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Streams of Reform
Alan Mandell

The last three decades have been significantly influenced by two streams of reform in adult education and learning: access and pedagogical transformation. The call to access has been the most powerful. In myriad ways, most American academic institutions either excluded adults, made it extremely difficult for them to complete a four-year degree, or completely ignored them. Scheduling was inflexible; curricula were fixed; practical knowledge was assumed to be weak and narrow; and the contents of texts and whole courses were geared to a population of growing adolescents, not world-savvy workers, parents and community members. Most adults just weren't invited in, and those who managed to struggle though university were, at best, treated like second-class academic citizens.

The revolution in access has resulted in significant change. There are more evening and weekend classes, more options for distance and computer mediated learning, more careful and interested offices of advising, more opportunities to receive credit for experiential and non-collegiate learning, and more public and institutional recognition that adults bring ideas, feelings and perspectives to the university that make it a more complete and complex intellectual community. While it probably remains true that most people still associate college with crammed football stadiums and four years of uninterrupted undergraduate study, the changing numbers tell us something very different. The university has substantially changed. It is a more accessible place than it was 30 years ago.

But over those three decades, another stream of reform pushed for recognition with a call for pedagogical transformation. At Empire State College, we sometimes name its spirit "student centered" education, or individualized learning, or simply "mentoring." At the heart of this second demand for change is a critique of the structures, habits and philosophical underpinnings of conventional teaching and learning. Yes, adults have been denied entry, but adults — indeed, *all* students — have also been denied the opportunity to study, explore and think creatively because an entrenched system of schooling at every institutional level has monopolized how we teach, how we learn, what we know, what we should know, and how we judge whether anyone has learned anything at all. Access allows people in, but only attention to the multiple intricate ways in which we are locked into oppressive systems of authority, curricula, and teaching will result in real academic transformation. That is, this second stream of reform pushes the idea that without on-going pedagogical experimentation (at Empire State College, expressed through individualized learning contracts and degree programs, the "non-course equivalency" model of the evaluation of prior learning, and the overall collaborative spirit at the very heart of mentoring), a critical opportunity to question the limits of the academy will be lost.

The landscape of higher education has undoubtedly been positively altered by both of these streams of reform. Indeed, in particularly innovative contexts, the gains of one have supported the efforts of the other. This has been so, at times, in the history of Empire State College. Nonetheless, "the call to access" and "the call to pedagogical transformation" have most often existed in uncomfortable tension with each other. And, as institutions have sought to resolve this discomfort, they have sacrificed pedagogical transformation.

So-called "open" universities throughout the world have welcomed the non-conventional student into college-level study in extraordinary ways, but often as part of a tacit agreement: "We will welcome you in," in effect they say, "but our

institutional and pedagogical authority cannot be questioned. We do not care when you study or even where, but we will certainly tell you what is important to learn, how you should learn, and if you have learned." Thus, the most highly sophisticated courseware developed by learned faculty is delivered by the most highly sophisticated technologies literally across the world. Access is abundant but standardization reigns. That is, by making the claim that legitimate and responsible access demands standardization (for how else can "quality control" be maintained with such an explosion in "customers?"), the academy budges but does not move. In a strange twist, the very triumphs of access deflect us from noticing the subversion of meaningful pedagogical reform.

The successful efforts to increase access should be celebrated and sustained. But the best promise of access — the questioning of authority and the improvement of learning — will never be achieved unless equal attention is given to pedagogical reform. Unless we attend to making teaching and learning more collaborative, and the content of learning more student centered, the opening of access will inevitably be closed by the academic status quo.

From Formal Logic to Critical Thinking for Adult Students

Michael Andolina, Northeast Center
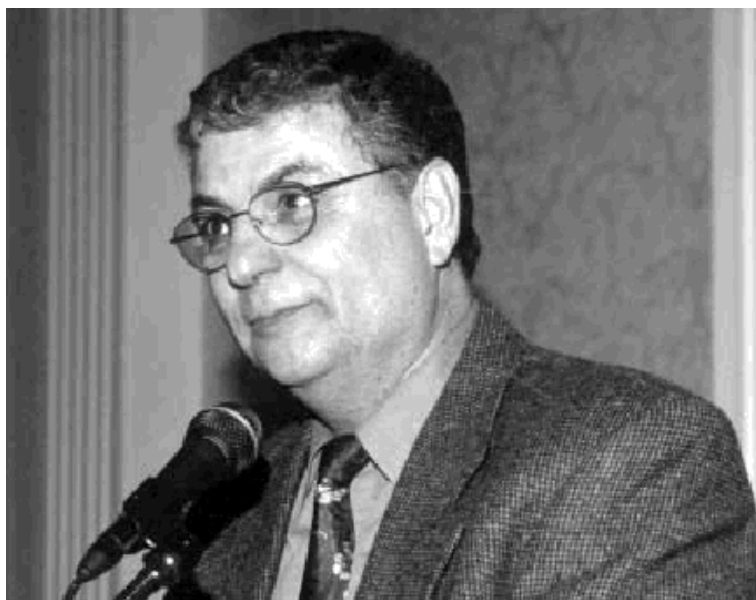
Michael Andolina

Note: Michael Andolina, the 2001 recipient of the Susan H. Turben Award for Excellence in Scholarship, delivered this talk at the All College Conference in March, 2002.

Before jumping into the main part of the lecture, I'd like to start with two quotations describing the importance of critical thinking. The first is from the *Harvard Business Review*:

The modern business world seeks college graduates who are able to analyze, synthesize, evaluate, and interpret information rather than merely apply technical ability. In other words, we are seeking employees who can think critically.

The second quote is from the *American Management Association Training Manual:*

An understanding of critical thinking — the ability to assess one's own reasoning — is a requirement for the successful business professional.

There's no doubt about the importance of critical thinking for society and for higher education, as well as for the business

world. Yet, after over 2000 years of experience with thinking about thinking, one of the most common laments we hear in higher education is that too many of our students just don't think or write critically. How many faculty development discussions, graduate and undergraduate retreats, workshops and seminars have we all attended, where the mantra is "too many of our students can't think critically?"

The purpose of this lecture is to address that complaint. I'll have some ideas of why and how we've gone astray over the years in teaching students to think critically, and I'll have some suggestions for how we can do a better job at Empire State College. But, in the end, I'll concede that there are no quick fix solutions.

First, I'd like to take a few minutes to explain the title for the lecture: "From formal logic to critical thinking, to critical thinking for adult students." But before you run for the door at the mention of formal logic, as some of my students do, I'll assure you that logic is only a small aspect of this discussion. Rather, I'd like to take us on a brief historical journey, one that traces the evolution of teaching logic to recent developments in teaching critical thinking. My own contribution to this field will take the discussion one step further, to a focus on teaching critical thinking to adult, working students.

In a nutshell, the evolution of teaching logic has been to move away from the formal, mathematically-based logical rules of inference taught in the abstract, to teaching informal logical principles of critical thinking taught in concrete terms by means of commonplace concepts and everyday experiences. The latter focuses on teaching critical thinking in familiar contexts and relates those contexts to applications in ordinary practical situations. This has been most prevalent in the last half century, as the phrase "critical thinking" became the "buzz words" in higher education, especially since the early 80s and 90s. My own evolution in teaching both logic and critical thinking over the last 25 years parallels these developments.

In the Beginning

So let's start at the beginning, at least in the western tradition, with the philosopher who is credited as being the first thinker to systematically examine and write about the processes of human reasoning. Over 2300 years ago, the Greek philosopher Aristotle attempted to understand the world around him in a rational, systematic way by dividing the natural world into classes and subclasses (genus and species). With respect to human reason, he examined how humans make inferences about the world around them that would lead to the most certain conclusions. Thus, his model for reasoning was mathematics, a method he believed led to absolute certainty. If he could find a set of principles of human reasoning that resembled mathematics, he could approach his studies in way that led to certainty of this kind.

To make a long story short, he offered a set of inferences in which the structure of the process led to certainty. For example, the most famous of these structural arguments is:

All humans are mortal
Socrates is human
Therefore, Socrates is mortal.

What's important about this argument for logicians has nothing to do with being human, mortality or Socrates. Rather, the structure of the argument is the key.

The conclusion follows from the premises based on the meanings of the words "all," the connector or copula "is/are," and the concept of class membership. If a member of one class is also a member of a larger class, and that class is a member of an even larger class, then the members of the first class member must also be members of the third, or largest class. The conclusion follows no matter what else we know about Socrates. For example, that he was bald, overweight, Greek, snubbed nose, and probably bisexual, is irrelevant to the strength of the argument. And any additional information about mortality or being human will also have nothing to do with the validity or strength of the argument.

Here is another example:

All mentors are martyrs
Socrates is a mentor
Therefore, Socrates is a martyr.

Knowing what we know about mentors and martyrdom, and at Empire State College we do seem to know a lot about them, this knowledge will not strengthen or weaken the argument.

Just one more example:

All faculty members are educated people
All educated people are excellent teachers
Therefore. all faculty members are excellent teachers.
A=B, B=C; therefore, A=C.

Here is an example of a valid argument in which the conclusion follows even if one of the premises is false. (I'll let you decide which one!) The validity of the argument follows from its structure, in a way that the conclusion follows from A=B, B=C, therefore, A=C.

Let's skip ahead several hundred years to the medieval period, when, primarily in monasteries in Europe and in academies in the Islamic world, scholars were rereading and rewriting Greek manuscripts. These scholars extended and improved upon Aristotle's logic. For example, they classified the various structures, added more structures that would lead to erroneous reasoning, and categorized the structures according to types. In the west, they even gave them Latin names. Despite the improvements to classical logic, the core of its method remained the same: its reliance on the mathematical model.

The Glaze Factor

There are at least four problems with this approach. First, something weird happens when teaching students formal logic of this sort. It is *the glaze factor*. This occurs when students, and probably many of you right now, begin to suppress a yawn, perhaps nod the head a bit, and then the eyes begin to glaze over. That's the glaze factor.

But there are more important, serious problems with this approach beside boredom. That is, by design, there is little or no connection to reality. In other words, logic when *taught in abstraction* has little connection to common experience, i.e., the real world. Second, the analysis neglects consideration of the method of communication of arguments, i.e., *how* ideas and inferences are conveyed — the *language* in which ideas are conveyed. Third, its application is extremely limited to the format Aristotle proposed, the model of class logic. There are several obviously valid inferences not captured by Aristotle's logic. And, of course, we rarely express arguments in this format to begin with.

But the fourth and most important and related problem, for the purposes of this talk, is that students can demonstrate facility with Aristotle's logical proofs, or any extended proofs of this type, even get an "A" in logic, and still not think or write critically, at least not in the ways we would like them to. I will get to the distinction between logic and critical thinking in a few minutes when I define those terms, but I'd like to stress that the connection between facility with logic and facility with critical thinking and writing has not been established through class logic.

I'd like to make some parenthetical remarks here. First, I am not claiming that there aren't other reasons why some students don't write or think in the ways we would like them to. There may be many factors other than the failure of logic as the cause of the problem. I merely want to emphasize the weaknesses and limitations of this approach in teaching critical thinking.

I also want to point out that up until fairly recently, and to a lesser extent today, students in philosophy courses throughout the country are still learning these logical structures, some even memorizing the Latin names for them. And there are good reasons for doing so. There is indeed a great value in studying abstract reasoning, or "mental gymnastics" as some of my students call it, and the mathematical models of decision making, not to mention the merit of understanding the historical context of philosophical movements. Its value to computer logic and preparing for the Law School Aptitude Test, are just two examples of important applications. But, again, abstract reasoning does not by itself lead to critical thinking.

The Scientific Approach

One more major historical movement in the development of logic is related to the development of scientific methodology.

That is inductive logic (as opposed to Aristotle's deductive logic) developed as a piece with scientific method. As we all know, this methodology relies on observation and experimentation and prediction. At its core are observing, testing, predicting, and hypothesizing, all of which are directly or indirectly based on sensory knowledge. So we now have a connection to experience through observation, but must sacrifice the kind of absolute certainty the deductive model guarantees. Nonetheless, it will allow us to make a wide variety of inferences about the world around us, even if the results are only highly probable, or approach certainty.

Some philosophers, who are leading proponents of this method, have been called the "Logical Positivists." They saw science and scientific methodology as the new key to understanding the world. An early and influential proponent of positivism, Bertrand Russell, and colleague philosopher/ mathematician, Alfred North Whitehead, wanted to combine Aristotelian logic with empirical science and mathematics. Essentially, they rewrote Aristotle. The result, modern quantificational logic, used both abstractions and observation, with the empirical observations serving as "facts." The facts (bits of language serving as component truth claims) were then plugged into their quantification system, a system that made use of quasi-mathematical proofs. Without going into the details, let it suffice to say that the system would not take into consideration a "data" that did not fit the empirical model. That was relegated to the realm of non-sense, meaninglessness, and included such un-testable factors as ethics, religion and the soul.

But of course they were wrong. Melding science and logic did advance human knowledge, and, as we all know, the problems of the world have not been solved, especially the problems in ethics and religion. And, once again, for the purposes of this presentation, the method, by itself, does not lead to clear and critical thinking. Yet the method provided a major step in this direction. (And again, I'm overstating the case.)

What Is Critical Thinking?
Now after this vastly oversimplified history, we finally get to the heart of this discussion: critical thinking. What do we mean by critical thinking? This definition comes from the National Foundation for Critical Thinking, with some of my own modifications.

Critical thinking is a process whereby one evaluates ideas and information, and the sources that provide them; arranges those data in a coherent way, according to their reasonableness; makes connections to other ideas and information; considers alternative ideas; and assesses all of the claims for their implications. www.criticalthinking.org

Notice there is no mention of logical proofs, rules of inference, or abstract or symbolic reasoning, although many of these concepts are implicit in the definition. Rather, critical thinking focuses on the ways in which ideas are communicated and evaluated. It stresses the fundamental importance of the mode of communication, rather than its structure.

Here are some of the key words associated with critical thinking (sometimes called "informal logic"):

Assess information S
ynthesize information
Assess implications
Evaluate coherency of ideas*
(The logical flow of ideas)
Identify assumptions
Evaluate credibility of sources
Make connections to other ideas
Analyze underlying assumptions
Assess emotional/rhetorical impact
Identify biasEliminate vagueness

Note: Only the phrase with the asterisk resembles formal logic. Note also that the list is not exhaustive. For example, some would include creative thinking and critical reading among the essential characteristics, to mention two.

This approach has been influenced by two related schools of thought. The first is the theoretical pedagogy found in Steven Brookfield in his book, *Developing Critical Thinkers,* and even more so in Chet Meyers, *Teaching Students Critical*

Thinking. They emphasize teaching critical thinking only within a subject matter, never in the abstract. They want to integrate critical thinking into subject or content areas, such as biology, business, history, English — subjects taught in typical classrooms. The impact of their work led to discussions on a new set of popular phrases like "critical thinking in the disciplines," "critical thinking across the disciplines," and "multidisciplinary approaches to critical thinking" etc., which became popular faculty development topics in recent years. These topics remain popular today. The second line of attack comes from the National Foundation for Critical Thinking in Sonoma, California. Its main proponents are Richard Paul, Linda Elder and Vincent Ruggiero, among others. Their focus is even more practical. They argue for teaching critical thinking not only in a subject area but insist on integrating it with common, everyday experience. For example, Ruggiero's book, *Becoming a Critical Thinker,* is designed to look more like a handbook or workbook rather than a college textbook. It has tear sheets with ample room for personal notation and comments in the margins, and several practice exercises stated in practical, common terms. There is little or no theory, no conceptual analysis of underlying frameworks, and no strategies for logical proofs. But notice again the emphasis on language and communication and their application.

Another parenthetical comment based on anecdotal evidence. I would argue that the change in direction is based on two factors, one following from the other. First, we have come to accept the integral connection between thinking and writing. Most of us assume that clear writing presupposes clear thinking. This leads to the next claim. If students can't write clearly, they probably have not thought clearly. Without getting into a theoretical debate over the subject, let's accept the argument that problems associated with the medium through which ideas are communicated have a great deal to do with problems associated with critical thinking. The two go hand in hand. Thus, the perceived decline in writing skills has propelled us to look at problems in thinking skills in this informal way.

The second related emphasis comes from the external world as quoted at the beginning of this lecture. The business world wants employees who can think and write clearly and critically. Thus, colleges are responding with courses in critical thinking to address the needs described earlier.   The difference in approaches, however, from logic to critical thinking also has an added, perhaps unintended, consequence. Faculty who teach these studies now tend to be in English departments and communications departments, and to a lesser extent in business departments, rather than in philosophy departments. And such studies are rarely taught by logicians. (I have some personal opinions on whether this is necessarily a good thing and would argue that the pendulum has swung too far in this direction. Besides, I have some good friends who are unemployed philosophers who could use the work.). But we might get into that debate in the question and answer session if we have time.

Back to critical thinking. The topics covered in these studies focus on language and its clear expression and on the organization of ideas. For example, you will find in the table of contents in a popular critical thinking text topics such as "Fallacies of Ambiguity," where the potential problem in reasoning is caused by an ambiguous form of expression. That is, one word has two separate meanings, but the argument turns on confusion as to which meaning is intended. Other topics include vagueness, malapropisms, ambiguities created by faulty grammatical sentence construction, emotionally charged language, stereotyping phrases and personal bias, and other rhetorical persuaders.

