Proceedings of the Third Worldwide Forum on Education and Culture

“Creating Communities for Communication and Connection”

Rome, Italy

Hosted by John Cabot University, Via della Lungara 233, 00165 Rome

November 12-14, 2003

Conference Director: Dr. Bruce C. Swaffield, School of Communication & the Arts, Regent University
“Third Annual Worldwide Forum on Education and Culture”

Rome, Italy ~ November 17-19, 2004

Proposals are now being accepted for a third annual conference on international education issues in Rome, November 2004. Presentations related to the theme of “Creating Communities for Communication and Connection” are welcome from educators throughout the world. The primary mission of this unique forum is to allow researchers and scholars an open opportunity to discuss innovative and diverse ways of advancing education and culture among all nations. A multilingual translation facility will allow speakers from other countries to present in their native languages.

Because we are now living in a global community, improving education and communication all over the world is necessary if we are to become successful neighbors in the 21st century. Designing new methods for interaction among counties and cultures is essential for individuals, communities and government organizations.

Those with presentations in one or more of the following areas are invited to share their work with other professionals at all levels of teaching and learning

- Resolving political and religious differences among diverse cultures and races
- Understanding and improving educational systems in developing nations
- Creating new methods and ideologies for intercultural communication
- Promoting multicultural language skills for citizens of all countries
- Assisting NGOs in establishing a worldwide network for cooperation and peace
- Developing solutions to teach students how to appreciate other cultures

Each speaker will have 20 minutes in which to address the entire assembly. All sessions will be conducted primarily during the mornings. Afternoons will be devoted to further discussion of ideas, free time and optional educational tours to nearby historic locations. A maximum of 30 scholars will be invited to present their work at the conference.

A manuscript of all presentations will be published in a journal of annual proceedings following the conference.

Cost of registration is $125 per person. Discounted lodging will be available at small hotels near the university. For more information or a proposal form, please contact Conference Director Dr. Bruce C. Swaffield, of Regent University (Virginia Beach, VA), at: brucswa@regent.edu There will be an optional trip by private bus to Siena on Nov. 17, available for $45 per person.

Deadline for all proposals is April 16, 2004. Presenters will be notified of acceptance within three to four weeks, following a juried review and approval of all proposals.
Thursday, Nov. 18

9:30 – 10:00  **Welcome** by John Cabot University President James Creagan, who will introduce Deputy Chief of Mission to the Holy See, Mr. D. Brent Hardt

10:15 – 10:45  **Opening Keynote Presentation:** Professor Maria Amata Garito, NETTUNO

10:50 – 12:00  **Session A ~ Chair: Lorna Bell Shaw**

~ “Postpartum identity and the rhetoric of rebirth: The changing roles of cultural identity of gender, blackness, and whiteness in public and private spaces of women across nations” by Lorna Bell Shaw, Lynn University

~ “Promoting Academic Success Through Dual Language Programs” by Lucia Buttaro, Adelphi University

~ “New Methods in Teaching Intercultural Education: Creative Pedagogy Using Language Arts” by Alfonso Nava, California State University

12:05 – 1:15  **Session B ~ Co-chairs: Elizabeth Landerholm and Cynthia Gehrie**

~ “A Comparison of the Use of Documentation by children, teachers, parents and student teachers in the Reggio Emilia approach to Early Childhood Education in Italy with the McCosh Even Start Family Literacy Project approach in the United States” by Elizabeth Landerholm, Northeastern Illinois University, and Cynthia Gehrie, Video Documentation Partnership

~ “Global Scholars: An Introduction to the exposure of culture and community service learning leadership development, and research: Middle School to Industry” by Karin Mae, National University

1:20 – 1:45  **Session C ~ Chair: Amalia Torrealba**

~ “Venezuela and the Chemistry Olympiad: To participate is to learn” by Amalia Torrealba, Olimpiada de Química Venezolana, Asociación Venezolana de Olimpiadas de Química, AVOQUIM

~ Lunch break ~

3:30 – 5:00  **Visit to NETTUNO Headquarters** near Largo Argentina; all delegates are invited to tour the main offices of this national on-line university

6:00 – 8:00  ~ **Rooftop Reception at John Cabot University** ~

Friday, Nov. 19

8:30 – 8:55  **Session D ~ Conference Keynote Presentation**

~ “Beyond Multicultural Education: The Importance of Multicultural Relationships” by Sharon Rush, University of Florida Levin College of Law

9:00 – 10:10  **Session E ~ Chair: Judith Lessow Hurley**

~ “Religious Diversity and Schooling: Issues and Resources” by Judith Lessow Hurley, San Jose State University

~ “Embracing Diversity: Teaching and Modeling Appreciation for Other Cultures” by Mary Ann Clark, University of Florida
10:15 – 11:00 **Session F** ~ Chair: Anne R. Richards
~ “Internet-Mediated Intercultural Learning: Collaboration between Tunisian and U.S. Teachers and students of Professional Communication” by Anne R. Richards, Kennesaw State University

11:05 – 12:15 **Session G** ~ Chair: Dallas McCurley
~ “Theatre Games: An active means of teaching students to appreciate other cultures” by Dallas McCurley, Queens College CUNY
~ “Seeing Differently” by Raymond Maxwell, Cornish College of the Arts
~ “He Changed His Name, He Got What Was Coming to Him’: Teaching American Literature in Singapore” by Gilbert Adair, Independent Scholar

~ **Lunch break** ~

1:45 – 2:10 **Session H** ~ Special Focus Presentation
~ “A Common Identity: Moving Towards Mutual Understanding and Acceptance Between Africans and African-Americans” by Verona Mitchell-Agbemadi, Bethel University & Seminary

2:15 – 3:25 **Session I** ~ Chair: Jane Davis
~ “Looking Beyond ‘Evil’: Demonization vs. Understanding after 9/11” by Jane Davis, Iowa State University
~ “Radical Pedagogy in the Wake of September 11th” by Beth Jorgensen, Simpson College
~ “The Seven Laws of Teaching” and “Journalists in Peril” by Bruce C. Swaffield, Regent University

3:30 – 4:40 **Session J** ~ Chair: Ann Whitaker
~ “Connecting Students to Different Cultures: A Pedagogical Paradigm” Ann Whitaker, Northeastern Illinois University
~ “Affordable Housing for Chicago’s Puerto Rican and Other Latino Communities” by Noemy Quinones, Coalition of Latin American Ministers, Southern New Hampshire University
~ “How to Communicate and Connect with Immigrant Parents to Partner in Education” by Deanna Perez Williams, University of Arkansas

~ **Coffee break** ~

5:00 – 5:25 **Session K** ~ Chair: Fernando Castro-Gutierrez
~ “Ethnomathematics: A bridge between cultures” by Fernando Castro-Gutierrez, Universidad Pedagogica Experimental Libertado and Universidad Simon Bolivar

5:30 – 6:30 **Roundtable Discussion** ~ Moderator: Judith Lessow Hurley
~ All delegates are invited to participate in this summary discussion on the issues and ideas presented during the conference
Remarks by Brent Hardt, Deputy Chief of Mission
United States Embassy to the Holy See

WORLDWIDE FORUM ON EDUCATION AND CULTURE

November 18, 2004

John Cabot University
Rome, Italy

Professor Swaffeld, Distinguished scholars, Ladies and gentlemen.

I am delighted to be here with you this morning to welcome you to Rome and to help kick off the third Worldwide Forum on Education and Culture. I am especially pleased to have been invited back this year, and for that I would like to thank Professor Swaffeld. I enjoyed the opportunity I had last year to meet with many of the participants, and hope to have the same chance this year.

The theme of this year’s gathering is "Creating Communities for Communication and Connection." It is a theme near and dear to my heart, for as an American diplomat, communicating and connecting between different cultures is what we do every day, both privately in traditional diplomatic communications with governments, and through our
public diplomacy, which seeks to convey American policies and values to the people of countries to which we represent the United States.

How we do this and how well we do this are sources of constant debate and discussion in the United States – as they should be. For in every era, the United States has faced new challenges in communicating with people in other countries and new challenges in building communities of like-minded states. In fact, I was recently reading the excellent biography of John Adams by David McCullough in which he describes some of America’s very first public diplomacy efforts. Adams, who was one of our first representatives to France, was quick to realize that his efforts to enlist French support and secure Dutch loans during the war for America’s independence were being confounded by negative reports on developments in the U.S. He therefore decided to launch an aggressive letter writing campaign to rebut some of the British propaganda and shape a more positive perception of the still struggling new nation.

During the Cold War, the United States was quick to realize that we were engaged not only in a strategic contest with the Soviet Union, but also in a battle of ideas. That recognition led to the creation of the U.S. Information Agency – an agency charged specifically with conveying American policies and democratic values to the world. As a result, the Voice of America and Radio Free Europe broke through the wall of division across Europe with democratic news and perspectives, up and coming leaders came to the United States as International Visitors, Fulbright Fellows studied in American universities, and American artists toured the world as goodwill ambassadors. All of these initiatives succeeded in communicating and connecting. Even behind the Iron Curtain, people knew what America was and what we stood for.

Unfortunately, after the end of the Cold War, some in the United States mistakenly believed that we no longer needed to make a major effort to communicate and reach out.
After all, our ideas had triumphed, our popular culture had swept the world, the Internet gave everybody access to more information than they ever could have imagined. Why spend money and energy to reach out through public diplomacy? As a result, USIA was downgraded and merged with the Department of State, cultural programming was dramatically reduced, and American libraries overseas were shut down. Between 1993 and 2001, funding for exchange programs alone was cut 33 percent, resulting in fewer exchanges and therefore less dialogue with people in other countries, not least in the Arab world.

The result of this inattention to communicating with the world beyond our shores and the failure to build understanding for our values and our policies was that we left the field open for others to define America. And there were no shortage of individuals and groups willing to push their – often skewed -- definitions, from anti-globalization crusaders to fundamentalist religious leaders eager to attribute the majority of evils in their local societies to the pervasive influence of the world’s sole superpower.

One of the most striking things about the aftermath of September 11 was the struggle among Americans to understand why terrorists would want to target our country. After all, people reasoned, we are a nation of good people with good intentions for the world, a nation that is the first on the scene in any natural disaster and the leader in humanitarian relief. But what we failed to see was that our self-image was no longer as widely shared as it once was. As the sole superpower, we had inevitably become more of a magnet for blame and criticism at the same time we stopped doing our homework to help the world understand our goals and aspirations. Under these circumstances, those intent on wreaking havoc and destruction found fertile fields to attract followers willing to go after the so-called “Great Satan.” This prompted the Chairman of the House International Relations Committee, Henry Hyde to ask: “How is it that the
country that invented Hollywood and Madison Avenue allowed such a destructive and parodied image of itself to become the intellectual coin of the realm overseas?”

In the aftermath of the September 11 tragedy, America has reawakened to its need to communicate and connect better with the world. Recent studies have borne out the dimensions of the challenge we face, particularly in the Muslim world. Anger toward the United States runs high in Muslim countries, where majorities in four countries surveyed by the Pew polling organization in 2003 doubted the sincerity of the war on terror, regarding it as an effort to control Middle Eastern oil and dominate the world. Perversely, while the U.S. struggles with unfavorable ratings, Osama bin Laden is viewed positively by large numbers: 65 percent in Pakistan, 55 percent in Jordan, and 45 percent in Morocco. Even in Turkey where bin Laden is not popular, 31 percent say that suicide attacks against Americans and other westerners in Iraq are justifiable. And in Europe, where polls show there is still appreciation for shared values with the U.S., a survey this year showed that a full 76 percent of Europeans disapprove of our current foreign policy. Clearly we have our work cut out for us.

That is why the United States has been taking a look at how we communicate with the world and what we can do better to build support for and overcome misunderstandings of our intentions. Congress created an advisory panel in 2003 to provide recommendations on how to communicate more effectively. The panel concluded, first, that we needed to reinvigorate the exchanges, cultural programming, American studies programs, and special programs for foreign journalists – the long-term outreach that builds real understanding and generates lasting person-to-person contacts. At the same time, the panel recognized that we also needed to be more nimble in meeting the information demands of a 24/7 news cycle, of a television-oriented audience with access to satellite programming. As the panel Chairman pointed out, they did a survey of Arabic broadcasting and found that the United States and its policies were being talked
about incessantly, but that the U.S. was almost never present to make our own case. We simply were not showing up.

Now things are changing. The State Department's Bureaus of International Information Programs and of Educational and Cultural Affairs are working to increase foreign understanding of the United States and our goals, and to reach out to more people with accurate information about the United States. On the Internet, on the television and radio, we are now actively developing a closer dialogue with Muslim societies and other countries and building language skills among Foreign Service officers to debate and discuss in local languages. Our goal is to reach the right audience, at the right moment, with the right message. Likewise, to build lasting understanding and cooperation among nations and among leaders in every field, we are now promoting professional partnerships – again communication and connection. Only in this way – with both accessible, understandable, and timely information as well as cultural and professional exchange and partnerships, will we be able to fight terrorism, resolve conflicts, encourage global economic growth, and build a genuine community of democratic values.

This mission of reaching out is one that we have taken to heart at the U.S. Embassy to the Holy See. Our Embassy suffered from the same post-Cold War disregard for public diplomacy that infected the larger foreign policy apparatus. Where we once had three people working on public diplomacy, all of these positions were eliminated as a result of 1990’s Congressional budget cuts. Since our arrival, Ambassador Jim Nicholson and I have worked to reinstate our public diplomacy presence to take advantage of the tremendous media focus on the Holy See, as well as the Holy See’s own media capacity. Vatican Radio, for example, reaches every corner of the world in 40 languages.
We have met with some success, and have secured some resources and personnel to help tell America’s story to multinational audiences both within the Vatican and among countries who follow the Vatican closely. One of the distinctive aspects of this communication community is that it is already focused on issues of values, and thus understands and listens when we discuss American values and how they inform U.S. policies worldwide.

In fact, the core of our mission to the Holy See – which reflects the core goal of U.S. national security policy – is to advance human dignity. This often overlooked focus of U.S. international engagement does not draw the headlines that preventive war and the fight against terror draws, but it underpins everything we do as a nation overseas. Because we believe in the universality of the inalienable rights of liberty and justice, our strategy insists that "America must stand firmly for the nonnegotiable demands of human dignity: the rule of law; limits on the absolute power of the state; free speech; freedom of worship; equal justice; respect for women; religious and ethnic tolerance; and respect for private property. " These core beliefs and principles provide the framework for our foreign policy and shape the priorities for our international cooperation.

In our effort to promote human dignity worldwide, the United States has no greater ally than the Holy See under Pope John Paul II. This Pope has made the promotion of human dignity the central theme of his pontificate. Because human dignity lies at the core of both the United States' and the Holy See's aspirations for the world, our diplomatic relationship -- our partnership for human dignity -- is playing an increasingly important role in advancing this defining goal of U.S. national security strategy. In essence, we are seeking to create a community for communication and connection in our relationship with the Holy See, a community whose common goal is to promote the dignity of mankind worldwide.
I would like to share with you just a couple of examples of how we have sought to build this communication in our relationship with the Holy See, and through our Embassy’s public diplomacy outreach. To build understanding of American values and policies, our mission has initiated a series of programs, projects and events that have sought to draw the Holy See, and other diplomatic missions accredited to the Holy See, into an ever expanding circle of consensus to tackle the major issues of our era -- food security, terrorism, freedom and democracy, new forms of human slavery, HIV/AIDS, and the resolution of conflicts.

For example, in May 2002, we organized with the Holy See a major international conference on human trafficking, an international problem that President Bush described to the United Nations as a "humanitarian crisis spreading, yet hidden from view" of nearly a million human beings bought, sold or forced across the world's borders. Our conference, with 400 participants from 35 countries, helped expand awareness of this modern day slavery. We then turned to ways to actively combat the problem. Working with the International Organization for Migration (IOM), we have funded and developed a training program specifically targeted at women religious workers to provide them with anti-trafficking strategies and skills. The nuns in the first session came from eight countries of origin or destination, and additional programs are planned this year for nuns who work with trafficked women in Italy, Romania, Albania and Nigeria. Among participants, this course has strengthened the commitment and capacity of people willing and able to combat this odious 21st century version of slavery.

To build on these initiatives, our Embassy has shared the outcome of our conference and training session with Vatican Nuncios the world over, encouraging them to work with their own Bishops Conferences and local U.S. Embassies to develop their own anti-
trafficking efforts. Many nuncios have responded positively and are considering ways they could make a difference in defeating modern slavery. All of this is aimed at building a community of cooperation among people who can act together to achieve a common goal. We recently held another conference to encourage further action against trafficking, and we are now expanding our training program in a second phase that will reach Asia and Latin America.

With so many people in the world suffering from man-made or natural disasters -- disease, drought, and famine -- the United States’ effort to promote dignity gives special focus to helping the world's poorest and most vulnerable people. As President Bush said last year, "America and other wealthy nations have a special responsibility to combat hunger and disease in desperate lands" -- a responsibility that we meet with emergency food in times of crisis. In fact, the United States quietly and with little recognition provides two-thirds and sometimes more of all the food aid provided by the WFP to people in need. Unfortunately, unfounded fears of biotech foods – which includes the majority of America’s corn and soybeans – began affecting the delivery of food aid in some parts of Africa in 2002. In Zambia, the government even refused to give its starving people U.S.-grown corn -- the same corn that Americans eat every day.

To overcome these irrational fears and to help spare millions from starvation in the future, the United States is determined to help developing countries avert famine by sharing with them not only our food to eat today, but also the most advanced methods of crop production to build self-reliance tomorrow. Through advances in biotechnology, many farmers in developed nations are today able to grow crops with high resistance to drought, pests and disease, which will enable them to produce far greater yields per acre.
To encourage the spread of safe, effective biotechnology and win the fight against global hunger, our Embassy has actively engaged the Holy See in a dialogue on the benefits of biotech foods, bringing to the Vatican leading experts in the field of biotechnology. The Holy See has been increasingly open to biotechnology’s potential, and agreed to co-sponsor a conference we held in September specifically focused on the moral imperative of biotechnology to feed a hungry world. Our goal is to expand communication and dialogue about this new technology so that we can overcome unfounded concerns and build an expanding community open to employing biotechnology as a means to improve food security.

With the world daily witnessing the consequences of religious intolerance, our Embassy has also been involved in efforts to promote inter-religious dialogue and understanding. Earlier this year, we brought to Rome an American symphony orchestra to play for the Pope under the direction of a Jewish conductor and accompanied by a Muslim choir. This performance of Mahler’s resurrection symphony, reflecting that all three Abrahamic faiths have a resurrection element, generated a symbolic unity, with the Pope seated next to the Chief Rabbi and Iman of Rome. Likewise, we have brought to Rome an American Imam to speak on his experiences as a Muslim religious leader in the United States. Here again, our goal is to break down walls of misunderstanding and build communities open to communication and cooperation.

These are just a few examples of how we have sought at the U.S. Embassy to the Holy See to create communities and connect people together. There are many more examples, from putting Catholic NGO’s working on HIV/AIDS together with potential sources of U.S. funding, to bringing together early next month a conference to examine the state of religious freedom in the world and to discuss how governments and NGO’s can work together to overcome threats to such freedom.
One of America’s great diplomats, Henry Kissinger, recently characterized the challenge of American diplomacy in the 21st century as follows: "America’s ultimate challenge is to transform its power into moral consensus, promoting its values not by imposition but by their willing acceptance in a world that for all its seeming resistance, desperately needs enlightened leadership." I share this belief. Other nations need to be able to see that their interests are compatible with the goals we are pursuing, and that they can pursue their national identity in cooperation with the United States, and need not feel threatened by it. The United States aspires to freedom and justice and peace, not just for Americans but for all people.

Today, in our diplomatic efforts at the Embassy to the Holy See, as well as in the efforts of our colleagues throughout the world, we are working to promote understanding of American values and policies, to communicate and connect and to build new communities of cooperation. I know that your efforts in preparing today’s students to meet America’s challenges in communicating and connecting with the rest of the world will be indispensable to our ability in the years ahead to build the moral consensus of which Dr. Kissinger wrote. I wish you a productive and rewarding exchange this week at this wonderful campus in the heart of this great city.

Thank you.
The Euro-Mediterranean Distance University

by Maria Amata Garito
Full Professor of Teaching and Learning Technologies

University of Rome "La Sapienza"- Faculty of Psychology

Director General of Network per l'Università Ovunque NETTUNO

NETTUNO (Network per l’Università Ovunque), in the framework of the EUMEDIS project (Euro-Mediterranean Information Society) launched by the European Commission to foster the development of the Information Society in the Euro-Mediterranean area, devised the Med Net’U project (Mediterranean Network of Universities) aiming at the creation of a Euro-Mediterranean Distance University.

The EUMEDIS programme derives from a long thinking process carried on by the countries involved in the project and the European Commission. This process was meant to raise the consciousness on the part of governments and organisations on problems and possible solutions related to the development of the Information Society.

Today museums, cultural centres, internet cafés, campuses, etc. are the new places where the information already disseminated throughout the towns is distributed, locally, but they are also points of access to a globalised knowledge. New technologies create new spaces among people; telecommunications networks allow working together, and the development of new knowledge by means of research, but also new competencies through education.

The problem, then, is not whether education reproduces social disparities; today, the problem shared by all universities in the world is how to better adapt this system and how to create, in the context of a globalised economy, systems that could develop integrated teaching and learning processes, using different languages to communicate knowledge and to create open systems, having no space and time barriers. The entire world is involved in this big change and, as far as education is concerned, there is a widely shared commitment to create new organisational systems for universities at local, national and international level that integrate presence and distance. In this new context, therefore, the Med Net’U project allows the sharing of the Mediterranean countries’ different cultural settings to create new alliances among universities and educational bodies, and develop together new real and virtual spaces to build common networks of knowledge.

Project objectives
The Med Net’U project aims at creating a new model of Euro-Mediterranean distance university that derives from co-operation among the best traditional universities of the many countries involved, as regards higher education and vocational training. Actually, this proposal envisages not only the delivery of university courses co-produced by the different partner universities, and short courses to allow students to acquire specific skills in the different fields of economics, tourism science and computer science, but also the development of the competences and skills that people need in the 21st Century.
The changes produced by new technologies involve all of society: women and men, rich and poor countries, start from the same level and should be able to solve complex problems, learn new technologies and their terminology, and develop knowledge of different languages and cultures in order to learn how to respect differences, etc.

**Partnership**
The Med Net’U project is the final outcome of the collaboration between NETTUNO and 30 partners belonging to 11 different Euro-Mediterranean countries (Algeria, Egypt, France, Greece, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia and Turkey). There are 19 university partners (universities, research agencies and polytechnics), 10 vocational training partners (ministries, vocational training institutes, specialisation schools), one technological partner (Eutelsat) and NETTUNO, project coordinator.

**Project architecture**
The project is divided into three subprojects: the Technical Architecture and Psycho-pedagogical Model subproject; the University subproject; and the Vocational Training subproject.

**The Technical Architecture and Psycho-pedagogical Model subproject**
The activities of this subproject are transversal and are the basis for the creation of distance teaching and learning courses in the framework of both the University and the Vocational Training subprojects. This subproject has the following objectives:

- Set up the network structure;
- Set up the technological structure;
- Identify a common psycho-educational didactic model.

**Structure of the network**
The organisational model upon which the Euro-Mediterranean Distance University is based is that of a consortium among traditional universities, continuing vocational training institutes, administrative bodies, institutional bodies and ministries involved in the project. The consortium structure allows for the creation of a distance teaching system based upon the traditional universities’ didactic mode in order to:

- Allow the partner universities to play the role of protagonists in the products, processes and structures innovation;
- Make the places where the research work generates knowledge coincide with those where knowledge is transmitted by teaching processes, that is to say universities responding successfully to quality training needs;
- Enhance educational offers;
- Enhance and innovate didactics also in traditional courses;
- Bring the educational world closer to the production world, promoting co-operation with companies during both the definition and the implementation phases of a course, interweaving theoretical speculation with practical work;
- Allow for a high-quality selection of teachers, educational issues and themes;
- Allow, through the new telematic and satellite technologies, for a more democratic access to education and training, and mobility of ideas as well as the mobility of people;
- Give immediate answers to the educational needs of the countries involved.

This model involves the creation of a true network that can allow for the transfer of knowledge not only from an institution (a supplying university) to a group of students located in different geographic
areas, but also from organisations other than universities, equipped as technology access points, to individual learners or organisations. Students can choose from a wide range of courses to match locations and times to their own specific needs. The benefits for the network partners lie in the fact that a limited effort on each single partner gives way to a wide global offer, and that scale economies make the development and the delivery of teaching materials synergically profitable.

From the organisational and structural viewpoint, the Med Net’U project is based upon the following structures:

- The Med Net’U Euro-Mediterranean Centre, which is located in Italy, near the NETTUNO headquarters in Rome;
- A national centre per country, located near the offices of one of the partners;
- Local centres at each partner’s site, with: administrative and didactic secretariats, university technology access points, continuous Vocational Training Technology access points, university and continuous vocational training production centres;
- Home technology access points.

From the operational viewpoint, the envisaged structures are organised on the basis of the NETTUNO model, adapted to an international dimension. The plan is to set up:

- A Euro-Mediterranean co-ordination centre that will define the organisational and didactic guidelines and strategies to be implemented;
- National centres in each country to guarantee the coordination of the activities at the national level and the co-operation with the Euro-Mediterranean centre;
- Supplying universities to carry out all the students’ enrolment proceedings;
- Production centres for the production of didactic materials;
- Technology access points that will be set up near the site of each partner to allow the distance courses delivery and provide a series of services for users/students.

**Technological infrastructure**

Med Net’U intends to set up a network structure based on common technological infrastructures and common technical quality standards – such as satellite technologies allowing both television and internet-via-satellite broadcasting – that will be adopted by all involved partners. During the initial phase of the project, NETTUNO will broadcast the Med Net’U video lessons on one of the two NETTUNO satellite channels. The structure suggested in the project derives from the NETTUNO psycho-educational didactic model, already tested and working in Italy since 1992.

**Psycho-pedagogical didactic model**

From the methodological viewpoint, a didactic model will be implemented, able to ensure a synchronic and diachronic teaching and learning system. The didactic model suggested is a mixed one, developing from a new psycho-educational model that fulfils the requirement of flexibility and manages to avoid the isolation of the student. This is a mixed model that empowers traditional systems by using a way of teaching unencumbered by spatial-temporal limits, but still maintains direct interaction.

**Distance learning didactic methods**

The Med Net’U project provides for the integration of the different media’s didactic-educational available possibilities and the creation of an open and flexible learning environment, that allows:
• The starting, also at distance, of new communication relationships between students and professors, promoting the shift to a one-way kind of communication to a two-way one, also in real time;

• The ending of the one-way communication of knowledge, and start of a new line of communication that allows the student to access dynamic knowledge that can be enriched by him or herself and that he or she can put at other people’s disposal;

• Use of an internet-via-satellite PC as the focus of a system where different contributions from different media converge, which allows the creation of a true integrated and open multimedia model. The PC allows transmitting directly from the university to the student’s desktop, lessons, multimedia products, databases, tutorials, practice work, evaluation and auto-evaluation systems.

The Med Net’U project puts forth a didactic model with a method of teaching/learning that is both synchronous, where teaching and learning happen at the same time but not in the same place, and diachronic, where training and educational processes are no longer tied to the same time and place.

**Traditional didactic methods**

By planning different distance teaching and learning activities, it was taken into account that distance teaching through mass media does not solve many students’ and users’ problems, with their difficulty in relating to a remote and impersonal structure. Therefore, in order to prevent this from happening, times and places have been given so the student can take the initiative and take advantage of such direct meetings. In particular, the traditional method provides face-to-face meetings for direct interaction between student and teacher or tutor. Traditional tutoring undoubtedly has the advantage of allowing shortcomings to be dealt with on the spot through the relationships teachers and students establish in the Med Net’U HQ, Med Net’U branches and learning centres.

The ability, on the teacher’s part, to ultimately motivate the student by creating a positive and open climate is surely one important element of direct contact. At the same time, the face-to-face method breaks up the student’s isolation and permits him or her to ‘socialise within a group’. It also creates opportunities for collaboration, exchange, discussion and debate with other students, and, therefore, collaborative learning processes are developed.

**The University subproject**

The University subproject aims at the setting-up of a consortium of European and Mediterranean public universities to create the Euro-Mediterranean University. The activities envisaged by the project are:

• Immediate use of the 27 NETTUNO Distance University courses and the 450 NETTUNO didactic modules for students who, even though they live in different countries, desire to enrol with the NETTUNO University, to attend distance courses by television and internet, and to obtain a final university qualification recognised at European level;

• Setting up 11 national centres;

• Setting up 9 production centres in the following universities: University di Djillali Liabes – Algeria, Helwan University – Egypt, Jordan University – Jordan, University Cadi Ayyad – Morocco, Damascus University – Syria, EGE University – Turkey, AEGEN University – Greece;

• Setting up of technology access points in the 20 partner universities;

• Training of professors on the distance didactic field;

• Training of technical staff on new technologies utilisation;
• Co-producing 36 new multilingual (arab, french, english, italian and spanish) modules in the field of a degree related to information engineering, allowing the recognition of credits and qualifications at the European level.

This consortium, bringing together universities of different countries in the Euro-Mediterranean area, provides a richness of content, experiences and competences, ensuring the high quality of final products, thanks to this cooperation model. Moreover, this model offers the opportunity to choose as professors of the distance courses, teachers coming not from only one university but the best universities involved.

The Scientific-didactic Committee, including teachers of all the engineering faculties of the universities involved in the project, has already identified the Information Engineering curriculum and the following elements:

• The different modules’ content;
• The guidelines for preparing and delivering the didactic modules and all related multimedia materials;
• The guidelines related to all practical exercises;
• The selection of video lessons teachers;
• The identification of distance tutors (for both online and face-to-face modes);
• The guidelines for the evaluation tests.

Each course will be subdivided into didactic modules and each module will be structured in:

• A variable number of video lessons, depending on the educational objectives of each course;
• Exercises and evaluation tests, delivered on the internet in an online or offline mode;
• Distance tutoring sessions, in both a synchronic and diachronic mode, via audio/video chat, satellite videoconferencing, forums on the internet;
• Face-to-face tutoring sessions.

The teachers from the universities involved in the Med Net’U project, not only design and produce together the Distance University courses, but develop a network of competences and create a real intercultural and multilingual co-operative laboratory that will become a European privileged environment compared to the rest of the world.

The Vocational Training subproject

The Continuous Vocational Training subproject aims at updating, qualifying and re-qualifying, and creating new competences in the job sectors requested by the Information Society: computer science, management, tourism, cultural assets, economics and environmental assets.

The vocational training courses are produced together with the universities, and are aimed at high officials, executives of public administration, business managers, entrepreneurs, and executives of chambers of commerce, trade unions, employers’ organisations, etc.

The activities designed and planned by the scientific committee for the vocational training are:

• Setting-up of two production centres in the following institutions: Foundation Sophia Antipolis – France, Ministère de la Formation Professionnelle – Morocco;
• Setting up of 10 technological poles by the offices of the vocational training partners;
• Training of trainers;
• Training of technical personnel on how to use new technologies
• Co-production of 28 modules in the areas in which partners are interested.

Conclusions
The Med Net’U project will contribute to the sharing of human and technological resources of each partner, encouraging the collaboration and the exchange of knowledge between countries belonging to different cultures.

The Med Net’U project aims at stimulating a deep reflection and an intense confrontation of ideas deriving from different cultural realities, in order to identify common methodologies and strategies in order to develop the Information Society still respecting all cultural and political differences and avoiding imposing previously realised models.

There will be the opportunity to create new cultural and scientific spaces, and to develop together new competences through research, but also developing new competences through education and teaching. With Med Net’U, the Mediterranean countries can re-evaluate their ancient culture and realise that similarities are far more relevant than the real differences. By harmonising tradition and technological innovation, peoples can learn how to better understand each other and try to identify the common patterns that accompanied the manifestations of thought between East and West.

The most important characteristic of the Mediterranean region relies in being a very important crossing and exchanging point. Even if, today, countries are delimited by strict boundaries, new technologies and communication networks overcome the boundaries between men, allowing the dissemination of knowledge and culture.

The Euro-Mediterranean Distance University Med Net’U will create a common space to support the development of education and knowledge, guaranteeing the balance between unity and diversity. It will become a university moving under open skies and without boundaries, a university that will foster the internationalisation of culture and knowledge, and the creation of new knowledge and new values, but also a common vision for the future.
Abstract
Connecting Students to Different Cultures: A Pedagogical Paradigm

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Focus will be on various ethnic groups’ cultures and their culturally relevant pedagogy, social political consciousness of teachers, nature of classroom practices, understanding the American educational system, need for teachers to recognize themselves as a cultural being, recognize student culture as a means of learning, suggest strategies for teaching students and teachers how to appreciate other cultures.

INTRODUCTION

When focusing on an effective paradigm with culturally diverse students, there must be a set of unifying values or assumptions, about how best to teach and interact with diverse communities. These values share the notion that being culturally different is positive, that different does not mean deficient, that education must be responsive to specific needs, and that teaching must be offered in a manner that empowers students.

CULTURE

Culture is defined as a system of conventionalized understanding of a group as they are manifested in act and artifact. Culture comes out of society and the individual incorporates culture and society into his personality. Thus, the individual develops his personality and adjusts to the demands of that society. Society and culture are related but not similar. Society is the group interaction and culture is the product of that interaction.

Culture is also an organized system of behavior. It is everything that is learned and shared by members of a society including the social heritage that the individual receives from the group. Culture consists of attitudes, values, goals, norms, symbols, and rules.

Within the culture there is subculture, real culture, and ideal culture. Subculture consists of clusters of patterns that are both related to the general culture of the society and yet distinguishable from it.
These are behavior patterns of a distinct group (preppies, skin heads, jocks, nerds, bikers) within the general society. **Real culture** is what people actually do (folkways, mores actually practiced). **Ideal culture** is formally approved behavioral patterns (folkways, mores which people are supposed to follow).

Nichols’s Philosophical Aspects of Cultural Difference model considers the ethnic groups’ worldview, axiology (theory of the study of values), epistemology (the branch of philosophy that investigates critically the nature or validity of human knowledge), logic, and process. The groups include Europeans/Euro-Americans, Africans/Afro-Americans, Native Americans, Hispanics, Arabs, Asian/Asians Americans, and Polynesians. Cultural differences for these groups will focus on their worldview, axiology, and epistemology.

The European and Euro-Americans’ highest value (axiology) lies in the object or in the acquisition of the object (person-object). The African, Afro-American, Native American, Hispanics, and Arabs’ highest value (axiology) lies in the interpersonal relationship between people (person-person). The Asian, Asian American, Native American, and Polynesians’ highest value (axiology) lies in the cohesiveness of the group (person-group).

Epistemologically, the European and Euro-Americans know (cognitive) through counting and measuring. The African, Afro-American, Native American, Hispanics, and Arabs know (affective) through symbolic imagery and rhythm. The Asian, Asian American, Native American, and Polynesians know (conative) through striving toward the transcendence.

Do cultural differences impact educational pedagogy? Are there cultural reasons why the Native American population is low at some universities? Do cultural groups view education differently? Does each ethnic group define education from the perspective of the dominate group? What impact does culture have on a group’s worldview from an educational perspective? Is there a correlation between the group’s axiology and education? Is there a connection between the group’s epistemology and education?

Nichols’s Philosophical Aspects of Cultural Difference model may suggest that a groups’ world view, axiology, and epistemology plays a **significant** role in their culture, learning, education, institutional matriculation, social meaningful interaction, behavior, acculturation, accommodation, and assimilation.

**DIMENSIONS OF CULTURE**

Cultural paradigms define and dictate how human beings live and experience life. Brown and Lundrum-Brown describe dimensions along which cultures can differ. The content and specifics of each dimension vary from culture to culture. Because of these differences and the natural tendency to ethnocentrically assume that everyone else views the world the same way we do, cross-cultural misunderstanding occurs. Brown and Lundrum-Brown suggest the following dimensions of culture: psychobehavioral modalities (the mode of activity most preferred within a culture), axiology (the interpersonal values that a culture teaches), ethos (the beliefs that are widely held within a cultural group and guide social interactions), epistemology (the preferred ways of gaining knowledge and learning about the world), logic (the kind of reasoning process that group members adopt), ontology (how a culture views the nature of reality), concept of time (how time is experienced within a culture), and concept of self (whether group members view themselves as separate beings or as part of a greater collective).
M. Ho compared the cultural paradigm of White European Americans to the paradigms of the four cultures of People of Color. He used five dimensions: three similar to those identified by Brown and Lundrum-Brown’s (psychobehavioral modality or work and activity, concept of self or people relations, and concept of time or time orientation) and two of his own (nature and the environment and human nature).

**Nature and Environment**
Ho classified the four Cultures of Color----Asian Americans, Native Americans, African Americans, and Latino/a Americans----as living in “harmony with” nature and the environment, whereas European Americans prefer “mastery over” them. For the former, the relationship involves respecting and coexisting with nature. Human beings are part of a natural order and must live respectively and nonintrusively with other aspects of nature. European American culture, on the other hand, views human beings as superior to the physical environment and entitled to manipulate it for their own benefit.

**Time Orientation**
There is diversity among the five groups in regard to how they perceive and experience time. European Americans are dominated by an orientation toward the future. Planning, producing, and controlling what will happen are all artifacts of a future time orientation. Once in a job interview the dean asked, “Where do you want to be five years from now?” “Where do you see yourself five years from now?” A former colleague asked one of his Hispanic students why he was always late for his Anthropology class and the student replied, “The bus left me.” These examples suggest that European Americans view time as compartmentalized and incremental, and being on time and being efficient with time are positive values.

