given as much media coverage as did other more prosperous communities. Clearly, this signals the importance of establishing media outlets in the Diaspora.

Likewise, there is an urgent need to respond to the inevitable psychological impact, particularly as it relates to losses incurred. Coming to North America to establish a “better life,” many immigrants sacrificially relinquished prized possessions, including homes, land and careers in the home country to start a new life devoid of what some may describe as dire conditions. Unfortunately, Hurricane Sandy made that road unexpectedly treacherous for some. Human adaptation to stressful experiences becomes important in crisis situations. People build and sustain resources such as a home, job and other assets to enhance their life circumstances and for immigrants, as evidence that they have “made it” in America. Particularly as a result of a lifelong investment in these resources, in addition to abrupt disruption of routine life activities, psychological distress occurs when there is a threat of loss, damage or destruction of possessions.

The human cost manifested in death, displacement and untold suffering, has given rise to multifaceted risks to the affected populations. Undoubtedly, this experience shatters common beliefs about safety and security, especially for immigrants from countries that have a history of natural disasters or spiraling social problems. Survivors were heard lamenting: “I never expected this to happen here”; “What can we do, start over?”

The assistance provided by hometown associations (i.e., local cultural organizations typically found in immigrant communities) and the diplomatic corps from various foreign embassies, was



Lear Matthews

credible. Immigrants have bonded with their American counterparts to mourn, reciprocate help and reassure one another. Such interactions provided a good source of immediate comfort and an opportunity to gain from cross-cultural perspectives of coping with stress and bereavement. However, in some instances, there is likely to be prolonged feelings of fear, anxiety, hyper vigilance and depression, especially among those who do not have a strong supportive network of relatives in the U.S. Feelings of helplessness and vulnerability will be common, particularly among the undocumented and those awaiting adjustment of immigration status, who tend not to readily reach out for assistance for fear of being identified, placed in detention and possibly deported. In an article in *City Limits* (Sanchez, 2013), it was affirmed that “without a Social Security number, immigrants have been denied federal disaster unemployment insurance or Federal Emergency Management Agency cash assistance for temporary housing and replacing damaged possessions ... [they] were particularly susceptible, even those who had children or grandchildren born in



REUTERS/ADREES LATIF, THE ATLANTIC, NOV. 1, 2012

Burnt houses side-by-side with others that survived in Breezy Point, Queens, after it was devastated by Hurricane Sandy, on October 31, 2012.

the United States and thus eligible for federal aid” (Gaps in Aid Programs section, para. 1; Introduction section, para. 4).

As is common in the aftermath of disasters, people will suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder, but the onset of critical incident stress, i.e., the worrying produced by a traumatic event that affects emotional lives and ability to cope, is to be expected. Many households, including those with children, the elderly and the differently abled will experience some level of distress. Such projections include a sizable immigrant population. However, amid sadness, frustration and anger, there was camaraderie and lasting friendships among diverse neighbors who shared the same fate.

Expressions of mental distress and the perceived role of helping professionals will determine the extent to which survivors benefit from or seek counseling. Both

receiving and giving help can be therapeutic and central to coping and recovery. Some people exhibit stark fatalism, while others demonstrate complacency or deny the pain caused by personal loss. Among some immigrants, such reactions tend to be congruent with culturally-defined coping behaviors. Having relatively modest pre-migratory resources, immigrants develop an attitude of “making do with what we have,” which can either enhance or retard the recovery process. Proven resilience in crisis situations makes it less likely that many immigrants will experience long-term adverse psychological effects. However, this depends on organized community support, which is needed to help them “get back on their feet.”

An often ignored issue is the exposure to health hazards experienced by day laborers, many of whom are undocumented,

hired as a major part of the clean-up crew. Having neither health coverage nor adequate clean-up gear, they are likely to be exposed to unhealthy conditions emanating from contaminated debris and sanitizing chemicals with minimum protection.

This essay highlights what this writer believes to be an important dimension of coping in the aftermath of natural or man-made disasters, particularly in diverse communities. Regardless of residency or citizenship, the human cost is as significant as the economic cost. Hopefully, this brief presentation will help to inform the way we prepare for, cope with and come to understand the aftermath of inevitable future disasters. Both students and mentors can benefit from the kinds of issues and questions raised here. In designing degree programs in areas such as Community and Human Services, Human Development, Social Theory and Cultural Studies, mutuality, efficacy and accountability in evolving relationships, especially in an increasingly globally interconnected world, become essential to academic planning. As educators, we have a responsibility to assess emerging problems and needs, and encourage dialogue on this and other life changing events. Ultimately, survivors, responders, clinicians and policymakers can benefit from our research findings and analyses, and how we present what we know.

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Finding the Gem Through Trial, Error and Dialogue: Adjunct Faculty Teaching in Adult-Centered Academic Programs

Daniella Olibrice, The Murphy Institute for Worker Education and Labor Studies (CUNY)

I have had the privilege of mentoring part-time adjunct instructors (from novice to more experienced), who teach at CUNY's School of Professional Studies' Murphy Institute for Worker Education and Labor Studies. The Institute offers non-credit, pre-college preparation courses; degree programs in education, urban studies and labor studies; undergraduate and graduate-level workforce development certificates in labor relations, health care policy and administration, public administration and public policy, and transportation to union members and public sector workers. Classes can be taken at our mid-Manhattan site, Queens College, College of Staten Island, New York City College of Technology and Lehman College. The Institute offers all of its programs in partnership with specific departments at different CUNY colleges and with different unions such as CWA 1180 and TWU Local 100. My work has been primarily focused on the development and management of the certificates offered in health care policy and administration, transportation and, to a certain extent, public administration and public policy. I recruit, hire and evaluate faculty who teach in these programs, and act as a liaison between the departments at the School of Professional Studies and our union partners. The latter provide tuition assistance to their member that allows them to pursue certificate and degrees through the Institute.

My role as "adjunct mentor" happened accidentally. About two or three years ago, my involvement with faculty changed and became more substantive. I found that understanding how our programs are being delivered and how successful they are required having more conversations and interactions with faculty, and to a certain extent, too, with students. Although I would



Daniella Olibrice

PHOTO: ZENZILE GREENE

how they approach their students and the course materials. In a sense, I see these adjuncts not only as experts within their discipline or field, but as individuals engaged in their own learning and development as teachers. I have been surprised as much by the adjuncts who have had very little to no teaching experience, as I have been by those who I would call veteran teachers. I have been inspired by their curiosity, dedication to our adult students and willingness to put in the extra time to support their students' success.

observe and visit classes at least once a semester, I found that reviewing instructors' syllabi before the beginning of the semester and having weekly or periodic check-ins either by telephone or email were very helpful for gauging student progress and curricular and instructional effectiveness. My interactions with faculty are less about telling someone exactly what to do and more about serving as a sounding board for ideas and a guide for helping to navigate some of the treacherous waters that occur when communication between student and teacher begins to break down. In part, I act as student-advocate *and* teacher-advocate – a silent partner, observer, coach – and mentor. I cherish this mentoring position; I find talking about the minutiae of teaching extremely interesting because of the insights one can glean about the teaching-learning process. In my conversations with adjuncts, I often get a glimpse of their ability to be creative, fast thinking and compassionate in

Without exception, all of the individuals who teach in our workforce development programs, which consist of certificate courses at the graduate and undergraduate levels, are professionals who hold advanced (sometimes multiple) degrees (master's degrees and doctorates) in public health, business, law, social work or education. Although they are a diverse group in terms of the number of years teaching (0 to 10+ years), gender, country of origin and age, I feel that they have much in common. They are high achievers with a strong sense of mission and purpose. They are as demanding of their students as they are of themselves. For the most part, they are professionals who hold full-time jobs, but who've decided that teaching adults one evening a week at our Institute is their way of giving back or contributing to some higher purpose.

Discovery

A couple of months ago, after receiving two semesters in a row of “very good” peer observation evaluations, an adjunct asked me: “What’s next? How I can continue to do better? How can the Institute support me in looking at other possibilities?” It was surprising to get these questions; it was the first time I had heard them. Although I wasn’t fully prepared to answer, I recommended that “M” consider getting a doctorate and that he reach out to other adjuncts teaching at the Institute who are taking (or have taken) that path.

M had received his Master of Public Health degree a few years before. He wanted to know how to create a trajectory at the university that would increase his opportunities as a teacher. He was an example of someone who did not have any teaching experience before I hired him. He came to public health as a career-changer. His previous work had been in business and management in the movie industry in California. He had begun his journey to public health by holding volunteer positions in HIV-AIDS awareness programs and helping others deal with the care of their elderly parents at his synagogue.

I hadn’t immediately contacted M after his first note to me. However, when I did schedule a phone interview, I did not expect a 90-minute conversation about his journey from California to New York, and the pursuit of his master’s at Columbia’s Mailman School of Public Health. What impressed me was that although M had no formal teaching experience on paper, he was able to describe his philosophy of teaching and his understanding of student learning. He also volunteered to substitute teach and prepare a workshop on a trial basis, if I was not convinced of his sincere interest in working with our adult students.

M was given the opportunity to serve as a substitute for a class and to talk with the regular teacher beforehand. I also planned for students to complete an evaluation at the end of his session. The students gave M a very favorable review. Thus, I invited him to teach a graduate-level course in health care policy and administration. During his first semester, I had (at least) biweekly telephone conferences with him about this class until

we both felt that monthly conversations were sufficient. He taught for two semesters, and would have continued to teach in our program had his partner not been offered a job out of state. M regularly expressed his appreciation for the mentoring support he received from me, the Institute, and a fellow adjunct and colleague.

“R” also came to me through Columbia’s Mailman School of Public Health. She had recently completed her MPH there, but had been working at another university and for a non-profit organization prior to teaching at the Institute. Although up to this point she had not taught her own class, she had held a number of teacher assistantships and tutored math at the University of Illinois. Before coming to New York, she also had tutored math as a volunteer to immigrant youth at a community center. I was impressed with R’s academic and professional credentials, but hesitated to hire her immediately because I didn’t have a class to match her experience in evaluation and research. Nevertheless, I kept her resume and contacted her when the right opportunity became available.

About a year ago, the Institute began a partnership with a New York public hospital whose training director was interested in offering a pathway to our health care policy and administration certificate for hospital workers. There was a cohort of about 12 employees who had started in the previous semester with one course from the undergraduate certificate. The instructor who taught during the first semester, “D,” had come to the conclusion that teaching undergraduate, returning-to-college-adult students was not something she wanted to do again. I reached out to R and arranged to interview her. Although I have had success in hiring people I’d only interviewed over the phone, I made a point of meeting R in person. My reasons were that the partnership with the New York public hospital was still new, and our credibility was on the line if I didn’t hire an instructor who was mature, serious, responsible and knew her field. This was especially important given that the location of the class was an hour and half away from the Institute’s campus. As obvious as this may be, after interviewing a few candidates for other teaching positions, I’ve come to realize that in-person interviews can offer

much more information than what one can gain on the phone. Are the candidates on time? Do they talk calmly, quickly, excitedly, slowly? Are they thoughtful, articulate, clear, confident? Do they listen? Are they quick to answer questions posed to them? Will they care about our adult students? R came to the interview with a lot of energy and confidence. I felt assured that she would be a good choice for our working adult students.

R turned out to be a true professional. I’ve observed her teaching on two occasions and recognize that she is both knowledgeable and approachable. She has found ways to engage, challenge and support her students wonderfully. Despite the fact that she took over teaching a cohort that had come together in the previous semester, the students have taken a great liking to her, and the training director and his assistant have offered nothing but praise. Attendance and retention of the students in this undergraduate cohort has remained strong. Indeed, despite the havoc that Superstorm Sandy wrought and the fact that classes had to be cancelled for two weeks, students have been keeping up with the work, and, from all reports, learning!

Challenges, Disappointments and Lessons Learned

I have had two instances where it became a matter of trial and error to align the program’s curriculum and student population (based on the number of semesters enrolled, program type, undergraduate versus graduate level, etc.) with an instructor. As I mentioned earlier, R took over the undergraduate certificate cohort from D. Only three weeks before the semester was to begin, I invited D to teach the first course at a New York public hospital. The training director and his assistant had been talking to the Institute about offering the certificate at the hospital for about a year. We told him that we needed to have 20 committed students in order to initiate the program. He and his assistant were able to recruit exactly that number. Given that the course was being taught at the students’ place of work, a few unanticipated issues came up. Most significantly, the hospital employees/students needed time to adapt themselves to the fact

that they were taking a college course. Since the health care policy and administration certificate course being offered on site was originally initiated by the hospital's training director, the students/employees had some trouble distinguishing between the expectations of an in-house workshop and a college-level course. In fact, it was an educational process for all of us involved. We all held misconceptions that only surfaced once the program was underway.

My Institute colleague, "K," and I were willing to be flexible about when classes would be held and were quite open to adapting the academic calendar to the students' work schedules. For instance, Election Day is typically a work holiday for these students, but at the university, classes are in session. When the students learned that they had to come in on a holiday, they asked the hospital's training staff to put pressure on the instructor and on the Institute to cancel class. It was D who rightfully pointed out to me that regardless of whether the class was held on a CUNY campus or not, the class was a CUNY class. We needed to adhere to the CUNY academic calendar. This was a prime example of how it was important for all partners to be on the same page about policies and expectations; otherwise, as D noted, we were not helping students make the complex transition from worker to student.

In my mentoring function, I held weekly conference calls with D. It was my way of being supportive of her, as well as my way of keeping track of how things were progressing with this class and, in general, with the students at the hospital. This turned out to be a very effective way of evaluating the course, the instructor and our overall initiative. Thus, by the time the course ended and it was time for D to evaluate the students, neither of us was surprised about which students had done well and which students had not met course expectations. One of the two students who did not complete the course had clearly plagiarized. D tried to talk to the student about it and, in response, the student accused D of wanting to fail her. Indeed, in the end, no amount of reaching out, supporting and cajoling by our staff or by those at the hospital could move this student to rewrite her paper. D's response was quite

similar to that of other adjuncts: When she reported the conversation with the student to me, the hurt and disappointment she felt was palpable. It was obvious that it was incredibly challenging for D to achieve her own mentoring expectations; that is, to meet her students where they are and to help them get to a place where they are fully comfortable being students.

Last semester, "J," a lawyer for a health agency, returned to teach a course for which she had previously been responsible. She was a self-assured, intelligent and extremely well-spoken woman who was very keen on teaching. When I asked her in our interview what she thought about the kinds of challenges adults returning to college may face, she told me about her mother, who decided in middle age to go back to school for a degree in nursing. J was close to her mother, who had shared with her some of the insecurities she felt as an older student. These conversations had stuck with her.

Still, the first time I visited J, I noticed her overly-intense and humorless style. While it was clear that she knew her subject well, she was all business. I asked her about it afterward, and she chalked it up to her feeling a little preoccupied and under the weather. During the semester, I heard there were a few students who complained about her favoring some students over others. At some point, one of the students who seemed most bothered by J asked me if the students would have the opportunity to evaluate her. I assured the student that this was part of each semester's process.

Two semesters later, J came back to teach the same course. When I got in touch with her to see how things were going, she told me that she felt this new group of students was more motivated and academically prepared than those from the previous semester. However, weeks into the semester, I heard from J about a student she was finding difficult. The student also was having trouble with the instructor and felt that she was being picked on. Other students started complaining, as well. It wasn't until we were toward the end of the semester that I heard from a different instructor within the same program that students were complaining about J. As much as I respected her as a professional, I began to worry that,

perhaps, she was holding students to an impossibly high standard. I now was of two minds. I had visited J's class earlier in the semester and I felt that she expected students to be well-prepared, to think critically and speak with clarity. She encouraged them to really think through what they read and what they said – all good. But I also began to think that J was imposing her own ideals of being a successful student (in effect, her sense of herself) on her students. I wanted to allow J to be the kind of instructor she was because I thought that no two instructors should teach in the exact same way. But, at the same time, I wanted her to remember what her mother had described to her about the experiences of adults returning to school.

At the end of the semester, I peeked at J's student evaluations. They weren't that bad; in fact, they weren't bad at all! Only one student had written a somewhat negative evaluation. For the most part, students appreciated what J was trying to do for them and the skills they were gaining with her encouragement. Still, after at least five conversations with J throughout the semester, I felt that she was not a good match for our program. But my questions have lingered: Why shouldn't working adults who've been away from school for a number of years not be expected to come to our graduate program with the same attitudes as

She might have gotten where she was in life by being incredibly focused and at the top of her game all the time, but, as I came to see it, she didn't yet understand how to balance her vision and accept that her students were at a different stage academically, professionally and even personally.

a student in any graduate degree program? I deeply respected J's high standards and her strong desire to shape students into what she thought successful students should be, but I felt just as deeply that her approach lacked empathy. She might have gotten where she was in life by being incredibly focused and at the top of her game all the time, but, as I came to see it, she didn't yet understand how to balance her vision and accept that her students were at a different stage academically, professionally and even personally. J was both frustrated and hurt. She didn't really understand where her students were coming from, and, in all likelihood, they didn't understand her perspective, either. I was relieved when, a few weeks after the semester, J emailed to inform me that she would not be returning to the Institute. I felt that her decision was wise and, had she not suggested it, I would have had to suggest it to her.

It was only after the fourth or fifth go-around with a course in public administration that my colleague and I came to the conclusion that teaching undergraduate-level certificate classes presents real challenges with regard to curriculum, student preparedness and teaching approach. "L," a seasoned professional, who worked in the private and non-profit health sectors for about 20 years, was assigned to teach the course this past semester. When L was recommended to me, I was excited about having her teach in the health care policy and administration program due to her vast experience as a manager and the fact that she was pursuing her doctorate in public health. She had worked on transforming non-profits in order to make them more effective service providers, and she had been teaching one or two classes in health management at a CUNY college. Her maturity was an asset. She would be able to inspire her students to look at health from other perspectives and to think about other ways of providing health care outside of the public hospital system. I described to her the kinds of students who typically enroll in our certificate programs and made sure to ask, as I do of everyone, whether she would feel comfortable teaching adult students who would require a good deal of support and guidance. She assured me that she would,

and told me that through her experience as a manager and teacher, she had helped people turn around and improve their job performances. A year after this interview, we were in need of an instructor for the public administration course, and I thought of L.

Surprisingly, things didn't go smoothly from the beginning for L. For one thing, she had different expectations about how much clerical support she would get from the Institute. Adjunct faculty do not receive any help other than the aid that the academic counselor and I provide that is directly related to providing services to students and answering questions that faculty may have. So, faculty are on their own when it comes to photocopying, looking for texts, requesting instructor copies of books, communications with the library or other departments, etc. L did not receive publishers' copies of the required textbooks early enough and was thus not able to revise the syllabus by the deadline I set for her: a month and half before the beginning of the semester. She was hard to reach during the summer and, in the end, she decided to use the syllabus as is.

A second problem arose around Blackboard, the course management system. L planned all of her assignments around Blackboard. A week prior to the start of the semester, she panicked because her students wouldn't be able to view the course material before the semester began. It was the school's policy that all content on Blackboard had to be reviewed by the school's Blackboard administrator before it could be made available to students. This policy had to be explained because it was different from that of her home institution. For the first month of the class, some students also panicked about using Blackboard because they were all novices. Some met with the academic counselor in order to receive a private tutorial. A handful of students decided to drop the class. One woman was advised to drop because her barriers were not only technological: She was retaking the class because she had failed it the first time. Despite her desire to have completed a certificate in public administration by the time of her retirement, the student had too many issues that we felt would preclude her

from progressing in the program without major accommodations and support that were just not available.

After learning that the school would not provide students with a tutorial session on Blackboard, L took class time to review it with her students – a strategy that I would have advised her to do from the beginning had I been aware of all the challenges she and her students were facing. As the semester progressed, other issues surfaced: a drop in enrollment, poor attendance and late assignments. In fact, about a week before Thanksgiving, L informed me that a majority of her students were in academic peril. One of the academic counselors and I met with her to discuss her roster of students. We concluded from our conversation that the textbooks did not provide a strong enough foundation and was too dense and thus incredibly hard to plough through (for both instructor and students!). We also recognized that some of the other problems L encountered were not solely her fault. As a program, we needed to establish clearer admissions guidelines: students had to be computer literate, have regular access to a computer, set up a Blackboard account and be more ready to assume the role of student.

What About Coaching?

Through our various initiatives, our goals have been to provide greater access to higher education for adults and provide the opportunity to consider new possibilities that education can bring. I have been at meetings where there is a tendency among my colleagues in administration to discount the level of influence, impact or input that our adjunct faculty could have or do have on our students. Rather, it is often assumed that only full-time, tenured faculty can make demands on students because it is supposedly an unspoken part of their job to mentor students – to help them develop as students and connect the dots between their studies, their lives and their work. Adjunct faculty are thus almost invisible because they are not always asked or expected to participate in the life of the university and only appear on campus when it is time to teach their classes. Often, they are not in a position to give time to the university beyond their finite teaching hours. Given

that universities more and more rely (and often disproportionately) on adjunct faculty to teach a majority of their courses, we are facing a major problem.

I believe that there should be a more concerted effort to support the work of adjunct faculty by making peer mentoring available to them. In fact, all instructors and students should be provided with someone I think of as a coach. Teachers often feel isolated despite being in a job that one would describe as being highly social. In the context of higher education, the development of curricula and courses is often a solo activity. As a consequence, there are not many opportunities for adjunct faculty, in particular, to develop and sustain rapport with peers during the course of a semester, especially if they work non-academic, full-time jobs. Unless the adjunct is a graduate student teaching in his or her discipline, or is a teaching assistant able to bounce ideas back and forth on questions related to curriculum, assignments, grading and rubrics, classroom management, conflicts with students, proper advisement and stickier issues such as academic dishonesty, coaching just doesn't happen as often as it should.

Coaching has, understandably, become very popular over the past few years. I believe that beyond having access to a mentor, all professionals should have a coach – someone who helps them to improve their performance, reconnect with their own personal and professional goals, and stave off the kind of complacency and habitual ways of working that come from having a lot of experience. In 2011, Atul Gawande, a contributor to *The New Yorker* on matters related to health care, wrote an article about coaching, “Personal Best: Top Athletes and Singers Have Coaches. Should You?” that caught my attention because I see the value of coaching for both new and old hands within any profession – not just for those working in sports or business, but for teachers, customer service workers or all professionals whose work directly or indirectly impacts a great number of people. At first, Gawande decided to use a coach in order to improve his game of tennis, but then he recruited his former professor (a retired surgeon who had been given a teaching award by the residents of the hospital) to observe him in the operating room. What he learned in both instances was so insightful and so valuable to him that he then interviewed an elementary school teacher, who volunteered to take part

in a coaching program at her school. He also interviewed Jim Knight, director of the Kansas Coaching Project that focuses on improving the teaching of school teachers.

Gawande's description of what a coach is, and does, seems apt because he stresses that coaches are teachers but also are like editors, which he calls “another slippery invention.” He points out (citing a quote from one of editor Maxwell Perkins' writers) that a coach “never tells you what to do. Instead, he [sic] suggests to you, in an extraordinarily inarticulate fashion, what you want to do yourself.” In some respects, I've tried to play this role by prompting adjuncts to find solutions to addressing problems with students or helping to bring some awareness to their interactions with students, through dialogue. Ideally, the adjunct-coach would be someone who understands the curriculum being taught, is knowledgeable about adult learners and learning, teaching and practice, and aware of the different social, cultural, economic, gender, power and authority dynamics that can come to play in a classroom of adults. At the most fundamental level, the adjunct-coach should be someone who cares as much about the adjunct's success as about the success of every student in the classroom.

Using an Area of Study Grid (Proposed) in Degree Program Planning: A Very Brief Practice Discussion

David A. Fullard, Metropolitan Center



David Fullard

While mentoring students working on their degree program plans, I've noticed that some struggle with trying to comply with the area of study guidelines in their chosen area. Specifically, students have trouble determining what studies are necessary for their concentration in order to meet the articulated competency areas of their area of study. Further, I also see that in their degree rationales, students have trouble documenting concentration compliance with the area of study guidelines.

However, these same students seem to navigate documentation of their studies for general education far more seamlessly. They say the "general education grid" made the difference because it was a practical tool that clarified the process and made it clear when they were in compliance with general education expectations.

In response, I created an area of study grid for the new area of study in Public Affairs (Figure 1) in order to assist students in

documenting links to the guidelines for their specific concentration. I tested it out with several students seeking to develop concentrations in criminal justice using the following process.

I instruct the students to:

- 1) Research (keeping track of what they find) what a concentration in criminal justice should look like.
 - a) Examine several college catalogs that list "majors" in criminal justice;
 - b) Review job announcements in criminal justice and their educational requirements;
 - c) Interview professionals in the criminal justice field and ask them what undergraduate studies they now find most applicable/useful as they go through their work day; and
- 2) d) Interview Empire State College alums who are currently employed in the field to see what is academically necessary to work productively in their criminal justice area. Read (and scrutinize!) the Empire State College area of study guidelines in Public Affairs, paying particular attention to the nine specific competency areas.
- 3) Based on the information gathered, accumulate all available documentation regarding prior transcript credit, topic areas for possible prior learning assessment and ideas for new Empire State College studies (for example, what topics and questions really interest you? How can you fill in some of the gaps that you have discovered in what you know and what you have done?).
- 4) Return to the Public Affairs area of study guidelines and compare them to all of the materials gathered.
- 5) After carefully examining the description for theoretical and philosophical concepts (the first of the nine competency areas), begin the process of "penciling in" the studies that fit the criteria in the area of study guidelines. (For example, the Public Affairs grid [Figure 1] shows how a student has documented Issues in Criminal Justice Systems, Organized Crime, White Collar Crime, The Economics of Crime, Multicultural Issues in Criminal Justice and Issues in Theoretical Criminology.)
- 6) Repeat this five-step process for each of the remaining eight competency areas designated for Public Affairs.

The Public Affairs grid also has proven useful for demonstrating how some studies overlap with others (e.g., Issues in Theoretical Criminology has strong theoretical, historical and research competencies).

Once completed, the grid enables students to utilize the "nuts and bolts framework" to carefully craft the concentration section within their degree program rationale (thereby answering the question: "Does the concentration meet the college's curriculum guidelines for that area of study and concentration?") In fact, some students have used the competency area titles as subheadings (as an organizing framework) while continuing their discussion of their concentrations.

Without doubt, the grid's logic has proven very helpful to students as they try to make sense of the area of study guidelines and apply them to their own degree program plans. I would welcome feedback and new ideas from colleagues who are trying to use particular area of study guidelines in new ways.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS [with a concentration in Criminal Justice]

Title of Documentation of Component	Source	CR	¹ Theoretical & Philosophical Concepts	² Historical & Comparative Perspectives	³ Social Context	⁴ Legal or Policy Environment	⁵ Economic, Financial or Budgetary Issues	⁶ Ethics, Values & Diversity	⁷ Communications Skills	⁸ Research Skills & Info Analysis	⁹ Technical & Scientific Knowledge
Police Supervision, Race and Culture	Transcript/JJC	3			X			X	X		
Procedural Law	PLA / NYPD	3				X					X
Terrorism Awareness and Response	PLA / NYPD	3		X	X			X			X
Policing Special Populations	PLA / NYPD	3			X	X			X		X
Substantive Law	PLA / NYPD	3				X					X
Police Crisis Intervention	PLA / NYPD	3			X				X		
Field Training Program	PLA / NYPD	3			X				X		X
Police Investigation and Reporting	PLA / NYPD	3							X	X	X
Internal Investigations Course	PLA / NYPD	3							X	X	X
Issues in Criminal Justice Systems	ESC Study	4	X	X	X			X			
Comparative Criminal Justice	ESC Study	4		X	X			X			
The Constitution and Criminal Justice	ESC Study	4		X		X		X			
Ethics and Criminal Justice	ESC Study	4				X		X			
Criminal Justice Planning and Policy Analysis	ESC Study	4					X			X	
Organized Crime	ESC Study	4	X	X							
White Collar Crime	ESC Study	4	X	X							
The Economics of Crime	ESC Study	4	X				X				
Research Methods	ESC Study	4								X	
Police Organization & Administration	ESC Study	4					X				
Multicultural Issues in Criminal Justice	ESC Study	4	X	X	X	X					
Police Leadership	ESC Study	4				X	X	X	X	X	
Issues in Theoretical Criminology	ESC Study	4	X	X						X	

All footnotes refer to the Area of Study Competency Areas

Figure 1: Above, I have created a grid that could be useful to a student interested in a criminal justice concentration within the Public Affairs area of study, who has had a career as a New York City police officer (possible PLA) and also has completed a course at John Jay College (JJC). The grid could help such a student begin to think about how, through past and new studies, he or she could fulfill the relevant AOS competencies.

Finite-Planet Water

Eric Zencey, Center for International Programs

One of the functions of effective education is help humans fulfill a more meaningful place in the world. And while John Dewey objected to thinking of education as “preparation” for life (insisting that education had to deal with learnings and knowings that were important in themselves, not as something endured before one could actually live), he nevertheless spoke about the instrumental value of education – its usefulness as a means to a variety of ends, the ends-in-view held by both teacher and student. So, I think it does no disservice to progressive educational ideals (at least as enunciated by Dewey) to say that education ought to prepare students for a meaningful role in the world that we can see coming – and even the world that we aspire to create together.

And that’s why I think that education – the education we provide, the education provided by any school anywhere – does a disservice to students unless it gives them tools and concepts they’ll need to manage our culture’s difficult transition to a sustainable economy. We can see that future coming; elements of it are here, today, now. You’ll never open your news browser and read the headline “World Economy Hits Environmental Limit; Change in the Offing.” No, instead you’ll read stories that tell one or another of the thousands of ways that that transition will be manifest. You’ll read about mass hunger and food riots as petroleum-supported agriculture sees its productivity fall with the ongoing diminishment of the planetary stock of oil. You’ll read about the consequences of climate change – Super Storms and droughts, wildfires and floods. You’ll read about countries grabbing territory – “lebensraum” – and about resource wars that are sometimes disguised as exercises in liberation, as indulgence of vendettas, or as ancient hatreds and genocidal rampages. By which I mean to say: we are in the transition *now*.

The definitive characteristic of an unsustainable system is that it doesn’t last. We will have a sustainable economy sooner or later, whether we plan for it or not.

To prepare students to take a role in the economy and society as it exists today is, on this count, short-sighted and dysfunctional. If we’re to prepare students for participation in a sustainable society (and to empower them to help midwife that society into being), then we need to know what “sustainable” really means. Reaching a good, clear definition is easier if you understand that an economy is a kind of engine, taking in valuable raw materials, processing them into goods and services that humans value, and spewing out an exhaust of degraded matter and energy. A sustainable society, then, takes no more from nature than nature can give to us without diminishing its capacity to give in the future, and it asks nature to absorb no more effluents from us than it can absorb without diminishing its capacity to absorb those effluents without ill effect in the future.

Against those physical limits, though, the economy continually exerts pressure: it’s structured for continual expansion of its matter-and-energy throughput, as we are encouraged to want, to seek, to produce and to own more and more and more. Until and unless the institutional features of the economy that drive that perpetual-growth dynamic are altered, we stand in need of adaptive mechanisms that can reconcile human economic effort to biophysical limit. What we need are policies that move us away from infinite planet economic thinking and toward a finite-planet economic reality.

As I did the research for a history of the environmental movement in Vermont, I realized that one such policy adaptation is in place but hasn’t been fully developed or conscientiously applied.



Eric Zencey

The Clean Water Act of 1972 (CWA) instituted a national clean-up of the nation’s waterways, which had too long been treated as an open-access sink into which anyone could freely dump wastes and pollutants. Under the CWA, wastewater treatment facilities were built or upgraded and point source discharges – those coming from a single facility – were regulated and controlled. Water bodies that were considered dead in 1972 made remarkable recoveries.

Even so, the *National Water Summary 1984* prepared by the U.S. Geological Survey reported that 38 percent of all U.S. waters suffered impairment by pollution (with pollution being a “major concern” in 19 percent of those waters); a little more than a decade later, the EPA’s assessment found that only 16 percent of U.S. watersheds had good water quality, while 36 percent had moderate water quality problems and 21 percent had serious problems (the remaining 27 percent hadn’t been studied enough to classify). If water quality was to be fully restored, more needed to be done.

The main problem was and continues to be “non-point” discharges – the diffuse pollution that is carried into waterways

by runoff from land. Anything that is put on land can and will find its way into our waterways. The most problematic pollutants vary from basin to basin. Some of the most troublesome: the oil, gasoline and road salt that find their way into our soils, streets and parking lots as we use automobiles; untreated animal waste, including the burdens produced in some areas by farm animals and in others by pets; and fertilizers and pesticides, used by suburbanites to feed their lawns and by farmers to increase their yields in order to feed us.

The CWA outlined the manner in which non-point pollution was to be judged and limited: states were to identify impaired bodies of water and then set water quality standards for them. EPA rules written in 1985 and 1992 offered further guidance: states were to identify the pollutants that cause the impairment, and for each of those pollutants, they were to identify the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) that the body of water could absorb without being impaired. Their work would be reported to and reviewed by the EPA. How TMDLs would be enforced – how the scarce capacity of water bodies to absorb effluents would be rationed – was left to state discretion.

Behind the notion of TMDL is sound, steady-state, finite-planet thinking: the capacity of bodies of water to absorb pollutants isn't infinite, and the limits need to be discovered and respected.

Implementation and enforcement of the new rules wasn't immediate. Some states, faced with significant expense, declined to comply with the law. Some sued to have the EPA do the job. The scientific work has been slow going. Between 1996 and 2003, a total of 7,327 TMDLs were approved nationwide, representing just 17 percent of the 42,193 bodies of water listed as impaired by 2003.

In Vermont, the issue of TMDLs came to a head in 1999, with an application from Lowe's, Inc. to build a store in South Burlington. The company received the necessary stormwater permits from the state in July of 2001, despite the fact that the store and its parking lot would force acres of runoff into Potash Brook, an impaired waterway. The Conservation Law Foundation immediately appealed the permit decision. Under the CWA, the

appeal said, additional pollutants could not be discharged into the brook unless a mitigation and cleanup strategy were in place – a strategy that would require determination of the appropriate TMDLs, which hadn't been prepared.

There were no TMDLs for Potash Brook for a simple reason: despite its carefully protected (and generally well-deserved) image as an environmentally aware state, Vermont hadn't calculated any TMDLs at all. Meanwhile, well over 1,000 state-issued stormwater discharge permits had expired and were up for review. In pursuing legal action, the Conservation Law Foundation had brought to light a major problem in the way that Vermont was managing its water resources and had revealed that the state was violating laws established under the Clean Water Act. At a press conference held to announce the appeal, Chris Kilian, the CLF's natural resources project director, gave fair warning: "Vermont's Agency of Natural Resources can no longer turn a blind eye to our serious water pollution problems. Rubber-stamping permits that will add more pollution is not acceptable."

"Rubber-stamping permits that will add more pollution is not acceptable."

CLF's appeals of the state's decision on the Lowe's permit were pending when the two sides announced a settlement in May 2006. Lowe's agreed to implement higher cleanup standards than the state had required. Measures included stormwater retention ponds and filtration systems for runoff not only for Lowe's 12-acre site, but the entire commercial plaza of which the new store was a part. As part of the agreement, Lowe's agreed to monitor stream conditions, both upstream and downstream of its discharge, to ensure that the "zero harm" standard would be met.

If the Clean Water Act can continue to encode finite-planet assumptions through its call for discovery of Total Maximum Daily

Loads of pollutants in the country's bodies of water, and if those limits can be enforced through state action or by citizen lawsuits, one key element of a steady-state economy will be in place.

But it's not going to be easy to reach that point. TMDLs remain a controversial and difficult topic, as might be expected of a regulatory device that operates at the intersection of human ambition and biophysical limit. The state-by-state foundation of the law also may hamper its effectiveness. For instance, of the 50 water bodies in Vermont that are officially classified as impaired because of acidification, the source of the pollutant – acid rain – is well beyond the power of the state to control. And much non-point-source water pollution in Vermont has its origin in agricultural practices, which the CWA specifically excludes from its purview and which Vermont legislators and regulators are loathe to tackle. As the strong base of the state's economy and as a prime preserver of the working landscape, farming provides all Vermonters with many benefits, and the environmental movement is unanimous in wanting to see a healthy agricultural economy in the state. But farming practices are responsible for 38 percent of the phosphate pollution that leads to regular algae blooms in Lake Champlain (making it the second largest category, after urbanization at 46 percent). The blooms can be toxic to wildlife, humans and domestic pets, and they prevent recreational use of the parts of the lake that are affected. If Vermont is to achieve its water quality goals, it will have to enforce TMDLs for all waters that drain into its lakes, even if those limits require changes in agricultural practice. By 2012, Vermont had established TMDLs for roughly 60 percent of the waters that had been identified as needing them.

The concept of TMDLs can be extended to other sinks and pollutants. A TMDL could be set for diesel exhaust from trucks, limiting the amount to what a particular air shed can absorb without ill effect. Ditto for carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases, though implementing (and enforcing) them on a global scale presents a considerable political challenge.

In theory, and paired with a similar understanding of the limits of source services – like the maximum sustainable yield figures that can be calculated for forests and fisheries – TMDLs point to one way of achieving a balance between human activity and planetary systems.

It's an expensive path. The research necessary to determine a TMDL is costly, and comes at a time when public budgets are already being strained (by, among other causes, a declining energy return on investment [EROI] for oil that means more and more of our economy's energy is dedicated to getting that energy). We can feel nostalgic for an era in which the planet was so much larger in proportion to human acts and works that it seemed infinitely absorptive and expensive research on the effect of pollutants on biological systems wasn't needed. But wishing won't change the facts. If we don't like the expense of

additional government regulation, if it looks like we can't afford all that governmental overhead, then we've basically got three other choices: retreat into an infinite planet state of denial and let our economy destroy our habitat; require private enterprise to fund the necessary research as part of the cost of doing business on what is undeniably a finite-planet; or find ways (like a carbon tax or other uptake and throughput taxes) to sufficiently meter inputs to bring economic activity well within biophysical limit, thereby making the regulatory burden and research expense of TMDL enforcement less necessary.

There may be other alternatives. In my teaching, I invite students to help find them – and to look for, analyze and strategize how to use other levers of change by which our infinite planet system could be adapted to finite-planet reality. This, it seems to me, is the most pressing project we humans face,

and it's a project that can be pursued in disciplines as disparate as psychology and history, business and biology, philosophy and forensic medicine. The one thing effective education ought not to do is pretend that all is well, that the world isn't about to change, and change dramatically.

Note

This essay was adapted from the book, *Greening Vermont: The Search for a Sustainable State* (co-written with Elizabeth Courtney, 2012, Vermont Natural Resources Council/Thistle Hill Publications), and the article, "Where Infinite Growth Meets Biophysical Limit," published Nov. 22, 2012 by the Center for the Advancement of the Steady State Economy (viewable at <http://steadystate.org/where-infinite-growth-meets-biophysical-limit/>).

"Hence, good speech, good harmony, good grace, and good rhythm accompany good disposition, not the folly that we call 'good disposition,' but that understanding truly trained to a good and fair disposition."