It seems to me, however, that these are the kinds of things that a student could or should encounter in a freshman or high school English class. As Ruggiero argues, for example, these skills should be taught in middle and elementary schools as well as in college courses. Ruggiero and a team from the National Association for Critical Thinking have developed texts at the appropriate level for young children that are being used in test schools in California.

Application to Life
Now we get finally to the topic of adult learners.

After teaching logic and critical thinking for 27 years, I have reviewed over 100 texts. Some are excellent (like the Moore and Parker book), some are useful handbooks (like Ruggiero's), some are very weak, and some are essentially a rehash of other wellestablished texts. However, none addresses the *unique* needs, backgrounds, and interests of adult students. Yet, according to federal statistics for 1999, 45.6 percent of all students enrolled in college in the U.S. are over the age of 25. Not one of these texts was aimed at older, working students. For example, they refer to Jane and John in a residence hall, or going to the movies, dating, discussing a classroom assignment, etc. The exercises and examples are aimed at the experiences of 17-21 year old full-time students on residential campuses. And although many texts address the issue of

gender diversity, I couldn't find any that addressed a multicultural audience in their examples and exercises.

> I reviewed or devised examples involving office communication, project reports, dinner table discussions, and management decision making.

Most education theorists agree that when students are engaged in material that is directly relevant to their own experience, particularly material they can apply and reinforce in their own daily experiences, that material is more easily learned and retained. We live this truism at Empire State College. Lifelong, experientially-based learning is at the core of mentoring. Adult theorists conducting research in this field confirm our *modus operandi.* For example, Sandra Crux, in *Learning Strategies for Adults;* Jeffrey Cantor, in *Delivering Instruction to Adult Learners;* and Patricia Cranton, *Working with Adult Learners,* argue for the integration of adult experiences with adult learning content. Additional research shows that differences in learning styles unique to adults, should include integrating past experiences with the learning materials.

Fortunately for me, textbook publishers also confirmed the need to address this niche. Through their own market research in response to my proposal for a textbook for adult critical thinkers, they found a gap in available materials. So I set out to develop a text that would build on the experiences that Empire State College students bring to us, and then would integrate the principles of critical thinking with that experience. I also developed practical interactive exercises whereby students could apply what they are learning to real life situations on the job or at home, with family or friends. I wanted examples that involved Ayesha and Rasheed, or Jorge and Kim, as they try to balance working full time, going to school, and taking care of children or other loved ones. I reviewed or devised examples involving office communication, project reports, dinner table discussions, and management decision making. Whether the events occurred in the context of a single parent household, a shipping department in a factory, or a large clerical support office, the exercises and examples reflected the lives of working students. To locate current, relevant material on these subjects, I read *Working Mother Magazine, Human Resource Journal, The Journal of Administrative Assistant, Office Manager, The Executive, The Journal of the Eastern Academy of Management,* among many others, including journals dealing with technology and computer networking. I reviewed textbooks on management decision-making, office procedures, and staff training, etc.

The goal was to develop exercises students would take home and/or bring to work. Students would be able to practice at home or bring their assignments to work to try them out. (For example, they analyzed actual reports, office communications, project proposals, and company literature. They included topics like analyzing their organization's ethics code.) Each chapter of the text culminates with an exercise titled, "Writing from Experience." Here students apply the principles of the chapter to an experience they've had on the job or at home. And in some chapters, they were asked to create their own exercises from events in their lives.

If you're wondering how a traditional philosopher can be successful with materials so far outside of his field, I'll admit I had a great deal of help. Dr. Craig Tunwall, a business mentor in the Johnstown unit "translated" some of the material, provided interesting examples, and suggested additional reading. He even got me to serve as a reviewer for the Eastern Academy of Management's journal, reviewing their sessions on business ethics. I also benefited from teaching in our FORUM management education programs. Many of the "real life" examples come directly from FORUM students.

As I reviewed traditional texts, I also noticed that there were three additional pieces missing from them, pieces that all students, especially adult students, encounter in everyday experience: First, I added a section on information processing and information literacy. I also included one on integrating ethics and critical thinking, and another on real-life case studies. I also included, as do many critical thinking texts based in philosophy, a chapter on critical thinking and empirical research methods.

Here are some examples:

I have students identify conflicting positions on a controversial subject based on material in two web sites. The sites will show a bias. For example, the Catholic Conference on abortion and the NOW web page will define the issue in very different terms.

For the chapter on ethics and critical thinking, students examine cases where the confusion over the "facts" versus confusion over the "interpretation" of the facts creates an ethical dilemma. Determining the precise nature of the dispute is often the first step in clearing it up. The language and emotional rhetoric can be at the heart of the ethical conflict.

Here is a sample of how I applied critical thinking to case studies.

The first case study examines downsizing/ rightsizing to budget cuts. For this case, I used the rational decision-making approach. This uses the empirical methods discussed earlier but has as its major principle the following: Maximize the net expectable positive outcome in view of available alternative outcomes. It's the "weigh your options" approach based on empirical data and mathematical probabilities.

In summary, teaching critical thinking effectively goes hand in hand with good mentoring; they share many of the same qualities, and we all practice it to some extent. We might not reflect on it consciously, but we are all engaged in this kind of work with our students as Empire State College mentors. In a way, it is also like cheerleading or coaching a sport. You have to encourage students to dig deeper into a subject, let them know that the analysis does not stop at the surface, model successful strategies with real examples, and celebrate successes.

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The Role of Conscious Reflection in Experimental Learning
Xenia Coulter, Central New York Center

Author's note: In 2001, both Empire State College and the UUP each provided me with two months in which to investigate the scholarly foundation of experiential learning and its relevance to our work in prior learning assessment (PLA). The hope was that the results of this investigation, if shared with the college community, might stimulate those involved with PLA to recognize the scholarly implications, and research possibilities, of a process that is ordinarily taken pretty much for granted. This paper, which was written for and presented at last year's Alliance-Adult Higher Education Alliance (AHEA) conference and also shared with members of CIRCLE, is one result of that work. Basically, it attempts to identify different bodies of research and scholarship that connect in surprising ways to some extremely interesting aspects of experiential learning. It also suggests that what is radical about formally recognizing knowledge acquired from experience is that it ultimately challenges the assumed superiority of what we ordinarily consider "higher" learning in our universities. The work reported here is, at best, only a beginning. I hope it at least exposes the range of possible inquiry that lies hidden beneath our everyday practice of doing credit by evaluation.

Xenia Coulter

Xenia Coulter

For the past few years, because of my involvement in the assessment of prior (experiential) learning, I have been asking questions about what it means to learn from experience as distinct from, say, formal instruction in school. Such questions were stimulated, in part, by videotapes I have collected over the years in which students, as they begin the process of formally requesting credit for knowledge acquired from experience, try to describe what and how they have learned in

informal settings. Many of these videotapes I have shared at past Alliance conferences.

It is interesting to note that the award of prior learning credit typically takes place without much, if any, theoretical discussion about the way in which learning from experience takes place. For the most part, students requesting credit are expected to demonstrate an understanding of a particular subject area that is equivalent to what might be taught about that subject in a formal classroom setting. Qualitative differences between what they have learned from experience and what students know at the end of a semester-long course are not ordinarily acknowledged, as long as those claiming experiential knowledge can show that what they know bears a strong resemblance to what is taught in a course. Thus, when various questions began to arise (see for example, Coulter et al., 1994; Coulter, 1996; Herman and Coulter, 1998; Coulter et al., 1998; Coulter, in press), it was with some embarrassment that I realized how little I knew of the scholarly and theoretical literature on experiential learning. This paper describes my ongoing efforts to remedy that situation.

My journey into the experiential learning scholarly terrain, which has been going on now for the past several years, has been in some ways astonishing and exciting, and in other ways very puzzling. One of the difficulties I encountered is that this terrain is large, rarely identified as relevant to prior learning, and filled with disconnected pockets of scholarship. In terms of the terrain analogy, my search for information felt like an uncharted hike from one isolated village in the mountains to another. As I now take time to look back on this, as yet unfinished, trip, I see a small trail of crumbs that moved me along toward my current destination starting with my initial reading of David Kolb and subsequently of his followers. While I have since traveled far afield from those first readings, it was their stress upon the critical nature of conscious reflection that caught my attention and which ultimately drew me along in my other readings. As I became more consumed by the question of intentional reflection, it began to take over as the purpose of my inquiry. Perhaps if I ever finish this journey, my original questions, long since set aside, may become, if not answered, at least regarded in a somewhat different light.

Literature on Experiential Learning and Education

Kolb's book, *Experiential Learning* (1964) is certainly the most obvious place to begin in any scholarly review of the recent literature. His book is substantive and challenging, and it contains many interesting ideas; however, in the adult learning field what is generally best remembered is his definition of experiential learning as a progressive or developmental cycle (see Kolb, p. 42). Derived from earlier cyclical models such as were developed by John Dewey and Kurt Lewin, Kolb's cycle consists of four stages:

Concrete experience
Reflective observation
Abstract conceptualization
Active experimentation

While Kolb goes on to consider each of these stages as different ways of knowing, he defines experiential learning as a whole as a continuous recycling of this four-stage feedback loop. First, the person has an experience; then the person reflects upon what he or she has observed; s/he then conceptualizes abstractly upon what these observations might mean; finally, s/he creates a plan of action that emerges from this conceptualization of the process. As the plan of action is executed, the person begins again the process of experiencing.

Two quite different bodies of literature have grown out of Kolb or Dewey. A number of edited volumes by Boud et al. (Boud, Cohen and Walker, 1993; Boud, Keogh and Walker, 1985; Boud and Miller, 1996) and Weil and McGill (1990), also an early text by Schon (1983), provide numerous studies and examples of adult learning from experience. In Boud et al.'s volumes, it is clear that the reflective stage in Kolb's model (and other such models) is taken very seriously, as illustrated by the title of the oldest of these volumes: *Reflection: Turning Experience into Learning* (Boud et al., 1985). Indeed, consonant with Kolb's theory, learning is assumed not to occur at all unless there is active and intentional reflection. Throughout nearly all these books, the role of the teacher is seen as critical in helping students turn their experience into learning.

The other body of literature, which is on experiential education, exemplified in the edited volume by Warren et al. (1995), similarly focuses upon the importance of the teacher for helping typically young students interpret various experiential opportunities that are engineered or developed as part of their formal training. In these writings, Kolb is never cited, but

much theoretical significance is given to Dewey (e.g., 1910, 1929, 1938) — in terms of his cyclical model as well as his emphasis upon the importance of creating learning opportunities around the interests and relevant experiences of students. Again, as with Kolb and Boud, the creation of learning depends not on "experience" per se, but upon the intervention of a teacher who helps students understand what they learned from that experience. Thus, the critical importance of intentional reflection is similarly embraced by practitioners of experiential education, stemming directly from John Dewey's belief that:

The crucial educational problem is that of procuring the postponement of immediate action upon desire until observation and judgment have intervened … [which] then give direction to what is otherwise blind … (Dewey, 1938, p. 69).

Literature on Prior Learning Assessments

It is not clear how well the assessment of prior learning fits into this particular model of learning. By definition most adults acquire experiential knowledge without the assistance of teachers, and a literal reading of this literature would seem to imply that, therefore, learning could not have taken place without this guidance. It may be for this reason that so much emphasis in the literature is focused, not on theory, but upon the methodology of prior learning assessment (see for example: Keeton and Associates, 1976; Whittaker, 1989; Mandell and Michelson, in press), where teachers are still seen to play a major role in helping students recognize, articulate, and organize what they know, even if it is after the fact. Sheckley and his associates (e.g., Sheckley and Pranger, 2001) have suggested that "deliberate practice" in the field may be the way by which unsophisticated learners are stimulated into purposeful reflection and acquire their experiential expertise. As developed by Ericsson et al. (1993) to expand upon Kolb's model, the theory of deliberate practice identifies various mechanisms (e.g., structured learning experiences, guided and independent practice) which provide the necessary "postponement of action" that allows for deliberation, and which Sheckley and Pranger argue are similar to what occurs when students prepare their portfolios for assessment. Whether this theory, or others such as Schon's (1983) which also focuses upon practitioner-initiated reflection, is applicable to the assessment of experiential learning is hard to determine. It is probably fair to say that questions about the utility for assessment of Kolb-like theories, however developed, still remain very much open, but, as recently pointed out by my colleague, Alan Mandell (2000), questions emerging from the practice of prior learning assessment are always more prevalent than answers (see also: Hoffman, 1989; some articles from Weil and McGill, 1990, and Mulligan and Griffin, 1992; and Fraser, 1995).
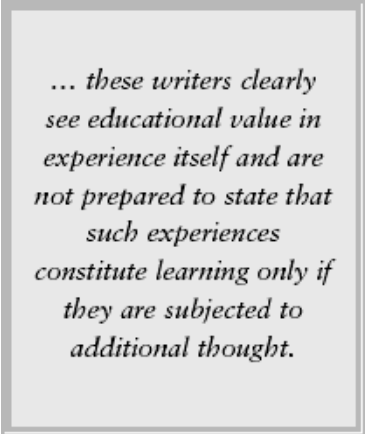
Literature on Experience

Not all writings on experiential learning stress the importance of a mediator or guide. Many books have been written to simply emphasize the other Deweyan message — that experiential learning, or learning first hand by doing, produces deeper and more enduring knowledge than isolated classroom or second-hand learning. Eisner (1994), Hopkins (1994) and Reed (1996) all argue that formal education, which is inordinately dependent upon book learning, is really quite shallow and relatively ineffective. The theoretical importance of these writings is that they call into question the use of formal learning as a benchmark against which to assess experiential learning. It could well be that Dewey's and Kolb's view of experience as somehow "raw" and undigested ("blind" in the words of Dewey above) needing the civilizing force of intentional reflection to make it meaningful is wrong. Certainly, this conception of experience seems directly contradicted by some of these writings, as well as by several other authors who describe how first-hand experiences on the job provide learning opportunities that are otherwise simply unavailable (see e.g., Burnard, 1991, on nursing; Scannell and Simpson, 1996, on the value of student internships; Calder and McCollum, 1998, on vocational learning;). Eisner (1994) illustrates these ideas by having the reader examine a picture of two people interacting in a restaurant and then asking them to read a well written description of the picture. He then asks which experience is richer, and it is patently obvious that infinitely more information is conveyed by the picture than the prose piece. In other words, these writers clearly see educational value in experience itself and are not prepared to state that such experiences constitute learning only if they are subjected to additional thought.

These ideas are supported by Vasilyuk (1992) whose research, he argues, supports the Marxian idea of the "**ascent** from the abstract to the concrete [my emphasis]," a position that contrasts sharply with the usual assumption that abstraction (the focus of formal education) is at a higher level than concrete knowledge (the presumed outcome of experiential learning). Vasilyuk, however, has a somewhat different perspective on the meaning of "experience" in that for him, experiencing is a form of consciousness, subjective knowing, or "a partly unformed stream of feeling that accompanies every lived aspect of what we are and mean and perceive" (Gendlin, 1962, as cited by Vasilyuk). Experiential learning in this context consists of facing one's feelings, working them through, resolving critical life situations, restoring mental

equilibrium, and so forth; thus, abstract feelings are made meaningful by rendering them concrete.

The Sociocultural Literature
A critical analysis of the assumption that experiential learning by itself is less meaningful than formal learning is shared by other researchers who have been strongly influenced by Vygotsky's sociocultural psychology and his theory of learning from action (e.g., Vygotsky, 1978; Martin et al., 1995; Wertsch et al., 1995). Their argument is that learning is action and that how we learn is very much affected by the moment and the circumstances of the learning. Thus, formal learning with its emphasis upon literate expression, is much more circumscribed by the limited context of the academic world than we realize. Indeed, a set of experiences, when forced to be "translated" into the more acceptable realm of academic discourse, may not only be reduced in substance, as in the earlier Eisner example, but also is often distorted so as to conform to a possibly inappropriate academic perspective (Clifford and Marcus, 1986, as cited by Glick, 1995).

> … these writers clearly see educational value in experience itself and are not prepared to state that such experiences constitute learning only if they are subjected to additional thought.

The academic form privileges knowledge of a certain type, and elevates that form of knowledge to universal and moral status as the kind of knowledge that people should have if they are said to have knowledge at all. Such selection practices can serve to fundamentally skew accounts of the phenomena under study and obscure certain essential elements that "do not fit" into theoretical idealizations … [This can be identified] as a privileging of an "idealized" over an "activity" perspective. This in turn relates to a privileging of the "intellectual forms" over the other forms often associated with "doing" (Glick, 1995, p. 361).