Asian and Latino cultures are described as past-present oriented. For both, history is a living entity. Ancestors and past events are felt to be alive and impact present reality. The past flows imperceptibly into and defines the present. In turn, Native Americans and African Americans are characterized as present-oriented. The focus is the here and now, with less attention to what led up to this moment or what will become of it.

As a group, and as distinct from European American culture. The cultures of Color share a view of time as an infinite continuum and, as a result, find it difficult to relate to the White obsession with being on time. Invariably, time becomes an issue when non-Whites enter institutions in which European American cultural values predominate. Lateness is often mistakenly interpreted as indifference, a provocation, or a lack of basic work skills or interest.

**People Relations**
Ho distinguished European Americans as having an “individual” social focus (I think, therefore, I am) compared to the “collective” focus (We are because I am, and because I am, we are) of the four Cultures of Color. Individual behavior refers to actions undertaken to actualize the self, while collective behavior involves doing things to contribute to the survival and betterment of family and community.

These differences become a basis for attributing value to different and opposing styles of interaction. For example, European Americans are taught and encouraged to compete, to seek individual success, and to feel pride in and make public their accomplishment, boasting, and self-aggrandizement.
The four Communities of Color differ significantly from the Europeans in their communication styles and the meaning of related symbols. Native Americans place high value on brevity in speech, while the ability to rap is treated as an art form by African Americans. It is considered impolite in certain Asian American subgroups to say no or to refuse to comply with a request from a superior. Among Latino Americans, differential behavior and the communication of proper respect depends on perceived authority, age, gender, and class. The same handshake can be given in one culture to communicate respect and deference in another to show authority and power.

**Work and Activity**

On the dimension of work and activity (similar to Brown and Lundrum-Brown’s psychobehavioral modality), European Americans, Asian Americans, and African Americans are described as “doing” oriented, while Native Americans and Latino Americans are characterized as “being-in-becoming.” Doing is an active mode. It involves initiating activity in pursuit of a goal. It tends to be associated with societies in which rewards and status are based on productivity and accomplishment. European Americans’ work and activity are premised on the idea of meritocracy----hard work and serious effort ultimately bring the person finical and social success. Asian Americans, on the other hand, pursue activity in terms of its ability to confer honor on the family and concurrently to avoid shaming the family or losing face. African Americans fall between these two extremes.

Being-in-becoming is more pass, process-oriented, and focused on the here and now. It involves the world to present opportunities for activity and work rather than seeking them out or creating them. It is a mode of activity that can easily be misinterpreted as “lazy” or “lacking motivation.” Liebow describes street corner men “hanging out” daily at a corner coffee shop in Washington, D.C. He appalled at the fact that these men are not working or taking advantage of the day work opportunities that present themselves. He cannot understand why, day in and day out, they choose to sit around and talk, drink coffee, eat, relax, and visit with each other. His conclusion is that they are lazy, shiftless, unwilling to work, and irresponsible. Upon meeting and befriending “Tally”, Liebow learns that most of these men are working. The interaction on this corner provides friendship with other men who have similar issues and problems with their jobs, wives, girlfriends, and the bureaucratic system. Some of them work nights, some work days, some are on their day off, some are on vacation, and some are retired.

**Human Nature**

This dimension of culture deals with how groups view the essence of nature. Are people inherently good, bad, or both? According to Ho, African Americans and European Americans see human nature as being both good and bad. But for each, the meaning is quite different. In African American culture, where all behavior involves a collective focus, or what Nobles calls “experiential communality,” good and bad are defined in relation to the community. Something is laudable if it benefits the community and bad if it does not. Thus, human nature is seen as existing in the interaction between the person and the group.

European American culture, on the other hand, sees good and bad as residing in the individual. Freud’s view of human nature is an excellent example. The instinctive urges of the id are seen as a negative force that must be controlled. The ego and the superego play a positive role in containing one’s drives. In addition, Freud hypothesized a life instinct that is balanced by a death instinct. Thus, the two sides of human nature, the good and bad, are seen in constant opposition and conflict within the individual.
Ho described Asian Americans, Native Americans and Latino Americans as viewing human nature as good. Early treaty negotiations between Native American tribes and the U.S. government clearly indicate the differences in human nature between these two groups. The tribes were under the assumption that they were dealing with honorable men and that agreements would be honored. The Europeans were immune to honoring tribal treaties and literally stole the Native Americans’ land.

**CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION**

Cross-cultural communication occurs often in school settings. A sixth grade school teacher was concerned that one of her female Hispanic students was dressing too provocatively for a twelve year old. Perturbed by the students’ daily dress, the teacher advised the principal and school counselor of her concern and plan to ask the mother to come to school for a conference. A telephone call was made to the mother and a conference time was set up. When the appointed day arrived, the mother showed up at school with her husband, her oldest son, her mother, her father, and a cousin. The teacher was stunned as she only expected the mother at the conference.

This is a clear case of cultural misunderstanding. The teacher proceeded with her normal modus operandi, despite the obvious cultural differences. She did not consider the fact that in a traditional Mexican family, the wife would not make a decision without first consulting her husband who represents and talks for the family in a formal situation.

In addition, the teacher had a narrow view of what constitutes a family and was accustomed to dealing with a nuclear as opposed to an extended family. The cousin was the student’s godfather and godfathers in a Latino culture are responsible for the spiritual lives of their godchildren. Cultural miscommunication.

A school counselor was advised by one of the teachers that one of her first grade immigrant children had an offensive body odor and wanted suggestions. The counselor immediately suggested that she call the mother and set up an appointment. The mother was annoyed that the teacher was offended by the smell of garlic coming from her child. She pointed out that Americans smelled like milk and she found that odor offensive.

In this particular student’s culture garlic was a stable ingredient in her diet and was eaten/used daily. What the teacher did not take into consideration was the fact that Americans smell too, but perhaps this odor is not noticed or smelled by someone in the same culture. Cultural miscommunication.

Some years ago a graduate student stated that when she was in fourth grade a substitute teacher from France showed up to teach the class. After recess, the students came into the room perspiring from their physical activities. This particular student raised her hand and asked, “Can we crack the window a little bit?” The teacher quickly replied, “Oh no, you don’t want to break the window today.”

For the student who asked the question, “crack” meant open a little. For the foreign teacher, “crack” meant break. Cultural miscommunication.

Another graduate student advised that while he and his mother were visiting his dying grandmother in the hospital one evening, the grandmother spoke “rubbish.” The student asked his mother twice, “What’s she saying?” His mother stated that she would tell him later. The son was told that his eighty-year-old grandmother came to the United States from Ireland when she was five years old. When school began this five-year-old attended kindergarten. On the first day the student responded to the teacher’s question in Gaelic. The teacher immediately yelled at the five-
year-old, “We speak English in this class, not Gaelic.” The student started crying, ran out of the classroom, out of the school door, and continued running home. She never went back to school and never learned to speak English. Cultural miscommunication

SUMMARY

When we look at the relationship of philosophy to educational and counseling practices we understand that there are philosophical determinants, namely, metaphysical beliefs, axiological beliefs, and epistemological beliefs. These three beliefs are related to contextual modifying factors that include goals, political dynamics, social forces, economic conditions, and expectations of immediate family and/or community. All of these feed into educational issues and practices.

What is the nature of the student’s philosophical orientation? What is the role of the teacher? Are there specific strategies that can be utilized? Which curricula emphasis would be appropriate? Are there specific methodologies that will enhance student’s issues?

The aspects of educational philosophy include content, attitudes, and activities. Content involves epistemology and axiology as noted by Brown and Lundrum-Brown and Nichols. Attitudes include self-awareness, comprehensiveness, flexibility, tolerance, and empathy. Activities include listening, examining, synthesizing, prescribing, evaluating, and a transforming.

There needs to be culturally relevant pedagogy. This pedagogy consists of social political consciousness, academic achievement, and cultural competence. We can learn to recognize ourselves as a cultural being and understand that culture is learned. Then we can recognize student culture as a means of learning and link student learning to student culture. Teachers learn from student culture and serve as a culture broker between the school and the home. Our efforts need to transcend the classroom by recognizing that a student’s language and culture impacts who they are and links them with their broader identities.

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

What can educators do to improve their credibility? First is to ensure that students feel that their cultural backgrounds and life experiences are understood. This involves appreciating their worldviews in terms of the intricacies of their cultural backgrounds and being able to communicate that awareness to them.

Second, is to ensure that students get some immediate benefit or reinforcement from the teaching or counseling process. This may involve advocating for them, teaching them a skill that might help them better navigate the system, or even intervene in a situation on their behalf. Keep in mind that educational practices were developed primarily for working with dominant culture students and consequently, limitations may not make cultural sense when working with Students of Color.

Third, Banks, Foster, and Ladson-Billings suggests we consider the creation of individual ethnic-specific global educational theories, each developed by teachers and researchers from a given ethnic community, aimed at a unique unbiased understanding of the educational needs of that community. This is an alternative to having teachers merely adapt and adjust dominant-group classroom theories and practices for use with culturally different students.

Fourth, Duran and Duran advocate a return to the use of traditional education practices from the student’s own culture. Each Community of Color has over time developed its own conceptions of
learning and education in the process of socializing children into the cultural group. Availing oneself of such approaches (a) helps guarantee that the knowledge being learned has not been compromised by dominant cultural ways; (b) it provides a vehicle for strengthening ethnic identity and cultural ties; and (c) introducing such culturally congruent teaching methods is especially useful to students who remain steeped in traditional cultural ways and values, for whom dominant American culture has little relevance and to whom dominant culture feels uncomfortable.

Most culturally different students have experienced some level of acculturation or are bicultural in varying degrees. For these individuals, a full return to traditional cultural ways is probably neither possible nor desirable. More relevant to their situation is the use of models of teaching and helping that have sensitively and extensively adapted to the cultural needs of their group by educators, either indigenous or culturally different, who are truly culturally competent. As the demand for cross-cultural education continues to grow and as effective strategies for serving culturally diverse students are developed, it is just a matter of time before dominant forms of learning begin to lose their Northern European perspective and become increasingly infused and informed by a variety of other cultures.

PEDAGOGICAL PARADIGM SHIFT

We can shift/change our paradigm so that it meets the needs of students in education. How?

*Respond empathically.

*Learn specific skills that include encouraging, paraphrasing, summarizing, asking appropriate open and closed questions, reflecting feeling, reflecting meaning, and providing feedback.

*Recognize that the relationship can be the transformative aspect of the teaching situation and learn to challenge models of teaching which inhibit substantive interaction.

*Recognize the characteristics of your natural style of responding to others. This suggests that you will recognize how your personal style works for and against you as a teacher.

*Recognize the role of cultural and social factors when encountering others.

*Learn how to listen and respond in ways that respect cultural diversity.

The needs of students, especially the needs of culturally diverse students, are not limited to the classroom. Students are defined by cultural and social forces that have deep emotional impacts on their psyches and shape the very essence of what and how they learn. As teachers and counselors of culturally diverse students, we will be called upon to interact with them, their parents, siblings, families, and communities. At times you may be acting as a babysitter, confidant, culture broker, social worker, counselor, and teacher. The broader your knowledge and insights, the better you will be able to perform and meet the needs of these students.

REFERENCES


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Venezuela y las Olimpíadas de Química: “Participar es Aprender”

Amalia Torrealba*, Eliseo Silva, Emiliano Zapata. Asociación Venezolana de Olimpíadas de Química, AVOQUIM

“La competencia se presenta de muchas formas y trae consigo alegrías, y algunas veces traen sinsabores. Pero por dura que sea la prueba a superar, nunca se den por vencidos y abandonen el reto antes de enfrentarlo, perderán más si no lo intentan. Nunca tengan miedo de competir, la competencia sacará de ustedes lo mejor, en especial cuando descubran y entiendan que la verdadera competencia debe ser consigo mismos, para cada día superar nuestras limitaciones y dar algo más de lo que ya dimos a nuestro entorno, a nuestra sociedad, y a nuestro país”.

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Introducción

Cuando se plantea la siguiente interrogante: ¿En qué se diferencia un país desarrollado de uno que no lo es, son varias las respuestas que se pueden esperar o varios son los parámetros a considerar. Se dice que para que una nación sea desarrollada debe tener un científico por cada cien mil habitantes. En la actualidad, Venezuela tiene un déficit de 15 mil. Igualmente, un país se considera subdesarrollado cuando su población tiene un acceso desigual al conocimiento, o a la educación, en un sentido más concreto. Esto último sucede en nuestro país, a pesar que la educación en Venezuela es considerada en un derecho humano. La Constitución Bolivariana de la República de Venezuela (CRBV) lo consagra en su artículo 19 y en artículo 103 “Toda persona tiene derecho a una educación integral de calidad, permanente, en igual de condiciones y oportunidades, sin más limitaciones que las derivadas de aptitudes, vocación y aspiraciones...”. Adicionalmente, la ley Orgánica de Educación (LOE) en su artículo 3 de le da una fin cuando dice: “la educación contribuirá al formación y capacitación de los equipos humanos necesarios para el desarrollo del país”. Son múltiples las causas sociales, políticas y económicas que causan que lo expresado en la CRBV no se cumpla. Una de ellas y de reciente data, es la que responsabiliza el enfoque actual de la educación en el país, que no responde a la realidad del mismo, si no es el resultado de la imposición de modelos extranjeros. Es por ello que se dice que la educación venezolana responde a una concepción holística del ser humano, y no va acorde con el desarrollo del individuo en cada una de sus etapas. (Tabla No.1).

Para Medina (2004) p.21, “...si todos los hombres al nacer son iguales mentalmente, lo que los hace diferentes cuando adulto será el medio social en el que se desarrollan. El hombre como tal será entonces un producto de la educación”. Si se extiende esta definición se dirá que el desarrollo de un país es producto de la educación de su pueblo.


<table>
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<th>Desarrollo Humano</th>
<th>País</th>
<th>Años de escolarización</th>
<th>% PNB Investigación</th>
<th>Científicos por cada 100 habitantes</th>
<th>Indice de Adelanto Tecnológico (IAT)*</th>
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*Data tomada del informe anual de las Naciones Unidas 2003.
Uno de los objetivos de la ciencia es la mejora de la calidad del vida del ser humano y lo logra mediante la tecnología. Para Bunge (1981) considera la tecnología como “…el tratamiento científico de los problemas prácticos, es decir, el tratamiento de estos problemas sobre un fondo de conocimiento científico y con ayuda del método científico” (p. 35). Pero es precisamente la tecnología que ha pronunciado más las brechas entre los países desarrollados y subdesarrollados. Un ejemplo de esto son las Nuevas Tecnologías de la Información y de la Comunicación (TIC). Ellas han favorecido el desarrollo y crecimiento económico de los países. ¿Pero los beneficios han sido para todos? La respuesta es no. Se habla que la desigualdad en naciones se ha acrecentado. Las razones son varias, una de ellas es que el acceso a las TIC no es igual para todos. Debido que se requiere de plataformas tecnológicas sofisticas y costosas. Como lo comenta:

Bernstein y col. (1997) “La transición de la sociedad industrial a la sociedad de la información supone una introducción de tecnologías que disminuyen la necesidad de mano de obra. En la primera fase, se ha producido una dualización social al escindir la sociedad en un sector con ocupación estable, cualificada y remunerada, y otro sector en el paro estructural o en el empleo precario” (p.31).

Todo lo anteriormente expuesto conduce a una palabra y es EDUCACIÓN, específicamente en ciencias. Hecho que presenta varias limitaciones que no solo se refieren a lo económico, si no que se relacionan con el ámbito educativo. Se encuentra que existe una baja motivación del estudiante al estudio de la ciencia, sobre todo en países como Venezuela donde los jóvenes requieren insertarse rápidamente en el campo laboral, para resolver la situación de pobreza de sus familias. Los contenidos programáticos de las materias científicas no le ofrecen una alternativa para solucionar su problemática. A lo que se le suma la idea que las ciencias son difíciles, incomprensibles y solo accesibles a mentes privilegiadas. Por otro lado se tiene un docente que se enfrenta a la poca disponibilidad de recursos: laboratorio, materiales, reactivos así como un limitado acceso a la actualización en didáctica y las nuevas tendencias de la educación en ciencias.

Es por ello que en la década de los sesentas, en los países conocidos como de la Europa Oriental, surgen las olimpiadas científicas, como una de las estrategia para detener el descenso de la matrícula en las carreras científicas, y estimular el estudio de la química, la física y de la matemáticas.

La Olimpiada de Química en Venezuela

En 1983 nace la Olimpiada en Venezuela con los siguientes objetivos:
- Detectar individuos talentosos
- Estimular esos individuos al estudio de la Química
- Proponer innovaciones en el área de la Química
- Desarrollo de la una cultura química en Venezuela
- Relacionar los sectores educacional, científico, e industrial de Venezuela

Le brinda la oportunidad a la juventud venezolana de demostrarse así mismos y a los demás, su capacidad para alcanzar las metas que se tracen. Para resolver problemas, pensar en soluciones creativas y tomar decisiones éticas.

La población a la que está dirigida la olimpíada, es a la de los dos últimos años de la educación secundaria de los planteles oficiales y privados del país a nivel nacional. El esquema No.1 describe el desarrollo de las actividades de la olimpíada.

Esquema No.1. Actividades de la Olimpíada

La olimpíada venezolana ha sido reconocida a nivel internacional como de características únicas porque los problemas de las pruebas de competencias, están vinculados con situaciones de la vida diaria. Igualmente por contemplar actividades y reconocimientos para los docentes. Durante sus años de actividad, la olimpíada ha tenido múltiples consecuencias las que se resumen en tres aspectos: se ha constituido en una base de datos para la investigación en educación en química, en un recurso didáctico en el aula y en una oportunidad.

Los resultados de las pruebas de competencia permiten determinar la problemática de la enseñanza de la química, lo que permite definir las distintas área de investigación y en tal sentido proponer estrategias para superar las deficiencias y cambios curriculares más ajustados con la realidad
del país. A la vez que permite detectar las necesidades de los docentes en cuanto a su formación y actualización.

Los problemas de competencia se transforman en un recurso didáctico para impartir los contenidos de química en aula. Ya que los presentan de diferentes maneras, en diferentes contextos y relacionados con la vida diaria. Al igual que mide varias habilidades por como está presentada la información, tablas, gráficos al igual que mide la comprensión lectora y habilidades matemáticas. Además los problemas contienen información química actualizada, avances científicos y tecnológico, y datos de la industria nacional y mundial.

El término oportunidad ha sido extraído de las opiniones que han expresado los estudiantes luego que han participado en la olimpiada. Ellos comentan que a parte de la adquisición de conocimientos de una manera amena, les permite definir su vocación y decidir los estudios universitarios a seguir. La competencia les permite descubrir sus potencialidades y habilidades. Por ser un certamen nacional les permite intercambiar con jóvenes de otros estados, con iguales intereses y conocer las diferentes regiones del país. Para los docente igualmente es la oportunidad de actualizarse, de compartir con otros colegas experiencias y estrategias así como reevaluar su rol en el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje.

En 21 años de ejecución del proyecto olimpiada venezolana han participado 296 383 estudiantes, 156 283 docentes, 2000 planteles de los cuales 300 y 160 son estudiantes y docentes ganadores respectivamente de los 24 estados del país. En la edición 10 del evento nacional, 1993, Venezuela recibe la invitación para participar en la Olimpiada Internacional de Química.

**Venezuela en la Olimpiada Internacional de Química.**

Esta competencia internacional nace en 1968 en Hungría, con la participación de 3 países. En la actualidad la cifra ha aumentado a 61, pertenecientes provenientes de los 5 continentes. Este evento persigue como objetivos:

- Promover el estudio de la Química y propiciar el desarrollo de jóvenes talentosos que muestran interés por la Ciencia.
- Estimular la excelencia en Química entre la juventud del mundo y fomentar el intercambio cultural de los jóvenes que están llamados a ser los líderes mundiales en el campo de la ciencia y la tecnología.

Tiene las siguientes características:

- Es un evento anual. El idioma oficial es el inglés.
- La delegación que asiste al evento está conformada por 3 profesores y 4 estudiantes. Los jóvenes deber tener menos de 20 años y no estar cursando estudios universitarios, así como ser ganadores de la olimpiada de su país.
- La competencia consiste en dos pruebas, una teórica y una experimental de 5 horas de duración. Temario es del nivel del tercer año de la carrera de Química.
- Los profesores que asisten al evento son miembros del jurado internacional que es responsable de: discutir, traducir, corregir y arbitrar las pruebas de competencia. El número de medallas que se otorga es proporcional al número de estudiantes participantes: 10% de oro, 20 % de plata y 30% bronce. Las menciones honoríficas se le otorgan a los estudiantes que en su prueba tengan una pregunta con puntuación completa.
- El país anfitrión cubre los gastos de alojamiento y comida durante la duración del evento.
- El país que asiste paga una cuota de participación de 100$N, donde N son los años de participación en la competencia.

Los profesores que asisten al evento, fueron los responsables de entrenar a los estudiantes y durante las competencia tienen varias actividades. A saber: discutir, traducir, corregir las pruebas de los estudiantes.

Entre los años 93 y 96 los resultados de Venezuela se resumen en 4 menciones honoríficas. A partir de 1996 se afinaron los mecanismos de selección y entrenamiento. Para lo cual se contó con el apoyo de personal calificado y de las principales universidades del país. Las calificaciones obtenidas por las delegaciones venezolanas hasta el 2004 se muestran en la Tabla No.2, la que se traducen como medallas, están resaltadas. Mientras que en la Tabla No.3 se muestran las medallas logradas otros países y por Venezuela.

En 1995 por iniciativa de los países iberoamericanos que asistían al evento internacional se crea una olimpiada similar pero el ámbito iberoamericano. La que permitiría el intercambio entre aquellos países con raíces y experiencias similares. Hasta el 2004 han participado de 13 países: Argentina, Bolívia, Brasil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Chile, España, México, Perú, Portugal, Uruguay y Venezuela. Para el año 2000 Venezuela tuvo la gran responsabilidad de organizar tan importante evento. Año tras años este espacio de iberoamerica ha crecido madurado, donde la excelencia y la elevada calidad académica siempre están presentes. En la Tabla No.4 se muestran los resultados de Venezuela y otros países en la dicha competencia.

En los procesos de selección para ambos eventos internacionales han participado 190 estudiantes, 300 docentes y 18 estados. En lo que respecta a las competencias de los anteriores lo han logrado 35 estudiantes, siendo 27 los ganadores, acompañados por 12 docentes pertenecientes a 8 estados del país.

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* Mejor prueba experimental 2003

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### Financiamiento

La participación de Venezuela en los eventos internacionales es posible por esfuerzos de diferentes sectores. Todos los docentes que laboran en los procesos de selección lo hacen *ad honorem*. Es un equipo conformado por 4 personas que trabajan un promedio de 540 horas, entre actividades docentes, administrativas y logísticas, durante 9 meses, para preparar y conformar las diferentes delegaciones venezolanas. Los reactivos y materiales y los espacios para el entrenamiento son aportados por las universidades. El financiamiento para asistir a los diferentes eventos se logra mediante donaciones de entes gubernamentales, empresas privadas y líneas aéreas.

### Consecuencias

La participación de nuestro país en este evento de tan elevada calidad académica ha permitido contrastar la educación en química de Venezuela con la de otros países, para detectar debilidades y potenciar fortalezas. Los docentes que han asistido al evento internacional han adquirido conocimientos y estrategias educativas, que han adaptado a la realidad del país y las han incorporado a la olimpiada nacional. Lo que les ha permitido compartirlos con otros docentes venezolanos mediante pruebas, folletos y talleres.

Consecuencias igualmente importantes para los estudiantes, con solo participar en el proceso de selección y entrenamiento, optimizan los conocimientos en química y áreas afines, los orienta vocacionalmente y les garantiza el éxito en estudios universitarios, y en su desempeño profesional. Para aquellos estudiantes, miembros de las diferentes delegaciones, sus logros trascienden las preseas antes mencionadas. Los conocimientos y la experiencia les permitió estudiar en las más prestigiosas universidades venezolanas y extranjeras, en las que se gradúan con honores, a nivel de pre y post grado. A nivel de la personalidad, su participación en olimpiadas les desarrolla cualidades tales como: trabajo en equipo, disciplina, programación y consecución de metas, y una fuerte vinculación con el país. Igualmente se manifiestan inquietudes docentes que les permiten colaborar en actividades de
entrenamiento para competencias nacionales e internacionales, así como en talleres de formación para docentes. Los logros académicos de estos jóvenes y los múltiples reconocimientos nacionales que reciben los constituyen en modelos a emular por otros estudiantes en sus planteles, regiones y estados.

Igualmente influye en los docentes quienes son responsables de la detección de los talentos hacia la química en la aulas, ven en la competencia internacional un reto que asumen como propio, para el que se preparan para apoyar a sus estudiantes en sus planteles y estados.

Otras actividades

El proyecto olímpíada participa en otras actividades a parte de las competencias internacionales. Los docentes que laboran en el mismo, en la actualidad, participan en la elaboración de una publicación bisemanal encartada en un periódico de circulación nacional, durante el año 2005. Igualmente asisten a congresos nacionales e internacionales, comunicando la experiencia de la olimpíada. Durante el año 2005 los ganadores de los eventos nacional e internacionales serán la imagen de una campaña publicitaria contra las drogas.

Testimonio

Las principales fortalezas de la olímpíada son sus ganadores: estudiantes y profesores, los “olímpicos” como se les denominan, son los que con su esfuerzo, disciplina y talento hacen posible que el proyecto continúe con sus actividades. Para la presentación en Third Worldwide Forum on Education and Culture, Roma 2005 se había llevado un video con el testimonio de uno de los estudiantes que en la actualidad estudia en el MIT en Estados Unidos, por razones de tiempo no se pudo proyectar. Para este documento escrito se reproduce el discurso que dio uno de los olímpicos en día de la inauguración de la 6ª Olimpíada Iberoamericana de Química, Venezuela 2000.

Olimpico: Francisco Malaret
Estudia Ingeniería Química y Licenciatura en Química. Universidad Simón Bolívar, Venezuela.
Ganador de la medalla de oro en la Olimpíada Nacional.
Medalla de plata 5ª Olimpíada Iberoamericana de Química, España 99
Medalla de plata 32ª Olimpíada Internacional de Química, Dinamarca 2000

Para mí es un gran honor haber sido designado para dirigirles unas breves palabras de bienvenida a esta 6ª Olimpíada Iberoamericana de Química. Yo siempre he sentido una gran atracción hacia la Ciencia y muy especialmente hacia la Química. Desde pequeño experimentaba mezclando las medicinas que tenía en mi casa. Hoy en día me pregunto por qué tengo que pedir una llave cada vez que necesito una aspirina. A pesar de lo básico de mis conocimientos de Química, el reto de afrontar una competencia de esa disciplina me motivó a intensificar mis estudios. Como para todos los participantes, las Olimpíadas han implicado tiempo de sacrificio, esfuerzo, dedicación y disciplina. Como dijo el compositor Ludwig Van Beethoven “El genio se compone del 2% de talento y del 98% de perseverante aplicación”. Con esta frase Beethoven quiso expresar que el genio no es producto de la casualidad, sino más bien el fruto del desarrollo sistemático de unas cualidades especiales. Con toda seguridad son innumerables los talentos que se pierden en todas partes del mundo porque no han tenido la oportunidad, o, porque habiéndola tenido, no hubo ese noventa y ocho por ciento de “perseverante aplicación” mencionado por Beethoven. Definitivamente, los logros no son el resultado del azar. Para alcanzar una meta, hay que esforzarse. Estas Olimpíadas vas más allá de ganar o no una medalla: participar significa aprender. Ahora que estoy en la Universidad me doy cuenta que, además de la satisfacción de haber participado en estos eventos, y todas las experiencias vividas, me quedaron unas herramientas útiles para toda mi vida: los conocimientos adquiridos. Un artista no puede ser evaluado sólo por una pintura, sino por toda una trayectoria. Para muchos de nosotros, éste es solo el principio de nuestra carrera científica, y seguramente podremos llegar a ser parte de esas personas que ayudan al desarrollo de la ciencia. En este sentido, estoy seguro que su interés por la Química, independientemente de la carrera que decidan cursar, no terminará hoy, sino que continuará y que esta Olimpíada representará un importante logro en su desarrollo profesional. Hay que recordar que nosotros somos la generación de relevo, y nuestros hombros soportarán el peso del avance científico de nuestros respectivos países. Vivimos en un mundo materialista, y el interés por la obtención de las cosas materiales tal vez sea el factor que haya determinado que muchas personas que aman la ciencia, hayan optado por dedicarse a otros campos. En este sentido, mi consejo es: Sigan sus sueños. El placer de triunfar en las metas que nos proponemos no tiene precio. No tengan miedo.
de asumir su vocación. Para mí, el participar en la 5ª Olimpiada Iberoamericana de Química en el año 1999 en España, me abrió un horizonte intelectual que representó no sólo un enriquecimiento académico, sino cultural y personal. Quisiera aprovechar este momento para expresar mis más sinceros agradecimientos a la Olimpiada por la oportunidad que me ha brindado y sobre todo a mis profesores y personas que acompañaron en este proceso, por su apoyo, amistad y confianza. Bienvenidos a Venezuela y el mayor éxitos a todos ustedes. Gracias.

**Bibliografía**


Constitución de la República Bolivariana de Venezuela, marzo 2000.


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**Teaching and Learning Democracy in the Wake of September 11**

**Beth Jorgensen**, Simpson College

Shortly following the September 11th attacks, New York City Deputy Chancellor for Instruction Judith Rizzo cited these tragic events as evidence that “we have to do more to teach the habits of tolerance, knowledge and awareness of other cultures,” noting that only through cultural understanding can peace between diverse cultures be achieved. She was quickly chastised by Lynne Cheney, who accused her of “impl[y]ing] that the events of September 11th were our fault . . . that somehow intolerance on our part was the cause.” Cheney went on to argue that our real “failure . . . is lack of commitment to this nation’s history” (Associated Press). Within weeks, the American Council of Trustees and Alumni (ACTA) issued a report declaring the faculty of America’s colleges and
universities the “weak link in the war on terrorism” and accusing faculty and administration of anti-Americanism. This report represents yet another volley in the academic “Culture War,” frequently characterized as a tug-of-war between the Judeo-Christian or Euro-western tradition and a diverse body of theories and practices which are often lumped together under a variety of monikers such as cultural studies, multiculturalism, deconstruction, and postmodernism.

“Moral-traditionalists” such as Cheney, hold that movement away from the “best that is known and thought” (Arnold “Criticism” 257) and toward analysis of power relationships represented by such texts, as well as study of alternative literatures, histories, and language conventions—that is, the practices of “counter-traditionalists”—have resulted in excess intellectual liberty, diminished literacy, and moral decline. At the heart of their arguments is defense of a grand narrative of American moral superiority which serves to define the virtuous citizen. However, as this narrative stems from three competing traditions in the narrative of rational liberalism, it results in an incommensurate and incoherent construct of the individual which diminishes citizen agency and severely constrains democracy and liberty.

Aristotle: The Determinate Self

In the first tradition, the Aristotelian, justice is said to aim for excellence, an overarching human telos, a predetermined purpose or end which is defined by the good that it pursues. Justice as excellence is maintenance of the best social order, principles regarding the best way to resolve conflict, and reduction of social ills so as to maximize what is best. Telos is determined by a pre-existing order which governs both the natural and social worlds. Society is a part of nature, a physis (something which is), rather than apart from nature, a nomos (something we create) (MacIntyre Justice 14). The aim of inquiry is to understand this physis so that individuals may behave according to its dictates and so model society in accordance with its laws. Justice is a themis, something laid down prior to society, which transcends society and is universally applicable in all times and places (14). Justice as excellence is thus metaphysical in that it corresponds to a cosmic order, divine law, or some other foundation that is stable, ahistorical, transcendent, and universal, existing as metaphysical truth.

In Aristotelian thought, the practice which embodies justice as excellence is politics and the polis [Greek city-state] is the institutional site of this practice. Far more than a place of mass habitation, the polis “constitute[s] a higher-order integrative form of activity,” a tightly ordered lifestyle in which humans seek their telos, “not this or that good, but the good and the best as such (44). Defined by Aristotle as eudaimonia, “the state of being well and doing well in being well, of a man’s being well-favored himself and in relation to the divine” (Virtue 148), this telos is not achieved “at some future point, but in the way our whole life is constructed” (175). The self is defined by determinate roles which maintain this way of life. Virtues are simply “qualities which enable an individual to do what his or her role requires” (Justice 15). As this lifestyle is best, to fulfill one’s roles is to act not only in the interest of the polis but in self-interest; even a slave justly serves both community and self by being an excellent slave.

Hence, distributive justice maintains social, i.e. cosmic, balance by awarding goods according to what the actions of each citizen merit in accordance with the metaphysical order and what each deserves by way of his role—merit and desert gauged by “how important the role . . . and how well he has performed in it” (107). Practical rationality is no more or less than understanding and acting upon the order of things, the proper roles of individuals in given contexts, and the merit and desert accorded each role. As premises for reasoning are “good reasons for action for anyone whose telos is the good and the best” (Justice 45), justice—a condition of ethics—and practical reasoning—a condition of epistemology—are one and the same (Marcuse 125). Corrective justice serves to facilitate practical

1 ACTA’s founders include Joe Lieberman and Lynne Cheney; advisors include Cheney and former Education Secretary William Bennett.
reasoning by educating the *polis* in “the good and best as such” and in the virtues their roles require. In all respects, injustice is “failure in respect of the metaphysical, political, and psychological order” (MacIntyre *Virtue* 157), which as personal vice is taking more or less than one merits and deserves.

Yet as the determinate self does not so much *choose* a course of action as *identify* the right course by what she knows of the transcendental order, she surrenders her *agency* to the demands of her role. She does not employ reason to independently “interpret . . . influence, change, or redirect” (Ewald and Wallace 343) events according to her needs or desires but to provide a stable *form* to which she may subordinate her impulses and desires. This lack of self-determination stands in stark contrast to the defining principles of liberalism, which has been historically linked with justice as *effectiveness*.

**Locke: The Autonomous Self**

Unbound by community agreement as to what is good or what human *telos* consists in, justice as *effectiveness* is reduction of conflict and social ills simply to maintain order, to solve problems in light of competition for external goods. It is therefore limited to material distribution and protection of property and persons, consisting of principles of negotiation and contract; adjudication of competing self-interest. The boundaries of justice as effectiveness are much more clearly drawn than those of excellence because “a perfectly just person is no more and no less than someone who always obeys the rules of justice” (MacIntyre *Justice* 39)—anything goes as long as the law is not broken. Justice as effectiveness ascribes to the *rule of law* (39), lacking the certitude of metaphysical truth, depending instead on human convention. This rule of law is the foundation upon which the second of these competing traditions, the liberal, is built.

Indeed, in light of the failure of political negotiation and rational theology to resolve persistent conflict, 17th-century thinkers came to believe that “any agreed conception of the good for human beings” (209) is impossible. The resulting focus on human competition and conflict paved the way for “the individual” to become “one of the fundamental . . . categories of social thought and practice” (210). Identity and individual capacity come to be held “apart from and prior to . . . membership in any particular social and political order” (210). No longer could the individual be defined by roles which uphold a particular *telos* nor could “good reasons for accepting and valuing the constraints imposed . . . by the social and political order” be limited to those in concert with “some teleologically understood, divinely legislated order” (210). Imbued with full agency in her personal realm, the self became *autonomous*, free to determine her own *telos*, to ascribe to any of a number of teleological doctrines, or to abandon the notion of *telos* altogether.

This tradition was first fleshed out in the philosophy of John Locke wherein he posited a state of nature prior to society in which men “lived together according to reason, without a common superior on earth, with authority to judge between them” (Locke *Treatises* 307). In nature, he argued, humans are free to do as they wish so long as they observe the laws of nature, primarily the law that “no one ought to harm another in his life, health, liberty, or possessions” (309). Above all, each individual was henceforth “his own boss . . . free to be good, bad . . . moral, immoral . . . tolerant, intolerant,” to “act properly or improperly” whether “he gets away with it or not.” All that matters “is that he has his own way” (Dietze 8). Political theorist Gottfried Dietze names such freedom “liberalism proper” (1).

With no common *telos* to fulfill and no way to appeal to a metaphysical or divine order, practical reasoning thus appears to be no more than cleverness in politics; it is rhetorical rather than philosophical, argumentative and persuasive rather than in pursuit of transcendent truth. As such reasoning pertains only to external goods, “cooperation with others demands recognition of their reasons for action as good reasons for them, not as good reasons as such,” in turn requiring “the creation of a framework for bargaining” (MacIntyre *Justice* 45). Virtue exists *in addition to* practical reasoning, its function to balance the interest of the community with self-interest. So, as one may be quite effective without virtue, allegiance to effectiveness often raises charges of moral relativism—the
very charge moral-traditionalists level at counter-traditionalists.