– Plato (A. Bloom, translator)

The Republic of Plato

New York: Basic Books, 1968, Book III, 400e

Declaring Adulthood: A Conversation with Joseph B. Moore, Part I

Ed Warzala, School for Graduate Studies

Joseph B. Moore was the second president of SUNY Empire State College, serving in that office for seven years. Immediately before coming to Empire State College, he was the provost and vice president for academic affairs at Mansfield University, part of the Pennsylvania State System. Prior to his work at Mansfield, Joe Moore was the director of academic affairs and planning in the Office of the Chancellor of the Vermont State Colleges. He became the president of Lesley University in 2007. The following conversation took place in Cambridge, Massachusetts on 07 August 2012. Thanks so much to Ed Warzala and Joe Moore for the interview and for their work on this text. What follows is part I of a two-part interview.

Ed Warzala: First, thank you for agreeing to do this interview. I appreciate it very much and know that your friends at Empire State College will be interested to read what you have to say and know what you're up to these days.

I hope this is a useful way to begin: Given your responsibilities at Lesley University, how much do you keep up with events at Empire State College, and what sources of information about the college do you access? Do you stay in contact with any members of the community?

Joe Moore: It's now been slightly over five years that I've been gone. As you'd imagine, a start up at a new place is all-consuming, and when you leave a presidency, you leave. Joyce Elliott and I have kept in touch over these years and our friendship remains. When we worked together, and even afterward, sometimes we'd see things the same way and sometimes not. Our friendship has been most important to us, so we haven't talked too much about the details of Empire State College. My main source has been *All About Mentoring*. It's

great to see what people are writing about and what they're doing. That's been a wonderful connection to have since I left the college.

E.W.: Well, that's great; AAM is a wonderful source of the college's history. Have you kept up, to any extent, with the changes going on in SUNY? Have you paid attention to the work of our new chancellor, Nancy Zimpher?

J.M.: Only through *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. I get the daily info through *The Chronicle* and anything that pops up there, or in *The New York Times*. I no longer read the *Albany Times Union* or *The Saratogian*, so my focus has really shifted.

E.W.: Later in the interview, I'll ask you about some of your own dealings with SUNY System Administration, but for now I'll say that, as I see it, SUNY is probably quite different than when you were a campus president in the system. I wonder if there had been a different administration in SUNY at the time, how your own presidency at Empire might have been different?

J.M.: It's hard to say. The SUNY relationship is a really interesting topic in itself, as Empire State College evolves and how SUNY as a system evolves, but you don't get to choose the historical period that you act within. I was there with Bob King and then with an interim chancellor who became a permanent chancellor, so it was a very curious entity with which to be dealing, but I also was dealing quasi-independently with the legislature and the governor's office. So, even the assumption that the relationship in Albany was with SUNY, is not completely accurate.



Joe Moore

E.W.: You've been away from Empire State College for over five years, and beginning your sixth at Lesley. How would you look back and assess your Empire State College presidency?

J.M.: I don't think the person involved can in any way assess his own presidency objectively, so just take that as a given. One brings personal biases to such an understanding and you have limited information about how things played out after your departure. I can say when I look at it, that for seven years, many of us worked very, very hard to improve Empire State College in a variety of ways. I think any success that we had during that time is a combination of the talent of a lot of people there, not just in Saratoga, but at the centers and the units. There were some incredibly talented and mission-driven colleagues. I think the fact that we were there when the economy wasn't that bad and enrollments were growing created opportunities for us to make significant investments, if you look at the budgetary growth, enrollment growth and the facilities investments. We

were able to accomplish things that were good in and of themselves, practically and even more important, symbolically. We were there historically at a time when the head of Governor Pataki's budget office was an Empire alumnus, and State Senator Bruno was one of the three men in a room. Pataki's budget director gave us a second person in the room. With the Democratically-aligned assembly, we had enough strong connections with them that we were able to convince them not to use us as a trading piece, when it came down to that. So, we tried to neutralize the Democratic assembly, use the influence of the Republican Senate and then the governor's office, to then get our projects funded. I contrast that with Alan Davis' tenure, and I don't know any of the details, but I know for any of us who were presidents, it has been a challenging time. When the economy collapsed in the fall of 2008, it's something I never experienced in my life and was the most unsettling period in my career. In contrast, prior to 2008, we had the opportunity to do things as a college, with or without SUNY.

E.W.: How did you know that the right approach to take was the political approach, through those powerful individuals in New York state government? It doesn't sound like you avoided consultation with SUNY, but how did you come to the conclusion that Empire State College's approach should be a political strategy?

J.M.: When it came to capital investments, my experience in the chancellor's office in Vermont was an education. In New York, the legislature is larger and the dollars have more zeros in them, but the dynamics remain the same. Who are the staff people? Who are the people with influence, how strong is your story and how relentless are you in showing up? People at the college had no idea how often I drove down to Albany to spend two hours to get 10 minutes with a staff person who wasn't even a legislator. Sometimes it was the staff member who controlled the project list. I learned this in Vermont; I learned that there was no guarantee of any great success, but that's the only way to do it. And as for the people in SUNY, I always made sure they knew what I was doing, but I wouldn't ask their permission. I also made sure I wasn't there without them knowing it. We had such

a relationship that we were actually able to help SUNY with some of their priorities, because of the influence we at Empire State College had with key players in the legislature.

But perhaps most important was the agenda at the college itself. That was more complex than trying to figure out the legislature, because you knew what the decisions were at the legislative level and you could get to the staff. You knew what outcome you wanted; you wanted an appropriation, but within the college, for seven years, the challenge was trying to figure out what are the greatest risks for this institution right now? Where are the greatest opportunities for it to get stronger, consistent with its mission? That, to me, was a wonderful set of questions to ask myself, numerous times, and to ask colleagues about: "Are we focused on the right things?"

E.W.: I'm characterizing the SUNY system during your presidency, and probably for several years before that, as a relatively ineffectual institution. Maybe you don't share that characterization. You mention there were interim chancellors and short-term chancellors – that suggests to me the weakening of an institution, or at least a vacuum of leadership. Was that possibly beneficial to your efforts in some ways?

J.M.: Yes, I think so, but I think people consistently overrate systems. The center of the action is where the student and the faculty meet, and those are at colleges and universities. Systems are constantly seeking affirmation of their presence and seeking meaning, whereas at the institutions, the meaning is right in front of you, if you can see it. That is where students and faculty meet and engage in intellectual work. So, systems have to figure out what their role is, whether that is SUNY Central or the Coordinating Center in Saratoga Springs. I would say SUNY was trying to figure out what its role was; certain roles were pretty clear, and certain roles were not clear at all. I would bet that is still the case and that systems are always trying to find their identity. In contrast, colleges and universities too often behave as if they know every aspect of their identity, and that resulting conflict is always fascinating.

E.W.: To move back away from system a bit and return to the college, if you had stayed at Empire State College for three more years, what would you have done? What initiatives would have been taken? What issues would have been on your list to be tackled?

J.M.: I think a number of things would have come up. I think when I started there in the year 2000, there was a pretty serious divide between mentored learning and the kind of work being done at the Center for Distance Learning (CDL). In fact, I think that one of the reasons I got the job offer was that I was asked that question by the SUNY office. They asked: "How would you deal with the apparent divide at Empire State College, between online learning and individualized mentored learning?" Then, through the interview process and reading, not having started there yet, not having been offered the job yet, I said that the issue was not technology at all; it had nothing to do with online learning versus face-to-face. From my point of view, the divide, and this was an early read on it, was about what came first, curriculum or the student? In the ideal of an individualized degree plan and mentored learning, the student came first and the student was asked two questions: "What have you learned and what would you like to learn?" That inquiry led to a degree plan that was consistent with all we know about adult learning theory, and the perception evolved that online learning began with curriculum. You designed courses that could be delivered online. Therefore, what came first was the course, and that was more traditional, where the student had basically a drop-down menu, instead of being asked, "What would you like to learn and how would you like to learn it?" CDL offered greater choice than many traditional colleges, but still, it was curriculum first. My argument to SUNY was that Empire State College could become the place where both models moved toward a convergence, and that we would see more and more of this, if we were successful in the individualization of online learning. In the digital age, we can customize learning and increase access, possibly more than we'd been able to do in any prior models of teaching and learning. At the same time, given the content and communication potential in the digital world, individually mentored students

would have access to new sources of information that would need to become part of every student's learning. If there were a place that could take it on, it was Empire State College. But I knew that it wouldn't be without its tensions.

E.W.: I think that question is still being raised. People at the SUNY system often say, "Well, why do you need 35 locations?" But some really don't seem to understand or appreciate what I sometimes call the "great tradition," and they think of the college increasingly as SUNY's online institution. I think outsiders see it that way, too, whether it is because of marketing, or other factors.

J.M.: If I'd been at Empire State College for three more years, I would have fought that perception. I wouldn't have accepted that from SUNY or from others. It is simplistic and it just opposes classroom face-to-face learning with online learning in a way that is not going to reflect reality in a few more years. What did we learn through eArmyU and Navy Online? We were one of four institutions across the country used by both the Navy and the Army as a selected provider of online learning and many of the institutions thought they were going to yield high enrollments. We assumed, once people in the Navy got used to us, we'd be their online provider no matter what port they were in. But, what did we find out? What happened was the primacy of place intervened: If you were on an Army camp or fort in Texas and a neighboring community college had an office on your base, once you got sent someplace else and they had online learning, you were with them because you knew them. This happened time and time again. There were no net big winners, it was all marginal. So, the students from Fort Drum stayed with Empire and when

they went to Afghanistan they stayed with us online. They didn't go to somebody new. Adults want the same thing that other students want, which is a sense of security, a sense of relationship with an institution. So, we needed to sustain and support all of our in-place centers and units, which is why I went to the state to get funding for permanent buildings. That is a statement that we are here, and three-quarters of the work force without a college degree are here, and that's not changing. Empire needs to be a physical presence and what could happen here is richer than what anybody would have thought, in part because of the integration of place, real people and digital resources.

E.W.: Did you think that buildings would help to preserve the traditional mentoring model, one-to-one guided independent study? Did you think that creating more permanent Empire State College physical structures would preserve this pedagogy and this philosophy of teaching and learning?

J.M.: I thought it would preserve the individual relationship with the student. I hoped it would preserve the individualized degree plan and assessment of prior learning. I hoped it would lead to a new kind of mentor-student relationship that would account for the digital age, as well. These assets were available for study and for research and for communicating. I hoped that a student might have a home base, say in Rochester, but could study with a faculty member anywhere, who'd mentor him. I didn't want it to be historically the same, but I would argue that the principle of individuality would be enhanced by the communication and information age. I did not like the notion of an Empire State College with a headquarters in Saratoga and 30,000 students online with no geographic locations. I thought that would be a loss for the state. I thought it would be a loss for Empire's future. That's why I don't like the notion of other people defining Empire as the distance learning option for SUNY. I would work against that characterization.

E.W.: A while back, I sent you a copy of the Davis administration's Open SUNY proposal. I'm wondering what your thoughts are on the ideas found in that document.

J.M.: I had a different perception about the relationship between Empire State College and SUNY than other people do. I think to some degree, Empire has almost, at certain points, been in a parent-child relationship with SUNY, of trying to please the parent. It needed approval to feel a sense of growing maturity and legitimacy, and I think Empire should have skipped that stage and declared adulthood. I think it should be very cautious about playing a lead role in system-wide degree planning and program planning, because most system-wide academic initiatives – not all, but most – have been failures across the country. That's the system trying to figure out by itself what it should be doing, as opposed to the system defining itself through its institutions, and saying, "Our job is to support these institutions to be as effective as possible." One of the chancellors asked me at one point, "Shouldn't Empire be the online college institution for SUNY?" I said no, and the reason is, that you can't allow the other institutions off the hook. They have to integrate digital technologies, even into their three-times-a-week classes. They have to decide that if they have a distinctive degree, what are the incentives for them to make that available to people across the state? There should be pressure on them to do that. When you start, there's a whole series of systems for curriculum approval: the teaching, the listing of the courses, and so on. Once you start doing that in an artificial way, through the system, you'll get uneven participation. The incentives are not there for the institutions to play well, and to throw Empire into that role would distract it from its mission. I always felt, that can't happen. It's the same thing that happened when one of the deans came to me and said, "We're getting a few more traditional students coming to us and we'd like to go to high school fairs to recruit for our enrollment." At first, I said absolutely not; a lot of people are dealing with the 18- to 20-year-olds. Nobody is focusing on adults; we're losing our attention, we're here for adults. Then, I had a little chuckle as I had a thought. I said, "Actually yes, you can go to fairs, but you need a sign behind the table that says: no, no, not you – your parents." He got the point. I think there is this tendency to want to satisfy SUNY and to play a system role that can feed Empire

"In the digital age, we can customize learning and increase access, possibly more than we've been able to do in any prior models of teaching and learning."

State College's need to be recognized. I would urge some serious caution to that. The primary audience to satisfy is adult learners, not SUNY.

E.W.: Your point about a parent-child relationship is an interesting one. I think you'd be surprised to hear that Empire State College is now the most prominent name, at least in the short run, within the SUNY system in the hallways and in the discussions at the University Faculty Senate. In some measure, I think it is because of the Open SUNY proposal. I would argue that we're entering a different time and not only does the parent-child relationship no longer hold, but in a certain way, it's about being in the right place at the right time, with the right history and the right background. I think many other campuses in the university now have a very close eye on what Empire State College is doing. In fact, there is some concern on the part of some campuses, "Are we missing something?" It's a very different dynamic perhaps, than during your presidency. I'm not sure what the outcome will be, but change is in the wind.

J.M.: Time will tell.

E.W.: Should we move on? The college is beginning the search for its fourth president. Were you surprised at the departure of President Davis, after what might be termed a relatively short tenure – four years – when he departs at the end of this month? What do you think the impact and implications are for the institution?

J.M.: I really don't know; I mean, did it surprise me? Yes, but I assume it surprised everyone. That happens for a variety of reasons. I had no inside knowledge of anything. Alan has always been gracious. We'd communicate every once and a while, so I just figured it's one of those things where this other opportunity came up and he made a choice. The role of the president is both underrated and overrated. There's a strength to Empire State College, in terms of its decentralization and the regular operations that go on with faculty meeting with students, and student services professionals working with students. The work of the support staff is ongoing, with everything that continues, from the phone systems to the technology, to the facilities. It is such an important institution that's

going to continue and you hope it's going to attract an interesting and diverse cohort of people who are interested in the leadership of it, who will be worthy of it, because it's such an important institution in many ways. I would hope that my colleagues at Empire State College are looking forward to the search, saying "OK, other opportunities come up, and our job is to make the most of it, and to convince some interested candidates that this is a good time to come to Empire State College."

E.W.: I appreciate what you said about this institution and its strength and history and tradition, but on the level of organizations and leadership, can it really be good for the leadership of an institution to begin certain initiatives and then make significant personnel changes?

J.M.: There's no question obviously, given my career, that I have to believe leadership matters, so yes, I believe the leadership does matter. The challenge is recognizing the different levels of leadership in a place such as Empire, and a lot of that remains. So, yes, is an institution under a little bit more risk? Can it float a little bit longer than it should? Are decisions that should be made getting deferred? All of that is probably true to one degree or another, but taking the time to find the best candidate is worth it. It's really important to have a sense of optimism during a search. It's possible to live with both of those feelings, one of optimism and one of concern about getting a permanent, appropriately-searched new president.

E.W.: What kind of a president and what kind of leadership does an institution like Empire State College need, given what's happening in higher education, given what's happening in SUNY, given a number of consecutive years of budget cuts and given the expenditure of reserves that were left in place upon your departure?

J.M.: I don't know about what the enrollments have been or what cuts have been made, so I have none of that information. What I would say is the following: that the core of any higher education enterprise now is enrollment. It doesn't mean you're selling your soul to hit all the targets, but you have to be strategic in your enrollment management. You have to look at marketing; you have to look at

your programs; you have to look at the use of your alumni in order to recruit new students, as well as your connections locally with the business sector, the nonprofit sector, organized labor, even though it's diminished. All have to be there, all have to be in place. The key to this is going to be tuition revenue. You need somebody who can engage in the work of philanthropy and raise money; you need somebody who's going to work the SUNY system and Albany, along with capital investments that are going to continue. The key to any institution, and especially a public one such as Empire State College, that has such a low proportion of its revenue that comes from state appropriation, is you can't hire somebody as president who believes it is their job to go down to SUNY and get more of that state appropriation, and who thinks "that's the key to our success." That can be a part-time activity, but the key is enrollment growth. You need to figure out what percentage of enrollment growth with certain tuitions gives you stability on an annual basis so that can cover basic costs, salaries, the rentals, the leases and the investments in technology and people that you want to make. You know you've got a basic requirement where you need five to seven percent growth a year in revenue to sustain your operation. You need to look at the enrollments and try to figure out what programs, what patterns, what practices yield that, and you need to be on top of that every week. You can't presume that what you know is right, and that's what affords you the opportunity to meet your objectives. My close colleagues know that I've always believed that you don't get to talk grandly about mission unless you manage budgets. If I have somebody who is responsible for a certain part of a college or university and they can't manage the budget, I'm really not interested in them coming in and telling me how important our mission is, because without a budget, we don't get to fulfill our mission.

E.W.: At Empire State College, you followed a 27-year presidency; that's a pretty unusual experience, I would think. I don't know if it's often been replicated. How did this history influence the course of what was your first presidency?

J.M.: Jim Hall was phenomenally gracious to me and very thoughtful and I think very respectful about some of the changes we began during my tenure, whether he agreed with them or not. We've always gotten along well and still keep in touch. That has been a significant gift to me, both professionally and personally. I repeated some of that here at Lesley University. I followed a president who was here 22 years, but again, I saw the institution differently. In both cases, you must believe that is one of the reasons you were hired. When I first came to Empire, I went to every location and I saw every place where someone was working to see what it looked like. The facilities depressed me, not all of them, but many of them. The conditions under which people were working were sometimes poor; there were historical reasons for that, and they were no one's fault whatsoever. So, I thought "Hmm ... what do we do about that and how do we frame that, how do we live with that, what should we do?" Then I looked at other things such as student enrollment patterns and the tension, if you will, between the online and face-to-face. All of the practices were brand new to me and phenomenally intriguing, and so in some ways, it's not so much about Jim Hall or my predecessor here at Lesley, but about anybody starting new in a position. What do you see and how do you start defining an agenda, and how do you check those priorities with developing relationships with colleagues at the institution? To me, that was just a wonderfully intense first couple of years, figuring all that out. And I know that my successor at Empire, Alan Davis, and my successor here at Lesley will need to do the same thing: see the institution freshly from their perspectives.

E.W.: Was there some kind of progression from a period of watching, listening and learning to one of action, initiatives and strategies for moving the institution?

J.M.: It actually was, and it was very specific: it was 365 days; it was literally July 7, 2007 to June 30, 2008. I traveled to every college location and I understood it was going to take a year to go to all of them. It was through that experience that I realized we needed to make significant changes to the labor sector. Through this period of observation, I realized the

continuing education operation that was going on needed to change and become part of the college, and we needed to get out of the non-credit business. We're a higher education institution and the skill sets that everybody had could be transferrable, so that they could work within the college, many of them within CDL, so they could stay in Saratoga. It was looking at International Programs and trying to figure out what their relationship was to the rest of the college. It was looking at the graduate-level programs and seeing what we needed to do, and it was looking at the facilities and developing a capital plan. The strategic plan we developed came from meetings throughout the state that first year. Most of the places that I went to, I requested to meet with students. If I met during the day with faculty and staff in Buffalo at 5 or 6 p.m., I asked to speak with five to 10 current or previously enrolled students, to hear their stories about each place. At each location, I asked the same questions of the students: "Why are you here? What's working for you? What's not?" I heard the most specific and remarkable adult learning stories that you could read about in theory in the books, but I heard it personally at every place. Then another thing happened at the end of the year, one that thrust me into New York politics in a way I'd never experienced before. There was a center that was associated with Empire, but located down in Albany and associated with the different people in government. The person who ran it was eventually indicted, and that happened on the last day of my first year. I was involved with the press, the chancellor, and a number of political offices and I made certain decisions about what needed to happen.

E.W.: Was this at a location other than the Coordinating Center?

J.M.: It wasn't at the Coordinating Center; it wasn't at our Albany center. It was a quasi-independent operation that administratively fell under Empire State College and it ended that year. All of this brought SUNY to my doorstep because of the political exposure of this case. Part of academic administration is not only trying to move a place forward, but keeping bad situations out or forestalling bad ideas and inappropriate intrusions – and this was one of those cases. This was

“Empire is context-driven; you’ve got to see what it looks like.”

absolutely an intense learning year. I joked with everyone as I went around the state, saying, “The reason I can do this type of work is because you have your job; none of you can do this because you have real work to do every day with students.” Empire is context-driven; you've got to see what it looks like. So, when I went to Rochester, the faculty set up in the early afternoon before one of my meetings to demonstrate some of the technology problems they were experiencing that were specific to the Genesee Valley Center. They showed me what they were facing – it was classic – terrific! And so, at Empire State College, it was always honest and that was the thing that you could trust. It might make me feel a little uncomfortable: you might feel like maybe they could have done it a different way. But you could never question that it was honest, always upfront, and that's what I came to love about the place.

E.W.: After this learning stage, were the challenges more in the policies and practices of the college or more in the culture, values and traditions?

J.M.: I think the core values and policies and procedures are inextricably linked. For instance, if people disagreed with policies and procedures we were promoting, they might use the core values as a counter point, as if I didn't share those values. That did happen, and that happens, I think at any institution. Some people are more comfortable defending core values, as they see them, than debating the pros and cons of certain policies and procedures. They'll claim that you don't share those values and therefore these values aren't important to you, as a way of critiquing your proposal. That's a fair thing to do, I might add; it's sort of testing one's ability to articulate how those values play out through a particular approach. But after the first year or two, I started learning more about certain risks that I thought Empire was facing. For instance, one of the most threatening was the financial aid eligibility audit that

many will recall. We found that in the absence of set terms and clear cut records, we had huge, huge financial exposures for us institutionally and for our students. We discovered that we potentially were not meeting a variety of criteria that each student needed to meet, to continue to be eligible for financial aid. If we didn't clean that up, I thought Empire would have been in serious jeopardy. It is an administrative tactic to create a demon that you're responsible for slaying, in order to save the institution. It's important to know it can be perceived that way, but anybody who knows financial aid and knows those details knows this is true. The exposure for Empire State College, with students not completing studies on set dates, placed the college in significant jeopardy. Often this meant that they did not make "satisfactory academic progress" and consequently they were not legally eligible for aid, yet they were receiving aid.

We also felt the "ghost load" was related to this issue and needed clarity for the institution itself to understand what the load of faculty was. Faculty wanted to talk about work load, but nobody wanted to talk about what the work load was, because it was difficult to try to measure. So, I took that on, trying to figure out with colleagues how we could do this. That was an intellectually fascinating piece to look at: the relationship

of terms, individualization, flexibility and financial aid eligibility. That's the tension that a place like Empire lives with when the federal government is getting more and more regulatory, more and more traditional, and Empire wants to meet the needs of adult learners and confirm their access to financial aid. That, in itself, is a huge intellectual and organizational challenge. I'm not convinced we got it exactly right, but we sure tried to address that. I learned a lot about federal financial aid, and I learned a lot about how Empire worked internally by taking the data and looking at it. Did it always speak to the genuine values of every faculty member there? No, and I think I didn't do as good a job as I would have if I'd stayed there and tried to articulate that more clearly, and pay more attention to some of the faculty's concerns over that. We certainly did try to pay attention, but I think more discussion on that may have convinced more people about what we were trying to do. There were many fine-tuning adjustments that could have been made by listening more closely.

E.W.: In recently reading *The Promise Continues: Empire State College, The First Twenty-Five Years* by Bonnabeau (1996), I was wondering if there is a culture at Empire State College that rejects certain forms of organization in the name of flexibility, but sometimes manifests itself

as disorganization. This must be a challenge for the leadership, which also must engage with the external environment. This must have been difficult for Jim Hall, for you, for Alan Davis, and, no doubt, will be for the next president.

J.M.: I think for anybody it is, certainly, and I think you're right. I think *The Promise Continues* captured it really brilliantly in many ways; I think that's one of the great tensions within Empire as higher education, from my point of view, becomes more conservative. Through accreditation, through the federal government, through financial aid eligibility and more standard options, how does a place like Empire State College remain eligible for federal financial aid, which is crucial to many of the students, even though it may be in the form of government loans? How does it do that and maintain the individuality of the degree plan for an adult student? How will it be able to deliver on that? That is genuinely a worthy challenge to try to figure out, and what I worried about was my inability to do a better job at convincing those who, for example, were opposed to the term approach. I think there were concepts about which most of us agreed: PLA, individualized degree plans, multiple modes of earning credit and customization. But, there were some basics we needed to have systemically in place to make it less risky as to avoid losing a lot.

What's in a Noun? The Strange Career of the Word "Religion"

Robert Carey, Metropolitan Center

Let me begin with an Empire State College commonplace: a student seeks credit for Religious Studies.

One student grew up in the Church of the Nazarene in his home state of Wyoming, but is now a practicing Russian Orthodox Church member. Another was raised as a Catholic, but is now a practicing Buddhist and aspires to be a Buddhist monk. A third is finishing a degree in information management, has studied for years in a Brooklyn Yeshiva and is seeking credit for his studies in "religion."

What does the word actually mean in this context? How are we using it? To what does it refer? In what follows, I want to discuss what the term encompasses when used to describe a field of study, and then explore what the term embraces when we think of religion as a matter of belief, of seeing the world "doctrinally." What is it that we believe? What do we affirm to be true and what can that tell us about ourselves?

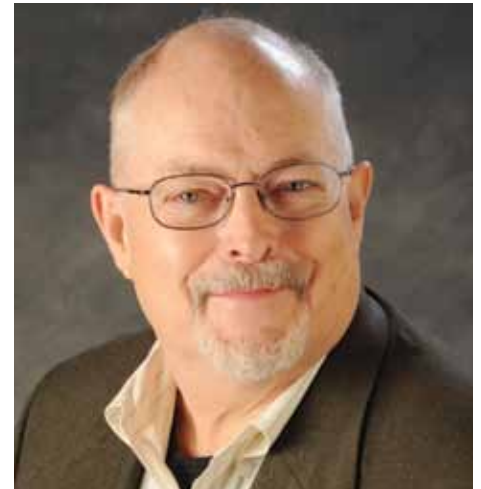
Religion, as a discipline, is a particular form of inquiry that embraces a range of critical issues, even as it shies away from others. In the first place, religion as a discipline took some time to establish its boundaries and foundational questions. For more than a few centuries, the discussion of "religion" was driven (certainly in the West) by issues of "ultimacy": Was a particular "religion" true, or false, or some kind of apostasy? Was it the work of priests and other schemers who sought merely to control people and enrich themselves and the institution they represented? This, in very short form, makes up a good deal of the history of the term as described by William Paden (1994) in *Religious Worlds*.

In his helpful, abbreviated review of the history of the term, Paden points to three strategies for accounting for religious behaviors. At the head of the list is Christian theology, which has offered, according to Paden (1994), at least five "takes" on

other traditions. They were: 1. "creations of evil forces"; 2. forms arising from the diffusion of an original monotheism; 3. an approximation of Christianity, i.e., the tradition in question seemed to contain "symbolic Christian truths"; 4. simply demonstrably "inferior in their practices and beliefs"; and 5. (somewhat more condescendingly optimistic), an expression of an "innate, independent spiritual capacity of all humans to come to some understanding of the divine" (p. 17).

The critics of Christianity, in turn, would argue that reason should shape our understanding of our own experience, not leave that bit of work to theologians and peddlers of types of divinity. That is, the answer to the claims of religion was rationalism. In 17th and 18th century Europe, wrote Paden (1994), rationalists had arrived at the point where "religious history could ... be written free of Christian authority" (p. 17). Solving problems replaced rehearsing and restating mysteries. A close cousin to the rationalist approach, "Universalism," with roots in Stoicism and Neo-Platonism, argued that behind all of the local usages and particularities of traditions was a single "supreme – usually divine – reality" (p. 29).

Religion as a discipline has only recently arrived at the place where its scholars do not seek to prove that one tradition is normative while others fall short, or that one tradition is a more mature and realized "religious" tradition than other earlier but persisting forms of belief. Rather, the tradition proceeds on the assumption that we have much to learn about human history and culture from the study of the many traditions and forms of religious activities that humans have practiced. To cite Paden (1994) once more: "To see that there is nothing religious apart from religious people, and to see therefore that what religious things 'are' is precisely what they *mean* to those people, is to follow a



Robert Carey

descriptive way that is at once scientific, because it is accurate and truly objective, and humanistic, because it requires engaged understanding of the positions of others" (p. 47). This is an attractive description of a style of inquiry that wants to understand. We will want to ask, a bit further on, if it goes far enough.

Having shed its theological agenda, the study of religion seeks to understand and account for the variety of traditions, stories and rituals that make up the family of religious behaviors scattered throughout human history in rich array. As a discipline, therefore, religious studies brackets the claims of "truth" – revealed or otherwise – that appear again and again in religious traditions, whether in the form of stories about how the world was made, why there is pain, how death entered the world, or in the form of creedal or doctrinal assertion, as in the Nicene Creed and other such instruments of remembrance and rehearsal. The outcome of this contention-ridden history is, according to Jonathan Smith (2004), an approach that sees "religion" as a term created by scholars for their intellectual purposes and therefore it is theirs to define. "It is a second order, generic concept

that plays the same role in establishing a disciplinary horizon that a concept such as ‘language’ plays in linguistics or ‘culture’ plays in anthropology. There can be no discipline study of religion without such a horizon” (p. 194).

For Tomoko Masuzawa (2005), the horizon that Smith describes, itself, warrants some analysis. In her book, *The Invention of World Religions*, the subtitle points to the problem: *How European Universalism was Preserved in the Language of Pluralism*. Masuzawa argued that “religion,” even when approached comparatively, is, in fact, a European construct that sorts out the world “religions” in a way that is “largely unhistoricized, essentialized, and tacitly presumed immune or inherently resistant to critical analysis” (pp. 2-3).

The comparative study of religious traditions opens the door on looking at people being “religious” as a natural phenomenon, something that happens over and over again in the course of human history.

This gives us a way of looking at the claims that arise with religious stories, systems and creeds. And that approach brings us back to what the three students were asking for in their individual studies of religion. The specificity of their study or their moving from tradition to tradition, or replacing one object of belief with another or none at all raises the question: What kind of knowing is this? What knowledge have they mastered? One thing is immediately clear: They have become literate in particular ways about the tradition that matters to them and the way in which that tradition accounts for human experience. At most, it is particular and its “take” on human experience is specific to it and the claims that it makes.

But given human creativity, a style of inventiveness that, by one estimate, has spawned nearly 100,000 religions, what are we to make of the claims attached to those traditions (Novak, 1994)? In which “god” are we really supposed to believe? How would one possibly know which one is the right one: Brahma, Isis, Mithra, Yahweh, Shiva or Thor? And there are more to be described and accounted for.

One response is to characterize religious behavior as a neurosis (Freud) or to claim that religious stories are simply not true; that they prevent us from seeing what is right in front of our faces. Writers like the late Christopher Hitchens (2007), or the still living Richard Dawkins (2006), come directly at the idea that religious stories and claims have substantial and important truths to impart to us with a “thanks, but no thanks” kind of approach. The argument that someone is delusional because they believe in God or that the third person of the Trinity is a kind of eternal ether energizing souls is not likely to persuade. If the fallback position of those who have difficulty with the idea of believing that God is great and worthy to be praised is that such statements are a sign of a mental disorder, it misses taking the full weight of the approach developed by other scholars that religious behavior is a natural, historical phenomenon.

The specificity of their study or their moving from tradition to tradition, or replacing one object of belief with another or none at all raises the question: What kind of knowing is this? What knowledge have they mastered?

If it is a natural phenomenon, then its persistence is what requires attention. So, a study like Robert Hinde’s (1999) *Why Gods Persist: A Scientific Approach to Religion* helps us to locate religious language and claims in a more richly detailed social and historical context. And, as Dennett (2006) showed in his study, *Breaking the Spell: Religion as a Natural Phenomenon*, we can trace the development of traditions, as human cultures settle into permanent settlements, as the cultivation of grains and the domestication of protein, the invention

of reading and writing mark the beginning of the world in which we live today. With those changes, “folk religion became transformed into organized religion” (p. 152).

But what is persisting amidst all these changes? What is the hand that rewrites and reconfigures traditions and usages? The final problem in understanding religious claims about reality is the human brain itself.

What is it about the way we experience reality that finds religious stories about that reality comforting and believable? For Michael Shermer (2011), or scholars like Scott Atran (2002) and Pascal Boyer (2001), the task is to understand what Shermer calls the “believing brain.” The problem is how what is “in here” shapes what is “out there.” As Atran (2002) put the matter: “Religious beliefs and practices involve the very same cognitive and affective structures as nonreligious beliefs and practices – and no others – but in (more or less) systematically distinctive ways. ... [H]uman cognition (re)creates the gods who sustain hope beyond sufficient reason and commitment beyond self-interest. Humans ideally represent themselves to one another in gods they trust. Through their gods, people see what is good in others and what is evil” (p. ix).

So, when someone asserts that God exists and that they have experienced grace, their assertion should not be privileged in any particular way, any more than the counter assertion – “You are quite mad” – should be deemed an appropriate reading of what has happened. The real task is, as Pascal Boyer (2001) said, to understand our own cognitive processes in order to “highlight and better understand many fascinating features of our mental architecture by studying the human propensity toward religious thoughts. One does learn a lot about these complex biological machines by figuring out how they manage to give airy nothing a local habitation and a name” (p. 330). What kind of “knowing” is involved in claiming that one’s knowledge of “airy nothing” is real knowledge? That brings us back to our three students.

What do we make of what they have presented for review and evaluation? I would argue that what they have

presented *can* be evaluated; it is a specific “denominational” take that has claimed time, energy and study, and in presenting what they have learned, they are subject to shared rubrics of evaluation, such as mastery of subject matter and the overall quality of their presentation. For example, is it well crafted, reflective and grounded in the textual life of the tradition in question? From the perspective of an undergraduate degree and its concerns with developing styles of literacy and understanding, the kind of knowledge arising from the intensive, devotional reading associated with a community of believers can find a place in the overall design of an undergraduate degree.

Is it more than a kind of “local” knowledge, particular to the tradition being discussed? However “universal” the claims of its master narratives, is there any suggestion that it lends itself to comparison with other traditions and their claims to universality? These are questions that should be addressed in the course of exploring what students have read, experienced and understand about the devotional and cognitive claims

of the tradition they find important to their self-understanding. From the point of view of a degree, what they have learned and seek credit for is singular, particular to their individual history and reading – one possible take on the many ways in which one can be religious. It is most likely the case that religious studies that are shaped by devotional concerns might very well be “deep,” but rarely, I think, will the knowledge arising from such a style be broadly inclusive. That awaits a different approach altogether.

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“5. The objectives of youth and adult education, viewed as a lifelong process, are to develop the autonomy and the sense of responsibility of people and communities, to reinforce the capacity to deal with the transformations taking place in the economy, in culture and in society as a whole, and to promote coexistence, tolerance and the informed and creative participation of citizens in their communities, in short to enable people and communities to take control of their destiny and society in order to face the challenges ahead. It is essential that approaches to adult learning be based on people’s own heritage, culture, values and prior experiences and that the diverse ways in which these approaches are implemented enable and encourage every citizen to be actively involved and to have a voice.”

– From “The Hamburg Declaration on Adult Learning”
The International Conference on Adult Education
CONFINTEA V, 1997

Reflecting on Service-Learning in Community Health Nursing

Mary Guadrón, School of Nursing; and students Christine Porter, Janine Mower, Kimberly Smith, Kim Wallace, Penelope Jordan, Elizabeth Hillier, Jewel Brandt, Kathleen Brown and Nechama Keller

The Context of Service-Learning

The National Service-Learning Clearinghouse (2013) defines service-learning as “a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities” (para. 1). Service-learning is congruent with the mission and vision of SUNY Empire State College (2013) to support learners as active partners in their education and to transform people and communities.

Traditional campus-based educational institutions with service-learning programs are typically geographically focused on the surrounding area of the institution’s location and serve the local community. SUNY Empire State College is a distributed institution with an online nursing student population. “Service-eLearning” is utilized in the Community Health Nursing course and is defined as “an integrative pedagogy that engages learners through technology in civic inquiry, service, reflection, and action” (Daily-Hebert, Donnelly-Sallee, & DiPadova-Stocks, 2008, p. 1).

Students located throughout the state of New York taking the Community Health Nursing course work with community partners, including governmental health departments, not-for-profit health organizations, home care agencies, community hospices, and school districts to develop health education and community-oriented health interventions. The integration of service-learning projects to meet identified community needs enhance student learning and civic engagement.

The following entries showcase several students’ service-eLearning efforts. Their descriptions and reflections on their projects demonstrate how both students and their

communities are involved in transformative learning experiences.

– Mary Guadrón



Christine Porter (center)

Empowering You

Christine Porter

Established in 1978, Safe Horizon has provided support and advocacy for victims of crime and abuse. Today, Safe Horizon is the largest victims’ service agency in the United States. Also recognized as a leader in responding to the changing needs of the clients and communities served, it is sought out for its expertise on issues of violence and victimization across the country and around the world. Its mission is to “provide support, prevent violence, and promote justice for victims of crime and abuse, their families and communities” (Safe Horizon, n.d., Our Mission section, para. 1).

At Safe Horizon, it was my intent to gain a greater understanding and appreciation of the value of utilizing a community advocacy and prevention approach in a domestic violence human service program. Additionally, it was my intent to create a brochure that provides valuable information,

resources and links to resources. The desired outcome is the continued education of victims of domestic violence:

- to produce a greater awareness of resources available.
- to contribute to self-empowerment of the victim so as to ensure a reduction of recidivism by the perpetrator of the violence, thus resulting in a safer existence for the victim.
- to support an educated victim, which results in an aware victim, which prohibits the repetition of the victimization.

It also was my intent to simply offer my services as a volunteer nurse to those in need.

Grief and loss affect victims of domestic violence. Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is additionally an issue related to the victimization and experience of the crime. Victims of violence suffer a traumatic experience, both physical and psychological, and as nurses, we must be prepared to identify this, as well as provide treatment and assistance.

Victims of domestic violence and traumatic situations also must be assessed for suicide risk. It is imperative that we, as nurses, adequately assess those we serve, for suicide can often be a result of the victimization related to shame or ineffective coping. In the setting of Safe Horizon, there are therapists and psychologists who can assist with this process, as well. It is our duty to ensure a healthy individual throughout the process of care deliverance.

This service-learning project has been one of great personal impact. My project was completed with great care and diligence, and offers a resource of information to be disseminated among those I serve in the capacity of nurse, forensic nurse

and community health nurse. I supplied statistical information as well as tips for safety and telephone numbers for resources. This was all completed with the anticipation that it will serve as a gentle but resourceful center of information dissemination. I was able to “see” things from the recipient’s perspective and the services provided. When I registered for this class, I truly did not know what to expect, and had no way of anticipating the personal impact and journey I would embark upon. For me, this was not simply a learning journey but a journey to a greater self-understanding and healing of my own in a way that I never thought possible.