As academics we are generally unaware of this bias. The focus on context by sociocultural psychologists is quite interesting in its own right since it suggests to many researchers that learning, knowledge, even intentions are not simply properties of an individual mind. Dewey, some years back (1938) made the observation that individual intelligence depends upon the shared knowledge of the culture, and others, more recently, argue more boldly that intelligence or knowledge as a property of a single mind is an illusion. In the edited volume by Salomon, *Distributed Cognitions* (1993), the contributors illustrate in a variety of ways how personal knowledge is socially distributed, is dependent upon numerous tools and technologies, and arises out of history and culture. Even individual intentions, including purposeful reflection, the subject of inquiry in this paper, have been argued to be socially situated (e.g., Hobson, 1991). As observed by Zeedyk (2001), who does research on the development of intentionality in children:

It does not make sense, from the social theorists' perspective, to conceive of communicative acts and intentions as only a property of mind, lodged within the head of an individual. Rather, from their perspective, intention and intentional capacities are constituted within the child's embodied relation to the world, initially the world of people and later that of objects (Zeedyk, 2001, p. 90).

What then does this conception of intentionality as socially determined (or a product of history, culture or context) imply for a theory of experiential learning that requires individual purpose or effort (e.g., Ericsson and Charness, 1994)? Indeed, what are the implications of this perspective for the award of credit for experientially-based, or any other, individual achievement?

Literature on Expert and Practical Knowledge

Returning to the idea that experiential learning is not well understood (much less well translated) by academics, we find additional support for these ideas in two other areas of research: the literature that describes the work of psychologists interested in "expert" knowledge" (e.g., Chi ... et al., 1988, Ericsson, 1991) and those who study everyday practical knowledge or intelligence (e.g., Rogoff and Lave, 1984; Sternberg and Wagner, 1986; Lave, 1988; Poon et al., 1989). In both areas of study, how people think in the real world has been examined in some depth. Researchers studying expertise have discovered that experienced individuals demonstrate strategies of thought and memory that seriously challenge a number of cognitive theories. For example, the memory strategies of waiters simply do not support the long established two-factor theory of memory (Ericsson and Poison, 1988). Even more surprising are studies suggesting that it is only the inexperienced who work out problems on an abstract rational basis; experts, in contrast but consonant with Vasilyuk's ideas, operate largely on the basis of an extensive repertory of remembered concrete experiences. Thus, an inexperienced doctor analyzes symptoms logically as s/he was taught in class, whereas an experienced doctor diagnoses patients by comparing their symptoms to those of others s/he has treated (Groen and Pate, 1988).

Overall, the strategies undertaken by workers in the real world are developed so as to maximize efficiency, even if, as in the case of ill-structured problems (e.g., the admissions process in college, Voss and Post, 1988), efficiency does not necessary lead to greater accuracy. As Glick argues in another context (1995), efficiency is not particularly valued in academia; indeed, it makes sense that what is valued and learned in the workplace may differ dramatically from the values and requirements of the academic world. But again this difference raises questions about the appropriateness of requiring experiential learning not only to resemble academic content but to rely on formal study techniques, such as deliberation and reflection, that may not be effective, or even accessible, in the real world.

From the practical knowledge literature, some of the most interesting findings, such as by Sylvia Scribner (1986), have shown instances of extraordinary competence by individuals who are neither schooled nor particularly reflective and who cannot articulate the skills that they amply demonstrate every day. Other researchers have provided very detailed analyses of the complex cognitive strategies that underlie experiential knowledge that is seemingly inarticulate such as in various forms of manual labor. (See for example, Keller and Keller, 1996, in *Cognition and Tool Use: The Blacksmith at Work* or Dalmiya and Alcoff, 1993, on the knowledge base of midwives). Again, such findings seriously challenge a theory of experiential learning that requires purposeful or intentional reflection before it can be acknowledged that knowledge has been acquired.

Literature on Tacit Knowledge and Consciousness

Similar challenges arise from the literature on "tacit knowledge," a form of knowing that has been discussed in some depth by the scientist and philosopher, Polyani (1967, 1958). The very term refers to knowledge that is unarticulated and inaccessible to consciousness, a concept that seems to contradict to the core the assumptions of Dewey and Kolb about the nature of learning. Tennant and Pogson (1995) pointed out the potential relevance of this type of knowledge in trying to understand the experiential learning of adults, and recently such relevance was demonstrated in a volume edited by Sternberg and Horvath (1999) in which contributors provided numerous examples of unarticulated and generally inaccessible knowledge that affects and even controls the performance, judgment and decision making of experts and professionals in a wide variety of fields.

> Yet, much of the research ... tends to suggest that purpose, deliberateness, intentionality, and conscious reflection are actually not necessary for even sophisticated learning to take place.

It is an article of faith by educators that learning, thinking, and indeed the intelligent behavior that sets us apart from non human animals are dependent upon or defined by consciousness. Indeed, it is on the basis of this assumption that Dewey, Kolb, Baud, Schon, and many others, have posited the crucial importance of joining intentional (i.e., conscious) reflection with experience before true learning can be acknowledged. Yet, much of the research I have so briefly described tends to suggest that purpose, deliberateness, intentionality, and conscious reflection are actually not necessary for even sophisticated learning to take place. While the topic of consciousness, which has attracted considerable attention in recent years, particularly by philosophers, goes way beyond the purview of this paper, it is of interest to note that an increasing number of studies support the idea that consciousness may be relatively unimportant in the development and execution of intelligent behavior. This literature ranges from Julian Jaynes's review of research (1976) showing consciousness to be unnecessary for concept formation, learning, thinking, problem solving or reasoning to a surprisingly similar argument presented by a contemporary psychobiologist (Gazzaniga, 2000); from an originally startling review of experiments showing that people do not have access to the reasons why they make the decisions or judgments that they do (Nisbett and Campbell, 1977) to a whole issue of the *American Psychologist* (1999) devoted to studies coming to a similar conclusion.

A Few Thoughts on Embodied Knowledge

Of relevance to this issue is a growing body of writing advocating the idea of "embodied knowledge," a term that can refer to the ways by which our ability to reason or think is constrained by the structure of our brain (from a molar perspective, see Lakoff and Johnson, 1999; from a molecular perspective, see Carlson, 1997), our emotions (e.g., Damascio, 1994), or our physical or other forms of worldly experiences (eg., Grosz, 1993; Varela et al., 1997). What is interesting about this literature is that in different ways, these ideas make an effort to eliminate the distinction between the ordinarily separated concepts of mind and body, much as the philosopher, Merleau-Ponty, has used the concept of embodiment to resolve the problems of "ontological dualism" (Dillon, 1988/1997). Thus, learning or knowledge is not regarded as residing only in the head, much as the sociocultural psychologists have argued, leaving open rather than closed questions about the actual role of consciousness.

The puzzle of experiential learning may, therefore, be the product of the not-oftenacknowledged old and seemingly intractable mind-body problem. Put another way, the demand for conscious reflection by Dewey, Kolb and others, may be simply a reflection of their underlying belief that embodied experience must be converted into disembodied knowledge before it can be considered legitimate. Development of the idea that knowledge is inherently embodied may lead to a reconceptualization of experiential learning that resolves at least some of the contradictions evident in the literature I have so far reviewed. If we are to move forward in our understanding of what it means to know from experience, new ways of thinking about the learning our students have acquired on the job or in other informal settings would be most welcome. We need to be freed from a set of assumptions about the nature of learning that quite possibly blind us to a much richer understanding of knowledge.

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ALL ABOUT

MENTORING

A Publication of Empire State College

Introduction to the Environmental/Adirondack Studies Residency
Wayne Ouderkirk, Northeast Center

The Environmental/Adirondack Studies Residency presents unique opportunities for both students and mentors. A three-day event offered every October to all Empire State College students by coordinating faculty from the Northeast Center, the program challenges students to learn in multiple ways. It also challenges mentors to create learning contracts and activities that intersect a broad set of concerns and a specific theme. The residency's structure and location provide educational experiences that help everyone respond to those educational challenges.

As its title implies, the residency focuses on environmental and Adirondack issues. Although there might be disagreement about the severity of specific environmental problems, a great deal of agreement exists that the solutions to those problems require cooperation and expertise from many fields of inquiry. With that in mind, the residency is an interdisciplinary and interactive experience throughout. First, each year there is a theme that in some way connects all the activities and learning contracts. For example, this year's theme, "Developing an Environmental Ethic," asks participants to consider moral duties regarding the environment in the context of ecological, historical, psychological and philosophical knowledge. Themes from past years have included critical examination of the ideas of stewardship and sustainability.

Residency participants, 2001

Everyone arrives at the residency having completed a short reading on the theme; two substantive plenary sessions are

devoted to discussing it and relating it to the topics of the learning contracts. These and other sessions illustrate the interactive aspect of the program. Both the theme and the interdisciplinarity of the residency demand that mentors and students expand their thinking and interests so they can view the environment in new, more complete ways. One Empire State College mentor, in collaboration with the planning committee [see box #1], takes responsibility for creating the theme, selecting the related reading, and designing and leading the plenary activities. Because the reading and those activities set the tone for much of the residency, and because the students are typical Empire State College students (i.e., they have tremendously varied backgrounds and interests, are from almost all areas of study, and from all over the college!), selecting and planning for the theme requires serious thought, as well as knowledge of the connections to the learning contracts other faculty will offer.

Those learning contracts constitute another major mentoring challenge. Although each one focuses on a single topic regarding the environment, they too are interdisciplinary. Each contract is an up-to-date examination of the central topic, but each also connects both to the theme and to broader environmental questions and issues. In the residency's six years, mentors have made an impressive array of topics available for students. [See box #2 for a list of this year's topics and faculty.]

Before arriving at the residency, students, in consultation with their primary mentors, select one of the year's learning contract offerings for in-depth study. (There are typically eight or nine such contracts from which to choose.) For the convenience of students and faculty, short descriptions of the residency courses as well as complete learning contract details are available through the residency web site [www.esc.edu/AdirondackRes]. Once students register for the residency (a separate process from enrolling in the college for the residency course — see the residency web site), they receive introductory information and a preliminary Residency participants, 2001 assignment from the mentor who will serve as tutor for that learning contract.

At the residency, there are three formal meetings of each study group with the mentor who will guide their independent study for that learning contract. Thus, residency mentors not only design interdisciplinary learning contracts; they also plan group learning experiences that initiate those contracts to enable students to continue the contracts in a distance learning format following the residency.

Camp Huntington, owned by SUNY College at Cortland, is the residency site. Behind the bland name is an exciting location, ideal for the learning process of this residency. Designed for his family by William West Durant, it was originally "Camp Pine Knot." Durant went on to design many of the Adirondack Great Camps; and Pine Knot, on the shores of beautiful Raquette Lake, has become a National Historical Landmark. It was deeded to SUNY Cortland and its use restricted to educational purposes. The camp consists of historical buildings, eating and sleeping facilities, and extensive forested areas with a system of well-marked and maintained hiking trails.

The camp is reachable only via boat from a landing near Raquette Lake Village, and all of us are ferried there together by camp staff, which is why our instructions to students emphasize that they should arrive for the program at the designated time. Missing the boat is not a metaphor in this program!

Learning About the Land

With its rich history and lore, Camp Huntington is itself part of the residency learning process: Each year, the camp director (a SUNY Cortland faculty member) and staff provide our group with a historical tour that raises many historical and environmental topics: exploitation vs. preservation of wilderness areas; historical and contemporary environmental attitudes; forestry practices; ecological systems; land use policy and practices; clean water and air issues; and wildlife habitat, to name a few. The Adirondack region is another of the foci of the residency. Residency learning contracts always include some devoted to Adirondack issues (Adirondack history, or a study of land use issues in the region). Several residency sessions include outdoor activities. Also, combining entertainment with education, one of the evening activities features an Adirondack folklorist and performer who regales everyone with humorous tales and songs of the region. So in addition to relating nicely to the broader themes of the program, the facility also serves as a historical and scientific laboratory for students and faculty interested in this important region of New York State.

Solutions to our environmental problems require scientific knowledge, and the residency planning group has always

insisted that some aspects of the residency be devoted to ecology. Students wishing to enhance their scientific knowledge can select one of the scientifically oriented learning contracts (e.g., environmental science, agroecology). But not every student takes those opportunities, so the residency also features two other science-oriented learning activities. First, there is an optional extra day before the full three-day residency. Students electing to arrive a day early can participate in an environmental field experience, which includes several learning activities designed to enhance their observational skills and to provide them with the means to continue deepening their knowledge of the natural world. Second, the main residency includes a presentation and field experience on forest ecology, taking advantage of the camp's location and illustrating some of the scientific knowledge needed for environmental improvement.

In addition to scheduled, structured learning activities, residency planners include free time in the agenda. Students may explore the adjacent forest trails or, weather permitting, the surrounding lake via canoe or kayak. Or they may meet informally with one another or with faculty on common interests, view relevant videos selected by the faculty, or just relax in a peaceful, remote area of the state.

Residencies and Mentoring

Based on experience with my own students, the more lead-time students have in considering participation in the residency, the more likely it is that they will be able to do so. I find it useful to bring it up several times in the mentoring process. In my first conversations with students, I call to their attention all the college's instructional resources. Polls tell us that most Americans regard themselves as environmentalists, and my students' self-descriptions, are consistent with that finding. While not all of them want to or can participate in the residency, most of them appreciate knowing about it early on.

Another moment in the mentoring process when the residency is pertinent is during degree program planning. Here the residency course offerings can help in two ways. First, because of their interdisciplinary nature, most of the studies can contribute to many different concentrations. For example, a contract in ecopsychology is an appropriate study in a psychology concentration as well as in some human services programs; a study in "business and the environment" has an obvious role in business-related programs; the scientifically oriented work adds depth and breadth to programs in biology; a course on nature writing is a boon to students with concentrations in literature and writing majors; and, of course, most of the residency courses contribute nicely to environmental studies concentrations.

Second, when designing the general learning portion of their degree programs, students may look to the residency to help them select topics that add breadth to their programs. They will find a broad array of studies offered in a unique format. Disciplines represented include science, policy studies, history, philosophy, literature and economics. Some of these topics will satisfy SUNY general education requirements. So the residency can offer multiple benefits to participating students and can assist them and their mentors in the degree program planning process. It is an annual event in the college, so mentors and students can rely on it as a continuing resource.

Over the years, Empire State College students and faculty have asked why the Environmental Studies Residency is held on weekdays, which makes it inconvenient for many of our students. The simple answer is that Camp Huntington is heavily used by SUNY Cortland for its own instructional purposes (e.g., for outdoor education and physical education courses and first year students' orientations), as well as for a wide range of educational workshops and meetings. We were fortunate to get an annual reservation on their busy calendar. Although some years there is a weekend here and there available on that calendar, holding the residency in the second week of October assures us that we will be able to continue to use this wonderful facility and use it on a predictable, consistent basis.

Amazingly, we have been able to keep student fees for the residency the same since its inception. For the three-day residency, students pay $120 for their room and food; those attending the field experience pay an additional $45. Please bear in mind that these fees are separate from tuition and regular college fees associated with enrollment in the college. Again, the residency web site contains information about registration and fees for the residency, as well as a registration form. Once registered, students receive directions to the site, as well as information about what they will need (and not need!) while there. The experience is rustic but not at all uncivilized. Sleeping quarters are dormitory style, and the dining hall serves hearty meals family style. Students and faculty help with light kitchen duties and general clean up.

Getting to Raquette Lake can be a challenge for students from distant parts of the state. Over the years, the commitment and determination of students have impressed us. Students from the farthest reaches of the state have attended the residency, from Buffalo to Staten Island, from Clinton County to Long Island. Some have traveled to the Central Adirondacks a day early so they can arrive on time! In 2001, we instituted an informal and optional car pooling system, which students appreciated and which seemed to work well for many of them. Of course, we will continue it in the future. The residency coordinators will continue developing ways to assist students in getting to the program. Thus, if any Empire State College mentor has a student interested in the program but unsure of getting there, the student should contact us as early as possible in the planning process. We cannot guarantee transportation, but we can and will explore transportation possibilities creatively!

Reflection

At the end of each residency, we administer an informal anonymous evaluation instrument. Every year, the response of students has been overwhelmingly positive. One could attribute that response to the self-selection process. After all, the students who participate are interested in the environment, they meet other people — students and mentors — who share that interest, and they participate in activities focused on their common interests. Of course they like the program! However, while that may be part of the story, it is too simple a reading of the students' response. As any Empire State College mentor knows, our students are serious, challenging, thoughtful people who will tell us quite clearly and frankly when an educational activity is not meeting their needs. So we believe that their positive response shows that the residency is meeting their needs quite well. Moreover, as further evidence, we have had a noticeable number of students return to a second residency, and even a few who came to a third!

We do not explicitly ask students on the evaluation form whether they would recommend the program to other students, but many of them volunteer that they would do so. Certainly we recommend it to Empire State College students and ask that our colleagues across the college bring it to the attention of students each year as a valuable educational resource for them. It is a program that illustrates the high quality and creative work of Empire State College faculty dealing with unique mentoring challenges. It is one that offers students a multi-faceted educational experience focused on issues of high significance to our world and to the world we will leave our grandchildren.