Yet while liberty “can mean freedom of the stronger to do down the weaker,” it can also mean “effective freedom of all to use and develop their capacities” (Macpherson 1). As “the latter freedom is inconsistent with the former” (1), liberty must be bound to maintain the initial premise of equality. Liberalism proper must become proper liberalism (Dietze 1). Yet restriction must likewise be limited so as to maintain the initial premise of liberty. Since liberalism can “never be totally replaced by propriety . . . we turn to . . . an ethical minimum, the law” (13). Beyond the law, the individual is free to determine her own morality. “I want, I need, I believe” serve as “statements of a reason for action,” as “premises for practical reasoning” (MacIntyre Justice 338). What is needed, therefore, is some means by which to ensure that the autonomous, self-serving individual behave virtuously toward the common good. As a solution, 17th-century thinkers turned to reason, conceived as rigorous method, initiating move away from modes of reasoning concerned with “the oral, the particular, the local, and the timely” (Toulmin Cosmopolis 30).

**Descartes: The Rational Self**

The first premise of this rationalist vision is that truth can be achieved only by extracting inquiry from the messy context of human affairs. Indeed, the common narrative, that taught in school and once presupposed in the study of Modernist ideas, tells us that Modernism began in a time of prosperity and material comfort in which literacy had become “as widespread in the prosperous laity as it had earlier been among priests, monks, and other ecclesiastics” (Toulmin Cosmopolis 14). Lay scholars, so schoolbooks say, insisted on reading and thinking for themselves and so reserved the right to reject church doctrine and free the human mind from the tyranny of superstition, tradition, and theology to pursue “pure” inquiry unhindered by human concerns which cloud the mind and distort understanding.

But, in fact, the seventeenth century was a time of great suffering and conflict throughout Europe. Near the turn of the century, Spain was defeated by England, ending her European dominance; religious disputes divided France and Germany; and England teetered on the brink of civil war. Economic depression and the Little Ice Age set in before the end of the century’s second decade; the Thirty Years’ War began; and, as the century passed, periodic recurrences of plague struck both England and France. Contrary to the standard narrative, scientists and “other intellectual innovators” (19) experienced intensified theological pressure from both the Papacy and Protestant reformers. Given such circumstances, perhaps the very contexts from which rationalist philosophies have sprung challenge this initial premise.

This internal contradiction is just one of many which shake the foundations of liberal reason. Among other things, the self-concept of Enlightenment rationalism paradoxically both culminates in and denies the fundamental premises of liberal autonomy. For on one hand, if one is to doubt all received wisdom, inquiry must proceed in intellectual isolation; one must be free of outside influence to question anew. On the other, if knowledge gained by rational inquiry is certain, then freedom to entertain one’s own beliefs is illusory; it is nothing less than madness to deny certain knowledge. Despite these contradictions, rationalism does indeed provide the foundation upon which liberalism is built.

The second premise of Enlightenment thinkers is that that reasoning must begin by doubting all one knows. In a nutshell, Enlightenment rationalists conclude that human emotion and its accompanying prejudices, traditions, and superstitions interfere with our rational capacity to apprehend the good; thus, reason must subordinate the emotions that the will may act wisely. Yet this concept of the will is not drawn upon a clean slate, but is presupposed by the dominant Christian theology of seventeenth-century rationalists; and so, another contradiction emerges

Descartes follows the example of Augustine, arguing that our reason, modeled on the mind of God, is perfect; error belongs to the will. Error ceases to be equated with a failure of passion or reason as the will comes into being as a faculty subject to either reason or passion—a crucial distinction being
that emotion acts upon us while the will is ours to use—for good or evil, for truth or error. Intellectual
error is thus a misuse of the will as applied to understanding (Bordo 79) rather than a failure of reason
itself. In this way, judgment is distinguished as an act of will independent of reason (79); that is, while
reason leads us to understanding, the will determines how we act upon our understanding. In place of
the belief that the will must be brought under submission prior to reason comes to rest the belief that
reason can master desire so that the will may resist temptation. The certainty and stability of reason
become the virtues of the rational self by which the autonomous self may be directed to righteousness
and truth.

Yet despite theological underpinnings, seventeenth-century rationalists saw the church and
political authorities as primary sources of intellectual error. As they saw it, nature rather than ancient
textual authority provides certain evidence of God’s law. Unlike the truths of books which are written
in obscure language, they maintained, the truths of nature are simple, self-evident, and easily
accessible to the natural capacities of the mind—should one but use the right method. By these lights,
as each individual is made in the image of God, each possesses agency to become her own authority as
“the power of distinguishing the true and the false . . . what is called good sense, or reason, [being] by
nature equal in all” (Descartes Discourse 5). In brief, the assumption of rational equality subverted the
sovereignty of traditional authorities, paving the way for both epistemological and political liberty.

Indeed, Enlightenment rationalists sought a new source of first principles that would stand the
test of infinite time. To arrive at these principles would require new “reliable procedural guides for
inquiry” (41). As words deceive, a new “language” was needed to represent thought directly. So, as
nature exemplifies God’s perfect plan, and as the “Book of Nature is written in mathematical symbols”
(Galileo in Toumin Cosmopolis 74), mathematics and geometry came to be viewed as the perfect
model of the precision, clarity, and certainty needed for knowledge and language. One need only
divide subjects “into as many parts as possible” in order to “commence with objects the simplest and
easiest to know” then move “step by step, to the knowledge of the more complex” (Descartes
Discourse 18)—each new truth serving as “a rule available in the discovery of subsequent ones” (19).

So reducing the process of reasoning to a linear calculus, this model of rationality assumes that
all individuals in all circumstances essentially think alike. The argument is simple; since humanity is
part of the divine plan, mental operations are subject to natural law; thus they, too, are analogous to
mathematics. All I need do to convince someone else of my conclusions is to take her through my
chains of reasoning much as I would take her through a mathematical formula; by explicitly testing my
deductions against the natural mirror of another’s mind, I may examine my knowledge for absolute
certainty. Cognitive process and human motivation are thus seen as stable and permanent; knowledge
as “a conceptual ordering of the thinking mind” (Crowley 5)—“sequential . . . accurately inscribed in
memory,” and reproducible “upon demand” (12).

From this view, knowledge is not regarded as the result of cultural interplay, but as awaiting
discovery, within nature and within the individual human mind. This vision of rationality thus
abandons the chaotic, public world in favor of a world of personal vision and concrete, testable
scientific truths. Banished are relational modes of thinking which account for time, place, and the
needs and claims of diverse individuals. What is left is a vision of reason which “conflates moral
reflection with scientific knowledge” (Young 4) and mistakes claims for “theorems to be demonstrated
in a self-enclosed system” rather than pleas, claims upon some people by others” (5).

Above everything else, Enlightenment rationalists believed the new method of scientific
inquiry to be applicable to all humanity is capable of knowing. Anything to which it cannot apply came
to be seen as outside the scope of human knowledge, residing in the “kingdom of darkness” (Spragens
45). The choice was clear: “absolute certainty or epistemological chaos” (Bordo 17); either apply this
method to the “moral sciences” or plunge humanity into absolute relativism. To the rationalists’ way of
thinking, just as method would allow humanity to understand nature, it would fortunately “unveil the
good” (Spragens 69). Henceforth, “the enlightened individual could be expected to discern his self-interest with careful reference to a felicific calculus and to behave accordingly” (6).

On this account, much of the Enlightenment project in philosophy, like the Classical, is an attempt to identify and articulate the ideal political order, a political telos, called by Steven Toulmin the cosmopolis, “a comprehensive account of the world” which can “bind things together in ‘politico-theological,’ as much as in scientific or explanatory terms” (Cosmopolis 128). In a stark move away from the Aristotelian tradition, the natural state of humanity comes to be identified as “apart from civil society” (Spragens 102), a condition prior to prejudices, superstitions, and traditions. Rationalists come to believe that by logically calculating from this imagined ideal state, human governance, while not attaining the status of a physis, could nonetheless rise above nomos by modeling the physis, the perfect plan of divine cosmology. Political stability could now be assured because loyalty is no longer a matter of fickle emotional bonds but of unfailing rational adherence to the themis represented, on the one hand, by nature; on the other, by a method which emulates the order of nature.

In sum, Enlightenment rationalists both adapted and rejected church doctrine and political authority. They adapted the doctrine of free will to support political freedom. They embraced the theological necessity of certainty and stability but looked to nature rather than books for evidence of divine law, thereby undermining traditional authority to declare individuals free and equal. They nonetheless argued that true belief is certain and stable, in a word, rational. So while rationalists declare individuals free to determine their own good, their own telos, they insist upon a vision of the Good, a rational human telos to which all must supply their allegiance. Their point hinges upon their understanding of practice. Simply put, they believed that through correct practice, i.e. rational method applied to inquiry, free people must eventually come to agreement. In their minds, freedom of thought would lead to correct thought; disagreement and conflict would cease. As a consequence, their insistence on rational method undercuts the autonomy and liberty they hope to attain for all.

But such thinking binds us in a paradox. For while rationalism, like liberalism, is grounded in a calculative paradigm which treats all goods as though they are commodities in the marketplace, rationalism also claims to transcend mere effectiveness by arriving at the correct and appropriate calculation, operating from first principles known by “insight” and “self-evidence,” truths recognizable “by everyone of sound mind who understood the terms in which they were stated and . . . had not been subverted by false doctrine” (MacIntyre Justice 223).

In the first instance, modern rationalism appears to ally with justice as effectiveness in the midst of competition—any notion of human telos appears abandoned to power and control. Distributive justice is governed by legal rather than moral constraints as the “effective” individuals who win the competition exercise their power to minimize regulation. And, as the “rational” methods of the market obscure the real contexts of people and resources, profit and/or economic growth serve as primary measures of effectiveness.

In the second instance, rationalism claims alliance with justice as excellence, paradoxically evoking the determinate self and so negating the autonomy which circumscribes both the liberal and rational self-concepts. Simply, if humanity is, on one hand, subject to material, mechanical nature but, on the other hand, above nature due to the causal ability of human reason, it seems to follow that, as in nature, the abilities of some creatures must be greater than those of others. Some individuals, “by attaining scientific truth,” must be capable of freeing themselves “from the grasp of deterministic nature that swallows the unenlightened” (Spragens 106). Such men emerge to become our rational leaders, offering infallible solutions to human problems in clear language to the natural, though inferior, reason of all individuals everywhere. Society comes to be divided in two—those whose scientific truths allow them to escape nature and those who do not possess these truths (107). The former rise above contingency and partiality; rather than “being radically determined beings . . . they are radically self-determining” (108). The latter are “artifacts . . .
characterized by their immanence, their passivity, their manipulability, their bondage, their ‘drivenness’—in a word, by their blind determination by outside forces” (107). The former possess not only agency, in the sense of volition, but mastery. The latter possess only minimal volition subject to forces beyond their control.

As in the Aristotelian narrative, practical rationality and the virtues which attend it are no more than understanding what is required of one’s role; hence, social inequality can be dismissed with the argument that social disturbances arise from the indiscretions of willful, irrational subjects—agency run amok. Under this construct, the depth and breadth of liberty and democracy hinge on a distinction between what Bowles and Gintis call “choosers” and “learners.” Liberty “is held to apply to rational agents (choosers) but not to others (learners), and the norms of democracy are held to apply to the actions of choosers in the public realm alone” (17).

**Rational Autonomy and Capitalism**

Given that liberalism assumes that the state of nature is defined by competition and rationalism assumes that nature is itself rational, as are humans, it follows that the conditions of competition are rational. Moreover, as human nature is essentially mental, thus capable of controlling material nature, it follows that the most rational humans are those who obtain the greatest amount of material resources. By virtue of their rationality, they are entitled to these resources; resources are property. Thus rational liberalism assumes property rights to be as fundamental as life and liberty.

Upon this foundation, politics is reduced to marketplace power. The logic is linear: rational conquest of nature leads to productivity, productivity reduces human misery, therefore, industriousness and productivity are the rational virtues of the liberal individual. As human nature is thus assumed to be grounded in economic activity, rational liberalism assumes that the surest of the human “sciences” must be economics. Here in particular it is not “the causal tangle of motives or feelings behind real human choices” which are of concern, but “the rational choices of ‘ideal’ producers or consumers, investors or policymakers” (Toulmin Cosmopolis 125). Economic patterns are taken as a part of the natural order, accorded a rationality of their own; all that is needed to maintain constant economic progress is greater understanding of the “natural” laws of artificial markets. In the guise of science, politics becomes “prudence in the service of homo economicus—the solitary seeker of material happiness and bodily security” (Barber Strong 20).

Thus to follow these economic laws should be to attain material success. Again, the reasoning is linear: rationality applied to human effort results in productivity; productivity culminates in property; therefore, a rational government exists to protect property. So operating on the premise of rational self-interest—if I respect the property of others, they will respect mine—virtue, which once directed humanity toward the public interest, is replaced by productivity and acquisitiveness. The public good is served only incidentally as my rational ability to anticipate threats to my private interests reveals to me that only mutual cooperation and respect for the private interests of others can protect my own. As wealth thus comes to be seen as material evidence of enlightened self-interest, it likewise is seen as material evidence of rational superiority. And as humans are also equal in passion, the ills that beset some individuals and, through them, society, must be due to willful emotions carrying them away; these folks must lack some quality, some virtue, which enables reason. In the interest of the community, therefore, the political, ethical realm must be ruled by a few objective “experts,” individuals whose superiority in “knowledge, will, and power” (Spragens 108) affords them “omniscience,” “detachment,” and the “god-like” potential for creating social harmony (109). Under such premises, power rightly falls to men of property, as “those who have something to lose would act more rationally and responsibly than poor firebrands . . . homo economicus thinks rationally” (Dietze 231). Such individuals are men of the public, while the majority are consigned to their own private realms so as not to unduly influence policy. Liberty is ensured by narrowing the public space, by excluding most activities of most individuals from public consideration. Democracy is (at least
minimally) ensured by the right to choose from among competing experts in the designated political realm.

In fact, the limitation of democracy in the service of economic interests goes well beyond government into the workplace, schools, and even social and family life. Evidence lies in the “hierarchical system of authority; centralization of decision making; division of labor and specialization . . . and increasing reliance on expert knowledge” (Wolin “Norm” 36), which characterize labor, education, social, and family policies, in government as well as in the “private” economic sphere. These characteristics of modern administration severely constrain the agency of citizens to become meaning-making subjects in academics, the workplace, and culture at large. Under such conditions, it is not the convergence of liberty and democracy nor the actuality of democracy which ensure the loyalty of subjects to the state, but the ideas of liberty and democracy. And this is where the university steps in.

**The University and National Ethos**

As I have discussed, the ideal citizen constructed by rational liberalism is both autonomous and unerringly calculative of self-interest—free to define excellence on her own terms and excellent in pursuing the satisfaction of material needs and desires—under rationalist assumptions, to the benefit of both self and community. But as rationalism assumes that such an ideal is attainable only by an elite few, some means must be devised by which to gain the loyal cooperation of the masses. Either an alternative image of the citizen must be constructed—a citizen willing to transfer power to an elite, who knows her place in the order of things—or the masses must be persuaded to embrace a national narrative in which the common citizen may rise among the elite.

This issue of citizenship ties the emergence of the modern university to the rise of the nation-state. In the first place, the rational, liberated individual will subject herself to governance only if governance proceeds from values she shares—as political revolution persistently demonstrates. As liberalism assumes a significant degree of pluralism, the values of the state cannot adapt to the individual. The individual must therefore be adapted to the state, must become “the bearer of a meaning that is only accessible as part of a collectivity,” enunciated as a “subjective ‘we,’ as in the phrase ‘we, the people’” (Readings 46). This adaptation has been, in part, the responsibility of public schooling. It has also been taken by some to be the central mission of humanities and literacy education throughout post-secondary schooling.

In the second place, while freedom from government intrusion and protection from the whims of others serve as mechanisms to ensure loyal cooperation, these mechanisms ultimately prove insufficient given that they particularly ensure economic liberty and protection. That is, should persons of power and wealth employ their liberty and advantage to exploit the less fortunate for greater power and wealth, the resulting imbalance of power risks dissatisfaction among the masses, so threatening subject loyalty to the state. Hence, an additional mechanism is necessary to ensure loyalty, some sort of shared belief system which serves to rationalize such inequity to the satisfaction of the narrowly enfranchised citizen. Toward these ends, ideology, that is national ideology, embodied in the notion of culture, comes to be viewed as a legitimate mission of the university.

Lacking the bond of religion as well as the bond of common ancestry, “for America the problem was one of finding a surrogate for religion—a secular bond . . . conceived of as a civil religion” (Aronowitz 43). The premises of this religion are familiar to anyone educated in U.S. schools. Our story is “unparalleled in human history” due to “liberty’s achievements . . . progress and the victory of aspiration over history” (45). Even negative narratives, which emphasize the hegemony of the few over the many, tell a “unique story whose chief player is liberty and whose chief antagonist is the past, history itself” (45). The story is simple: America is the land of opportunity where everyone is free and equal to overcome the limitations of the[ir] past and pursue happiness (read “property”). In this vein, the history of Western civilization comes to be a story of human progress toward its culmination in United States democracy while the earmarks of liberal capitalism—industry,
acquisition, consumption, and political dominance—take on a moral force which, it is claimed, underwrites democracy.

Against this background, English and, ultimately, American literature come to be seen as a fitting means to teach the values embodied in this story. Based on a presupposition that the ideals of Greece and Rome were “inherently bound up with the grammar and etymology of the languages in which [Classical] works were written” (Graff 29), literature in the English vernacular likewise comes to be considered “essentially national” (29). Hence, “many members of the founding generation” of English Studies saw literacy education as a means to foster “between the social classes, the cultivation of ‘larger sympathies,’ the instillation of national pride and the transmission of ‘moral’ values” (12). Moreover, because it is embodied in a heritage which “threw off the shackles of tradition through revolution” (Readings 84), the American literary tradition makes the canon “appear to be the object of democratic choice rather than the sheer burden of heredity” (12).

In fact, although the American narrative has always been contested and although the view of literature as a moral instrument has not been universal within or without English Studies, both the belief in a national literature and the belief that English Studies were founded for this mission, have come to take on the proportions of myth. It is upon this myth that moral-traditionalists establish their arguments for preservation of the canon as well as their arguments against counter-traditionalist theory and practice. Likewise upon this myth, counter-traditionalists denounce the canon as an artificial and discriminatory emblem of national ethos, rejecting the claim of a unifying American vision and calling for a new canon inclusive of the viewpoints of minorities and women. In short, on both right and left, the myth that English Studies came into existence to impart a national ethos has become institutionalized. The former see themselves as guardians of this institution, while the latter hope to deconstruct, if not reconstruct, this institution. In either case, the discipline of literature has become analogous to a museum—“a linear map of a particular account of a history of art, offering a unified account of linear development and a generalized system of classification” (Readings 73). The contemporary conflict surrounding and within English Studies is often no more than an argument over which roads will be drawn on this map. Rarely is it considered that the American, much less the human, narrative resists linear mapping. Typically, it is thus the proportions and details of this myth that are contested rather than the myth itself.

The first consequence is that the practices embodied in the myth, rather than actual human practices in real contexts, become the focus of literacy education; practices become institutions. Texts and the qualities of texts, come to be studied as passive objects that embody static universal truths, rather than the creations and idiosyncrasies of living subjects in response to specific cultural circumstances. Under the traditionalist model, literary criticism takes on “the task of combining the Hebraic rigor of religious ‘light’ with the Hellenic grace of poetic sweetness, uniting knowledge and meaning in what Matthew Arnold calls a ‘national glow’” (Readings 78). Under the alternative or multicultural model, literary criticism often takes on the task of problematizing, deconstructing, or even rewriting the myth, often imparting a moral “glow” to alternative narratives and readings. In either case, criticism becomes “textual exegesis” of the “truths” embodied in the text rather than “ethical commentary” (Green 277) on the places and circumstances toward which the author addressed his work. In this way, a work of literature, what was mind—a human response to circumstances which can never be fully understood or explained—becomes body—a static and eternal institution, a canon or museum, which imparts so-called universal truth to those able to see.

Under the moral-traditionalist construct in particular, the canon, as material body, is thus accorded the unity and order of a singular entity with the result that difference and conflict within are elided. Aristotle tends to be taught as though his work simply progresses from, or builds upon, the work of Plato, as Thoreau progresses from Jefferson—when in fact these authors conflict and contradict in myriad ways. This assumption that the literary tradition is unified and cumulative, which is indeed traditional, accepted, and prevailing at least through secondary education, teaches that the
history of knowledge is paradoxically both progressive and static—that expression of unchanging truths is movement toward a telos beneficial to all humanity. Indeed, to attain the alleged “lost organic unity” (Readings 80) of the grand American narrative, an author’s resistance must be eclipsed by readings which more favorably align him with the desired grand narrative. As an example, the struggle of Walt Whitman as a gay man in a hostile culture is not only pushed aside as irrelevant to understanding his work, it is just the sort of thing moral-traditionalists condemn as serving a “political agenda.” Alternately, efforts to use his struggle and reflection to assist students in coming to grips with contemporary hostility towards gays and lesbians is condemned as “therapeutic” rather than “educational.”

At the same time, counter-traditionalists err when they reject the canon as just so much imperialist dogma. To do so is to forget that Shakespeare played to the people, that Homer traveled among the people, that great poets, thinkers, and leaders, indeed, some of them white, male, and privileged, have risen from the people. Such rejection is also paradoxical—for it can only be grounded in the moral-traditionalist assumption that the canon is unified. If anything, the Euro-western canon is certainly marked by controversy and debate, even hostility. Moreover, to attribute some sort of organic unity to the voices of the disenfranchised is simply to supplant one set of universal claims for another. Likewise, to attribute some form of guileless integrity to the disenfranchised is to negate the integrity of canonized authors just as it is to deny the guile of those on the margins.

Meanwhile, language practices are also regarded as progressive yet static. Each newly canonized author “develops” the form, creates new usages in both vocabulary and structure, yet somehow upholds the formal standards of what we call literature. And while Homer, Plato, and Aristotle did not write in English, they too are part of the American story and Classic examples of eternal beauty. Likewise, translations of these authors are thought to uphold standards of both content and form, although translators convey the meanings, vocabularies, and structures of each in radically different ways.

So materially objectified, literature becomes an object of consumption, rather than creation. Literacy education becomes the study of, rather than creation of texts; authors become “others” and the uses to which students envision putting their writing becomes merely instrumental. At best, this creates literary critics rather than authors; at worst, it creates non-writers, non-makers of meaning. Moreover, given that a traditional mission of literary study is cultivation of “taste”—somehow a moral, as well as aesthetic, quality, a distinction emerges between “high” and “low” language uses. Literary writing is “high,” an unattainable model of perfection available for students to consume for spiritual nourishment and set apart from utilitarian purposes. Meanwhile, despite obscure criteria for merit, not all fiction or poetry is “high.” Popular fiction is “low,” considered “trash” or “propaganda,” little more than an “exercise in consciousness-raising, trashy sentimentality and elevated sentiment” (A. Bloom 64).

Moreover, the kind of functional language students will employ in their future as workers is “low,” subject to instrumental standards determined by the task toward which it is put. The language students bring with them to the classroom is similarly “low.” In need of remediation, the language that colors their identities is thought to demonstrate, in the best light, intellectual and moral underdevelopment; in the worst light, intellectual and moral incapacity. Moreover, as the language spoken in the university best resembles the language of the property elite, children of affluence and privilege arrive on campus advantaged while the insights of less-privileged majority are silenced by disapproval of and/or embarrassment about their mode of self-expression.

The second consequence is that, when treated as material body, as non-living stuff, the canon becomes essentially dead, a corpus, a corpse. Attempts to write into the history of America previously overlooked perspectives of women, slaves, Native Americans, and other oppressed people are called “revisionist” and condemned. Literature which resists the accepted narrative and shatters formal standards is shunned by canon-preservers. Meanwhile, under the moral-traditionalist construct,
Composition Studies is reduced to attempts at emulation of “historic” and “standard” forms, content provided by canonized “experts” in their respective fields.

Following this line of thought, we do not invite students to use their language to question the terms of their occupation nor the measures of success and standards which define “educated,” that is, to independently determine whether the practices of their industry or the institutions in which these practices are housed, are truly excellent. In the realm of industry, they must emulate “high” writing to prove their worth, but use it for the “low” purposes to which their occupations constrain them; they must emulate excellence for pragmatic effectiveness—typically defined as “the bottom line.” Writing becomes limited to routine documentation and correspondence within administrative systems that render public writing private. That is, writing which may be publicly consequential, typically workplace or occupational writing, becomes a neutral techne, “a technique of information processing” (T. Miller 59), rather than a praxis, a “doing,” a social action upon something. Their public language becomes a mere instrument of their industry as they become instruments of the industry of others. Writing, and writers, become mere tools by which to exploit commercial opportunity.

At the same time, keeping alive the myth of opportunity for ourselves as well, we paradoxically teach them that writing is a means self-expression, equated with self-determination. We thus encourage students to see themselves as “choosers” (Bowles and Gintis 17)—rational agents who possess socially consequential power or at least empowerment—rather than “learners” (17). But given the purposes to which their writing generally is put, this self-image of “chooser” is likely little more than illusion. In the first place, by arguing that the messages delivered through our models of expressive writing are somehow universal, we imbue these authors with a “greatness of soul” that makes students’ insight and need for expression trivial and petty by contrast. Against such a background, students come to not expect their expressive writing to be public—at least until they “rise above themselves” to attain that elusive virtue of universality. Hence, the student often ceases to envision herself as someone who knows something worthy of public expression. Expressive writing is left to the private realm—personal correspondence or a private exercise of emotional purging. Hence, “real” praxis is confined to superior others—the intellectual elite. In short, when subjected to an education which makes such distinctions between high and low usages, students come to believe that writing may be literary and expressive and thus the public practice only of an elite, or it may be instrumental and routine, aimed only at institutional effectiveness; should the teacher propose to make writing social and political, she is stepping out of line.

In the second place, as self-expression is interpreted in terms of liberal values, students often fail to understand that “expression” means “expression to” someone—with paradoxical results. What the author feels becomes more important than what the audience needs for understanding and empathy. Misunderstanding becomes an audience deficiency and guidance from peers and/or teachers becomes impossible. Yet emphasis on authorial expression rather than relationship with audience may also reinforce the notion that personal readings of the canon which vary from prevailing scholarship reflect their deficiency. The self-expressing student is thus at once master of her own texts—which may be neither excellent nor effective—and mastered by the texts of self-expressing others—often presented as excellent in ways yet beyond her comprehension.

Unfortunately, by helping to transform our students into passively determinate selves who believe themselves self-determined due to narratives of opportunity and free expression, English Studies has come to serve the very commercial forces which threaten our alleged mission. Students have been reduced to consumers of the “American story,” a story they are, on the one hand, expected to place themselves within, but on the other hand, not expected to create. Merging the concepts of liberty and equality, this story tells us that not only are individuals equal, but that the playing field is equal as well. All things being equal, then, we are utterly self-determined; all things out of our control stem from our deficiencies. While clearly flawed, this principle of individual agency commands
loyalty for without it no individual could attain socially consequential power, or preferably, agency or empowerment.

In fact, both denial and acceptance of the equality assumption (with its attendant myths of opportunity and merit) lead to a narrowing of the public sphere—denial by claiming the public realm for those few whose truths allegedly allow them to rise above personal concerns; acceptance by perpetuating the notion that lack of personal agency stems from allowing private concerns to intrude on public judgment. In this scenario, equating power with economic gain, students often confuse “having” and “choosing.” Meanwhile, as moral-traditionalists and counter-traditionalists battle over the right to indoctrinate students, the university each desires is being dismantled from within by an increasingly corporate paradigm which feeds on public conflation of “having” and “choosing.” That is, bolstered by American narratives of opportunity and merit, corporate interests which threaten the intellectual independence of the university have taken advantage of internal disciplinary debates to discredit both traditional and critical views and locate their values in the rift we have created. In short, in the midst of disagreement, by establishing our grounds upon the same collective myth, we work together to construct passive and fragmented subjects ideally suited to the administrative hierarchies of the transnational corporations which increasingly exploit them.

The Fragmented Self

In literally abandoning the physical boundaries which comprise nations transnational corporations (which often hold great sway over governmental policy) have likewise abandoned the ethical boundaries marked out by these nations. No longer loyal to national interests, the transnational corporation requires a different subject, a subject with shallow, manipulable loyalty to the state and, if not loyal to the company, at least self-interested enough to maintain the bottom line. This self-construct forcefully draws on liberal and rational assumptions to produce a subject which is, at bottom, largely determinate in significant ways. This fragmented self is defined not as a participating citizen but, as compositionist Gwen Gorzelsky points out, as professional, client, and consumer (307 cf. Habermas).

As a professional, the fragmented self possesses a “disciplinarily grounded authority” (308) which proves Janus-faced. From one view, her profession provides both economic security and a sense of personal authority which facilitates her identification with the elite. From the other view, her “authority to make judgments is confined to a narrowly defined vocational sphere” (308) which limits her ability to question the determinations of others. Rather than possessing full authority for, as well as full knowledge of, the outcomes of her industry, she provides, and is aware of, but a fragment of the whole, discernment of which is limited to the few who possess ultimate power for judgment and decision-making. So mistaking economic security and disciplinarily grounded authority for socially consequential power, the fragmented self is doubly pacified (even passivized) as she congratulates herself for being both economically and authoritatively higher in the pecking order than her less-educated subordinates. Yet confined to her narrow realm, she is nonetheless determined by the demands of her occupation and industry—demands which she is under-equipped to examine and which often result in fundamentally undemocratic consequences both within the workplace and within the greater society. In short, her self-image as a member of the professional elite serves not only to undermine her admission to the power elite, but also to reinforce her perception that elite power is justified.

Meanwhile, as a client of other professionals, the fragmented self is “subject to their direction” (Gorzelsky 308) due to the perceived limitations of her expertise. For example, Gorzelsky cites the top-down authority of a managed-care plan to deny recommended cancer treatment in the effort to save money (313 cf. Kolker). In both contrast and correspondence, she further cites the use of controversial, “expensive, toxic procedures” for cancer treatment by which “for-profit health care exploits a desperate patient market” (313 cf. Linden). While the latter example may at first blush seem to justify the authority of the former, both instances illustrate the ways in which “authority as a top-down
channel . . . not only offends clients’ dignity but also infringes on their rights to participate in decisions that affect their lives” (308). Likewise, top-down authority may prevent co-workers in disparate disciplines from participating in decisions which may affect not only their lives but the public good. In the meantime, the fragmented self is subject to the top-down authority of government agencies little accountable to the demos. As her interest in government is predominantly limited to personal benefits and advantages, the fragmented self can here be said to be a client, rather than citizen, of government.

Finally, the fragmented self as consumer is pacified by material comfort through its erroneous identification with social agency. Moreover, in the United States, this fragmented individual is a proud consumer of the very myths which associate liberalism, capitalism, and calculative rationalism with “American” moral pride. Associating U.S. material dominance—from which she benefits and with which she complies—with the values of democracy and equality, the fragmented American feverishly defends the former as the latter.

Thus, the fragmented self is economically liberal. She believes that a minimally regulated market produces global material benefits, that competition culminates in human progress. She equates material comfort with social agency, even consequential power, and she perceives global economic dominance as moral dominance. Possessing rational agency only in limited spheres, she believes in opportunity and merit, equates her professionalism with (at least potential) membership in a rational power elite, and perceives her authority over subordinates, i.e. workplace inequality, as well as material and social inequality, justified in light of her rational self-determination. Thus by a cultural paradigm she herself accepts, the fragmented self is unwittingly transmogrified into a creature determined by the demands of the market.

Hers is a circular reasoning culminating in a self-enclosed system of ethics in which ethics is reduced to balancing what she thinks is good for her against what you think is good for you. Her dominance over you is merely evidence of the rightness of her dominance. Even when motivated by seemingly non-individualistic ethics, this individual engages in a cost-benefit analysis in which the expense of her altruism is measured, not against the benefits conferred upon others but toward the goodwill or spiritual reward reflected back upon the giver. Even notions of a greater morality come to be reduced to a profession of faith guaranteeing a place in the afterlife. Taken to its extreme, so long as these individualistic circles of ethical reasoning (which begin and end at oneself) do not intersect, ethics are indeed irrelevant. The fragmented self thus harbors no concept of ethical responsibility to the non-human living world which sustains her. And, in fact, this non-ethical is often taken to just such an extreme—as our water, air, even our stratosphere, are perpetually poisoned to meet the needs of the individual or collective “me.” Meanwhile, the individual’s sense of duty is satisfied so long as she behaves as expected, so long as she believes herself to possess the virtues which manage the human foundation which supports this status quo.

Liberal education, therefore, must confront the contradictions of the fragmented self. And we cannot do so without understanding the source from which it stems. Moreover, we must make effort toward restoring the agency of citizens by engaging them with the public sphere. In English Studies and throughout the humanities this means examining the social and ethical consequences of texts, in both historic and contemporary contexts. We must also drive home the understanding that the purposes of writing are public and as such the documents each of us create have public consequences. Of course this means engaging our scholarship and teaching with the world outside the ivory tower, for only thoughtful discourse offers an alternative to weapons of war. Democracy, after all, is an agreement to talk.

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Embracing Diversity: Teaching and Modeling Appreciation for other Cultures

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Abstract

One type of social and emotional intelligence is the ability to show empathy, understanding and compassion for others. With increased globalization and diversity of populations, learning to respect and embrace differences as well as commonalities has become an essential nuance of effective functioning in society. This paper will describe a four session classroom guidance unit that was developed by school counseling graduate students and their professor in a school/university partnership program. The sessions aim to help elementary students value their classmates, respect and embrace differences in backgrounds, to learn more about one another and to show caring and respect for all.

Embracing Diversity: Teaching and Modeling Appreciation for other Cultures

Many countries throughout the world are becoming increasingly multicultural populations with people from a variety of countries, cultures, and ethnicities. In the United States, there are a few states with populations which used to be considered “minority” that are now the majority and that trend is
expected to continue. The increase in mobility, immigration, and a more global economy, has contributed to such diversity. Additionally, there are an increasing number of children who are born into families with mixed heritages with regard to race, religion, culture, or ethnicity. This increase in diversity affects many aspects of life, including family relationships, personal identification, and participants in the workforce, to name just a few.

With major worldwide changes regarding work, gender roles, family structure, and cultural diversity, many traditional functions in the upbringing of children have been increasingly transferred to schools, transforming the role of educators. Furthermore, the growth of the media, marketing, and the internet have expanded the worldwide exposure of children to outside influences resulting in parents sharing their role in the character formation of their children with factors which give them less control (Elkind, 2001). Research and common sense tell us that the influence of caring adults who are positive role models is a major factor in children’s healthy development and academic success. Although this paper is primarily about the stark changes that have been taking place in the United States, many of these principles apply to numerous other countries as well. It is clear that sweeping changes have taken place in Asia, for example, that appear to shift the focus of the traditional extended family with a more westernized “individual” focus. These changes are not necessarily all positive, and can certainly be disruptive to the traditional societal structure.

Experts agree that establishing meaningful connections between teachers and the students in their classrooms as well as among the students themselves are essential for the mission of education to be successful (Dodd, 2000; Mulgan, 1996). Many educators assert that too much instructional time is taken up with classroom management issues including the lack of positive communication between teacher and student(s) (Dodd, 2000). They are recognizing that when schools attend to students’ social and emotional skills, the academic achievement of children increases, the incidence of problem behaviors decreases, and the quality of the relationships surrounding each child improves (Cummings & Haggerty, 1997; Elias, Zins, Weissberg, Frey, Greenberg, Haynes, Kessler, Schwab-Stone, & Shriver, 1997). An increasing research base suggests that teachers’ relationships with students contribute to their social and cognitive development through instilling motivation to learn, addressing their need to belong, and by serving a regulatory function for the development of emotional, behavioral, and academic skills (Davis, Davis & Smith, 2003).

A cooperative school environment can have substantial effects on the behavior of the students, increasing feelings of empathy for others, reducing inter-group tensions and antisocial behavior, improving moral judgment, and building positive feelings toward others including those of other ethnic groups (Joyce, Showers & Rolheiser-Bennett, 1987). A positive climate affects student achievement and fosters problem-solving skills (Cohen, 1999; Pasi, 2001). By creating nurturing environments, teachers encourage children to want to come to school, thus improving attendance and motivation to learn (Glasser, 1997; Kohn, 1996). Research findings have indicated that the affective climate of the classroom can predict social as well as academic outcomes including empathy (Battistich, Solomon, Watson, & Schaps, 1997), help-seeking, (Ryan & Pintrich, 2001) and intrinsic motivation for school and reading comprehension (Battistich et al., 1997).

The school counselor, serving as a consultant and collaborator with teachers, can be in a pivotal position to teach and model communication skills to both teachers and their students (Lee, 1995; Ponterotto and Pedersen, 1993). Both counselors and teachers can teach and model for children how to convey caring and respect for one another in the classroom. Going a step further, counselors and counselor educators can conduct training in these skills for classroom teachers so that communication skills will become a natural part of the teaching repertoire. Such skills taught in a proactive, organized program that is part of the daily curriculum can generalize to students’ everyday lives resulting in more positive interactions with others (Wittmer & Clark, 2002a,b).

C.A.R.E. (Communication, Attitude, Respect and Encouragement): The Lessons
As a “Professor in Residence” at a high poverty elementary school in a university community in Florida, I worked with my graduate students in school counseling to help facilitate a positive classroom and school climate where students would be encouraged to value each other and their similarities as well as differences. A number of teachers at our elementary school named “accepting differences and embracing diversity” as an area where they needed help in working with their students. My four graduate students themselves were a diverse group with regard to background and life experiences. Two of them were Haitian Americans and had come from low SES families. Another was a Fulbright scholar from Namibia, Africa, and a first generation university student, who had come to our university to earn a Ph.D. He spoke 9 languages! And the fourth student had lived in Norway and Spain as a young adult. They were excellent role models for the population of students with whom we were working, the majority of which were eligible for free meals at the school. Most were African-American and Latino children, and there were a few whose parents were international students at the University of Florida.