Janine Mower

Nutrition and Physical Activity - Habits for Healthy Living

Janine Mower

The organization that I worked with during this semester, The Rose Women’s Care Service Community Resource Center (n.d.), has as its mission “To provide information, conduct educational events, and make referrals in order for women and their families to make empowered choices for their health and well-being” (Our Mission section, para. 1). The organization focuses on the health needs of migrant workers who come to the Hudson Valley area for seasonal farm work. Most of the migrant workers are Spanish speakers.

I worked with a small group of women who are from a Central American country. The young women are residents of the county in which I live and they are between 25 and 35 years old. They are young working mothers with husbands, siblings, parents and in-laws

who are part of their busy lives. And, they are gaining weight. Some have increased in weight 15 to 20 pounds over the past four or five years. According to the Office of Minority Health (2012), “Hispanic health is often shaped by factors such as language/cultural barriers, lack of access to preventive care, and the lack of health insurance” (Health section, para. 1). I believe they are at risk of not being able to meet the Healthy People 2020 goals set out for nutrition and physical activity as a result of their health literacy and language barriers (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2012).

The potential risk for developing diabetes, coronary artery disease, stroke, breast and colon cancer are known to be higher in individuals who are overweight. Many of the grants that the women’s center works on are focused on nutritional guidelines for children and their mothers. Much of the teaching at the center requires bilingual handouts. Over time, the nurses of The Rose Women’s Care Service have developed an excellent working knowledge of nutrition and physical activity and its link to obesity. They are advocates for healthy choices in meal planning and healthy lifestyles for all.

While preparing to create my project for the course, I developed the idea for a teaching aid. The end result was a bilingual brochure showing the importance of physical activity and nutrition. It was my hope that this would be useful for the population we were seeking to serve.

I have become aware that a number of local residents who use English as their second language struggle with literacy in their native language. Therefore, I designed the brochure at the level of a sixth-grade reader, in English and in Spanish. Also, the brochure is colorful, attractive, and gets the basic message across that our bodies need physical activity and nutritious meals to work properly. The two women who were helping me with translation were quite happy to be part of the project, and also interested in the content and concept of nutrition and the role it can play in helping with weight maintenance.

During my journey at SUNY Empire State College, I’ve become more aware of how learning and access to information allows

individuals to grow educationally as well as on a personal level. The concept of a bilingual brochure is not something new. What is new for me is the knowledge that teaching health literacy has to take into consideration the person’s reading level. Prior to the Community Health class, I was operating under a certain set of assumptions about how my Spanish-speaking friends and neighbors learn. While working with my friends on the assignment, I realized that because of circumstances beyond their control, there was a point in their lives where formal education stopped. Now, 10 or 15 years later, their children are progressing beyond the math and reading levels of their mothers. The Community Health class has given me a glimpse into the future. I now have had the opportunity to see firsthand the potential health problems that programs like Healthy People 2020 are trying to address. It is my hope that I can use my knowledge obtained while taking this course to be part of – even if it’s a small part – the campaign to raise health literacy of all residents of the United States.



Kimberly Smith

Adult Immunization Screening/ Education Tool

Kimberly Smith

Community health nurses are advocates for preventative services such as immunizations as well as restorative services for existing diseases. From infants to senior citizens, timely immunization is one of the most important protections against serious diseases. Providing education and

bringing awareness to the benefits of adult vaccinations has been my primary focus throughout my clinical experience and for my service-learning project in upstate New York.

I gained knowledge of immunizations and their importance throughout the community. I engaged in evidence-based immunization recommendations for the adult population; in addition, I developed knowledge about the preventable diseases, symptoms and how the diseases are spread. I clarified misconceptions about immunizations for adults and assumed a proactive, instead of reactive, approach to communicable disease. I was able to publicly speak with confidence based on immunization knowledge that I gained. I developed an easy to read and understand education sheet for adult immunizations and a self-assessment tool regarding the vaccines each individual should receive. I enjoyed providing preventative health care education to the community.

I reflect back on the beginning of the Community Health Nursing course when I didn't have much interest in community health nursing, nor did I ever expect to have such a rewarding experience. I have truly enjoyed sharing with peers on our community health nursing practice. My focus on adult immunizations came at a prime time when the fast moving seasonal flu was hitting New York state. I also have become an advocate for ensuring adults are educated and well informed regarding immunizations and the importance of getting them, especially their annual flu vaccine. I was able to take this knowledge back to my hospital setting and run a satellite flu clinic from my office. I have given over 100 staff members their flu shots; this is an additional 100 people who may not have taken the time to go to employee health to get it. If I had not been taking this class, I probably would never have volunteered to do such a thing. I also was proud to be able to answer many questions from the staff regarding immunizations when they came to get their flu shot. Prior to this class, I would have just referred them to employee health to explain and educate them.



Kim Wallace

Identifying and Managing End of Life Grief and Depression

Kim Wallace

I was fortunate to have spent my clinical time this semester with a well-established, local hospice agency. I had some apprehension about this experience, as I have never worked in a hospice or home care setting before. With this said, I am happy to report that this experience was a very positive one. This clinical experience has allowed me to put things into a different perspective.

There is a difference between normal grief, also known as preparatory grief, and abnormal grief, which is known as depression. The main goal of hospice is to provide comfort care to those who are nearing death, as well as to serve as a support for the family members who are impacted by the process. The manner in which the patient and family grieve imminent loss can have a great impact on the end of life experience, as well as the post-death mourning of those left behind. There are many mixed emotions that are experienced in the dying process, but there are identifying behaviors that indicate when an individual is experiencing abnormal grief. It is important for caregivers to be able to identify these behaviors, along with any red flags that may indicate the need for intervention.

In an effort to raise awareness in patients, families and caretakers, I created a brochure that is presented as a three-fold pamphlet for easy reading. In this brochure, I included

the definitions of both normal/preparatory grief and abnormal grief/depression, and the importance of identifying both. I also included some identifying behaviors, which may indicate the need for intervention, along with some simple interventions that can be taken and some resources/referrals that can be made.

The beauty of this brochure is that it is not just patient-specific, but can be utilized in cases where family members are experiencing abnormal grief, as the stress of losing a loved one does not just affect the patient, but the family as a whole. The National Alliance for Caregiving (2012) reports the substantial impact on caregivers, not just emotionally, but physically and mentally, as well.

This brochure can be a helpful tool, not only for hospice nurses, but social workers and pastoral care members alike. Education can be reinforced when this brochure is utilized those in different disciplines within the hospice setting.



Penelope Jordan

Disaster Preparation

Penelope Jordan

Understanding your community is the first step in disaster preparation. Certain environmental hazards can be expected if the potential exists in the community. For example, those citizens who live near heavily wooded areas should be prepared for hazards such as forest fires. Those citizens who live near water or in low lying areas

should expect some flooding and structural damage caused during a hurricane or high tide.

For my service-learning project, I created a presentation about disaster preparation for my community. Developing a disaster plan that will prepare family members for what to do, how to find each other, and how to communicate during the disaster – a key part of the plan. Building a kit is the next step in the disaster readiness and preparation plan. Every household and family is different. The kit should be adapted to the unique needs of their family. Climate and environmental factors also should be taken into consideration. Pets also should be part of the plan and materials should be developed responding to their needs. Many victims of hurricane Sandy and Katrina would not leave their homes due to a lack of shelters available for pets. It is important, as part of the preparation, to identify nearby shelters that are pet friendly if ordered to evacuate. My presentation included creating a family plan, as well as what items should be included in emergency kits. Disasters can happen at any time. Preparing for disasters is a shared responsibility for all members of society and will ensure community survival. Communities must embrace, understand and implement disaster strategies not only to prepare, but to recover from disasters.

In the past, I never wanted to be a community health nurse. Going into homes and speaking to people was not my idea of what I wanted to do, and I didn't really understand why I needed to do it in this course. What made me continue were the nurses I had the pleasure of working with. They were engaging, offered suggestions and shared their experiences. I learned so much working with them. I learned how to assess the community. Every aspect of the environment – home, home health assistants and family – plays such an interconnected role that if any of these parts are missing, problems arise for the patient. With the hospice nurses, I learned how to prepare, and know when to step back and appreciate that death is as natural as life. Knowing a patient was in the process of transitioning brought a measure of peace to me because I knew those patients who were suffering would soon be at peace. I also learned that I am already a community health nurse.

My community is the school where I am employed. So, the very thing I have been trying to escape, I have been a part of for the past seven years.



Elizabeth Hillier

Perinatal Mood Disorder

Elizabeth Hillier

As a nurse for more than 30 years, I have always felt a little bit of regret at never working with maternal health patients. As a nursing student, this is a field that I wanted to pursue, but my career had thus far taken me on a different path. When I met with my preceptor, I verbalized my feelings about working with this population. My preceptor suggested that I speak with the maternal child health nurse at the clinic. I met with the maternal child health nurse, and we identified a need for community education on the topic of Perinatal Mood Disorder. I was excited about the topic and the chance to research and create a teaching tool for her to use in her monthly classes. The Family Medicine clinic services mostly the underserved and uninsured patients on the south shore of Long Island. Some high-risk pregnant patients are seen here, as well as a large number of non-high risk pregnancies. The maternal health nurse offers a class once a month for these patients and provides information on various topics of caring for yourself and your baby. Some topics include breastfeeding information and baby care, as well as nutrition and Diabetes.

Although pregnancy is not an illness, it does pose many problems for women and their families. Perinatal Mood Disorder is a condition that affects 15 to 20 percent

of all new mothers. It can occur during pregnancy or after the birth. Symptoms include “crying, sleep problems ... fatigue, appetite disturbance, loss of enjoyment of activities, anxiety and poor maternal-fetal attachment” (New York State Department of Health, 2006, para. 2). This is a more serious condition than “baby blues,” which affects 80 percent of all new mothers and is usually resolved within two weeks after delivery (New York State Department of Health, 2006). In Nassau County, perinatal mood disorder is a major health concern affecting 10 to 15 percent of all women and up to 40 percent of women living in poverty. It is estimated that in Nassau County, there are 3,500 families affected by this disorder each year (Nassau County, 2012). Education is critical in order to have patients and their families recognize the signs and symptoms and not be ashamed to verbalize that they are having a problem. Educational materials can be used in the clinic with the goal of lessening some of the stigma associated with this disorder.

My service-learning project incorporated a simple PowerPoint presentation describing the condition, signs, symptoms and places to go for help and support. This project was very beneficial to me and to the clinic. As community health nurses, our role is to provide outreach, educational and preventative health services to our patients. I have gained more knowledge on the topic of Perinatal Mood Disorder and I was able to present the nurses at the clinic with materials that enhance their education programs.

The end of the semester always brings a time for reflection on the learning that has taken place over the past 15 weeks. I have been working as a home care nurse for almost 30 years, so I guess you can say that I have some experience in this field. I wasn't sure how much more I could learn, but as with so many of the courses I have taken here, there is always more knowledge that can be gained.

The Community Health Nursing course has been valuable and meaningful to me because I enjoyed the patient population I worked with and I was able to provide a tool that will be used by the staff. I fulfilled a dream of mine, which was to work with the

maternity patients. The patients at the clinic were very receptive to the topic of Perinatal Mood Disorder.

Sometimes we go through our nursing roles without a thought as to why we are doing what we are doing. In this course, I was able to think about the nursing process and apply it to my day-to-day practice. I think the “KASH” activity allowed be to reflect and think about the Knowledge, Attitudes, Skills and Habits that were experienced in each module.

I will be able to apply my learning as I continue to work in the field of home care. According to Clark (2008), “effective nursing practice is facilitated when nurses use a systemic approach to clients, their health status, and the nursing interventions needed to promote, maintain, or restore health” (p. 62). I have gained knowledge about the nursing process and applying the nursing theories to my daily practice.



Jewel Brandt (right)

Hygiene Packs

Jewel Brandt

Homelessness is everywhere, affecting many communities on a daily basis. Homelessness can be defined as “the conditions that contribute to the absence of customary access to conventional residence or dwelling” (Babatsikou, 2011, p. 66). Men, women and children of all ages have been victims of homelessness. The problem is

larger than not having a roof over your head; it includes the risk for increase in physical and psychological illness due to the conditions one must live in day to day.

While working with my preceptor, a school nurse for elementary schoolchildren, I learned that there are a few students who reside in a shelter for homeless families. When I asked about them in more detail, I learned that they were often absent due to illness and were often behind on some critical immunizations due to lack of health insurance or inability to get to the clinic. This triggered me to focus more on this population for my service-learning project.

The problem facing these children and their families who reside in shelters is the overcrowding and lack of hygiene products to care for themselves. Without proper hygiene, illness can spread much faster, and without proper health care, this can become a dangerous thing for anyone, especially children who are more susceptible to disease and illness. There also is the lack of clothing or access to laundry, which can introduce other health problems such as ringworm, lice and mites. Many of these families will enter the community on a daily basis, especially the school-aged children, and this is where the challenge begins – the transmission of illness and disease becomes an increasing concern.

My service-learning project focused on an effort to provide hygiene packs to a local shelter for families. This project matched the problem that this community faced, and was chosen with the intent to decrease the number of illnesses related to poor hygiene in the public schools of the families and children living in shelter conditions. I involved all of the children in the school in this service-learning project. Information was gathered in regard to the number of people in the shelter, gender and ages, and then a list of necessary items was put together in order to help plan the next step: the journey for donations. Then, collected from local vendors were items such as toothbrushes, toothpaste, Band-Aids, floss, deodorant, soap, wipes, nail clippers, lotion, and much more that would help assist these families who are currently forced to live in overcrowded shelters. Once the items were collected, the schoolchildren helped make

hygiene packs, which were delivered to the shelter residents. Information packets on proper hygiene with emphasis on hand-washing also were placed in each pack for the families in an effort to help teach and use prevention methods.

Knowledge was gained by all involved through the making and distribution of the health information packets. There were many skills used to manage this project: communication, social, cultural, math and reading. The schoolchildren learned about health teaching as they prepared hygiene kits, and about different cultures and alternative ways of living. Teaching the participants in this project to reach out to the community was a great feeling and showed that this indeed was a successful plan. Compassion and caring are great qualities to have and enforce; these were both addressed throughout this project.

The participants were taught about hygiene, given needed supplies to help decrease their chances of becoming ill, and were given a sense of hope that there are, indeed, people in their community who care about their hardships and are willing to help.

Although I was not there long enough to see the changes in these children who were residing in the shelter, I was able to discuss with my preceptor ways that we would be able to measure these goals. One was by tracking their absences, trips to the nurse’s office and doctors’ appointments. This would be a way to see if their better hygiene skills helped to decrease the presence of illness in their surroundings. Another was to see just how much the children learned through their information packet and assess whether the packets were appealing enough to interest the recipients in learning about the topic.

Overall, I feel this service-learning project was a successful one that both provided a service to those in need, and taught lifelong skills such as compassion and caring to those involved. This community was willing to open up their hearts to those in need and the collection of supplies was rather easy. This shows that this is a strong community with the best interest of each other in mind: to partner with community stores and residents to collect hygiene products for all ages in order to make packs for the

families of a nearby shelter; to provide the necessary items to maintain proper hygiene to those in need; to teach the families proper hygiene practices; and to show and teach compassion for those who are less fortunate.



Kathleen Brown

Ask the Expert

Kathleen Brown

The population I am focusing on in my clinical experience is comprised mainly of individuals diagnosed (or being ruled out for) multiple sclerosis and their support network. The overall population is comprised of adults between ages 20-50, of both sexes but with a higher percentage of women. The setting is an official urban agency located in the middle of New York City.

Although the Internet and television (media) can be valuable resources for health information, many members of this population, and society as a whole, are unaware of how to separate legitimate fact and meaningful research from opinion and hearsay. Patients tend to be eager to learn about their disease, as well as preventative health measures; however, they may rely upon poor sources for their information. Online discussion boards and basic Google searches may lead to false health information and possibly dangerous advice.

Health care provider visits may occur two to three times a year. These encounters are an integral time for patients to receive evidence-based health care information. Unfortunately, there are months in between where patients seek answers to their health questions. There is a need for supplemental, educational opportunities where patients can learn about their disease, which health professionals to contact when questions arise, and other important matters that can benefit their overall well-being.

The purpose of my service-learning project was to provide monthly educational sessions for patients where they would be introduced to professionals who can address their needs throughout their spectrum of care. They also would serve as meaningful resources that address patient needs, as well as facilitate meaningful discussions among the patient population. In facilitation of these educational sessions, patients would gain a better understanding and ownership of how to have their needs met. They began to recognize the roles of specific practitioners and distinguish who to contact for which concerns. They also gained greater understanding of the etiology and physiology behind specific issues, ways to minimize symptoms and maximize quality of life.

In an effort to evaluate the effectiveness of the service-learning project, I created two main tools to be used with patients.

I created a trivia game (*Jeopardy!*) to be used at the conclusion of some of the sessions, which was used to evaluate the knowledge gained throughout the session. I also created a basic survey, which was used to evaluate the patients' baseline level of comfort and knowledge. This survey was typically given and then discussed before and after the session.

All in all, I believe that application of the service-learning project was successful. There was a significant difference between baseline knowledge and the quality of post-session discussions. Patients were able to fully engage and participate in the trivia game, illustrating mastery of the newly gained understanding of the material. As the months passed, patients looked forward

to each new topic and showed excitement in educating themselves about important matters and having their concerns met.

Through the use of service-learning, we were given the opportunity to impact, and hopefully benefit, the lives of others while we applied the skills we had been learning throughout the course. As I learned about assessing and meeting the needs of community members, I was able to practice these skills and work directly with patients. Knowing that the effort I put into my course work also was benefitting the patients made my contributions more genuine and meaningful. I appreciate having had this experience.



Nechama Keller

Immunization Awareness: Why Immunizations Are Important for Your Children

Nechama Keller

The Chasidic Orthodox Jewish community is the population I have chosen for my clinical. This population is at high risk because of the large number of families that have chosen to either refuse or delay vaccinating their young children. Many of these parents will postpone coming to the pediatrician for a wellness checkup due to the fact that they do not want to give their child vaccines. The possible spread of vaccine-preventable disease has become a more frightening reality. There have been recent pertussis and measles outbreaks that are a real cause for concern. This community relies on the immunity others have, or "herd immunity," to continue to

protect them. Over time, this immunity will decrease and more children will be susceptible to contracting serious and even fatal diseases.

The most challenging part of trying to reach this community is a combination of the language barrier together with the community's lack of trust in health care providers. This community does not have much access to the outside world and most information is transmitted by word of mouth. There is no use of the Internet allowed in the community and only certain newspapers circulate within the village. This limits the population's access to important factual information. Instead, many people are advised by elderly family members warning their children and grandchildren to beware of health care providers and their practices. Many people believe that the health center pushes vaccines to make money off of them.

Additionally, incorrect information about vaccines and their side effects are passed along as fact from family to family. This, along with the many fears of the outside world connecting vaccine administration to diseases like autism and mental retardation, make the challenge even greater. As our health center tries to educate parents about vaccine safety and importance, we find that we are not always able to get through. This is due, in part, to the fact that the primary language spoken here is Yiddish. There are those who are willing to accept information about vaccines, but will only bring it into their homes if it is presented in a culturally appropriate way and is in their primary language.

The most appropriate education that can be taught to this community is one where the educator is accepted by the community. Additionally, written education material that is presented in a culturally appropriate manner in the community's first language is likely to have the greatest impact. We designated Dec., 2, 2012 as "Immunization Awareness Day." On this day, we scheduled over 30 wellness visits where the focus was around the importance of vaccines. We have two providers aside from me who speak Yiddish and were able to communicate with the patients and their families in a trusting and caring manner.

Cultural preconceptions and myths also were addressed. I created a PowerPoint presentation and then printed pamphlets explaining why vaccines are important for children. Many of the important points were translated into Yiddish, elevating the level of understanding of the reader. A creative and colorful background was used to make the information seem fun and enjoyable. These pamphlets were handed out and continue to be handed out.

The best way to evaluate the outcome of this project is by seeing an increased number of parents agreeing to vaccinate their children in a more timely fashion. This can only be evaluated over time, but an increased interest has already been seen. The organization that I work for has taken very seriously its role in being responsible for increasing community outreach projects and public health education. They have already begun by meeting with marketing consultants from the community that will be able to work with the nurses and doctors of our department. These consultants are contracted to create educational materials and present them in a culturally sensitive way. The materials will be strictly in Yiddish and will be done in a most professional way. Our health center's recognition of the power of appropriate educational materials for this community indicates much success for this service-learning project, as the entire concept has been adopted and accepted.

This course has really been a landmark one for me. I have been involved in working with the people from the Chassidic Orthodox community for many years, but never viewed the opportunity as I do now. Never did I see the population as a community to which I can personally affect change. Through the Community Health Nursing course, I have been able to look at situations very differently and see the community's needs from a different perspective. There are many issues that the community faces as a group and these issues need to be addressed at the community level, not just on a one-to-one basis. While each individual patient and family member has his or her own views and opinions, there are still many traditional and cultural ways of life affecting the way health care is regarded.

Using the community health nursing models has helped me better direct my goals for improvements on a community level.

The course's reflective summaries really gave me insight into thinking about a specific patient situation and realizing that it may be applicable to the entire population. The discussion boards are always a great place to get feedback from other students about my actions, reactions and perceptions of unique situations within this community. I opened myself up to understanding more about the people I care for because this course has given me the tools to do so.

Conducting key informant interviews and doing a windshield survey gave me information about the community, helping me develop a much deeper sense of the traditions and values of these people. Creating a project that is well received by the community is very rewarding, especially when it is a significant part of maintaining their wellness.

Most of all, I enjoyed reading about my fellow students' experiences and learning so much from them. I also acquired so much from viewing projects and papers that have been posted. I feel that the course section on self-nurturance was a very personal exploration of our inner self and needs, realizing that I, myself, need to make more time to nurture my inner core.

Final Thoughts

As viewed in the essays and reflections above, service-learning helps Community Health Nursing students take an active part in their learning; it also further engages them in the health of their communities. This authentic learning experience involves the application of knowledge in the real world to build community assets, assess and meet community gaps, challenges and needs, and fulfills the mandate to improve the health of our nation. This approach exposes learners to multiple perspectives, inter-professional collaborations and partnerships, and assists them in finding meaning in what they are learning. Reflection and discourse in the online environment connect course content with service and enhance metacognitive skills. With a strong grounding in scholarship, service-learning is an innovative and effective way to provide challenging,

transformative learning experiences for students that positively impact both the student and the community.

– Mary Guadrón

Note

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One Last Narrative Evaluation (with some musical and literary accompaniment)

Steve Lewis, Hudson Valley Center

A. TOPIC

After more than three decades at this remarkable college without walls, I will soon be breaking through the invisible gates and driving off to what I assume will be the next brick-and-mortarless realm of my life (which I fervently hope is not yet the ultimate brick-and-mortarless realm).

So it seems fitting, given my age and the age that helped shape my ideas and character, that I begin this final narrative evaluation with some lines from Bob Dylan (don't laugh):

*Your old road is
Rapidly agin'
Please get out of the new one
If you can't lend your hand
For the times they are a-changin'.*

Aging: check.

Changing: check.

But why get out now?

First, of course, is the indisputable arithmetic of life. I turned 66 last spring, and there is no veering away from the cold calculations of actuaries who say I likely have in the neighborhood of 15-20 years left in this four stroke engine. As Son Volt croons, "Both feet on the floor, two hands on the wheel. ..." It is indeed time to hit the road.

That said, as I've learned over the decades, numbers never tell the whole story. Please punch in Dylan again, yowling through the speakers and imploring me to get out of the way if I "... can't lend a hand." And so there's reason number two: It seems that I have come to a stark philosophical crossroads with my cherished college and must now acknowledge that I've grown a bit weary of driving into the pedagogical winds blowing down from Saratoga. In the spirit of full disclosure, with the official abandonment of the narrative

evaluation followed in tailgating fashion by the jaw dropping Blue Ribbon Panel recommendations, I was already signaling for the exit.

In the post-post-James Hall era, as this growing and evolving institution has moved in ever tightening circles toward greater structure and accountability, I have found myself – intellectually, creatively and spiritually – moving toward a kind of academic libertarianism, where meaning and truth are not found, as Conrad wrote in *Heart of Darkness*, "... within the shell of a cracked nut," but "... outside, enveloping the tale which brought it out only as a glow brings out a haze." And in moving inexorably toward that misty halo and the transformative magic that I believe emerges from it, it's become quite clear that I, as the mixing metaphors Dylan says, "better start swimming or I'll sink like a stone."

The View From Exit 66

In glancing back over my shoulder at the long strange trip behind me, and then peering through myopic eyes toward the unmarked highway ahead, it's not actually clear how my life will change after Empire State College, only that it will change. Right at the molten core of my experiential half-life of learning at this college has been the simple and profound notion that change itself is the antidote to intellectual and spiritual death on a grand personal scale.

In tracing the roadmap of my own evolution through this evolving institution from a lowly (and low paid) adjunct to some vague honorary (and *unpaid*) position called associate faculty and finally ascending to the coveted role as mentor, it is clear that there has been nothing but change all along the way. Frankly, I can't imagine a more nourishing and safe environment to have evolved and grown as a thinker, as a mentor, as a writer ... or, I might add, as a father and grandfather. (While I'm not ceding



Steve Lewis

any cyber-paternity or maternity rights to Saratoga, this has been a very fertile place for my tribe. To wit, when I started as an adjunct, my wife and I had three children; there are now seven children, five spouses, two "significant others," and 16 grandchildren ... 32 of us in all.)

So, while I am hoping to be a little bit warmer during the mid-winter months (walking around barefoot and nearly naked in the Keys) and spending as much time as possible on my beloved and battered Hatteras Island, I am confident that I will continue to change and grow as a husband, as a father, as a grandfather, as a writer, as a mentor, intimately engaged in the ways in which the dear people in my midst attempt to navigate this incomprehensible universe.

B. EVALUATION

Having long ago dispensed with the notion of myself as a conventional instructor (see *All About Mentoring*, 2000), I have alternately perceived my role at this college either as a poorly-dressed doorman or as a well-dressed wilderness guide. Indeed, that peculiar self-assessment has never been more true, it seems, than over the past three years. As an aging doorman in the modern brick and glass enclosure in which I have found myself since 2009, I have found deeper meaning and renewed

inspiration daily by simply inviting students into various discussions of great books and grander ideas; as a wilderness guide (right here in the mean streets of Newburgh, NY), I have learned a kind of sustaining humility that comes with showing one human being at a time how to navigate and survive the sometimes perilous interior street life.

I have served in a multitude of capacities at Empire State College, academic (mentor, tutor, advisor, evaluator, advocate, committee-er) *and* otherwise (father confessor, shoulder-to-cry-on, kick-in-the-butt, intellectual wingman). Also, while at the now defunct Highland unit, I provided occasional service as plumber, carpenter, recycler and Walmart-type greeter. As such, I also have come to understand more fully – and more robustly – that whatever success I found at the heart of those multi-purpose roles has its roots in the more transcendent skills I learned over 43 years as a parent – too often, I admit, after the fact.

While it seems that far too many colleges in my experience pit students and faculty against each other in traditional controlling parent-child or, worse, warden-prisoner relationships and other deplorably disrespectful forms of *in loco parentis*, at Empire State College I have observed and admired – and learned – and taken to heart – and tried to utilize – the work of some truly remarkable colleagues who have, along the long and winding trail, taught me the art of leading without whip, chain, coercion, intimidation, bribery, guilt, bullying, humiliation, gold stars, cupcakes – or grades.

For reasons big and small, old and new, abstract and concrete, I have grown increasingly inspired over several decades by that pristine model of open-ended collaboration to which I was first introduced by a remarkable mentor at the University of Wisconsin, the poet Jim Hazard – who wrote “It is an ordinary thing to be holy / We do such extraordinary things not to be” – and then actually learned to put

this into practice a few years later by my first teachers in the Hudson Valley during the earlier ‘80s: Dave Porter, Carole Ford, Alan Mandell, Jim Case. Their unique guidance enabled me to understand that the imperative of adult education is far more complex than the transmission of knowledge or the acquisition of critical thinking skills, but is a soulful – and occasionally sorrowful – enterprise that, at its most enduring, brings mentor and student into a knowledge of Old Testament vanity and vexation, the sum of which leads to humility ... and then revelation ... and only then, wisdom.

That said, while I have grown increasingly confident in my skills as a mentor along the way, in this self-assigned gut-checking hybrid CE/PLA, I must admit that I have come to the humbling conclusion that I have not been a very good traditional teacher. In fact, I think I’m rather mediocre when it comes to explaining certain types of material to my students – e.g., transitive verbs and why it matters that anyone should know how to identify them; amino acids and ... well, pretty much everything beyond textbook definitions of their origin and function; the differences among MLA, APA and Chicago documentation and why there needs to be more than one obsessive-compulsive way to provide access to sources. I stumble, I mumble, I grumble deep in my constricting throat and eventually come up with empty variations of the same explanations I first heard – and memorized without ever truly understanding – from my ninth grade days at Wheatley High. Thus, for my teaching efforts over three decades, I’m sorry to say that I think I have only earned a B- or C+.

And yet, when I reflect on the unquantifiable indicators of academic success, the gains measured by the immeasurable depth and quality and consequent satisfactions brought about by the discussions I have shared with my many students (in group studies, in-person, online, on the phone, in the margins), I feel much better about the work I have done here.

For reasons I *still* don’t understand, I have a good and reliable inner compass, one that has enabled me to be a helpful navigator for pilgrims of all kinds searching for meaning, truth and, of course, a college degree. I have taken to heart the silent wail of so many students who have arrived here seeking the clarification of Hemingway’s Jake Barnes who says, “I no longer wanted to know what it was all about. All I wanted to do was know how to live in it.” And so, I have been an unwavering advocate for my students, many of whom have been so battered by their previous educational experiences that they have lost the language and the skills necessary to advocate for themselves.

I have learned over the years how to help students find their own *suis generis* paths to degrees that will sustain them spiritually, emotionally, professionally; I learned how to make each student feel as if I am solely focused on him or her when we talk; I know how to direct a reader into the heart of a narrative, into a deeper and truer understanding of the subtext that carries the real story; I know how to introduce philosophy into a discussion of health science and how to utilize science in a complex and nuanced exploration of health philosophy; and I know in my bones how to introduce a writer to her or his intimate voice, the one – and maybe only – enduring aspect of the sum of any writer’s life.

Thus, at the end of the day(s), I can take a deep cleansing breath, give myself a gentle pat on the back, and acknowledge with some confidence that I have been a pretty good mentor. And so with a wink and a nod toward all the extraordinary colleagues and friends who have mentored me over the decades, I’m not giving myself a grade on this one, just an old time Full Credit.

As Cannonball Adderly occasionally murmurs in my ear, “Mercy, Mercy, Mercy.”

Material Shift

Antonia Perez, Metropolitan Center

I am a mixed-media artist who makes sculpture, assemblage, paintings, collage and drawings. Much of my recent work evolved from my practice of collecting discarded objects such as used plastic bags and empty tissue boxes with the potential for conversion to something unexpected. Their usefulness has not ended and they await a transformation that reveals their hidden beauty.

I challenge myself to find the beauty in a discarded grocery bag, though paradoxically, I regard that plastic bag as a threat and symbol of ecological destruction. By crocheting the bags, I redirect their journey as trash on the way to the landfill, and instead, send them to a second life, one of elevated status and privilege. The colors of the plastic bags are seductive and just as they entice the consumer, they draw me into the process of making. Gathering reusable bags is the first step in a practice that is ultimately meditative in nature. The plastic bags that had accumulated in my own kitchen have been augmented with those collected by others (who also are not willing to toss them into the landfill). Sorting and cutting the bags into strips and then crocheting them is a slow, repetitive process grounded in my lifelong engagement with needlework. I crochet some bags into oversized representations of household or quotidian objects such as dishcloths, potholders, lace, curtains and doilies that in much of the world were traditionally handmade by women in the home. They become heirlooms – a legacy to those who remain after one has gone on. Plastic bags are perhaps one of the unintended heirlooms that will endure on Earth for generations to come.

This practice also encompasses an abiding interest in textile-related design and the pursuit of the means to conflate it with abstract sculpture. Through the repetitive labor of crocheting the bags, a visual language emerges with each piece. As I work, I meditate on work – handwork, housework and artists' work. I make work that wavers between abstraction and representation and between object and image, never wanting it to remain in one realm or the other.

antoniaaperezstudio.blogspot.com



Antonia's Folly – 2010
114" h x 40" diameter, crocheted plastic bags, hula hoop
photo by Timothy K. Lee



White Fence (Installed in apple tree grove at Rosenthal Library, Queens College, N.Y.) – 2011
360" x 32", crocheted plastic bags, wood
photo by Nancy Bareis



Donald Judd's Grandmother – 2010
36" x 36" x 36", crocheted plastic bags, steel
photo by Antonia Perez



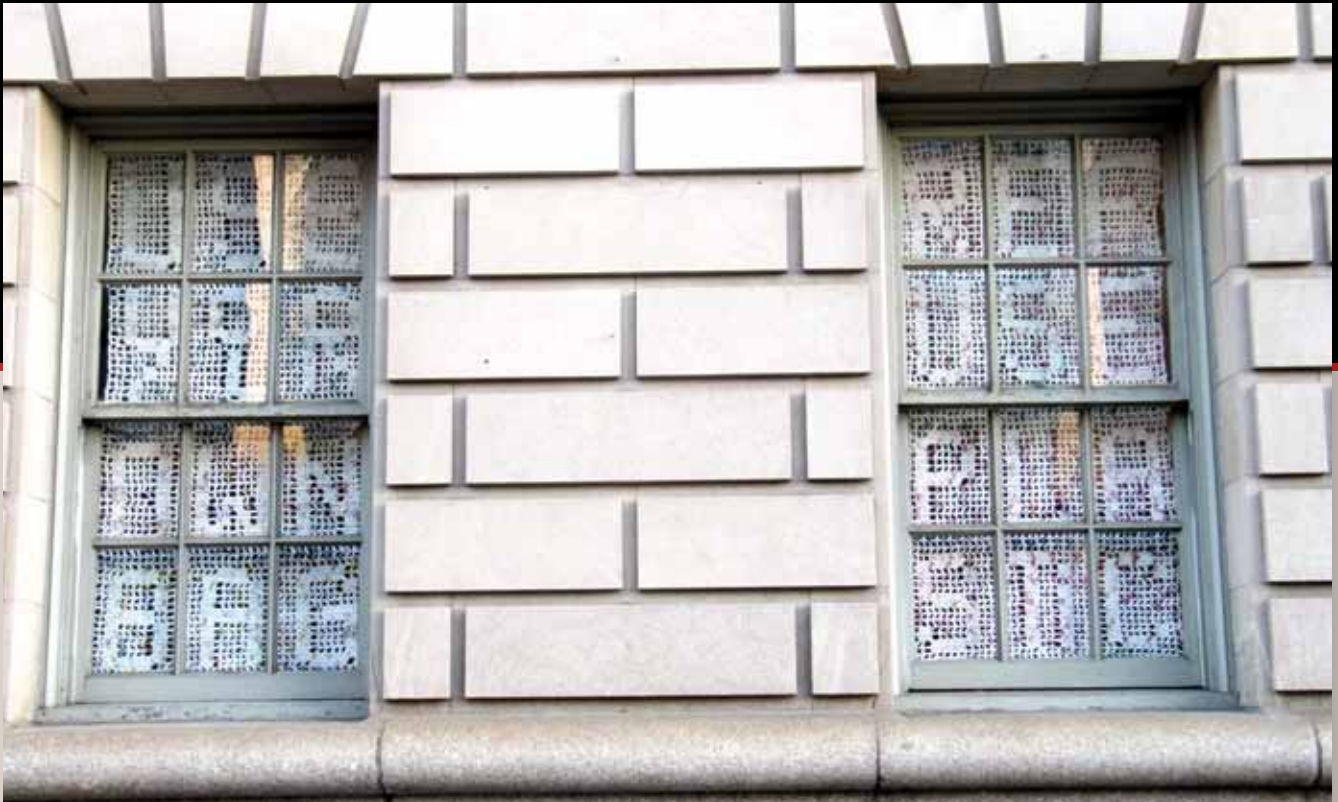
Dishcloth – 2008
83" x 72", crocheted plastic bags
photo by Antonia Perez



Rope – 2012
3 pieces, 1 ½" x 108", 1 ½" x 120", 1 ½" x 124",
crocheted plastic bags
photo by Cibele Veiera



Drape – 2009
Dimensions variable, 50" h, crocheted plastic bags
photo by Antonia Perez



Curtains (installed at Jamaica Center for Arts and Learning) – 2011
Diptych, 40" x 77" each piece, crocheted plastic bags, aluminum
photo by Sang Min Kwak



Black Lace – 2011
Dimensions variable, 17' w, crocheted plastic bags
photo by Antonia Perez

Mentoring as a Means to De-Centering the Academy

Juanita Johnson-Bailey, The University of Georgia

One of the highlights of my 20-year academic career as a professor was giving the 41st annual Boyer lecture at Empire State College in May 2012. In particular, it was a privilege to deliver the talk because it celebrated Ernest L. Boyer, the former chancellor of the SUNY system, a national education hero, who was so significant in the founding of Empire State College. And secondly, this event was satisfying as a personal watershed moment because it required me to critically reflect on my career in the professoriate. In writing my speech, “Re-Centering and De-Centering the Ivory Tower: The Insights and Musings of An Interloper,” and attempting to take a philosophical perspective, I came to realize that that I’ve been about de-centering, making an effort to democratize my higher education setting, for my entire career, even before I knew that there was a name for it. In preparing for this speech, I came to understand that my multilayered teaching approach is the personification and the expression of my activism.

Moreover, I recognized that my teaching as activism includes mentoring and that mentoring is inseparable from my teaching, a fusion that is de-centerative performativity (Butler, 1997). Yet, I am not unique in the performance of student-centered teaching/mentoring because it is the mainstay of most adult educators. De-centering is an undertaking that adult educators apply in response to their discipline-based philosophical approach. As Derrida (1978) makes clear in his chapter, “Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences,” the center is “not a fixed locus but a function.” And therefore, de-centering is the performance of our theoretical stance.

As an atypical professor at my Southern Research University, a black woman who was born and educated in the region, I embody de-centering in my academic community. From my perspective, as the *other*, I move through this physical,

intellectual and psychological space called “academia,” troubling the terrain by my presence. In addition to being the personification of the *other*, I hold the expressed intent to make a difference and to make space (Sheared, 1994) in my academic environment. To my amazement, it took this speech preparation for me to become conscious that my teaching, my labor in the academy, was different because I am different. Then again, I also would assign difference to my adult education colleagues in general, because of our place in and relation to higher education. Remember that we carved out this niche of adult education in response to a pedagogy that did not adequately address adults as learners (Cross, 1981; Cunningham, 1988; Knowles, 1980).

As an avowed feminist adult educator, I embrace the Second Wave (Humm, 1992) feminist belief that, “The personal is political” (Hanisch, 1969). But as a black woman, I know that my racial standing more often than not translates into an understanding that the, “The political is often personal.” And so, it is these stances and their accompanying perspectives that inform my educational practice. The ensuing axioms are twofold. First, in order to make space for more learners, I must disrupt the norms of academia that use positionality to assign place.