Coordinating Faculty for the Environment/ Adironcack Studies Residency

Marlene (Chris) Evans, Saratoga Unit

Elaine Handley, FORUM Management Education Program

Dora Ingolfsdottir, Schenectady Unit

Wayne Ouderkirk, Cobleskill Unit

Learning Contract Offerings and Course Tutors for the 2002 Residency

Adirondack History: Chris Rounds, Binghamton Unit

Endangered Habitats, Endangered Species: Deborah Kleese, Middletown Unit

Ecopsychology: Dora Ingolfsdottir, Schenectady Unit

Environmental Science: Marlene Evans, Saratoga Unit

Environmental Ethics: Wayne Ouderkirk, Cobleskill Unit

The Hudson River, Our Legacy: Sally Daly, Center for Distance Learning

Perspectives on Environment from Business and Economics: Duncan RyanMann, FORUM Management Education Program

Plants and Society: Nikki Shrimpton, Central New York Center

Root, Word and Ritual: The Power of Nature, Traditions and Storytelling: Elaine Handley, FORUM Management Education Program, and Pamela Collins, SUNY Cobleskill

Barry Sheckley Visits Empire State College
Mayra Bloom, Hudson Valley Center

On May 10, 2002, at the invitation of the Mentoring Institute, Barry Sheckley met with a group of Empire State College mentors and professionals to discuss his ongoing research on adult learning. Sheckley is professor and section head of the Adult Learning Program at the University of Connecticut. He has written extensively on adult and experiential learning and, with Morris Keeton and Joan Griggs, has recently published Effectiveness and Efficiency in Higher Education for Adults: A Guide for Fostering Learning. At the heart of Sheckley's thinking in his understanding that: "Individuals with a strong interest in learning seem to learn best when they participate in a setting that supports experienced-based, unfettered inquiry into genuine problems and that provides a well formulated conceptual model to guide this inquiry." Mentor Mayra Bloom was kind enough to offer the following response to our workshop with Barry Sheckley.

Barry Sheckley

Barry Sheckley's presentation on Enhancing Adult Learning: Perspectives from Empirical Research was compelling for many reasons, not least because his themes and findings pertain so directly to Empire State College.

Sheckley has been doing basic research (much of it international) on adult learning for more than 30 years. He is fascinated, consumed, in fact, by the desire to understand the learning process. (It was memorable to hear him describe himself on vacation at the beach, wrestling with the neurological and biochemical substrates of learning while everyone

around him was wrestling with the latest from John Grisham.) His familiarity with the micro level leads him to refer frequently to changes in body state, which form the basis for memories and concepts which, in turn, comprise what he calls our "mental architecture." As a result of learning, mental models develop, becoming more complex and useful for solving problems. That is, we become more "proficient," a key Sheckley term with profound implications for our approach to outcomes assessment as well as credit by evaluation.

According to Sheckley, learning and the development of such proficiency depend on the interactions among three systems: environmental factors such as the opportunity for collaboration and support from co-learners; the learning process itself (e.g. use of experiential vs. lecture methods); and individual characteristics such as self efficacy and learning styles. When educators take all of these into consideration, learning tends to be enhanced. Proficiency is not, however, just a function of how much one knows. More important, Sheckley emphasizes, is the ability to use information skillfully by developing "situation assessment skills, or the ability to sort out in a problem set cues that are relevant vs. those that are not relevant to the problem at hand." As students' mental models develop, they become more proficient at learning itself. They begin to frame problems differently and analyze them more effectively; they develop knowledge and strategies to draw upon in a wider variety of situations. As Sheckley puts it, they do not just "know a lot, they use information skillfully."

What was also compelling about Sheckley's presentation was that he took unusual care to ensure that participants would *experience* as well as hear about his findings. He apparently uses every presentation as an opportunity to test out his own approach. That is, he attempts to establish an optimal learning environment in which what we know about the learning process is taken into account, as are individual needs and learning styles. Pointing out, for example, that only 10-15 percent of what is heard in a lecture is likely to be retained, Sheckley reinforced a formal lecture with a 12-frame Power Point presentation which was, in turn, reinforced with handouts duplicating the slides and providing explanatory captions. Thus, we were exposed to the material in verbal, auditory, written, visual and schematic forms simultaneously. Because he has found that interaction with co-learners tends to reinforce learning, he used some of his slides to prompt five-minute small and then whole group discussions. The last slide enumerated the questions that would frame the ensuing discussion. It is rare for a presentation to actually embody the principles discussed — Sheckley's did.

Finally, the day was compelling because Sheckley's work provides powerful confirmation *and* powerful challenges to Empire State College. In the long run, the only way that alternative educational institutions can survive in a high stakes/zero tolerance/ bottom line climate is to ground our practice in empirical research, which demonstrates the value and efficacy of our approach. Fortunately, Sheckley's work confirms the perennial principles on which Empire State College was founded, and it is always heartening when the research shows that we're on the right track. His work is challenging, however, because it provides a stark reminder that we too have had the opportunity — and the obligation — to do such research with our own brand of rigor and passion for the past 30 years. Whether we thought we lacked the resources; whether we tried to stave off attack by flying under the radar; whether we lacked the courage to confront our own convictions, I think Sheckley would agree that it's never too late to learn.

Barry Sheckley

Online Learning
Sylvain Nagler, Northeast Center
Anne Morris, Dottie Perez, Teal Rizzo, Paul Matylas

After many years of offering opinions about the relative merits of online education, I decided some two years ago to actually experience it first hand by designing and teaching an SLN course on Power and Privilege. I have now completed four terms and feel sufficiently grounded in the pedagogy and technology to come out of the closet and even offer some personal observations. Still, I am a neophyte — four terms does not a professor make! Very briefly, it is much more engaging than I imagined, much more work and, at least with the more 70 or so students who have completed the course, more successful as measured by full credit outcomes.

(l-r) Paul Matylas, Teal Rizzo, Anne Morris, and Dottie Perez

As I reflect on what it means to be an online instructor, what stands out most for me is the asynchronicity of the exchanges both between me and the students and between the students themselves. What I have come to appreciate is a certain protection that exists by virtue of sitting at a computer keyboard in the security of your own place, particularly for those students who are generally shy and who may feel a sense of reluctance to share their views without having the opportunity to frame them carefully and deliberately — much less an option in traditional classroom settings. So, the student may well enjoy a greater sense of protection and more of an opportunity to patiently frame a comment, be it to initiate a topic or to respond to someone else's. At the same time, though, that same participant is denied the opportunity to observe the response, the reaction, her comment has on those to whom it is directed. In the ordinary course of

conversation we have the opportunity to monitor the reaction to our comments and, if appropriate, make adjustments. When you are online, once you hit the "send" button, your message, in its entirety, is sent. It's all or nothing; no mid course corrections allowed. No adjustments to coincide with a reaction you pick up. So, you may find yourself sending a comment only to learn in the reply that you somehow misjudged. Perhaps in a venue that provided an opportunity to experience the reaction of the person or persons to whom it was directed, you might have altered your message to accommodate the reaction you had elicited: not an insignificant variable in fashioning effective interpersonal communication.

There is, of course, another obvious defining characteristic of online exchanges, namely you do not know the faces of those with whom you are communicating. Also, not an insignificant variable. The online template we use working with SLN includes a discussion module. It provides all participants with the opportunity to engage each other and the group as a whole in exchanges of views, experiences, analyses, personal stories … . For me, it is central to this modality and the most exciting as well. However, the discussions do not always go smoothly. There have been times when student disagreements about issues seemed to get too personal. Individuals became linked to issues and issues became linked to students. These challenges got me thinking about how the absence of a face at the other side of the communication somehow contributes to the character and content of these exchanges. If you do not see to whom you are directing your comments, do you feel more or less license to speak your mind, more or less comfortable to respond directly to an individual, whether you agree or disagree?

So, I got to wondering whether the dynamics of the exchanges among the students, particularly when those exchanges involved a difference of opinion, would have been substantively affected had they known what the other looked like. Would they have been kinder if they liked the face; less kind if they did not like the face? Would students be more cautious if the person or persons to whom they were directing their comment looked like ____ [you fill in the blank]? Similarly, would the students feel freer to respond if they were familiar with the face of the person they were addressing?

I was sufficiently intrigued with these sorts of questions that at the conclusion of last term's course, I invited anyone who would be interested to volunteer to participate in an exercise of matching photos to names. About half the students consented, and I collected the photos and names and asked the participants to see how many they could accurately match. It turned out to be a fascinating exercise that gave each of us who participated pause to reflect more deeply on an issue that we may well take for granted.

The four papers that follow address this issue and related ones. They are written by students who joined me on a panel at this year's SUNY Conference on Instructional Technology (CIT) held at SUNY Oneonta. They were all wonderful presenters. Their full comments have been abbreviated for space reasons. Three of the four papers were written by students who were enrolled in the online Power and Privilege course — Anne Morris, Dottie Perez and Teal Rizzo; the fourth, Paul Matylas, participated in a center-based, face-to-face, group study version of the same offering. The five of us met together in person for the first time the evening before our presentation. I wish to publicly thank them once again for volunteering to join me on the CIT panel and for allowing their remarks to be published here. I am confident you will find them informative.

Anne Morris

My college "career," as I like to call it, began in the early 1980s through the Lockport Unit. I took one or two courses at a time, meeting professors face-to-face either on campus or in their homes. I got married, had children, and priorities changed as well as my location in the country. I moved to Tennessee where I tried to continue my education through the good old U.S. mail and weekly calls with my professors. Another child, another move and life was too hectic for school. Eventually my children began their own education, I moved to Mexico, and I found myself with all the time in the world, but in a different country! Now what? Empire State College came to my rescue yet again and provided me with help revising my degree program and obtaining the rest of my degree through online studies. Truly, I wouldn't have a degree in my hand today if it weren't for the opportunities afforded me through this venue.

I loved the online format of learning. Why? I finally had classmates! No offense to all the wonderful professors out in our audience, but I felt pretty isolated in my studies without a peer group to bounce ideas off — peers who understood my struggles and my point of view (sometimes)! We had a common bond of desperately wanting to get that piece of paper

that said we had a college degree, and peppered in with that goal was the ever-apparent desire and thrill to learn. I am convinced that passion would not have existed in my 18- year old self, but was alive along with that of my fellow students in my "30-something" self. The challenge, and the excitement, of online learning was developing short-lived yet intense relationships with people I had never met and would probably never meet.

I believe that, whenever you meet new people in a social setting, certain things happen every time. First of all, people tend to gravitate toward others they believe will be like they are. Therefore, women tend to gravitate toward other women, outgoing people tend to gravitate to kindred spirits, while less social people tend to gravitate to other quiet people. Initially, we all want to find a common ground with those with whom we speak, and try to speak with intelligence about the subject matter in the conversation. Online learning is no exception, or so I learned. We spend the first initial weeks feeling out the others for "kindred spirits." Common interests are found, dislikes are shared, and an initial conclusion is drawn based on very sketchy and preliminary data. More personal information usually follows. We find out who is married, who has children, someone's age slips in a conversation, or hair color or the smallest tidbits to try to place a feeling of familiarity to the words typed across the computer screen. Then it happens (and it happens every time). Someone makes a controversial statement and the camps are drawn. Half the class is shocked and the other half says: "Boy, I wish I had the guts to say something like that! Good for you!" You can see the atmosphere changing from disassociated students to cliques of friends sharing common bonds. I loved it. In every class I found a kindred spirit with whom I wished I could stay "friends." And, almost always, this "friend" was someone that I never would have gravitated toward had I met him or her in person. The appeal was their spirit, their intelligence, and their passion; it was not a superficial connection based on looks. As a course ends, there is a feeling of loss as the bonds you have worked three months to establish are coming to a close. But a new course always follows with new opportunities to make connections.

I think there are major advantages to establishing relationships (on a scholarly level at least) without the "advantage" of seeing or hearing the individual. I'm afraid it is part of human behavior to try to come to instant conclusions about people based on what we see or what we hear. Call it bias, or prejudice or just plain ignorance — it happens. I have a friend who is 5´9½, slim, drop-dead gorgeous and has a speaking voice like one of the Power Puff Girls. She's also one of the most caring, intelligent individuals I know. But we both know that she has a lot to overcome in a social setting based on how she looks and how she sounds. People just don't give her a chance to show her depth. I have also found that, since we tend to gravitate toward people of similar looks/backgrounds in person, we often miss the opportunity to learn and grow from those who are different. Deep down, we may find that those who look or act differently than we do may share similar values, passions and interests. We just never take the time to find out.

In the *Power and Privilege* class in particular, we made some very personal connections that helped us learn and grow from each other as well as the course material. If I may say, the courses I enjoyed the most in my studies were those where the professor was an encouraging and everpresent facilitator for us, encouraging us to expand on thoughts that were of interest, supporting our attempts to broach difficult topics on a personal level, and letting the flow of the dialogue move in a natural manner with minimal interference.

Finally, the question was asked about my behavior online versus a face-to-face conversation. Did I alter my comments because of this factor, or would I have reacted the same way in a classroom setting? I must answer honestly that I did behave differently, and the cloak of anonymity was a source of comfort for me. I felt empowered to be more honest and forthright in this setting than I would be normally. I also believe people in general are less judgmental when you are judged based on your words rather than how you look. They will take the time to really "hear" you, and are coming into the dialogue without any preconceptions about you. That's really wonderful if you think about it. I also like the idea of being able to form my thoughts clearly in writing before offering them to the group. I liked the idea that people who would have normally shied away from me in face-to-face dialogue, opened up with some encouragement online. We helped each other and grew as people because of the exchange. I'm not convinced that would have been possible in any other kind of group study situation.

Dottie Perez

I returned to college in 1999, after almost 20 years, determined to receive a degree but not knowing what to expect or what would be expected of me. What I found was that for the first time in my academic life, someone thought I might do well and that someone was myself. My first semester was on campus and I did well and was excited and couldn't wait to

continue. My advisor spoke to me about online courses, and with my life the way it is sometimes, between family and work, it sounded intriguing. I have been taking online classes now for three years, full time and part time. I love it. This mode of education has expanded my horizons and allowed me to be myself in a way I never imagined possible.

Holding a conversation with someone you do not know at all calls for a new form of communication. There are fewer preconceived notions and communication is explored with more intrigue and less fear of the differences that are not seen and prejudged. People's journeys are spelled out in their own words and become an open invitation for you to join in the mystery of who they have become by expelling the myth that we can truthfully judge who they are by merely taking in the scenery of their present vessel.

I "listen" better when I read my fellow students' comments. And, not knowing who was on the other end gave me more time to make clear my thoughts and to think about every issue from many different angles and to become more conscious of how they may be hurtful to others. At the same time, I do not believe I would have been the same in a class where personal appearance was evident. I would have allowed myself to be a victim not so much of concern about the result of how others might judge me, but the result of stereotypes that I have applied to myself. So, I would have been more withdrawn than I was in the online class. Online, I can project myself to be whoever I want to be. This method of learning opened a new door for me because I decided to project myself as a success.

I suppose this type of learning environment where everyone is anonymous can lead to a greater possibility of demeaning or degrading of others. Although we may try to be as non-judgmental as possible, we will tend to gravitate to those who are more like us and I think that connection can be better when found on a level greater than on personal appearance. In some classes where the class emphasis is more technical than emotional, I am not sure it has the same influence as it does in courses such as Power and Privilege in which a more profound degree of personal thought and expression is involved. Traditional classroom or photo previews can hinder your true expression and guide your words to be more from a personally trained response with considerations for others in a falsely obtained declaration of how we are supposed to respond, rather than how we truly feel. I would prefer to meet the people I have come to know in an atmosphere of anonymous written words after the semester is over. This way I might better avoid the possibility of unforeseen prejudices, which are the product of my visual perception.

Teal Rizzo

They say first impressions are so very important, because whether we like it or not, people do make certain assumptions based on looks. In an online learning classroom, it becomes very difficult to define others based on first impressions as we all basically start out on an equal ground, even though we are thrown together in a group.

Upon entering our virtual classroom and with a brief look over readings we'd cover, I thought to myself: "As a downstate NY'er (and right — there is a generalization), one who has lived and worked in NYC, I'm well aware that this (discrimination) exists in other places, and possibly even here, where I've been, but me? I don't judge others by their appearance, or if the slightest bit of such thought would come into my mind, I'd be quick to pick up on it and dismantle it and, therefore, treat everyone around me equally. As a matter of fact, I might give someone who I felt was an underdog more of a chance." How much more fair can you be than that?

Like Anne, I noticed those who were quiet in the group, those who were more outspoken, and those with similar and different interests than my own. But due to my speed in thought and response and preference to work independently, I did tend to miss out on the ideas behind the thoughts of some of those students who reacted more slowly or more quietly. For some reason, in a real world typical classroom setting, possibly due to a forced and timed physical presence and the human interaction present, I would have done the opposite — given less time to those who appeared strong and focused, more on those who were quiet and slower to respond more than I did in our online class setting. And hence, I feel I would have yielded to those students and their comments more quickly and with a quiet understanding much better had I had the opportunity to see their faces. I do not think, even if I saw my classmates or knew them personally, I would have changed what I said, but there were times I would have changed how I said it.