Together, we created a four session unit for fourth graders on Embracing Differences through Caring and Respect, entitled C.A.R.E. (Communication, Attitude, Respect and Encouragement). The graduate students presented each lesson in pairs. Thus they were able to plan the lessons cooperatively, could present and demonstrate the activities and could offer each other feedback on the lessons. We met as a group of five to process each lesson. The final lesson was presented to two fourth grade classes as a larger group. These lessons could be used by teachers, counselors, interns or a combination of these roles.

The C.A.R.E. unit is a set of activities designed to build a sense of community in the classroom. The overall goal of the activities is to help a classroom of students to perceive themselves as a “family” working together toward some common goals. To achieve this larger goal, the unit is designed to help students learn the skills of effective communication, the impact that their attitudes have on each other, how to show respect, and the importance of encouraging one another. Prior to each session, the teacher/counselor should decorate the letter for that day and display it in the classroom during and after the lesson. At the end of the unit, the students will see the word CARE written across the wall of the classroom. The lessons learned are to be used and reinforced in daily interactions after they are presented; they are skills that can be continually taught, practiced and modeled.

Lesson One: Communication (C)

Communication is a very important aspect of classroom management and can help in developing harmony and a positive school climate. It is essential to all classroom interactions; those between teacher and students and among the students themselves. This lesson teaches and models ways to effectively communicate with others.

The counselor/teacher should begin the session with the definition of communication. Emphasize to the students how we are always communicating by sending and receiving messages, both verbal and nonverbal. Exaggerating facial expressions and postures and having the students guess what message is being conveyed can be helpful. Then, ask them if the message demonstrated was clear or unclear. It can also be pointed out that people may sometimes have a facial or body expression that does not match their words.

Listening skills are taught in this lesson. The acronym “S.O.L.E.R.” is used as follows:

- **S**quare up your shoulders and face the person you are talking to
- **O**pen body posture and an open mind
- **L**ean toward the talker as appropriate
- **E**ye contact
- **R**elax
Students are also taught a feeling word vocabulary so they can state how someone who is talking to them is feeling. Making a statement to show you are listening for the feelings of the other person is emphasized in this lesson.

Lesson Two: Attitude

Prior to this lesson, the counselor/teacher develops a set of index cards with behaviors that could be judged as “helpful” or “not helpful” and has several short stories or poems for a student to read. These can be choosen to personalize situations that may need to be dealt with in a classroom. For example, if name calling is taking place in the classroom, one of the stories may be about a child who is being picked on. If students from other cultures are feeling left out, that could be another scenario. Then a short discussion on “attitude” follows, distinguishing between positive and negative attitudes, Students are told they will be practicing some ways to demonstrate such attitudes, particularly toward other people.

The classroom is then divided into three small groups, each of which has a student reader, and an adult facilitator. The facilitator could be a teacher, counselor, an intern, or a parent volunteer. The designated student passes out the set of cards to the other group members and then reads one of the four stories or poems to the group. The students are to act out what is on the card. The group facilitator will lead a discussion on how the student in the story might feel (hurt, angry, sad, disappointed), and what students in the group could do to help that student. If the story is a positive, helpful scenario, students can point out what is good or right about the situation, and name the possible feelings of the main character. Four rounds of this activity take place. To close, have students, as a class, discuss ways in which they can show positive attitudes and practice good listening skills for the next week. Write these ideas on a poster board and display on the wall. Tell the students when they have practiced one of these ideas they can sign the poster board. The letter “A” is put on the wall next to the “C”.

Lesson Three: Respect

This lesson teaches students appropriate ways to show respect to other students and adults. They will learn how to appreciate individual and group differences in people. The intent of the lesson is for students to learn: 1) the elements of respect and why respect is important, 2) what can happen when people behave disrespectfully to each other, and 3) why respect in necessary in the classroom. A reference for this lesson is the book and song “Don’t Laugh at Me” (Seskin & Shamblin).

The teacher/counselor begins by reviewing the previous two lessons and referring to the poster which students will have signed during the week, reinforcing the positive behaviors that have taken place. A brief discussion of the meanings of “respect” and disrespect” is introduced with student’s examples (no names to be used).

Following the discussion, the teacher/counselor reads the book, “Don’t Laugh At Me” and asks these questions:

- What are some simple ways to show people we care about them?
- How does it feel when someone laughs at you, leaves you out of an activity, or treats you as if you are beneath them?
- Although the children in the story are all different, one from another, what are the things they have in common? (they all have feelings, they all would like to have friends, they all want to be respected, etc.)
- How are we as classmates all alike? How are we different from one another? What can we learn from each other?

The lesson ends with the letter “R” being posted and with students being paired up to learn more about one another and show respect for each other.
Lesson Four: Encouragement and Empathy

This lesson is a celebration of having completed the CARE unit. In this lesson, students learn the importance of understanding and encouraging one another. The lesson begins with a brief discussion on what it felt like to have a partner for the week, to learn more about the other person and to share respect for the other. The teacher/counselor discusses the word “empathy;” trying to understand another’s point of view and life experiences.

Students are complimented on having completed the previous sessions. A discussion is held emphasizing how a classroom is like a family, and these lessons have helped the members become closer by learning more about each other and feeling connections with each other. The word encouragement is introduced and students are asked to contribute examples of how they can be encouraging to one another.

The teacher/counselor passes out paper gingerbread men and instructs the students to decorate them. They are then to write two things on the back that they can do to encourage one another in the classroom. The letter “E” is then put on the wall to spell the word CARE. After they finish this activity, the students tape the gingerbread men around the word CARE to represent the classroom family. The counselor/teacher asks the students what they notice about the ring of the gingerbread men. (i.e. they are all different colors, they are decorated differently, they may be different sizes, etc.)

The final activity is to teach the song, “Don’t Laugh at Me” and have the students sing that together as a class. Singing this together is a bonding experience. After the song, the counselor/teacher may want to provide some fun type of reinforcement such as stickers that the students can have to remind them of the lessons they have learned.

In addition to the unit described above, the school counseling graduate students shared some of their own life experiences in classrooms and in small group sessions. In so doing, they were role models for the children, and they created interest in other cultures. They shared flags that represented their countries, talked about customs, foods, and the languages that they spoke. Our student from Namibia used phrases in several of the languages in which he is fluent, inciting great interest among the elementary students. Several of the fourth graders who had come from other cultures and countries were encouraged to share their traditions as well, and were given positive feedback about doing so. These sharing sessions demonstrated that differences are to be valued, everyone has their own “story” and background, and each person is unique. We started an “Act of Kindness” program in the classrooms where students would practice and notice acts of kindness, creating posters that recorded these. An attitude of interest and respect began to develop in classrooms and feedback from the classroom teachers was very positive about these experiences. They felt that the lessons indeed did facilitate the feeling of the classroom as a family.

Conclusion

Social skills, including empathy, respect, showing kindness, and encouragement are becoming increasingly recognized as essential competencies in today’s complex world. Establishing bonds and connections among teachers and their students in the classroom is an important step to helping students develop the repertoire of skills they need to be successful in their academic lives as well as to develop into good citizens who care about others and the world outside their individual domains. Understanding and respecting oneself and others is the key to embracing diversity and differences and ultimately to a more satisfying and productive life, individually and collectively. These attributes enhance the quality of life for individuals as well as for families, communities, and institutions. Teaching these social skills to young students and modeling them in the classroom can build important human connections and provide life long skills that will create more interpersonal and external harmony in the world.
References


How to Communicate and Connect with Immigrant Parents to Partner in Education

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Rationale: It is important for faculty in K-12 schools serving immigrant populations to be able to communicate and connect with parents at a level that can facilitate successful academic outcomes for their children. However, communicating and connecting with immigrant parents to partner in education may be difficult due to trust, communication, and cultural issues that exist for parents and students as well as faculty.

Methods: Community-based Partnership Methods in Education (CPME) was used to access Hispanic immigrant parents and community members living in Northwest Arkansas, U.S.A.

Results: Schools successfully communicated and connected with parents to form partnerships and overcome the trust, communication and cultural differences.

Conclusion: The benefits of using CPME joins partners with diverse skills, knowledge, and expertise, gives a voice to people otherwise “unseen,” and provides a method for faculty to access immigrant populations.

Introduction

One in every five children in America has an immigrant parent and many of these parents do not speak English at home. As a result, their children must learn to navigate the complex educational systems on their own, even at a young age. Although the problems facing immigrant groups are diverse, one of the most serious problems is when immigrant parents with limited English skills cannot efficiently assist their children in pursuing their academic goals. It is well documented that students with parents who partner in their education are more likely to earn higher grades, graduate, and attend college.¹²

Yet, schools serving immigrant populations have parents that do not partner with their child or school at a level that can facilitate successful academic outcomes for their children. Communicating and connecting with immigrant parents to partner may be difficult due to trust, communication, and cultural issues that exist for both parents and teachers. To be able to communicate with immigrant parents, schools need to be cognizant of the cultural, linguistic, social, and economic differences that can inhibit parental and family involvement. These differences between the immigrant families and school may result in a misinterpretation of a child’s academic potential or progress.³

Community-based participatory research is a methodology used in public health to overcome access barriers in hard-to-reach populations in order to ameliorate health issues. “Participatory research is defined as systematic inquiry, with the collaboration of those affected by the issue being studied, for purposes of education and taking action or effecting change.”⁴⁻⁵ Some of these principles were borrowed on to formulate a methodology, Community-based Partnership Methods in Education (CPME) for use in education. CPME is defined as a collaborative, partnership approach to accessing and communicating with hard-to-reach population that equitably involves parents, faculty staff and other community members to ultimately enhance academic achievement.

CPME was used to overcome the trust, communication, and cultural issues as a means to access and communicate with Hispanic immigrant parents and community members in Northwest
Arkansas. Specifically, this paper describes how CPME was used by school and university faculty and staff to connect and communicate with immigrant Hispanic parents. The unique challenges of partnering with an immigrant community are illustrated as a guide for other faculty in schools with similar issues.

**Methods**

**Community-based Partnership Methods in Education (CPME)** was employed to access the immigrant Hispanic population in Northwest Arkansas. There are a number of challenges that must be overcome to develop a partnership between parents and other members of the immigrant community and school faculty. Some of these challenges are overcoming the trust, communication, and cultural issues. By becoming knowledgeable about the community, establishing trust and engaging and partnering with the community, parents and students as well as faculty were able to overcome the trust, communication, and cultural issues.

**Becoming knowledgeable about the community**

Identifying and recognizing the existing resources and strengths of the community can not only expedite the communication process but demonstrate sincerity in learning about the issues that affect the academic success of their children. Understanding there is also an intercultural diversity within the population can avoid misunderstandings when trying to establish goals. For example, the population in Northwest Arkansas consists of parents representing various nations, such as Mexico, Columbia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Puerto Rico and other Latin American countries. It is important to become familiar with the demographics as well as other issues of concern within the community such as health, social, employment, immigration and housing issues. It cannot be overemphasized that the more knowledgeable one becomes about the community and their issues, the easier it is to instill confidence and establish rapport.

**Establishing trust**

Trust is essential for establishing successful partnerships. Trust can be established by taking an active role in the community. This is a continuous effort that may be an ongoing endeavor. Taking an unsolicited role in the community at large can foster trust and can also be interpreted as having a sincere interest in improving and promoting the issues of concern to the community members. Attending social events, participating in community events, and volunteering are not only obligatory but also contributes to establishing trust as well. Being a member of the community may be advantageous, but not necessary to gaining acceptance and fostering trust. Fluency in the language spoken in the community is beneficial and ideal because it contributes to a sense of familiarity and comfort and facilitates communication, especially among the more recent immigrants. It is important to be cognizant of the heterogeneity within any population especially when there are many national and socio-economic groups represented.

More propitious for establishing trust in the community is the ability to convey a sense of empathy for their concerns by listening with respect and acknowledging their issues. Attention to sensitive issues, such as the legal status of many community members, necessitates an added emphasis on confidentiality. It is also essential to convey the importance of their active participation toward improving the academic outcomes for their children.

**Engaging and partnering with the community**

Creating a comfortable environment should first be established for ideal communication processes. This includes convening in a location in the community that is central and already familiar...
to the parents and other community participants. An interpreter should be available or family members
who want to assist the parents should be made to feel welcome. Child care may be an issue for
attendance and provisions should be made for those with children. Ideally, the time frame for meetings
with parents should also accommodate work schedules. Participation is enhanced when the meeting
allows for the sharing of food and socializing.

Allow community members to voice concerns in their own terms. An important tenet is to
listen and to allow parents to express their concerns and experiences. It is important when trying to
establish rapport to build on the existing knowledge and skills of the community members. It is a
misconception that all of the parents are not sophisticated in their ability to articulate their concerns.
Many have had previous experiences in community matters in their home and many may be
professionals with different skills.

An important step in CBPE is creating an advisory group or accessing an established advisory
group. Establishing an English as a Second Language (ESL) advisory group consisting of ESL parents and faculty, provided another channel of
communication. This advisory committee allowed parents who would not otherwise have an
opportunity to express their views and opinions on ways for the faculty and schools to assist their
child.

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sensitive issues, such as the legal status of many community members, necessitates an added emphasis
on confidentiality. It is also essential to convey the importance of their active participation toward
improving the academic outcomes for their children.

Results

Partnerships between the Hispanic community and academic community were established
employing some of the strategies of CPME. Trust was gained by members of the faculty and staff
through a gradual and continual involvement with the community. The success of this partnering
process is in part based on the ability to access and harness the strengths of the community. These
strengths included community members who are professional, knowledgeable, and committed to
resolving the communication processes to become empowered to assist in the academic achievements
of their children. Additionally, the best mediums for conveying information were identified: a local
Spanish language radio station, including a popular Spanish-speaking radio station personality, the
weekly Spanish language newspaper, a church located in the community, and posters or flyers that
could be distributed among the frequented Hispanic markets. Partnering with community members provided a means to promote Hispanic community members who had different skills, such as providing translation services, legal services, entertainment, art, and culinary skills. This process also provided an opportunity for community members to increase their skills in articulating their community’s needs and resources as well as defining their partnership roles.

Moreover, this was a co-learning process. Members of the academic community understood more fully the issues and concerns of the community and their need to be more culturally sensitive and competent not only in communication but in the delivery of services. Importantly, they increased their interaction and the visibility of the Hispanic population with the rest of the school staff and community at large. Perhaps one of the most provocative outcomes of this project is that an organization was formed, the Hispanic Service Provider’s Network of Arkansas. The purpose of this organization is to coordinate the diverse network of social service providers of Arkansas in the areas of education, health, housing, employment, and immigration with a mission to promote a dialogue and exchange of information between the Hispanic community and the community at large. It is also a forum to give a voice to people otherwise not adequately represented.

Conclusion

Using Community-based Partnership Methods in Education requires a long-term commitment, but it has multiple benefits and rewards. It joins partners together with diverse skills, knowledge, and expertise. It empowers the community members to have a voice and assist in decisions that affect all those involved. It provides a process for faculty to connect with people and communities, give a voice to people otherwise “unseen”, and learn from others outside the university academic ivory tower. Most importantly, CPME is a process that can assist parents, students, and faculty to enhance the communication process with the purpose of ultimately improving academic outcomes.

The ability to establish partnerships in the community is also an art that requires the use of interpersonal skills such as listening, flexibility, persistence, patience, organization, and an ability to work with all socio-economic levels, while remaining tactful and diplomatic. To improve the educational outcomes for immigrant students, there must be a culturally sensitive and culturally competent approach to the communication process with the students and parents.

References


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Bridging the Digital Divide: A case study of the Des Moines, Iowa Enterprise Community Initiative

Adriana Gonzales

Introduction

Since the 18th century many policy makers have been debating the matters of land use and housing issues. One of the earliest documents, addressing these issues is the United States Constitution. Other examples of policies relating to and regulating land use, housing and neighborhood issues are the Homestead Act, the City Beautiful Movement, the Housing Reform Act, the Housing Act of 1949, Model City, and the War on Drugs. Often, these policies and their designers were at odds with the rights of the individual (self interest) and the “good” of the greater population, the masses. Nevertheless, along this continuum of change, and development policy makers and planners have tried to learn from past examples to help create policies that stand as a guide rather than a top down recipe for what communities need to do to become sustainable, livable, and viable communities. One example of this type of policy is the Enterprise Zones / Enterprise Communities Initiative put forth by the United States Federal Government in 1994.
Former President Clinton proposed the Economic Empowerment Act of 1992 on May 4th. His Enterprise Zone plan targeted poor neighborhoods with tax breaks and increased spending on social programs. Clinton recommended a competitive selection process for 110 zones, in which interested communities could try to win and qualify for specific business tax incentives and federal dollars. Clinton’s plan included $4.1 billion in new tax breaks over five years. Approximately $3 billion in tax breaks would be allocated for training and employment wage credits. An additional $1 billion were to be allocated to other tax incentives. Another $1 billion would be available for block grants and a community-policing program. The largest tax disbursement was for the wage credits that businesses could receive for hiring people who live in the enterprise zones. In addition, the targeted jobs credit would be expanded to businesses outside the zone that hire zone residents. Duplicating and improving state efforts, Former President Clinton emphasized the organization of government resources to distressed areas, instead of tax breaks for businesses that were located or relocated in these areas. Previous Republican zone proposals concentrated on helping zone businesses raise capital, Clinton advised that any tax incentives be reserved for education and training tax credits. At the heart of this initiative was a holistic approach that viewed the community as a whole process involving different collaborations and undertakings; a request for proposals selection process.

The Empowerment Zone was designed to help historically distressed communities revitalize by using tax incentives to lure firms. The desired outcome was new business activity that created jobs for zone residents and activate economic well being. The primary goal of the Empowerment Zone were to stimulate private investment and job creation for the purpose of curbing unemployment in Empowerment Zone communities through the coordinate efforts of zone businesses. (www.ez/ec.com) The Enterprise Communities are small sections of larger areas selected as project recipients with high poverty rates, where funds could be used for economic development, community development, and human resource development. This includes employment in high tech and computer fields that require specific skills and training. Therefore, building community capacity strengthens the resident’s ability to participate or even compete in the labor market as new jobs come into the area.

Despite debates and preparation for the 21st Century, disparity of access to technology looms large in many communities. There is a positive correlation between access, education and income. Bridging the “Digital Divide”, creating by equal access and “democratic communication” is what will keep U.S. companies and businesses competitive and viable. The shared knowledge among more of the population creates a larger pool of skilled practitioners available to be employed by businesses. For communities this raises the bar for residents to strive for access and fill jobs locally. In later years Former President Clinton expressed a great deal of enthusiasm for a societal transformation that would see every classroom, library, and home wired so that children all across America could have access to a computer and log onto the internet. The EZ/EC is clearly a vehicle to help achieve this objective. However, thoughtful and careful strategic planning is necessary.

The goal of this paper is to illustrate the effects of a planning process, in Des Moines, Iowa, which developed a collaborative community effort that was empowering for the community. The case study focuses on the implementation and development of the Enterprise Community Initiative in and the effort to bridge the “Digital Divide”. While, quantitative outcomes are typically used to show success, the case presented here illustrated how development of vital community networks served as a strengthening tool for the community.
The paper first presents an overview of the Federal Enterprise Community Initiative. Following then is an analysis of the Enterprise Community Initiative in Des Moines, Iowa. This analysis is based on interviews with learning facilitators from each learning sites, six in total, and with the Coordinator of Support Services for the Enterprise Community School to work program. Additional information was obtained through a literary and Internet search.

**Overview of the Enterprise Community Initiative**

In 1994, former President Clinton and Vice President Gore introduced a policy that administration hoped would encourage rural and urban communities which fell behind during rapid technological advancement. The general vision for change included the formation of partnerships/collectives involving both private and public interest that would address local community issues. It would be through these collective bodies and with the support of Federal Government tax incentives, federal technical assistance, and grants, that communities would be revitalized and the quality of life would be improved for the whole community. Areas of improvement to be addressed included; job creation, business assistance to struggling existing businesses, training and education, healthcare, residents’ safety, and housing. Collectives addressing such issues would become viable, sustainable, and livable. The EZ/EC Initiative provided guidelines for communities to put together in order to participate in the selection process.

**Key Principles**

The principles put forth by the initiative to afford true opportunities for growth were:

1. Strategic vision for change
2. Community-based partnerships
3. Economic Opportunity
4. Sustainable community development

Communities were to identify what they saw as their future. Participants in the planning process were to create realistic goals and strategies to achieve them including how they defined performance and how performance was to be measured. Essentially, communities were being asked to describe what they wanted to become. Also, at the center of the EZ/EC initiative was the belief that a community knows best how to address and solve it’s problems. With this concept in mind, community-based partnerships become an integral part of the process.

These broad based community partnerships served as an assessment of resources within the community. It allowed the community to gather and see, what strengths and weaknesses were present and what they had to work with and leverage against both. “The rationale for encouraging the local EZ/EC sites to pursue collaborative approaches was the need to mobilize across sectors and populations to accomplish the desired changes. Collective engagement was seen by the Federal EZ/EC program designers as creating a process that would allow the knowledge and skills of each group of local stakeholders to be utilized and the needs and concerns of all parties to be addressed.” ([www.hud.gov](http://www.hud.gov), p. 5) Involvement in the multi-layered process created a personal responsibility and tie to see the success of the designs.
These partnerships are the foundation for disadvantaged communities to build self-sufficient and sustainable communities.

Sustainable communities build capacity and assets so economic development can be cultivate. As part of the comprehensive community development approach, this aspect is based on an understanding of the system as heterogeneous and complex, replete with competing capitalist structures, conflicting political considerations, and other elements such as labor, consumerism, neighborhoods, and voters, it constitutes a many-layered method of addressing the local situation. The rapid influx of jobs is not the cure all solution to poor communities. Strengthening potential through technical assistance and training creates the climate to support new or improved economic opportunities.

Broad Community Partnership

Community based partnerships encourage all stakeholders to participate in the process of community revitalization. Partnerships consist of but are not limited to residents, political leaders, businesses, social service agencies, faith-based organization, and schools. The convening of diverse members of the community requires, all to take active role in the process. This allows the potential to have the usually polarized zones of, the rights of individuals (free enterprise) and the greater common “good” (the masses) to come together at the planning and decision making table to solve problems and spur economic opportunities and community development. While in general, it goes without saying that, if a person pursues individual freedoms that they in fact are not disturbing the universal good from which the later originate. This is not completely true because the pursuance of individual good does not replenish the larger stock and in effect breaks down the collective competence. As practitioners of capitalism, those who have the means to move on do, and leave behind those not as fortunate to the remains of the community. Therefore, the creation of broad based partnerships provides a forum for both contending sides to develop economic opportunities that reflect each respectively.

These partnerships are seen as the core mechanism for providing economic opportunity to the community. The collective body is expected to create the possibility for community members to be linked to training and educational programs that helped prepare them for “real” job placement. Technical and financial support for existing businesses helps to sustain and encourage businesses to develop, grow and create job opportunities. Educational institutions are also expected to gain an understanding of the needs of industry and business, to create training and education programs for a ready workforce. All of these elements are considered to be fundamental to creating sound and sustainable communities and community economic development.

Sustainable Community Development

The City of Des Moines has long had a commitment to its citizens. In 1960 Des Moines was considered to be a leader in the Model City initiative. In an effort to meet the continuing and changing needs of the residents, along with forming an inclusive relationship with the federal government, local government, and community participation, the City of Des Moines began a process to address crucial issues; this includes the Enterprise Community Initiative.
According to the Enterprise Community Initiative, sustainable Community Development requires the promotion of the revitalization, creation of self sufficient and livable communities. Through an all encompassing approach which addresses the issues and needs of communities, as well as promote the ability to advance the momentum of a coordinated effort, the quality of life for community members and the fulfillment of all stakeholders, those involved in each level of the planning process, should have a hand in the increased gains, access to technology, skill development programs and awareness. While all the components of the Enterprise Community Initiative are crucial to the success of an Enterprise Community Initiative underway in a given community and, long-term sustainability is the heart and true test of whether the actions taken were the right combination

**Overview of the Enterprise Community Enterprise Initiative in Des Moines-IA**

In December of 1994, the City of Des Moines, Iowa Department of Community Development applied to the United States Department of Housing and Development (HUD) to have a portion of the city accepted as an Enterprise Community. Martin Luther King Jr. Parkway binds this community area on the North, by Hickman; to the South, by I-235; to the West and by the Des Moines River on the East, which is an area of 2.1 square miles (see map below)
The characteristics which lead to the selection of this community were 1) the low-income rate and high poverty level and 2) pre-existing industrial initiatives, commercial revitalization plans, and plans for developing the parks. The city council of Des Moines appointed a steering committee, which was responsible for carrying out the principles of the Enterprise Community program.

The Enterprise Community Steering Committee (ECSC) was responsible for designing the Des Moines City Enterprise Community strategic plan and making sure that it incorporated all the relevant programs and recommends the plan to the City Council for approval. The Des Moines Enterprise Community Steering Committee contained 15 members, including, member from neighborhood association and non-profit business. The Des Moines City Council approved the resolution for submission of intent to participate in the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development Enterprise Community Initiative program. In its approval, HUD noted that:

“The Enterprise Community designation would build on a long tradition of citizen participation and local partnership with federal initiatives in this area. Since Des Moines entered the Model City program in the late 1960’s. It has received three All American City Awards from the National League of Cities for its citizen participation structure, its innovative neighborhood revitalization programs and its success in bringing many resources to bear on the needs of the target area neighborhoods.” (www.hud.gov p. 2)

Goals and Strategic Objectives

The following are policy action subject matters, as well as, the framework for developing the area, addressed by the Enterprise Community Steering Committee. The committee included community members and individuals from organizations within the strategic plan design area.

- Economic Opportunity / Economic Development
- Affordable Housing
- Human and Organizational Development
- Health and Human Services

In recent years, the residents in the 2.1 square mile area of the Des Moines City have experienced a reduction of jobs. One factor in rising unemployment was a decrease in public transportation. Additionally, many of the residents felt unmotivated and had a poor outlook about everyday survival. In order to address the issues faced by this community a strategic plan was developed:

(www.hud.gov p. 3-4)
• Enhance the long-term success of existing businesses and promote the development and access of viable employment opportunities for residents of the enterprise community.
• Enhance the long-term likelihood of economic self-sufficiency for underemployed and unemployed persons by providing comprehensive job training with the necessary support services to aid trainees in overcoming family and personal barriers.
• Provide employment opportunities that pay a “living wage” to allow area residents to reduce or end their needs for government assistance and become viable, sustaining community members.
• Improve the accessibility of the city’s bus service in order to improve resident’s opportunities for employment.
• Partnerships to enhance the involvement of state and local agencies the Des Moines Office of Economic Development, business organizations, banking institutions, community organizations. Representatives from these organizations worked together on redevelopment projects such as Central Place Industrial Park, expansion of the Mid-City Business Center, and the development of a business incubator.
• Area educational institutions and nonprofit organizations will provide job training programs in order to reflect the needs and demands of area business and industry.
• Provide diverse and affordable housing opportunities to community residents through the rehabilitation of existing units and the construction of new homes.
• Educational institutions within the Enterprise Community will work closely with the residents to address educational needs consistent with responding to the demands of business and industry.
• To stimulate employment and economic development through enhancement of childcare providers, the plan suggests, accessible and affordable quality childcare is an essential component of economic development, which allows families to move through training and employment to their goal of self-sufficiency. (www.hud.gov p. 3-4)

The overall expectation was to build on the historical achievement of Des Moines, Iowa to develop and strengthen community initiatives. The following section will focus on a collaboration of community agencies within the Enterprise Community Zone of the City of Des Moines and their efforts to address the goals put forth by the Strategic Plan with regard to community and neighborhood environment. More specifically, the focus will be the phenomenon of “Bridging the Digital Divide,” which from an educational standpoint uniquely connects to the points laid out in the broader Enterprise Community Initiative.

The Enterprise Community Initiative laid out a framework, which engaged specific key principles as a guide. These principles created the condition for education as a whole. An educated community is a community that has the opportunity, to take advantage of newly developed or redeveloped economic initiatives. The community will be able to contribute to a vision for change, build, and have a say in community-based partnerships; ultimately, leading to sustainable community.
Bridging the Digital Divide and bring Technology to the Community

The digital divide, another manifestation of the split between the “haves and the have-nots” in society has been devastating for those without access to the technology and systems in place. Household income relates directly to the probability of home computer ownership, and education levels correspond to the likeliness of computer access at the workplace. For example, “results from a Department of Commerce study show that 80 percent of households with an income of more that $75,000 have computers, compared to only 16 percent of households earning $10,000 to 15,000.” (Stanton and Chang, June 2000 p. 11) Not having access or having limited access creates and perpetuates a community with limited skills and capabilities. The significance of technology in the community means creating informed, consciences and “connected” participants that strengthen the community. The “know how,” builds self-sufficiency and sustainability within a given community, which in turn promotes, and enhances social responsibility and lifelong learning. “Every Block a Village Online” is a local effort to bridge the digital divide by providing in-home Internet access to block leaders in a 57 block area of Chicago’s Austin community” (Masi, June 2000 p. 10) The initiative offers the community crucial information that can be used, as needed by community members and it links several area institutions such as, hospitals, schools, and local alderman offices to residents.

Technology in the community is a community growth initiative, which assembles community assets and develops the capacity of community members at all levels. Community leaders and members can be linked and offer information, major institutions can provide important information on health issues. Nurse information lines can be made available to assist parents and reduce risks and accidents. Career information can be made available with regard to local business as well as government job listings. These are the aspects that lead to a recovered economic base within a viable community. They help sustain housing and affordability for community members because people become educated and linked to information and resources. While, the trend of creating an accessible site for community organizations or individuals to obtain information is to some extent new; collaborations among organizations working to address the issue of “Bridging the Digital Divide” are important to examine, in order to see how vital the planning process is in building key networks within the community.

A collaboration of six community organizations within the Des Moines, IA Enterprise Community Initiative

The organizations, which originally made up the collaboration, were:

- Grubb YMCA: a youth and family recreation, skill development and social service agency

- Mid-City Visions Coalition: a business centered organization which focused on the some of the following employment, skill development and business development
• Urban Dreams: an education and training organization

• Spectrum Resources: a youth education center

• Creative visions: a youth education and training organization

• House of Mercy - (Children and Families of Iowa): a social service organization which offered employment and skill development for women

Startup was not a smooth process. Making sure all the labs had the right hardware specifications to support the software and trained staff to run the learning labs was difficult to coordinate. Initially, the collective came together under a kind of framework, of the goals and strategic objectives set forth in the Enterprise Community Initiative. Essentially, education, computer skills, and accessibility were the underlying threads that linked each agency. These threads were primarily the guides for developing programs.

The Grubb YMCA was the lead purchasing agency for educational software and training for the entire collective funded through the Department of Labor. Each organization was responsible for hardware and staff to operate the learning labs. As part of the effort to create accessibility, each of the sites received 2 computers, 12 in total. Specifically, each group identified participants through school to work programs, after school programs, welfare to work programs, and other training programs to provide computer skills and accessibility. Some organizations used the resources to help displaced workers update skills or improve basic skills, to build the personal capacity of individuals in the workforce. Collaborative agreements were made to offer skill enhancement for college bound youth. Other organizations offered basic skill development to individuals who were trying to complete their GED. One organization offered an educational component to their summer employment program. Although, quantitatively, large numbers of computers or programs were not provided or developed, the commencement and emphasis to offer quality is important to note in the growing process of building sustainable communities.

The collaborative effort of the partnerships in creating programs specific to their program participants is the successful consorted effort, to focus on building the aptitude, interest, and reasoning capacity of the community with it’s residents. The new computers provided to the different organizations helped to build asset capacity within the community and accessibility in parts of the community that may not have had computers or enough computers. The programs developed, created the initiative to raise the conciseness of the community as to the need of education and technical skills to be eligible for jobs, higher learning, and provided the access to achieve skill development. The organizations involved, received support through staff training and professional development. Increasing proficiencies develops the community as a whole.

The development of a network among the community organizations helps to provide the entire community with vital programs and services. Shared knowledge creates a strong self-sufficient community that is well connected, responsive, and proactive. Collaborations of this caliber create, the climate for providing in-kind services among community organization.
Therefore, solutions can be developed and implemented more rapidly. A Brighter future begins to take shape the more community organization work together.

The long-term effects of these types of partnerships lead to enhanced economic development possibilities for the community. Community residents become more aware of their environment and able to invest in their community. Problems within the community are resolved. Quality of life and community sustainability increases. Overall, the holistic approach facilitates a thoughtful and meaningful process.

While quantitative outcomes were not large, the planning process provided significant insight. As set out in the larger framework of the Enterprise Community Initiative, strategic vision for change, community based partnerships and, sustainable community development was considered vital. The collaborative partnership discussed, and coalesced this framework. Thus, the planning process was an empowering tool. Taking part in all levels of planning created the sense of ownership for all stakeholders involved.

The process also demonstrated the need for consistent support for staff development and troubleshooting technical difficulties. Slight problems can seem to have a large impact on program continuity. Program participants that may need time management skills improved loose interest when continuity is disturbed. Learning new skills and dealing with computers can seem overwhelming to people. The frequent overturn of staff disrupted the firmness of program consistency. The holistic approach to “bridging the digital divide” and providing access to technology created an effective network of community organizations equipped for provide the necessary services to community residents that leads to a self sufficient community. Thus, what can be taken from the look inside the planning process of this community is the importance to build on past successes and lead to strengthening awareness.

Diverse community involvement at every level maintained the integrity of the planning process to remain in tune with the community. On going and consistent technical support and professional growth moved forward the development of skilled staff to deliver programs focused on raising skill levels of zone residents to be able to participate in a labor force that relies more on computers. The programs developed; created the initiative to raise the consciousness of the community as to the need of education and technical skills to be eligible for jobs and higher learning, and provided the access to achieve skill development. The organizations involved received support through staff training and professional development. Increasing proficiencies helped to develop the community as a whole.

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Conclusion

In conclusion, the effort to “bridge the digital divide” within a small community, in the City of Des Moines, Iowa has been successful. While quantitative outcomes were not large, the planning process provided noteworthy insight. Different community involvement at all levels maintained the reliability of the planning process to remain in step with the community. Providing each organization with hardware and software developed the community’s capacity to provide needed instruction. The number of collaborators made it feasible for each organization to work together. Maintaining staff awareness and consciousness is vital to helping zone resident gain technical knowledge. The people who do the day-to-day are those who make the difference, which is why, it is crucial for this person to be part of the whole planning process. Program participants will be more apt to trust the process if they see those who are delivering the services trusting in it as well.

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Religious Diversity in the Classroom:  
An Issue for Multicultural Educators  

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Multicultural educators, for whom responsiveness to cultural diversity is an essential organizing principle, pay little attention to religious diversity. Few, if any, teacher preparation programs require any study of religion as a curricular content area. Nevertheless culturally diverse populations are religiously diverse as well, and religion is an essential component of culture.  

At the present time, according to the World Almanac (2004), Christianity is the majority American religion, but the Almanac’s list suggests that there a myriad of ways to be Christian in American. In addition to about 250 million Christians, there are 65 million Roman Catholics, between 5 and 6 million Muslims and between 2 and 3 million Buddhists, and about 6 million Jews in the United States at the present time. In addition, there are about 1.2 million Hindus and a half a million Sikhs, and lots of much smaller communities of faith.  

The question of religion and public schooling rests on the religion clause of the First Amendment to the United States Constitution. “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or preventing the free exercise thereof.” While this sounds straightforward, it is fairly complicated in practice. Consider the following scenario: A group of students asks for a room to be set aside at lunchtime so that those who wish to do so may read the Christian Bible. Can the school refuse (potentially prohibiting free exercise)? And if the school accedes, are they establishing religion? This kind of controversy isn’t new, and doesn’t fade. The question of whether or not to include a discussion of evolution to the exclusion of creationism in science texts has been argued for decades, and is still in the news today.  

Public school educators deal regularly with a multiplicity of issues related to religion in schooling, including, but not limited to prayer at graduations and athletic events, holiday celebrations, vouchers, teachers’ right to display religious symbols or wear clothing in keeping with religious dictates, and of course issues related to the curriculum. This last is of particular concern to teachers. The law informs teachers and schools that they must maintain a position of neutrality with reference to religion. From a teacher’s perspective, this is generally interpreted to mean that it is acceptable to teach about religion but not to impose religious beliefs on students.  

Once again, this sounds simple, but isn’t. Consider, for example, teaching about the Chinese New Year at the primary level. Often this involves making lion masks and may extend to dancing with
masks in a lion dance parade. Is this “teaching about,” or is it “celebrating?” And given that experiential learning is essential for young learners, how else might you give them a sense of the Chinese New Year? It hardly seems appropriate to simply lecture small children!

According to one reliable source, approaches to teaching about religion in a public school setting must be:
- Academic, that is, related to educational objectives and non-devotional in nature;
- Geared toward awareness, but not done in any way that pressures students into accepting any tenet of faith;
- Should not involve practice.
(First Amendment Center, 1999, p. 3).

The underlying complexity of the issues often leads to confusion, and at its worst, to highly inflamed community conflict. At a minimum, teacher preparation programs must begin to address the issue of religious diversity.