Secondly, in order to make more space, more people must become a part of the whole. This act of “troubling” does not involve pushing *others* out, but is a “function,” as explained by Derrida. Therefore, in this instance, the exercise involves attempting to make more space by inviting in *others* who are disenfranchised. Our adult learners are frequently the *others*, the nontraditional student: learners returning to the school after an interruption, adult students over 21 years old; part-time students who are full-time employees. These *others*, our adult learners, bring a wealth of knowledge and experience. Therefore,



Juanita Johnson-Bailey

our approach must respect their skills and abilities, and we must endeavor to establish a relationship imbued with reciprocity. Such a relationship can only be built on trust, the necessary grounding of the teaching/mentoring dynamic.

Mentoring as a Site of Activism

The core of my teaching/mentoring is a philosophy that is based on self-revelation that is grounded in my childhood in the segregated South of the 1950s United States. It all began with my grandmother, who could neither read nor write. As I learned, I endeavored to teach my 85-year-old grandmother, Sarah, a nontraditional learner. My first day of kindergarten also was my first day as a teacher. Every day, I ran the two blocks home to teach my grandmother what I had learned. I was determined to teach her how to sign her name “Sarah” and not “X.” Although she was my first pupil, she also was my original mentor, showing me that teaching and learning could be acts of shared empowerment. Her willingness to be self-revelatory, even though it exposed the painful truth of her lack of ability to read and write, engendered in me an understanding of the power that can

be inherent in a give-and-take relationship between teacher and student, a joyfully dynamic, joint process. What I know now is that while I was endeavoring to teach her, she was schooling and mentoring me. In our days on the front porch in Columbus, Ga., I discovered that she never learned to read and write because of the Jim Crow System that engulfed our lives and determined our possibilities, but that if we resisted and worked in community, we could advance an agenda for change. We could make our space and make a place for others.

As you might expect, because the early circumstances of my childhood learning, my higher education methodology is rooted in social justice and incorporates critiques of Western rationality, androcentric theories and structured inequalities. I teach within a political framework that attends to and encourages the following: 1) a caring and safe environment; 2) consciousness-raising; and 3) activism. My approach was further influenced by the loving and radical missionary nuns at my Catholic grade school and high school, and the integrated refuge to which I could retreat as a military brat. Each of these circumstances continues to shape what I bring to the classroom and to my students. But it all comes back to the first day that a five-year old ran home, excited, eager, thrilled to show her maternal grandmother what she had learned. Mama Sarah never learned to write her name, but she did become skilled at recognizing it in my kindergartener's scrawl. However, I believe that her example of modeling a type of teaching/learning that encompassed mentoring was adult education in practice.

An Operational Definition of Mentoring

Most definitions frame the relationship between mentor and protégé as one of "intense caring," where a person with more experience works with a person with less experience to promote both personal and professional development (Boice, 1992; Hansman, 2001; Johnson-Bailey, 2012; Mullen, 2000; Murrell & Tangri, 1999). However, this framing of the relationship in purely psychological terms, while partly true, ignores the central dynamic of any mentoring relationship, which is hierarchical in nature (Bowman,

Kite, Branscombe, & Williams, 1999). Virtually all of the literature about mentoring assumes a "teacher centered view of learning" (Margolis & Romero, 2001, p. 85). In fact, the very definitions of mentoring speak about the "coaching and counseling" functions, which effectively define the learning as going in one direction (Hansman, 2001; Murrell & Tangri, 1999).

One problem with this understanding is that it is highly paternalistic in that the mentor is seen as above the fray, bestowing gifts on the protégé in a highly altruistic way. However, to be real and truly human, we need to understand that relationships affect both people. Some literature is now beginning to talk about the benefits that mentors gain from the relationship, including career enhancement, information exchange, recognition and personal satisfaction (Smith, Smith, & Markham, 2000). Since studies have indicated that mentoring relationships can positively affect development and advancement of students (Allen, Eby, Poteet, Lentz, & Lima, 2004; Constantine, Smith, Redington, & Owens, 2008; Crutcher, 2007; Moore & Toliver, 2010), mentoring and teaching, in my mind, seem inextricably linked. Good mentoring helps the protégé to reach his or her full potential, with benefits of effective mentoring including increased competence, increased feelings of confidence in one's abilities and higher esteem (Constantine, Smith, Redington, & Owens, 2008; Crutcher, 2007). Mentors routinely help protégés by providing inside information and access to informal information about one's organization, as well as tips on navigating the process, securing resources and understanding the institutional climate – unwritten rules for which insiders have insight.

If mentoring is to be successful, establishing mutual confidence is crucial. On the surface, the concept of trust as it applies to mentoring appears simplistic: faith in the other needs to be present and reciprocal in nature between the mentor and protégé. While working through trust on the individual level is routinely discussed in the mentoring literature, it must be recognized that the mentoring relationship is much broader than an association between two persons. Mentoring occurs

on two dimensions: the internal aspect that transpires between the mentor and the protégé, and a second external aspect that takes place between the mentoring pair and their institution (Knight & Trowler, 1999; O'Neill, Horton, & Crosby, 1999). The connection to the institution and its members is a weighty part of the mentoring dynamic, especially for nontraditional students, who often don't feel respected by the rules and procedures of traditional colleges. For example, the often constraining operating hours and class schedules of the typical university prove problematic for working adults and nontraditional students, especially those with school-age children.

So, how do I mentor in this place, when I feel an obligation to address not only the personal, but the institutional, as well?

So, how do I mentor in this place, when I feel an obligation to address not only the personal, but the institutional, as well?

And how do I mentor in this place when, according to my mentor, Ron Cervero, "in order for any (mentoring) relationship to be successful, both parties must benefit" (Johnson-Bailey & Cervero, 2004, p. 9)? The answer to the first question is to be mindful of the context (the student, the program and my narrative). And the response to the latter issue of what the mentor acquires from mentoring is one of which I am cognizant. What I gain by placing mentoring as the nucleus of my teaching, advising and working with students is the ability to de-center or make space by attempting to create a site that reflects our society, a place that is welcoming, nurturing and fosters successful learners. This is, a setting that I longed for when coming of age in the midst of the Civil Rights struggle. It's a milieu that Sarah could not have imagined, but would have desired had she thought it possible.

My Personal Journey of Risk and Struggle

After decades of deferring dreams, I finished my doctorate months before my 40th birthday and I began work as an assistant professor at the University of Georgia, the oldest assistant professor in my cohort of 113 incoming faculty. On a campus of over 1,000 faculty and 35,000 students, there are only 97 African-American faculty and 2,400 African-American students, 10 percent and 6 percent, respectively. With such demographics in a state that is 30 percent black, it is reasonable to say that I considered this new academic home a strange land, and myself an outsider in this non-representative and unique setting. Quite truthfully, I am often uncomfortable in this setting: being a numerical minority, facing the legacy of Dixie that intermittently impacts the campus climate, and working in the intimidating environment of a research-intensive university. Inevitably, my practice, which is based on the early lessons learned on the front porch, presents teaching as a shared, risk-filled, continuous process that fuses mentoring as its steady companion. Whether I am teaching or advising or even traveling with students, I am attempting to engage in mentoring.

Foremost as a teacher, I mentor by being self-revelatory and taking the risk of admitting my failings. For instance, in my graduate course, Writing for Publication, the optimal teaching tools are my publication folders – actual boxes that contain the complete record of an in-print journal or book chapter. The students in the class are privy to the initial proposal, correspondence with editors, the multiple manuscript drafts, rejections, reviews and revisions. Each group of students chooses one of my publications to track from conception to publication. While I find this act of revealing the arduous and often anxiety-ridden publication activity precarious, I persist in the process from year to year. And according to the students, witnessing their teacher's struggle to get into print by writing draft after draft and enduring often harsh critiques from reviewers, helps to lessen their fears and lets them know that persistence is directly correlated to publication. Furthermore, this disclosure or attempt to demystify the writing and publication process by offering

personal experiences encourages the class to ask the most personal questions and consequently puts me in the position where I must respond, regardless of my level of discomfort, for to do otherwise breaks the growing trust.

Now in my role of advisor, my mentoring role is more explicit. Notwithstanding the mode of advisement, face-to-face, online, or over the phone, I seize opportunities to ask questions when I perceive doubt, distress or tension from the advisee. Counseling is rarely advice, but more often a “when it happened to me” narrative. Few areas are off-limits, as a mentor is indebted to offer what will help. My students know the underbelly of the professor that stands before them: I was rejected when I applied to my first Ph.D. program; I have failed to make the benchmark for several nominated honors; not only have I been disillusioned by fellow students and colleagues (who remain anonymous), but there have been times I have let my fears and doubts stymie my own advancement.

Finally, whether I'm working with students on upcoming conferences, planning a program or traveling with students on a Study Abroad Tour, mentoring is embedded. If it's a conference presentation, the student and I will plan together and rehearse our presentation in front of a cohort of peers, and I'll share tales from the field about previous presentations (what can go wrong, what usually happens and what to do when no one comes to hear you). On the occasion when I just can't get the message or the concept across, I hold the belief that the process of mentoring/teaching/advising is not a singular in nature, but is continual.

Concluding Thoughts

As I offer final thoughts on mentoring, I'd be remiss if I didn't acknowledge that I continue to benefit from being mentored by my senior colleagues, my peers and my students. In my experience, there has never been a situation bereft of a lesson, as mentoring moments abound. But as my first department head reminded me, if a person is not open to being mentored, they can't be mentored. And to those wise words, I'll add that in order to be mentored and to mentor, you have to take the chance of

disclosing your fears, weaknesses, needs and limitations. Accepting a seemingly subjugated posture of being the one to receive mentoring requires the protégé to flout the culture of the academy that promotes the notion of the brilliant solitary scholar, and intimates that members (students and faculty) should either have all the solutions or at least know how to acquire the answers. The ultimate solution is to understand mentoring as an essential element of higher education; a social justice component of our teaching, advising and all the work that we undertake.

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“Adult learners are typically defined as learners over the age of 25, and are often referred to as nontraditional students. Yet for almost two decades, adult learners have comprised close to 40 percent of the college-going population, spanning a range of backgrounds and experiences, from Iraq and Afghanistan war veterans and GED credential holders to 55-year-old professionals and skilled workers in career transition.”

– ACE (American Council on Education)
Higher Education Topics: Adult Learners, 2013
<http://www.acenet.edu>

The Monastery at Skriða

Deborah Smith, Center for International Programs

On my last reassignment during the fall of 2011, I volunteered to restore the monastery at Skriða, in the Fljótisdalur Valley of East Iceland. A decade-long archeological dig discovered not only the remains of the monastery but also its function as a hospital for Iceland's Eastern Fjords. In 1493, the sick, the dying and those needing medical assistance (like pregnant women) came to Skriða and the Augustinian monks for care.

As a contributing writer for *Iceland Review/Atlantica*, the English-language visitor's magazine distributed throughout Iceland, I was interested in seeing a new part of the country and doing it during a time with considerable daylight. I had already visited the capitol and one December, visited the north, where at that time of year, there were exactly four hours of daylight.

Iceland is a very expensive country in the summer and fall, so I contacted See Beyond Borders (SEEDS: www.seeds.is) to sign up for a two-week assignment in a part of Iceland where I had never been before. As the oldest woman and the only American in the group, I headed off through the south of Iceland with 13 other SEEDS volunteers to the post-excavation site. We would live in the archeologist's quarters, work during the week and see the Eastern Fjords area on the weekends courtesy of our hosts at Skriðuklastur.

Our group's two-week task was to reassemble the site to its original state after the completion of the excavation. From two towering mounds of earth at the edges of the site, we were filling the cloister rooms with endless barrows of soil, packing it down and later covering it in handmade turf. Areas within the rest of the monastery would get the same treatment, while the interior rooms would be packed down and covered with deep layers of wood chips. Icelandic stone-and-earth walls would separate these interior rooms, once we actually constructed



PHOTO: SKOTTA VALGARDSDOTTIR

Digging the internal rooms at Skriduklastur. Deborah driving the excavator.

the walls. In the days to come, I would drive heavy machinery, comb hay, lever stones larger than my head into a wall, and dig and shovel more soil than I'd ever want to see in my life again. The things I'll do to see a place I've never been before. ...

As I began shoveling barrows of earth into the churchyard, I realized the irregular pits before me were actually someone's grave. Nearly 200 skeletons were exhumed during the recent archeological dig. Whether indigent or benefactor, it was the last resting place of East Icelanders for quite some time – at least before our group started its work. Packing earth into another grave, I wondered about the people buried there.

What I knew of the site came from the nearby museum: these were men, women and children of all ages who died in the monastery's care. They succumbed to dental infections, congenital diseases, syphilis, injuries, death in childbirth, influenza and

tuberculosis. Many were young children or not yet born; some of the mothers were gravely ill. Other folks lived into their 50s and 60s before their shadows crossed the monk's door. Someone 50 or older had reached a "ripe old age" attributed to a diet high in fish, at a time when Iceland was without running water or electricity.

As a Catholic hospital, Skriðuklastur's monks buried those who died in their care. Religious duty compelled the monks to treat the sick, help the needy and bury the dead – without running water, indoor plumbing, central heating, knowledge of dentistry or even how infection is transmitted. It was a formidable task – one they did in the light of faith.

What was the day-to-day reality of 16th century life? Life then was hard, really hard, especially in the Arctic winter with little sun and mostly darkness. Infections were common in the centuries before antibiotics.



The SEEDS volunteers at Skriduklaustur included men and women from England, Italy, France, Russia, Germany, Japan, the United States and Spain. Here, the group poses for a photo after completing restoration work.

PHOTO: CLAIRE HAMMER

The monastery garden grew only about 10 medicinal plants; the monks used mercury to treat wounds. Think of the size of your local pharmacy and then consider using 10 little plants like garlic, burdock, buttercup, juniper berries and white birch for nearly any ailment. No wonder so many died of conditions that today hardly qualify as fatal – like ear and dental infections, gingivitis and arthritis.

Each churchyard grave had a location marker and a number that defines them still: Grave 33, Grave 65, Grave 192. Small plastic numbered bags and used cups were littered across the onsite toolshed: a visible reminder that the archeologists and their sharp spoons had come and gone.

On the weekends, our group explored the Highlands and the East Fjords region of Iceland – some of the prettiest and most spectacular scenery in the country. We rode Icelandic horses, swam at the public pool in nearby Egilsstaðir, hiked to high waterfalls, fished in the Highlands and feasted at the Klausturkaffi Cake Buffet on Fridays after work.

At the Hafrahvammur Canyon one Saturday, while the others left on a hike, I sat alone in this stunningly beautiful wilderness with wide skies and silence. But thoughts of the people buried at Skriðuklaustur – whether monks who lived in this place or the lives of those who died there – haunted me still.

Who were these people? As a Catholic, I could take an educated guess at how God and religion informed their lives when Iceland was Catholic, before the Reformation in Europe made Evangelical Lutheranism the national religion. But beyond a 50-something woman in Grave 10, what did we really know? What were their names? What was their idea of God? Where had they been in their lives? Who did they love? If they had the chance, what would they tell us – here in the far future – about the past and what they hoped tomorrow would bring?

I'll never know the answers to these questions, but every day, thinking about them shortened the distance between the people who'd been in the graves and my work at Skriðuklaustur. For two weeks,



Small mountains of earth also were shoveled by hand and wheeled into the excavation area to restore the monastery rooms. Lower left, the beginnings of interior Icelandic rock-and-earth walls constructed by the volunteers. In background, view of the Fljótisdalur Valley of East Iceland.

PHOTO: CLAIRE BIGOT

we moved among remnants of these former lives – ones that could not have imagined this day when our group finally finished restoring a piece of Icelandic history for the future. And we did it: built stone walls that sequestered space into defined rooms, turfed the churchyard, laid the wooden chips on the interiors and literally moved mountains to reflect the past as best we know it.

Even though I don't want to be a forgotten skeleton in a numbered grave, centuries into the future I could be exactly that, when photos fade and those who knew me are gone, too. I can only hope that my life will prompt someone, if an excavation is done, to respectfully fill in my grave and wonder about what I did, who I loved and what I hoped for in much the same way. Then all these lives will be a blessing. Even mine.

To Learn More

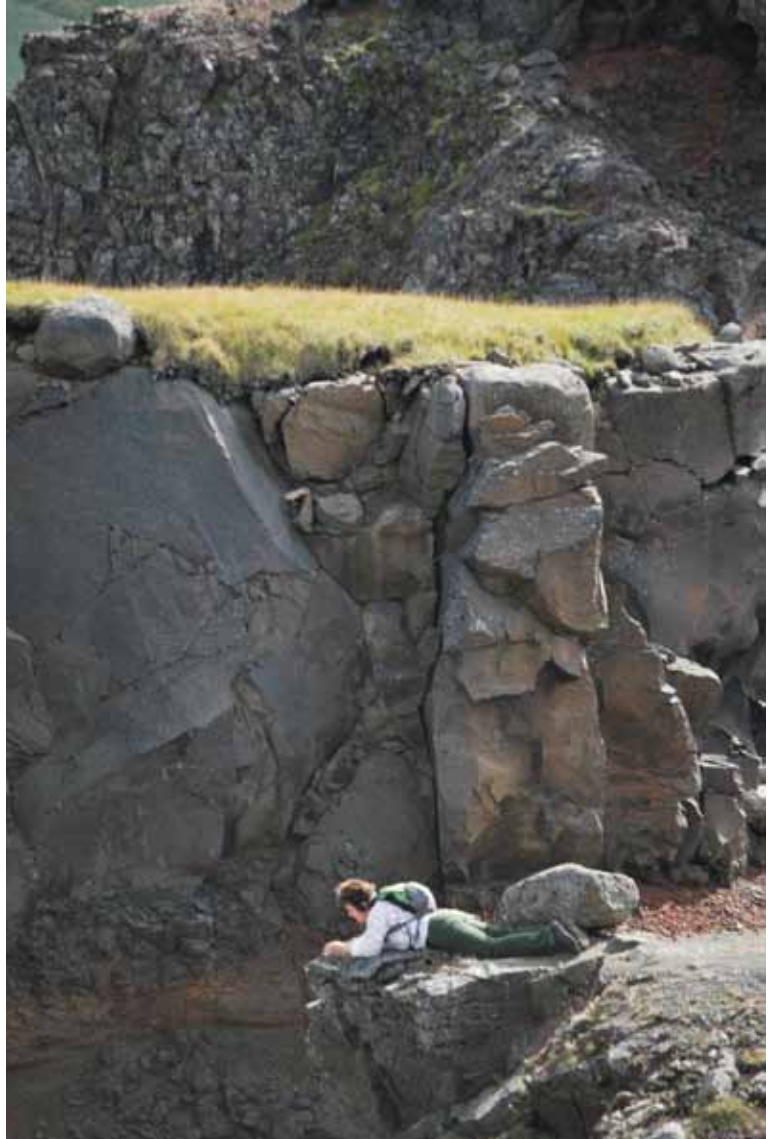
Skriðuklaustur website: <http://www.skriduklaustur.is/index.php/en>

This is the official website of the Gunnar Gunnarsson Institute where the monastery remains lie. Parts of the site are in English and explain the various aspects of the excavation in the context of Icelandic history, including:

- Icelandic Monasteries:
<http://www.skriduklaustur.is/index.php/en/archsite/history>
- The Archeological Excavation:
<http://www.skriduklaustur.is/index.php/en/archsite/research/97-formleifarannsokn>
- Excavation Methodology:
http://www.skriduklaustur.is/~skridukl/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=139%3Aaefereafraeei&catid=51%3Aarannsoknin&Itemid=74&lang=en

Project Plans: A brief overview of the excavation plans.
<http://grampus.150m.com/icelandectea.htm>

Anthropological Analysis of Selected Gravesites: A scholarly technical report, downloadable in PDF format.
http://www.academia.edu/708720/An_anthropological_analysis_of_graves_174_181_and_195_from_Skriduklaustur_Iceland



Deborah photographs near the waterfall Litlanesfoss in the East Fjords region of Iceland.

PHOTO: ESTEFANIA CALPARSORO

Archeoentomological Analysis: Scholarly analysis of insect remains inside the monastery, in PDF format.
https://notendur.hi.is/sjk/SKO_2009.pdf

Additional Scholarly articles are available online via Google Scholar. They include:

Kristjánsdóttir, S. (2010). The tip of the iceberg: The material of Skriðuklaustur Monastery and Hospital. *Norwegian Archeological Review*, 43(1), 44-62.

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Larsson, I., & Lundquist, K. (2010). *Icelandic medieval monastic sites*. Alnarp: Sveriges lantbruksuniversitet. *LTJ-fakultetens*.

Volunteer Opportunities in Iceland:

See Beyond Borders (SEEDS)
<http://www.seeds.is/>

Mentoring Women

Roz Dow, Central New York Center

I am a mentoring woman. I'm proud of my mentoring skills. I have had ample opportunity to mentor students and newer faculty at the college and have enjoyed great success in my mentoring. Sadly, I never had the help and guidance of a female mentor myself. I would bet that many other women, especially baby boomers, never had women mentors either.

Why was that? There are some easy answers to that question and most of them center on the scarcity of women in powerful management or professional roles "back then." Happily, that isn't the case, now. Younger women know that they can find women mentors to help guide them toward achieving success personally and professionally.

While completing dissertation research about the socialization of organizational newcomers, I learned that members of Generation Y (those born between 1988 and 1995; dates vary, but this is the general span), both men and women, seek mentors from among the most powerful and experienced people in their organizations. The most successful mentor relationship occurs when the mentor and protégé share similar traits or personalities (Benishek, Bieschke, Park, & Slatery, 2004; Blass, Brouer, Perrewé, & Ferris, 2007). They also wanted more autonomy in selecting their mentors instead of having one assigned to them.

After conducting another research project while on a reassignment, I interviewed new mentors at Empire State College about their socialization experience and their interactions with other mentors. I found that they held similar attitudes as those of the newcomers I previously interviewed at law firms.

I decided to take advantage of my research results and expertise in mentoring to offer some practical training to women in the larger community of Central New York. I

intended the audience to be Empire State College students, as well as women working in service non-profits, young professional women and women who sought to re-enter the workplace. I wanted to plan a conference that focused on mentoring for young women, as an underserved population, and that also could provide networking opportunities for them.

My dean, Nikki Shrimpton, was very supportive of the idea but immediately asked me how I would fund the conference. How naïve was I to believe that good ideas immediately attract bundles of cash?! Ultimately, a grant proposal was submitted to the SUNY Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion for "Explorations in Diversity and Academic Excellence." Sadly, only one grant is given to a campus and Empire State College had submitted several proposals with one from the Metropolitan Center receiving the grant for a very worthy ongoing project. With encouragement from our provost and Office of Academic Affairs, who were very interested in seeing this conference develop, I rewrote the proposal and submitted it to the Empire State College Foundation's Community Outreach Fund. Other funding was provided by a local corporate co-sponsor and from registration fees for conference attendance. In the spirit of the "Power of SUNY," we partnered with the SUNY Leadership Institute whose director, Lee Riddell, was convinced that this conference would be a strong addition to the Leadership Institute's "Tools for Leadership" program. Riddell's office provided expertise in event planning, a network of speakers, an online registration system and marketing to other SUNY institutions across the state. We at the Central New York Center did our own marketing across central New York to local community groups and corporations.

The result of our hard work was a one-day conference called, "Leadership Tools for Women: Creating the Right Mentoring Environment for You," which took place



Roz Dow

on August 24, 2012 in the Central New York Center. It attracted women from 14 other SUNY colleges, community not-for-profits, corporate managers and new hires, and several of our own CNY students who wanted to learn how to mentor as part of the first class of the Women Mentoring Women project headed by CNY mentors Yvonne Murphy and Marie Pennucci.

On a beautiful summer morning, everyone converged at the CNY Center in East Syracuse for a day of learning and networking. Starting with a warm welcome at the reception desk from Utica secretary Rose Stevens and the CNY staff (Michael Mancini, Patti Pierce, Phyllis Wright, Andrews Kurian, Cindi Gamage, Deb McEligot and Heather Howard), attendees were made aware that this would be a special event. Their own energy was very evident and networking began as soon as they registered and were introduced to Nikki Shrimpton, Lee Riddell and other key players of the day. Many women had already mentioned to me that they were very happy that this day was about women and women's concerns about professional development.

The program began with an exciting keynote address by Nicole Williams, connection director for LinkedIn, titled, “Get Lucky! How Preparation Can Change the Course of Your Career.” Attendees listened to her humorous and inspirational description of her own mentors, how she had “found” them and what they had added to her life. The audience appreciated her energy and advice. They seemed to respond to her story of how she recognized potential mentors from among the people she met at each stage of her career. Sometimes she did not even realize they were *really* mentors until later on when their influence and advice helped her achieve her next goal.

This was followed by a more scholarly address, “Understanding Mentoring,” led by Kathy Jelly, director of the Center for Mentoring and Learning and Desalyn De-Souza, CNY mentor, about the meaning and scope of mentoring in a broader sense. They discussed mentoring students, mentoring new faculty and expanded to how mentoring occurs in the professional, non-academic world, as well. After these two joint sessions, everyone moved on to select from concurrent sessions throughout the morning.

CNY mentor Julie Gedro and I offered a session on “How to Be a Great Mentor,” which focused on best practices mixed with some advice on being proactive and planning for individual professional growth. A very well-known local CEO, Maryann Roefaro, offered, “What to Expect from Your Mentor,” which addressed the issues of identifying and securing a potential mentor, handling positive and negative feedback, and what to do when the mentor relationship isn’t working as desired.

Since the planning group believed that communication competencies were crucial for any successful relationship, we welcomed

the inclusion of “Communication for Mentoring Success” by Empire State College colleagues Yvonne Murphy and Marie Pennucci, who designed an interactive workshop on assertiveness, listening and communicating anger or frustration. We also were very fortunate to include Sally Klingel, director of the Labor Management Program at the Scheinman Institute on Conflict Resolution at Cornell University, who talked about her specialty, “Conflict and Negotiation,” and Ruth Hopkins from the SUNY Leadership Institute who shared, “Working with Mentoring Tools.”

The concurrent sessions were certainly informative, and due to their participative nature, a lot of fun. You could hear animated conversations, laughter and applause everywhere in the center. The CNY staff, mentors and students shared in the excitement of the day by directing our conference attendees around the center and, of course, setting up classrooms and preparing materials for the day. It was a truly joint effort that made us all proud. The comfort level of the attendees was evident when, at the luncheon, we found the conference room jammed with about 100 people who were sharing their observations of the day and talking as though they had known each for years. They were confident, they were excited, and they were mentoring!

We ended the day with a low-key reception and a final opportunity to exchange business cards, emails and plans for future meetings. At that time, we also informally asked for feedback about the sessions. People were very forthcoming with comments, and we had a good idea about what had pleased them and which aspects weren’t as successful.

In an online survey taken about a week after the conference, we asked people to volunteer responses about each session they

attended and provide suggestions for future workshops. Their responses told us that they appreciated the “energy” of the day, the sense of empowerment they felt, concrete suggestions given, and being with people who shared similar goals and expectations. Many wanted to attend future workshops and check back with us on their individual development plans that they had begun to identify at the conference.

One of the most amazing and gratifying results of the conference was the collaborations that occurred: first, the collaboration with SUNY Leadership Institute and brainstorming among the planners, then meeting with the speakers and sharing our perspectives, and finally the whole CNY group’s investment in the success of the conference. When focused on the same goal, all of that energy resulted in a smooth operation that was recognized and enjoyed by attendees, and, above all, one that advanced the development of mentoring women.

Note

If any other center is interested in sponsoring a similar event in conjunction with CNY, please contact Dean Nikki Shrimpton or Roz Dow.

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Can Science Education Evolve? Considerations on the Pedagogic Relevance of Novel Research Discoveries in Animal Behavior

Guillaume Rieucau, Institute of Marine Research, Bergen, Norway and
Kevin L. Woo, Metropolitan Center

"It's poetry in motion. She turned her tender eyes to me. As deep as any ocean. As sweet as any harmony. But, she blinded me with science."

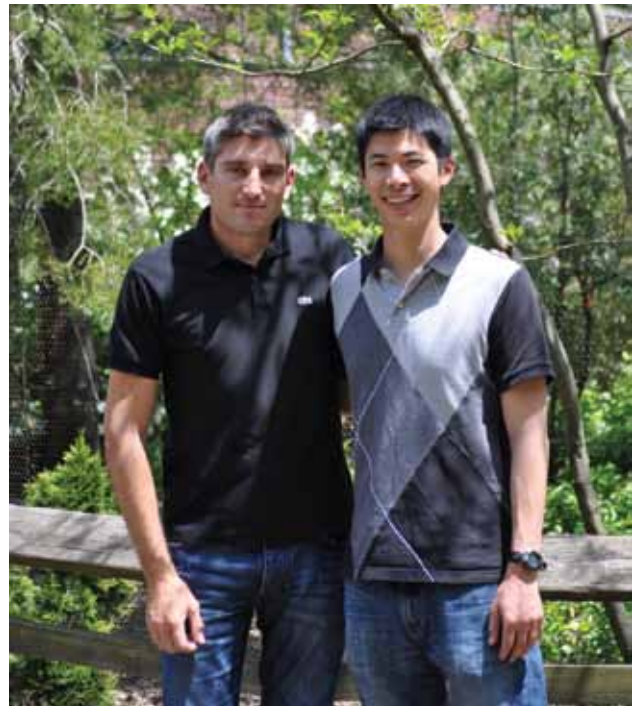
– Thomas Dolby, *"She Blinded Me with Science"* (1982)

When we were both two undergraduate students following our first Animal Behavior course in packed auditoria at Southampton College of Long Island University or at Paul Sabatier University of Toulouse, we were fascinated by lectures on sexual selection, anti-predator behaviors, optimal foraging, competition or cooperation in animals. However, times are changing, we are changing and science is changing. While instructors of the discipline still present the proximate (i.e., likely eliciting stimuli) and ultimate (i.e., evolutionary forces) causes of behaviors, it is easy to notice that recent animal behavior textbooks integrate novel topics. For example, within what we consider the latest editions to texts in our field, the authors present new considerations in the field with new ideas that derive from research progress. Today, textbooks incorporate the gene-environment interaction, animal personality and behavioral syndromes, social network theory, social learning and cultural transmission (e.g., the second edition of *Principles of Animal Behavior* by Lee Alan Dugatkin, 2008). Obviously, scholarly achievements over the short history of behavioral research were the building blocks for the evolution of the educational material that were offered to undergraduate and graduate animal behavior students.

In this essay, we want to present our reflection on the need for teachers and mentors who practice animal behavior

science at the tertiary level to continuously refine their educational material based on the advancements of the scientific research. In addition, we propose a series of considerations for instructors to assess the pedagogic relevance of novel research discoveries and to include them appropriately into the teaching material. To start, we feel it is important to clearly define what we mean by animal behavior science. Throughout, we will employ the term animal behavior science in its broad and inclusive sense following Bateson's (2012) presentation of *Behavioral Biology*: the scientific domain that incorporates several sub-disciplines with their own distinct perspectives, such as behavioral ecology, evolutionary biology, ethology, sociobiology, psychology or neuroscience.

We advocate that proper application of research studies to regular work with our students can be of significant educational value. Previously, Prince, Felder and Brent (2007) examined the deeply rooted belief that faculty research enriches undergraduate teaching. The authors argued that this claim is seldom, if ever, supported by firm evidence and suggested that the link between research and teaching, especially at the university level, may be weaker than commonly thought. If so, what are the principal reasons of this? Mainly, the two activities have different primary goals and require different skills and basic knowledge



Guillaume Rieucau (left) and Kevin L. Woo

(Rugarcia, 1991; Felder, 1994). If research tends to focus on increasing knowledge around a scientific question through novel discoveries, then teaching implies a transfer of knowledge from teachers to students using diverse learning strategies. Moreover, the academic vision of institutions can favor, or sometimes disfavor, what Prince et al. (2007) termed the "Research-Teaching nexus," the observed connection between the two kinds of academic activities. Thus, for example, based on a negative correlation found between research-oriented universities in the United States and several educational indices, Astin (1994) concluded that pursuing curricula in highly research-driven faculties negatively impact students' development; nevertheless, the opposite trend was observed for student-

centered institutions. According to Astin, the two points are strongly interconnected. Generally, research-oriented institutions attempt to recruit scientists with strong research profiles to strengthen their faculty research program instead of scholars who are primarily devoted to teaching. Hence, meeting the expectations of faculty research missions becomes the prime motivation for scholars to place teaching as a secondary task. Even though we share some of the concerns raised by Astin (1994) and Prince et al. (2007), we believe that a successful combination of both aspects of academia is indeed possible and beneficial for students; this, regardless of their educational level or the type of academic institution where they are pursuing their degrees.

Students' interest, personal development and academic success should be the essence of any faculty mission. Institutions should offer the opportunity to students to grasp the reality of the scientific research, during student research projects or by bringing research into the classroom. This should be considered as a significant pedagogic achievement. But, can we ensure a positive interplay between teaching and research? We argue here that this requires a proactive attitude from teachers and mentors by: 1) keeping track of novel advancements of the research in their teaching discipline, 2) determining and extracting the pedagogical substance of new published results, and 3) combining them to the educational platform. To this aim, college environment and culture may encourage teachers' motivation to use research novelties in their teaching materials. In this writing, we want to propose a series of considerations for instructors in animal behavior science to strengthen this "Research-Teaching nexus."

A (Brief) History of Nearly Nothing

We are two junior scientists in the field of animal behavior who had followed classic scientific training, defended both master's and Ph.D. theses in research-oriented academic institutions in different countries (United States, New Zealand, Australia, France and Canada) and have post-doctorate experiences in different parts of the world that have contributed to the personal building of our scientific niche. One of us (Woo) now an assistant professor at Empire

State College in New York City and the other (Rieucan) is currently a post-doctoral fellow at the Institute of Marine Research in Bergen, Norway. On a regular basis, we communicate the results of our works to the scientific community through scientific publications in peer-reviewed journals or during seminars, congresses or symposia.

Since 2006, we have collaborated on studies around the broad question of animal communication and the evolution of signals employed during animal interactions. Most of our experimental research involves the use of innovative techniques, like video playback and computer-generated animations, to mimic animal partners during social interactions. Lately, their use in testing for visual signal design characteristics has become increasingly popular. We have devoted time and effort to present this experimental approach as an efficient and accurate means to simulate companions and precisely control what focal animals get to observe or experience in term of social stimuli. However, we noticed that some studies developed the animations without any proper standardization; thus, we decided to bridge our interest in signal design and visual animation, and apply a motion algorithm (Analysis of Image Motion) to calibrate design accuracy in computer-animations. Using an experimental approach, we are exploring visual signals employed by the Jacky dragon (*Amphibolurus muricatus*). For our first collaboration, we published our study in *Behavioural Processes* (Woo & Rieucan, 2008). We have since continued to use the Jacky dragon as a model for signal design and have published three manuscripts in diverse scientific reviews: *Behavioral Ecology & Sociobiology* (2011), *Ethology* (2012), and *Ethology Ecology & Evolution* (2013). Most recently, we extended our collaboration to another system investigating, this time, the microevolution of alarm calling in helmeted guinea fowl (*Numida meleagris*) in the urban environment. This research project is supported by Empire State College. We will conduct our first experiments in spring 2013 at the Prospect Park Zoo, Brooklyn, N.Y.

In 2008, our collaborative scientific journey slightly deviated from its research-focused path when we co-supervised an

undergraduate student during her student research project at Southwestern University, Georgetown, Texas. At this time, Woo was a visiting assistant professor at the Department of Psychology at Southwestern University, while Rieucan was finishing his Ph.D. thesis at Université du Québec à Montréal, Québec, Canada. Our mentee was working on a project to develop a computer-generated mummichog (*Fundulus heteroclitus*), and to use the animation in social learning and facilitation experiments in fish. Collectively, we helped her create the animation and design-staged experiments (Figure 1). We developed a study to employ the animation in a social context, where most animation experiments typically use a single live individual with a single animation. We used this technique to test for the interaction between the numbers of social foragers versus the presence-or-absence of a predatory fish. Ultimately, she presented this work at the 2008 Southwestern Psychological Association Conference in a talk entitled, "Building Nemo: The Development of a 3D Animated



Figure 1. Screen capture of animated mummichog (*Fundulus heteroclitus*) during the first co-supervision of an undergraduate student.

PHOTO: MINGLE-WOO-RIEUCAN

Mummichog to Study Schooling Behavior,” which was co-authored by us, and Dr. Jesse Purdy (Southwestern University).

At that time, we believed that we would mostly gain from the research outcome, *per se*, of this project. Retrospectively, as much success as we encountered with this experiment, we gained a lot more valuable experience from interacting and supervising our mentee. We now believe that the reason was that for the first time in our careers, we had to re-evaluate the way we think about and do scientific research to meet our mentoring duties. The biggest challenge faced was to develop and include an “educational” component into the research process itself, something that we were not so used to at that time.

The first step of the process was to define the scope of the student project. We refined the research question that we wanted to address in such a way that it became pedagogically meaningful. Therefore, we determined the theoretical concepts that were important for our mentee to grasp by taking into account her knowledge in the field. To do so, we felt very important to have open discussions (using the Internet platform) to clearly distinguish our mentee’s interests and expectations. It was, for her, a good experience to be engaged in scientific discussion around a research question. Once the scientific question and the pedagogic goal were determined, we engaged our mentee in the readings of selected scientific articles and textbooks chapters. We offered some “supervised” freedom to our mentee, an active learning strategy that encourages innovation as opposed to adopting rote protocols. We helped her to formulate the working hypotheses and predictions for the project and we were very careful to guide her in this process in such a way that the general hypothesis that was developed met the pedagogic achievements fixed for her student-project. While we provided continuous external advisement during the development of the experimental design and the building of the 3-D fish animations, this followed a “trial-and-error” process for her – an everyday face-off to all scientists. Thus, in our mentorship, we created a step-wise approach for her to employ the scientific method, and to merge theory and application, as she designed her project.

Through our own academic training, we clearly navigated academia through a traditional path. However, as we reflect upon our actual practices when we teach in the classroom, and directly mentor a research student, we noticed significant variations that differ from how we learned to how we impart knowledge. Moreover, as we reviewed our own pedagogical evolution, we recognized an apparent disconnect in the system. Below, we highlight three main considerations that aim to reduce the gap between scientific research progress and science education.

I. Keeping Track of Research Novelties

Indubitably, the pool of scientific knowledge is growing day-after-day. Researchers in biological sciences rely on the advancements of the ongoing scientific research to address meaningful questions that allow others to develop new hypotheses to test, refine or sometimes challenge classical ideas or theories. Recently, the rapid improvement in science communication, especially with the exceptional explosion of the World Wide Web, ensures an incessant flow of research information to the scientific community. The research field of animal behavior does not stand outside of this reality. New studies based on empirical or theoretical work are published every day in many peer-reviewed scientific journals that range from broad perspective and audience journals (e.g., *Nature*, *Science*, *Current Biology*, *PNAS*, *Ecology Letters*, *PloS ONE*, *Journal of Animal Ecology*), core animal behavior journals (e.g., *Animal Behaviour*, *Behavioral Ecology*, *Behavioral Ecology and Sociobiology*, *Ethology*, *Behavioural Processes*, *Behaviour*) to topic-specialized journals (e.g., *Ibis*, *Copeia*, *Journal of Fish Biology*). Web search engines, open access journals, digital libraries and content alerts have revolutionized how scientists access scientific information.