Another dimension in all of this was my awareness of the great potential there exists in learning about sensitive topics and each other in an online environment versus that   of a real world classroom setting. So, for example, I found it difficult

at the end of our course to identify one of the students in our group from her photo because this one student, M, appeared very soft looking, in sharp contrast to her words and writing. This contradiction of how I perceived her in her photo and how I perceived her from her words led me to see that I most likely also judge people if their facial expression is hard or stern. Without knowing them and in the non-virtual world, I may give them less of a chance than I would a soft-looking person, even if they said the same thing.

This was quite an insight for me, one I would not have realized in a real world classroom, because I would have adapted my responses based upon whom I was looking at and what they looked like. In closing, I'd like to highlight how beneficial it was to see my classmates' images after the fact in the photo-name matching exercise. It provided me with an opportunity to see how initial images shape our perceptions. It also made me sad that more of our classmates did not participate in the exercise when I think of how much more I could have learned about those particular students and about myself through them.

Paul Matylas

As a new student at Empire State College last fall, enrolling in a course that had the feel of a traditional college class had a lot of appeal. This course was the seminar version of Power and Privilege. In the course, we followed a traditional format of writing papers, turning them in, and coming together every two weeks to discuss the topic we had written about. This structure was familiar and comfortable for me, and having at least one of my courses look familiar made for an easier transition to the untraditional realm of Empire State College.

This style of learning is familiar given that most of us have between 12 and 20 plus years of experience with schooling, and the educational system. This environment becomes second nature, or a second home. The classroom and its structure is strongly ingrained, and it has been my experience that I have seldom questioned the influence this format exerts on the students or the learning process. It is my assumption that there are tangible differences between the presence of these influences in the traditional format which I was part of and the online format of Power and Privilege. In the following remarks I will highlight what I believe are some of the contrasts and speculate about their impact.

One of the more distinct differences for me was the presence of an instructor. In many cases the instructor was a benefit to the class. As the moderator, he joined the students at the table, literally and figuratively. In this role, he was able to provide a structure to our conversations by posing questions that were provocative and insightful. By being present, the instructor was allowed to constantly assess our emotion, our understanding, and our level of ownership of a thought or idea.

Having a knowledgeable and articulate facilitator was undoubtedly a blessing, but didn't come without some pitfalls. How many students could be truly honest in expressing their opinions within the classroom and not to some extent take into account the influence it may have on the professor? This is the person who is responsible for your grade, your evaluation, or is seen as the authority figure in the room.

Taking this into account, I felt it necessary to mildly self-edit my comments and responses within the group. Having the instructor operate as the moderator put an additional tension on discussion. The moderator can have a heavy hand on the course of discussion, being that he or she is primarily responsible for the direction of the conversation, the amount of time spent on a given topic, the length of pauses, and to some extent the overall tone. Although we are accustomed to having this pressure within the classroom, it seems to me to be in strong contrast with the online course where the students may be the driving force behind the direction of the discussion.

Although I was not part of an online course, there are some experiences of the seminar version that would have been different had the seminar been conducted over the Internet. My primary example of these differences came from one of our initial meetings. We were asked to describe ourselves in terms that we felt define us. The descriptions my classmates chose to identify themselves had a strong influence on what information I was willing to give about myself.

Having many students use religion as a defining factor told me something about potential biases or ideals they may be bringing to the class. This is one of the reasons I chose not to use my sexuality as a defining characteristic. Given that I was going to engage the other students on a bi-weekly basis clearly shaped my decision about what information I was

willing to divulge.

> *The classroom and its structure is strongly ingrained, and it has been my experience that I have seldom questioned the influence this format exerts on the students or the learning process.*

I believe that the anonymity of the Internet gives us the mettle to be a bit bolder in the way that we express ourselves. Online we are not bound by the same set of rules that govern our face-to-face interactions, or what I call the "congeniality factor." The congeniality factor includes the manners we use when sitting across the table from someone, the way we avoid uncomfortable silences, or confrontation. The short leash of kindness and manners stifled what could have been very thought provoking and insightful conversations.

Multiple times during our seminars we passed over relatively challenging and provocative material. Though efforts were made, there was very little debate on the topic and we moved on relatively quickly. In a one-to-one conversation with another student post-class, she expressed how upset the dismissive nature of the other students had made her. When asked why she hadn't spoken up in class her response was: "I'm always the one that is disagreeing, I don't want to be seen as the trouble-making bleeding heart liberal."

I don't doubt that many of the same mechanics of polite conversation were employed online, but I'm skeptical that they were used to the same degree. The congeniality factor may have been all but absent in the online version of Power and Privilege where it had had such a powerful influence in the seminar version.

The mechanisms of plurality can also serve a dual purpose. In addition to effectively avoiding confrontation the speaker is able to avoid being criticized in front of a group. By recognizing the opposing argument, the speaker is able to an extent to defuse opposition. By avoiding being on the losing end of the argument, the speaker has the ability either to prevent or to soften a harsh response in the presence of peers. Having this kind of experience in group seems to be very different than that of the virtual classroom where even if you are the lightening rod for the group, you are able to maintain anonymity, to some extent keeping your ego intact.

The face-to-face format of the traditional course is certainly familiar. This format encourages skills of debate, attentive listening, and has a human interactive quality that is absent online. However, there are advantages to online learning that are unlikely in the classroom. By not knowing ethnicity, age, or possibly gender of online classmates, we are freed from judgments. Decisions are left to be made on the merit of intellect and clear communication. By having courses online we also create an opportunity for more people to access higher education, across the country or around the world. Perhaps with a bit of help from creative and dedicated professors, there will be a place in the future of higher education for a marriage of all the best qualities of the online learning and the face to face format of the classroom.

Bastille Day 2002
and/or
The Artist at Work

"La chair est triste, hélas!
et j'ai lu tous les livres."

Stephane Mallarmé

Conjunctions are our duty, challenge, curse:
Camus's concluding, uncertain pun
        "solitaire ou solidaire"
confronts Auden's ardent line
"We must love one another or die,"
soon dropped for his conjunctive slip
                -And-
and/or then we see our words
betray, free, mistake us
while deeds CNN-live now stun
around the world again & again & again
until the consonants shift
one second, one letter, adjective to noun
& we are spun out of poised control,
dervishes without clear grammar
to construe freedom's/love's true song.

Mary Folliet, Metropolitan Center

Dorothy Burnham Honored

The following introduction and Dorothy Burnham's talk were originally published in the Alumni Student Newsletter of the Bedford-Stuyvesant Unit *of the Metropolitan Center in February, 2002. Thanks to mentors Rudy Cain and Dorothy Burnham for permission to reprint these pieces in* All About Mentoring.
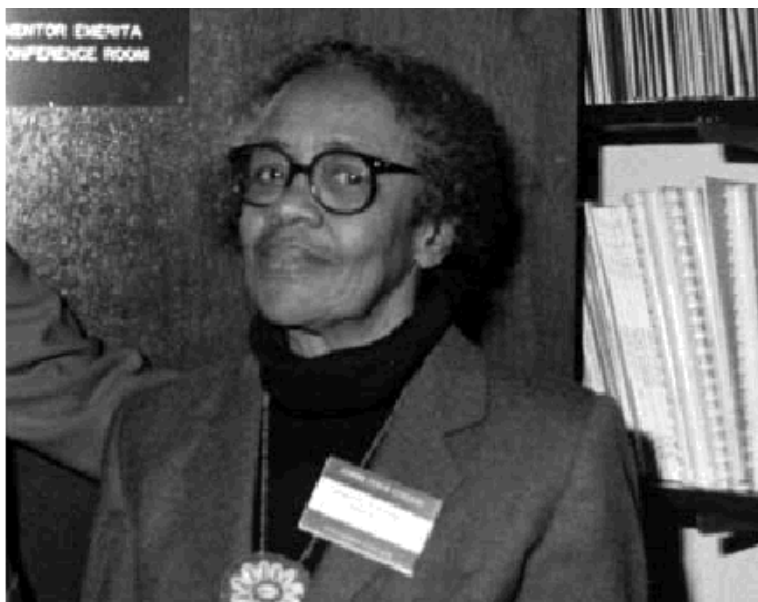
Dorothy Burnham

Dorothy Burnham, a teacher, scientist, activist, artist and mentor emerita at Empire State College received an honorary Doctor of Fine Arts degree from City University of New York/Medgar Evers College during its 12th academic convocation on Wednesday, December 5, 2001. "Dorothy has a long history of service to the college, the Metropolitan Center and the Bedford-Stuyvesant Unit," said Rudy Cain, mentor and coordinator of the Bedford- Stuyvesant Unit. "Importantly, her lifelong involvement in the human rights arena (locally, nationally and internationally), and her work as a visual artist are not to be overlooked."

Burnham was also recognized at the 2000 graduation at the Metropolitan Center with the Citizens Laureate Award. She began her activism in the Scottsborough Movement, while still a student at Brooklyn College, and took part in demonstrations and boycotts to bring about employment opportunities for people of color in New York City. In the 1940s, she joined the Southern Negro Youth Congress and moved south to engage in activities designed to bring about voting rights, expand employment and ensure veterans' rights for African Americans.

She was a member of the board of Freedomways, a publication which, prior to the creation of Black or Africana Studies departments in colleges and universities, provided a forum for dissemination and discussion of history, cultures and conditions of peoples of African ancestry. She was also a contributor, and her work is among the articles selected for a recent anthology of work from that journal.

As a practicing microbiologist and subsequently as a teacher of biological science, she became involved with "Genes and Gender," a group of women scientists concerned with misuse of hereditary explanations of behavior. Burnham has been an activist on behalf of women's rights as well as of racial and economic equality. She has been recognized with numerous awards and honors for her work, of which the honorary degree is just the latest.

Said President Joseph Moore: "On behalf of the Empire State College community, I want to congratulate Dorothy Burnham on the occasion of this very special recognition from the City University of New York. This college, our students and the communities we serve have benefited by Dorothy's years of productive and creative service. We are certainly fortunate and proud to be associated with her." ***

Text of Dorothy Burnham's Statement

How did I get to this place, Medgar Evers College, today December 5? It has been an interesting excursion. Some years ago, when I was five years old, my immigrant Barbadian parents took my hand and led me to a path. They bought a house on Waverly Avenue which was down the street from P.S. 11. I now understand their plan was to monitor my progress in school and oversee the teachers in charge of my learning. It would soon be clear that there would be no turning around. Getting an education was intended to be an important part of my journey. Many thanks, parents. Dorothy Burnham Some 250 years ago Thomas Jefferson declared that one of the goals of the nation would be to provide public education to rich and poor so that all could take part in our democracy. When I enrolled in Brooklyn College, two years after its founding in 1930, there were no tuition fees and no financial aid forms to fill out. The trail blazers I followed on this trip were the science professors and the history and social science professors. I had one science teacher who made physics and chemistry so interesting that I was compelled to become a science major. My teachers in the history and social science departments put their careers on the line when they taught us to explore the true causes of poverty, starvation, social inequality and racism and pointed us in the direction to change these conditions by their own active participation in the struggles of that period. I am truly grateful for the free public education system for the direction and help I received at that period in my life.

When I got on the train after graduation it was to a food-on-the-table job in a medical technology laboratory. But the peace and freedom struggles were the main roads on the map for me. And I followed as closely as I could the enlightening paths of leaders like Claudia Jones, Louis Burnham, James and Esther Jackson and others truly committed to social change and an end to the horrors of racism. When I started out it seemed like a straight highway but we encountered many twists and turns and roadblocks along the way. It took some strength to continue but we did.

Many years down the road we met Martin Luther King and Malcolm X and Ella Baker and Medgar Evers. With daunting courage and with thousands of dedicated youth and adult community leaders joining the struggles, the landscape was changed and new roads to advancement opened. Thanks to their work and sacrifice the landmark school in our community, Medgar Evers College, was founded in 1970. The educational opportunities offered to our children in this place are boundless — a dedicated faculty and staff and a wise and caring administration have moved this college fast forward.

Just as the struggles for equality in school systems advanced so did the opportunities for African Americans to teach in the academic communities open up. Along with many colleagues, I was fortunate to start teaching in the CUNY and SUNY systems. On this part of my expedition, I have met many friends who have become most valuable tour guides. Some have even held my hand as they led me through the woods. My friend Dean Nancy Bunch at Empire State College gave me the confidence to go back to a year of teaching last year (my 85th year). And I am most grateful to my colleagues at the Bedford-Stuyvesant branch of Empire State College — Professors Rudy Cain, Emil Moxey and Ethel Bowles for their dedication to the Bedford-Stuyvesant community, which is my home. Their unselfish devotion to the task of educating working adults and helping them to move on with their careers is exemplary.

It has not been possible to travel in all the directions I saw through my window. Many days the sun beckoned and I wondered at the beauty of the rainbow. When I saw what those artists could do with their brushes I envied them. I have spent some hours of these last few years trying to capture the beauty I have seen around me here at home and in my travels to Africa. The walk down that road is not regretted.

Loving thanks to my four children who have contributed in many different positive ways to constructing the unfinished map of this journey, while at the same time designing their own life charts and buying their own bus tickets.

For me, today is a wonderful occasion and a time to meditate and plan for new adventures. The itinerary has changed many times on this journey but the main destination is the same. Thank you from the bottom of my heart for bestowing this honor and I will do everything to live up to it.

> In my own practice, when I succumb to the compulsion to teach my students something I know they ought to know but that they don't yet know they ought to know, which I sometimes do because bad habits take time to break, they report that it gets in the way of their learning. My practice has improved since I adopted the policy of authorizing them to signal me when they sense this happening.
>
> Malcolm S. Knowles, The Modern Practice of Adult Education (1970)

Learning for Life
David Starr-Glass, Center for International Programs

Three Educational Experiences

In part, this reflection is the result of the confluence of three separate streams of experience. Ostensibly, it might seem that these experiences are proximally linked to personal and professional growth. However, on reflection, they seem to indicate an underlying set of basic assumptions and attitudes that I hold regarding knowledge, lifelong learning and myself. In this article I try to clarify these assumptions and attitudes. I hope these clarifications will be understood as a part of a reflective discourse with self — a reflection that can be shared within our community of learning and among our students, rather than an indulgent reflection of the narcissistic variety.

Four years ago, I enrolled in a distance learning program offered by the University of London. The University of London was probably the world originator of distance learning, inaugurating an external degree program as far back as 1858 for those unable to attend its colleges. In those days, "distance learning" was not recognized as an alternative educational process. Instead, it was seen as a specialized educational delivery system designed to allow students to participate in a learning process even though they were distant from the centrally placed physical institutions traditionally associated with higher education. Distance, in this definition, could be in space (living far from the constituent colleges and schools of the university), in time (those in full-time employment), or in social terms (women socially restricted from leaving home to take up college residency). Recognizing these different ways in which potential learners were "distanced," the University of London acknowledged that knowledge acquisition was independent of location. From its inception in 1858, curriculum, examinations and standards were the same for internal and external students. Indeed, in its charter, the university unequivocally states that there shall be no difference between internal and external degrees either in quality or in academic recognition.

I am now completing a master's degree in occupational psychology as an external student of the University of London. Occupational psychology is the British term for what Americans recognize as industrial and organizational psychology. I have completed 12 modules in this program, dealing with topics such as organizational behavior, motivation, assessment, communication, training and career management. Presently, I am working on a research project that examines ways in which occupational choice among ultra- Orthodox women is shaped by interaction with their religious communities. This is the final module in the degree program.

Throughout this extended learning experience assigned work has been creative, stimulating and enjoyable. The instructional methodology is based on hard-copy modules, containing explanatory texts and massive numbers of journal reprints. These packets are sent out at the beginning of the academic year and the student is expected to digest them slowly and carefully. There is an opportunity to write specimen answers to old examination questions, which are graded, critiqued and returned by instructors. Every June there are formal written examinations. Personally, I find the whole process very anxiety-provoking. It reminds me of my university days in Scotland where the massive accumulation of knowledge had to be displayed by answering a small selection of rather open-ended questions in three hours. Much of this

new learning has complemented or expanded my understanding of organizational and management studies. Some of it explicitly enters into my teaching. All of it makes a mark on what I teach and how I teach.

My second experience occurred last summer, when I was invited for a month to the Marketing Department of the University of Strathclyde, Scotland. The department is the largest marketing school in Europe and has consistently received the highest national awards for excellence in teaching and research within the British higher educational system. There was a very direct personal involvement in the visit, since it was the first time that I had been back to my native Scotland in almost 25 years. While ostensibly the invitation was extended to enable me to research the impact of social exchange theories on relational marketing, the real motive was to allow me to enjoy a warm, collaborative, academic environment. A phrase that evolved as I worked with my academic sponsor at Strathclyde was "recharging batteries," and indeed my academic and intellectual batteries underwent an exhilarating process of being energized. It was valuable to see different perspectives within marketing (one of my own specialized teaching areas) and to explore the possible impact of sociological perspectives on current marketing theory and practice.