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**Dual Language Programs: What are the and Why should we use them?**

**Some Points and Recommendations for Educators, Parents and Administrators**

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**Introduction:**

In an increasingly diversified and multilingual world, more and more young children find themselves in an environment where more than one language is used. Similarly, with job changes that involve moving to different parts of the world, parents can feel overwhelmed by the linguistic demands placed on their children and themselves. What can parents expect for their children? Do parents have anything to contribute to the process of early language development? Do children have to be especially intelligent to be able to cope with more than one language?

People everywhere have strong ideas about children growing up with second or third languages. These ideas influence how people interact with their children and how they look at other
people's children. These ideas also influence how professionals such as teachers, doctors, and speech therapists advise parents of children growing up bilingually. Sadly, many ideas that people have about children growing up with a second or third language in childhood are not of any benefit to these children and may, in fact, have adverse effects. One of the purposes of this paper is to dispel some of the myths and misconceptions about children growing up bilingually and to offer suggestions that can help children to become fluent users of two or more languages. After all, if this is a common practice in Europe, why can't bilingualism be seen as an asset and not a detriment in the USA?

One in six US teachers has non English speakers in the classroom. In New York City, the educational implications of children's ability to use sometimes distinct, sometimes overlapping linguistic codes are most viewed negatively. Differences in the linguistic codes of the community and the school, and conflict between their ways of speaking, learning, and showing what they know contribute to the academic failure of linguistic minority groups (Philips, 1972; Heath, 1983). Policies are being formulated in response to the country's educational, economic, and social crises without comprehending the repercussions for minority and majority communities alike. Inflammatory debates about bilingual education, English only laws, ethnic studies, and multicultural curricula are too frequently fueled by poisonous stereotypes of the nation's speakers of other languages. Ladefoged (1992, p. 810) insisted that "we must be wary of arguments based on political considerations", and that "it would not be the action of a responsible linguist to persuade them [a group that is giving up the use of its language] to do otherwise" (Ladefoged, 1992, p. 811). Dorian (1993) pointed out that the facts are not so obvious and there are no apolitical positions where languages and cultures are threatened. I agree with Dorian that "it seems a defensible intellectual as well as emotional position to hold that each loss in linguistic diversity is a diminution in an unusually powerful expression of human cultural life, given the nature of language" (Dorian, 1993, p. 578). When the stakes are not only loss of language and culture but a decent life, as they are in many ethnolinguistic minority communities in the USA, the tasks of a responsible linguist must include political action. By incorporating the word "political" in its name, anthropological linguistics openly declares its intention to discuss the language and politics connection and to make it clear that, whether we choose to discuss it or not, there is no language without politics. The cultural and linguistic lessons that living in The Bronx teaches often are not understood by the schools, and this affects whether or not the children learn the school's lessons.

Members of every generation want their children to speak, read, write Spanish, but few have any idea of the enormity of the task, and the community resources to help them - beyond the beleaguered bilingual schools - are almost non existent. To be effective, language maintenance efforts must tap into the extensive linguistic and cultural knowledge that exist throughout the larger Latino community, and tackle the social, economic, and political problems that demean and restrict that knowledge.

A bilingual environment is often a necessity and NOT a choice:

Many discussions of the advantages and disadvantages of early bilingualism seem to be based on the idea that a bilingual environment is something that parents choose for their children. This, however, is usually not the case; young children growing up bilingually are for the most part doing so because there is no way that they can grow up monolingually. For example, it may be the case that the child interacts regularly with monolingual individuals, some of whom speak one language (e.g. teachers and classmates who speak only Italian), others of whom speak another (e.g. parents who speak only French). Other children may grow up in a community where most people speak the same two languages on a day-to-day basis. The usage rulers for these languages determine when a particular
language is spoken. Imposing changes in these conventions so that all bilingual speakers in the child's social world would limit themselves to one and the same language in all circumstances is not only impossible but also ethically dubious, because it would infringe on an individual's linguistic human rights.

**Hearing a variety of languages in childhood is not a cause of a language disorder or language delay:**

All over the Western world, there are speech therapists, medical doctors and teachers who advise parents of young children growing up with more than one language to stop using one of those languages with their children. Typically, the language to be given up is the language that is not used in the overall environment. For example, speech therapists in the United States often suggest that parents stop using Spanish in the home in favor of English. The common reason for their advice is twofold. First, it is often claimed that hearing two or more languages will confuse the child and lead to grave problems in acquiring language. However, there is no scientific evidence to date that hearing two or more languages lead to delays or disorders in language acquisition. Many, many children throughout the world grow up with two or more languages from infancy without showing any signs of language delays or disorders. These children provide visible proof that there is no causal relationship between a bilingual environment and language learning problems. In addition, there is no scientific evidence that giving up one language has a beneficial effect on the other. In fact, the abrupt end of the use of the home language by a child's parents may lead to great emotional and psychological difficulties both for the parents and for the child. After all, language is strongly linked to emotion, affect and identity. A three or four year old whose mother suddenly stops talking to him/her in the language familiar to him/her, particularly if his/her mother does not respond to the things he/she says to him/her in that language, may make the child feel emotionally abandoned and totally lost. Speech therapists who advise monolinguals should not be surprised to find that the child in question starts to exhibit troubling behavior. Should the child recover from this traumatic experience; there is no evidence that progress in the main language of the environment is helped by the loss of the home language (otherwise known as subtractive bilingualism). In fact, it has been shown in educational settings that build on a child's skills in the first language helps the acquisition of a second one.

**Children's use of two languages in one sentence is NOT a sign of confusion:**

Often, it is claimed that small children who are learning to speak two languages go through a stage of mixing and confusing the two. The use of words from both languages in a single sentence is cited as evidence that the child cannot distinguish between the two languages, but in reality, this is not a sign of confusion. In fact, it has been shown that the use of two languages in one sentence by natural bilinguals reveals a great deal of linguistic skill (Romaine, 1995). It is also true that while young bilingual children use words from two languages in the same sentence, they produce far more sentences using only one language. This clearly shows that they are able to keep their languages separate.

The question then becomes in what circumstances do children use words from both languages in the same sentence? They do it only when talking to people that they know understand both languages and who do not get upset with them for using such sentences. In other words, the social context in which children find themselves determines whether and to what extent they use more than one language in a single sentence. The same happens with bilingual adults; they use words from two languages in the same sentence only in sociolinguistic settings in which it is appropriate. This is called code switching.
Code switching is characteristic of many parts of the world where two or more speech communities live in close contact, but often it is misunderstood. Sometimes code switching is confused with the historically recurrent process of word borrowing. For example, English loans like londri (laundry), lonchar (to have lunch), biles, (bills), etc. regularly appear in the Spanish of monolinguals in New York City and they have been adapted phonologically and morpho-syntactically to such an extent that members of the second generation think they belong to the Spanish lexicon (Acosta - Belen, 1975; Zentella, 1981b). Spanish distinguishes between regresar (to return/to go back) and devolver (to return), but many of the students and teachers at Region II who were bilingual used regresar for both meanings, just as they merged preguntar (to ask a question) with pedir (to ask a favor). It is not always easy to distinguish loans from code switches, and some researchers believe "that efforts to distinguish codeswitching, codemixing and borrowing are doomed" (Eastman, 1992, p. 1). More serious than confusing code switching with loans is the charge that code switching represents language deterioration and/or the creation of a new language - called Tex - Mex or "Spanglish" in US Latino communities, Japlish, Chinglish, etc. in others. The pejorative connotations of these labels reflect negative evaluations of the linguistic and/or intellectual abilities of those who code switch:

Speakers of the non defined mixture of Spanish and/or Spanish English are judged as "different", or "sloppy" speakers of Spanish and/or English, and are often labeled verbally deprived, ailingual, or deficient bilinguals because supposedly they do not have the ability to speak either English or Spanish well (Acosta - Belen, 1975, p. 151).

All native speakers demonstrate a tacit cultural knowledge of how to speak their language appropriately in different speech situations, in keeping with their community's "ways of speaking" (Hymes, 1974). Whereas monolinguals adjust by switching phonological, grammatical, and discourse features within one linguistic code, bilinguals alternate between the languages in their linguistic repertoire as well. Children in bilingual speech communities acquire two grammars and the rules for communicative competence which prescribe not only when and where each language may be used, but also whether and how the two languages may be woven together in a single utterance. Rapidly alternating languages to accommodate people who are dominant in one language or the other accustoms the children to juxtapose the distinct phonology, morphology, syntax, and lexicon of Spanish and English with ease. In families with members of two or more generations, this process begins in infancy. Members of the Bronx acknowledged their use of these strategies when they cited "getting mad" as a reason for switching languages. What monolinguals accomplish by repeating louder and/or slower or with a change in wording, bilinguals can accomplish by switching languages. The bond between linguistic code and power/solidarity variables can not be regarded as a rigid dichotomy that denies the language of solidarity a role in control. We can not assume only English is used for enforcement and that Spanish is used for endearment. Switches for both will occur in either language, but may differ in terms of their deployment. Cazden (1979) suggests that these differences are along the lines of the Brown and Levinson (1987) politeness forms selected to minimize face threatening acts, I.E. "positive politeness" forms are intimate, in-group ways such as mock chastising, whereas "negative politeness" forms stress social distance and power by appealing to respect and deference. She predicted that "bilingual teachers will frequently code switch into Spanish for control purposes," but that "Spanish is used for positive politeness, English for negative politeness" (Cazden, 1979, p. 154-155), a hypothesis which I found corroborated in Region II in The Bronx.

On the periphery of a prestigious English monolingual world and the periphery of a stigmatized Spanish monolingual world, The Bronx children lived on the border of the "borderlands" alluded to by Anzaldua (1987), unwilling to relinquish their foothold on either. Their codeswitching was a way of
saying that they belonged to both worlds, and should not be forced to give up one for the other. Switches into Spanish were attempts to touch home base, a resistance to being engulfed by English. As one student explained it to me: "Sometimes I'm talking a long time in English and then I remember I'm Puerto Rican, let me say something in Spanglish". Spanglish moved them to the center of their bilingual world, which they continued to create and define in every interaction. Every time they said something in one language when they might just as easily have said it in the other, they were re-connecting with people, occasions, settings, and power configurations from their history of past interactions, and imprinting their own "act of identity" (Le Page and Tabouret - Keller, 1985) on that history. In the process, they called upon their knowledge - of how to exploit the similarities in two sets of grammatical rules to accomplish rule - governed code switching, challenging the view that their code switching, or "Spanglish" was a chaotic jumble. Code switching in New York may be seen as part of an "alternative form of resistance, not a deliberate ignorance of multicultural realities but a different and potentially more democratic way of apprehending them" (Flores and Yudice, 1990, p. 74).

The code switching of the children and the teachers in the Bronx proved they were not semi - or a-lingual hodge podgers, but adept bilingual jugglers. They followed rules for what and where to switch that were shared by several Latino communities, corroborating the syntactic hierarchy and constraints outlined by Sankoff and Poplack (1981). An older versus younger contrast that was linked to each group's dominant language (younger=Spanish, older=English) surfaced in favorite switch boundaries, adherence to constraints, and language of the switch. English dominant bilinguals favored short Spanish insertions that distinguished them from monolingual English speakers, and younger Spanish dominant children - eager to demonstrate their increasing command of English - made use of easy to insert English constituents. Both groups displayed their bilingual New York identity by continually touching base with Spanish and English. Second generation parents favor English because it is their dominant language and because they considered it crucial to their children's ability to "defenderse" (defend themselves). One of the meanings of defenderse implies knowing a language, that is, Me defiendo bien means "I speak it well enough to get along", which immigrants say in reference to their English skills.

Important Tips for Parents:

Because language in the first ten years of life is such an important basis for the achievement of academic and social skills, it is no luxury to reflect a little more on just what elements play an important role in learning a language, whether it is one, two or more. Although it is not possible here to spell out the things a parent should consider when his/her child is in a situation where he or she could learn to speak more than one language, it is my hope that the brief list of pointers below offers some assistance. Investing in a child's bilingualism or multiculturalism, after all, should yield a high return. Here are a few basic points that are important in raising children with more than one language:

1) Do what comes naturally to you and your families in terms of which language(s) you use when, but make sure your children hear both (or all three or four) languages frequently and in a variety of circumstances. Create opportunities for your children to use all of the languages that are important in their lives.
2) Talk to your children in the same way, not, for instance, using one language for the elder and another language for the younger. Language is tied to emotions, and if you address your children in different languages, some of your children may feel excluded; which in turn might adversely affect their behavior. Avoid abrupt changes in how you talk to your children, especially when they are under six. Don't suddenly decide to speak French to them if you have been using only English. In this respect,
beware of "experts" (e.g. doctors, teachers) who tell you to stop speaking a particular language to a child. Some therapists alarm parents by blaming the bilingual household for confusing children and causing speech problems; and advise parents to speak to the child only in English. Perhaps some therapists are influenced by studies conducted in the 1930's which concluded that bilinguals stuttered more than monolinguals, and are unaware of reassessments which concluded that "any correlation between bilingualism and stuttering must be unreliable" (Hoffman, 1991, p. 141).

3) If you feel strongly about your children using one particular language with you, encourage them to use it in all of their communication with you. Try to discourage their use of another language with you by asking them to repeat what they said in the preferred language or by gently offering them the appropriate words in the language you want them to use. It is no more crucial than asking your child to say, "Please" before giving him/her a cookie. Doctors and others who advise caretakers to avoid code-switching are defended by advocates of the "one parent-one language" principle:

4) Not all families opt for a consistent pattern of language use; nor do they always adhere to the one parent-one language principle. The parents, and other family members, may use both languages; … they may follow no specific pattern at any time. For the establishment of bilingualism this kind of strategy tends to be less successful, as then the choice of using a particular language at any given time will depend on arbitrary factors, and the child may find this confusing. If this happens, the majority language may soon become the dominant one, and the incidence of mixed language output is likely to be high (Snow, 1991, p. 45).

5) In fact, "bilinguals acquire the same items, and in the same sequence of acquisition as monolinguals" (Hoffman, 1991, p. 69).

6) Do not make language an issue, and do not rebuke or punish children for using or not using a particular language. If you feel your child is not talking, as he or she should in the preschool years, have a hearing test done, even if teachers or doctors tell you that bilingualism is the cause of any language delays. An important fact about bilingual language acquisition is that children differ in the rate at which they move through various stages (Snow, 1993). Ignorance of this fact can lead to comparisons that construct a "confused" and "language-delayed" child. Many professionals who work with children make the same mistake in advising bilingual parents.

7) There is considerable worry among preschool and primary teachers, speech pathologists, and pediatricians that bilingual households produce language delay or contribute to language problems, but there is no evidence to support this (Snow, 1993, p. 395.). Follow your own intuition about what is best for you and your family. Keep in mind that young and old alike follow the unwritten rule, "If at first you don't succeed, try, try again, but in the other language".

**Two Way Bilingual Programs:**

Two Way Bilingual Education (also known as bilingual immersion, developmental bilingual and dual language programs) has taken root in many schools across the United States. In these types of programs, students develop dual language proficiency by receiving instruction in English and in another language in a classroom that is usually comprised of half native speakers of English and half native speakers of the target language (for the purpose of this paper, that language is Spanish). While Spanish is currently the most common target language represented in two way programs, other programs support learning through Cantonese, Korean, Japanese, Navajo, Russian, Portuguese and French. Two-way programs provide both sets of students with ample exposure to the two languages, allowing them to progress academically in both languages and gain an appreciation of another culture.

Two way bilingual programs work toward academic, language and affective goals. Language minority students benefit from the opportunity to develop and learn through their native language as well as English (Krashen, 1991), and English speakers achieve well academically in an immersion
environment (Genesee, 1987; Harley, Allen, Cummins, & Swain, 1990). The additive bilingual environment supports development of both languages and enhances students' self esteem and cross cultural understanding (Christian, 1994).

**Implementation Issues:**

The two way curriculum is content based and focuses on the development of strong academic achievement in both languages. Because students learn content through a language they do not speak natively, techniques that make instruction more comprehensible are preferred. The strategies teachers use most often include experiential or hands-on activities, thematic units, peer interaction, multiple cues that give students additional chances to master concepts (e.g. a graphic representation such as a semantic web followed by discussion or direct experience on a field trip), and whole language philosophies.

While the goals of two-way bilingual programs generally remain constant, the methods through which these goals are realized depend largely on local conditions, demographics and community attitudes. As a result, each program makes a selection from a variety of modes of instruction. For example, a program may allocate the two languages by content (e.g. social studies and math are taught in Spanish, while science, arts and music are taught in English); by time (e.g. instruction in each language on alternate days); or by person (e.g. one teacher uses only Spanish and another uses only English). Some programs operate as magnets within their districts; others are strictly neighborhood based.

Two-Way programs also follow different language development models. The two most popular are the "50/50" model, in which the students receive instruction for equal amounts of time in the two languages, and the "80/20' model, in which about 90% of the instruction is in the target language with about 20% in English in the early grades, gradually moving towards the 50/50 model in the upper grades. The way in which students are integrated varies somewhat as well. Many programs never separate the students based on their language background, while others provide specific second language instruction to segregated groups every day. However, as Christian (1994) points out, cross group interaction helps students realize the full benefits of the two-way approach, since the presence of native speakers of both language groups makes the environment of the two-way programs more conducive to second language learning.

**Future Directions and Concerns:**

Various reports and statistics reveal that the two-way approach is effective not only in teaching of the two languages to both groups but also in the development of academic excellence. Lindholm and Gavlek (1994) cite samples of schools with two-way programs where student achievement on several standardized tests - including math achievement tests in English and Spanish - demonstrate academic progress as well as fluency in both languages. While the researchers noticed major variations within and across school sites, it was clear that the students were achieving the desired levels of bilingual proficiency. Ongoing research by Collier (1994) in five urban districts shows that language minority (Hispanic) students in two-way programs experience more long term educational gains than students in other bilingual or English as a second language (ESL) programs.

**Teachers from a school in Region Two Reflect on their Professional Experiences:**

I have been working closely with the teachers at a school in Region II for about a year and a half. I have taught them an Adelphi University graduate level-three credit-TESOL class. I felt it was
important for them to get the necessary strategies, methodologies and techniques in second language acquisition. The rapport I developed helped reduce anxieties since I spent quite a bit of time in the classrooms with them, observing the way theories were applied to practice, co-teaching, and spending time with the students. There were a total of eight teachers at first, four from kindergarten, and two from first grade and another two from second grade. One of the kindergarten pairs had to be dropped from the dual language program since there were many issues involved such as language minority students, language majority students and children in special education classes, all combined in one room. The teachers were inexperienced so I felt that the pressure was too much for them to handle.

All six teachers spoke about the many challenges they faced. First, because everything was done in two languages. Many materials had to be developed from scratch, and since the teachers were alternated from Spanish and English instruction, they had "twice as many students in half the time".

They also reported multiple challenges in working with the parents. Specifically, the need to help parents understand that second language (L2) acquisition is a slow process and that the program has cross-cultural goals as well as linguistic and academic goals.

Linguistic challenges were cited, such as teaching content information through the L2, distinguishing special needs from the L2 process, easing the frustration of students who do not understand the language, and promoting Spanish language use among all students.

Administrative challenges mentioned were tensions between the dual language program and the general education program within the school and the dual language program and the central administration at the regional level. Scheduling, working with a partner teacher and disagreements among staff regarding program features were concerns voiced by the group; e.g. "There has been a lot of debate over how much they believe in this model". Trying to make sure we have a uniform philosophy was also voiced on numerous occasions.

Suggestions

All six teachers were invited to recommend ways in which the school and the district could facilitate the work of the dual language program teachers. Foremost among teacher concerns was finding qualified and skilled teachers and offering them substantive training. One teacher mentioned: "You just can't throw a teacher into a classroom and tell her to teach the curriculum if she lacks the techniques or knowledge… I am thrilled at the fact that this program is opening up and giving me a big chance. But, I do feel that there is a lack of time for searching for people that are competent, or training people to be competent in the field". Nearly all teachers agreed that more training and professional development would go a long way to help overcome these challenges. Beyond a general call for more comprehensive and ongoing teacher training, teachers suggested a number of ways that administrators could better support the program and the teachers. Suggestions included the following: 1) paying mentor teachers to aid new teachers and prepare curricula; 2) giving both novice and veteran teachers more direction and materials; 3) and extending the period of apprenticeship for student teachers. Within the school, teachers cited the need for positive cross-cultural attitudes among all school staff, and recommended conducting staff meetings in Spanish as well as in English to allow for more input from Spanish-dominant staff.

What new teachers should know:
All the teachers were eager to share their experiences and insights in the form of advice for new and prospective teachers in the upcoming NYSABE conference to be held in Rye, New York at the beginning of March 2005. They suggested that new teachers become familiar with the structure and goals of the program. One teacher said: "In the dual language program, they have to believe in the program, they have to believe in bilingual education; they have to believe it's important to learn other languages and other cultures." New Dual Language teachers should possess subject matter competence, be familiar with the grade level curriculum and have appropriate expectations, be prepared with a wide array of effective teaching practices, and be firm in the underlying belief that all students can learn and succeed.

Teachers also spoke about cross cultural and linguistic knowledge that would be important for new teachers to possess. A basic familiarity with the two cultures and languages involved in the program is key, as having some ideas about how to work with the two groups of parents. One teacher mentioned that: "the increased demands placed on teachers by parents in the dual language program deserve extra consideration."

Other issues the teachers raised were considering how to elevate the status of the language - minority students in an integrated setting and become familiar with the differences across two languages, such as conventions of punctuation and capitalization.

From what I have observed at the school in Region II thus far, I can say that:

The Spanish speaking students:

Feel equally competent in both languages
Feel that their writing in Spanish is stronger than their writing in English (particularly in the second grade).
Are confident that they can understand nearly everything presented in Spanish
Feel comfortable translating most things.

The English speaking students:

Feel their English is stronger (particularly in kindergarten)
Feel that their reading skills in Spanish are stronger than their listening, speaking or writing skills
Can get the main idea of Spanish but not specific details
Feel comfortable translating "some things" but not many.

Both Groups:

Feel confident about their ability to teach both English and Spanish to their peers
Favor speaking English over Spanish in any given social situation (especially the second graders)
Reveal no ethnic or linguistic bias in their choice of close friends.
Perceive Hispanic Americans as they would other Americans
Demonstrate confidence in themselves.

For those who believe that English monolingualism equals greater success:

English fluency, even being monolingual, is not the guaranteed passport to educational and economic progress that organizations like US English claim (US English 1987, 1988). Some groups
that lost their native languages generations ago, like Native and African Americans, suffer among the worst health, educational, and economic problems in the nation, while others with a high proportion of non English monolinguals, like Cubans in Miami, have “reversed the established notions of assimilation - acculturation before participation” (Talbot, 1993, p. 14), proving that English fluency is not a sine qua non for economic advantage.

English proficiency may not guarantee educational or economic success but it is a crucial skill nevertheless, and it is intensely desired, pursued, and achieved by most Latinos, notwithstanding arguments to the contrary by US English and other proponents of legislation to make English the official language of the United States. In fact, an epidemic rate of Anglicization is evident in the dramatic loss of Spanish by the second generation nationwide (Veltman, 1983, 1988). Children who are raised speaking a language other than English are an untapped reservoir of national strength whose linguistic repertoires must be expanded (Zentela, 1986). The expansion of repertoires succeeds when it builds upon the strengths of speakers' existing abilities, that it, when it is additive, not subtractive, following Lamberts’ (1977) use of these terms. Sadly, two sobering facts currently increase the pressure to Americanize, or "Englishize" ethno linguistic minorities with a subtractive vengeance. One is the spiraling number of school aged children who are "limited English proficient", ignominiously referred to as "LEPs", they totaled 5.5 million in 1985 (Waggoner, 1986). Another reliable count indicated that there were approximately 4.4 million limited English Proficient children in the United States (Kindler, 2002). While public school enrollments rose about 24 percent between 1989 and 2000, the number of limited English proficient students grew a startling 105 percent. Enrollments of limited English proficient students are predictably high in certain states. California, for example, which enrolls nearly 10 percent of the nation’s schoolchildren, identifies 1,559,248 limited English proficient students, K-12 in 2001-2002 (California Department of Education, 2003).

The other concern is the inability of nearly half of the US adult population to handle the basic reading and math necessary for daily living (Celsis, 1993). Along with rising fears about recessions on the home front and slippage in the world economy, they spur a revival of the narrow approach to Americanization favored early in this century, epitomized by President Theodore Roosevelt's insistence on talking "United States":

"The man who becomes completely Americanized … and who talks :"United States" instead of the dialect of the country which he has of his own free will abandoned is not only doing his plain duty by his adopted land, but is also rendering himself a service of immeasurable value (cited in Molesky, 1988, p. 51).

Understanding what many call “Spanglish”

A language is not a collection of vocabulary words, sounds, and grammatical rules divorced from the geographical, ethnic, gender and class identities of its speakers. Membership in one or more speech communities is reflected in people’s dialects, that is, in the specific configuration of vowels, consonants, intonation patterns, grammatical constituents, lexical items, and sentence structure shared with other community members, as well as in the rules for when, where and how to speak. Some dialects, like those of the English and Spanish monarchs, came to be considered the correct or pure form because of the historic, economic and political power of its speakers, not because of any greater intrinsic beauty or logic in the dialect’s features. Moreover, there are multiple ways of “doing bilingual” (Auer, 1984, p.7), and they are not captured by talking about Spanish and English as if they were monolithic codes or as if a bilingual were two monolinguals joined at the neck. Because no bilingual uses his/her language in exactly duplicate situations, there are few ambi/equi – linguals, or
truly balanced bilinguals in the world; one language is more dominant than the other in different situations or life stages. Also, contrary to Weinreich’s (1968, p. 73) conviction that “the ideal bilingual switches from one language to the other according to appropriate changes in the speech situation but not in an unchanged speech situation and certainly not within a single sentence, there is intense and prolonged contact among different networks and generations, as there is in The Bronx, it is precisely the ability to switch languages in the same sentence and situation that characterizes the most effective bilingual.

Teachers and students in The Bronx school call their language behavior “mixing” or “talking both”, without negative connotations, and scholars who study bilingual poets and rappers consider it “the vanguard of polyglot cultural creativity” (Flores and Yudice, 1990, p. 74). But many more people refer to it pejoratively as “Spanglish”, meaning a deformed linguistic mish-mash. In an effort to counter the categorization of code switchers as linguistically and cognitively deficient, sociolinguists have responded by replacing disparaging terms like “Spanglish” and its southwest equivalent “Tex-Mex” with neutral, if lifeless, linguistic term, code switching, and by quantifying speakers’ adherence to syntactic rules to prove that code switchers are not without language – they are juggling two grammars. Not every code switcher is a virtuoso at alternating the dialects in his/her repertoire, but almost all honor the complex rules of when and where to link the two grammars, and some of them speak “Spanglish” proudly.

Conclusion:

The six teachers interviewed for the paper have different ways of reaching their goals. Yet, there was considerable overlap in what they viewed as the benefits and challenges of being a dual language teacher: their thoughts on how schools and districts could help them meet the challenges they face, and their advice for new teachers working with the upper levels; e.g. the new third grade teachers starting in September of 2005. Hopefully, the opinions expressed in the interviews and the demographic trends brought forth by the questionnaires I provided would enhance appreciation for the deft and complex work that these professionals do and the qualifications they possess.

Further, they should serve as a stimulus for more investigation and, ultimately, for change in the dual language teachers are prepared and supported.

Overall, the two-way program at the school in Region II has shown positive results: students achieve academically and socially and are pleased with the program thus far. Parents, too, have indicated their satisfaction and are committed to keeping their children in the two-way bilingual program for an extended period of time.

While the students are in the process of becoming functionally bilingual, they are also forming friendships with students from other ethnic and linguistic backgrounds and learning to appreciate the diversity that is historically characteristic of American society but particularly fragile today.

Understanding and Applying the Bilingual Alternative:

One alternative way of teaching ethnolinguistic minorities that is fiercely debated is bilingual education. Critics argue that it costs too much money, retards the learning of English and does not move children into all-English programs fast enough, and that bilingualism puts minorities at a cognitive disadvantage and threatens national unity (Baker & Kanter, 1983; Porte, 1990; Imhoff,
Bilingual education advocates question the ideological and methodological biases that plague most of the criticism, and cite research that proves the educational and cognitive benefits of bilingualism (Hakuta, 1986; Hakuta & Snow, 1986; Government Accounting Office, 1987; Crawford, 1989; Ramirez, 1991). Casanova (1991, p. 174) astutely contrasts “the robustness of positive research findings against eroding government support “for bilingual education with the unchallenged expenditures on programs for the gifted and talented which have neither judicial nor research support. Reappraisal of data that claimed bilingual education programs were ineffective proved that the more rigorous the evaluation of a bilingual education program, the more it showed that it worked (Willing, 1985). Finally, a $4.1 million survey of 2,000 Spanish speaking students over four years (1984-1988) in five states found that the stronger a native language component in a program, the more effective it is in teaching English language, reading and math (Ramirez, 1991). That comparison of three alternative methodologies, commissioned by the US Department of Education, discovered the following:

First, there were few significant differences in achievement between immersion and early exit programs, that is, between children taught almost exclusively in English and those taught mostly in English. Second, children in late-exit programs taught primarily in Spanish, had the most sustained growth in achievement. Third, students in all three groups took five or more years to acquire academic proficiency in English (Crawford, 1992, p. 229).

These findings, seemingly contradictory, because children who were taught in Spanish learned more English and content subjects than those who were taught in English, corroborated theories about the progress language learners made when provided with comprehensible input (Krashen, 1985), and the advantage of establishing a strong base in the native language so that skills can be transferred to the second language (Cummins, 1981). The language learning capacity of humans does not function hydraulically (Hakuta, 1986), that is, it does not require that the brain be emptied of Spanish in order to learn English. Instead, a learner makes use of his/her first language in order to achieve proficiency in a second language. The amount and type of grammatical discourse and pragmatic knowledge that can be transferred is facilitated the more the two languages involved are similar. In the case of English and Spanish for example, correspondences in grammatical surface structure and the same writing system means that the child who knows how to speak, read and write Spanish well will be able to transfer many of those skills into English. Thus, the time spent on Spanish in a bilingual classroom not only helps children understand the lesson, it also helps them learn English faster. For similar reasons, parents who are told to speak only English to their children may be inhibiting their fullest development of English when they comply. When the parent’s version of English does not include the full length exposition of argumentation, subordination, clarification, etc., that they communicate with in Spanish, children are being denied significant linguistic input. Consequently, the teaching of children in their native language (e.g. math, science, and social studies), and teaching the native language (communication arts) are essential components of a bilingual education program, along with intensive English as a second language instruction, content courses in English, and bicultural history. Parents need to be informed and reassured that it’s acceptable for them to use Spanish in the home. Unfortunately, the opposite is usually conveyed at meetings and this is detrimental to the children’s self esteem and success at being truly bilingual.

Unfortunately, not everything that calls itself bilingual education includes a strong native language component. I maintain, in keeping with Cummins’ and Krashen’s theories, that a good part of language development problems are due to being cut off from the home language before children get a firm foundation in it, and being forced to do academic work in English with only basic interpersonal skills in that language. Furthermore, Wong Fillmores’ (1991, a,b) findings show that intra-familial
tensions can be severe when pre-schools separate children from the home language. The best bilingual programs enable students to achieve oral and literate proficiency in two languages, for their linguistic, cognitive, and academic benefit, and for the social, economic, and political benefit of the wider community. Parents of monolingual English children anxious for similar advantages support “two-way bilingual programs” in which their children learn with and from children who speak another language.

Cultural mismatch or the stigmatization of difference?

Arguments in favor of bilingual education have focused on the mismatch between the language of the home and the language of the school as a primary cause of educational failure. But children who have learned English as a second language – even those who become English dominant do not necessarily use English the way a native monolingual does. Is it possible to speak in English, yet talk like a Puerto Rican or a Haitian, for example in terms of how knowledge is impaired or displayed? The cultural ways of using language to teach and learn in ethnolinguistic minority homes may differ from those that are required in mainstream classrooms and institutions (Heath, 1986), and conflict between those ways may result in failure as decisive as that caused by conflicting languages. Even when teachers speak the native language of their students, they may teach in mainstream ways that are unfamiliar to their students, thus students and teachers may use similar linguistic codes and still not “speak the same language”. Most New York children leave the bilingual and multidialectical homes to enter schools that reward the mainstream ways of speaking, reading and writing one linguistic code, Standard English to the exclusion of all others. Where some bilingual programs exist, they make the same demands in standard Spanish. This approach works best for students who have acquired the standard(s) at home, but it shuts the doors on the ways of speaking and learning that most New York children bring to class, for example, the ways they teach, explain, argue, etc, in their non-standard English. Student’s strengths are not tapped, and they come to regard those strengths as weaknesses. To reverse the process, the linguistic repertoires of students and teachers must be expanded to avoid potential areas of conflict between the school’s ways of taking in or demonstrating knowledge and those of the community it serves. It’s almost as if our children are proficient (or need to be) in four dialects: standard English and Spanish and non standard English and Spanish to fit into their neighborhood community and school community.

Discussions of cultural differences in language and learning can be explosive because of the distortions that result when the well off and well educated families of powerful economies are posited as the model against which all others are judged, for example, by assuming that if Anglo white middle class parents talk baby talk, then baby talk is best. This can lead to viewing differences in poor and uneducated communities as deviance, so that Latino caregivers that rely on children to learn by observation are blamed for their children’s academic failure. To avoid these pitfalls, there is a pressing need for cross cultural research that asks: Is there really a mismatch between the ways in which particular groups of children are taught at home and at school? Is cultural mismatch the cause of educational failure? Is it possible to achieve a better from between home and school ways of using language?

To be evaluated as alert or intelligent, children must be adept at exchanges that constitute the classroom discourse canon. In influential work, Heath (1983, 1986) has identified the principal “language genres” that characterize mainstream communities and institutions’ label quests, e.g. “What’s this”. Meaning quests, e.g. “What does X mean?” Recounts, e.g. “What happened in 1776?”, accounts, e.g. “What did you do last weekend?” Event casts, e.g. “First, we’ll do math, then social studies, and then English”, and stories, e.g., “Write a story about Z”. Children who come from mainstream, school – oriented communities have had extensive practice in these genres before they
reach kindergarten; many form part of bedtime story rituals (Heath, 1982a). Those children have less difficulty participating in the school routines that make use of such genres than children who have been socialized with other genres.

Label quests are the dominant language genre in mainstream schools, particularly in the early grades. A label quest links items and attributes or asks a question to which the questioner knows the answer, such as, “What’s this/that?” Where is your ear?” “What color is the kite?” In later grades, label quests may seem more complex, for example, “What were the three principal reasons for the civil war?” but their purpose is the same. They serve as an effective introduction into a production-oriented society that classifies and categorizes. Essentially, the label quest is a form of test: teachers have the answer in their heads and check to see whether or not students respond with the correct label(s). Such tests are an effective way of expressing and maintaining the power differences between authority figure and child and of reinforcing the notion of education as an adult led “banking” process, in Freire’s (1970) terms. Children gain favor by reproducing what the teacher had deposited previously. Label quests exemplify the belief that it is appropriate and important for authority figures to test in order to teach, and to punish and reward accordingly. Mainstream parents raise their children with many labels and meaning quests because such teaching is essential to their definition of good parenting, and in keeping with the notions of child development.

Given the high degree of intra and inter group diversity and the high rates of failure in Latino communities, many question whether it is more appropriate to focus on the lack of fit between the mainstream classrooms’ discourse and Latino ways of displaying knowledge, or on the people, practices, and institutions that structure educational inequality and interpret differences as deviance. Latino scholars are leading voices among those who ask: How much and how should the parents and communities change, and how much and how should the teachers and schools change? (Trueba, 1989; Delgado-Gaitan, 1990; Moll, 1990; Perez & Torres-Guzman, 1992; Vazquez et al, 1994)?

In Pursuit of Bilingual Excellence?

Teachers are urged to “teach from strengths” by building upon what their students know how to say and do and upon the various ways in which students learn, in order to make them proficient in others which are indispensable in the dominant society. The following suggestions are meant to help educators at every grade level expand repertoires – their students’ and their own.

It is important that educators learn how to confront their own biases. The narrow norms of one cultural group and class cannot be the yardstick against which others are measured. We cannot earn the respect of caregivers if we are always telling them that they are doing a bad job of raising their children. One immediate way of facilitating the adoption of new ways of using language is to allow students to talk more. Increased opportunities for meaningful talk allows for the mergence of –in a variety of dialects-accounts, stories, analogies, rebuttals, creative performances, collaborative discussions, role playing, joking, proverbs, teasing styles, imitations, translations, etc. Classrooms that foster expanded linguistic repertoires provide a wide range of discussions and projects that require understanding, speaking, reading and writing the formal varieties of English and the home language, but they also acknowledge the appropriateness of non-standard dialects on code switching, the cultural significance of non standard dialects, and the bridges they offer for crossing over into other ways of using language, it may jeopardize the linguistic and social development of children if their language is “corrected” in every part of the school day.
Formal and informal patterns of language emerge as normal by-products when students meet intellectual challenges that demand a wide range of genres. Varied language flows best from engaged cooperative interaction (Heath, 1983). A similar approach, “small collaborative academic activities requiring a high degree of heterogeneously grouped student to student social (and particularly linguistic) interaction which focused on academic content”, was the key instructional strategy in the excellent bilingual programs studies by Garcia and Garcia (1988). To stimulate purposeful communication, teachers should de-emphasize unnatural repetition drills, fill in sheets, and decontextualized lessons on punctuation and grammar. Knowledge of spelling, parts of speech, etc. can be learned as an integral part of communicating effectively in the pursuit of collective goals.