However, with this permanent and somehow overwhelming flow of information, the ability to keep track of the latest published research results in an accurate manner is a laborious task that requires rigor and significant time investment to collate up-to-date scientific information. Recent research information must be accessible to the

scientific community through conventional publications or other communication pathways (symposiums, workshops, media RSS feeds), but it also needs to be assessed by critical readers who will evaluate the value of its contribution to their field of specialization. The peer-review system, often criticized due to its lack of transparency, is a necessary process to ensure that novel research information will reach the scientific standard of scientific robustness required for publication. Then, every new piece of research information will help scientists better understand *why* (referring to the function and evolution of behaviors) and *how* (referring to the development and mechanisms that underlie the behaviors) animals behave the way they do. However, it is important to keep in mind that assessing the *scientific value* of a scientific contribution and assessing its *pedagogical content* are two different exercises.

Current interests in animal behavior science are changing with the rise of new areas or questions of interest, such as the next “hot topic.” Thakur, Mane, Borner, Martins and Ord (2004) mapped the evolving interests in animal behavior. The authors analyzed the research areas of over 2,000 articles published in 1994, 1997 and 2000 in a core set of journals in the animal behavior domain (e.g., *Animal Behaviour*, *Behavioural Processes*, *Behavioral Ecology*, *Behavioral Ecology and Sociobiology*, *Journal of Ethology*, *Journal of Insect Behavior*, *Applied Animal Behavior Science*). Their results revealed changes in the general interests of published articles over the years with a reported focus on parental behavior, feeding behavior and animal learning in 1994, an observed switch toward sexual and social behaviors in 1997, and toward mating, nesting and foraging behavior-related questions in 2000. Classical topics taught in animal behavior at the undergraduate and graduate levels address sexual selection, optimal foraging, communication, parental care, competition, parasitism, aggregation, cooperation, learning and present classical approaches such as field observation, experimentation *in situ* or in a semi- or fully-controlled environment, theoretical modeling as game theory (producer-scrouter model, hawk/dove game, prisoner’s dilemma) or

the optimality theory (optimal foraging, central-place foraging). Even though new questions of interest in the field are regularly introduced to the teaching material, they generally lag behind research advancements.

Over the last decade, animal behavior science has undergone a major shift. Indeed, the study of between-individual differences and variations in behavior over time and across ecological contexts has received growing attention. Commonly, it is admitted that animals adjust their behavioral responses when in specific situations in a way that minimizes their costs/benefits ratio (Krebs & Davies, 1993). Selective pressures were thought to act as an erosive force on genetic (and phenotypic) variations of traits expressed in a population and due to long-term effects, the mean value of a (behavioral) trait should reach an optimum. Thus, the adaptive expression of a (behavioral) trait in a particular situation should only be optimal if it allows individuals to maximize their fitness. Behavioral flexibility (or behavioral “plasticity”) is expected to be unlimited, immediate and reversible (Sih, Bell, & Johnson, 2004). Generally, behavioral plasticity is presented as the principal adaptive cause of behavioral variations observed at the population or specie levels (Dall, Houston, & McNamara, 2004). Interestingly, animals often express a very limited behavioral plasticity and vary in consistent ways in their reactions toward similar external conditions (Clark & Ehlinger, 1987). Recent attention in the investigation of variations around the mean behavior of the population has promoted the study of “animal personalities” (Gosling, 2001; Réale, Reader, Sol, McDougall, & Dingemanse, 2007), also presented as behavioral syndromes (Sih et al., 2004) or temperament (Boissy, 1995), and their ecological and evolutionary consequences (Wolf & Weissing, 2012). Differences, consistent over time and situations, between individuals in the expression of their behaviors are referred to as “personality” and have been reported across a large range of species and reach various ecological settings (as foraging, antipredator, exploratory or aggressive behaviors). This is now considered a widespread phenomenon in the animal kingdom.

Traditionally, individual differences in behavior were only considered as “noise” around the mean value of a population with no real evolutionary importance. However, to date, the study of animal personality is of prime importance with many remaining unanswered questions. As a consequence of intensive research in personality and behavioral syndromes, a growing number of researchers have been interested, and actually quite intrigued, by questions around the proximate and ultimate causations of personality differences in animal populations. If previous research in the field of animal personalities has mostly focused on the relationship between personality traits and fitness of individuals using theoretical or empirical approaches, we noticed a subtle shift toward a broader and integrative examination of the phenomenon with the current consideration of the important consequences of animal personalities for ecologically and evolutionary processes (Wolf & Weissing, 2012). Animal personality was a controversial topic in the early 2000s, and at the time, it met resistance from a part of the scientific community. Animal personalities finally entered students’ textbooks, a good example of which is the recent addition of a chapter entirely devoted to this topic in the popular *Principles of Animal Behavior* (Dugatkin, 2008).

The field of animal personality is not an isolated example, and new growing areas of research are starting to find their place in the pedagogical material used by teachers in animal behavior science as social learning and cultural transmission. Numerous studies have explored the mechanisms and functions of social learning and the use of social information that is thought to afford the first building block for the evolution of culture in animal society (Galef & Giraldeau, 2001; Danchin, Giraldeau, Valone, & Wagner, 2004; Laland, Atton, & Webster, 2011; van Schaik & Burkart, 2011).

Recently, both empirical and theoretical efforts have focused on unraveling the circumstances under which animals use incorrect social information and consequently decide wrongly to adopt maladaptive behavior. For instance, evidence shows that social animals can disregard even reliable personal information and

copy the erroneous behavior of others (Rieucou & Giraldeau, 2011). Such herd-like phenomena, called informational cascades, have been studied by economists such as Bikhchandani, Hirshleifer and Welch (1998) and have been reported to be widespread in human societies in which decisions are made with total disregard to the individuals’ personal knowledge. Then, it results in individuals “blindly” copying the observed decision of predecessors (Bikhchandani et al., 1998). These informational cascades have been proposed as a coherent explanation for a number of large-scale explosive copying events observed in humans, such as market crashes in economics, new fashion styles or panic rushes in crowds but also in animal societies as the accumulation of thousands of colonial birds in night roosts, mate choice copying and collective escape behaviors in bird flocks or fish schools (Giraldeau, Valone, & Templeton, 2002).

The transmission of information from parents to young or between non-related individuals about the quality of the environment, sexual partners, food resources, presence or absence of any kind of danger are some of the evidence that animals can learn from others – sometimes wrongly. This social information is non-genetically coded, compared to the genetic information that is coded by DNA, and is conveyed both vertically (across generations) and horizontally (within generation) and provides the essential “vector” for cultural transmission (Danchin et al., 2004) in both animals and, of course, humans. The increasing interest in the emerging topic of cultural transmission and its evolutionary consequences (i.e., cultural evolution) shows in its recent presence in several textbooks frequently used in animal behavior classes such as *Behavioural Ecology* by Danchin, Giraldeau and Cézilly (2008, Chapter 20, 693-726). Hence, students following animal behavior courses can be introduced to the study of animal culture and the role of cultural inheritance in evolution, a role that was underestimated for long time.

New technological opportunities to observe and quantify behaviors *in situ* (e.g., video playback techniques, computer generated 3-D animations, sonar imaging and acoustics for aquatic animal species, high-

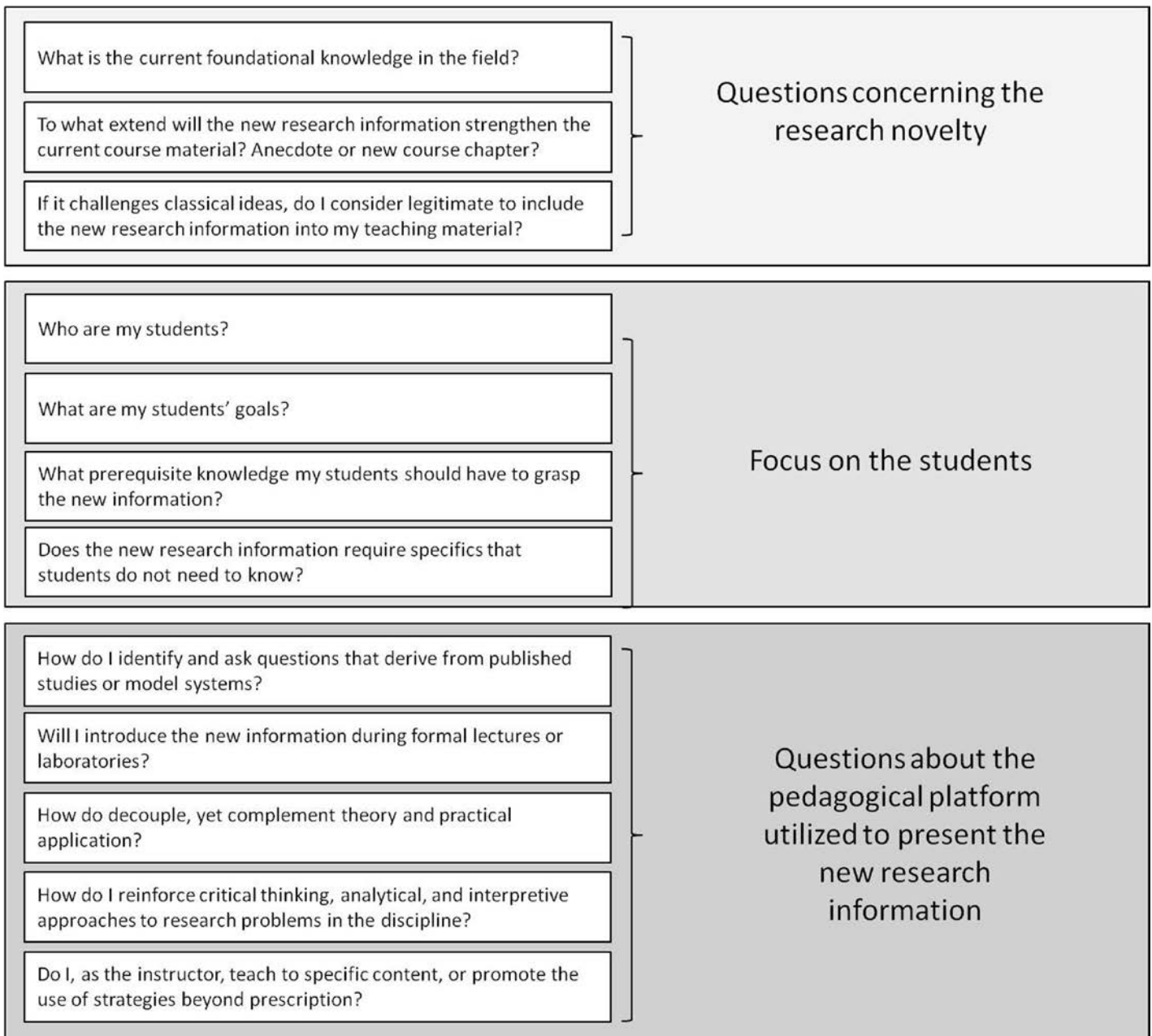
definition video recording, satellite tags for migratory species), in advanced computing and large data processing, evolutionary (e.g., genetic algorithms) and collective behavior simulations (e.g., collective responses tracking), as well as in the development of molecular (e.g., database of gene sequences and expression) and physiological (e.g., respiratory, stress hormones) tools allow researchers to test new hypotheses in animal behavior. Undoubtedly, these new methods are useful tools that researchers can use

regularly to better understand animal behavior. They also illustrate the need to include them in current educational material.

II. Evaluating the Pedagogic Value of Novel Research Information

Research information should be seen as a primary component in the development of effective pedagogic activities. But it is a fact: not all new scientific results have educational relevance. Thus, when facing the desire to add a newly published result

in their teaching material, instructors and mentors must keep in mind that pragmatism is a virtue. We emphasize again that evaluating the scientific content of a research study is not the same as evaluating its educational content. Here, we formulate a series of questions that would guide teachers toward determining and extracting the pedagogical substance of research novelties and finally how to incorporate them in an effective way into the education platform (Table 1).



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Table 1. Our questions on the evaluation of research questions for instruction as conceived from three points of view: the research, the student and the pedagogic value.

III. A Broad Perspective: The Natural Selection Process of Science Education

Estimates from the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Educational Statistics (2012) suggest that in 2010, there were approximately 21 million students enrolled in undergraduate institutions. From this cohort, approximately 1.7 million students had enrolled in post-baccalaureate degrees across all disciplines, which include master's and Ph.D. programs (NCES, 2010). Furthermore, in some programs, there is a 50 percent attrition rate for Ph.D. candidates (McAlpine & Norton, 2006). Reflective of the sciences, these statistics also indicate a shift in gender and ethnic matriculation, which is increasing among women (Sax, 2000) and other minority groups (Oakes, 1990). This shift also garners a greater perspective and acceptance of gender-balanced and minority-balanced programs (Lopatto, 2004). Hence, the number of undergraduate students who earn their bachelor's degree, compared to those who likely advance and complete their Ph.D.'s, indicates a huge disparity in education. Moreover, this difference also suggests educational strategies that likely cater to certain strengths of students, and likely segregate them from a weaker pool of candidates. This is currently the reigning strategy for recruiting top intellectual talent for post-graduate programs. However, we question this approach and ask whether the real premise of this strategy is to support a relatively small number of students in advanced science work and deny the education of science-related skills to the majority of undergraduate students who become discouraged. We acknowledge that many other factors, such as a decision not to attend graduate school, personal conflicts or medical issues, just to highlight some common reasons, may prevent an undergraduate student from pursuing a graduate degree.

The quest for a degree in the sciences reflects the process of natural selection. Though, even if we consider a Darwinian approach, undergraduate science programs tend to favor students who are able to achieve high marks on fairly standardized assessment tools, such as exams (e.g., multiple-choice) and laboratory reports. Few conventional

courses deviate from this prescription, especially in institutions with a large undergraduate enrollment, as it allows instructors and their teaching assistants to grade the material systematically and swiftly, and hence, from their perspective, to assess students more efficiently. Here, efficiency is not a function of student learning, but of grade-processing. Moreover, this approach identifies specific benchmarks for excellence, adequacy and failure across a traditional "A-F" grading system. It segregates strong from weak students, and ignores the likely causes for the disparity in performance. Stronger students may have likely developed strategies for success, while those who fared worse may never change. Exemplifications of "winner and loser effects" (Dugatkin, 1997) continue to reinforce strategies to a wider bimodal distribution. However, that still leaves a significant portion of the population who fair adequately, one in which reflects a bell curve (Herrnstein & Murray, 1996). The small percentage of students who excel might likely progress to a graduate degree, the middle likely receiving (but not maintaining) a base-level of knowledge, and the rest facing science-learning extinction!

What about this "middle-class"? Typically, a gap in knowledge occurs between traditional freshman-to-senior level instruction and learning. For example, students in introductory Biology are often taught the scientific method, how to find and cite research from primary research journals, and format laboratory reports in a scholarly manner. However, many mid-level biology courses cease to reinforce these skills, and simply expect students to master them. Somewhat ironically, not all students do, and this is evident by the success rate of biology graduates with high grade point averages (GPAs) and the selection criteria that makes them competitive applicants as

candidates for graduate programs. Thus, success demands knowledge from students that they do not necessarily have.

The goal for every laboratory is to advance scientific knowledge. However, to discover phenomena about the natural world is to compete. Both Schoener (1983) and Connell (1983) conducted independent meta-analyses of all papers published in ecological journals at the time, and found an overwhelming bias across the articles that were sampled demonstrating competition, either inter- or intraspecific. Publications are the "currency" of science, and there is an interaction between quality and publication of research. Potential post-graduate degree supervisors acquire students who are likely capable to improve the currency of the laboratory. The employment of the scientific process is to acquire new knowledge; yet, Rosenthal (1979) noted that nearly 95 percent of all research studies end in non-significant results. Failing to reject the tested hypothesis (then, accepting the null hypothesis) is inherently a result, but there is a bias to believe that all science produces significant results, and that only significant results are published.

Perhaps, in pairing with a Darwinian approach, we could argue that the graduate atmosphere is Machiavellian. There is a pressure to publish or perish, especially for institutions whose currency is dependent on output. Retention rates in the United States for graduate programs vary widely (Nerad & Miller, 2006). Graduate students are expected to employ basic experimental techniques and design innovative techniques to solve problems. The failure to "produce" may result in retribution by their supervisor, ostracizing by the scientific community and inability to maintain support from the institution to continue the degree. At this academic level, there is an obvious conundrum: How do we expect graduate students to employ innovation if they have not mastered experimental techniques in basic biology and/or ecology? Aside from their own theses, graduate students may only gain additional training through teaching assistantships. However, many research-driven institutions invest heavily in individuals who are employed to conduct research, and do not invest sufficiently in the education of undergraduate students (Putnam & Borko, 2000).

*The quest for a degree
in the sciences reflects
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natural selection.*

How do we ensure that learners are gaining foundational knowledge in the sciences, while, at the same time, incorporating new discoveries? This is the gap. Peer-reviewed journals highlight modifications of methodological approaches for new experimental designs to answer questions. Yet, few of these methods are ever transferred to college-level laboratories or courses.

Conclusion

It is often assumed that one should not ask a scientist for answers, as you will only yield more questions. "Why should we care?" In this essay, we discussed several issues with the current pedagogical approach for engaging students in science, and more specifically, the discipline of animal behavior. "How do we make students care?" We can radically change the relationship between learner, mentor and content, but that does not guarantee success. Consequently, we acknowledge that we need to include one critical component to our discussion: A *posteriori* evaluation of the effectiveness and application of alternative approaches to science education. "How do we measure success?" We need a reliable measure for ensuring the success of new pedagogical paradigms. Here, we merely introduce some initial thoughts on the current trajectory of science education, and indeed, aim to further understand and perhaps even improve upon this imperfect relationship.

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How to Write a Poem

Menoukha Case, Center for Distance Learning

Everything you're about to hear is happening just the way I tell it.

It's night. I'm asleep in my bed but I'm not in my bed. I'm dreaming there's an enormous, bloated, satiated bear, slumbering belly up in my mother's place, taking over a whole room with his snores swelling and sinking and rough fur roughing up the furniture. I'm afraid – I know that when he gets hungry again, there will be trouble.

Like all bears, he has very long, strong, sharp, claws, but unlike any other bear, his back is the color of an Irish setter but his belly is the color of clotted cream. I've never heard of a bicolor red bear, and, this bear has a long tail to boot, bristling fur energetically like the fur on the tail of a husky.

When I wake up, I'm supposed to think about what the whole thing means to me, how to describe it, all the things that eventually turn up between the lines of poems. But I spend more time wondering about the bear's strange appearance than anything else, because anything else all seems a vain pursuit. The symbolism, I'm sure, will elude me, and the images are too utterly concrete to be anything but themselves.

It's afternoon, the same day, one of those days that day battles night from dawn to dusk in a dark gray sky that's a presence, not an absence, the threat of a storm mixed with light so yellow it turns green leaves gold and gold leaves orange. I'm walking in the park and see a tree that has seedpods shaped like miniature rounded pine cones, yet no needles. I wonder if it is a dead evergreen, clinging to posterity. I wonder if there's a kind of evergreen that sheds its needles.

There's a voice behind me, "See something you recognize?"

Without turning around, I answer. "This tree has these things like pine cones, but no needles. So, I wonder if it's a dead evergreen, or a kind of evergreen that sheds its needles or what."

"Look close," a hand reaches over my shoulder and pulls a branch near my face, "these are buds. I'm seeing this for the fourteenth year now."

Yes, they're buds.

I turn to look at the speaker. He's large, bearish actually, and I see he's holding a leash. At the end of the leash stands a husky the color of an Irish setter with a belly the color of clotted cream and a long tail bristling fur.

"Do you like bears?" I ask.

"I don't know much about them; just they have very long, strong, sharp claws. Why'd you ask?"

"Last night I dreamt about a bear who was the color of your dog, red with a belly the color of cream, and a long tail, just like your dog's."

"Must've been a sign," he says. "Sometimes something doesn't feel right, maybe it's anger, maybe it's sexual. Everything else is fine, you're doing fine, but because of this something you open to someone, someone who when they get into it, get into what's bothering you, they don't stop there but start digging around and eating you up, messing with what was fine. You can't open like that. What you gotta do is use your own emotions, you gotta work em yourself."

He's saying more, but I'm still digesting this. He stops.

Starts again: "My father, he was as light as you. My mother, she was the dark one, a Puerto Rican Indian."

"Taino?"

"Yeah, Taino."



Menoukha Case

I look at him carefully, he looks at me. I can't tell you what he saw, and I can't tell you what I saw, but many would describe him as a middle-aged man with a belly, missing quite a few teeth. Dark skin, black eyes, wavy black hair, rough tired clothes.

"What you told me – you learned it the hard way," I say.

"Yeah."

"Dreams," I say. "Everyone thinks they're about something inside of you, but sometimes they're about something outside of you. Like, in this case, when someone bearish with a red and cream husky comes along, pay attention to what he says."

We walk and talk a little longer and he says he has to go and he takes a left and walks away. I take a right and go to the flower shop and buy three white carnations and offer them to the God of Chance. I work for a few hours, then I get dressed to go to a bona fide literary event; my poetry teacher's in town to sign books. As I walk out the door and turn the corner, he turns the corner, too, and we're face to face again.

“I was just thinking about what you said to me,” we say together.

“I’m still trying to wrap my mind around it.” I say, “It was too much to understand at once.”

“Yeah. I live around the corner.”

He gives me his address. I go to the book signing.

Afterward we go to a bar, the author’s treat. The first wine bottle’s half empty when she tells me about an extraordinary experience she had with Audre Lorde, and when I finish telling her about the dream of the bear, the second bottle’s empty.

“I don’t know how to write that as a poem,” I say.

She raises her arms, holding both bottles upside down and speaking in cadence with the syncopated sound of drops that slowly descend to and from their necks and then hit the glass of the table.

“Line breaks, line ... breaks, linebreaks,” she says.

I lied at the start: everything didn’t happen just the way I’ve told it here. Truth is, we only drank one bottle.

“Lasting personality changes may not occur in a blinding flash. As Dylan Thomas ... said, ‘Light breaks where no sun shines ... Dawn breaks behind the eyes ... Light breaks on secret lots ... On tips of thought ...’ While some epiphanies are dramatic and sudden, most occur gradually and incrementally. We may not know for years that a single lecture or conversation or experience started a chain reaction that transformed some aspect of ourselves. We cannot easily discern what subtle mix of people, books, settings, or events promotes growth. Nor can we easily name changes in ways of thinking, feeling, or interpreting the world. But we can observe behavior and record words, both of which can reveal shifts from hunch to analysis, from simple to complex perceptions, from divisive bias to compassionate understanding.”

– Arthur W. Chickering and Linda Reisser
“The Seven Vectors: An Overview”
 Education and Identity (2nd ed.)
 San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1993, p. 43

Confessions of a Closet Materialist: Lessons Learned About Money, Possessions and Happiness

Miriam Tatzel, Hudson Valley Center

“What we seek, at the deepest level, is inwardly to resemble, rather than physically to possess, the objects and places that touch us through their beauty.”

– Alain de Botton
The Architecture of Happiness (2006)

*My mentoring and scholarship have fed each other in my career at Empire State College. When I get a new intellectual interest, I often turn the interest into learning contracts and study groups. My interest in the material world and consumption led to studies on the social history of dress. From there, I became interested in the psychological aspects of money, and that led to positive psychology. Over the years, I have honed and updated studies variously called *The Consumer in Society* and *Psychology of Consumption*.*

Both personally and pedagogically, I like to match the literature with experience. For me (and I hope for my students), learning about ways of dealing with money and possessions so as to enhance well-being also is a process of self-discovery. So, I thought it would be neat to write a piece for All About Mentoring on “Confessions of a Closet Materialist,” delighting in the pun. But the essay grew and grew and became a chapter for a book, of which I also am the editor.

*This edited excerpt on Money covers most of the second part of the chapter, after the Introduction and before the next part on Possessions. The chapter will appear in the volume, *Well-Being in the Material World*, in press with Springer Science and Business Media, 2013.*

2. Money¹

I had always considered myself above venal ambitions for money and status. I didn’t make life choices that would maximize money either in my career or personal life (the usual route to wealth for women is to marry into it [Nickerson, Schwarz, & Diener, 2007]), and I regarded those who chased money as crass and shallow (a lot of moralizing comes up when we judge money behaviors). But in another sense, you could say I was obsessed with money. I made life choices with financial security, though not with wealth, in mind: a Ph.D. at an early age, a job with tenure. My immigrant parents were so frugal as to keep track of the smallest expenditures, and some of that attention to small change rubbed off on me. I have suffered much anxiety over money; big expenditures, mistakes in spending and the scary sense of not being able to stem the outflow are all fodder for insomnia and self-denial.

2.1 Money and Happiness

As it happens, financial security has snuck up on me. This is largely a result of aging: the house is long paid off, my retirement fund has grown and Social Security kicked in. But money management and debt aversion had something to do with it, too. (I was fortunate to come of age in the 1960s when education at Queens College, City University of New York, was tuition-free and a National Science Foundation fellowship supported me through graduate school at Columbia University.) Am I happy about having financial security? Does it feel good not to worry about money and



Miriam Tatzel

PHOTO: ED ROBINSON

the future? You bet. I would even say it’s changed the complexion of my life. You can call it security, but it feels like freedom.

According to the literature, an increase in money, once basic needs are met, should do little for one’s happiness. People adapt to both increases and decreases in fortune and we wind up feeling pretty much as we started. Should we get more money, we are then likely to want even more, with our aspirations ever eluding our grasp. For me, as a result of feeling financially secure, I am easier about parting with money. I am less remorseful over mispending, and I enjoy the novel sensation that if I want something, it’s OK – I can go ahead and buy it. Of course, price still matters. After all, I am a value seeker, but one can bargain hunt at all points all along the quality continuum (Bei & Heslin, 1997), for cookware and clothing, for example.

2.2 It Pays to be Thrifty

I regard frugality as a positive trait, and here, the literature is with me (Chancellor & Lyubomirsky 2011, 2013; Guven

2012). Saving money and recycling are obvious benefits. Avoidance of debt is a big positive when compared to the negatives of paying interest, having to keep paying long after the thrill of the purchase is gone, and living in a psychological “debtor’s prison” of constraint, guilt and low self-esteem (Bernthal, Crockett, & Randall, 2005). I am deeply debt averse. I like being frugal, especially when I am successful at it. Frugality means more than being conservative with money; it’s also about not being wasteful, as in recycling. As an impecunious graduate student, I honed my bargain hunting and DIY skills. To this day, I delight in making things out of scrap wood or scrap fabric and I’ll paint anything. When clothes shopping, I’ll patiently bottom fish the clearance racks.

Although I am almost reflexively price conscious, I am lately becoming sensitized to ethical implications of unqualified price consciousness. By going for low prices, am I supporting the cruelty of factory farming of animals, factory farming in general, the outsourcing of domestic jobs to the worldwide market for the exploitation of cheap labor, the cheapening and degrading of manufactured goods and craftsmanship, and so on (de Villiers, 2012)? An early awareness of the moral implications of mass marketing traces back to the 1950s when chain stores began to put small merchants out of business. Stone (1954) distinguished among different types of shoppers, one of which he called “ethical” because of their loyalty to local merchants and willingness to support them by paying more than the chain stores charged. For myself, I am willing to pay more for eggs, for example, if I believe the hens are better treated, I’ll pay more for organic food if it’s not too much more, and I avoid a certain big box store, among other small concessions by which virtue moderates price consciousness.

In spite of the undeniable draw of low prices, being tight with money (frugal, thrifty) has the negative connotation of being cheap and stingy. Materialism, I observe, is a negative trait in the abstract, and frugal values are paid lip service. In real time, however, there seems to be more of a stigma to looking cheap than looking extravagant. We look down on coupon clippers (Argo & Main, 2008; Ashworth,

Drake, & Schaller, 2005). Lavish spending, on the other hand, is impressive; it makes a big social bang, as Veblen (1899) informed us. We admire the rare and costly. But what’s better for happiness: thrift or spendthrift? Maybe spending to impress is not about happiness but is meant to avoid being seen, and treated, as low status. The desire for riches and to be rich may have less to do with personal happiness than with raising one’s status and social influence (Ahuvia, 2007). Yet, as important as status may be for our social relations and life circumstances in general, the quest for prestige, along with materialism and extrinsic values generally, leads us down the path of dissatisfaction. Again and again we see a conflict between what’s good for the “I,” the subjective, personal self (intrinsic motivation) vs. what’s good for the “me,” the objective, social self (extrinsic motivation). And so, we may spend more than we really want to enhance our social image.

So far, we have seen that money does not matter much for happiness, and frugality is good for well-being. How should we think about money and how should we spend it? The research literature provides suggestions, and what I learned from my studies challenges some of my ways of spending, as well as how I was brought up.

2.3 For the Experience of It

One such message is that it is better for one’s happiness to spend on experiences than possessions. When asked, people report greater satisfaction from the money spent on experiences. This is very well documented (e.g., Carter & Gilovich, 2010; Van Boven, 2005) with a small nod to bad experiences (Nicolao, Irwin, & Goodman, 2009). There are several reasons why. One is that experiences have a longer “shelf life.” They give us memories. We tire of our possessions and we treasure our memories (of the vacation, the concert, the workshop, etc.). Even inconveniences on a vacation can burnish into fondly remembered adventures and amusing stories. Another reason is that experiences are not as susceptible to invidious side-by-side comparisons as objects are – they are more singular. It’s easier, say, to compare cameras and find that one is superior, and the next generation

smartphone may outdo the one we have, but experiences are unique, and in that way, matchless and untrumpable. Thirdly, many experiences are social, which in most cases enhances the good time with the warmth of good fellowship. And, ultimately, experiences are more central to the self, more personal (Carter & Gilovich, 2012). Indeed, experiences make up who we are, our biography, more than do possessions.

Here is an area where I fall short. I spend more readily on things over experiences. I was raised with the opposite point of view regarding the lasting power of purchases. I learned that it’s objects that have staying power; experiences are fleeting, ephemeral, but objects are for keeps. Moreover, experiences are not typically “necessary.” While growing up, such events as family vacations, eating out and movies were rare. As a teen, activities like going to concerts or on ski trips with friends were things I didn’t “need.” But one does need furniture, and I had a good quality bedroom set. I have adopted that perspective even as I question it. Travel overseas to a wedding? Well, no, a new car comes first.

2.4 The Joy of Giving

Another research-based principle for hedonic spending is that it is better to give than to receive. Contrary to people’s expectations, they report feeling more pleasure from spending on others than spending on themselves (Dunn, Aknin, & Norton, 2008). This is an area where I have some ambivalence, harking back to my upbringing. My mother was generous in some ways. If she went visiting, she invariably baked one of her much desired cakes. She was concerned to know if I needed money and was willing to help out. But she resented being asked for money for charity, she resented expectations to buy gifts and she pretty much did neither. The former was *schmorrerei* (cadging) and the latter was perhaps a mild form of extortion (being invited to an affair means you have to give a gift). Following in her footsteps, I get squirmy when charities call asking for money. I started donating to causes in recent years, thinking it’s the “right” thing to do. But it’s led to more and more solicitations,

and it pains me to get gifts of stickers and cards and whatever – those resources should be going to the cause.

2.5 Wait for It: The Pleasure of Anticipating Pleasure

Another bit of advice on how to spend is to delay gratification and thereby reap the pleasures of anticipation (Dunn, Gilbert, & Wilson, 2011). Prepaying theater tickets, planning out a vacation, dreaming of that new car or imagining what you will order in the restaurant gives its own boost of enjoyment and savoring. It's fun to think about something good that's coming up. Anticipation also has the not unpleasant tension of impatience, as in "I can't wait." Making arrangements (transportation, lodging, tickets) can be a chore, but one leavened by pleasant imaginings.

The pleasure of anticipation is a strong admonition against impulse buying, a pleasure that the impulse buyer, in haste of the buying moment, forecloses upon. Impulse buying is part of the "dark side" of consumption, denigrated as a moral weakness of sorts (immaturity, lack of self-control) and as poor decision making and hazardous money management, but I don't denigrate the impulse itself; it is through our attractions that we learn about our preferences and desires. So I say, hold on to that impulse, plan the acquisition (do research and budget, as appropriate), and savor the anticipation. (One can't say that all impulsive buying is a bad idea; spontaneous decisions and unexpected buying opportunities can work out well [Rook & Fisher, 1995]).

2.6 Think Small

Buy small pleasures rather than big luxuries (Dunn et al., 2011). Parceling out treats gives more total happiness than one Big Bang purchase. With the former, you have daily pleasures spread over time; with the latter, you get a spike of pleasure followed by the diminishing returns of adaptation, much like the child whose once fervently desired toy becomes a source of clutter and boredom.

I was raised with the contrary point of view. It's precisely by scrimping on the small things that you accumulate enough

money to buy something special. "Look after the pennies" and all that. My mother, abstemious in so many ways, bought quite a bit of fine jewelry, which I derided at the time, and which I now possess. I, too, am very good at foregoing small pleasures. The allowance I didn't spend as a teen got saved and plunked into my first home down payment (savings do add up). These days, as I become looser with money, the advice from the literature gives me permission to indulge in small treats and conveniences. For example, when driving into Manhattan, I am willing to put the car in a garage and pay way too much money for parking, something I once would not have considered doing, preferring instead to drive around for who knows how long and finding street parking far afield. I experience this new way of being as a disinhibition, a giving into impulse and convenience. Am I in danger of losing my grip on money management or am I more rational for overcoming "hyperopia" (an over-aversion to indulgence) (Haws & Poynor, 2008)?

2.7 Follow Your Bliss: Spend for Intrinsic Reasons

Kasser (2002) has presented much evidence in support of intrinsic life aspirations being key to well-being (self-development, interpersonal relationships, making the world a better place), while extrinsic goals (wanting to be rich, famous and attractive) go along with dissatisfaction with life, if not outright mental illness. The lesson for consumption is that it is better to acquire possessions for one's own enjoyment, meaning, and growth and in support of the basic psychological needs for competence, relationship and autonomy, à la self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000) rather than for public display. In other words, beware of purchasing for status and prestige reasons. If you do buy to impress, you may wind up with something that doesn't work for you, you may spend more than you need to or should, and you may fail to wow those you intend to impress anyway. Here's a small example of how the imagined judgments of others can inhibit intrinsic choices. Did you know that there's a social norm that says variety is better than sameness? When people can choose candy bars in private, they tend to choose multiples

of their favorite, but if they believe other people will see their choices, they will go for variety instead (Ratner & Kahn, 2002).

Note

- ¹ A little family context re: money. When I was 13, my father had his first cancer surgery, and his working career was over (he survived, though). My mother then went to work at a factory for minimum wage, but she liked the job and we were not destitute. In my adult family, my husband was a stay-at-home dad who looked after our two daughters.

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Expect the Unexpected: What Would You Do? A Crisis/Ethics Simulation in the MBA Program

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Imagine for a moment that you are the CEO of a chain of hotels in Saratoga Springs at the height of the season. While at the track, you get word that the mayor and dozens of other people have been rushed to the hospital from four of your five hotels.

What would you do? Who would you call first? What would you do next, next, next? How would you lead – and who would you lead – in the face of what quickly becomes a multi-faceted crisis of inestimable proportions?

This scenario begins an online crisis and ethics simulation that is the culminating learning experience in two Empire State College Master in Business Administration electives I teach: Leadership, Crisis and Coping Strategies, and Ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility.

Both courses focus on understanding how a leader's words, behaviors and actions can impact a variety of stakeholders, how critical thinking and ethical judgment (often in cascading situations demanding immediate *action*) are essential, and how emotions must be compartmentalized until circumstances allow introspection and expression.

In the weeks prior to the simulation, course content is focused on leading under pressure, making decisions effectively, quickly evaluating new information, interacting with government officials, resolving ethical dilemmas, making good use of staff and resources, and recognizing potential opportunities and pitfalls. The courses I taught in the summers of 2011 and 2012 also included guest speakers (via Elluminate) who had provided leadership during intense crisis situations: in the aftermath of 9/11/2001 in New York City; on the battlefields in Iraq; in airline industry disasters; and through the U.S. Postal Service anthrax attack. In addition, a former drug

enforcement agent who had made unethical decisions, acted illegally and served time in prison shared his story. Also, internationally-known business games expert Dr. Mark Chussil led students through activities designed to sharpen their critical thinking skills in advance of the simulation.

The "Expect the Unexpected" simulation was born out of a commitment to bring theory to life, to make the abstract real by creating a learning environment that would give students a taste of being in the throes of grave, unforeseen circumstances. How does one react when rapid-fire decisions are needed, when immediate action trumps fact-gathering, and when competing interests and ethical dilemmas muddy the waters?

As a mentor and instructor, I also wanted to provide students with an unforgettable, transformational learning experience that would be a game-changer. Through the simulation, I believed we – students and faculty alike – would come face-to-face with our own selves. Instead of thinking we knew how we would act and react during moments of intense pressure, we would actually be able to experience our visceral reactions when faced with ethical dilemmas and events unfolding on multiple fronts.

"The best way to learn something is 'on the job,' but that can be very dangerous and very costly," cautions Dr. Sivasailam Thiagarajan, a simulation game creator, trainer and educator (Wunderlin Company, n.d., para. 5). "The next best thing is simulations. ... People do not learn from the actual simulation; rather, they learn from reflecting on how they behaved during it. Simulations don't distort a person's



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PHOTO: JAMAL ARABATY

behavior; rather they hold it up as a mirror to it. And in some cases, it's a magnified mirror" (para. 9).

Thus, I wanted "Expect the Unexpected" to be a mirror – a unique opportunity to confront our own personal growth needs, so that we could become more effective in all areas of our lives. In doing all this, the simulation would ideally enhance each participant's confidence in her or his ability to handle crises, ethical dilemmas and whatever happens in life, both on and off the job.

These learning objectives drove the design of the simulation. I quickly realized I could not do this alone. With the encouragement and support of MBA Faculty Chair Alan Belasen, I reached out to Instructional Technologists Denise Snyder and Josh Gaul, Director of Media Production and Resources John Hughes, Audio Visual Technician Jim Merola in the ESC-TV studio, Assistant Director for New Applications and Hosted Systems Steve Simon, and Betul Lus, my faculty colleague in the MBA program.

As a cross-disciplinary team working together for the first time, we came to the project with a plethora of ideas, skills and abilities. Our excitement for venturing "outside the box" was palpable. We pooled

our talents to produce a series of “Breaking News” videos with “anchormen” played by Empire State College Vice President Mitch Nesler and then School for Graduate Studies Dean Bob Clougherty. We scripted information that would be given to each student for her or his assigned role. For example, the deputy mayor was attempting to unseat the mayor, one of the people stricken with the unknown illness. A fundraising dinner for President Obama had been scheduled at the one hotel that did not report any illnesses. To further complicate matters, turf battles between local and county emergency management staff had existed for years. Nepotism and bid rigging would be discovered with hotel suppliers.

The simulation kicked off one evening in the last week of the course via an Elluminate session. Roles were announced, the scenario was presented in sketchy terms (just enough to generate curiosity and edge-of-one’s-seat engagement) and then the first Breaking News video was played:

Fifty people – including 10 children – all guests at Momentous Hospitality hotels in Saratoga Springs, have been taken to the emergency room at Saratoga Hospital, according to police reports. Their condition at this time is unknown, as is the cause of their illness. Ages range from 5 to 82.

Among them is the mayor of Saratoga who collapsed while speaking at a luncheon honoring servicemen and women returning from Afghanistan. According to the mayor’s deputy, 24 people from Hotel Omega, where the luncheon was being held, were transported by ambulance and police vehicles to the hospital. The remaining 26 were from Hotel Infinity and Hotel Atlas.