My third experience that has flowed into the other two is my first encounter with online education. I am presently enrolled in two educational courses offered by the University of Southern Queensland. USQ Online is the one of the world's premier providers of online education. The quality of its instructional design and student support is exceptional. I am working on two beginning courses dealing with the concepts and design of open and distance learning courses. While not technologically phobic, I did have some reservations about negotiating and communicating in a virtual environment. Now, I find myself communicating freely and effectively with a variety of well informed students, spread throughout four continents. It is an exhilarating experience. The pace is fast with reading assignments   and an almost overwhelming number of web sites and information links with which to connect. Assignments are well conceived, demanding and there is always a new submission deadline coming up. Semesters are 12 weeks long with the USQ estimating that the average student will have to spend about 160 hours of academic involvement to complete each course.

There is a very strong and invigorating dynamic in the whole process and I am delighted with not only my own knowledge gains but by the high caliber of intellectual exchanges that are being made, and with the accessibility that has been seamlessly incorporated into the technology. I feel supported intellectually and technically and it is remarkable how, in such a virtual group, ideas are generated and exchanged. For me, online education is a first experience and one that I will continue to use. The University of Southern Queensland offers a number of master's level degrees and I am considering a Master of Education in open and distance learning.

As an educator, I am always interested in different modes of instruction and certainly these three different educational experiences have contributed to my own personal appreciation of how learning takes place, and how it is impacted by different educational delivery and support systems. Each of these educational expressions has developed within a unique historical, cultural and technological framework. The approach of the University of London reflects the social concerns and educational vision of that institution just as much as the USQ format embodies a quite different set of Australian agendas. Apart from actually expanding my knowledge in specific areas, these different experiences have allowed me to consider the often implicit assumptions and patterns that are expressed in the way that we engage in learning activities. However, it seems to me that these experiences have also contributed to a more fundamental question, which concerns the very nature of ongoing, lifetime learning.

Models of Assessment, Paradigms of Learning

One of the great additional benefits of my USQ work has been an exposure to contemporary Australian scholarship in education and to the unique challenges that Australian politics, demographics and geography pose to open and distance learning. In an article by Paul Hager and Jim Butler, both leading Australian scholars, an argument is made for two different models of educational assessment (Hager and Butler, 1996).

The traditional approach is characterized as one of "scientific measurement." Within this scientific model of assessment, objective testing is devised to produce numerical scores of the capacities and abilities of those being assessed. The emphasis is on the operalization of constructs regarding underlying knowledge, devising ways of quantifying this knowledge, and ways of objectively relating performance to standards. Consistent with a scientific paradigm, quantification is crucial (one recalls the Scottish physicist Lord Kelvin's remark that "if you can measure it then we can

talk about it"). Equally important are objectivity, reliability, verification and ranking.

Hager and Butler are concerned with the assessment of performance and competency among novices and entry-level professionals. They note that when physicians, who are themselves subject area experts in a medical specialty, are asked to assess the performance of novices, they do *not* use a science based measurement. Instead they employ a "judgmental model" in order to compare the novice's performance against their internalized model of behavior that constitutes professional competence. The judgmental model of assessment considers three levels. The first level is whether the novice has attained knowledge, skills and attitudes (KSAs) that instructional designers have agreed are required for future performance. At this level (a level which, for instance, many professional examinations examine), the classical scientific model of assessment is still widely used. At a second level, a higher degree of integration and synthesis of knowledge is assessed in simulated or practice domains. In assessing practice, judgement of experienced practitioners becomes more significant in assessing likely success in the novice's future. At the third level (the level of personal competence in the practice domain), the judgmental model becomes even more pronounced and critical. Here, it is the "learned relative standards of the assessor" that are used to make competency decisions about the novice.

Now while these two models of assessment are of interest in their own right, what I have found most interesting in Hager and Butler's work is the drawing of a parallel between these assessment models and underlying educational assumptions. The scientific model, perhaps most critically seen in IQ measurement, is based on assumptions such as (Hager and Butler, 1996):

_ assessment is of well-founded, certain knowledge
_ knowledge is objective and context-free
_ assessment is through closed problems with well defined solutions
_ knowledge is divisible into traditional disciplinary areas.

By contrast, the judgmental model makes quite different inferences about the nature, acquisition and assessment of knowledge:

_ assessment centers on integration of theory and practice
_ assessment of practice should reflect the subjective, context-dependent nature of knowledge
_ assessment involves problem situations that are ill-defined and without clear resolution
_ curriculum is conceptualized as interdisciplinary.

Similarly, Eisener (1993) sees the choice of assessment model as reflecting underlying conceptualizations about the educational process and about the nature of knowledge. The scientific model is informed by an epistemology in which knowledge: (1) is detached from the world outside the lecture theater; (2) can be used to solve problems; (3) involves simplified and discrete tasks; (4) centers on the individual, provides unambiguous solutions to problems; (5) is reflected in the current curriculum, and (6) is ultimately in the control of the instructor.

In contrast, Eisner sees that the judgmental model incorporates a differing epistemology. Here, knowledge: (1) incorporates concerns outside the educational setting; (2) is interested in process as well as solutions; (3) is interested in group interactions and well as individuals; (4) appreciates diversity in solution formation; (5) goes beyond the current boundaries imposed by curriculum, and (6) is essentially holistic.

These different sets of assumptions about the nature, acquisition and assessment of knowledge are clearly reflected in the visions and practice of different educational institutions. I am fortunate to teach in a variety of traditional and nontraditional educational programs, and, for example, have to change gears intellectually when I lecture and examine in one place and tutor and assess at Empire State College. It is not helpful to argue for the supremacy of either of these education models. A better response is to appreciate which educational model might be more, or less, appropriate in a given context with a given student and with a given instructor. That is not to say that I don't have my preferred model and that I don't try to structure the context to fit my preferences. Generally, I find that an awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of these different educational approaches leads to interesting experimentation and cross-fertilization.

Lifelong Learning

The scientific assessment model has historically been associated with the measurement of IQ. However, that association clearly reflects assumptions about the nature of intelligence itself. The classical IQ formulation saw human capacity as bound by an unitary intelligence (the "g" factor) that underpins all future performance and is normally distributed within populations. IQ was measurable because it was assumed that the underlying intelligence was essentially fixed and constant. In contrast, contemporary theories of cognition recognize intelligence as the product of a more complex combination of underlying abilities (spatial, verbal, numerical, etc.) with new combinations being possible and with no normal ability distribution in a population. Cognitive theories reflect a notion of more "crystalline" and "fluid" intelligence and tend to be less dogmatic about defined limits for future performance or expectation.

Hayes (1990:236) refers to these different views of the human condition as "preformationism" and "epigenesis." In the former, the person is seen as having well defined unchangeable characteristics that are capable of being revealed throughout life. Given the appropriate conditions, particularly educational conditions, these attributes, if latent, can be encouraged to appear. From an "epigenesis" perspective, characteristics are not seen as statically innate but may be determinable in the rich and fluid set of potentials that can be modified, expanded and altered by future relationships between the individual and the social and cultural environment. In the terms of our earlier assessment models, the scientific model incorporates a preformationist view of human nature, whereas the judgmental reflects an epigenesis position.

On reflection, it seems to me that involvement in the educational experiences that I have mentioned resonates with my own epigenetic approach to education, knowledge and my students. I do not see professional development simply in terms of adding discrete blocks of knowledge to a wall that has already been partially built along a predetermined foundation. Instead, I see the possibility of playing with these new blocks and putting them together in novel, creative ways — ways that we really did not contemplate when we started out. I would call this creative engagement in education and areas of knowledge, although I would not be unhappy if some saw it as serendipitous.

I know that I have incorporated much of what I have learned in the last few years into the courses that I teach and the educational exchanges that take place in my Empire State College tutorials. I recognize, however, that these additional insights have had more to do with the *quality* of the course rather than with any quantitative additions or modifications. We realize that the rate at which new knowledge is being produced has increased significantly. New understandings coupled with rapid technological advances means that we cannot use the knowledge we have acquired during our training to successfully deal with the contemporary issues in our work lives. For example, some have estimated that the half-life of engineering knowledge is about seven years, while the half-life of medical training is nearer five years. This realization leads to a logic of continuing, upgrading or developing professional knowledge. Lifelong learning thus becomes a requirement rather than a choice in this world of rapid knowledge creation and expectations of competency and professionalism. This logic can be imparted to our students. It has an objective, pragmatic ring to it.

> I do not see professional development simply in terms of adding discrete blocks of knowledge to a wall that has already been partially built along a predetermined foundation.

However, this logic is built on the same assumptions as our scientific measurement of IQ and our notion of preformationism. Essentially, it understands knowledge as an object that can be determined, specified, acquired and augmented. It adds more blocks to the wall because the wall is understood to be too low or too short. It can be taken as a planned process that we can approach through changes in the defining curriculum.

There is an alternative presentation of lifelong learning. It sees learning as an extension of the judgmental model and the cognitive paradigm that we examined earlier. Here, knowledge is understood as a "construction" that can be initiated, shaped and guided by the educator, but which ultimately is a process that requires the learner to construct his/her own knowledge. Knowledge must thus be seen as the product of a unique interaction between an active learner and his/her educational facilitator. We might better call that facilitator a mentor.

Many years ago in the University of Glasgow, I had a professor of education who would pause after a particularly erudite seminar and ask: "Yes, but what do you do with this on a cold wet Monday morning in your first class?" This reflection sought to incorporate many issues, but what about those cold, wet mornings?

_ Lifelong learning is not an add-on, it's an integrated part of the contemporary educational scene. I don't explain this to my students. Instead, I simply tell them what I'm doing. They are usually shocked; after all, I am supposed to be the subject area *expert*. Often they become nervous: perhaps I don't really know the material as well as an instructor who has actually completed a degree? However, the personal example, shared and reviewed with students sets the tone for the imperative of lifelong learning.

_ My students (I work with students in the areas of management and organizational behavior) are usually very much given to the scientific paradigm although they don't know it. They want simple answers to well-defined problems. This problem has been around for a long time (Porter and McKibbin, 1988), and although curricula in business have tried to change student expectations have not. They want closure and they want the reassurance that they are pressing up against the intellectual limits of the field. I disappoint them, although this does not give me any great pleasure. I draw them to the openendedness of many of the questions that we attempt to answer. I prefer to understand why we frame a particular question rather than provide the appropriate jigsaw- piece answer. I direct them to the ongoing involvement with problems — a process that will transcend the limits of any particular study in their undergraduate lives.

_ I let my students know that knowledge does not come in preformed blocks. Rather, and this is a core issue, knowledge is the result of an active construction by the learner. I am the facilitator, guide, mentor in the educational process; however, the knowledge that the student exits with is his/hers — new and inevitably personalized. As educators we are responsible for creating a learning environment but students must actively construct and claim their own knowledge. Once knowledge is seen as a construction, then that construction can be more readily placed in a student's individual life, rather than in a classroom or in an individual study with me. This is an invitation to personalized, lifelong learning.

Particularly in the business areas which I teach, there is a tendency to limit education to a well-defined, conservative curriculum. Recalling the triple level of competencies associated with the judgmental model, I try to encourage students to see that proficiency with knowledge, skills and attitudes (KSAs) alone is simply not enough in their careers, let alone in their lives. There must be additional levels of performance and personal competence and these, while certainly grounded in a familiarity with appropriate KSAs, require a personal integration of knowledge into one's life. Lifelong learning does not begin after graduation, or after you have started a career.

Lifelong learning began yesterday and it focuses on an on-going integration of knowledge, practice and a presentation of self. Lifelong learning becomes more crucial when we take personal responsibility for the learning process and the self-construction of life knowledge.

Learning for life is not a sentence imposed by the knowledge explosion on hapless students. Learning for life is a way of integrating what we come to know with what we come to do, and in that respect it is central to our being.

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AutoWorks
Abby Robinson, Metropolitan Center

While I was a student — at that time studying interior design — I came down with mononucleosis. I went to all my instructors and told them I was sick. They all said something to the effect of "Don't worry, dear, you can make the work up." I went to my photo teacher last and he said, "You can lift the camera, right? So photograph in bed."

It was one of those lightbulb- goes-off-in-the-head moments. "You can feel really lousy and still make art? Wow!," I thought. I got out of bed and changed my major.

AutoWorks — as the self-portrait series I started then is now titled — already covers a 25-year period and is an ongoing project. I figure I'll continue doing it until I'm too old and feeble to hit the shutter.

From those early bed shots, I became fascinated by the way the camera turns the ordinary into the extraordinary, how fluidly it renders the everyday into something unexpected, magical, goofy, maybe even beautiful. What I learned then has a lot to do with how I teach now: that a photographer doesn't have to find exotic locations and subject matter. That you can make pictures anywhere about anything. That photography is about vision more than it is about occasion. That nothing is inherently photogenic or photographic and that really, the only difference between photographs is the photographer. I do self-portraits because I'm always around; I never need a model release; and I don't have to worry about what my subject looks like or will think. Photographers find one excuse or another to make a picture. I like making pictures. And I like photographic problems. It's a challenge — and also fun — to figure out how to manipulate space and make new kinds of images while keeping one element constant.

Though the series certainly has diaristic elements, what I'm doing is exploring the interactions between photographer camera photographer. The photographer (in front and in back of the lens concurrently) get to be director, actor, observer, subject and/or prop, and the camera functions as companion and accomplice.

The accomplice part is because after I got out of school I worked awhile with a private investigator. Your work inevitably winds up being the sum total of your experiences brought to bear on very, very short increments of time.

The work is never displayed chronologically. I like the photos mixed up, the past bumping up against the present, so that the sequences parallel memory — quirky, circular, paradoxical, comical and mysterious.
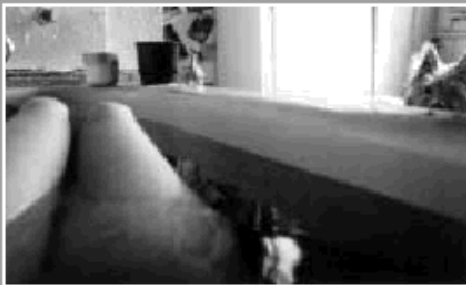
Affirmative Action Committee Report Introduction, 2002
Betty Lawrence, Center for Distance Learning

Editor's Note: We have never included an Empire State College governance committee report in All About Mentoring. *These documents are accessible to all of us by other means. What follows here is not the official report of this year's Affirmative Action Committee, but it is the important introduction to that document offered by chair, Betty Lawrence during a plenary of the All College Conference, March, 2002.*

The Affirmative Action Committee report is in your folders. However, the Affirmative Action Committee met this morning and I would like to make a few comments based on the discussion at that meeting.

(L-R) Richard Bonnabeau, Betty Lawrence and student

As you know from my written report, the president is working with the affirmative action officer and an outside legal consultant on the development of a revised Affirmative Action Plan. The Affirmative Action Committee is in full support of a plan that clarifies the legal aspects of affirmative action for the college community.

We realized, during that discussion, however, that there is disagreement among us, and therefore among the college community, as to what affirmative action is and how it relates to the broader aspect of the value of diversity. I ,therefore, encourage the college community to take the time to wrestle with these concepts. For, unless we have a common understanding of affirmative action and diversity, any Affirmative Action Plan will fail in its mission.

Maxine Greene, in her session with us on Wednesday, gave us a quote from Dewey that applies quite well to how we need to approach affirmative action and diversity: "The self is created from the choice of action." Right now, the Empire State College "self" is overwhelmingly white. If we are to make that self more reflective of the diversity that surrounds us, we need to choose to act differently. But actions that change the self do not come from adherence to rules imposed from outside. They come from commitment that lies within.

Only heartfelt commitment will move us to seek more diversity in our candidate pools before the ad is written. Only heartfelt commitment will steer us to distribute literature about job opportunities at conferences and community gatherings. Only heartfelt commitment will move us to making the hiring of minority faculty a priority as we acknowledge within that it is essential for our ultimate survival as an educational institution. Only heartfelt commitment will lead us to work together to identify comparable experiences, which make it more possible for a minority candidate to make it through our search process.

Affirmative action, which has as its foundation a commitment to diversity, will fail unless each of us decides to act to create a different self. Only through commitment that goes beyond paper can we have any hope of changing our current self. Our future is in our hands.

I would like to end with a special tribute to a member of the committee who embodies the spirit of affirmative action — Nancy Bunch. She has shown, through both words and actions, her heartfelt commitment to the causes of the Affirmative Action Committee. We will miss her more than words can ever express. I ask all of you to join with me in giving her a simple "thank you."

Indigenous Education and the Prior Learning Conference in Canada
Marianne Arieux, Hudson Valley Center

Marianne Arieux

Marianne Arieux

I have been interested, if not possessed, for quite some time with discovering kinds of learning not captured by traditional western ways of knowing. I kept this interest unarticulated to permit me to be open to other ways in which knowledge is construed. My unconstrained interest, I reasoned, would lead me to discover whether this muse-like nudge was an intellectual hunch, or another moment of rebelliousness. I had been playing at the margins of this amorphous possibility for some time. I have many students who do fantastic things that imply significant knowledge bases, but who cannot translate those activities into the various discourses of knowledge that permit us, western trained academics, to award them credit for their knowledge. It was this interest, along with Elana Michelson's description of a radically different way of assessing prior learning practiced by indigenous educators in Canada, that drew me to the 13th annual Prior Learning Assessment Conference (PLA).