Teaching from Strengths:

Teaching formal uses of Standard English and standard Spanish is essential, but it can be achieved in ways that supplement, not supplant, students’ verbal repertoires. The notion that schools must banish all but Standard English in order to provide the best opportunity to learn it does not take advantage of the transferability of linguistic knowledge and skills. Knowledge of the forms and functions of one style and/or dialect transfers to the learning of another style or type of dialect. One need not be acquired at the expense of the other, especially when the dialect that the schools attempt to eliminate is essential to student’s identity and survival. If forced to choose between the language of the community and the school, the choice is clear but it is unnecessary.

Within the community, the power of street speech is irrefutable, and it is imitated by outsiders who want to be “cool”. The greetings “yo” and “que pasa” are heard on the lips of rock stars, poets and Wall Street brokers. The community’s range of dialects can serve as a powerful activator of one that is favored by outsiders in formal settings. All code switchers know some Standard English and standard Spanish since all mutually intelligible dialects share many features. Those shared aspects can be a valuable resource for achieving greater fluency in the formal varieties. The variable nature of non standard dialects means that students hear and use alternative sounds and structures frequently. Classrooms that incorporate the expressive vitality and code switching will establish the strongest base for reaping the cognitive and academic benefits of multilingual proficiency.

Towards a bilingual pedagogy:

The events in the lives of children in The Bronx make it painfully clear that no method will succeed unless it is accompanied by an appreciation of the forces that push-pull students between home and school, between studying and struggling to survive. The lessons that living in communities like East Tremont teaches are often not understood by the school, and this affects whether or not working class Latino children in the US learn the lessons of the schools. Merely changing the language of the classroom does not transform an educational system. Parents, educators and community leaders who recognize that students may become illiterate but still know how “to read the world” look to “critical pedagogy”, based on the theories of Paulo Freire (Freire, 1970; Freire and Macedo, 1987; Walsh, 1991). Their goal is the educational excellence achieved when curriculum and methodology challenge traditional student-teacher power relationships and allow students’ own voices to emerge as they interrogate their reality. A basic premise is that the educational systems’ disabling approach must be challenged because the mismatch between the home and school ways of speaking are critical than the power that one group’s ways exerts over the others. The ultimate objective, as Walsh (1991, p. 137) explains it, is education in the pursuit of broader social change:
If we view schooling as the promotion of interaction through which students generate their own knowledge and, with the assistance of curriculum, build upon their language, culture, and experiences, then our approach is most likely process oriented (e.g., incorporating aspects of whole language and techniques of cooperative learning). Or, instead, we view schooling as a sociopolitical and cultural process through which students act and struggle with ongoing power relations and critically appropriate forms of knowledge that exist outside their immediate experience, then chances are our classroom is based on dialogue, on the problem themes of students’ lives, on encouraging students to question and to work toward social change”.

Bilingualism is one of the most significant problem-themes of Latino students’ lives. Intense dialogue is generated when students explore their feelings about English and Spanish in general and different varieties in specific, about their underdeveloped literacy skills, and about the links between their community’s linguistic repertoire and its revolving door migration. Questions and contradictions arise that require thoughtful discussion, study and collective research. Does the nature of US-Latino relations demand both the marginalization of Spanish and the stigmatization of the bilingualism of Latino immigrants? Why is the bilingualism of a well – to do source of linguistic security and a sought after advantage while the bilingualism of the poor is a source of insecurity and a disadvantage? How do we explain the fact that bilingual education is looked down upon as a remedial program while many mainstream adults pursue second language studies? Another contradiction: The South Bronx’s and El Barrio’s code switching is blamed for corrupting two languages, but fluent bilinguals, including teachers, regularly communicate that way, and code switching rappers and poets are praised for their creativity. The purpose of this paper is not to rationalize school failure or to hunt down culprits, but to come to grips with the complex and pervasive role of language in students’ lives in ways that make them feel positive about what they know and enthusiastic about what they can learn. A bilingual critical pedagogy facilitates owning many ways of talking and knowing, so that students can speak in formal varieties of Spanish and English as authentically as they do in their street talk, and tackle all subjects as confidently as they face the dangerous streets.

It is very easy to take the defeatist position and say that the kind of bilingual excellence proposed here as a goal for public education is too much work and too costly. We may satisfy ourselves and say that the primary responsibility of educators is to steer the code of wider communication, Standard English, and mainstream language genres. But that traditional approach has been found wanting for mainstream as well as non-mainstream students, causing expensive special education programs to proliferate. Unless schools change radically, we will lose the opportunity to teach large numbers of diverse children in ways in which they can excel, and which help build a more just society. Fortunately, some alternative schools that the fruits of visionary parent-staff-community collaborations are underway.

An anthropological linguistic perspective:

We need to understand that what may be a survival tactic for the streets may not be as functional in the classroom, or ultimately contribute to the fullest development of the children’s linguistic skills. A few community members have adopted the Mexican-American Richard Rodriguez’s (1982) view that the right to full participation in this society demands paying the price of giving up the language of the home. There seems to be little awareness of what it takes to raise children in the US so that they end up with a command of two languages. Most caregivers are satisfied if children understand enough Spanish to behave appropriately. Almost no one insists that Spanish be spoken in certain settings or with certain speakers. The expectation is that exposure to grandmothers will ensure fluency in Spanish, and that English is learned in schools and on the block. But, grandmothers with
limited years of formal education can not teach children to read and write in Spanish, and since most of them understand English and do not insist on being addressed in Spanish, grandchildren may get little practice in speaking Spanish. As a result, Latino identity is defined in New York as a way that attempts to resolve conflicting linguistic and cultural pressures, and Spanish is de-emphasized. Parents, educators, and community leaders should insist on giving bilingualism the prominence it deserves, and work towards resolving the contradiction between national cries for widespread foreign language competence on the one hand, and the calloused indifference to the maintenance of the mother tongues of the nations on the other. Support for bilingualism is not only essential to the group’s success, it is fundamental to any effort to achieve a language competent nation. Far from being fostered as a national resource, bilingualism is blamed for fomenting separatist views and threatening political upheaval. Nowhere is this more obvious than in the charges of supporters of “Official English” laws, which would outlaw bilingual education, bilingual ballots, and other government services that are not in English only. There are disturbing similarities between the pronouncements of US English, the main lobbying group for such legislation, and those who view the opening of the literary canon as an abandonment of the timeless truths embedded in the Western classics. The first Executive Director of US English declared that non English language services must be eliminated because “government should not stand idly by and let the core culture slip away” (Birkales, 1986, p. 77). In a similar vein, we see a “leading opponent of multicultural curricula fragmentation, civil antagonism, illiteracy, and economic technological ineffectualness” (Hirsch, 1988, p. 92). One US English advocate goes so far as to blame sociolinguists for opportunistically championing multiculturalism and multilingualism (Imhoff, 1989, p. 20).

Monolingual societies are defined as culturally impoverished and multilingual societies as culturally enriched because of the amount of material these countries provide for sociolinguistic study. But our societies are not organized for the amusement of academics, and we have no responsibility to complicate our lives in order to provide material for their own monographs.

It is important to understand that bilingualism and the country’s multiculturalism are not the root of the political, social, and economic problems facing the United States today. Blaming linguistic and cultural diversity is a smokescreen for the fact that the USA has not resolved fundamental inequalities. The nation’s problems would not disappear if we all spoke the same language; unless by speaking the same language we mean that we have the same rights and obligations toward each other. At times I feel pessimistic and at times I feel optimistic about the nation’s ability to achieve a common language of respect, and about the future of the Latino community. It is impossible not to be disheartened by the anti-immigrant and anti-Spanish (as well as anti any other language) fervor that has accompanied the adoption of English only amendments by 18 states since the 1980’s, the rise of anti-Latino racially motivated attacks in New York, the socioeconomic disparities that leave almost half (19.6%) of Latino children living in poverty (Passell, 1992), the over representation of Latino children in special education classes, the revival of genetic inferiority theories to explain Latino test scores (Dunn, 1988), and the public demonization of women who are forced to raise their children with welfare benefits that amount to less than half of poverty level income. That home is not only where English speakers reside, and the American dream is not dreamed in English only.

The children in The Bronx and East Harlem have spent their lives building linguistic and cultural bridges; the only way to prove that we do not believe that they are garbage is to meet them halfway. Our reward would be a more respectfully diverse, and consequently more United States. My most audacious hope is for a truly new century: one in which poor children are not alone in crossing linguistic and cultural frontiers.

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This study investigates the premise that Africans and African-Americans can mutually acknowledge their relationship as people of color, emerging from a singular geographical root, Africa. The study presents two newly developed communication models – Biophysical Cultural Identification and Cultural Artifact/Event Model. The Biophysical Cultural Identification (BCI) Model and Cultural Artifact/Event Model (CAE) use forms of inter-group, cross-cultural communication modes to ascertain relevancy to an identified cultural topic moving to a unified understanding. Established cross-cultural communication modes are combined with the newly-developed CAE model which uses a tangible item/artifact to spur culture retention and allocation, and the BCI which uses a format to allow paired ethnic groups an avenue to dismantle communication barriers beginning with a focus on physical characteristics and moving through cultural practices. The adoption of the CAE and the BCI as ethnic communication models for this study assist in the exploration of how Africans and African-Americans can depolarize to develop mutual understanding and acceptance using cultural exchanges and verbal narrations to achieve a collaborative understanding of self, legacy, history, and cultural identity. Results indicate that cultural barriers were decreased and understanding was increased between these groups. The use of the CAE and BCI models are not limited to the two groups in this study, but can also be used with other ethnic groups to bring about similar results.
Introduction

Many customs and traditions prevailed through African/American slavery into modern times, but countless traditions and customs were lost. Both Africans and African-Americans emerged from the single geographical root of the land mass of Africa, but are now separated by the Atlantic Ocean and nearly 400 years of historical evolution for African-Americans. When attempting a communication project involving these two cultural and ethnic entities, what remained prevalent were the separation of space and time between the two.

The current frequency of Africans coming to the United States is dense. The Immigration Naturalization Service reported that 45,640 Africans came to the United States in 2003. Through direct observation and interviews conducted associated with this study it was noted that Africans rarely settled in African-American neighborhoods and occasionally found themselves in the United States establishing independent areas of habitation or merging into the more dominant Anglo environment and not connecting with the African-American population. Both Africans and African-Americans interviewed for this study admitted to disconnection the other and oftentimes felt discontentment fueled by misunderstanding and lack of communication. The media was cited as one of the key indicators to the communication deficiencies between Africans and African-Americans. Dyson (1993) stated that media shaped cultural values, and determined social relations all at the expense of the exploited, but at the profit of corporations providing millions of dollars on advertising. Schudson (1989) also noted that mass media has had an impact on individuals and what is relayed regarding a person’s culture beliefs and behavior.

In the implementation of this study, African and African-American participants stood separated in their conceptual views of the opposite groups. One of the prevalent themes that emerged immediately within the dialogue diffusion process of BCI, a process within the communication model where raw ideas and stereotypes are openly addressed through verbalization, were media’s influence in the misperceptions and misrepresentation of the two groups. The African-American society portrayed by the media as a troubled society plagued with crime, pimps and drug pushers (Dyson, 1993). The African-American society is also plagued by a system of under-education, unemployment, poverty, and hopelessness. These images are widely broadcasted throughout the world. So how do we move to a reculturalization of culture that could bring individuals to a space where the independent, polarized groups could function collectively within one cultural realm? The implementation of the Biophysical Cultural Identification (BCI) Model and Cultural Artifact/Event Model (CAE) BCI models put culture identification at the forefront of the communication process. However, direct communication that is culturally acceptable to the engagers is the essential key in relaying facts and information that foster and cultivate dialogue between groups. Once communication is established on the key cultural grounds, groups set and work the agendas that will bring cooperation, peace, global unity, and humanity.

This study presented two newly developed communication models that attempted to identify common threads that still link Africans, particularly of West Africa, and African-Americans. The study and the communication models presented served as instruments for further study and research surrounding culture-based communication models. In addition, this study examined how modified inter-cultural, cross-cultural, and face communication models, when implemented with certain groups, can aid in communication, reconciliation, bridging understanding, and building community. Attainment of such objectives could lead to the development of social-economic bonds, newly-formed modes of communication, and cultural re-education through reflective and equivalent acknowledgement, respect of culture, and physical engagement between the two groups. The presentation challenged Africans and African-Americans to develop an agenda that will move towards peace, global unity and mutual understanding.
Dedication: This research work is dedicated to the memory of the late Ralph Hammond, a man who served God by respecting and sharing his love for community, peace and racial reconciliation. It is befitting that this research work is dedicated to the memory of the late Rev. Ralph Hammond, who served as associate professor of pastoral care at Bethel Seminary and the seminary’s first director of multicultural affairs.

Historical Perspective

The Issue of Slavery

African-Americans have been separated from their root continent of Africa for over 400 years. However, hybrid activities of the original culture and physical characteristics are evident in some African-American populations. One of the major goals to facilitate understanding from an African-American western worldview will be to dispel and demystify untruths relative to Africa and its people and to regain connectivity to that culture which was lost. Before we attempt to move into modern times we must look to the past to determine where severance occurred from the land mass of African and thus from its people. Samovar, Porter, and Stefani (1998) stated that African-American history in the United States was shaped by slavery. Dobson (2002) defined slavery as an organized method of labor and exploitation. Labor was the key economic need and commodity of the European slave merchants. In 1510 the King of Spain gave executive orders to launch the Transatlantic Slave Trade with 50 African slaves being sent to Haiti (Dobson, 2002).

Dobson (2002) concluded that during the Transatlantic Slave Trade, between the time of 1500 and the 1870s, millions of Africans were enslaved by European slave merchants in Africa and transported to America via the Atlantic Ocean. Slave merchants established forts on the western coast of Africa, not to defend themselves against indigenous native tribes of Africans, but to guard and defend themselves against other Europeans who were also take interest in and advantage of the slave market in western and central Africa. This was not Africa’s first orientation to slavery. Dobson (2002) reported that small tribes and ancient Egypt society participated in enslavement or indentured servitude. Other cultures that engaged in slavery predating the American slave activity were Greece and Rome, ancient China, and the Incas and Aztecs. In North America, the Native American Indians were the first slaves of the European slave system of America but because of susceptibility to diseases brought over by the European colonists, many Native American Indians fell ill, thus spoiling the plot to extract free labor from the indigenous American natives.

Enslaving people for economic advantage is a component of United States history, beginning with Native Americans, the indigenous population, and continuing with enslaved Africans brought to the United States. Africans were sold to the American colonists as free labor. Between 1500 and 1700 the Portuguese colonists reigned supreme in the transporting of the precious cargo of slaves. During the Portuguese rule of 200 years it was estimated that 1.7 million enslaved Africans were transported to the Americas, primarily to Brazil and the Caribbean (Dobson, 2002). The majority of African slaves transported during that time period hailed from the west-central African regions of Congo-Angola, the Bight of Benin, the Bight of Biafra, and the Gold Coast, Senegambia (what is presently the independent countries of Senegal and Gambia), and the upper Guinea. An additional 3.5 million arrived in the Americas during the 19th century. Those who survived the horrors of the Middle Passage were men and boys ages 14 to 30, and girls and women ages 14 to 30. The latter represented 25 percent of the total slave population transported (Dobson, 2002). The 1860 United States Census confirmed that the total number of slaves in the Deep South
was 2,312,352, representing 47% of the total population; the total number of slaves in the Upper South was 1,208,758, representing 29% of the total population; and the total number of slaves within the bordering states was 432,586, representing 13% of the total population (United States Historical Census, 1998.)

Slavery in the Americas was taken as a bittersweet pill. Dobson (2002) concluded that the transatlantic slave trade was instrumental in the economic development of the modern world and to establish political, social and cultural relations between peoples of Africa, Europe, and the Americas that did not exist prior to that time (Dobson, 2002).

**Cultural Shaping of Early African-American Society**

Blassingame (1972) noted that the African made many attempts to escape the torturous hands of their captors and that the African resisted enslavement and obligatory emigration. Blassingame noted that Africans, while still on the coast of Africa awaiting boarding of the ships, began to flee by foot. Some attempted or committed suicide while waiting to be transported. Africans making the middle-passage often mutinied and seized the ship, killing the captain and crew. Despite their chains and confinement the Africans mutinied so often that many ship-owners purchased insurance to cover the loss of any mutiny. Africans continued the mutinies and tried to escape the moment their feet touched the soil of the New World. Others slaves became uncooperative laborers resisting work as a slave. Blassingame (1972) described the slaves as having “Greatness of Soul”, pride, and inner courage that had to be removed. If any slaves displayed strength, pride, or “Greatness of Soul”, that slave had to be re-conditioned and spirit-broken with harsh physical torture and punishment until the slave conceded or until death (Blassingame, 1972).

Western colonial enterprise noted cultural differences among non-western cultures and judged those cultures and peoples as “less developed”. This labeling of levels of civilization and human development was the justification that westerners used to colonize and enslave other humans (Schutte, 1998). Colonization opened the path to attempts of re-culturalization by attempting to alter the value system, to change cover identities by replacing original names and by tainting history and genealogy. Dobson (2002) noted that despite slavery some blacks had worked towards becoming free blacks. The black population representing the free blacks’ population was around 59,000 in 1790 and had grown to approximately 488,000 in 1860. Despite the oppression of slaves in the south, 44% of free blacks continued to live in the south, and 46% lived in the northern states. Roughly one-third of the Southern families participated in slave ownership. The number of slave-owning families reached 50% in Mississippi and South Carolina. Louisiana was unique in that it allowed freed Negroes to also participate in slave-ownership (Dobson, 2002). The efforts of some free black populations advanced and developed the beginning of African-American organizational life. With the assistance of abolitionist whites and free blacks, the fundamentals of African-American civic, religious, literary, educational, fraternal and social clubs and organizations formed. At the beginning of the 19th century such African-American organizations propelled social and cultural revolution that transformed the enslaved African immigrants into what we now know as the African-American people (Dobson, 2002).

As we move closer to modern time, MacDonald (1975) explained that the emancipation of African nations helped African-Americans create their African distinctiveness and offered them a sense of pride in their African heritage, and to some, their satisfaction in claiming Africa as their lost home. With this newly formed sense of pride, Blacks in America refrained from labeling themselves as Negros, the term given to them by their slave oppressors, and began referring to themselves as African-Americans, Afro-Americans or black people. African-Americans’ attempts to reconnect themselves with their history beyond that which predated what was taught by the dominant culture, provided rich evidence that African-Americans wanted to claim their stolen heritage(MacDonald, 1975). This provides part of the justification for this study.
The main emphasis of this study is to bring together two polarized groups through means of communication and connectivity with a common culture. Exploring and discovering commonalities in socialization, traditions, religion, and community to gain a platform for dialogue between Africans and African Americans is the objective.

**Defining Culture**

To discover common threads between the two ethnic groups we look first to defining and explaining culture. Ngwainmbi (2003) stated that we could not view the total concept of culture without including the basic premise of time, circumstances, locale, and a group’s belief and how that particular group perceives value in relation to their own customs. People work together and do like activities to achieve a collective way of life that differs from other groups of people in ways that reflect the group’s culture (Ngwainmbi, 2003).

Although Africans and African-Americans were spun from the same geographical source and perform similar rituals and cultural identification markers, the two groups stand largely polarized in their communication with one another. Sharing historical information could be crucial in the development of increased frequency of effective communication between these two polarized groups. Culture, the intra and extra expressions held by a group of individuals sharing a common history, understanding and conceptualization of time, proximity, activities and common belief system, as defined by Ngwainmbi (2003), could be identified as what African-Americans and Africans do solely apart and independent of each other. However, Zoreda (1997) defined culture beginning with its humanistic and biological root. Zoreda (1997) makes clear the issue of culture and activity by defining culture as a non-elitist and anthropological term that means the common experiences that guide a group’s action. Culture materialized through thought patterns and outward behavioral signs that included values, beliefs, and codes of conduct, political association, and trade/industry activity, that were obtained through shared learning throughout time (Zoreda, 1997).

Zoreda (1997) explained that the culture of a group of people evolves and changes. By embracing culture we see our culture fluency, and ability to connect with others who are culturally different from ourselves, as evolving to the state of culture we are addressing. Cultural fluency is the ability too acknowledge, respect and operate within the confines of a cultural that is different from our primary culture. In the case of Africans and African-Americans, the knowledge that commonalities exist could establish a re-emergence of a common culture. In embracing the “other” culture we open the self to enjoyment, struggle to understand, and at times, pain by remembering or sharing those stereotypes that prevented and caused misunderstanding (Zoreda, 1997).

Blassingame (1972) reported that slaves of the Antebellum south learned to lighten their sorrows of slavery by creating unique cultural forms which minimized the oppression, formed unity and solidarity, gave an avenue for verbalizing aggression and trauma of the day, built pride in self, and supported hope. Slave culture and a hybrid of ceremonies and customs brought from Africa with African natives were marked by Blassingame (1972) as emotional and religious rituals, folk songs and storytelling, displays of dancing, and a belief in the supernatural coined as superstitions. Burns (1987) stated that food and news were celebrated by the slaves and the kitchen was the place where information was shared. Family history was often passed down during conversations while the head slaves were controlling the kitchen. Burns (1987) noted that slaves passed on the use of spices, cooking style, and traditions brought over from Africa. Slaves in the southern region of the United States had accessibility to rich spices that grew wild. Slaves often utilized the abundant harvest of fruits, grains, and game to re-create their old recipes from Africa or concoct new dishes.

Slaves also used their skill of meat preservation carried with them from Africa. In Louisiana slaves and their descendants were introduced to Creole cooking a combination of French and Afro-
Caribbean dishes. Burns (1987) documented that black slave women pioneered the use of corn in baking bread.

Cultural-based Communication

The push to utilize culturally-based communication in my research is a push to address and dispel misperceptions of the polarized groups. Baldwin and Hunt (2002) stated that the utilization of intergroup competency, a point of understanding reached by individuals sharing a like set, dispelled media-made stereotypes through direct data-discovery. The Baldwin and Hunt (2002) distinguished that individuals have total freedom from their preconceived stereotypes but could practice conscious suppression which could be spurred by the combating action of intergroup competency (Baldwin & Hunt, 2002). As we witness our communities becoming more ethnically diverse, there is a need to communicate with each other and to live together in God’s peaceful design for humanity. However, not everyone agrees that people of other cultures should live together in community. Schutte (1998) stated that more prejudices are aimed towards immigrants and people who are different in our communities. A formula to live together and communicate with those who are labeled as “other” or different is needed. When we open ourselves so that we can have control within the confines of communication and the communication leads to shared cultural respect, we can rise to a new level of understanding and to interpersonal and social interactions that can transcend gender, ethnic, cultural, and other differences (Schutte, 1998). Within the execution of BCI and CAE, stress appeared when one culture was perceived as having advantage in the communication process. Group members of the “other” cultural group displayed resistance in the form of non-communication and limited or evasive or no eye contact, thus leaving the two groups limited in communication. Conflict and indifference in the communication process should not be deemed negative. Schutte (1998) reported that struggle and ambiguity in the communication process allows individuals to determine what the sensitive areas are and offer a gauge for re-adjustment.

Schutte (1998) stated that incommensurability is what remains unsaid or lost in the communication process. We can confront the incommensurability by establishing an equal plane of communication. The greatest case for the utilization of cross-cultural communication is that it enforces and places infrastructure on human association and solidarity. Schutte (1998) stated that the utilization of cross-cultural communication in communication with the true self gives the opportunity to appreciate the stranger within ourselves and the stranger without.

Neuliep and Ryan (1998) noted that although individuals may emerge from the same geographical root, they may look at themselves as being totally different in culture and, like other core differences, this may cause disassociation. When individuals encounter cultural differences the others are labeled strangers. Interaction with those that are culturally different could be the cause of anxiety, labeled Intercultural Communication Anxiety (ICA), in situations of communication between culturally different groups. Effective intercultural communication is attained when individuals are able to manage anxiety and ambiguity and work through ICA (Neuliep & Ryan, 1998).

Schutte (1998) noted that desired outcomes between two cultural groups may be confirmed and hindered by the non-transparencies of the two cultures or by language. Incommensurability is the remains of what is left to meaning that will not be reached in cross-culture communication. Yet the remains or incommensurability of communication marked by those that have been identified as the “differentiated other” may be an important key to understanding, and struggles need to be translated so that both parties can understand. The moment of dealing with the remains of incommensurability could cause frustration in the facilitation and participation in cross-cultural communications (Schutte, 1998). In order for cross-cultural communication to be successful, the groups must move to limit the level of incommensurability, by taking the focus off of what is said in the communication and shifting the focus to what remains “unsaid” (Schutte, 1998). Frequently, polarized groups, such as Africans and African-Americans, do not function or communicate interdependently, so the first model was
utilized in the study to aid cross-cultural communication with the hopes that intergroup competence could be gained (Baldwin and Hunt, 2002). Baldwin & Hunt (2002) defined intergroup competence as the ability to recognize and display like behavior appropriate to the group situations. Gained skill in intergroup competence supported expected behaviors with the general group interactions and specifically in the data-discovery process.

Chen (2002) investigated face-to-face, one-to-one communication that looked at perceptions of intercultural interaction. The perceptions were **synchrony**, **difficulty**, and **common ground** of communication. Personalness is a level of intimacy or the interpersonal variance of the participants or cultural group. Individuals who are together in close physical proximity and who established close relationships had a high degree of personalness. Synchrony describes the fluid ease of communication and relatedness. Chen (2002) stated that individuals sharing a common sociocultural background may experience a higher degree of synchrony than those individuals who do not share like sociocultural backgrounds. Difficulty is explained as the obstructions that prevent ease of communication. Chen (2002) noted that the major difficulty in intercultural communication were ignorance of the “others’” life and world, or lack of commonality between participants in the communication.

Schudson (1989) observed that culture is embodied in both material form and social practice. The cultural object is tangible as well as symbolic. Artifacts and symbols are viewed as powerful in shaping human action and thus can be a key instrument for producing of ideas, propaganda and direct actions of society. Schudson (1989) introduced five points that examine the potency of a cultural object: **retrievability**, **rhetorical force**, **resonance**, **institutional retention**, and **resolution**. The cultural object should be accessible and able to be retrieved. Culture can be retained if it can be brought into a physical presence and has a better chance to have longevity if the cultural item can be etched into memory. Schudson (1989) noted that culture can be used as a resource for social action more than a structure to limit social action. The rhetorical force, effectiveness, and designated sacredness of the culture object made the object powerful and memorable. The rhetorical force can differ with each holder of the object and with the audience. The engagement of the storyteller makes the object powerful. The storyteller infuses energy in the relaying of information to the audience. Schudson (1989) noted that if the cultural object is to be effective in relaying cultural symbolism, individuals coming in contact with the object must have be able to freely engage with others in dialogue. Resonance is the degree to which the audience chooses to have the cultural object transcends the community’s existence. The cultural object becomes the unanimously chosen symbol within the group (Schudson, 1989). Institutional retention of the cultural object happens when the object not only is accepted and transcends individuals in a common group, but also has an institutional or organizational impact on political and governing bodies. Some cultural objects have controlled or directed action and moved to an end or to a resolution. For example, Schudson (1989) described sacred text as being a cultural object that offers resolve and action by fulfilling the objective to read and to perform ritual related to the object (Schudson, 1989).

In an educational study of a rural public university in the United States, with a student population of 13,000, of which 13% were non-white a West India instructor set out to document students’ perceptions, behavior and experiences when instruction was administered by a non-white individual. Pattnaik’s (1997) study gauged the stereotypes of students and educators. Pattnaik (1997) recognized that students had a greater respect for cultural dissimilarity and understanding of the descriptions of a cross-cultural encounter. The descriptions were identified as **nonverbal cues indicating, tolerance, persistence, openness, and listening skills**. Pattnaik (1997) also noted that students and educators moved past their stereotypes by addressing their own biases journaling about their thoughts and findings (Pattnaik, 1997). Students preferred to have instructors of their own ethnicity over other ethnicities which lends to the theory of ethnocentrism. Pattnaik (1997) described ethnocentrism as the predisposition among people of a group to display a more approving pattern of acknowledgment for their in-group members than for the members of other groups. During the use of
the BCI model the two polarized groups of Africans and African-Americans showed signs of ethnocentrism, preferring to comfortably communicate intra-group rather then expand communication to the opposite group. The displayed ethnocentric behavior confirmed Pattnaik’s (1997) findings. Baldwin and Hunt (2002) stated that the purpose of intercultural communication and intergroup communication is information-seeking. Pattnaik (1997) introduced the definition of a contact zone. A group session can be viewed as a contact zone which is a social space where cultures congregate, disagree, and come to grips with each other, often in the context of highly unbalanced relations of power (Pratt, 1991).

### Two New Culture-based Communication Models

We begin this journey of connectivity and culture awareness by defining culture and by introducing to the two communication models, the **Cultural Artifact/Event Model (CAE)** and the **Biophysical Cultural Identification Model (BCI)**. The CAE and BCI models can be utilized not solely for Africans and African-Americans, but for other ethnic groups as well. Qualitative methodology was used for the study. The following describes the setting, participants, procedures of data collection, limitations of the study, and data analysis.

#### Setting

The study was implemented in two separated gatherings at a local community church, with congregation comprising of 45% Africans, 35% African-Americans and 20% Caucasian, in the upper mid-west section of the United States. The community church is well-known for its outreach into the community and has offered both Africans and African-Americans a stable place to worship together. Caucasians attending the church have family roots in the church with some being chartered members along with African-American members.

#### Participants

Participants were openly solicited through a general announcement during worship service. Four African and African-American families, consisting of twelve individuals, were selected for the CAE models and 46 individuals were selected for participation in the BCI model. Male and female participants were represented in the study. A total of 58 individuals participated in the study from the mid-west site.

#### Limitations

Families were limited to individuals over the age of 18. Participants were limited to those who could communicate in English and those over the age of 18.

#### Biophysical Culture Identification (BCI) Model

**Procedure and Data Collection**

Data was collected from 146 individuals by execution of the Biophysical Culture Identification (BCI) model. In figure 2 the model engaged ethnic groups in group interaction by pairing with a person of the opposite group. Each participant list three, physical, cultural, historical, and personal commonalities and differences as speaking points or reflection. Participants within their independent groups were required to identify a stereotype that they held of the opposite group and determine if the stereotype were fact or fiction and, if fiction, the origin, if known. Paired participants rejoined the larger group to present their findings thus creating an avenue for communication and relationship building. Data collection documented the responses to preset questionnaire. Ease of communication, non-verbal communication was also taken into consideration. Chen (2002) in the investigation of face-to-face, one-to-one communication looked at perceptions of intercultural interaction noting synchrony, difficulty, and common ground of communication. The model aimed for congruency with Chen...
(2002) points of successful intercultural interaction pushing for a high level of synchrony that would bring on personalness between the groups.
Findings

Both Africans and African-Americans were comfortable within their silos or independent groups when communicating. Although individuals engaged in religious worship together on a consistent basis, the two groups found it difficult to openly list perceived stereotypes that they held about the opposite group. The African-American group at times became the aggressor when Africans had difficulty getting their message understood. The difficulty was attributed to ease in verbal language expression. It was documented that 35% of the participants operated on the stereotypes of the opposite group and admitted that limited association was made because of perceived stereotypes. Both Africans and African-Americans responded that they could work together and build community because of the engagement, but realized that physical contact frequency would be instrumental in building relationships.

Cultural Artifact/Event Model (CAE)

Procedure and Data Collection

Data was collected from twelve individuals representing four families, through execution of the Cultural Artifact/Event Model (CAE). Oral histories in the course of storytelling, reflection on unit (identifying population), social connections, and introspection were introduced through a touchable item that the family agreed held symbolism for their family. Within the execution of CAE, figure 3, the families used the tangible items of the family bible, pictures and African carving to describe how that item held culture for them and how they can convey the symbolism to another culture.

Figure 3.
Findings

Both Africans and African-Americans were comfortable talking about the object to the opposite group. When asked to share the object allowing the opposite group to gain sensation though touch, some resistance was shown. During storytelling surrounding the events that created the symbolism to the object, four out of five individuals from each group showed sorrowful emotions causing delay in storytelling. Schudson (1989) noted that the engagement of the storyteller makes the object controlling. The storyteller infused force in the relaying of information to the opposite group. In correlation to Schudson (1989) study, the participant’s cultural object was highly effective in relaying cultural symbolism; individuals who were allowed to touch the object were allowed to dialogue with the family holding the object. It was noted that the item/event served as a transference tool for human emotion, cultural history. Families found ease in talking about the object, and event. Families also began conversing freely about their independent experiences to one another. Families stated that they had a greater respect for the histories and experiences of the opposite group and was more aware of the humanity of the opposite group. Africans participants noted that the media portrayed African-Americans in a negative social formation and engagement which fueled their disassociation from the African-American minority group while supporting their perceived need for Anglo association. African participants also noted that the perception is that African-American families are void of the family structure, a male dominant figure and many families are headed by single-headed females; which for Africans of the West Coast, a society embodied the characteristics liken to that of the perceived African-American society were out of cultural sync and supported disconnection and obscurity. Africans openly voiced concerns within dialogue diffusion that they desired not to associate with negative activity posed by the African-American society such as disrespectful behavior for culture and family values, passed down to their children.

Both Africans and African-Americans stated that they see each other as both deserving respect and acknowledgement from the other. Of the two polarized groups African-American women were more participatory through vocal expression then African-American men and African women. African men, throughout the majority of the execution of the CAE, were the representative from their group. The outcome of CAE Communication Model is to gain platform for dialogue and aid in reconciliation.
Discussion

With the dialogue diffusion process, African-American participants gave similar information regarding media’s influence in the misperceptions of Africans. African-American participants stated that they were taught through primary education sources and the media that Africans were to be feared and that Africans were in some way less human than others. African-Americans noted that when coming in contact with Africans the biggest challenge was getting past the communication piece, which in the process could be intimidating and frustrating. African-Americans noted that images projected on mass media showed Africans as uncivilized, untamed, starving and waiting on world relief efforts for life sustainability. Africans, in whom African-American participants came in contact through school or community, appeared self-applied ostracized from African-American participants. African-Americans stated that when discoveries and inventions, the abundance and riches of kingdoms were presented in educational setting, it more than likely always pointed to Egypt, giving Egypt a state of being off the continent of Africa instead of giving Egypt its rightful geological location in Africa. Compared to Egypt other places, such as the Congo were presented as dark, unknown, or underdeveloped. African-American participants blamed mainstream society for inequalities in support given to Africans arriving to the country, as opposed to African-Americans, thus supporting the alienation, distance, and disssention between the groups. A common thought pattern was that Africans were embraced by Anglo society on jobs, in churches, colleges and university, and in social settings because they represented a land that had been exoticized. On the other hand, African-Americans commented that when engaged in similar social and economic settings they were not welcomed as the Africans were but were labeled and feared by Anglo society.

African and African-American participants in the communication study found strong similarities in worship with the participants noting that worship is filled with emotion and serves as an avenue to heal from the stresses of life. Africans accounted ritual ceremonies of initiation, welcoming new life into community and successful harvesting as ones that brought on emotions marked with jubilant dancing and physical expressions. During worship or dance individuals connected with the outer spiritual world displayed trance-like physical traits. In many African-American churches today individuals freely express themselves verbally and through praise-dance, similar to that which is experienced in African culture. The African slaves created a culture they could claim as their own and which presented mental reprieve that took them to an imaginary life free from the control of whites (Blassingame, 1972). The execution of the practices set slaves apart from their white captors and masters in language, traditions, customs, beliefs, and ceremonies (Blassingame, 1972). The execution and display of African and African-American cultural behavior distinctly established the groups apart from other ethnic groups, yet both groups were similar in cultural practices.

Study participants’ responses matched those accounts given in Burns (1987) regarding the use and preparation of black, southern foods. Study participants both agreed on the favorite foods from Africa that were added to the culture of African-Americans. African-Americans in the study commented that they cooked with heavy spices. With many African-Americans this form of cooking and ingredients was a re-introduction to the spices and aromas that the slaves cultivated. African and African-American cooking, similarities, elements, and ingredients that were presented within the study included the following: cornbread, various gumbos (chicken, oyster, seafood, gumbo file’, chicken gumbo), grits, couscous, gari, collard greens, black eyed peas, sassafras tea, watermelon pickles, okra and tomatoes, potlikkers, burgoo, cornbread and molasses, oxtail stew, possum stew, spoon bread, hoecakes, crackling, stewed chicken, collard and turnip greens preparations, and eggplant. Extensive usage of pork and beef, but mainly pork, was mentioned because of the abundant supply, accessibility in local markets, frequency of usage, and consistency in recipes. Participant responses were similar to those foods presented in Burns (1987).
African participants stated they too had similar richly spiced dishes. Both groups described and agreed in naming aromas from open seafood markets as having a blend of onion, sweet bell pepper, okra, and the thick sauces of gumbo. Gumbo is flour-based brown gravy called rue. The gumbo is seasoned with spices, seafood, okra and chicken, and is similar to the Africans’ fufu and other rich dishes cooked and served in the western regions of Africa. Burns (1987) predicted that “Black” food will always be with us and that “Black” food has become an integral part of American society. Black food or the food that were/are the product of the cooking style and ingredients of the slave and descendants served as communication and connection for both Africans and African-American families.

Study participants concluded that celebration, information, informal and formal gatherings around food and its preparation are a mainstay in the African and African-American family, and the attempts to not only pass on cooking recipes and style, but family history and tradition were mentioned as a goal. The African and African-American participants of the study commented that food and celebrations surrounding food were similar in nature. Coming of age, religious, and family gatherings were noted to be celebrated with food and drink. Participants explained that during the celebrations and jubilations storytelling and oral presentations of histories were passed down from one generation to the next.