Momentous Hospitality Inc. owns five hotels in Saratoga Springs – Hotel Omega, Hotel Infinity, Hotel Atlas, Hotel Tomorrow and Hotel Zeus. We have unconfirmed reports via Twitter that guests were stricken during lunch at each of the hotels and that people were complaining about a “funny smell” coming from the air conditioning vents. We have not

independently verified those reports. We have been unable to reach Momentous Hospitality’s CEO or a spokesperson.

WPQR is dispatching crews to the hospital and hotels. We will update you as soon as we have additional information. Stay tuned to WPQR, your up-to-the-minute news source.

The simulation began immediately after the video concluded. Students from the two courses had to work together, even though (as happens in a real crisis) they mostly did not know each other. They began taking action based on the roles they had been assigned. For example, in addition to Momentous Hospitality’s CEO, roles included the chief of police, the deputy mayor, five hotel general managers, a hospital spokesperson, distraught family members, persistent reporters, marginally informed bloggers, the Secret Service, federal agents, vendor executives and hotel employees, among others. Over the course of several days, members of both course communicated with each other via text, email, voicemail, phone, Elluminate, social and other media. At various times, Twitter and Facebook intentionally became sources of inaccurate information, demonstrating the importance of fact-checking. Reporters pressed for answers. Improprieties were discovered between hotel managers and several vendors. Additional Breaking News segments provided new information on unfolding events.

Students took action, posted their decisions for all to see in each day’s discussion forum in ANGEL, and contemplated what to do next. In addition, each student kept a daily private “learning journal” to capture thoughts, feelings and experiences.

On the evening of the last day, everyone met again on Elluminate for the final Breaking News segment that focused on what had caused the crisis. Each student was then given the opportunity to share his or her thoughts about the simulation experience. Later in the week, a more thorough debriefing was held, followed by an online survey and in-depth interviews to capture key lessons learned and suggestions for improvements.

Here is what some of the students had to say (shared by permission):

Paul Shea, Role of Hotel General Manager

The crisis simulation was almost like a game of Clue except communication between teammates and opponents was virtual. I found myself checking email and cell phone hourly, as I did not want to miss a “hint” or change in role/status. The virtual updates felt like I was watching the news, and a major crisis situation was unfolding before my eyes. The exciting part was I could make a difference and my actions affected a large group of people.

After completing the simulation, I realized that I had learned much about myself while working with others. Through this simulation, I was able to see how I and other people reacted to a crisis situation, which helped me face the need to control my emotions and forecast the emotions of those around me. This entire course not only helped me become a better communicator, but also helped me think outside the box, which I am now able to apply in my daily routine.

Daniel McKenna, Role of Observer

After the “Breaking News” kickoff of the simulation, everyone was stunned. However, we quickly learned we had to face the situation and get moving! Things were unraveling fast! However, other than the most obvious facts, we weren’t sure of all the information contained in the news report. Each of us recalled different bits of information. We immediately understood that we needed each other and to trust each other. We also quickly learned that verifying information would help avoid greater troubles. The qualities and skills developed throughout the simulation can be applied during almost any situation in the world of business. I began applying them the very next day at my job.

Billie Taft, Role of White House Events Manager

I was pleasantly surprised by how realistic the simulation was depicted. It was so realistic that it was difficult for me to step away from my computer and cell phone.

My biggest “takeaway” from this was that it is acceptable to ask for help. I played a leadership role in the simulation. Oftentimes, I did not know what to do next or how to handle conflicting personalities. Instead of haphazardly making decisions, I asked my “leadership team” for advice. Their input helped me make more informed and confident decisions. In a time of crisis (or any time for that matter) it is better to reach out to those who have experience with a situation, rather than risk an uninformed guess.

I am confident my career has benefitted from my experience in the simulation. I am an even stronger team member and leader!

Greg D’Imperio, Role of Assistant CEO/General Manager of Momentous Hospitality Hotels

This simulation really helped me realize that when a crisis happens, most people will be looking for a leader, and that I could be a person people will follow. I did not fully appreciate that until I went through this simulation. As a matter of fact, just moments after the simulation was over, the president of our company called me. He said a huge storm damaged our Atlantic City office and that we would have to handle their payroll in other branches. I was so into the simulation, I had no idea there was this storm coming. I thought perhaps Dr. Rutigliano had set me up with him, calling me with this problem! Wrong. After I realized this was real, I got right to work with not only the payroll issue but the other things needed to keep the company running and helping the people at that office get back on their feet. I was practicing what I had just learned!

This simulation was fun and exhausting, and a huge confidence booster for me. It was a life changer: Do not dwell on the problem, find the solution.

Lisa Green, Roles of Co-CEO of Momentous Hospitality Hotels and Hospital Spokesperson

I have the unique perspective and privilege of having experienced the simulation twice. Having different roles in each simulation was an incredibly eye-opening experience. As co-CEO of the hotel chain, I had to

learn some very hard lessons about letting go, trusting team members to do their jobs, juggling competing priorities, and breaking down traditional barriers to achieve a common goal. I also learned that anyone can be a leader at any time, and a crisis situation is no different! In my hospital spokesperson role during the summer 2012 simulation, I was faced with the very real frustration that comes with being unable to isolate and “cure” a problem quickly enough for the public and, more importantly, for the families of loved ones impacted.

Through the simulation experience, we all learned about the importance of planning and open communication. We also were reminded that sometimes help and resolution can come from the most unlikely places – like the media or from bystanders who may hold key information. In other words, we learned that to be a great crisis leader we need to suspend our own judgments, check our egos at the door, listen and analyze information carefully, and inspire our team to work toward a positive outcome.

Sheila Suro, Role of White House Liaison

The simulation taught me much. During a crisis, leaders emerge. Do not worry about stepping on others’ toes; do what is necessary to solve the problems. If there is no action plan, think about the facts and create an action plan, assign roles and request updates. Keep in mind the importance of stepping back at several points and rethinking the strategy. Elements, facts and situations change constantly, and maybe the strategy that originally was designed is not effective anymore. Foster communication between the people, teams and agencies involved. Be aware of how peoples’ weaknesses and strengths can jeopardize the outcome of a crisis. Be committed, dedicated, trustworthy and honest. When you are not sure on how to proceed, look for guidance. Recognize when it is time to step down and let others lead. Take risks and be prepared to face the consequences. Do not let what others may think about you stop you from making decisions, taking risks, digging deeper, thinking differently or doing what is right.

Jim Fiorino, Role of FBI Agent and Simulation Historian

The simulation was certainly an atypical learning experience. Students in two separate courses were called upon to interact and work together to solve the crisis. That, alone, made this a one-of-a-kind experience!

Throughout the semester, we utilized Bill George’s (2009) 7 Lessons for Leading in Crisis. It taught us the skills necessary to lead through a crisis. What the simulation then provided was an opportunity to apply those lessons in a “real life” test, something that is another rarity in online learning. Participation in “Expect the Unexpected” added dimensions of immediacy and urgency not felt through books or lecture, but essential preparation for leading in the face of intense, unwanted and unexpected events.

Gail Schneider, Role of Simulation Facilitator

The Crisis course was perhaps the best use of innovative, creative and critical thinking that could possibly be combined with conventional academic instruction. The opportunity to find common ground between “left field” and analytical thinkers defines education principles both for students and educators.

I learned about effective management and leadership by having to open my mind, think on my feet, consider all points of view, make concessions, uncomfortably compromise, put aside ego, know when to speak up, when to keep quiet, and how to actively listen. Nothing brought more real-world insight into the Competing Values Framework than this simulation. Each student could recognize the strengths and weaknesses within themselves and each other, between and within teams, and see the value of each role in the event’s resolution. The opportunity to apply this knowledge to situations at home and at work is invaluable.

Jose Grullon, Role of Hotel General Manager

From this, I took with me one important point that will serve me for the rest of my personal and business life: self-confidence. Prior to this experience, my confidence

levels were very unstable. At the beginning of the simulation, I relied on others instead of being a leader myself. I was very quiet and almost passive. Then I was encouraged to step out and speak up. This helped me tremendously. During and after the simulation, I realized that I could be myself even more. I could develop my own ideas and believe that I am capable of making decisions, even if the byproduct is not popular or causes me to be disliked. I realized that one thing I have always been afraid of is making mistakes. Losing, making mistakes, and not being well accepted by my peers were my blatant fears during the simulation. However, I learned not to be scared; take action instead.

Simply put, “Expect the Unexpected” was the richest, most exhilarating and most exhausting experience of my faculty career! It caused me to “dig deep” (as I tell my students) within myself for creativity, confidence and energy. It caused me to risk, to step outside my own comfort zone and to be vulnerable. It demanded my best.

This experience affirmed the value of “outside the box” learning experiences. I experienced what I often teach: a group of strangers can quickly become a high-performing team when the mission is clear, when everyone is valued for who they are and what they bring to the team, and when synergy is fueled with passion. The simulation design team literally took a mustard-seed of an idea and grew it into a full-blown production in less than a month. Given I was in my first year at the college and largely unknown, I am especially grateful to those who worked with me to bring this vision into reality.

As the simulation unfolded, I came face-to-face with many of the same issues the simulation was designed to prompt for the students. First, was my own reluctance to “let go.” I had ideas about what and how the students would learn, and when things seemed amiss, I wanted to intervene. I also had to face the displeasure of several students at various times when their frustration levels skyrocketed and they wanted to quit. Fortunately, they worked through those feelings and all ended up being major contributors to the learning

experience. When the simulation concluded, I experienced the natural “let down” that often follows an intense experience. We were all exhausted – myself included. This hampered my ability to guide the students in an immediate debrief, something that many of the students later recommended be incorporated in future simulations.

I also fell into a common trap of comparing one experience with another. The first simulation experience in the summer of 2011 unconsciously became the “silver box” – the standard. When the simulation in 2012 unfolded very differently and seemed to generate less engagement initially, I immediately jumped to the conclusion that something was “wrong.” My emotions swirled. I spent the first half-dozen hours wanting to remake the simulation as it was going along, change people out of roles in which they were ineffective and basically do my best to control the outcome. Fortunately, as I was frantically scribbling notes about what to do next, I caught myself before falling into other common traps: making assumptions, letting emotions rule and acting without sufficient information. In a paradoxical way, I was experiencing what the students were experiencing! I realized then that nothing was “wrong” and that the “silver box” I had conjured up in my mind was the problem.

The students’ feedback following the simulation was meaningful and inspiring. Ways to improve the learning experience included shortening the length, providing more information in the set-up with clear expectations for participation, and conducting the simulation on a weekend. There also were ideas of conducting the simulation in a residency format, with some students volunteering to help. I am applying many of these ideas to a redesign of the simulation for upcoming courses.

The richness of the simulation as a learning tool has prompted me to consider in what other courses and with what other topics simulations could be valuable at Empire State College. There are many off-the-shelf simulations that can be purchased or obtained via open learning. They can be broadly categorized in the business arena based on the learning emphasis: communication, finance, sustainability,

leadership and teamwork, marketing, strategy, supply chain, change management, venture capital, entrepreneurship, economics and pricing, and statistics.

Harvard has “The Tip of the Iceberg” simulation that focuses on how international team members work together in a project. Harvard also utilizes “Everest,” a well-known simulation that focuses on leadership and teamwork in a life-threatening mountain climb. Wharton Learning Lab’s “Tragedy of the Tuna” is a simulation that puts students in a situation where they have to learn to balance short-term profitability with long-term sustainability. In Stanford’s “Venture Capital Game,” students act as either entrepreneurs or venture capitalists and work to acquire maximum equity in exchange for cash.

While not every course can or should have a simulation, what I learned is this: students want more from online learning than discussion forums, individual and team assignments and grades. They want to hear from experts. They want to be taken out of their comfort zones, they want to be challenged in atypical ways, and they want faculty who create unique learning experiences for and with them. They want us to do what we ask of them: take risks, try new things and “mine the gold.” Simply put, they want our best.

Whether we create our own or utilize someone else’s simulations, I believe these can be another powerful tool to accomplishing the most important aspect of our mission: being student-centered and providing innovative, alternative and flexible approaches to higher education.

If anyone is interested in developing a simulation for work they are doing with students, I would be most happy to consult. Please contact me.

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Second Chances: Our Empire State College Experience New Mentor Reflections

Dov Fischer, Debra Kram-Fernandez and Troy Jones, Metropolitan Center

Alan Mandell suggested that we share some of our reflections on our first months as Empire State College mentors. In meeting to consider this request, we reminisced about our experiences in the first term. The theme that seemed to thread our individual experiences together was that of Empire State College being a place of second chances. We identified second chances for students, as well as for mentors who are embarking on a new career in academia or a continued career in academia but in a refreshing and new environment. We recognized that Empire State College supports students in their second, third and sometimes, more attempts to complete a degree, and supports them as they confront obstacles during their time with us. What emerged through our conversation were the following three perspectives.



Dov Fischer

Dov Fischer

I first became interested in Empire State College several years ago during a walk in midtown Manhattan. At the time, the

college was located in midtown, and my curiosity was piqued when I saw the “SUNY Empire State College” banner. “What was SUNY doing in CUNY territory?” I wondered. Over a number of years, I learned more about the college’s mission and periodically browsed its job site. I also chanced upon its charming Saratoga Springs offices during a vacation trip in upstate New York.

Shortly after the vacation in Saratoga Springs, I noticed that the college was looking to fill a Business, Management & Economics faculty position in Staten Island. The college apparently self-selects faculty who think outside of their narrow disciplines. In the case of my academic area (accounting), faculty tend to look at job sites and advertisements that specifically seek our narrow concentration and even sub-concentration. It took some “nontraditional” thinking on my part to even consider an ad for the broader area of Business, Management and Economics.

The college’s core values became evident even before the beginning of my phone interview. I mistakenly thought that the phone interview was scheduled for noon rather than the agreed-upon time of 11 a.m. As I prepared to dial into the conference call at noon, I noticed that the interview was actually scheduled for an hour earlier. I called in, fully expecting that a ruined first impression would eliminate my prospects. To my surprise and gratification, the interview went forward as planned. Not only that, but the associate dean specifically asked me not to let the incident cloud my poise and performance during the phone interview. As a believer in second and third chances, I was impressed by the sensitivity and consideration shown by her and others on the phone interview.

During the subsequent in-person interview, I gave a one-hour presentation about how to understand The Ford Motors Company’s financial statements. I had customized the presentation for a hypothetical group of nontraditional students by highlighting key concepts while allowing students (proxied by the interviewing faculty) to share their own knowledge and observations on the company and its finances. The unit’s faculty coordinator later told me that my efforts to tailor the presentation to our target students made a favorable impression on the committee. On the receiving end, in addition to learning more about the college’s mission, I began to imbibe a new vocabulary with terms such as mentor, study group, center, unit, etc.

The pleasures of teaching and mentoring at the college are similar to those at other colleges but are more frequent and intense. I admit to relishing the immediate gratification of calling a new mentee to answer questions and help design an initial course of study. Having spent a few months as a financial-products salesperson in the mid-’90s, I find that calling new mentees has some of the thrill of cold-calling a prospective insurance or mutual-fund client; only here, I stand behind a much more solid product!

As can be expected, there is a learning curve in adapting to a new and unique environment. In reflecting on what went right and what went wrong in my first term, one lesson is the importance of structure within study groups. I learned that students at the college desire more, rather than less, structure within studies compared with students at other colleges at which I’ve taught. In my opinion, the relative lack of structure within the degree planning process creates students’ thirst for such structure in

their Empire State College studies. I learned this the hard way when, in a study group, students rose in protest after I provided critical feedback on the style and originality of their presentations. They claimed that the learning contract specified only the required content of presentations with no specific requirement of style and originality. Besides being more specific in future learning contracts, I also have learned to provide feedback in a more discreet manner. At any rate, I was impressed that students felt confident enough to voice their complaints openly rather than to grumble behind my back.

As a markedly positive experience, I took advantage of the flexibility in designing my studies and in choosing texts to successfully engage students. Typically, college texts in business and economics take areas about which students are naturally curious, only to disappoint by addressing topics in overly “academic” and abstract ways. To some extent, this is the nature of the curriculum in those areas and cannot be helped. My approach to one of my studies, Business Law, has been to assign two relatively inexpensive texts. The first is an abridged version of the traditional text and the second is a more popular book on the topic. Thus, we supplemented the “academic” *Business Law* by Emerson (Barrons, 2009, 5th ed.) with *Everybody’s Guide to the Law* by Wilkinson and Belli (Collins, 2003, 2nd ed.). While students were lukewarm to the traditional Business Law topics and style, they raved about the *Everybody* book, which covered topics such as law relating to pets. Based on this positive experience, I plan to use the same approach in my upcoming Macroeconomics study.

Halfway into the term, Hurricane Sandy took a devastating toll on the unit’s home and on the surrounding communities. The Staten Island Unit occupies a two-story office building situated a half-mile from the beach. As a New Yorker who lives in Brooklyn and often visits Manhattan, Staten Island is a rustic experience and distinctly separate from the rest of the city. One of the more notable memories of a visit to our unit before Sandy was the sight of turkey hens crossing Seaview Avenue with their chicks in tow. Although the unit was only

a 20-minute drive from my home in Boro Park, Brooklyn, the geographic distance underlies the distance in the tempo of life.

Unfortunately, this resort-like way of life along Seaview Avenue and the boardwalk along Father Capodanno Boulevard has ended for now. Three weeks after the storm, we visited the unit to retrieve materials from our offices and found Father Capodanno Boulevard filled with vehicles from FEMA, the police and even the Marine Corps. It seemed like the residents of Staten Island, many of whom serve as or are connected to first responders, were experiencing a repeat of 9/11 on a smaller scale. It is ironic that one of the notable offerings of our unit is emergency management.

In the remaining six weeks of the fall 2012 term, we held our group meetings in New Dorp High School, approximately two miles from our unit’s location. In addition to the limited face-to-face meetings at the high school, the online ANGEL teaching portal made it possible for students to communicate and submit the work necessary to complete the term.

Many of our students’ lives were severely disrupted, and some even lost their homes. The silver lining behind the disaster is that the response to this crisis demonstrated the college’s flexibility in coping with unexpected challenges. The Metropolitan Center office on Hudson Street in Manhattan has provided temporary office space to the displaced Staten Island faculty. The shared experiences of dislocation by the faculty and staff from the unit have prompted me to connect in a more meaningful way with colleagues from both the Staten Island Unit and the other units of the Metropolitan Center. These experiences, not forgotten, have been very important to becoming a mentor.

Postscript: Our Staten Island building reopened on February 25, 2013. Although the building is still undergoing repairs, faculty and students are excited to be back. We even held a well-attended orientation session on the day we reopened.

Debra Kram-Fernandez

Again and again and again, I think that I’ll break but I mend.

– Unknown



Debra Kram-Fernandez

In what felt like my first week of mentoring (I might have been here a couple of weeks but I felt just-born), I sat with the first of many new students I would have the opportunity to mentor in Community and Human Services. This was a woman, a mother, a person with a long work history and a person with very few transcript credits. She was bubbly, excited, reported to be a bit nervous and somewhat vague about what she hoped to accomplish through her studies at Empire State College. We explored a bit further and out came the dream: “I always wanted to. ...” Without giving it a lot of thought, I responded practically and wondered if she had planned to complete her bachelor’s degree and go on for a master’s in social work. Suddenly, and without warning, she burst into tears, but the smile never left her face. She disclosed that she had always fantasized about completing her degree and continuing on for a MSW, but never dared to say it out loud. She stated that she was so glad that I had, and that she loved the way that sounded – her name and MSW in the same sentence. It became apparent to me that while much had been said about the fact that many of our students come with a great deal of life experience, it was important to recognize that much of that “life experience” was not easy; in fact, many of our older students have experienced numerous life challenges, and showing up and coming through our doors is not merely a decision to pursue a degree, but a testament to their strong resilience, buoyancy and hope for the future.

My background, in a nutshell, is in mental health (working with adults with serious mental illness), trauma, and child and family welfare. Most recently, I had the opportunity to lead the family foster care department of a large social service agency to “Sanctuary Certification.” What that means is that a governing body found our practice to be trauma-informed and meeting the standards of excellence in practicing the Sanctuary model (Bloom, 1997). This was important because one can presume that anyone approaching a social service agency for help has encountered an adverse or traumatic experience. People come for help when the methods they were able to employ for coping are not holding up so well. People, who have experienced trauma, need to be able to utilize the services that are offered to them. In the same way that the Americans with Disabilities Act ensures that all public buildings are accessible to people who have a disability (Harris & Fallot, 2001), a trauma-informed agency makes its program accessible to individuals who have experienced trauma. Many schools for children and adolescents are working within or toward Sanctuary Certification and other trauma-informed practices. In reality, everyone has experienced some adverse experience in life before they come through our Empire State College doors, and what I like and respect about this institution is the effort that is made to make education accessible to a wide range of people. This is in line with the social work code of ethics and with being trauma-informed, and it is quite simply the right thing to do. Any effective learning environment, whether formally or informally, will strive to be trauma-informed, in order to create a safe, socially responsible environment conducive to learning and growing.

Patricia Deegan (2007), who is a survivor of the mental health system and works tirelessly to affect positive changes in that system, has a YouTube video in which she talks about her own struggles with mental illness and how they might have interfered with her school experiences. She states that she would never have disclosed having a mental illness to anyone associated with her doctoral program for fear this would jeopardize her standing. Kay Redfield Jamison (1995), a renowned scholar on

bipolar disorder and herself a survivor of the disorder, echoes this sentiment, stating that she had to make sure her status as a doctor and a professional were secured before going public. Even in a few short months at Empire State College, students have disclosed many adverse experiences to me from trauma, psychiatric hospitalizations and substance abuse, to name a few. Many of our students are parenting children with severe special needs. This is probably not much different than any population of people, but what seems to be unique about the mentor-mentee relationship is that there is a mutual understanding that rather than being an obstacle, these life experiences can drive academic success: they can fuel second chances. Students quickly learn that this is a special place where they will not be judged by faculty, staff or peers; where others have experienced challenges that were obstacles to obtaining an education; and that with planning, dedication and support, an academic degree is, for most, a very real and attainable possibility.

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Troy Jones

This position at Empire State College is my second position in higher education and provides me with a contrasting perspective of life in the academy. I now have a new outlook on my role in higher education and a reference point to which to compare my experiences in teaching, scholarly pursuit and academic service. Since Empire State College is vastly different from my previous institution, I now have a different

perspective on my work with students. Empire State College has afforded me a second chance to evaluate my role in the academy.

I'll start with the disclaimer stating that I'm not ranking the two experiences as to which one was better or worse; I'm merely



Troy Jones

contrasting how vastly different each experience was and how this has broadened my perspective of higher education. My very first taste of the different flavor that Empire State College provides occurred just shortly after I accepted the position. I was contacted by the Staten Island unit coordinator to inquire about which study groups I wanted to teach and on which days I'd like to offer them. I had been accustomed to receiving comparable emails from my department chair, but these were not inquiries; instead they detailed which courses I would teach and on which days I would teach them. This experience was simply a sneak peek into the world of autonomy (with accountability) that is offered by Empire State College to both students and faculty.

As I discovered more about the inner workings of the college, I was awed by its individualized nature and by the way in which students respond to and are served by the college. I was aware that the college primarily served nontraditional students, which excited me since, before the fall of 2012, I had primarily worked with the traditional 18-to-24-year-old students. My previous institution had an online program with comparable students to those enrolled at Empire State College; however,

I never met or had any kind of significant interaction with them. Empire State College was my opportunity to finally meet the type of students whom I had been teaching online. It was at this point that I discovered that this college opened new doors for our student population, as well as for the faculty.

Once I began to interact with the new students, I realized that mentoring is very different from advising. My experience had been meeting with students, reviewing transcripts, reviewing courses that needed to be completed, providing them with forms to apply for graduation and sending them on their way. Having the opportunity to sit and talk with students about their career plans and goals was an experience that made me realize the true purpose of higher education. I found it invigorating to empower students to take control of their own education and learning. The students come with very different backgrounds and have distinct educational and career goals. It is powerful

to discover students' professional goals and help them map out a pathway to reach them.

The ownership of their learning that the students have is mirrored in the ownership I am now able to experience in the context of my own career. As a former schoolteacher, I've always prided myself as a student-centered educator. I really misunderstood this concept to be a lot of fun and cute activities as a vehicle for learning. Empire State College has helped me to realize that student-centered education means that the student is at the center of the educational process. Our students have the power to determine their degree plan and inform the faculty of their needs instead of the faculty informing them of what they need to graduate. I'm always most excited when students register for independent studies and ask me what they have to do to complete the study. I enjoy their expressions when I ask them what *they'd* like to do. Designing the study together goes to the foundation of Empire State College and our philosophy of learning.

I've also learned that Empire State College serves as a second chance for many of our students. I'm always amazed at orientation when the students introduce themselves. Nearly all of them are coming back to college after being unsuccessful at or disillusioned by another institution. Empire State College provides them with a second opportunity to pursue higher education, take ownership of their learning and experience success. Having just completed educational planning with my first mentee, I feel the nervous excitement whenever we speak. Empire State College also is serving as the second university of this student, and I am sometimes struck by our similar experiences. She was able to design and complete her own degree plan, and I am now able to design study groups and individual learning contracts that reflect my interests and the needs of my students. This college has truly offered second chances on a variety of levels. I look forward to all of the wonders that are ahead as I continue my journey through Empire State College.

Bridging the Digital Divide

Silvia Chelala, Long Island Center and Center for International Programs

What follows is an edited version of Silvia Chelala's keynote address given at the Conference on Information-Communication Technologies in Linguistics, Foreign Language Teaching and Cross-cultural Communication in Moscow on 07 June 2012. This conference was sponsored by The Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation, The Scientific-Methodological Council on Foreign Languages, The National Association of Applied Linguistics (NAAL), the Faculty of Foreign Languages and Area Studies of Moscow State University, The Center for Distance Education and the Department of Linguistics and Information Technologies.

Good morning, colleagues:

I bring you warm regards from your American colleagues at SUNY Empire State College. As you know, we have been participating in these great meetings since the first conference. My colleague in our School for Graduate Studies, Eileen O'Connor, has been doing research on "Second Life" within the context of teaching science. She has made presentations at previous meetings. I have been working on blended courses in introductory Spanish, also sharing with you my experiences along the way. Now it is my goal to tell you what my institution as a whole is doing to enhance teaching and learning through the use of technology. I also would like to invite you to consider the "open" education movement, which is now percolating in different parts of the world.

Empire State College has been considered a nontraditional and experimenting institution since its inception in 1972. It has been learner-focused and thus an "open" institution to innovation. Its mission as currently stated is as follows:

SUNY Empire State College's dedicated faculty and staff use innovative, alternative, and flexible approaches to higher education that transform people and communities by providing rigorous programs that connect individuals' unique and diverse lives to their personal learning goals. (SUNY Empire State College, n.d., para.1)

According to our current administration, the college's current work is now redefining and repositioning Empire State College as an "open university." This shift is being accomplished through the following steps:

- improving the mentor/learner experiences through emerging technologies,
- making full use of students' previous learning experiences,
- increasing student access to all kinds of available resources,
- developing the best strategies that match learner's needs and goals,
- participating in the wider discussions of open education's possibilities (Benke, Davis, & Travers, 2012).

I will discuss these "steps" in this address. (I also am happy to discuss these issues in greater depth with anyone after my presentation.)

Empire State College is a distributive organization; that is, it provides instruction through 35 locations in New York State and abroad, as well as online, reaching students from the USA, Europe, North and Central America, the Middle East and China. Empire State College has over 18,600 undergraduate students (average age of 36) and one thousand two hundred (1,200) graduate students (average age of 40). About one-third of our students are male and almost two thirds are female (SUNY Empire State College, 2013).



Silvia Chelala

With such a geographically widespread institution like ours, there are many challenges to supporting faculty and students in the use of technology. Therefore, I will first talk about the work with and for students that are directly tied to the first four steps delineated by our administration and noted earlier as a way to achieve the ideal of "open university," and then I will devote myself to the institutional support for faculty.

Courses and programs at the college are delivered in several ways: face-to-face in a traditional classroom, individually with a mentor in a tutorial situation, in small groups or seminars, and on the Web. (As you will recognize, in all forms, technology is used.) In some programs, there are residencies, which means that students meet intensively with faculty for a few days and then work via the Web for the rest of the term – a form of blended learning. Electronic mail is the most common form of communication when at a distance. In addition to email, most courses use resources on the Web such as YouTube (e.g. TED Talks), as well as textbooks and materials available through our online library. There are language tutorials and math supports on our college website.

Students use programs that help them articulate their choices in their curricula (what we refer to as “degree programs”), upload information to be evaluated and find out about offerings around the college, as well as at their home center. Students in any part of the college can work with faculty at a distance if there is no expert faculty at their site.

Technology is of the utmost importance at our college because we are so dispersed. However, this move to a reliance on “new” technologies is not easy for all students. They need quite a bit of training themselves, as well as opportunities to ask for help. The college has a “Help Desk” staffed by our own professionals who answer questions from faculty and students every day, even on weekends. Although we have students of all ages, a recent study from the *International Journal of Mobile and Blended Learning* (Kukulska-Hulme et al., 2011) found that an increasing number of so-called “mature” students are using mobile devices for formal and informal learning and communication. In addition, student interactions with online learning are being improved every day. For example, our foreign language courses have been experimenting with voice streaming; that is, students can record their speech so faculty can evaluate their pronunciation. These recordings are kept and the students can listen to their own progress. This feature is particularly valuable for foreign language courses at a distance, even though there are opportunities for synchronous sessions.

Two other challenges for institutions like ours are science labs and library facilities. Faculty use simulations for science courses and tests, as well as other technical innovations to deliver such courses without physical laboratories. However, the library is one of the most popular resources. As the library is online, all students have access to it no matter where they are and at what time they need to find information. This feature is of great importance in our overseas programs, as time differences are an obstacle to some exchanges with mainland USA. The online library has databases of different kinds that students can access. There are e-books, self-paced tutorials on identifying research topics and how to organize material for papers and monographs. Librarians are available to answer student questions

within 24-48 hours, as well as live through the “Ask a Librarian” chat feature (during business hours). There are titles of new publications, as well as lists of books that can be researched by keywords or concepts. Learners can consult databases, journal abstracts, and even download full text articles. The e-book section is particularly useful for our students in overseas programs, as books are so expensive to buy and ship from the United States to other countries. My colleagues in Prague routinely steer students to the online library.

Another way of enhancing student learning is through the platform Moodle and an application called Mahara. Moodle will soon be the learning management system for all Empire State College online studies. It is a platform designed with a constructivist approach, which means that faculty and students can collaborate on a series of tasks integral to the course offerings. Aside from having the regular features (small class discussions, peer evaluation of work, lectures, quizzes, exams), this platform also gives faculty the option of assigning different leadership roles to students. These roles can change from class to class. Moodle also works well with a companion program called Mahara, which the college is using to help students construct electronic portfolios (e-portfolios). In these e-portfolios, students will be able to store their resumes and samples of work, as well as art that can then be shared with other classmates, faculty, graduate programs; it also acts as a repository of information for employment situations. Right now, the Master of Arts in Teaching program uses the e-portfolio to assess overall student competency in all aspects during the program and before graduation.

The college also has been working on expanding communication with current and prospective students through smartphone applications and connecting prospective students with pre-enrollment advisors. We also are involved in encouraging the use of our website, social media, video and mobile technology to promote faculty and professional accomplishments and student success.

I now want to discuss aspects of our college’s plan to achieve the goals of being an “open university.” In addition to providing help in the use of technology (the Help Desk that I mentioned earlier), there are others resources: faculty instructional technologists (FITs), the Center for Mentoring and Learning, and publications shared through the college’s website.

FITs are usually graduates from doctoral programs in education who have special training in the use of technology. They have been deployed to the regional centers and provide useful information to everyone through a blog on a college site called “The Commons” (open source systems, use of tablets and other mobile devices and new developments). Faculty and FITs collaborate in the development of courses incorporating the new technology tools available to us. They provide ongoing advice and problem-solving assistance. They are invaluable to all of us who are learning new ways to interact with each other and with our students.

Empire State College, through its Center for Mentoring and Learning, also provides ongoing training and opportunities for discussion. These exchanges usually had been provided when, once or twice a year, there were face-to-face meetings of the entire college. Now, the Center for Mentoring and Learning has its own website, which offers much information for new mentors and about different groups that wish to connect with each other.

Aside from postings at the site, the college now conducts a series of webinars to provide for new knowledge. For example, last year, Dr. Bakary Diallo gave a lecture from Nairobi, Kenya, on how using resources from the African continent and around the world, the African Virtual University has created an institution using three main languages (French, English and Portuguese) that can provide African countries with learning opportunities relevant to the creation of a well-educated labor force. We then heard Dr. Stephen Brookfield of the University of St. Thomas in Minneapolis, Minnesota talk about what it means to educate our students to be “critical thinkers” and its relevance today. Another webinar series that has been running for the whole academic year is

on formative evaluation (in essence, how can we provide constructive and ongoing feedback to our students). Overall, faculty from around the college have shared their work and thus continue a productive conversation across the centers and different locations, and that, too, have connected us with students and educators around the world.

Librarians and faculty have invested time and resources in teaching colleagues about time-saving programs. For example, there is a program called RefWorks, which helps with citations. With this tool, you can enter citations manually or import information from library databases and e-book catalogs, as well as text files. RefWorks allows you to bookmark and share a folder, and tie it to a course or Web page. Faculty teach each other to use such resources as Google Docs. These are opportunities for students and their teachers to share documents synchronously and asynchronously. Students can literally “see” the changes that their instructor or peer tutor make to the text, indicating where better wording or better grammar is appropriate.

I want to speak briefly on another aspect of Empire State College that, as the title of this talk mentions, “bridges” one of the “divides.” Along with the fact that there are more and more institutions developing in the United States and around the world, we recognize that learning accomplished in nontraditional ways (outside of the classroom in workshops, work-related training, private reading, professional activities) is worth college credit if a faculty can assess it and equate it to college-level learning. The college has been engaged in prior learning assessment since the institution’s start, as many of our students have been returning adults continuing on to graduate school or aiming for the work promotion they so eagerly desired. One of our promises is that students should not have to re-take courses relevant to their current academic plans that they completed at other institutions. Many students take advantage of prior learning assessment and of the college’s flexible transfer policy..

As an innovative institution, Empire State College has tried to provide access to a wide range of open educational resources

and to support faculty and students in their use. In important ways, this connects us to a larger “open educational resources” movement that is bringing great changes to our world and to higher education. But, in addition to the incredible opportunities such an “open” system offers, it also throws into question some practices that we have considered “unchangeable.” If students can join Stanford University graduate students in a course in Artificial Intelligence without having to pay Stanford tuition, then what institution benefits? The Massachusetts Institute of Technology has been posting its syllabi on the Web for some years. I have made use of them to gather ideas and new bibliographies. Imagine: in just two weeks, the enrollment in the Stanford course was 68,000 students! Even Non-enrolled students can participate in courses like this. Empire State College and all those institutions that identify, recognize and accredit informal and alternative college-level learning can, perhaps, serve these students by finding ways to evaluate and thus accredit what they have learned.

The excitement is in the air. For example, *Alt-Ed*, an online publication devoted to documenting significant initiatives related to massive open online courses (MOOCs), published an article on March 20, 2012 titled, “The Stanford Education Experiment Could Change Higher Education Forever” (Leckart, 2012). However, the revolution is still evolving. Not all institutions offer the same services for the same course. In 2012, *The Chronicle of Higher Education* compared six institutions teaching Introduction to Economics, Principles of Microeconomics, Microeconomics: An Introduction and Principles of Microeconomics and found that some offer recorded lectures, some have interaction with other students, some provide options to take quizzes and tests, all give readings and assignments, but most do not offer contact with professors (Mangan, 2012).

Empire State College, which is part of a larger State University of New York system, has joined a consortium of institutions in Canada, Britain, Australia and the United States. A similar consortium in Europe, backed by the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) and UNESCO, sent representatives to a meeting in Cambridge, England to discuss

the basis for coordination and cooperation. One hundred and twenty-seven institutions participated in this gathering.

According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, “Open Educational Resources are teaching, learning or research materials that are in the public domain or released with an intellectual property license that allows for free use, adaptation, and distribution” (UNESCO, 2012, para. 2). Usually these new trends tend to favor rich, developed countries, but this movement can enrich institutions in the developing world where the need for highly trained workers may not be able to be achieved through traditional universities; the institutions could follow the path that I earlier described of the African Open University in which education is provided through different institutions with a common content but in different languages. I think it is in this same spirit of innovation and responsiveness that at Empire State College, a committee

The excitement is in the air.

is looking at Moodle and Mahara as tools that can give us new “open” educational opportunities.

Critical thinking is of prime importance in these environments, as students and other participants have to make decisions about the authenticity and validity of material that is free and online (Mackey, 2011). Cross-cultural experiences are very much part of our work. Faculty teach in different programs and in different countries. Using new technologies, we can increase our students’ learning in a globalized world that is shrinking (B. Chandra, personal communication, 15 May 2012). This offers us another kind of “bridging” that is a necessity today.

I invite you to think about these issues and to take time in these few days together to talk about them. It has been a pleasure to speak with you today. Thank you so much for listening.

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“This suggests something else about an educational institution that values student-centered learning: that educators continually seek to learn more about teaching and learning itself by reflecting on their experiences working with students. This entails, once again, maintaining open-mindedness about the ways that teaching-learning might occur. But, since teaching-learning is an integral aspect and a core assumption of education, this also suggests that a college’s open-mindedness translates into another quality I would call reflexivity: Educators simultaneously treat their deepest assumptions about education – for example, what “teaching-learning” means or how it occurs – as open questions in and of themselves, not as immutable givens. And, they adopt this reflexive stance not only when they are safely isolated from students (e.g., as a purely research question), but also when – especially when – they are working with students.”

*– Eric Ball, “Some Qualities of a Learner-Centered Educational Institution”
All About Mentoring, 30, winter 2006, p. 40*

A Tale of Cloud Collaboration

Kjrsten Keane and Miriam Russell, Center for Distance Learning

A Center for Distance Learning student picks up his cell phone and begins to dictate an assignment. Recording content verbally is a standard practice, as he is disabled with spastic cerebral palsy. The student understands most of the requirements of the assignment, which he has previously discussed with his mentor over the phone. This is his rationale essay, an essential part of CDL's online Planning and Finalizing the Degree course, and the cornerstone of his associate degree. Using his Samsung Galaxy Android phone, he creates the recording and uploads the content to his Google Drive application where he will be able to edit within the program. Though he also can upload his audio file to his netbook computer's word processor directly, the Google app is key for this assignment, as he plans to share it with his mentor and writing coach via the Cloud.¹



Miriam Russell (left) and Kjrsten Keane

Miriam Russell: A spiral of events led us to Cloud Computing after the student requested extra help writing his essay. As his writing coach, it was my role to assist him in the creation of his rationale essay in consultation with his mentor. The student and I began with a landline call. It soon became evident that communicating via landline and cell phone due to his speech impairment was time-consuming. We sought an improved mode of communication, working to identify the best technology that would enable him to create and revise his text. First, he suggested using the Facebook chat mode; however, that solution was quite inefficient due to his slowness in typing.