The PLA conference is an annual event sponsored by CAPLA, the Canadian Association for Prior Learning Assessment as well as several related groups, not the least, the First Nations Technical Institute. The conference theme was "Recognizing Diversity: The Role of PLA." As will become evident, what the Canadians mean by prior learning assessment is both similar and different from our conceptions and practices. The conference was preceded by a day of pre-conference workshops, one of which was Holistic Learning: A Model of Education Based on Aboriginal Cultural Philosophy. This was the workshop that would meet one of my goals since it was given by the indigenous educators I had

come to learn about and hopefully from. The conference had two-fold objectives, knowledge development and information dissemination.

Prior learning assessment as presented by the CAPLA model is an institution of its own, separate although interactive with education, government and industry. I was impressed with the richness of the conference presentations in a variety of areas of knowledge and practice, many of which were new to me. In addition to the workshop on holistic learning, there were pre-conference workshops on Developing Standards for PLAR Practitioner Training (something I had never heard about) and Introduction to Prior Learning Assessment and Portfolio Development. I began quickly to understand that while prior learning assessment is defined similarly, practices are varied and dependent on many factors, not the least their political and social contexts. Any work group or ethnic group that has been excluded from participation in the cultural institutions of learning, and/or have a different model of learning has a need for prior learning assessment (PLA). Thus, there were presenters and participants from labor groups in Canada as well as the Caribbean, Australia and South Africa on topics as varied as the role of the Canadian government, and engineering. The conference had two tracts as it were: actual practices of prior learning assessment, and the para-practices so to speak: the contexts of such assessment, such as governmental, academic and labor acceptance. As a former Peace Corps volunteer in Africa and from Elana Michelson's reports of her work in South Africa, I understood for example, how South Africa's urgent need to have the prior learning of its indigenous people assessed and institutionalized engaged the government, labor and educational forces. I gained what I would call only an acquaintance with these aspects of prior learning assessment, since entry into the conference was through portholes framed by Marianne Arieux my interests as a mentor; that is, indigenous learning practices of PLA, and assessment of the institutions of adult education that engage in PLA practices such as Empire State College.

I will concentrate mainly on the first because it was nothing short of amazing. I had come to the right source for my own professional knowledge development. The two-part preconference workshop was conducted by Diane Hill and Banakonda Kish Bell, indigenous educators and academics responsible for the social service certificate tract at the First Nations Technical Institute (FNTI). It will be difficult to be brief here, since the knowledge gained was so layered that I can only offer a sketch of their work. At best it will be a snapshot of a very dense method of assessing prior learning.

Holistic Learning

First of all, the two educators introduced their workshop by explaining the source and impetus of their work their need to shift from western learning practices to aboriginal practices when working with students. FNTI is on Mohawk lands, and Diane is Mohawk and Banakonda is Objibwa. Their students are mostly Iroquois, Objibwa and some Cree. The two are part of a team of academics responsible for the Social Service Certificate students' portfolio development. Portfolio development here means that students put together a compilation of their learning that encompasses what we at Empire State College think of as prior learning, but also includes residencies and classroom studies. The purpose of their workshop was to demonstrate how their practice varies from typical prior learning assessments. They call it "holistic learning," and in this case, what that refers to is the idea of an integration between healing and knowledge. The aboriginal philosophy that informs their model of education differs in many ways from the Greek and Roman traditions of rational scientific thinking, and these differences are honored in their work with students. For example, all knowledge is considered to be based in subjective rather than objective understanding. The self is the knower, and knowledge is possessed and available in memories. In addition, a major factor is the recognition that their students come from cultures that have experienced "ethnostress," i.e., suffer from the effects of oppression, thus the aboriginal philosophy that education and healing are one becomes realized in the student's learning. Temporal requirements vary, and educational meetings often wait until all participants are present rather than the other way round.

Diane and Banakonda begin all their educational session with the aboriginal practice of a smudge pot. This is a ritual which was more helpful than my description can capture. One person goes around to all participants with an herb, either sweet grass or sage, that is burning slowly emitting smoke, similar to incense. Participants scoop up the smoke with their hands passing it over their eyes, ears, head, heart and body to OPEN up oneself to learning. This method reminded me of the practice of "centering" used to help students focus, but unlike that western tradition of excluding thoughts that interfere, the student is encouraged to take in something that then permits openness. This practice illuminates differences between these two world views and ultimately, educational practices. In the holistic method espoused by the aboriginal cultural philosophy, one knows with all aspects of the self, and does not rid oneself of the body in order to enhance the mind. This approach turns Descartes' dictate, "I think, therefore, I am," to "I am, therefore, I think." The body is included

as a part of what is known.

> They call it "holistic learning," and in this case, what that refers to is the idea of an integration between healing and knowledge.

This ritual was followed by a meditative practice, which included information about the aboriginal philosophy of knowing. Participants were then asked to call forth a memory in the belief that knowledge is contained in memories. Eventually participants use this memory, peeling back the layers to reveal the knowledge within. The memory also is considered to reveal the participant's approach to education or learning. The next day at the workshop, participants met in groups to examine their memories, and to discover what knowledge could be there. For example, I did not have a particular memory but recalled an image of feeling good being outside with sunlight pouring down. This memory indicated that knowing made me feel good, thus I would have a positive if not magical regard for education. That certainly explained the years I have spent as student and teacher in educational institutions. Another participant unwillingly recalled a family tragedy. This memory reflected a change in how she learned. She no longer could tolerate lengthy assignments, and had to learn everything quickly. In this all too-brief workshop we only scratched the surface of their method, but it was clear that the holistic approach offered another way to get what is usually unarticulated, articulated. Portfolio development for aboriginal learners in the Social Services Certificate program begins with this experience. This is perhaps comparable to the Empire State College request for students to first reflect on their own learning in developing a degree program. I can only posit that the difference in self-reflection using the aboriginal method is amazing, and I think provides a richer knowledge base. Unfortunately, I am only able to provide the most cursory glimpse into this extraordinary way of knowing, since it is experiential in its essence. It's trite but true in this case — you have to be there! (For more information, a book-manual, *Aboriginal Access to Post-Secondary Education: Prior Learning Assessment and its Use Within Aboriginal Programs of Learning* is available from FNTI for $20 Canadian. They can be contacted at their web site or 800 267-0637.)

Action Research

Another equally impressive but quite different development of my knowledge came from a shorter workshop presentation by Paul Zakos on implementing the ALFI survey. ALFI stands for Adult Learning Focused Institutions, and this is a self assessment survey developed by a task force from CAEL (Council for Adult and Experiential Learning). I discovered that Empire State College had been one of the original institutions assessed in CAEL's benchmarking study of six high-performing, adult serving colleges and universities. (Flint, T. and Associates, *Best Practices in Adult Learning: A CAEL/APQC Benchmarking Study,* New York: Forbes, 1999.) The benchmarking study provided the material for the development of the ALFI survey. Paul Zakos was one of the original evaluators and, together with a team, developed the survey for "institutional improvement on behalf of adult learners." In this workshop, he was trying to elicit attention to the ALFI in order to further good adult education. Paul was the president and force behind CAPLA since its inception until this year, and remains optimistic about the potential for adult learning to be respected in all its complexities. It was both enlightening and heartening to learn that he was willing to help any institution (almost free of charge) improve their understanding and services to adult learners. His interest is in using the ALFI to illustrate what adult learning is. This would be what is termed action research, when the goal of the research is both to discover information while facilitating change. I left thinking that utilizing ALFI could improve our practices and our morale. We would recognize what a good job we do as we move to improve it by honoring the principles of adult education that made Empire State College into one of the premier educational institutions for innovative adult education.

The conference closed with an indigenous ceremony acknowledging respect for the person and the learning that occurred.

It was quite an experience, and one that has left an indelible, I hope, imprint on my own practices. Helping students learn "from the inside out," with knowledge embedded in the body-mind nexus, challenges the ways I/we have learned to learn. I can still vividly recall my professor and first mentor revealing the wondrous Socratic view of knowledge as "to know is to know you don't know." I was as enthralled then as I was sitting in that workshop in Belleville, Canada as a new way of knowledge discovery unfolded in front of and within me. So while I sit in the tension created by these two ways of knowing, I find myself leaning towards methods created by the aboriginal approach to education that allow me to see and hear ways of knowing and learning different from those I have been schooled in for so long. It is challenging to work in this new and unfamiliar way, but I am hoping and planning to learn more about this way of thinking and knowing.

> *Knowledge accumulates in unpredictable ways and its practical consequences are unforeseeable. Assessment of the effectiveness of an education in "shaping concrete results" is irrelevant to the democratic ideal of an open and dynamic society, the laws, principles and moral standards of which are constantly subject to the critical scrutiny of its citizens.*
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> *Ken Brown,* The Right to Learn: Alternatives for a Learning Society *(2002)*

Reflections on Graduate Distance Learning Environments
Laurie Seamans, Central New York Center

This piece by Laurie Seamans, support staff member at the Ithaca Unit, is a response to the American Federation of Teachers' report, "A Virtual Revolution: Trends in the Expansion of Distance Education" (2001). The complete report is available at www.aft.org/higher_ed/technology.

The recent report of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) detailed many new trends in the area of distance learning, ranging from institutions of higher education developing distance education programs as a supplement to their "brick and mortar" campuses, to full virtual universities. For the most part, the article posed legitimate questions with regard to the quality of degree programs completed entirely by way of distance learning. It also served as a catalyst for reflection on my own personal experiences after a year and a half in a graduate-level distance learning environment.

I am enrolled in the Behavioral Sciences: Negotiation and Conflict Management degree program through California State University/Dominguez Hills (CSUDH). The "classroom" in this particular distance education program is made up of two components: the online web site driven by Blackboard wherein students find their course syllabus, assignments, discussion boards and other related information; and the actual weekly class broadcast by streaming video through a program called Avacaster, with the help of Shockwave and Media Player. Through the use of these two mediums, students are provided with all of the information necessary to complete the coursework with the "feel" of face-to-face learning.

Since I began, I have found the methods by which this program is delivered to be both enlightening and frustrating. On one hand, the sequential nature of the program keeps most of the students moving through each of the classes together. For this reason, an unmistakable bond develops among the students just as it might in a more conventional college setting. E-mail, discussion boards and instant messaging form the basis for our interaction and our co-dependency. Before becoming involved in this program, I never truly understood how people who did not meet face-to-face could carry on discussions at a level that fostered such friendship and collegiality. At Empire State College, for example, there are opportunities to meet the person behind the voice or the electronic memo, but this is not the case in my graduate studies. For example, I am the only student in New York State in the current Negotiation and Conflict Management class expected to finish in September 2002. The student nearest to me lives in Ohio. Others are located in Kentucky, Nevada, California, British Columbia, and even the Middle East. Students have logged onto the broadcasts from vacations in Hawaii and from business trips in Singapore.

The technological wizardry behind this amazes me to this day. During the broadcast, lectures are the same as if you were sitting in the same room; questions to the instructor can be posted and sent for response during the lecture; polls on different subjects are taken with results evaluated; and video clips are shown. Many of the instructors evaluate participation based on comments or questions posted during the lecture or through participation in the discussion boards on the web site. Other than the fact that I am sitting in the convenience of my own home, there is very little that separates me from students sitting in a classroom. After the initial culture shock wears off during the first class, it dawns on you that it feels the same. The big difference is that I do not have to fight traffic to get there, drive around looking for a parking

spot, or clean the snow and ice off my car in winter.

This is not to say that this is the best possible way in which to conduct graduate learning or learning of any kind. As the AFT report notes, there are also a number of drawbacks to distance learning. One of the frustrations that impede this manner of learning is the heavy reliance on e-mail to contact instructors or advisors. For many, contacting instructors by telephone is not cost effective nor, in some cases, possible. (Even if one can afford it, encountering the world of voice mail systems can be tremendously frustrating.) While many faculty members in this program respond in a timely manner to questions and concerns, there are those who have been less accessible. But, this could also be said of faculty at any institutions, although leaving a message with a department secretary or in a mailbox seems more secure than letting it go through cyberspace to destinations unknown. It has been my experience, however, that students in distance learning are relentless in their pursuit of answers and if an answer cannot be found in one direction, another avenue can be attempted. The department chair at CSUDH has been very active in answering as many questions as he can, discussing potential changes in the program, continuously notifying us of upcoming conferences around the country that might be of interest, and engaging in discussions that help us to put different aspects of the program into perspective. Classmates also help to provide each other with clarification on assignments and lecture notes. They also are a source of strength to those who are struggling with a particular component or personal situation that might otherwise affect their success. For example, one student has been undergoing cancer treatment while working on her degree. If it were not for the support system that she established while in this program, she may not have been able to keep sight of her goal and may not have gotten through the rough spots along the way.

Not surprisingly, this same camaraderie of the students has another side. It can increase suspicions about the academic integrity of the programs and raise the possibility of plagiarism. Interestingly enough, in the very first course of this program, students are required to work in groups on three analyses chosen from a variety of articles. Each group determined on its own how it would approach the problem of reading the other students' papers and maintaining their integrity. What was most intriguing was how hard we tried to not analyze the same article at the same time. We purposely went out of our way to pick a different article so as to not overlap or be influenced by another's viewpoint. This, in itself, indicates that it is entirely possible to avoid plagiarism in a distance learning environment. No doubt, plagiarism is a choice that students make no matter what the form of their education.

Despite the complexities of distance education, education by any means is rewarding. The option of distance learning allows more individuals the opportunity to enrich their lives, which might not have been possible otherwise. At the University of South Florida, residents of a retirement community are taking courses in the auditorium of the facility, giving distance learning a new meaning. Providing senior citizens with a chance to take college courses stimulates their brains and their lives. While some colleges are finding distance education is much more expensive than anticipated and other institutions are not finding it as lucrative as they had hoped, other colleges are taking the venue to new heights. Demographics and marketing play a big role, but in the end the question becomes whether it fulfills a need or not. In my case, I might not have been able to undertake a master's degree program without the option of distance learning. Residencies and week-long program requirements are a hindrance for individuals who have full-time jobs. I am fortunate that I found a program that not only fulfills my desires but also has allowed me to get a quality education with promise for the future.

Submissions to *All About Mentoring*

If you have read a book or article that interested you; attended a stimulating conference; had a valuable, surprising or difficult mentoring experience you would be willing to describe, please consider *All About Mentoring*. If you have a comment on any part of this issue or on topics/ concerns relevant to our mentoring community; have developed written materials for your students that may be of good use to others; have a scholarly paper-in-progress or a talk that you presented, we would welcome it. If you have a short story, poem, drawings or photographs; have reports on your reassignments and sabbaticals, consider writing about them for *All About Mentoring*.

Send submissions to Alan Mandell (Empire State College, 225 Varick Street, Second Floor, New York, NY 10014-4382). It is most convenient if your submissions are sent via e-mail or on disk. We very much look forward to your contributions. The next issue of *All About Mentoring* will be published in Winter/Spring 2003. Please send your contributions to Mandell by January 15, 2003.

Issue 24, Fall 2002

The Speed of Sound: Can Communication Be Too Easy or Too Cheap?
David Orr

David Orr *The following piece was originally published as "The Nature of Speed," in* EarthLight Magazine, *Issue 41, Volume 11, No. 4, Spring 2001. This version was published in* The Utne Reader *(January-February 2002). Thanks to the publisher for permission to reprint. David Orr, Professor of Environmental Studies at Oberlin College, is the author of many books, including* Ecological Literacy: Education and the Transition to a Postmodern World *(SUNY Press, 1992).*

Several years ago, the college where I teach created an electronic "quick mail" system to reduce our use of paper and to increase our efficiency. Electronic communication is now standard in most organizations. The results, however, are mixed at best. The most obvious is a large increase in the sheer volume of stuff communicated, much of it utterly trivial. I have also witnessed a manifest decline in the grammar, literary style, and civility of communication. People are less likely these days to stroll down the hall or across campus to converse. Our conversations, thought patterns, and institutional clock speed are increasingly shaped to fit the imperatives of technology. Not surprisingly, more and more people feel overloaded by the demands of incessant "communication." But to say so publicly is to run afoul of the technological fundamentalism that is now dominant virtually everywhere.

By default and without much thought, it has been decided for us that communication ought to be cheap, easy, and quick. Accordingly, more and more of us are instantly wired to the global nervous system with cell phones, beepers, pagers, fax machines and e-mail. Though this wiring is useful in real emergencies, the overall result is to homogenize the important with the trivial, making everything an emergency and making an already frenetic civilization even more so. We are drowning in unassimilated information, most of which fits no meaningful picture of the world. In our public affairs, and in our private lives we are increasingly muddleheaded because we have mistaken volume and speed of information for substance and clarity.

It is time to consider the possibility that — for the most part — communication ought to be somewhat slower, more difficult, and more expensive that it is now. Beyond some relatively low threshold, the rapid movement of information works against the emergence of knowledge, which requires time to mull things over, to test results, to change perceptions and behavior. The clock speed of genuine wisdom, which requires the integration of many different levels of knowledge, is slower still. Only over generations, through a process of trial and error, can knowledge eventually congeal into cultural wisdom about the art of living well within the resources, assets and limits of a place.