Implications for Future Research

James Downs stated, “One of the greatest stumbling blocks to understanding other peoples within or without a particular culture is the tendency to judge others’ behavior by our own standards” (as cited in Elmer, 2002, p. 35). The direct action of acknowledging an individual’s culture will assist in building relationships between cultures. We are the products of our cultural heritage and upbringing and that heritage dictates our worldview and interaction with people. Sometimes we assume that people are the same and do not understand that everyone has their own experiences of culture and interaction with the world. Elmer (2002) suggested that the more we understand, the more we bridge communication gaps and understand people who are different from us and begin to see some similarities, and withhold our urgency to judge people based on our own cultural heritage. One key way to learn and share cultural experiences is to be a cultural informant. A cultural informant is a person who is willing to share and teach about their culture to people who live outside the culture. Culture is the way people live collectively in community with others. It is only natural that people act out of their cultural heritage, whether it is male or female, young or old, or different ethnicities or races (Elmer, 2002). So how might this research using the BCI and the CAE modes be a building block for further culturally-based communication between these groups and others? Perhaps collaboration will arise from greater understanding between these groups, and maybe the enhanced sense of historical identity for African-Americans will strengthen such things as leadership potential and economic success.

When thinking about possibilities for future collaborations between groups, it is comforting to know that such things have been done. For example, in May of 1963 Africans and African-Americans worked harmoniously in the building of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), whose mission was to combat economic and racial discrimination against blacks and colonial subjugation of Africans. The OAU’s activity involved Blacks (African-Americans) from the United States, individuals from Haiti, Ethiopia, Liberia, British West Indies, and West Africa. Panford (1996) reported that Africans and African-Americans participating in the activities of the OAU were satisfied with the results of bridging cultural divides and strengthening the organization. The group members struggled with inter-cultural differences but moved forward tying common beliefs, values and systems together (Panford, 1996). Collaboration can happen between cultures, and it happens best when goals benefiting all parities unify the group. Clearly, this also requires effective leaders.
So where are African-American leaders today? West (2001) asked how African-Americans can explain the lack of leaders as Frederick Douglass, Sojourner Truth, Martin Luther King, Jr., Malcolm X, and Fannie Lou Hamer. Can the acknowledgement of past culture give life to a resurgence of leadership that is critically needed in the African-American communities? Can the synergy created by the reunion of the African-American and African communities assist with humanitarian efforts that are desperately needed in Africa? We can hope that the answer is yes.

Quality African-American (Black) leadership is not the product of one great person or the outcome of a memorable historical event. West (2001) stated that Black leadership emerges from the acknowledgement and remembrance of traditions and communities that nurture talented and gifted persons. That is what the BCI and the CAE modes can contribute. Without the remembrance and fight for past struggles, African-Americans will continue to look blindfolded into the struggles of the lower-class today, and it may well be partially due to a lack of the nurturing of collective and critical consciousness.

Franklin and Moss (1988) noted that many African-Americans speak of the “Motherland”, meaning Africa. However, few African-Americans can speak of Africa other than to name a few countries that were commonly mentioned in geography class. Knowledge was not extended to generations during and after slavery that displayed the political and intellectual magnitude of the nation states of Ghana, Mali, Chad, Niger, Nigeria, The Gambia, and Upper Volta, which are not common knowledge to the average African-American. The use of the BCI and the CAE models could in fact have dramatic impact on how African-Americans see the value of their heritage and allow them to re-establish their political and economic roots as originating in Africa.

So how do we continue to build on our progress with utilization of the communication models and other forms of communication to bring Africans and African-Americans together to establish joint community? The community could be that of the physical environmental landscape of an urban society, joint economic and educational environments, or reculturalization - meshing a rediscovered combined culture. The community of the future can be gained by making common connections. Stephen R. Covey stated that we should work together towards establishing an idea community and yet this type of community probably could never be wholly materialized as cited in Hesselbein (1998). Elements to incorporate in to a joint idea community might be, as Hesselbein (1998) suggests, 1) one standard of integrity, 2) single heart, vision and direction, 3) a single purpose that unifies, and 4) an agenda for economic equality and survival within such a joint ideal community (Hesselbein, 1998).

Clearly, these elements require effective leadership, and good leaders are aware of both where they came from and are prepared for where they are going. Future research might focus on longitudinal studies of groups using the BCI and CAE models to determine if common ground and understanding develops and then produces collaborative efforts. A longitudinal approach could also investigate whether or not leaders are produced from continued use of these models. And, of course replication of this research will be needed as well. It has been said that we must know our history in order to manage the future well. It is hoped that the BCI and the CAE models of cross-cultural communication will contribute not only to African-Americans’ knowledge of their past, but other ethnic groups as well, and thereby enhance positive self identity, grow potential leaders, and make humanitarian collaboration a reality between two groups that are so often polarized.

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**The Case of the Chinese Laundrymen: using theatre games as an active means of teaching about other cultures**

By Dallas McCurley, Queens College CUNY

Playing theatre games is fun; it is also a means of learning that provokes a state of hyper-attention in the participants. This state occurs as students not only learn about various historical situations, but actively become ‘participants’ in the events by taking roles that they will prepare and enact.
Theatre games can be played across disciplines and at all levels of study. In a simple game designed for elementary students who are first learning about the solar system, the participants would be assigned to ‘play’ the entities they are studying; for instance, some would take the roles of planets, some would be moons, others comets or asteroids, and one would play the sun. A student playing one of Jupiter’s moons would physically recreate its slow turning around its own pole and its simultaneous orbiting around Jupiter. The ‘moon’ would need to react to any contact with any of the students playing asteriods or comets in an appropriate manner while maintaining an orbit around another player (Jupiter) who is also turning as well as orbiting the sun. Individually, each student must come to know exactly how the entity they are portraying would behave in the galaxy; in their group interactions, they come to comprehend the interrelations between the solar system’s objects. Once all participants are moving according to the demands of their roles, they begin to understand in a hands-on way the overall pattern of how the solar system works.

Theatre games can be short (2-3 minutes) or complex, lasting over a period of several weeks. To illustrate how flexible theatre games are in terms of the material that can be covered, I decided to go back to the Proceedings of last year’s conference to find a topic about which I knew nothing but which I thought could be interestingly explored in a theatre game. Ann Whitaker’s paper “Asians and Americans: Culture and Education” refers to the Exclusion Act of 1882 as a central issue in Chinese-American relations during the second half of the 19th century. Researching this topic led to my devising “The Case of the Chinese Laundrymen.”

The game is played over several classes. In the first class I suggest beginning with a brief theatre game called “Getting Through the Door.” The point of this game is a) for each student to have an objective and to focus determinedly on it; and b) for the students to realize that they all can improvise. In this game, two students are presenting at any one time. They are told that there is an imaginary door. One student has the objective of not letting anyone through this door; the other student’s objective is to get through it. The extemporaneous dialogue might take the form of:

**Student A:** Excuse me, I need to get in, I have to go to the bathroom.
**Student B:** This is a nuclear facility, you can’t come in here to go to the bathroom!
**Student A:** But I have to go right now, it’ll just take a second.
**Student B:** Didn’t you hear me? Nobody can get in here without an ID.
**Student A:** I have an ID.
**Student B:** Show it to me.
**Student A:** Here it is. *(Mimes showing ID)*
**Student B:** Well that’s expired, I can’t let you in with that.
**Student A:** Well, my boss is just inside the door here, let me speak to him—he can tell you I work here.
**Student B:** No, I can’t let you in until you show me your ID first.

This segment of the game lasts for two minutes, at which point the students are asked to switch roles.

Once all students in the class have had a chance to play both roles, the teacher points out that improvisation is something they already do on a daily basis, and gives the students encouragement for their ability just demonstrated to improvise for an extended period of time without having been provided with any background information to feed their inventiveness.

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2 A popular game at the present time, being played on several campuses in the U.S., is commonly known as *The Athens Game*; its full title is *The Threshold of Democracy: Athens in 403 B.C.*, Boston, MA: Pearson Custom Publishing, 2003. The author and deviser of the game is Mark C. Carnes, Ann Whitney Olin Professor of History at Barnard College, CUNY.
The main game, “The Case of the Chinese Laundrymen,” is now introduced. The students learn that here they will be given background information. They are then assigned to one of the various factions historically involved and given a packet containing original historical material relevant to that faction, such as Constitutional Amendments, a segment of a treaty, newspaper clippings from the time, etc.

The next six classes, each lasting an hour, will be used to play the game’s six episodes. These play out events centering on Chinese immigrant laborers in California between the years 1852 and 1886. In the process, a rich array of issues is raised, to do not only with relations between the Chinese laborers and other workers but also engaging many other adversarial groups. The first six episodes all take place before Councilmen whose task it is to introduce the issues, call on contending speakers, and mediate the hearings. The sixth comprises an improvised trial, “The Case of the Chinese Laundrymen,” which draws on material from all of the previous episodes; the jury includes members of a number of the factions involved. There will then be a concluding lesson, which will be explained later.

The factions are as follows:

- **Councilmen (2 students)**
- **Miners and Railway Workers and their Wives who are employed as Domestic Servants and Laundrywomen (8 students)**
- **The Administrators of Mines and Railways and their Wives who employ Domestic and Laundry Workers (4 students)**
- **Labor Union Leaders, Police, and Anti-Chinese Politicians (5 students)**
- **Pro-Chinese Politicians and Officials (2 students)**
- **Reporters, Editors, Cartoonists, Judge (4 students)**
- **Lawyers, who until the last episode are present in their capacity as Citizens (2 students)**
- **Chinese Workers and Association Leaders (6 students)**

**Class 1**

**Setting: Town Hall, Everyville, CA**  
**Time: 1855**

The Councilmen convene a meeting to hear disputes between Miners and Railway Workers and their respective Administrators, together with all the Wives concerned. All students involved have received information on two Commutation Taxes, which tax ships bringing in Chinese laborers; and a tax of 1855, the Foreign Miners License Tax, which charges $6 per month per Chinese miner for the first year, after which it will be raised by $2 a year.

All three taxes are supported by the Labor faction, who are concerned that Chinese immigrants, who are willing to work for very little money, are stealing their jobs and forcing down wages. The taxes are opposed by the Administrators who are facing crises in both industries and wish to keep down overall costs. Both sides are supported by their Wives.

As in the introductory game, each of the participants has an objective. The Labor faction wishes to have the taxes maintained or even increased; they must make it clear how the Chinese laborers are hurting them and their families. The Administrators want to abolish the taxes and must therefore put forward the case that the cheaper Chinese labor is essential to keep the industries going, which in the end will benefit everyone. The Councilmen must hear all sides of the argument; as moderators of the
game, they insure that everyone is participating and also spur on arguments by playing Devil’s Advocate.

In this class each student is asked to make at least one extended argument on behalf of their faction, and encouraged to make more extensive contributions. The students have been encouraged to research further the materials they have been given for their factions, and to share their findings with the rest of their group; within these factions, however, they create the character they will play. The actual class interactions will be improvisational. This is the operative format for all the game’s episodes.

Class 2

Setting: Town Hall, Everyville, CA
Time: 1862

This Town Hall meeting has been called in connection with the rise of community tensions. Recent developments include the following:

1. In response to an effective refusal by the Police to enforce the law in the Chinese community, the Chinese have formed their own vigilante groups known as tongs. Clashes have been occurring between Police and tong members.

2. Further to protect themselves, Chinese merchants in 1855 have organized the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association to protest discrimination in schools and employment, to settle arguments within their own community, and negotiate between the Chinese and state and federal governments. The CCBA also hires American lawyers to defend their rights in court. Labor unions have been protesting this.

3. In 1862 the California Supreme Court has ruled unconstitutional the two Commutation Taxes and the Foreign Miners License Tax, along with an 1858 Landing Law prohibiting Chinese from landing in California and an 1862 Police Tax of $2.50 levied against everyone from China. Several of the factions are up in arms about this.

The economic issues are the same as before, and students can draw on the background, arguments, and passions established in Class 1. In addition, the various factional spokespeople will now seek to present their opponents as taking unreasonable and extreme measures. For instance, notable among Chinese grievances is the ‘Queue Ordinance,’ whereby Police round up Chinese at random and cut off their queues, making it culturally impossible for them to return to China and also discouraging further immigration. As well as encouraging opinions from all sides, the Councilmen must try to rationalize with all present staying within the law.

Class 3

Setting: Town Hall, Everyville, CA
Time: 1881

The Everyville Town Hall is addressing controversy aroused by a decision to invite as speakers Dennis Kearney, labor leader and President of the Workingmen’s Party, and his associate the Reverend Isaac Kalloch, mayor of San Francisco. Kearney had taken a lead in trying to prevent further Chinese immigration; Kalloch, a Baptist minister who was at first outspoken against Kearney, changed his
mind when urged by Kearney to run as mayor with support from the Workingmen’s Party. The editor of the *San Francisco Chronicle*, Charles De Young, attacked both these men in editorials, revealing a sex scandal involving Kalloch. After acrid remarks flew on both sides, De Young shot and injured Kalloch, who was narrowly elected mayor in 1879 on a sympathy vote. A year later Kalloch’s son fatally shot De Young, who was continuing his attacks in print, but was acquitted on the basis of testimony later revealed to be perjury.

In conducting their Town Hall debate, students can enrich or modify their arguments by drawing on, for example:

1. Provisions of the Burlingame Treaty signed with China in 1868, asserting the “inherent and inalienable right of man to change his home and allegiance and the mutual advantage of free migration.” The Workingmen’s Party was agitating for its abrogation.

2. The rise of the Anti-Coolies Association and the Supreme Order of the Caucasians, who ran boycotts against Chinese businesses in Chinatowns across the US and stirred up riots.

3. Provisions of the 14th Amendment of 1862, which opens by declaring that “All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside.” The Amendment effectively granted the right to vote to all males over the age of 21. Susan B. Anthony opposed this on the grounds that it unfairly excluded women; other suffragettes supported it as a first step to securing the vote for women. In practice, the Chinese were excluded from the protections of the Amendment.

4. Hardships of the widespread economic depression beginning with ‘the Panic of 1873,’ attended by public outrage over business corruption and excesses, including steep railroad fares. In 1875, Union Pacific hired Chinese as strikebreakers in its mine at Rock Springs, Wyoming.

**Class 4**

*Setting: Town Hall, Everyville, CA*

*Time: 1885*

Community tensions have increased, and national politicians are running for office on the basis of their attitudes to Chinese immigration. The factions are meeting in the Town Hall in connection with claims by the Knights of Labor, a radically anti-Chinese union, that the Exclusion Act of 1882 is not being properly enforced in Everyville. This Act prohibited Chinese immigrants other than students, teachers, and merchants who held certificates of “good character” from American missionaries.

The students have been given materials on the immediate history to the Exclusion Act. They have also learned that not long before the fictional Town Hall meeting, the Knights of Labor led the worst massacre of Chinese in the nation’s history. Chinese mineworkers had refused to join a strike; Welsh and Swedish miners, many of them Knights, burned the homes of some 75 families, killing at least 28 people and wounding 15 more. Students have been given an article from the *Rock Springs Independent* dated September 3, 1885, concerning the return of Chinese miners to Rock Springs, protected by three hundred U.S. soldiers.

The Councilmen mediate between the several factions as each argues their own position in regards to political allegiances, moral concerns, and the complex entanglements of economics, race, and class.
This Town Hall meeting is attended by Thomas Nast and Frank Bellew, cartoonists for Harper’s Weekly: A Journal of Civilization. The stated aim of Harper’s is to present all sides of American life basing its arguments on “American ideals and a shared humanity.” They have been running a series called “The Chinese Question” for which Nast and Bellew have been instructed to contribute cartoons. Nast’s work is pro-Chinese, Bellew’s ridicules and caricatures the Chinese. Both men have every interest in stirring up all the factions’ passions in the meeting.

The issues concern women’s work. Many Chinese men driven out of railroads and mining have been doing domestic and laundry work for wealthy San Francisco wives at wages much lower than those paid to the women who were previously hired. These women have been writing to newspapers protesting that they cannot do the work for as little money as the Chinese; the wealthy women have written also, defending their refusal to pay more when they can have the same work done for less. There have been reports of some ex-domestics being forced to turn to prostitution.

Additionally, Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton are stirring both sympathies and alarms with respect to the feminist movement by their new newspaper, The Revolution. But the situation in Everyville divides women against women on class lines; working-class women are set against Chinese men; and the Chinese men are supported by upper-middle-class women. There is no clear suffragette position on this.

All the factions have points to urge here. The Councilmen must ensure that by the end of the meeting, the immediate concerns have been aired that will contextualize the trial scheduled for Lesson 6, “The Case of the Chinese Laundrymen.”

Lesson 6

Case No. 11186: Ching Yung Laundry vs. Everyville Councilmen

The Judge presides; there is a jury of six selected by the teacher. The Councilmen are now defendants. Members of all factions are called on by the Lawyers to testify. Testimony draws on all the material covered so far. This lesson takes the form of an improvised trial whose outcome is not predetermined; each side is trying to put its case as convincingly as it can.

The Councilmen are being sued by the owners of Ching Yung Laundry for “failure to enforce in a fair manner” a city ordinance requiring that all laundries be constructed of stone and brick. The plaintiffs claim that only Chinese laundries are being required to adhere to the ordinance, and that the Council is therefore behaving in a systematically discriminatory way.

Once both sides have made their case, the jury has five minutes to reach a verdict.
Class 7

The teacher gives a lecture on an actual case from 1886, *Yick Wo vs. Hopkins*, where the plaintiffs brought the same charges as in *Ching Yung*. The Yick Wo Laundry, represented by Caucasian Lawyers, won the case and in the process established the principle that a law is discriminatory, even if its wording is not discriminatory, if it is applied in a discriminatory manner. Yick Wo’s Lawyers pointed to the 14th Amendment as well as the 1880 Angell Treaty between the U.S. and China which included the following clause: “If Chinese laborers, or Chinese of any other class, now either permanently or temporarily residing in the territory of the United States, meet with ill treatment at the hands of any other persons, the government of the United States will exert all its powers to devise measures for their protection, and to secure to them the same rights, privileges, immunities, and exemptions as may be enjoyed by the citizens or subjects of the most favored nation, and to which they are entitled by treaty.” The teacher brings in some other information the students have not heard before. In 1886, Port Townsend, Washington decided against trying to expel its Chinese population because employers and consumers depended on Chinese labor for the smooth running of the town economy and because the Chinese had invested a considerable amount of money in the town itself. The Council determined that to expel the Chinese, then, would be to create significant economic problems for the community. Example, that the Exclusion Act was not repealed until 1943.

The lecture is normally the most passive of learning forms. In this case, however, the students have spent six classes becoming acquainted with pertinent materials in a hands-on way. They have acted as ‘participants in history’ who have had, moreover, to improvise their responses in plausible accord with their role in events long past. During the lecture, they should now be in the ‘state of hyper-attention’ described in the present paper’s opening lines: imaginatively participating in the unfolding events of *Yick Wo*, actively relating these to the group’s dramatic choice of options during the previous lesson. In effect, the experiences of others become in some sense the students’ own experiences; the complexity of issues becomes palpable; they widen their sense of the world. As a result, theatre games of the kind described constitute a wonderful teaching tool for classrooms concerned with global studies in which multiple issues (economic, legal, gender, class, etc.) intersect in complex ways and where different points of view need to be imaginatively grasped rather than simply abstractly understood.

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“HE CHANGED HIS NAME, HE GOT

WHAT WAS COMING TO HIM”:

TEACHING AMERICAN LITERATURE IN SINGAPORE

By Gilbert Adair, Independent Scholar

Don DeLillo’s novel *White Noise* (1985) is narrated by Jack Gladney, the death-haunted founder of Hitler Studies at a mid-Western American college whose popular culture department includes, as it seems to new arrival Murray Jay Siskind, “full professors ... who read nothing but cereal boxes.” (10) In six years of teaching it to Honours students at the National University of Singapore, I never received a slack essay on the book. The students appreciated the satire when an ATM confirms Jack’s own estimate of his account balance (“Waves of relief and gratitude flowed over me. The system had blessed my life. I felt its support and approval.... A deranged person was escorted from the
bank by two armed guards” [46]). Many in the class were intrigued by the depiction of Jack and his wife Babette’s family life where the children all come from separate marriages; and nearly everyone picked up on SIMUVAC, an organization set up to ‘simulate evacuations,’ in preparation for emergencies. When the Gladneys’ part of town is evacuated following the (presumably) accidental releasing into the atmosphere of a cloud of toxic chemicals, however, a SIMUVAC medical officer bemoans the operation’s messiness. It dawns on Jack that priorities, in these people’s minds, have been reversed: they’re using “the real event in order to rehearse the simulation[.]” (139) The perfected simulation is what matters to them. The students felt they could recognize that.

In 1993, in reference to *The Great Gatsby* (1926), I asked a second-year student why she seemed so satisfied that Gatsby ends the novel shot dead in his own swimming pool by George Wilson, emerged from his garage in the Valley of Ashes in the belief that Gatsby has killed his wife through reckless driving. “He changed his name,” the student said of Gatsby, “he got what was coming to him.” He began as humble James Gatz; he died as the glitteringly wealthy ‘Jay Gatsby.’ Here was a response that seemed as out of touch with American mores as the Honours responses to *White Noise* had seemed in touch. But nor was the sense of nemesis awaiting anyone rash enough to change their name supported in any obvious way by Singapore’s own fortunes since gaining independence in 1965. I should add that it wasn’t a typical student reaction to Gatsby’s death. Still, the remark stayed with me. I began to wonder what kind of world Gatsby had changed his name to enter. More precisely, was there a Singaporean world, or Singaporean worlds, on which these two American novels, one from the mid-20s and one from the mid-80s, in their own ways plausibly converged?

In class, we would not be talking (much) about Singapore, but about American literature, in ways whose whole purpose was to respect the texts’ own cultural settings and aesthetic strategies. Could that nonetheless be coupled with approaches to the texts that would resonate singularly with Singaporean students in the mid-90s?—especially, for the purposes of this paper, with respect to *The Great Gatsby* and *White Noise*, where responses had been, in their different ways, so striking. In effect, I would be trying to talk, indirectly, to the students’ sense of Singapore through mine. Obviously, these were very different. But communication is to do less with a direct transmission of ‘message’ than with negotiating divergent (rather than entirely alien) understandings to arrive at some point which both can sufficiently recognize to contribute to. The materials we had to negotiate with were first and foremost these texts of American literature.

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The remarks that follow will be highly selective, not only with respect to ‘Singapore itself’ but with respect even to my sense of it, which over the years grew more complexly embroiled with the people, students among them, I came to know. Still, these remarks have some pertinence for the teaching there of American literature.

Singapore gained independence from Britain as part of the Federation of Malaysia in 1963. Two years later, the Chinese-dominated island was expelled from the federation. Singapore had “no natural resources or adequate water supply,” (57) and it was on its own. It promptly moved to exploit its history as a ‘free port’ to attract manufacturing corporations. Lured by a range of tax breaks, a rapidly modernizing infrastructure, and an educated workforce, these multinationals effectively divided the economy into the elite sector of foreign and government-run corporations enjoying minimal regulation, and the local small-business sector, which is highly regulated. (Lingle and Wickman 68) Present class stratifications have largely been shaped by this division. From 1967, the ruling PAP (People’s Action Party) made concerted efforts to attract electronics companies; a decade later, Singapore had become “the largest exporter of semiconductors in the world.” (Murray and Perera 133) By the mid-90s, it was “well on its way to becoming the world’s first digital economy.” (152)

At the same time, Singapore had been turned, argues Michael Haas, into a “mass society,” characterized by “a vast gulf between rulers and ruled” (152) and more deviant behaviour than is usually thought. The government flatly asserts that the masses are too ignorant and stupid to interfere,
and has bid to “monopolize the public discourse” (152) via media censorship, intimidation of political opponents, hounding of independent associations, and ‘simulations,’ as DeLillo might say, of crises to maintain anxiety. All government measures are claimed to be interlocking in the creation of prosperity and a substantial home-owning population. There’s a strange sense that the surface has been crafted to be seamless, that the mirror-glassed buildings lining Orchard Road and the Central Business District are a fitting image for ‘the public discourse.’ One enters the mirror-glassed buildings only to be confronted with more surfaces—and endless shops. I began to think of American literature also, in part, in terms of spectacle, deliberately fashioned to relay vague messages of wealth, power, and dazzle in one direction only. What lay behind spectacle to support it, or moved in its interstices, keeping it going?

More immediately, however, in what ways did Singaporean students tend to view the American culture that was inundating their island? The PAP has taken steps to promote a ‘Singaporean identity,’ envisioning the island as a kind of cultural supermarket yielding its various products (Chinese, Malay, Sri Lankan, and expatriate) for combining or discarding. At the centre of this ‘identity’ are what the government describes as ‘Asian values,’ putting community and family above self, while also developing entrepreneurial competitiveness. The aim is to offset ‘Western values’—in effect, ‘American values’—where rampant individualism is said to make regularly for social chaos. At the same time, Singapore’s largest manufacturing investor and trading partner is the United States; the PAP supported the neocolonial Vietnam War as essential to Singapore’s security; and from 1990, the U.S. has enjoyed a naval and air force “base-access agreement.” (Deck 160) Still, beginning in 1987, Washington has charged Singapore with a range of copyright and human rights violations. It’s been a fraught relationship. One result has been that many Singaporean students believe that American literary heroes seek solitude for the freedom it affords to do only and exactly what they want. I had to repeat that American heroes want above all a close male friend; the tradition persists in the Hollywood ‘buddy movies’ recurrently showing in the island city-state’s cine-complexes.

When I arrived in Singapore in 1992, the effect was of being in a new world—one that when I went back to London the following summer, and visited Prague in 1995, had taken hold in both these cities. It was the world of capitalist globalization: ATM’s everywhere, movies advertised in Singapore showing in Leicester Square. More than simply appearing to be everywhere at the same time, it was as if this world had suddenly been ‘born whole,’ in excess of any possible historical preparations. In time, stock markets would be routinely described as operating in defiance of the historical boom-and-bust cycle, thanks to the infinite growth enabled by computerized economies. Here was an abrupt and transcendent world generating its own rules. It was mystification incarnate.

This was the ‘postmodern’ world the Honours students had recognized so readily in White Noise. Yet it was also in some ways an intensified version of the world Gatsby had ‘changed his name to enter.’ “The truth was,” says the narrator, Nick Carraway,

that Jay Gatsby, of West Egg, Long Island, sprang from his Platonic conception of himself. He was a son of God—a phrase which, if it means anything, means just that—and he must be about His Father’s Business, the service of a vast, vulgar and meretricious beauty. (76-77) Gatsby’s source is his own ‘Platonic conception of himself,’ not James Gatz’s conception of what he would like to become. In effect, Gatsby comes into being before he can have. His mind, Nick says sardonically, is the God that creates ex nihilo; the 90s would call it a ‘bootstrap operation.’ Gatsby is produced by his concept of himself, but he had already to be himself to have that concept—or more precisely, image. More precisely still, movie-image. Elsewhere Nick gives him as “an unbroken series of successful gestures,” (6) as if he’s sustained by, or is nothing else than, his own surface moving through time. His parties invite attendance by a spectacular orchestration of “constantly changing light,” (33) where Gatsby is the star perpetually reinvented by his guests’ gossip: He’s related to Kaiser
Wilhelm; he’s a spy; he’s a bootlegger (actually, he first amassed wealth in the stolen bonds business). Perhaps he’s a killer, at which “[a] thrill passed over all of us.” (36) The most fantastic rumour holds that his house is really “a boat that looked like a house and was moved secretly up and down the Long Island shore”: (76) a combination house and (literally!) movie-set, unsecured by any foundations. Again, I’m being highly selective with respect to approaches I took to The Great Gatsby. In many ways, students generally found it an alien text: a little archaic, with a bizarre and highly ‘literary’ (in the worst sense) set of obsessions. More insidiously, it came complete with a prepackaged set of lit-crit terms: Gatsby ‘symbolizes the American Dream,’ Nick is ‘an unreliable narrator,’ and so on. Such terms, in such circumstances, can suck understanding into a black hole of unfelt responses. I was playing up Gatsby as a lighting-effect, a movie-image, a mystification, in part to short-circuit such responses, as well as trying to give students ways of thinking about the book, and reading its sentences closely, that they could handle with what they knew from their own experience in a world of spectacle, much of it American. But I was also thinking of that stunning response, “He changed his name, he got what was coming to him.” It was in part, as a result of the ‘fraught relationship’ between Singapore and the U.S. that this student envisioned a Gatsby whose crime was not simply to have pretended to be something his birth should have told him he wasn’t—beyond that was the sense of some more terrible betrayal, surely something familial (Gatsby had lied when he told Nick that his family were all dead). But was her response also to do with the world Gatsby had changed his name to enter—which exacts, says Fitzgerald, such an implacable price in betrayal and imaginative murders, and leaves eye and mind so little to trust?

Rather than embarking on a series of anecdotes concerning student exchanges, I’m trying to indicate the multi-sourced fashioning of a field in which productive exchanges could take place. It was accurate to the text: Fitzgerald did synthesize key fascinations of the period: the new spatio-temporal dynamics of film and automobile, along with the celebrity/criminal merger (Hollywood would shortly be mythologizing both gangsters and the stars who played them). The country was literally on the move; Nick “began to like New York ... the satisfaction that the constant flicker of men and women and machines gave to the restless eye.” (46) The underlying panic in Fitzgerald’s characters is that their continuity will falter and find nothing else to support it. The breakthrough in teaching Gatsby, at least for me, came when the question was raised: What keeps film going, as a functioning illusion? Projected at 24 frames per second, a movie triggers persistence of vision; what lies between the frames is literally unseeable. When a film isn’t running, the illusion isn’t happening, that’s all, it hasn’t been replaced by its ‘truth’ in a coil of sprocketed celluloid; at best, that’s the material substrate of all films, other than on video and DVD. You can’t ‘see through’ a spectacle, because what lies behind it is not its ‘other side,’ but something else entirely. That, I thought, was something to learn—at least it gave provisional avenue to other speculations—and some of the students seemed excited by it.

With Gatsby, it was a matter of trying to give the students something through which they could relate to the book, as well as of trying to understand the student response to which I had had no easy way to relate. With White Noise, it was rather a question of trying to slow down recognition in order to point up what was specifically American about the novel. This would include its place in a post-1945, post-Freudian fictional tradition that locates the root of human motivation in the fear of death; and also in a much older American tradition of deifying technology (‘The system had blessed my life,’ thinks Jack before the ATM. ‘I felt its support and approval’). Through his narrator’s language, it’s therefore child’s play for DeLillo to fashion the book’s many technological exhibits—including the black cloud of toxic chemicals—as facets of a man-made god of vengeance and of probably specious salvation. America has produced few novels more implacably devoted to exposing every representative evasion and rationalization where the fear of death is concerned. Many of the students were Christians, and uneasy or censorious about DeLillo’s presentation of what they saw as false gods with no exit; no one, from the PAP on down, had asked for this American importation along with the rest.
The seminar ‘space for productive exchanges’ thus combined recognitions and misrecognitions of roughly equal intensity, on the teacher’s part as well as the students’. These met not only in DeLillo’s text but in the shopping-malls, mirror-glassed buildings, and televisions of Singapore. Attention would turn to the social space depicted in *White Noise*, which also had something to say about the inordinate investments its consumers brought to these mass outlets. Jack is shown in often hilarious interaction with his various family members; a few college colleagues; hardly at all, interestingly, with his students; and with various electronic machines, many of them ominously medical. The organizing forces of this world are invisible, barely even glimpsed in their range of intermediaries. The Gladneys are further alienated within the amorphous space of their own middle class. The division between the social (such as it is) and the political is absolute.

What the students tended not to make much of was Jack being the founder of Hitler Studies, supposedly committed to alerting his own students to “the continuing mass appeal of fascist tyranny.” (25) This lack of attention seemed to have something to do with the fact that Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong, unlike his predecessor Lee Kuan Yew, was very deliberately a far from charismatic figure. Goh was bespectacled, tall, neat, not bad-looking, speaking in a measured, rational, data-glutted voice. The question had then to arise, Was DeLillo somehow locating ‘the continuing mass appeal of fascist tyranny’ less in the specific figure of Hitler and more in the very ‘mass outlets’ he was, through his death-haunted hero, exploring? It was now a decade after *White Noise* and the action-movie genre was at its height: Go ahead, you’ll do your evil worst, and watch the awesome firepower we throw back at you. It was clear to many of the Honours students that these films were fostering and exploiting a ‘fascist imaginary.’ But what were the implications of this, if what’s behind a spectacle is not its other side? Planet Hollywood opened in Singapore, attended by some of its action-hero owners, which drew large crowds. The club didn’t prosper, however. Students told me that every now and then, to some particularly egregious exploitation, Singaporeans simply say, ‘Enough.’

Speculation, in the culturally mixed literature seminars and lecture-halls of the world’s universities, continues.

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The Seven Laws of Teaching: New Methods from an Old Paradigm

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**Introduction**

Mapping the future of education is a worldwide challenge, and only those institutions and industries that have learned from the past will successfully navigate the storms ahead. By reflecting on the true purpose and history of education, we can be more certain of reaching our destination and, perhaps on the journey, re-discovering new concepts in learning.

**A Vision for the Future**

One way to face the future of education is to look back on the past – to reflect on the whole meaning of teaching and learning so we can begin to apply certain fundamentals as we employ more and more technology in our classrooms. “Increasingly, educators are meeting with cable operators;
television, publishing, computer and software executives; and an assortment of entrepreneurs and their funders,” said Arthur Levine (1999), president of Teachers College at Columbia University. “What’s going on is the convergence of the information, education and digital ages in a way that will have a profound and growing impact on U.S. colleges and universities. Higher education must seize the moment or risk marginalization.”

Educators must see this era of technology as a dawning of a new age. The use of computers, on-line courses, teleconferencing and the Internet will allow educators to teach as they have never done before. New advances in communication and technology will make the road ahead much easier because we can now access data from anywhere in the world in a matter of seconds. The biggest problems, however, seem to be in deciding what to do with all of this information and how to continue to teach students how to use all of these advances in technology.

Levine (1999) explained that, “If colleges and universities refuse to re-examine how they carry out their historic missions of research, teaching and service in a world of changing technology, the possibility of losing control over higher learning is as real as today’s Internet and tomorrow’s wired world. For the sake of meeting the aspirations of a new and expanding body of learners, as well as the nation itself, we simply cannot afford to let this happen.” The challenge that lies ahead of us will be how to make the shift from the traditional classroom, with all of its personal interaction, to the cyberspace classroom where professors and teachers never truly meet hand in hand.

Learning from the Past

It is imperative for us to understand that the whole process of teaching and learning has not changed dramatically through all the many centuries of teachers and students. The purpose of education – the act or process of imparting or acquiring general knowledge and of developing the powers of reasoning and judgment – has been the same since the days of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. Only the “act or process” of education has changed in thousands of years whether we are talking about the Socratic method of interrelated questions and answers or the threaded discussion in an on-line course in world masterpieces. The biggest challenge facing all of academia is how to plug into the current of constantly changing technology. What might seem like obstacles to learning can, in fact, become opportunities in disguise. When we begin to understand the basic principles of teaching, and apply these to this new era of computerization, then the task of getting students to learn how to learn becomes more manageable and much more effective.

The first task of any school should be to teach students how to learn. Whether we use computers, blackboards or drawings in the sand, teaching relies on certain laws or principles that have changed little over the past 3,000 years. In The Seven Laws of Teaching, John Milton Gregory (1868) explained that “the art of education” is a two-fold process: “the art of training and the art of teaching. These two great branches of the education art – training and teaching – though separable in thought, are not separable in practice. We can only train by teaching, and we teach best when we train best. The proper training of the intellectual capacities is found in the acquisition, elaboration, and application of the knowledge and skills which represent the heritage of the race” (1868). Gregory, who organized what eventually became the University of Illinois, believed that there were certain “laws” of teaching “which are present in every instance of true teaching. . . . Teaching has its natural laws as fixed as the laws of the planets or of growing organisms. It is a process in which definite forces are employed to produce definite results and these results follow as regularly and certainly as the day follows the sun. What the teacher does, he does through natural agencies working out their natural effects. Causation is as certain – if not always so obvious nor so easily understood – in the movements of mind as those of matter. The laws of the mind are as fixed as material laws.” In other words, teaching is a natural and holistic process; for each cause there is a fixed effect.
The Seven Laws of Teaching

Gregory’s work is as current today as it was when his book was published more than 125 years ago, and his seven laws of teaching could be keys to the future for those colleges and universities that want to unlock the doors of learning in the 21st century. In stating the seven laws as rules, Gregory outlines each one as he first addresses the teacher directly:

1. Know thoroughly and familiarly the lesson you wish to teach; teach from a full mind and a clear understanding.
2. Gain and keep the attention and interest of the pupils upon the lesson. Do not try to teach without attention.
3. Use words understood in the same way by the pupils and yourself – language clear and vivid to both.
4. Begin with what is already well known to the pupil upon the subject and with what he has himself experienced – and proceed to the new material by single, easy, and natural steps, letting the known explain the unknown.
5. Stimulate the pupil’s own mind to action. Keep his thought as much as possible ahead of your expression, placing him in the attitude of a discover, an anticipator.
6. Require the pupil to reproduce in thought the lesson he is learning – thinking it out in its various phases and applications till he can express it in his own language.
7. **Review, review, review,** reproducing the old, deepening its impression with new thought, linking it with added meanings, finding new applications, correcting any false views, and completing the true.