Kjrsten Keane: As his mentor, I was aware of the student's need to connect frequently to seek clarification and support for his coursework and participation. Despite the inefficiency of our landline and cell phone conversations, the student continued to request close contact.

M.R.: The student's ongoing desire to talk with us personally prompted him to suggest trying the Google Voice feature of the Google suite, in accompaniment with Google Docs (recently renamed Google Drive). I was only somewhat familiar with Google applications, but I did have a Gmail account that allowed me to explore the features he discussed. Soon I was wearing earphones with a mic plugged into my computer. While on my inbox page, the student would call me to talk. I was struck by how much more intelligible his speech seemed when transmitted via our computers. As a result, I no longer had to ask him to slow down so I could better understand him, and thus we were able to make significant progress in planning our strategy with his essay. Since the Kjrsten closely supervised this essay, we all began to communicate via Cloud calls in order to effectively move toward the conclusion of the essay.

K.K.: Navigating the hurdle to connect with each other in a more seamless way, Miriam and I discovered that the writing challenge in our scenario was actually "transactional distance." Moore (2007) defined transactional distance as the psychological and communication space between learners and instructors. Transactional distance is relative and different for each person, meaning that some learners are more comfortable with distance than others, and that distance can take many forms (large lecture vs. small seminar, online vs. face-to-face vs. hybrid).

M.R.: Since the beginning of distance education, there has been a great deal of concern on the part of theorists about the psychological and communication space between learners and instructors. Somehow, the near presence of a student in the instructor's office was thought to provide unequivocal tangible support.

K.K.: The physical distance between our collaborative team was apparent from the beginning; we were substantially separated by location (Manhattan and Troy, N.Y. and Lexington, Va.). The transactional distance was less obvious. The writing skills that the student brought to the table were fairly strong, but they were not revealed until we were connected on both a visual and verbal level in the Google apps space.

M.R.: Right! His seemingly basic errors previously masked his true capabilities. During our voice/text conferences, as we reviewed my comments and highlights, it was easy for him to identify the correct spellings or to revise his sentence structure in the case of fragments or run-on sentences. Because his typing was labor-intensive, I felt justified in allowing him to dictate his revisions to me. Taking his dictation, it was evident that he was an able creator of advanced-level writing. The transactional distance had been breached to the extent that he would transfer his words to the page quickly through my fingers. For those of us who are most comfortable with traditional keyboard functioning, it is rather off-putting to imagine our students composing their work orally; there may always be a need for print editing. However, for students with neurological impairments, this student's approach works best for him until something better becomes available.

K.K.: According to Moore (2007), the extent of transactional distance is a function of structure (course design) and dialogue that can produce autonomous learners. Our design challenge was met through Google Docs. The application allowed us all to function to meet the learning objectives synchronously and asynchronously in a supportive online environment.

M.R.: Still, there were technical challenges. Connecting online in this new way was a steep learning curve for me as a “non-techie.” Google accounts are an obvious necessity; including team participants in one another's Google contact lists also was required. While it was easy to download Google Voice, at times I was frustrated because I couldn't answer the ring window. Sometimes the solution was as simple as plugging in my earphones or turning them to the “on” indicator. I soon learned to

locate and check the settings frequently to determine if my mic was properly selected. Nevertheless, it seemed Google technology itself wasn't always reliably cooperative, so we occasionally resorted to three-way phone conversations using cell and landlines as back-up. In addition, I learned the importance of officially ending a call in the call window on the Gmail inbox screen. Forgetting to disconnect means that students can still hear after you have moved on to other conversations! In spite of these challenges, we are enthusiastically advocating use of the Cloud to close the transactional distance gap.

In the process of learning how to use the technologies of Cloud collaboration via Google Docs with a disabled student, it became clear that the same process is highly effective as a conferencing and teaching tool for all others who need help with writing assignments. Presently, we aren't advocating that students compose the majority of their written assignments via mobile technology, as was necessary for this disabled student. In fact, documents created on a mobile device are apt to be replete with spelling errors and faulty punctuation. They are quite useful, however, to create a draft that can be checked later in a Word document or in Google Drive prior to submitting a final copy.

K.K.: In our case, the technology was the window we needed into the student's writing process and capability. Without the mobile application and the Google Drive collaboration options, we may never have fully understood the skill set of the student or assisted in refining the essay to the degree that we did.

M.R.: We are supporting the use of Cloud computing with applications such as Google Drive as “savers” of documents, not only because it automatically saves and tracks each change every few seconds, but for the accessibility it offers to individuals and groups of people anytime and anywhere the Internet is available.

K.K.: In addition, we find ourselves increasingly using Cloud collaboration to communicate synchronously as well as asynchronously with colleagues at a distance. It compares most favorably with face-to-face conferencing because the time

spent joining the conference is reduced to seconds, which is especially useful if participants live in another state or country. Furthermore, the choice of applications in the Google suite includes visual and auditory communication.

To increase the strength of the written rationale in this case, Miriam and I focused on dialogue – *facilitative* dialogue, in the Moore (2007) spirit – to meet our goals. Working with dialogue builds student autonomy and establishes more learner control. The role of the instructor can thus truly evolve into one of guide vs. sage (Mezirow, 1991).

Our ability to couple the auditory with the visual is vital in encouraging student autonomy because the tone used by the instructor is key. Ghosh (2011) noted: “The rapid distribution of instructor feedback through rubrics and Google Voice provides students with specific and timely comments and helps decrease student anxiety and frustration” (Evidence of Effectiveness section, para. 4). Small talk, combined with Socratic questions, works wonders in building a student's confidence in editing skills. As the student and coach/mentor focused on specific words or phrases synchronously or when commenting asynchronously, questions like, “Is there a word that would work better here?” or “Can you expand upon this idea?” are better than “This is wrong!” or “Change this.” Autonomy is strengthened by avoiding those didactic phrases, rather resorting to questions such as: “What would happen if we turned this sentence around? Do you like that better?” Or, “Is there any more we can do to improve this paper, or is it ready to submit?”

M.R.: In contrast to didactic methods, dialogic methods used in our collaboration enabled the student to find his voice and gain ownership of the words he selected to create the document, thereby achieving a positive outcome that is essential to his ultimate success in attaining his degree at Empire State College. In a short six months, we learned a great deal through this collaborative effort with a disabled student. Consequently, most of my coaching to help students overcome writing problems now takes place on the Cloud. After the

student reviews my comments on his or her document and we connect synchronously using Google Voice, the experience is exhilarating and the outcomes appear much better than they would have been otherwise. Preliminary results consistently support this result. As we continue to collaborate on the Cloud, we expect to find more positive results for teaching, mentoring and coaching students along with expanded applications for collaboration with other faculty and mentors.

Lastly, working in the Cloud saves time; all documents saved within seconds on the Cloud can be accessed from any location without resorting to hard copies, email attachments or saving to a flash drive. It's a consolation to busy instructors who may be moving from home to work and back again, to have the most up-to-date text ready to read and, if needed, to share instantly with others on a mobile phone or any computer with Internet access. Learning about the research tool was an amazing revelation. Just highlighting material and clicking "research" instantly gives original sources as well as additional Web articles on any given topic!

K.K.: Ultimately, our case study is a story of how a disabled student struggled to find the best way to communicate at a distance with his mentor and writing coach. Emerging Cloud technology provided a vehicle for this disabled student to gain writing skills and to achieve more confidence and autonomy while developing a strong relationship with his mentors.

M.R.: Our CDL colleague, Nataly Tcherepashenets, and Florence Lojacono (forthcoming 2013), in the introduction to

their forthcoming book, *Globalizing Online: Telecollaborations, Internationalization and Social Justice*, quoted Heidegger, who sees technology as enabling a kind of liberation, observing, "When we once open ourselves expressly to the essence of technology, we find ourselves unexpectedly taken into a freeing claim" (pp. 330-331). This is rapidly becoming a reality for learning that challenges us to keep up with our students' usage of technological advances in communication and text sharing.

Interestingly, to date, Datatel shows that most CDL students report a Gmail address as their primary form of contact. Still more may have a Gmail address as a secondary method of communication, as determined through mentor-student or instructor-student conversations. Furthermore, the abundance of active Gmail participation allows ease of access to Google applications. According to *Campus Technology*, "50% of higher education institutions use Google Docs as an app in the Cloud" (O'Hanlon & Schaffhauser, 2011, p. 28). It's safe to assume that by 2013, the percentage will increase. As the number of students who are using Cloud applications rises, we are fortunate to have discovered its many advantages by working with one of our students who happens to be disabled.

Note

- ¹ For those who are not familiar with Cloud Computing, it is best defined as: "the use of computing resources (hardware and software) that are delivered as a service over a network (typically the Internet). The name comes from the use of a cloud-shaped

symbol as an abstraction for the complex infrastructure it contains in system diagrams. Cloud computing entrusts remote services with a user's data, software and computation" (Wikipedia, 2013, para. 1). The Google Drive suite is comprised of productivity applications, such as file creation and storage, housed in the Cloud rather than on an individual computer.

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"Making the Best in a Bad Situation"

Catana Tully

Our colleague, Catana Tully, who for many years served as a mentor at the Northeast Center and then in International Programs, has recently published a deeply moving memoir that traces her incredible path in a trilingual German-Guatemalan family and her search for identity as a woman of color. In Split at the Root: A Memoir of Love and Lost Identity (Completion Enterprises, 2012), Tully's descriptions of her adopted German mother, "Mutti," her efforts to learn about her biological parents, and the portrait of her life in Europe as an actress and fashion model, offer us a glimpse of her complex and rich journey. As Carolyn Broadway, longtime Northeast Center mentor, wrote: "The questions [this book] explores strike at the heart of all of our lives. How do we frame the persona we present to the world? How do we reconcile the self-image we create and defend over a lifetime with the image we see in the mirror? How do we come to love and honor all of our mothers, and all of our heritage?"

The excerpt from Split at the Root provided here, a section entitled "Making the Best in a Bad Situation," is taken from Part One of the memoir. In it, the author (referred to by her mother as "Mobrle" or "little Moor") then 15, describes her wrenching leave for Jamaica and difficult days in a boarding school there – "a place of learning where order and honor ruled supreme."

Thanks to Catana for her willingness to share her work with us.

Early in the morning on the day of my departure, I found an oval box in my shoe. In it was a silver and navy blue Parker fountain pen. It was a gift that would mark my passage from mischief-maker to serious student. Mutti and I boarded a busy two-propeller Viscount and lifted into a cool Guatemala sky, heading northeastward. Two hours later, hopping and skipping like an albatross trying to avoid scorching its

feet, the plane landed on the sizzling strip in Belize. The door flung open and hot air flooded the cabin. Outside, I could barely breathe in the stinging mid-morning heat. Belize smelled of salt, bananas, and tar.

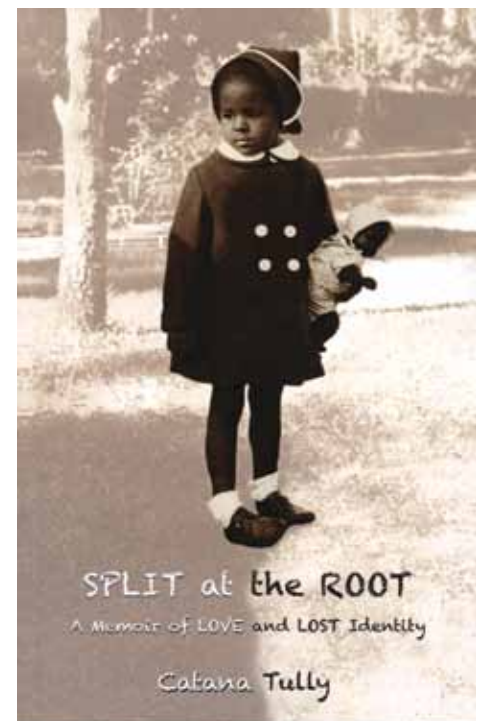
I was told the place had Black people; I just didn't reckon they'd be everywhere. I became painfully self-conscious. Was something wrong with my beige suit? My hair? My speaking German? I stayed close to Mutti, clutching her arm, even squeezing it when someone came too close for my liking. "Stell' Dich nicht so an!" (Pull yourself together) she'd hiss at me while smiling sweetly and shaking me off. I noticed how she asked for information, arranged for the luggage to follow us, and when and how she handed out tips. I should have noticed, but didn't, that she was not scared of anyone and no one meant us any harm.

Of the two days in Belize I only remember writing to Putzi that it was a frightening place. "Everyone is Black, from the street sweeper to the hotel manager. You'd be scared too."

In Kingston we stayed the first three days in a hotel that exemplified gracious British colonial living. At first I thought we were driving through a park, but the road led us to a white building that was more impressive than the presidential palace in Guatemala. Flamingos and peacocks paraded freely on the manicured lawns in a landscape of palms, giant ferns and waterfalls. There was a swimming pool and several in and outdoor restaurants. The breakfast room was an airy buttercup-yellow environment where golden canaries chirped in white rattan cages, while we scooped balls of chilled buttery papaya from Wedgewood bowls. I was quite aware of being the only dark guest in the hotel where the management was White, and the help came in assorted shades of brown to ebony.

The day prior to our departure for Hampton, we moved to a more modest lodging run by two Scottish sisters who were just about the sweetest old women I'd ever encountered. They and their staff chaperoned the girls while in Kingston. Mutti made sure to befriend the sisters, thus reassuring herself that I was in good hands while away from the school. She's fabulous, I often thought of Mutti; the way she talked to people, the way she got everything she wanted, the way people who had never set eyes on her instantly liked her. "How you shout into the forest," was one of her favorite sayings, "the forest responds to you in kind." She treated everyone with courtesy and humility, and the response was warm, friendly, and respectful.

In the afternoon, while sipping tea and nibbling cucumber sandwiches on the porch, we watched as the overseas girls began to arrive. By dinner the place was alive with laughter and gaggles of French, Dutch, and Spanish. We introduced ourselves to



some and I right away liked Sandra from Maracaibo in Venezuela, who also was new that term. The next morning, with boxed lunches in hand, we set off for the St. Elizabeth Mountains on a relic from the early days of railroad travel. The locomotive, emitting billowing clouds of grey smoke and chugging laboriously, pulled the train along the countryside. Boring landscape, I thought, no colorful trees or bushes like we have in Guatemala. Here and there a beleaguered donkey needed a poke in the ribs from its ganja-smoking owner. Women with large baskets on their heads quaffed on corn pipes as they lumbered along. Cloudy afternoon skies greeted us at our destination.

Established in 1858 and perched on a wide hilly expanse, the school was a dominating U-shaped two-story construction. I don't know what I was expecting, but the minute I saw it, I hated it. Several smaller houses dotted the grounds. I later learned they were science labs, and music houses for lessons and practice. On a small hill facing the main building stood a limestone chapel next to a solitary poplar.

A blond, blue eyed, freckle-faced girl came bounding up to us. "Hi, my name is Sally," she said with exuberant energy. She handed Mutti a note that invited us to the headmistress's office once I was settled in the dorm. "I'm your prefect. Welcome to Hampton," and she handed me a green enameled pin explaining it was for my uniform. It was the color of the house to which I was assigned: Saint Hilda's. Henceforth, I'd eat and sleep among Saint Hilda's girls; for all competitive events, those in the other three houses (red, blue and yellow) would be my rivals.

Sally helped me carry my suitcases to the dorm, a long room with six beds. Curtains separating the cubicles were only to be drawn for privacy when washing or dressing. On one side of the bed stood a night table with a lamp and a decanter with drinking water, on the other, a stand with a large white pitcher in a basin. I had a dresser and a closet. On the bed reserved for me lay the ordered eight cobalt blue pinafores and bloomers, and white blouses. Sally's cubicle, with walls and a door, was at the end. Prefects were seniors, and a

perk for that was being allowed to study into the night. Sally, who was Scottish and lived in Kingston, introduced me to the other girls. Peggy Chin was Chinese and lived in Mandeville, which was in Jamaica. Shirley Johns was English and flew in from Trinidad; Janette LeFoire was French from Martinique, Hatti Haaring, Dutch, came from Curacao; Antoinette Marsoobian, of Armenian origin, was Jamaican and lived in Montego Bay. I was the only new one and, I noticed, the darkest. (Years later I learned Mutti had made such a request.) I unpacked, and Mutti put my clothes away to make sure everything was neatly stacked. Then the dinner bell rang.

Mutti was escorted to the headmistress' private quarters; I joined the Saint Hilda's line in front of the dining room. My place was in the middle of a long table, at the head of which throned Sally. At the other end sat Denise, a sub-prefect - she was from Haiti. There were two tables per house, which meant that each house had two prefects and two sub-prefects.

A procession of slender, ebony-colored women balancing wooden trays on their heads entered the hall. They fanned out and placed steaming platters of food on stands. Someone said grace, and boiled beef was passed around. Then followed a bowl of vegetables and one of rice and peas. I helped myself sparingly to the funny-smelling wilted things. I knew I wouldn't bring myself to swallow them. Sally admonished me, as Joyce removed my untouched plate, that in future I would eat all the food I'd served myself. She had been friendly before; now her words carried the iciness of authority. I was not accustomed to someone so close to me in age telling me, in such uncertain terms, what I could and couldn't do.

After dinner, all I could think of was finding Mutti. The minute I saw her, I ran over and began my bombardment: "I hate this place! For heaven's sake, don't leave me here!"

Mutti looked sad, preoccupied, but I didn't care.

"Dinner was ugly grey meat! The carrots and string beans were cooked so long they were mushy," I gaggled with disgust, "and the rice had peas in it and tasted

like coconut! Muuuutti, the food here is repugnant! Uagh," I gaggled again for good measure.

I knew she empathized with me but she only looked sad and, touching my cheek, said: "Food in boarding schools is not high cuisine, Mohrle. And the English are not known for their kitchen." She hooked her hand into my arm as we walked to a bench. "I understand it's going to be difficult," she said sitting down, "because you have to get accustomed to the ways of another country. Dear, dear child," she sighed, and sighing again, kissed me on the cheek.

The bell rang. "Bells, bells, bells. This is nerve-wracking," I moaned. This time we had to get in line and march to chapel for evening prayers. Mutti had no sentiment for church rituals. This was not a wedding, baptism, or funeral, so she climbed into the waiting car that would drive her to wherever she was spending the night.

When she returned the following morning, I was waiting and ready. I ran to her, awash in tears: "This place is hell!" I cried. "That pitcher with water in the cubicle? It's to take care of the morning shower. These people are filthy! They told me we shower every other day, and when there's a drought, which means there's no rain, we can easily go for a whole week without bathing. The bathroom should be called 'Egypt', Mutti; it's so far away. And Mutti," I sobbed, breathless and distressed, "they served sardines in oil for breakfast... I haven't eaten since the boxed lunch on the train," I whimpered.

Silently she took me in her arms. I was sure she was going to tell me to go pack my stuff at once and we were going home. But she only said, "Be brave, Mohrle. It's for the best that you learn to adjust to all sorts of conditions."

"There's no way I can adjust to this! I want to go home with you. You can't leave me here," I said clutching her arm. I began to cry, right there in the open. I didn't care who saw me. I wasn't staying anyway.

The bell rang. What did that mean now? Chapel? Again? Was I expected to troop to chapel twice a day? "Oh no!" I screamed, "This whole thing is getting out of hand!" Sally was suddenly next to me, and taking

my arm, led me to the line. This can't be happening to me, I thought, despairing. Mutti smiled and in German suggested I pray not to be given sardines for breakfast again. More seriously, she added: "I'll see you later," and waved to me as I followed the line of girls.

I didn't see Mutti later. Not after lunch, nor after the afternoon rest period. Then I received a message from the headmistress inviting me to her office for tea.

Miss Wesleygammon, the headmistress, was a stern-looking woman with black, well-groomed short hair, expressive, thick black eyebrows, and a rather wide, thin-lipped mouth that covered a set of crooked alabaster teeth. She was dressed in a lime green linen dress with hand-embroidered dahlias on the collar. Her very black eyes were friendly, and her voice was rather sweet. I remember thinking it odd that such a sweet voice could come from so stern a face.

"Thank you for having tea with me, Catana," she said smiling, and gestured for me to sit in one of her caned Chippendale chairs. The mahogany-paneled office was dark. Etchings of flowers and tropical birds – the sort one finds in better art dealerships – graced the walls. Behind her large, solid ebony desk hung her diplomas.

"I hope you'll feel comfortable in this school and find that everything is to your liking once you've been with us for a few days," she said, smiling.

What was she talking about? Just wait 'till I get to my mother, I thought. I've spent one night here, but she'll let you know that she's blasting me out today. Not wanting to seem ungracious, I said in a polite soft voice: "I've never been away from home, and everything here is different from the way I'm accustomed."

"Care for tea?" Miss Wesleygammon offered.

"No, thank you." I was not in the mood; I was waiting for Mutti. I wanted the green light to pack my stuff.

"Catana," her voice was soft, her look piercingly direct and her smile had a slight edge of triumph... "Your mother left for Guatemala this morning."

"That's impossible," I choked, aghast.

"I suggested to her," Miss Wesleygammon continued, disregarding my shock, "that the best thing would be for you to stay here. You need the learning this environment and this school will give you." She sat upright, her back straight as if someone had shoved a walking cane up her butt. Gesturing, so as to make me understand that everything, but absolutely everything the school provided, including only one pitcher of water for the daily toilet, the sardines for breakfast, the rice that tasted of coconut, and boiled green bananas, was something I needed to learn about.

"She can't have left," I said breathless. My heart beat so loudly I hardly heard my voice. "She didn't say good-bye to me; she told me she'd see me later. Now is later. She's staying three days. Where is she?" My voice was meek, my mouth dry and somewhere in a dark, deep place I knew the devastating truth.

"Your mother left at nine, on the morning train to Kingston. I drove her to the station."

The weight of my body filled my brown leather shoes as the cool air of the fan, circling overhead touched my skin. I wasn't going to cry in front of this woman. But I couldn't fathom how Mutti would simply leave me, just like that go away without me. I hadn't finished... Heck, I hadn't even started complaining and she was already out of earshot in Kingston. How could she have done that to me?

Miss Wesleygammon stood up, and so did I. She took two steps toward me and gently placed her perfumed arm around my shoulder. Walking me to the door she said, "Your mother left because if she had not done so then, she would have taken you with her. She was very conflicted but knows how important it is for you, in the long run, to be here. She also knows that you are very unhappy staying now." She placed both hands on my shoulders and turned me to face her. "Your mother loves you very, very much, Catana. Things will be better in a few days," kindness coated her words. "Please know that my door is always open to you; you can call upon me about anything, anytime. I am here for you."



PHOTO: PATRICK A. TULLY

Catana Tully

With that, I was out of her office and on the way to my dorm. My dorm... that unfamiliar place I shared with other girls, where even what had my name on it was alien to me. I took my doll and hugged her to me as I fell onto my bed, heartbroken. Indescribable grief slowly seeped into the marrow of my bones. "What have I done that this should be happening to me," I thought as I cried every tear out of my body. In my fifteen years I had never felt so abandoned. I thought I had tough nerves; not so ... now my heart felt like a fragile rosebud. When evening came, Sally sat down on the edge on my bed and gently informed me the dinner bell had rung. I said nothing as I picked up the pitcher, poured water in the basin, splashed my face and walked down the stairs across to the dining room on the other side, and got in line, swollen face, red eyes and all. I ate a little of the rice and tried salted, oily cod. I took a pea-sized portion of something yellow called ackee and swallowed it without chewing. No more special baby. Desert was tapioca pudding with coconut. I passed. I would eat what I had served myself, like it or not, just like everyone else.

A letter Mutti composed in Kingston arrived three days later. She had to leave suddenly, she wrote, and had no time to write me a message. "I love you, my darling child," she said at the end, and signed, "Be brave. Your Mother."

By the time I read the words she was already in Guatemala. There were no telephonic communications between Jamaica and home, and it took six to ten days for letters to arrive at their destination. News was always old by the time it reached me. In the remote Jamaican hills of St. Elizabeth, nothing could be rushed and I learned why patience is a virtue.

There were a hundred girls attending the school, ranging in age from ten to nineteen. More than a third came from overseas. There were Dutch from the ABC islands, Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao; French from Guadeloupe and Martinique; Italians who lived in Venezuela; Spanish from Colombia;

Lebanese Trinidadians; Chinese Jamaicans; British Belizeans. Add to that the local island *mélange*, and Hampton was the ultimate international microcosm with British faculty, chaperones of mixed ancestry, and Black servants.

First and foremost, Hampton was a place of learning where order and honor ruled supreme. There was no monkeying around as there had been in the American School. Fifteen minutes into the first study hour, the supervising prefect stood at the desk and declared, "All right girls, you are on your honor." Then she headed out the door. I, of course, thought it time to chat and let loose a little and looked around for

someone with similar intentions. Everyone's nose was in their books except Nieves Sotelo's in the back row. She also had an expectant roving eye. We gawked at each other and grasped immediately what "on your honor" had meant. Believe me, it was a major cultural shock.

With little else to do, I had to adjust, buckle down and begin to study.

Mentor, Guide, Personal Learning Environment Engineer ... or All of the Above?

Mara Kaufmann, Center for Distance Learning - Nursing Program

With the advent of new technologies, changes and additions to learning theories and methods have been swift. In Lombardi's (2007) essay, "Authentic Learning for the 21st Century: An Overview," she wrote of these changes: "With the help of the Internet and a variety of communication, visualization, and simulation technologies, large numbers of undergraduates can begin to reconstruct the past, observe phenomena using remote instruments, and make valuable connections with mentors around the world" (Lombardi, 2007, p. 2).

Given this context, the in-person, one-on-one mentoring of adult learners needs some reflection and a fresh eye in order to move it into the 21st century. For some of us, such a mentoring model is a sacred cow; for others, it is one part of a paradigm of personalizing and individualizing college-level learning. Either view point reminds us that there is richness and depth of learning that can and does exist between mentor and mentee, especially when both teacher and learner are in sync.

However, the faculty mentor is not the sole source of learning and support in a student's life. Other individuals and experiences can play an equal and sometimes more important part in the learning, growth and development sought for and achieved among lifelong learners. We see evidence of this all of the time. For example, in their reflective learning journals, students often report that their most impactful learning came from peers in online courses where experiences and new knowledge were reflected upon, integrated and then shared with classmates. We, thus, have to ask ourselves: In these days of Web 2.0 and 3.0 tools, what are the "changing roles" of mentor/mentee, learner/teacher, peer/peer, scholarship/life experience and community/civic engagement? Especially with the challenges of our "problem-centered" worlds needing immediate

"application of knowledge," what learning environments most effectively serve the student of today?

You will hear mentors identify themselves as the "guide on the side" rather than the "sage on the stage." But the picture is more complex. The image of the guide can be of someone who is too close, with too tight of a hold and too short of a leash. On the other hand, a guide can be one who is too far away and not near enough to keep the path safe or to give timely direction. The definition of the verb "guide" starts out with a partnership approach "to assist (a person) to travel through, or reach a destination ... to accompany ...," but then moves on to the more directive approach, "to force (a person, object or animal) to move in a certain path ... to supply (a person) with advice or counsel ... to supervise (someone's actions or affairs) in an advisory capacity" (Dictionary.com, n.d.).

Is "guide" the right image of a 21st century mentor? It seems it is time for those of us who wish to move with the changes afoot and provide the best practices in mentoring in our worlds, to let go of what needs letting go: to engage in the present and move into the future.

We speak of lifelong learning and growth as a journey, and so the definition "to assist (a person) to travel through, or reach a destination ..." (Dictionary.com, n.d.) works with the concept of guiding the one journeying. The "journey" theme is used in many educational planning studies across the college, and it was used in the development of the Educational Planning: Transition to Baccalaureate Nursing course. Still, over time, within course or learning contract development, the role of a mentor shifts from a one-to-one guiding perspective to a model of creating learning environments and experientially-engaging activities. These activities can be creative opportunities where new learning can arise from multiple



Mara Kaufmann

sources, using multiple intelligences and producing learning outcomes that had never been thought of by those of us who originally designed the activity. Is it possible that we *limit* learning by guiding on too tight of a schedule, with too many directions or questions, or acknowledging only the learning that matches our objectives and our own expected outcomes?

When charting a travel plan and getting directions, some prefer to use a global positioning system (GPS) instead of paper maps or electronic maps like MapQuest or Google Maps. Prior to relying on the new technologies now so present in our lives, paper maps provided the information we needed, but also the options of alternate routes and interesting places to visit or stop for necessities. Once programmed, the GPS is much more rigid, specific, even dictatorial, and the experience of it as a tool for guiding one's journey fits the definition of "guide" as "to force and move into a certain path" (Dictionary.com, n.d.). Many learning contracts and courses developed in the paradigm of "sage on the stage" are like the GPS in setting out a course of content and outcomes expected for any success to occur.

While traveling, using an electronic tablet/pad with Internet service can provide access to maps and email, and any information needed on lodging, restaurants or road service. Using an electronic pad in guiding one's journey most closely fits the definitions of "guide" as "to assist," "to accompany" and "to supply (a person) with advice or counsel" (Dictionary.com, n.d.). The device is flexible and can accommodate traveling needs whatever they may be and whenever they occur. Such tools also offer the option of expanding the journey through exploring new destinations or deepening the experience by giving the history and background of a landmark or place. Courses and learning contracts with these options are more like the "guide on the side." There may be objectives listed from the course and learning contract that are used in the formation of learning activities, but the learning outcomes that the student realizes can go much further and deeper, depending on the student's choices and actions.

As mentors, our role as "guide on the side" is continuously undergoing development – it's a never-ending construction zone – where many extra tools and resources are needed. Simultaneously, we are each mentoring and being mentored by the people, events, experiences and knowledge that we share. We each have a "personal learning environment" (PLE) that is always with us, and the tools of this century help facilitate our learning as we identify our preferences for receiving, sending and in general, communicating with our worlds and those within them. Though we may have a preference for face-to-face meetings and use the phone whenever possible, some students want contact only online through emails. This is their choice and meets their PLE needs. Indeed, their understanding of their needs may be the main reason they are choosing to pursue their education online. Regardless of the student's PLE and learning style, a learning contract and course can be designed that will allow the learning journey to go deeper, wider, and higher than

the faculty's or even the student's initial objectives and expectations. As we are open to new learning theories and technology, we become skilled "learning environment engineers" who are designing learning environments that will give rise to the knowledge, competencies and skills needed by 21st century learners.

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This essay is intended as the beginning of a series of writings I hope to do that pose some questions for further explorations about the faculty mentoring role. In thinking and writing about this over the last year and a half, the drifting toward checking out this tree, going down this slope or adjusting the camera's focus on this wildflower became overwhelming as the flora and fauna of the landscape opened up. Like some of the uncharted territory of our 21st century world, mentoring requires the preparedness, presence, reflection and care of a successful explorer. The next essay in the series will focus on the "Merging, Converging, and E-Merging Learning Theories and Concepts" to include andragogy, heutagogy, connectivism, authentic and experiential learning, and others.

During his 2006 keynote at the Learning Without Frontiers Conference in London, "Leading the Learning Revolution," Sir Ken Robinson (2012) pointed to many "shifts needed" in education: in curriculum (from subjects to disciplines); in knowledge (from static to dynamic); in teaching and learning (from solitary to collaborative, passive to active); and in assessment (from judgment to description, disenfranchising to empowering) (see minutes 22:52 to 28:50). It's exactly this spirit that we need to consider as we move forward.

If there is sufficient interest, an accompanying blog may be set up for ongoing dialogue and discussion on this or the next article in the series. Please email Mara.Kaufmann@esc.edu for more information.

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Institute on Mentoring, Teaching and Learning Completing its First Year

Katherine Jelly, Center for Mentoring and Learning

This past year, the Center for Mentoring and Learning (CML) held its first annual Institute on Mentoring, Teaching and Learning (IMTL). Fifteen faculty and academic administrators and two librarians, three faculty instructional technologists and an instructional designer attended the opening residency in June. Institute participants then continued their projects and connection through the 2012-2013 year. We were excited to launch the IMTL and genuinely pleased to support the interesting, valuable, innovative work that faculty are doing. The inaugural residency was developed by the Institute Planning Group: Deborah Amory, Desalyn De-Souza, Sabrina Fuchs Abrams, Suzanne Hayes, Katherine Jelly (convener) and Alan Mandell. Desalyn, Suzanne, Kathy and Alan continued by planning and facilitating conference calls through the year.

To apply to the Institute, participants submitted a proposal for a project they wanted to carry out over the coming year related to mentoring, teaching and/or learning. Projects – including research, innovations in practice and writing for publication – varied widely, both in focus and mode of inquiry.

Within the broad goal of supporting participants' learning and development of their practice in mentoring and teaching, the purposes of this first IMTL were to:

- help participants leave the opening residency with a clear plan and identification of support people for carrying out their project;
- support institute participants in accomplishing their learning goals;
- support institute participants in designing and carrying forward an individual project related to their mentoring and teaching;

- provide for collegial exchange – including getting input on the focus and execution – regarding participants' projects; and
- provide new learning opportunities regarding innovation in mentoring, teaching and learning for all institute participants.

The summer residency, which opened the year-long institute, allocated time to: individual project planning, small group sharing and consultation on projects, individual consultation with a faculty instructional technologist, librarian or curriculum instructional designer and four “shared learning” sessions.

We then continued our connection through conference calls to share progress and get input, and through participants' individual consultation with FITs and librarians. And at the All College Conference, seven faculty shared their work in presentations that both conveyed the creative work they are doing and gave attendees a sense of what would be possible to do through the IMTL. The presenters were: Cynthia Bates, Frances Boyce and Cathy Leaker (working on a collaborative project), Sue Epstein (sharing a project on which she'd collaborated with Michele Forte), Rhianna Rogers and Amanda Sisselman. In addition, several 2012-2013 Institute participants will join the opening residency of the 2013-2014 Institute to talk about their work and ways to make good use of the Institute.

The 2012-2013 IMTL participants and their projects are:

- **Cindy Bates** – Northeast Center: college-level, reading, writing, critical thinking and research skills, and independent learning strategies.
- **Suzanne Benno** – Center for Distance Learning: incorporating service learning into Educational Planning.
- **Rebecca Bonanno** – Center for Distance Learning: website for both students and mentors on post-bachelor's degree options available in field of Community and Human Services; creating repository of resources.
- **Elizabeth Bradley** – School for Graduate Studies: incorporating and assessing content on identification and referral of at-risk students into Master of Arts in Teaching courses.
- **Nan DiBello** – Niagara Frontier Center: developing ANGEL site for new graduate course, Workforce Development Policy, including embedding video and incorporating video material from open sources.
- **Sue Epstein and Michele Forte** – Center for Distance Learning: developing blended Planning and Finalizing the Degree course; students “meeting” in virtual classroom and using discussion boards throughout term.
- **Himanee Gupta-Carlson** – Center for Distance Learning: developing course, Creative Writing as Critical Inquiry.
- **Lorraine Lander** – Genesee Valley Center: developing college Commons site to provide resources for three psychology studies, including links to open education resources, websites, TED talks, YouTube videos, etc.
- **Cathy Leaker** – Metropolitan Center and **Frances Boyce** – Long Island Center: designing workshop series for minority women seeking PLA; disseminating the project's goals and findings.
- **Thalia MacMillan** – Center for Distance Learning: developing streamlined Planning and Finalizing the Degree workshop and Web page for mentees.

- **Joyce McKnight** – Center for Distance Learning: developing community organizing incubator open to undergraduate and graduate students.
- **Lynette Nickleberry** – Metropolitan Center: investigating variation in independent study practices and the effectiveness of current practices.
- **Rhianna Rogers** – Niagara Frontier Center: collaborative student-driven research project, “Fostering an ‘Open’ Culture at Empire State College: An Ethnographic Study of the Niagara Frontier Center.”
- **Kymn Rutigliano** – School for Graduate Studies: designing a conference presentation to showcase design and delivery of live, online crisis simulation. Integrating various technologies in learning experience for students to practice what they have learned in the course.
- **Amanda Sisselman** – Metropolitan Center: the potential for collaborative learning between human services workers and/or social workers and clergy, and building into the educational program.

In addition, the following faculty instructional technologists, librarians and curriculum instructional designer participated in residency sessions and provided individual consultation through the year to faculty regarding technology tools, library support and instructional design needed for their projects:

- **Sheryl Coleman**, assistant director for faculty instructional technologies, Central New York Center
- **Sara Hull**, librarian, Office of Integrated Technologies
- **Mark Lewis**, faculty instructional technologist, Newburgh Unit
- **Dana Longley**, assistant director for library instruction and information literacy, Office of Integrated Technologies
- **Chi-Hua Tseng**, instructional designer, Office of Academic Affairs (residency only)

- **Nathan Whitley-Grassi**, faculty instructional technologist, Niagara Frontier Center

With this year’s Institute not yet concluded, we have not yet done evaluations of the full year, but in their evaluations of the residency, IMTL participants stated that they were very satisfied to have:

- furthered their thinking about their project;
- developed their plan for carrying it out;
- learned about the many resources available;
- connected with and gained input from colleagues; and
- identified who will support them through the coming year.

And regarding what they found most valuable, participants mentioned, for example:

- “the time to reflect on what I was doing, why I was doing it and how I would best achieve my goals (or revised goals)”;
- the “session on scholarship [that] really opened my project planning”;
- “the individual consultation time [with tech specialists, that] resulted in several concrete plans”;
- “connection, ability to take time to focus”;
- “seeing that it is organizationally possible to support faculty in their own work”;
- the “session on blended learning [that] was very relevant to my teaching.”

Regarding advancing their projects, participants were well satisfied with having “expanded ... thinking about possibilities,” “strategized a timeline ... and identified a possible funding source.” As one participant wrote: “I have a doable plan of action and a support network to see me through.”

The Center for Mentoring and Learning is very glad to have had the opportunity to support faculty’s work and development in this way. And CML, Institute participants and the Institute Planning Group have deeply appreciated the administration’s support of this institute. Already, for the coming year, we have grown to our cap of 20 projects, with 25 faculty, administrators and professional employees signed up for 2013-2014. CML is very much looking forward to building on and expanding the Institute on Mentoring, Teaching and Learning in the coming years.

Found Things

Diagram of Range of Programs (1971)

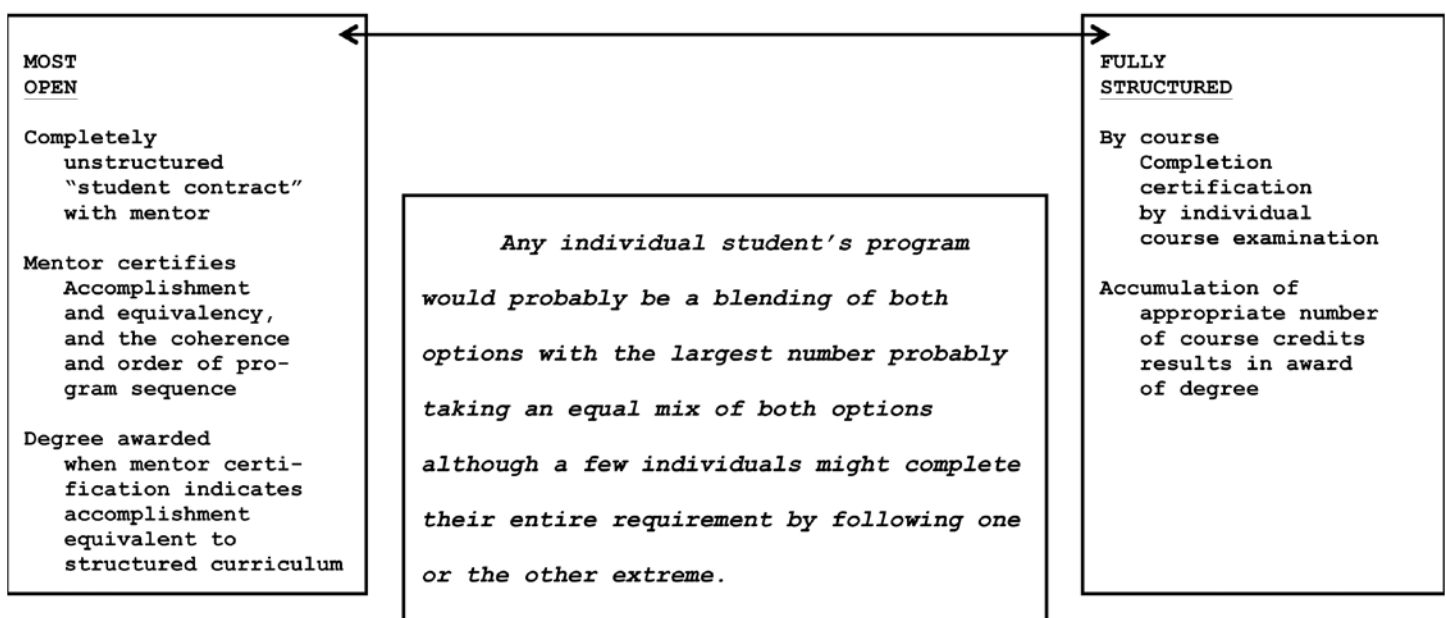
In 1970, Ernest L. Boyer became the chancellor of the State University of New York. Soon after his appointment, Boyer established a task force of his top administrators to plan a nontraditional college. By January of the following year, he secured a resolution from the SUNY Board of Trustees to establish a nontraditional university college. As Empire State College historian, Richard Bonnabeau reports in his volume, *The Promise Continues* (1996), the minutes of the SUNY Board of Trustees of 27 January 1971 were clear. Empire State College would “draw

upon the resources of the entire university to devise new patterns of independent study and flexible approaches to learning thereby providing accessibility for young people and adults for whom an off-campus individualized instructional pattern will be most effective” (p. 18). With the generous financial backing from both the Ford and Carnegie Foundations, a new experimenting institution was launched with the “Prospectus for a New University College” (8 February 1971) serving as its statement of guiding principles.

The “Prospectus” includes a section on the goals of this new institution and includes details about its organization, its “operating relationships” and “the academic program.” It is from the latter that the “Diagram of Range of Programs” reproduced here has been taken. Perhaps what is most striking is the “range” that was envisioned and, too, the concept of “most open” so relevant to many discussions today, 42 years later.

(Thanks to colleagues Richard Bonnabeau and Bob Clougherty for their help on this “found thing.”)

DIAGRAM OF RANGE OF PROGRAMS



The Body in Question

Elana Michelson, School for Graduate Studies

A Review of:

“Bodies of Knowledge: Embodied Learning in Adult Education” *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education* Edited by Rande Lipson Lawrence

The body, with its sensate, emotionally-saturated life, has been a focus of inquiry through several generations of contemporary theory. From Wittgenstein and Dewey, through Merleau-Ponty, Foucault, Butler, Bordo and many others, the body has been explored as a site of experience and knowledge, as an artifact of culture, and as the matrix around multiple debates concerning gender, “race,” social location, performativity and a longer list than I can rehearse here. Recently, it has begun to get the attention of theorists of adult learning (see, for example, Fenwick, 2006). That attention, it seems to me, is long past due.

A recent issue of *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education* (Lawrence, 2012) offers an example of both the strengths and weaknesses of current treatments of the body within the field of adult learning as a whole. The authors who contributed to this volume are solid practitioners in their disparate fields, which range from dance education and theater, to nurse education, to management training; taken as a whole, they provide us with an interesting and creative array of learning and teaching strategies. I, thus, offer what follows in the spirit of a collective self-critique of what I see as a collective challenge, both to take more political and intellectual responsibility for the practices we promote and to engage more consistently with important new schools of thought that have much to contribute to the field of adult learning.

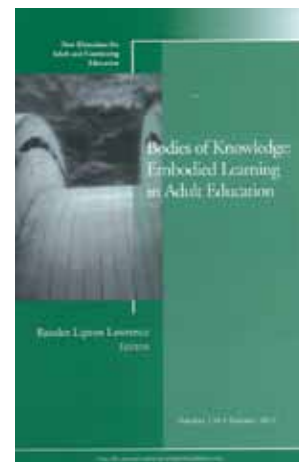
The title of Lawrence’s edited volume, “Bodies of Knowledge: Embodied Learning in Adult Education,” plays on a well-seen and clever dual meaning: our physical, sensate *bodies* as bearers of knowledge and, in the more traditional sense, the metaphorical *bodies* of accumulated knowledges that reside within professions, academic disciplines, and other formal knowledge systems. This dual meaning, itself, raises the question of the relationship between the two meanings of the term. Are “bodies” in these two senses in opposition to each other? Or do the two meanings exist in a more complex tension, feeding into each other so that the opposition is never complete?

More broadly, what do we, as practitioners of experiential learning, mean when we talk about the “body”? Whose body are we talking about? Do we have a universalized body in mind that in all important ways shares the same organic nature as other (human) bodies? My use of the term “organic nature” begs other questions, of course, and I use the term advisedly to ask whether we see the body as part of nature or of culture and, still further, whether our conceptualizations of the body confirm or trouble the culture/nature dualism that parallels that of mind/body.

Similarly, what assumptions are we inscribing about the relationship of body to mind? Do we code this relationship as one of separation and distance, with the perceiving, sensate body as the raw materials for learning? Or do we see the body as, itself, the bearer of knowledge and the mind as part of our embodiment? Finally, how do we understand the relationship of our bodies to other bodies? Are our bodies atomized units in a world of other such units, or do we understand ourselves as existing in and through interaction with others, and accountable to and for the power-laden social structures within which that interaction occurs?

Whose Body? The Body and Historical Specificity

The need to take those questions seriously can be seen as early as the first paragraph in Chapter 1, in which Lawrence laid out a variety of approaches to the role of the body in knowledge: intuition understood as “spontaneous, heart-centered, free, adventurous, imaginative, playful, nonsequential, and nonlinear” (p. 5); kinesthetic or somatic learning; holistic forms of knowledge that involve heart, mind, body, and spirit; bodily awareness as a key component of consciousness; and the feminist reclamation of the body as a site of learning and resistance. While the stated goal of the volume, certainly an important one, is to encourage a greater awareness of embodied knowledge and help adult educators think about “how we can reclaim the body as a source of knowing” (p. 12), that goal is compromised from the start.



Imagine you are walking down a dimly lit street in an unfamiliar neighborhood. It is just before sunset and the streets are fairly deserted. Suddenly you hear a loud noise that might be a car backfiring, or it might even be gunshots. Your heart starts racing, your breathing becomes shallow, and you feel as if you may start to

hyperventilate. Some instinct tells you to run and leave the area as quickly as possible. You don't stop to think or reason or figure out what is happening, you just follow your body's cues and move toward safety. You rely on your intuition. (p. 5)

On one level, this imagined scene is simple enough. There is a general and uncontroversial consensus that human beings share with other species an inborn response to loud noise to which the word "instinct" can accurately be applied. On the other hand, however, it is not clear who the universalized, unmarked "you" in that paragraph is, whose instincts induce the urge to flee. The situation is presented in such a way that the particularities of the "you" don't matter – "you" will have the same reactions anyone would in that situation because your body holds the same natural impulses that everybody's does.

The problem is that, by the time any of us is old enough to walk the streets by ourselves, the natural "instincts" of the body have been overwritten in innumerable, complex ways by the hard lessons of a life lived in a quite particular body. What if the body in question can't run because she has been taught that her legs look better in high heels? What if the body in question has had it drummed into his head by loving parents that he should never run while in a white neighborhood because someone will assume he's done something wrong and shoot him? Further, what does "unfamiliar neighborhood" imply? What color are the bodies of the people living in that neighborhood, what assumption is being made about that on the part of the reader and what responsibility does the author have for fostering those implicit assumptions? Thus, Lawrence's opening anecdote re-erases the body at the very moment it tries to render it visible. If the point about bodies is that they carry our knowing histories in both senses of the word, then an ungendered, nonracial, nonspecified body, as Susan Bordo (1990) has said in a somewhat different context, is "no body at all" (p. 145).

Lawrence seemingly knows better. In her introduction, she draws on work by feminist educators who use embodied performance to help connect students with the pain of

their own histories so that "the unsay-able" can be said (Horsfall & Titchen, as cited in Lawrence, 2012, p. 9). But the authors she cites understand learning through the body, not as the "primal" and "preverbal" awareness that babies have naturally and spontaneously, but as the holding of specific historical, cultural and personal memory.

Indeed, two of the chapters in "Bodies of Knowledge," those by Yolanda Nieves and by Shauna Butterwick and Jan Selman, are exemplary in their understanding of the historically-embedded body in which the unspoken effects of oppression, marginalization and violence are stored. Thus, Nieves tells the story of a theater group in which a group of Latina women used movement, embodied performance, and, in the end, voice to reveal what she significantly calls "undocumented" events (p. 36). Nieves, herself, is one of the bodies whose history carries meaning; like the "you" walking down an unfamiliar street, her body reacts, but instead of presenting her twitching facial muscles and trembling lips in terms of universalized instinct, she understands her fear as the product of a personal history that makes visibility dangerous.

Nieves tells us that one's history (and, importantly, one's stories about one's history) is not without danger. It opens one to judgment, carries the risk of further marginalization or cooptation and raises the specter of exposure and rejection. That the body expresses fear is a function of the ways in which it carries quite specific physical and psychic scars. Nieves notes, further, that the safety to speak what the body knows requires the presences of equally particularized other bodies. The women whose bodies speak their stories trust her because she is one of them. The outcome of the women's work together is a performance, for which location and audience also matter because place and performance constitute a series of relationships between differently positioned bodies in a space that codes safety for some and not others.

In a second, closely related chapter, Butterwick and Selman introduce the notion of the colonized body to stress the ways in which our bodies become subject

to history, sometimes in the form of such brute oppressions as rape or torture, but also through the ways in which we enact on a daily basis the ideological frameworks and power relationships of specifically-located members of a society. Butterwick and Selman work with teachers and teachers-in-training and point out that teachers, as typically female gendered bodies and as members of a multiply-visible profession, are required on a daily basis to perform the particular constructions of gender and professionalism that they have internalized. In effect, what can be understood as decolonizing the body through dramatizing its story is an act of individual and collective self-revelation that carries the risk of unexpected meanings, surprise and even re-traumatization. It is a mark of their respect for the power of embodied knowledge that the authors stress the importance of allowing individuals not to participate.

The chapters by Nieves and by Butterwick and Selman are powerful because they recognize both the deeply emotional and sensate quality of human consciousness and the power-laden historicity of the content of embodied memory.

However, other chapters in this volume pull back from that understanding in one of two directions, both of which, I believe, re-inscribe the mind/body dualism and deny the body's historicity. On the one hand, claims are made for the body as innocently authentic, as speaking essentialized truths. On the other hand, experiential learning is channeled back into the conventional mind/body dualism, with embodied experience seen as the raw material for learning that transcends the body and takes place in the mind.

Essentializing the Body: The Body as "Nature" Versus "Culture"

Snowber's chapter on "dance as a way of knowing" is evocative and elegantly written. Drawing on Martha Graham's assertion that "movement never lies," the author speaks movingly of our gradual alienation from the body as we move through an education system that forces children to sit still. She argued that, through dance, we can return to kinesthetic forms of learning and recover

a “visceral language” that will allow us to understand more deeply “what it means to be human in the world” (Lawrence, 2012, p. 54-55).

Snowber *is* aware of the body as culturally mediated. Indeed, she argues that Western culture inevitably distances us from our bodies, teaching us to see them from the outside and to shape them in the image of the culturally valued. At the same time, however, she treats the “natural” body as something that somehow survives the markings of culture; we can return to the body in order to access our feelings and, with them, a profound connection to the earth that will lead us to a greater understanding of self and to a sustaining ecological politics. As rhetoric, this is both hopeful and appealing, but casting the body as an unchanging source to which we can return takes the body out of history and relocates it in the realm of the “natural” in the same way that essentializing notions such as “maternal thinking” do. If we have been taught by Western culture to despise our bodies, so that they have stood apart from our conscious understanding until we return to them, where have these bodies been and what have they been doing in the meantime? How has the body stayed so innocent of the all-too-aculturated mind?

I am suspicious of claims for the natural wisdom of the body. We are at an historical moment in which other people’s “gut feelings” – a term both Lawrence and Snowber invoke positively – come in truly terrifying versions. It is a time in which knowledge claims based on embodied and affective knowledge are not always made in the cause of progressive social possibilities. We are living through a time in which a frightening right-wing politic is fed by powerful “gut feelings” concerning the threat posed by a gay man in a bar, a Pakistani on a plane, or, that embodied oxymoron, a black president in the White House. We grapple as a society with people who know in their bones that God hates fags and whose “guts” tell them that the world is no longer the fine place it used to be because white men are being displaced by the undeserving and the uppity. In other words, some “truths” mediated by the body – hate, fear, irrational fundamentalist religious ecstasy – can be pathological, and

sorting out the implications of what our “guts” tell us is the important other side of trusting them.

The Body as Raw Material for the Mind

Other chapters in “Bodies of Knowledge” reveal a different tendency that still typically frames treatments of adult learning; namely, that of using an embodied pedagogy but continuing to treat the body as a convenient resource for educating a self securely located in the mind. For example, Meyer’s discussion of embodied learning at work is less about embodied knowledge than it is about using play and playfulness to develop a more committed work force and a more productive company. She discusses a bank work force whose “motivational moment(s)” each morning range from dodging marshmallows to dancing to the Rolling Stones, and a digital media firm whose employees cook together, make beer and ride bikes (Lawrence, 2012, p. 25). The techniques are such, Meyer tells us, that they reveal the whole person beyond the “employee,” ease a good bit of the psychic stress of work and help to develop mutual loyalty between people based on shared experience.

Thus, while the bodies in the workplaces discussed by Meyer are indeed active, the physical activities in which they participate are not intended to engage the body as a source of knowing. Rather, the intent is to use physical activity to develop specific mental and emotional qualities, not to ground knowledge in the body or listen to what the body knows, but to nurture collaborative relations and motivate employees by encouraging the sense that, as one employee of the digital company put it, “this is not just a job” (p. 27).

This tendency to treat embodied activity as a convenient resource for developing the mind is even clearer in Howdon’s chapter on outdoor experiential education. Howdon’s short history of this form of experiential education begins with Kurt Hahn’s mid-20th century concern with the decline of such qualities as fitness, initiative and self-discipline among the youth. Hahn used difficult, physically challenging expeditions to inculcate self-confidence, leadership and

initiative. In effect, in keeping with this spirit, Howdon argues that participants grow in leadership skills, group cohesion and self-knowledge through undergoing the experience and reflecting on it afterward. He quoted Hahn as explaining that such activities “revealed the inner worth of the man, the edge of his temper, the fiber of his stuff, the quality of resistance, the secret truth of his pretenses, not only to himself but to others” and noted that Hahn was focused less on the physical challenge than on the “emotional, social, and psychological” growth obtained (Lawrence, 2012, p. 46). Thus, like Meyer’s discussion of embodied activity at work, Howdon’s chapter is not about the body as the bearer of knowledge *per se*. Rather, it re-inscribes the conventional Western understanding of embodied experience as providing the raw materials for the development of mental qualities.

I want to focus on a final issue raised for me by “Bodies of Knowledge,” specifically, what I believe is a failure to take full note of the ideological embeddedness of any and all framing conceptual paradigms. This takes two forms in the volume: insufficient attention to the theoretical paradigms themselves and insufficient attention to the political implications of our practices.

Positivist and Post-Positivist Understandings of the Body

Drawing in her chapter on her work as a nurse educator, Swartz explores the use of embodied pedagogy to instill greater bodily awareness and healthy life practices among student nurses and, by extension, patients. She defined her intention as providing “a clear and practical introduction to use of a scientific perspective on embodied learning” (2012, p. 16). Importantly, the chapter points to the relationships between the education nurses receive and the education they provide for their patients and between a particular way of knowing – in this case, science – and social institutions – in this case those of medical care.

Swartz’s treatments of science, however, waver between positivist and post-positivist paradigms. At times, she asserts a positivist view of value and ideologically neutral neurology which, “because it is

empirically derived and not philosophical or theoretical, can avoid Western and Eastern dichotomizing by encompassing both” body and mind (Lawrence, 2012, p. 17). That is, she treats the body as natural in some of the same ways that Showber does. At other times, however, Swartz makes a strong case for the historical and ideological embeddedness of both the body and the knowledge practices we use to explain it. She understands that “each person’s embodied mind is a unique product of life experience” (p. 18), sees health and disease as “points of intersection between the person and environment” (p. 19), and understands “clinical worlds” such as those of medicine as fraught with power and ideology (p. 19). Specifically, she cites the contending paradigms of body-as-machine versus body-as-organism and challenges both her students and the reader to explore “the complex relationships among our bodies, our lives, our ecological contexts, and power” (p. 20).

It is unfortunate that Swartz does not appear to realize that her statements draw on two contending paradigms: one that sees science as neutral and the body as pre-historical, and the other that sees them as nodes of ideology and contestation. The relationship of brain to mind, the organics of perception as active or passive, and the ways in which the body “holds” memory are only some of the terms of reference that can best be seen, not as eliding the mind/body dichotomy but as negotiating it.

I favor the post-positivist aspects of Swartz’s discussion over the positivist ones, but that is not really my point here. My point is that Swartz has not parsed her argument sufficiently to notice its internal contradictions; specifically, she has drawn on two contending paradigms, both for the body and for theories of science. One can make the case, of course, that the body in different ways is both pre-verbal *and* structured via discourse, or that science can function in some ways that are relatively free of ideology but not in others. But to do so, one has to make that case carefully and deliberately with full attention to the tensions within one’s argument – something I think is absent in her discussion.

The Political and Ideological Non-

Neutrality of Embodied Knowledge

Lack of attention to the ideological non-neutrality of one’s argument is, I would argue, even more apparent in the chapters by Meyer and Howdon. Meyer’s treatment of embodied learning as building employee commitment and morale speaks to an important debate that she does not acknowledge, namely, the extensive critique of new management strategies that attempt to foster employee loyalty in the face of the loss of secure employment and to make new demands on employees in the guise of whole-person learning and creativity. Similarly, Howdon’s repetition of Hahn’s pedagogical goals – to foster the ability to find “the inner worth of the man” and “confront the “fiber” of one’s “stuff” – furthers a view of personal and civic virtue that is ideologically laden in ways Howdon does not seem to notice; its masculinist ethos, the implicit militarism, the coding of courage as physical, and the individualism of this form of “character” all need to be problematized.

Of course, I am willing to grant that, as educators and entrepreneurs, Meyer and Howdon are not required to ground their treatments of embodied learning in social critique. I am more troubled by the ways in which a volume that attempts the important work of understanding more deeply “what it means to be human in this world” (as Snober describes it, Lawrence, 2012, p. 71) pays insufficient attention to the quite different intellectual and ideological locatedness of its constituent parts. To be clear, the lack of consistency among the chapters is not itself a problem – indeed, the range of practices and theoretical/political approaches is one of the virtues of the volume – but the failure to acknowledge and contend with those differences is a problem. Thus, Lawrence’s focus in her concluding chapter on the “common threads” (p. 78) among the chapters draws the reader’s attention away from important debates and serious disagreements and toward a superficial reading of these common themes. Making the connections requires not only an affirmation of the embodied nature of knowledge, but deeper thinking, more careful reading and analysis than what is offered here.

Still, in many ways, “Bodies of Knowledge: Embodied Learning in Adult Education” is a step in the right direction. It moves the field of adult learning, however incompletely, in the direction of a paradigm shift that has been long in coming, and it exemplifies one of the things that is admirable in adult learning: namely, a tenacious insistence on locating the creation of knowledge in grounded human life. I have paid this amount of attention to the unevenness of the volume, however, because it is only through this kind of close reading that we can see the implications of failing to take our own theoretical and ideological frameworks sufficiently seriously. Understanding the body as the bearer of knowledge requires, ironically perhaps, our best and most rigorous intellectual engagement. This means engaging the multiple theoretical perspectives that frame disparate understandings of embodiment and requiring of ourselves a more careful, challenging critique. Whose bodies are we talking about when we talk about embodied knowledge? How do we understand bodies as natural organisms and/or cultural artifacts? Whose theories of knowledge are we drawing upon, and what makes us think they are valid? Not to challenge ourselves seriously, intellectually and academically reinforces our professional marginalization and does nobody – least of all our students – any good.

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Remembering Robert Hassenger

Tom Dehner, Center for Distance Learning

Robert Hassenger, who died on 30 November 2012, was a pioneering member of the Empire State College community and an important figure for more than four decades, serving the college in many capacities at the Genesee Valley Center, at the Niagara Frontier Center, in International Programs, in the Office of Academic Affairs and, since 1979, at the Center for Distance Learning where he helped shape the future of distance education at Empire State College. Bob earned a B.A. in philosophy from Notre Dame and a Ph.D. from the Committee on Human Development at the University of Chicago. Author of hundreds of reviews and articles, Bob also edited and contributed to The Shape of Catholic Higher Education (U of C Press, 1967), a publication that cemented his reputation as an expert in church-related higher education in America. In acknowledgment of his abiding commitment to ideas and scholarly work, Bob received the Foundation Award for Excellence in Scholarship in 1994. Many of us will remember Bob's questioning spirit, the distinctive timbre of his voice and his omnipresent pipe and soda can; others were aware of his many years of devotion to youth sports and of his national ranking among "masters" in the 200-meter dash. A memorial service in Bob Hassenger's honor took place in Saratoga Springs on 08 December, during which our colleague, Tom Dehner, offered the following reflections.

Even though we are all saddened by the sudden loss of a dear friend, parent and colleague, it seems most appropriate that we come together to celebrate his life and accomplishments and to share memories of how he touched our lives. Knowing Bob, he would surely want that.

I will always remember Bob as an engaging, interesting and helpful colleague, mentor and friend for nearly 40 years – someone whose wide-ranging intellectual breadth and

depth and wry sense of humor enriched my life, and the lives of many of his colleagues and his many students.

Our first encounter was at the first faculty meeting of the newly formed Niagara Frontier Learning Center in Buffalo. Although I think none of us had actually met before, the dean had shared brief bios on all of us. As I recall, Bob's first words to me were something like:

"Well Tom, how do you think our team will do this fall?"

It took me a moment to realize he was referring to the Notre Dame football team. We all know what an avid fan Bob was and how he loved to play "Monday morning quarterback" when reflecting and commenting on the previous Saturday's game.

Bob and I overlapped for only one year at Notre Dame. I was in graduate school, and he was fresh from the University of Chicago with a newly minted Ph.D., returning to a school he loved, as an assistant professor. On many occasions over the years, we exchanged and shared memories of that campus, not just of football. It makes me happy that this past fall he got to see "his team" climb to the top again after many years.

Bob as Mentor

Bob was truly a mentor to me, especially in those early years when we all worked together to launch a new learning center and to help develop some of the key policy and procedure documents that were to guide our work with students. We were all "newbies" then, and he was our "experienced leader"; after all, Bob had a full year or more of experience with this mentoring stuff!!

"Coach" is perhaps a good descriptor of Bob's style as a leader, as a colleague and as a mentor.

We looked to him for answers. But those who knew Bob and worked with him know that a response from him to a question was not likely to be a simple answer; it was more likely to elicit a series of follow-up questions from him, often with running commentary (sometimes affectionately described as "ruminations"). Bob's response was invariably opening a dialogue, which led to some useful insights and ideas, possible solutions or answers – at the very least, to some provocative discussion.

Bob let us know that this was a new institution, a new experiment, that there were lots of questions still to be answered, and that we should see ourselves as active contributors to its further development and refinement.

Bob as Intellectual Colleague

Empire State College is a rich interdisciplinary environment for mentors as well as for students.

There are a few colleagues who have been especially important in my own intellectual development, but probably none more so than Bob.

I knew little of the formal study of higher education, for example. Through many conversations with Bob, especially at the beginning, in Buffalo, when we talked about the seminal ideas and issues that led to the founding of Empire State College, and some of the key people and their contributions in the early days, I came to a much better, deeper understanding and appreciation of this "new experiment." And I loved his stories about the "rival camps" that developed in the earliest days of the college.

Intellectually curious, very broadly read, with a quick wit and distinctive sense of humor, Bob Hassenger was passionate about things he really cared about. He really enjoyed the intellectual exploration of issues and ideas, and enjoyed sharing his thoughts.

Bob was an excellent writer. I looked forward to reading his book reviews, which he often shared, both because I really enjoyed and admired his writing style, and because he always had interesting things to say. His writing was sharply analytical with interesting insights and with an enviable ability to relate detail to a larger theme or perspective.

Bob also was a keen observer of human behavior, not surprising, given his primary academic interest area. But his interest here was not for any mean-spirited reason, but because he really enjoyed trying to figure people out. His observations, when he shared them, were often delivered with some kind of pithy comments, (I'll resist any temptation to share a particular example ...) but almost always with a smile or a chuckle,

and often with further elaboration of a larger context, which, of course, he wasn't shy about expounding upon.

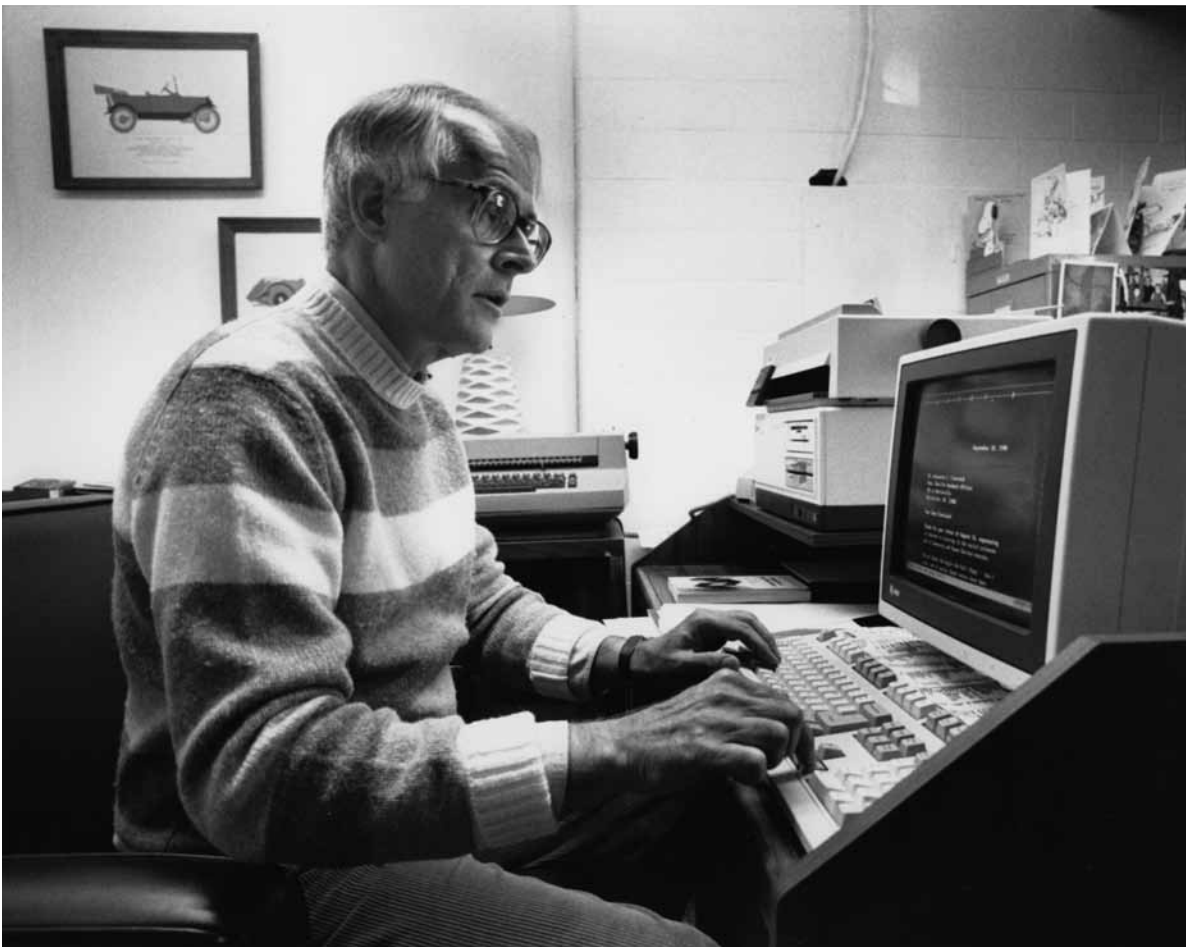
He loved all aspects of the study of human behavior and loved to engage students in its formal study, and loved the challenge of guiding students to discover new insights from formal study that they could relate to their own lives and work and family experiences. This was clearly evident in the many courses and learning contracts he developed, and by the fact that he continued to tutor courses even after his retirement from the college.

I recall something that Bob said about John Jacobson (former vice president for academic affairs at Empire State College) when he heard about John's death, several

years ago. He commented: "John lived the life of the mind." It seems to me that also is a very apt descriptor of Bob's life as well.

Jesse and Andrew and Meg: you and your siblings should be so proud of your dad. Thank you for letting us, at this sad time for you, share some fond memories of a special person and friend, and to celebrate an interesting and productive life.

I want to end my comments with another quote, this one from a colleague in an Empire State College regional center who worked with Bob on course development and who couldn't be here today. She ended her email to me with this closing comment: "I remember Bob fondly ... a smile involuntarily breaks out on my face when I think of him." And it does on mine, as well. We will miss him.



Robert Hassenger, circa mid-1990s

Remembering Karyl Denison (KD) Eaglefeathers

Ivan I. Ivanov, Long Island Center

Karyl Denison (“KD”) Eaglefeathers came to Empire State College in 2003 from her work as the director of Tribal Head Start for the Northern Cheyenne Tribe in Montana. KD came to the college with an amazing breadth of learning and experience. She received a bachelor’s degree in elementary education, a master’s degree in American folk culture and a Ph.D. in folklore. This learning, in addition to her many years of fieldwork, direct service to communities, and organizational and community development informed KD’s lifelong and heartfelt commitment to teaching, research and museum/archival work. Along with her husband, Clifford Eaglefeathers, KD was the recipient of many honors, including grants from the Rockefeller Foundation and the National Science Foundation. In 2006, she was awarded the college’s Arthur Imperatore Fellowship for Community Engagement. In addition to her work as a scholar, teacher, administrator and community activist, KD was an avid knitter and passionate about the folk music of the New York City watershed. KD’s devotion to her blood and extended families was evident throughout all of her activities. As Long Island Center colleague Ivan Ivanov’s remarks (given at a memorial held at the Hauppauge Unit on 19 October 2012) attest, KD’s breadth and depth of knowledge, her insights into too-often neglected traditions, and her abiding care for colleagues and students will be missed by all of us.

I never had such a difficult time writing a short speech – I started many times in the last 10 days, and after hours of glaring at the screen with my eyes in tears, emotionally exhausted, I postponed it to the very last night. Every time I started, moments of the last nine years came back to me like from an old movie tape with such explicit details and immense pain of the loss. Because, as it has

been said, “truly great friends (and lovely professionals) are hard to find, difficult to leave, and impossible to forget.”

I have known KD since September 2003; we joined the college at the same time. Over the past nine years, I have worked closely with Dr. Eaglefeathers at the Hauppauge Unit, Long Island Center sharing challenges, exciting professional and personal moments, traveling many times to Old Westbury, Albany and Saratoga Springs jointly exploring and growing into the profession of mentor. I found her to be an amazing professional, exceptional scholar, extremely hardworking person and a wonderful colleague and friend.

Dr. Eaglefeathers exemplified a perfect profile of an Empire State College mentor. Here is what she wrote in one of her reappointment review essays:

“I am trained as a social scientist and my academic and applied work has given me a deep understanding of the value of traditional knowledge possessed collectively by communities ... Community and Human Services are about social conditions and social change, identifying and preserving what is of value, while imagining, advocating for, and implementing change when human conditions are out of balance. ... My professional background as a college teacher, public administrator, and community activist has prepared me to serve the extraordinary students that Empire State College attracts. ...”

Her service to the students was marvelous and unforgettable: the students never took only one course with her; most of them did follow-up studies with KD, either independently or in one of her very popular study groups. KD was creative, inspirational and amazing in her academic disciplines. Her approach was strongly interdisciplinary; she crafted her contracts to meet specific needs of her students – including in group studies – and she demonstrated a solid

sense of the mentor role. Dr. Eaglefeathers interests were wide-ranging and she was able to work with students in many subject matters within Community and Human Services and Cultural Studies. Her courses were outstanding; she made good use of all kind of resources: print, audio, films, DVDs/CD-ROMs, online research databases and field explorations. Our students will remember her well-known study groups in Community and Human Services Theories and Practices; Celebration and Sustainable Communities; Moral Commitment and Social Advocacy; Cheyenne Language and Culture and the joint study in Art and Healing. The atmosphere in her sessions was creative and lovely, the contracts were challenging and supported with a wide variety of resources and materials to help students to complete meaningful academic and practical assignments.

Students always commended her as knowledgeable, engaging, and open to their ideas and their academic and career needs. As one of her students wrote:

“From our first meeting to the end of my degree program at the college, Dr. Eaglefeathers has exemplified the consummate Empire educator. Her keen insight, intuitive nature and enthusiasm have provided encouragement and sparked initiative. In reality, the depth of her own lived experience combined perfectly with her academic achievements to offer a blueprint of learning ... SUNY Empire State College, all of its faculty and staff, and its student body benefit from Dr. Eaglefeathers’ dedication and commitment to its mission of adult learning.”

Dr. Eaglefeathers demonstrated her excellent mentoring abilities not only with students, but also with colleagues and friends. She informally and naturally gave of herself when we worked together. With other colleagues from LIC, I had many opportunities to prepare and present

with her at the 2007, 2008 and 2009 All College Conferences in interesting multidisciplinary topics such as: Utopia/ Dystopia: An Interdisciplinary Conversation about Technology and Society; Mentoring Farther: Technology and Studies Across Disciplines, Professions, and Generations; and Arts and Healing. We all remember how her initiative, involvement and stimulating performances were vital for the success for our sessions.

Dr. Eaglefeathers' curiosity, creativity and her dedication to the field of Community and Human Services made her one of the most valued members in the CHS area of study collegewide. In all her pursuits as a convener for CHS at the Long Island Center, as a co-chair of CHS AOS collegewide and on multiple governance committees including the Senate and APC, she helped to bring energy, creativity, professional focus and a faculty perspective to the work of the college. KD's active participation and involvement in a large number of planning, quality, search and governance committees, as well as in all of our center's activities were always critical, precious and important. As our colleague, Barbara Kantz, stated as a Hauppauge unit coordinator:

"... she brought a steady and reasonable hand to her administrative duties, she identified needs and solved problems in order to maintain academic excellence in a climate of change."

As a scholar, Dr. Eaglefeathers was outstanding: she earned a three-year National Science Foundation Research Award, the Imperatore Fellowship, the Technology Development Fund Award, and the award of professional development funds that led to a founding of a non-profit organization and Catskills Folk Connection and numerous presentations, publications and field work. I will use KD's words to precisely outline her teaching, scholarly and community activities and how she appreciated her work with communities and at the college:

"Much of my teaching, research and services are in the area of healthy communities, communities coping with transitions, and community development. Two of the communities that I learn the most from are the Catskills region of New York State and the Northern Cheyenne community. My course offerings have been invigorated by what these communities have taught

me ... I have benefited greatly from the adult pedagogy I have learned and the interdisciplinary nature of Empire State College. It has liberated my approach to research, teaching and learning. ..."

There are so many more things to add, but I hope these should highlight why I think in losing KD, we lost a lot of light and charm-in-action. And here the quote from Helen Keller describes precisely our emotional state:

"What we have once enjoyed, we can never lose. All that we love deeply becomes a part of us."

I think all of us – students, colleagues, friends and most of all, her family – feel personally touched by KD in our lives. For that magic and for the wonderful experiences we've all had because of her, we will be forever grateful to Dr. KD Eaglefeathers.



KD Eaglefeathers (top left) with her Hauppauge Unit colleagues in 2012.

Core Values of Empire State College (2005)

The core values of SUNY Empire State College reflect the commitments of a dynamic, participatory and experimenting institution accessible and dedicated to the needs of a richly diverse adult student body. These values are woven into the decisions we make about what we choose to do, how we carry out our work in all parts of the institution, and how we judge the outcome of our individual and collective efforts. More than a claim about what we have already attained, the core values support our continuing inquiry about what learning means and how it occurs.

We value learning-mentoring goals that:

- respond to the academic, professional and personal needs of each student;
- identify and build upon students' existing knowledge and skills;
- sustain lifelong curiosity and critical inquiry;
- provide students with skills, insights and competencies that support successful college study.

We value learning-mentoring processes that:

- emphasize dialogue and collaborative approaches to study;
- support critical exploration of knowledge and experience;
- provide opportunities for active, reflective and creative academic engagement.

We value learning-mentoring modes that:

- respond to a wide array of student styles, levels, interests and circumstances;
- foster self-direction, independence and reflective inquiry;
- provide opportunities for ongoing questioning and revising;
- reflect innovation and research.

We value a learning-mentoring community that:

- defines each member as a learner, encouraging and appreciating his/her distinctive contributions;

- recognizes that learning occurs in multiple communities, environments and relationships as well as in formal academic settings;
- attracts, respects and is enriched by a wide range of people, ideas, perspectives and experiences.

We value a learning-mentoring organization and culture that:

- invites collaboration in the multiple contexts of our work;
- fosters innovation and experimentation;
- develops structures and policies that encourage active participation of all constituents in decision-making processes;
- advocates for the interests of adult learners in a variety of academic and civic forums.

Submissions to *All About Mentoring*

If you have a scholarly paper-in-progress or a talk that you have presented, *All About Mentoring* would welcome it. If you developed materials for your students that may be of good use to others, or have a comment on any part of this issue, or on topics/concerns relevant to our mentoring community, please send them along.

If you have a short story, poem, drawings or photographs, or have reports on your reassignments and sabbaticals, *All About Mentoring* would like to include them in an upcoming issue.

Send submissions to Alan Mandell (SUNY Empire State College, Metropolitan Center, 325 Hudson St., New York, NY 10013-1005) or via email at Alan.Mandell@esc.edu.

Submissions to *All About Mentoring* can be of varied length and take many forms. (Typically, materials are no longer than 7,500 words.) It is easiest if materials are sent via email to Mandell as WORD attachments. In terms of references and style, *All About Mentoring* uses APA rules (please see the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 6th ed. [Washington, DC: APA, 2010] or http://image.mail.bfwpub.com/lib/feed1c737d6c03/m/1/BSM_APA_update_2010.pdf).

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