It is essential to note that there are seven factors involved in any act of teaching and learning. Whether we are teaching children in Latin American about their rich Spanish history and heritage or trying to explain principles of accounting to students throughout the world via an on-line course, the processes of education are the same. We must have “(1) a teacher, (2) a learner, (3) a common language or medium, (4) a lesson or truth, (5) the teacher’s work, (6) the learner’s work, (7) the review work which organizes, applies, perfects, and fastens the work which has been done. Each of these seven factors,” said Gregory (1868), “is a distinct entity or fact of nature. . . . Whether the lesson be a single fact told in three minutes, or a lecture occupying as many hours, the seven factors are all present. None of them can be omitted, and no others need be added.”

Gregory’s first law – “the teacher must know that which he would teach” – is crucial to the entire “art of education.” He stresses that knowledge in all of its many forms, from the theoretical to the practical, must come into play whenever a teacher enters the classroom. “That we cannot teach without knowledge seems too simple for proof. How can something come out of nothing, or how can darkness give light? To affirm this law seems like declaring a truism: but deeper study shows it to be a fundamental truth – the law of the teacher.” In an age of rapid and sudden technological changes, trying to teach any subject is extremely difficult because the pool of knowledge expands and deepens at alarming rates. We are “an information society [that] puts a premium on intellectual capital” (Levine 1999). “Since the half-life of knowledge is shorter than ever, there is increasing pressure to remain at the forefront of knowledge use and production.” Educators in the next century will need to spend more and more time re-educating themselves; they will need to continue learning about advances in their own fields, but they also will have to study what is going on in other disciplines throughout the world. At the same time, teachers will need to be working with the modern tools of technology, exploring innovative ways to use computers and the Internet. What lies ahead may be truly a classroom without walls where teachers communicate what they know – their knowledge – over a computer screen.

The law of the learner is the second key element in education. Gregory advocated that “the learner must attend with interest to the material to be learned.” The learner must focus or direct his attention “upon some object. The object may be external, as when one watches carefully the operation of a machine or listens intently to a piece of music; or it may be mental, as when one ‘calls
to mind’ some past experience, or ‘reflects’ upon the meaning of some idea.” There are three different types or levels of attention that greatly affect teaching and learning:

- Passive Attention is the “primitive, instinctive type of attention – the attention of everyone at some times during the day, especially when one is tired or when one is in a playful mood. . . . One is ‘passive’ because one is letting the forces that play about him control the mental life.”
- Active Attention is when we are aware of the things going on around us and we make a conscious decision where to direct our thoughts. “The essential characteristic of the human mind is that it can control, rather than be controlled by, the forces that surround it. It can rise above its immediate environment and look beyond the present into the future. It can even attend away from objects that naturally attract attention. . . . It can hold momentary fancy in leash and work resolutely and persistently toward a remote goal.”
- Secondary Passive Attention grows out of active attention and it occurs when we are truly “absorbed” in some task or study. “Generally speaking we learn most easily and most economically when we are ‘absorbed’ in our work, when the objects that we are trying to fix in mind and remember permanently really attract us in their own right, so to speak – when our learning is so fascinating that it simply ‘carries us with it.’”

The responsibility of the teacher is to lift the student to a level where secondary passive attention can occur. “The duty of the teacher is essentially not that of a driver or a taskmaster but rather that of a counselor and guide.” As a facilitator to learning, the teacher is always trying to pass along knowledge from himself to the student. But there is much more to the process than what once was termed the “Have and Have-Not” theory of education. “The notion that the mind is only a receptacle in which to stow other people’s ideas is entirely incorrect. The nature of the mind, as far as we can understand it, is that of a power, or force, activated by motives.” As future educators think about using computers in the classroom and in on-line courses, they will have to seek innovative ways to engage the minds of their students. New methodologies and strategies, incorporating the effects of both visual presentation and critical thinking skills, must be created in order to challenge students to learn. We cannot expect students to learn simply by using a computer to search for resources and information.

The third law is the law of language: “the language used in teaching must be common to the teacher and learner.” Writing more than a century ago, Gregory explained that both the student and the teacher must be able to communicate even though the teacher possess much more knowledge and wisdom. “The vocabulary of the teacher may be many times larger than that of the pupil, but the child’s ideas are represented by his vocabulary, and the teacher must come within this sphere of the child’s language power if he would be understood.” Communication is essential in all walks of life, but in the art of education it is critical. In the past 15 years, modern educators like E.D. Hirsch (Cultural Literacy and The Dictionary of Cultural Literacy) have come to realize that “common knowledge or collective memory allows people to communicate, to work together, and to live together” (Hirsch 1988). In the 21st century we will face unique problems in communication, not so much because of differences in language or location, but due to the connotation and tone of the words we use. Words can have different meanings and convey certain emotions depending on how they are used. As Gregory pointed out, “Words that are poor and weak to the young and untrained may be eloquent with many rich and impressive meanings to the mature, trained mind. Thus the simple word art may mean ‘craft’ to some minds, a mechanic’s ‘trade,’ or even the pretence of a hypocrite; to a Reynolds or a Ruskin it is also the expression of all that is beautiful in human achievement, and of all that is elevating in civilization. It speaks of paintings, sculpture and cathedrals, and of all that is beautiful in nature, in landscape, sky, and sea – all that is noble or picturesque in history and life – all that is hidden in the moral and aesthetic nature of man. Men’s words are like ships laden with the riches of every shore of knowledge which their owner has visited; while the words of the child are but toy boats on which are loaded the simple notions he has picked up in his brief experience.” With the advent of e-mail, chat rooms, threaded discussions and journaling, teachers will have to re-establish a common
language not only between themselves and the students but also among the students themselves, especially if students from all corners of the world are participating in the same on-line course.

In the fourth law, Gregory explained that all learning must progress by gradual steps based on what the student already knows: "The truth to be taught must be learned through truth already known." He adds that "the new or unknown can be explained only by the familiar and the known. . . . The pupil who has mastered one lesson, half knows the next. . . . But the philosophy of this law goes deeper still. It must be remembered that knowledge is not a mass of simple, independent facts; it is made up of the experience of the race crystallized and organized in the form of facts together with their laws and relations. Facts are linked together in systems, associated by resemblances of one sort or another. Each fact leads to, and explains, another. The old reveals the new; the new confirms and corrects the old." Today’s students many times do not have a strong grasp of various subjects – literature, history, science, etc. – as they move from one level to the next. Even in college, students often seem to forget everything they learned in a beginning course as they move up the ladder to the intermediate level. “Oftentimes,” observed Gregory, “past acquisitions are considered goods stored away, instead of instruments for further use.” It is increasingly difficult for teachers to lift their students to a higher level because: (1) students do not see the intellectual connections between one course and another even in good liberal arts colleges, (2) we live in the information age where society is constantly being bombarded with too much data, and (3) modern technology is advancing so rapidly that it has the potential to control our future, especially how it is used in education, if we are not careful. Teachers in the 1800s struggled with similar issues though in much different ways. Gregory commented that, “Teachers frequently fail to place their pupils in the attitude of discoverers. Children should learn to use what they have already been taught in the discovery of new problems. [Another] common fault is the failure to show the connections between parts of the subject that have been taught and those that are yet to come.” With all the technology that we have today, we need to be careful that we do not misuse the tools that can facilitate learning as never before in the history of the world.

The law of the teaching process is the fifth in Gregory's list. “Excite and direct the self-activities of the pupil, and as a rule tell him nothing that he can learn himself.” The philosophy behind this law is to make sure that teachers create conditions for learning to take place. “True teaching, then, is not that which gives knowledge, but that which stimulates pupils to gain it. One might say that he teaches best who teaches least; or that he teaches best whose pupils learn most without being taught directly. . . . The great aims of education are to acquire knowledge and ideals, and to develop abilities and skills. Our law derives its significance from both of these aims. The pupil must know for himself, or his knowledge will be knowledge in name only.” What good does it do, for example, for a person to read three or four newspapers from different parts of the world each day if she does not begin to draw logical conclusions concerning trends in world politics, the differences in cultures and the similarities in human nature everywhere? The Internet can bring the world to us in remarkable ways, but we as educators need to teach students how to use this information so that they can discover more about themselves and others. When the teacher is able to motivate students to learn for themselves, “the pupils become thinkers – discoverers. They master great truths, and apply them to the great questions of life. They invade new fields of knowledge. The teacher merely leads the march. Their reconnaissance becomes a conquest. Skill and power grow with their exercise” (Gregory).

The sixth and seventh laws deal with the overall learning process and the importance of constant review. The sixth law involves the learning process in that, “The pupil must reproduce in his own mind the truth to be learned” (Gregory). “The practical relations of truth, and the forces which lie behind all facts, are never really understood until we apply our knowledge to some of the practical purposes of life and of thought.” For any learning to occur the student has to transfer the theoretical (textbook knowledge) to the practical (experiential knowledge). Columbus may have studied charts and maps for years, but he did not become a sailor until he traveled across the Atlantic to discover the
new lands over a thousand miles away. This great explorer used his limited knowledge of the world and sailing to propel him on a new adventure – one that allowed him to learn more about himself by building on “truths” already known. We are living in an era of artificial intelligence; where people can access information on any subject at anytime and then repeat what they have read. In fact, no true learning has occurred – though it might seem so – because the person has not “reproduce[d] in his own mind the truth to be learned.” Computers and the Internet are remarkable tools, but they are only part of the overall process of learning. These things are resources – similar to books, journals, periodicals and encyclopedias -- that allow us to gather and collect vast quantities of data. It is then up to the wise student to work with and apply the information to some great task. Then, and only then, will learning occur. Knowledge is just a tool and the student must be guided in how to use it. In the seventh and final law, Gregory stresses the importance of constantly reviewing both what the student knows and is learning. “The completion, test and confirmation of the work of teaching must be made by review and application” (Gregory).

The aim of the seventh law is “to perfect knowledge, to confirm knowledge and to render this knowledge ready and useful.” But he warned that review is “more than a repetition. A machine may repeat a process, but only an intelligent agent can review it. . . . [A] repetition by the mind is the rethinking of a thought. . . . Even in the best-studied book, we are often surprised to find fresh truths and new meanings in passage which we had read perhaps again and again. It is the ripest student of Shakespeare who finds the most freshness in the works of the great dramatist. The familiar eye discovers in any great masterpiece of art or literature touches of power and beauty which the casual observer cannot see. So a true review always adds something to the knowledge of the student who make it. . . . If we would have any great truth sustain and control us, we must return to it so often that it will at last rise up in mind as a dictate of conscience, and pour its steady light upon every act and purpose with which it is connected.” State-of-the-art computers make this process much quicker and more efficient. Like a warehouse, we can store information in hard drives and on disks. Still, it is up to us as humans to take what we are gathering and let it drive us ever closer to new worlds of learning.

Gregory’s seven laws can help us as we use new technology and new platforms to deliver education to students today. “They are like seven hilltops of different height scattered over a common territory. As we climb each in succession, many points in the landscapes seen from their summits will be found included in different views, but always in a new light and with fresh horizon” (Gregory 1868). Teaching and learning today are the same as in the 1800s and in centuries earlier. For we still have the basic factors or components – a teacher, a learner, a common language, a lesson, the teacher’s work, the learner’s work and the review work. Using these “ingredients,” Gregory draws a parallel between the act of education and the act of farming: “[I]t is obvious that when seeds, soil, heat, light, and moisture come together in proper measure, plants are produced and grow to the harvest.” Our delivery systems may be vastly different than even 20 years ago, but students and people in general have not changed. To be sure, we now have PowerPoint presentations rather than blackboards, computers instead of paper and pencils, and on-line cyber courses as opposed to physical classrooms. Teaching fails not because of the tools used, but mostly because teachers do not know the principles of teaching. “Comenius said, over two hundred years ago, ‘Most teachers sow plants instead of seeds; instead of proceeding from the simplest principles they introduce the pupil at once into a chaos of books and miscellaneous studies.’ The figure of the seed is a good one, and is much older than Comenius [1592-1671]. The greatest of teachers said: ‘The seed is the word.’ The true teacher stirs the ground and sows the seed. It is the work of the soil, through its own forces, to develop the growth and ripen the grain” (Gregory).

Conclusion

As we look ahead and try to see the future of education, let us also look back to see where we have been and to re-discover the fundamentals of teaching that have guided us through centuries of
learning. We need to examine cautiously the past, present and future before we can take the first step into the next century. As skilled educators, Gregory warned all of us more than a century ago that, “The steady advance of veterans is more powerful than the mad rush of raw recruits. The world’s best work, in the schools as in the shops, is done by the calm, steady, and persistent efforts of skilled workmen who know how to keep their tools sharp and to make every effort reach its mark. . . . While facing your pupils, how often have you wished for the power to look into their minds, and to plant there with the sure hand some truth of science or some belief of the gospel? No key will ever open to you the doors of those chambers in which live your pupils’ souls; no glass will ever enable you to penetrate their mysterious gloom. But in the great laws of your common nature lie the lines of communication by which you may send the thought fresh from your mind, and awaken the other to receive and embrace it.” Therein is our greatest challenge in the entire process of teaching and learning.

References


Journalists in Peril:
The Costly Fight for Freedom of the Press throughout the World

By Dr. Bruce C. Swaffield
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Each day, somewhere in the world, a journalist is arrested, beaten, jailed, maimed or even killed. The fight for truth and freedom has become a costly battle in many countries around the globe. Dozens of journalists each year pay heavily for trying to report the news or to tell the truth about what is really going on in their countries. The stories may deal with political struggles, drug deals, embezzlement, the black market, murders, rapes or even organized crime.

For example, just last August, a newspaper columnist in Mexico was killed by a mob of assailants. The columnist was known to write about problems in education, organized crime and political corruption. Members of the International Freedom of Expression Exchange issued a statement concerning this senseless attack:

IFEX members have condemned the killing of Mexican newspaper columnist Francisco Arratia Saldierna, who was beaten to death by unidentified assailants in the northern border city of Matamoros on 31 August 2004.

PROBIJDAD, the Inter American Press Association (IAPA), the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), Reporters Without Borders (Reporters sans frontierès, RSF) and the
Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) are calling for an immediate investigation into Arratia's murder.

Mexican news reports said a group of individuals went to Arratia's car dealership and had an argument with him. Shortly after, Arratia was heading home when he was abducted by the group. He was brutally tortured. His body was dumped outside the offices of the Red Cross and he died several hours later in hospital.

Arratia, 55, wrote a column called "Portavoz" ("Spokesman") for four newspapers in the state of Tamaulipas - "El Imparcial," "El Regional," "Mercurio" and "El Cinco." He wrote often about organised crime, political corruption and education. He was also a schoolteacher and operated a used car business.

More than 200 journalists from across Mexico have written a letter to President Vicente Fox calling for the federal government to ensure the safety of journalists working along the country's borders. They say federal authorities should have jurisdiction in crimes against journalists. (Mexico 2004)

To be sure, the incident involving Arratia is not an isolated one. While most Americans are familiar with the death of Wall Street Journal reporter Daniel Pearl in 2002 at the hands of Pakistani militants, few have probably heard about a foreign reporter who was killed in Baghdad as he covered the ongoing conflict in Iraq:

On 12 September 2004, Mazen al-Tumeizi, a reporter for Al-Arabiya television, was killed while covering clashes in Baghdad, report the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) and the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ). Two other journalists were injured.

Al-Tumeizi was reporting on an American armoured vehicle that had caught fire in the centre of Baghdad amid fierce fighting between Iraqi insurgents and U.S. forces. As crowds gathered around the vehicle, one or more U.S. helicopters opened fire, hitting Al-Tumeizi and two colleagues, says CPJ. Reuters camera operator Seif Fouad and freelance photographer Ghaith Abdul Ahad survived the attack.

According to CPJ, Al-Tumeizi was the 33rd journalist killed in Iraq since the U.S. invasion in March 2003. The International News Safety Institute (INSI), which includes media support staff such as drivers and translators in its tallies, says 52 media workers have died in Iraq in the same period.

Meanwhile, CPJ, IFJ and Reporters Without Borders (Reporters sans frontières, RSF) have criticised Iraq's interim government for imposing an indefinite ban on Al-Jazeera. The broadcaster's offices were sealed by police on 4 September.

The government accuses Al-Jazeera of inciting violence and hatred in its coverage of Iraq. Officials claim that the broadcaster's coverage of kidnappings encourages Iraqi militants and creates a negative picture of Iraq.

In August, authorities had imposed a temporary 30-day ban on Al-Jazeera and ordered it to provide a full explanation of its coverage. Al-Jazeera denies that its coverage incites violence and says it is committed to covering Iraq according to its editorial policy and professional code of ethics.

RSF says the ban on Al-Jazeera and other actions by the interim government are worrying. Authorities have shown little interest in investigating cases in which journalists have been attacked or gone missing, the organisation notes.

In one incident on 25 August, police briefly detained some 60 journalists covering clashes in Najaf and accused them of "not telling the truth. (Iraq 2004)

More than 20 reporters have been killed in Iraq during 2004 alone, yet little news of these deaths has been reported. The Committee to Protect Journalists continues to speak out against the treatment of journalists. They point out journalists are merely reporting events of the war and do not represent one side or the other, despite the fact they are employed by the media in a certain country.
In occupied Iraq, journalists have become an increasingly unwelcome presence. Since January 2004, insurgents have abducted at least 20 journalists and US-led coalition authorities have shown an indifference to media safety concerns despite the deaths of close to 50 journalists and media staff since March 2003, reports the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ).

Hostile conditions have forced many foreign media outlets to "bunker down" in high-security compounds protected by thick walls. There is a widespread perception among Iraqis that foreign journalists are "spies" or collaborators with coalition forces. In August 2004, Italian freelance journalist Enzo Baldoni was abducted and killed by insurgents who demanded that Italy withdraw its troops from Iraq.

These conditions have forced many foreign media to become increasingly reliant on Iraqi reporters and media staff to report the news. Not surprisingly, locals have become particularly vulnerable to attacks, says CPJ.

On 15 October 2004, two journalists became the latest victims. Dina Mohammed Hassan, a correspondent for Al-Hurriya TV, was gunned down outside her home in Baghdad as she was leaving for work. In the northern city of Mosul, Karam Hussein, a photographer for the German-based European Pressphoto Agency (EPA), was killed by four men who opened fire on him as he exited his home.

CPJ, the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) and Reporters Without Borders (Reporters sans frontières, RSF) have condemned the murders and called on authorities to conduct immediate inquiries.

The motives for the attacks are unclear. Hassan's employer, Al-Hurriya, is owned by the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, a party that enjoys friendly relations with the United States. Neighbours and friends of Hassan claim that she had been told by unidentified individuals to stop working for Al-Hurriya and to wear an Islamic headscarf, CPJ notes. EPA's editor-in-chief, Cengiz Seren, said he was unaware of any threats against Hussein.

In another incident, Australian freelance journalist John Martinkus was abducted by insurgents on 17 October in Baghdad. He was released the next day after convincing his captors that he was not a spy for coalition forces.

Meanwhile, the fate of two French journalists and a Syrian guide who were kidnapped two months ago by insurgents remains unknown. "Figaro" correspondent Georges Malbrunot, Radio France Internationale contributor Christian Chesnot and Mohammed Al-Joundi have been held captive since 20 August. IFJ, RSF, CPJ and other press freedom groups have called for their immediate release. (Iraq: Two Journalists 2004)

There also is the story of Mauro Marcano, a talk show host, who was gunned down after exposing local businessmen who were involved in drug trafficking:

On 1 September 2004, unidentified men shot and killed radio show host Mauro Marcano in the city of Maturín, eastern Venezuela, reports the Institute for Press and Society (Instituto Prensa y Sociedad, IPYS).

Marcano, 55, was the host of an opinion show on Radio 1.080 AM, a local station. Unofficial sources say he had implicated several local businessmen in reports on drug trafficking. Del Valle was also a councilor for the Acción Democrática party and headed the Maturín Municipal Chamber's Common Lands Commission. (Venezuela 2004)

In the same month in the Dominican Republic, a journalist was killed as well for trying to report on a series of crimes in Santo Domingo:

On 14 September 2004, gunmen shot and killed journalist Juan Emilio Andújar in Azua, Dominican Republic, shortly after he reported on an escalating crime wave that has seen as many as six journalists threatened in recent weeks.
The Inter American Press Association (IAPA), the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), Reporters Without Borders (Reporters sans frontières, RSF) and the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) have condemned the murder and called for an investigation.

Andújar and Juan Sanchez, a reporter for the Santo Domingo-based dailies "El Nacional" and "Hoy," were leaving the offices of Radio Azua on 14 September when two gunmen on motorcycles ambushed them, report CPJ and IAPA. Andújar was shot in the head and died shortly after. Sanchez survived the attack.

Jorge Luis Sención, a reporter for Enriquillo Radio, witnessed the shooting and went to Andújar's aid. Later that morning, Sención was ambushed by the same gunmen. He lost his right forearm to amputation and is recovering in a hospital under tight security.

A man thought to be one of the two assailants was killed by police in a gun battle yesterday. The other assailant is reportedly still at large.

Andújar, 49, was a respected journalist with 20 years of experience. He was a correspondent for the daily newspaper "Listín Diario," and hosted a weekly show, "Encuentro Mil 60" ("Encounter 1060"), on Radio Azua. On the day of his murder, Andújar had reported on local clashes earlier that morning between gangs and police which left four gang members dead, note IAPA and CPJ.

Azua has seen a surge in crime in recent weeks, which has led to clashes between police and gangs in the town. Andújar, Sanchez and six other journalists had received death threats because of their reports on the clashes. (Dominican Republic 2004)

Much closer to the United States, Guatemala has proven to be an especially dangerous place for journalists. Many face constant attacks for exposing corruption in their society and government. Recent reports indicate that those trying to cover the news are the target of many individuals and organized groups:

Seven years after Guatemala's civil war ended with the signing of peace accords in 1996, the country remains dangerous for journalists. Last week, the leader of a journalists' association was murdered and a magazine reporter received death threats, reports Centro de Reportes Informativos sobre Guatemala (CERIGUA).

On 28 September 2004, Miguel Ángel Morales was killed by an unidentified individual while travelling on a highway from Guatemala City to Izabal. He had pulled over to the side to allow a car to pass him when an assailant shot him. He died instantly. Morales, 70, was the secretary general of the National Press Society (Círculo Nacional de Prensa, CNP). The motive for the killing has not been confirmed.

Three days earlier, César Augusto López Valle, director of the magazine "Panorama" in Retalhuleu, received a death threat. The journalist told CERIGUA that a local member of the Guatemalan Veterans' Association (Asociación de Veteranos Militares de Guatemala, AVEMILGUA) grabbed him by the neck and told him he would be killed if he continued to report on the association's activities.

Issues involving the military are highly sensitive in Guatemala. During the decades-long civil war, an estimated 200,000 people were killed, according to a U.N.-sponsored truth commission. It is widely believed that army forces, acting in collusion with paramilitary groups, were responsible for the majority of the killings. (Guatemala 2004)

Conditions in the Philippines are not much better for journalists and reporters. In many cases, those representing the media are shot and killed with no questions asked. A radio broadcaster was just murdered, bringing the total number of journalists killed in the country to eight persons so far in 2004.

The death toll in the Philippines continues to mount. On 19 October 2004, radio host Eldy Gaginales was shot dead, becoming the eighth journalist killed this year, report the
International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) and the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ).

Gabinales was shot in the back three times by an unidentified assailant as he was leaving a supermarket in the town of Tandag. Police have yet to confirm a motive behind the murder. The National Union of Journalists in the Philippines, an IFJ affiliate, says Gabinales may have been targeted for his outspoken views on illegal drug running and gambling practices in Tandag. As the host of "Singgit sa mga Lungsuranon" ("Cry of the People") on Radio DXJR-FM, he often expressed these views on the programme. (Philippines 2004)

This has been the “worst year” in recent history in the Philippines, according to the Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility.

2003 was thought to be the worst year for journalists in the Philippines. A record seven were murdered, according to the Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility (CMFR). This year is proving to be just as dangerous. On 29 September 2004, Romeo Binungkal became the seventh journalist killed since January.

Binungkal, a correspondent for the Manila-based tabloids "Remate" and "Bulgar," was riding his motorcycle between Balanga City and Pilar, Bataan province, when unidentified assailants shot and killed him.

Police are investigating possible motives for the killing. No suspects have been detained. Binungkal, 43, was the former editor-in-chief of the local newspaper "Mt Samat Weekly Forum." He was also a businessman, according to Task Force Newsmen, a police group investigating journalists’ murders.

CMFR, the Southeast Asian Press Alliance (SEAPA), the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) and the World Association of Newspapers (WAN) have condemned the murder and called for an end to the impunity surrounding the murders of journalists. CMFR says 50 journalists have been killed since the country returned to democratic rule in 1986. No one has been convicted for any of the murders.

In response to growing local and international concern over the murders, the government has begun showing signs that it is serious about bringing the culprits to justice. The Philippines National Police recently arrested the suspected killers of Edgar Damalerio, Ely Binoya and Arnnel Manolo, and a taskforce has been struck to investigate the 31 July 2004 killing of Roger Mariano.

CPJ notes that most killings of journalists occur in rural areas, where criminal justice systems are often held hostage by local political bosses and corrupt police. This often keeps suspects from being brought to trial. At the same time, Philippine journalists, many of whom are poorly paid, can be vulnerable to bribes and used by powerful figures and politicians to promote their agendas or attack enemies. (Philippines: Reporter Gunned 2004)

In the country of Belarus, a female journalist was found stabbed to death in her house soon after the President of the country won a controversial election:

A week after the President of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko, won a controversial referendum that allows him to extend his term in office, IFEX members are raising serious concerns over press freedom conditions in the country. Last week, a journalist was stabbed to death in her home and several others were beaten while covering demonstrations against the government.

On 20 October 2004, Veronika Cherkasova was found stabbed to death in her apartment in Minsk, reported the International Press Institute (IPI), the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), Reporters Without Borders (Reporters sans frontières, RSF) and the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ).
Cherkasova's body was found with 20 stab wounds. A journalist for the independent newspaper Solidarnost ("Solidarity"), she mainly covered social and cultural news but occasionally wrote about politically sensitive issues such as drug abuse.

Police found no evidence of a break-in, and nothing was taken from the apartment, according to local reports. They have not ruled out the possibility that she was killed because of her work as a journalist, as she had been collecting material for an article on religious sects in Belarus. A colleague at "Solidarnost" also told CPJ that four months ago, Cherkasova had written a series of articles outlining the Belarusian Security Services' surveillance methods used to monitor civilians' activities.

Meanwhile, journalist Pavel Sheremet was physically assaulted on 17 October, the day Belarusians voted in a referendum to decide whether Lukashenko could extend his term in office. He suffered a concussion and was hospitalized. Police charged him with hooliganism.

On 19 October, several other journalists were physically assaulted while covering a peaceful opposition protest against the referendum result, according to RSF and CPJ. Camera operators from Russia's NTV and REN-TV stations had their equipment destroyed. Several foreign reporters said they were prevented from relaying footage of the referendum to viewers abroad.

The government claims that 77 per cent of voters supported extending Lukashenko's term to 2006. However, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) says the Belarusian government failed to ensure conditions for a fair vote in the referendum. (Belarus: Reporter Murdered 2004)

In Bangladesh, an editor was "hacked to death" by assailants wielding axes. Apparently, several persons, identified as "professionals," were upset after the 55-year-old man wrote about political corruption in his city:

On 2 October 2004, Dipankar Chakrabarty, editor of the daily newspaper "Durjoy Bangla" in the northwestern city of Sherpur, was savagely hacked to death by unidentified assailants, report Media Watch, Reporters Without Borders (Reporters sans frontières, RSF) and the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ).

Chakrabarty, 55, was attacked by men with axes while returning home from work. Police said the assailants were most likely "professionals." A motive behind the killing has not yet been confirmed.

RSF says Chakrabarty had earlier told the press freedom group that he had been threatened for writing about local politicians who were reportedly protecting criminal organisations. He was the vice president of the Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists and was the former president of the Bogra Union of Journalists and the Sherpur Press Club.

According to CPJ and RSF, he is the fourth journalist killed this year. In a country where corruption is rife and political parties are highly polarised, reporters are often targeted for covering political violence, graft, and organised crime.

However, in the majority of cases where journalists are attacked, it is because of their reports on corruption, says CPJ. In 2003, Transparency International rated Bangladesh the most corrupt country in the world for the third consecutive year. (Bangladesh 2004)

In incidents where reporters and journalists are not killed, often they are jailed for an extended period of time without any hope of release. In Eritrea, 17 journalists have been held captive for three years without being charged with any specific crimes.

Three years after the government of Eritrea launched a crackdown on the country's independent media, 17 journalists remain jailed without charges. Nine IFEX members have joined Amnesty International in calling attention to the journalists' plight by urging President Isaias Afwerki to release them and lift a ban on private newspapers.
In a joint letter sent to the president on 18 September 2004, the organisations said Eritrea was violating international human rights treaties by detaining the journalists. "As a state party to the [African Charter on Human and People's Rights], Eritrea is obligated to uphold the rights and freedoms protected by these agreements, including the right to freedom of expression," the organisations said.

The letter was signed by the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), Human Rights Watch, Media Institute of Southern Africa, West African Journalists Association, Freedom of Expression Institute, Journaliste en Danger, Media Institute, African Free Media Foundation, and Media Foundation for West Africa.

The detained journalists, who have not been charged, are being held in undisclosed locations, even though Eritrean law stipulates that an individual cannot be detained without charges for more than 30 days, says CPJ. None of the detainees have appeared before a judge or been provided with legal counsel, and officials have refused to supply any information regarding the health, whereabouts or legal status of the detainees.

Eritrea is the only country in Africa without any privately owned media outlets. It is also Africa's leading jailer of journalists, according to CPJ. Most of the imprisoned journalists were rounded up after the government ordered a clampdown on the press in September 2001. That came after senior politicians called for political reforms and independent media began writing editorials on human rights and democracy.

In a separate action, Reporters Without Borders (Reporters sans frontières, RSF) also called on President Afwerki to release the jailed journalists. (Eritrea 2004)

In order to help journalists throughout the world, and to promote freedom of the press to nearly half of all the nations, several organizations have been created. Most notable is the International Freedom of Expression Exchange (IFEX). Its mission is, first, to help journalists who need immediate assistance and, second, to encourage governments to protect the rights of journalists. IFEX was created in 1992:

[W]hen many of the world's leading freedom of expression organizations came together in Montreal to discuss how best to further their collective goals.

Several funding and development organizations, recognizing the need for more cooperation among freedom of expression groups, provided the initial support for IFEX. These included The Ford Foundation, which provided funding to hold the first IFEX meeting; the Joyce Mertz-Gilmore Foundation of New York, which supported the establishment of the IFEX Action Alert Network; and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), through its International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC), which provided support for IFEX to extend its links into the developing world and promoted IFEX through its own developmental network.

At its core, IFEX is made up of organisations whose members refuse to turn away when those who have the courage to insist upon their fundamental human right to free expression are censored, brutalized or killed. Comprised of 65 organisations - located everywhere from the Pacific Islands to Europe to West Africa - IFEX draws together a tremendously diverse and dedicated global community. (Why IFEX Was Formed 2004)

Reporters without Borders is another group that fights for the rights of journalists. It has been at work, protecting the rights and privileges of the media, for almost 20 years. Their mission is simple and direct: to fight for freedom of the press throughout the world.

More than a third of the world's people live in countries where there is no press freedom. Reporters Without Borders works constantly to restore their right to be informed. Forty-two media professionals lost their lives in 2003 for doing what they were paid to do --
keeping us informed. Today, more than 130 journalists around the world are in prison simply for doing their job. In Nepal, Eritrea and China, they can spend years in jail just for using the “wrong” word or photo. Reporters Without Borders believes imprisoning or killing a journalist is like eliminating a key witness and threatens everyone’s right to be informed. It has been fighting such practices for more than 18 years. (About Us: Reporters 2004)

A third group, the Committee to Protect Journalists, has joined the battle as well. They have representatives throughout the world who are serving journalists in “more than 120 countries.”

Without a free press, few other human rights are attainable. A strong press freedom environment encourages the growth of a robust civil society, which leads to stable, sustainable democracies and healthy social, political, and economic development. CPJ works in more than 120 countries, many of which suffer under repressive regimes, debilitating civil war, or other problems that harm press freedom and democracy. (About Us: Why 2004)

It is, indeed, difficult to believe that journalists in various parts of the world must risk their lives just to tell a true story.

The fight to truth has been a costly battle. In the past 10 years, more than 300 journalists have been killed in the line of duty. In its annual report, the Committee to Protect Journalists analyzed the current state of the media worldwide:

During the last decade, 337 journalists have been killed while carrying out their work. While conflict and war provide the backdrop to much of the violence against the press, CPJ research demonstrates that the vast majority of journalists killed since 1995 did not die in cross fire. Instead, they were hunted down and murdered, often in direct reprisal for their reporting. In fact, according to CPJ statistics, only 67 journalists (20 percent) died in cross fire, while 244 (72 percent) were murdered often in reprisal for their reporting. The remaining journalists were killed in conflict situations that cannot be described as combat—while covering violent street demonstrations, for example.

Since 1995, CPJ has recorded only 35 cases in which the person or persons who ordered a journalist’s murder have been arrested and prosecuted. That means that in more than 85 percent of the cases, those who murder journalists do so with impunity. In many cases, journalists are murdered either to prevent them from reporting on corruption or human rights abuses, or to punish them after they have done so. The brazenness of the killers is suggested by the fact that 60 of the 244 journalists who were murdered during the last decade were threatened before they were killed.

In 22 cases since 1995, journalists were kidnapped—taken alive by militants, criminals, guerrillas, or government forces—and subsequently killed. The kidnapping and murder of Wall Street Journal reporter Daniel Pearl in early 2002 highlighted this terrible phenomenon. In several cases, notably in Algeria and Turkey, journalists have simply “disappeared” after being taken into government custody. (The Toll 2004)

In presenting the “2004 Annual Report” for Reporters Without Borders, Pierre Veilletet explains the realities of being a journalist in countries where there is little regard for freedom of the press:

There was Jean Hélène, shot like a dog in an Abidjan parking lot. There was... one could go listing ad nauseam last year's drama in which journalists of every nationality lost their freedoms, or their lives, because they were journalists.
Every year, we would like to be able to announce to you that the sad litany is finally beginning to decrease. But this will not be the case for 2003, a black year if ever there was one. More than 120 journalists are still imprisoned and 42 were killed, mainly in Asia and the Middle East (in the Iraq war), compared with 25 in 2002. Moreover, all of the other so-called "indicators" have increased notably: 766 journalists detained, at least 1,460 physically attacked or threatened, and 501 news media censored. To this we should add the many other signs that are harder to quantify. We will return to them because they point to a worrying evolution in retaliatory methods.

Africa? The death of Jean Hélène was unfortunately not isolated. Covering a war is proving to be more and more dangerous, and armed conflicts persist in many countries. Moreover, in Paul Biya’s Cameroon, Omar Bongo’s Gabon, Lansana Conté’s Guinea, ObiangNguema’s Equatorial Guinea, Paul Kagame’s Rwanda, Gnassingbé Eyadéma’s Togo and Robert Mugabe’s Zimbabwe, journalists must face the wrath of aging regimes clinging to power and protective of their authority. They all balk at liberalisation, especially when broadcasting is involved. Indeed, independent news media are becoming scarce throughout Africa and journalists continue to flee with a heavy heart.

In Asia, the dictatorships have the biggest prisons in the world for journalists who refuse to give up. At least 200 journalists were jailed - and in many cases tortur ed - in Asia last year. In Nepal for example and in Burma, where one of the few outsiders to enter the prison world described it as a "real hell." No one needs reminding that North Korea has no idea what press diversity is and China discourages anything that is not propaganda. What could be called "judicial harassment" prevails almost everywhere. Tried and tested forms of this can be found in Turkey, despite a slight relaxation aimed at improving the country’s image for the European Union, and in former Soviet bloc republics such as the relentless Azerbaijan (with more than 100 physical attacks on journalists), Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan - countries with absolute censorship.

The war in Iraq has not improved press freedom or the safety of journalists in the Middle East, where it is now well established that Iran stands out for its brutality. The murder of photographer Zahra Kazemi on 19 July in Tehran’s Evin prison was the most outrageous evidence of that. Encouraging signs of emancipation in Sudan and the Maghreb have been resisted by the old absolutist reflexes of control at all levels and mistrust at all times.

As for the Americas, a lopsided division endured. Press freedom is generally respected in most countries, but is violated every day in Cuba, Haiti and Colombia, which continues to be the region’s most dangerous country. Four journalists were killed there. In North America, the confidentiality of sources was too often challenged.

So, it was undeniably a bad year, especially if examined in detail. (Veilletet 2004)

What the future holds for journalists overseas is uncertain. It will take much more time, work and money to make sure that journalists reporting the news anywhere are not punished for trying to keep the public informed. Along with various watchdog committees, we can take the time to become better informed about what is going on in our global community. We can regularly visit the websites of Reporters Without Borders, Committee to Protect Journalists and the International Freedom of Expression Exchange. Each site offers numerous ways for the public to become involved, whether it is by signing an online petition, sending an e-mail to a government official or writing a letter.

Those of us living in countries where freedom of the press is a guaranteed right have an obligation and a responsibility to help persons living in oppression. Our free voices can make a difference, if we are willing to speak up.
References