Women and Identity: Redefining Ourselves

Mary Klinger, Genesee Valley Center
Margaret Clark-Plaskie, Genesee Valley Center

This article is based upon a workshop facilitated at Empire State College's November 2001 Women's Studies Residency, "Wisdom of Our Mothers, Sisters and Daughters: Feminism in Theory and Practice" held in Albany. The topics were addressed from a multidisciplinary perspective, particularly integrating the mentors' backgrounds in business and psychology.

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(l-r) Mary Klinger and Margaret Clark-Plaskie

Every message I gave myself about who I should be seemed right. Everything seemed equally and critically important. But these messages could not coexist. Something had to give and it was my peace of mind. I had a work life. I had a personal life. Together, however, they made not one but two separate lives. Each wanted a hundred percent of me. I wanted 100 percent of each. More important, both defined 100 percent of me. Unfortunately, my self-esteem depended on succeeding in both lives equally well. (McKenna, 1997, p. 7).

In the past several decades, women have established themselves in every walk of life. We have made great strides in establishing ourselves as innovators, entrepreneurs and professionals of every kind, as well as daughters, sisters, mothers,

students, friends, coworkers and partners. We define ourselves in a plethora of multiple selves and roles, which are dynamic and must be continuously balanced. As we engage in this constant juggling act, we may let our own needs go unmet. By trying to be all things to all people, we risk losing ourselves.

These significant issues were discussed in a Women's Studies Workshop, in which approximately 25 women graciously shared their experiences and views. The majority of the participants were Empire State College students who were enrolled in various studies tied to the residency, but we also had a few other mentors, as well as the young adult daughter of one of the students among us. The diversity in terms of age, cohort, race, work, family life and length of time with Empire State College made for lively discussions and enlightening comparisons. We began by asking the participants to think back to their late teens and the dream(s) they had for the future. These dreams were written on index cards and moved aside, not to be looked at again until later in the workshop. We then turned our attention to some facts and theories about family, work and changing expectations for women in our society.

Mary Klinger explained that the proportion of married couple families in which both spouses work in the labor force has almost doubled between 1960 and 1990 (1960 — 28 percent, 1990 — 54 percent). In many occupations in the United States, working hours have increased as leisure time has decreased. Since 1973, paid work hours increased 20 percent and leisure time dropped by 32 percent. Few workplaces offer flextime or support family responsibilities, while the careers that educated men and women want require people who are totally committed (Kanter, 1993).

So what happens? Who is on top and continues to be on top? The people who have "made it" are able to devote most of their time and effort to their careers and this reinforces the traditional vicious cycle. "Managers that rise to gain influence over people's lives are those who place the least priority on family and therefore are least likely to understand the realities of working parents' lives." (Kanter, 1993, p. 322).

Mary explained that if we look at women reaching adulthood in the 1960s and 1970s, when many of us were young, we were told (often by our fathers) that not only could we do it all, we should do it all (McKenna, 1997). We had the opportunities, therefore, we should succeed at all of them. We could have a career, family, etc. — "if we just worked hard enough — if we were just good enough" (McKenna, 1997, p. 25). By the time we reached adulthood, the relatively narrow world of our mothers was opened up. We could do what the males did — school, career, and so on. Having a family was an unspoken expectation for women, not considered a goal, as women became more and more assimilated into the traditionally masculine work world. Further, we as women came to value ourselves by our contributions and promotions — the way other people see us — in other words, our roles.

To gain a wider perspective on women's roles, the participants in the residency workshop brainstormed about today's woman and her various roles ("hats she wears"). Following a general discussion, each participant listed her own roles, ranked them according to importance, and then rank ordered them according to amount of time spent in each role in an average week. Participants actively engaged in small group discussions, noting key issues and common patterns, and eventually sharing their insights with the entire group. For many, there were clear discrepancies between importance of roles and time spent in them. The connection between such discontinuity and feelings of stress or dissatisfaction was also noted.

The discussion of how working women are increasingly fitting the profile of working fathers continued. Mary Klinger raised an interesting question, which was first proposed by Hochschild (1997): Is life at work winning out over life at home? A number of studies on work-life balance policies in the workplace reveal some interesting numbers. In a national study of 58 employers, over half (31) claimed that family-friendly policies help attract employees, 3/4 said that such policies lower absenteeism, and 2/3 felt that these policies improve workers' attitudes and lowered stress (i.e., lower medical costs). (Hochschild, 1997, p. 31). This seems like a contradiction from the earlier idea that the people in power are maintaining the status quo, with the traditional cycle. So why in many companies do employees seem to be strained to the limit? Hochschild, among other researchers, have found that some companies offer family-friendly policies to allow employees to cut back, but almost no one takes advantage of these opportunities. Why not? Employees (women and perhaps men) fear the loss of the fast track and movement into the "mommy track" (or "daddy track"). They believe they can't cut back without severely damaging or ending their careers.

Also, people generally have the urge to spend more time on what they value most and especially on that for which they

are most valued. And, the *devalued* place is home. In a survey of child care centers serving middle and upper-middle class parents, taken from Hochschild's *The Time Bind* (1997), almost 1,500 parents responded to a series of questions. One question asked was "Does it sometimes feel to you like home is a workplace?" (p. 200). Eighty- five percent said yes (with women more likely to agree than men). Hochschild argues that workers often feel more appreciated and more competent at work. They are more relaxed, more emotionally supported, have friends, and are more in control there. For many, life at work is much more interesting than life at home.

Defining Ourselves

Hochschild (1997) uses the term, "the third shift." (p. 83). She says this is what is happening to women with careers and family. The first shift is the job. The second shift is the work at home. The third shift is mostly unacknowledged. It is a desperate attempt to schedule in a range of activities that try to make up for children's unhappiness over a lack of parent and family time and interaction. If many of us are working three shifts, are we feeling and being successful in all of these roles? Are we ignoring our own needs? And what about those among us who are not actively working outside the home; are we somehow "less than?" Can we and should we do it all and do it all well? Does the icon of the American woman as "superwoman" still prevail?

SUPERWOMAN

She is a perfect mother
The model wife
The best housekeeper
The greatest cook
The most available daughter
The most effective worker
The most helpful friend.
She is wonderful at
Juggling home and career
With a constant smile
And an even disposition.
She is everything
To everyone.
But who is she?

Natasha Joseowitz
From Marjorie Hansen Shaevitz' (1987)
Superwoman Syndrome

After reading this powerful poem, which seemed to resonate with each participant in the workshop, Margaret Clark-Plaskie then introduced the developmental theories of C.G. Jung and Daniel Levinson in order to provide frameworks for discussing and trying to understand these experiences. Carl Jung was a Swiss psychologist who was influenced by Freud, but diverged from Freud in various ways and for several reasons. For one, unlike Freud, Jung believed that personality is not set in early childhood, but that lots of interesting changes may occur in the second half of life. Also, Jung was more "mystical," proposing that there is not only a personal unconscious, but also a collective unconscious, consisting of archetypes — all the potential ways of being that everyone, everywhere, who ever lived, inherits and shares. (As colleague Evelyn Williams had discussed in her earlier workshop at the residency, there is this "ancient knowing inside of us.") So, for example, according to Jung's theory, we all have the potential to be good and evil, feminine and masculine, introverted and extroverted, and it's important to acknowledge (though not always to express) all aspects of ourselves. We might think of a seesaw, with the Self as the fulcrum "holding the tension of the opposites." If our mental energy is going more to one side than the other, we are   unbalanced and may suffer physically, mentally, emotionally, and/or socially in the long run. For Jung, to be healthy means to be balanced. Yet it is also a continual process, a "balancing act," which takes practice and time. Sometimes when our energy shifts to one extreme, we may be perceived as going through a "crisis," but we could very well be in a temporary stage within the process of becoming balanced. Plus, a "crisis" is not necessarily a "bad" thing. It may be an opportunity for growth and development. (For a good explanation and application

of Jungian theory to real life situations, read Brehony's 1996, *Awakening at Midlife.*)

Dreams

Another framework for understanding the issues we are facing in adulthood comes from the work of Daniel Levinson. In 1978, Levinson published, *Seasons of a Man's Life,* which was based upon his interviews with a certain cohort of middle-aged men in the United States. Through these retrospective interviews, he identified developmental stages of alternating years of stability and years of transition. For instance, in youth these men formed a Dream (often occupational, as Erikson had also described with his "identity crisis" of adolescence). They spent much of their 20s (following service in the military) working on the fulfillment of this Dream, having a mentor in their work lives and a special partner (read, "wife") to help them along. Then, between the ages of 28-33, there was a period of questioning (e.g., "If I stay in this marriage/job, will I miss out on someone/something better? Should I change now, before it's too late?"). Levinson then saw another period of stability, working on that life structure, followed by another questioning phase from 40-45, often referred to as the "midlife crisis." At this point, the men began to reflect on their own mortality, thinking in terms of the number of years left to live, rather than the number of years already lived. The youthful Dream was re-evaluated and revised; changes such as divorce, remarriage, moving, and career shifts were fairly common. Levinson proposed that there would be new periods of stability, followed by transitions, alternating throughout the life span. This developmental theory was generalized beyond the men in Levinson's original research, although, over the years, the sampling and research methods have been criticized. For instance, critics have questioned whether or not these developments occur in the same order and time periods for women, or whether they take this form for both men and women of different cohorts (not to mention different cultures). Indeed, in the 1990s, Levinson interviewed women and published another book, *Seasons of a Woman's Life.* He reported that this sample of middleaged women basically followed the same developmental stages as did the sample of men from the earlier cohort.

However, Levinson pointed to some interesting differences in timing (e.g., delays in career advancement), and to the fact that these women (both homemakers and careerwomen — in academia and business) typically formed two Dreams in their youth: One dream was about work, and one about family. Traditionally, when men work, they are perceived as taking care of their families; hence one Dream. However, for women, working and taking care of the family are likely to be viewed and experienced as two conflicting, even mutually exclusive Dreams. The women reported feeling like they had to choose one over another (at least temporarily), and put more of their energy into either work or family. Yet their self-esteem seemed to depend on doing both and doing both well! These women experienced real crises around age 30 and again around age 40, often shifting their energy and attention from one domain to the other (for example, having devoted themselves to their family for years and now returning to work and/or school or vice versa). Such shifting of energy is consistent with Jung's theory, as women may be in the process of trying to balance their lives, roles, psychic energy and multiple selves.

> Have you fulfilled your Dream(s)? Have you neglected your Dream(s)? Would you like to revise and/or create new Dreams for your current lives and for the future?

How does all of this shifting and juggling leave today's women feeling? Observations and personal experiences were discussed in the workshop and Margaret noted that this might be yet another version of the "problem with no name," of which Betty Friedan made us aware in her 1963 book, *The Feminine Mystique* (and that our colleague Carole Turbin mentioned in the opening plenary of the residency). That is, women who seem to "have it all" just don't feel quite right. We may feel empty inside, as if something is missing even if we cannot quite name it. Have we lost touch with ourselves in this process of living? Have we forgotten about our youthful Dreams? This perspective is reflected in Gloria Steinem's

1992 book, *Revolution From Within: A Book of Self-esteem:*

We are so many selves. It's not just the long-ago child within us who needs tenderness and inclusion, but the person we were last year, wanted to be yesterday, tried to become in one job or in one winter, in one love affair or in one house where even now, we can close our eyes and smell the rooms. What brings together these ever-shifting selves of infinite reactions and returnings is this: There is always one true inner voice. Trust it. (p. 323).

Towards the end of the workshop, we had the participants look back at the Dreams they had earlier written down. We raised several questions for consideration, such as: Have you fulfilled your Dream(s)? Have you neglected your Dream(s)? Would you like to revise and/or create new Dreams for your current lives and for the future? Each participant wrote down her own thoughts and took this index card away with her, to do with as she desired (perhaps to keep tucked away or displayed prominently as a reminder to the self). We wondered aloud about what we had all learned and what we would like to pass on to the future generations (of both women and men). For example, the need to be fully informed about the long-term consequences of our choices and the tradeoffs that take place were highlighted. (For a more in-depth analysis of specific tradeoffs of which younger cohorts should be aware, see Hewlett's 2002 book, *Creating a Life.* She examines the fact that the more successful today's women become in their careers, the less likely they are to have partners or children, while the opposite is true for men.) As a group and as individuals, we may have come up with more questions than answers, but reflecting on and verbalizing the questions together was a great place to start (or continue) the journey.

As McKenna summarized in her 1997 book, *When Work Doesn't Work Anymore:*

This message will stop seeming so revolutionary and threatening only when the baton is passed from the generation still governed by the visions of the 50s fantasies to the baby-boom generation and the generation beyond us. The transformation we seek for lives of meaning and balance is, as Gloria Steinem pointed out, a transformation of "and," not "either/or." But the values and the behaviors of women and men have to change first; only then will the structures around us begin to reflect what is important to us. (p. 265).

Works Cited

The following list consists of books that we have read and found useful in preparing for this workshop and article. Students and colleagues may also consider these books as "suggested readings." Some of the students at the Women's Studies Residency were enrolled in related studies and used this list as a resource for assignments within those learning contracts.

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The Less Perfect Side of Critical Theory: Reasonable Mentoring Ethics
Alan Hunt, Metropolitan Center

The ethics of mentoring that I am searching for are ones born of consent, not wrung by coercion. The moral authority and autonomy of both mentor and student cannot be coerced and be regarded as legitimate — legitimacy and coercion are mutually exclusive concepts. Consent is the child of reasonableness, and as such our actions should be deserving of consent. These actions are those of autonomous beings knowing that their autonomy hinges on the autonomy of the other. A contractualist philosophy cannot capture the willingness of consent that critical theory demands. A contract by its nature is a coercive instrument. That is, I act contract-wise, as I fear the consequences of contrariness. I have no contractual ethical high ground, only a fear of consequential Hobbesian "brutish" behavior.

This autonomy is a descendent of Kant's autonomy, characteristic of reason, pervasive and self evident, but of a significantly different complexion than its Teutonic cousin. Kant held autonomy and reason to be inherent parts of a universal humanity, waiting only to be recognized and used. The autonomy and consent that I look for is something that is achieved through right actions. It is earned, and most importantly, *its earning can be taught.* Chambers sums up this modern autonomy:

Autonomy in its new guise is not something we possess that sets us apart from the contingent world; it is something that must be sought and won, sometimes through great effort, while we are part of the contingent world. (Chambers, S., *Reasonable Democracy: Jürgen Habermas and the Politics of Discourse,* Cornell University Press 1996, p. 29)

This is the ethic of mentoring that I am searching for — an ethic that enables students to earn greater levels of autonomy. It is an ethic that through its own enabling of autonomy earns consent and legitimacy. The student deserves to learn to become a more functional and essential part of discourse and, more importantly, the student deserves to learn that he/she deserves to learn. The mentor, through right discourse, creates the environment where the student learns how to participate as a full citizen in an institutional community of communication (the university). This institutional community becomes the incubator for the larger community within which the student lives and participates. The student should grow into a more articulate part of the polity.

Learning (the genesis of autonomy) occurs within a community of communication and is an intimate social activity. It cannot occur without social interactions, whether synchronous or asynchronous. As a consequence of the deeper social aspects of the educational process, a mentor has an implied responsibility for the tone and tenure of communication. This responsibility overrides any discipline-required communication; it functions at a deeper level, whether we are talking of Descartes' *Meditations* or straight-line depreciation.

Critical theory offers us a means to think about this responsibility. The works of Habermas and others, discussed in previous articles (*All About Mentoring* issues 21 and 22) developed a framework for discourse. Habermas uses the "perfect speech situation" as a procedural component of his discourse ethics. The word "perfect" connotes an impractical system. We are imperfect beings, living in a world of chronically inadequate and inefficient information. We can never achieve the perfect — the "ideal" — speech situation. We should seek a reasonable solution to this perfect dead end that

Habermas constructs1. Chambers looks at critical theory and abstracts from it what is required for us to act in a practical and reasonable manner. Her work about democracy leads to reflections on how we as mentors can construct a practical and reasonable framework, wherein our students can earn and use autonomy. Chambers provides guidelines to achieve reasonable democracy by a discursive process. She establishes four conditions for approximate democracy that have suitable application to an ethic for mentors. These are: approximating universality, rationality, non-coercion and reciprocity2. Rationality and non-coercion are twins. In the following they are considered as one.

Approximate universality requires that no competent person should be excluded from the discourse. The mere absence of an act of exclusion is not enough to assure universality, but rather universality requires deliberative actions or promotion. To gauge the validity of this approximate universalization, Chambers suggests that we examine three aspects of the discourse: systematic exclusion of interest groups, whether the debate has reached out beyond the circle of negotiating elites, and if citizens have demonstrated interest and involvement. She points out that apathy (a passive self-inflicted exclusion), not active exclusion, is the principal cause of dysfunctional discourse. Apathy is indicative of a lack of history and/or a lack of historical perspective about one's history.

Approximate universality transfers well to the symposium. We need to ensure that the door to the symposium remains open to all argument and diverse views. We cannot rely on happenstance awaiting the arrival of divergent views, but must invite them in and, if needed, introduce them and explain them. We must ensure that all perspectives are brought to the seminar. For example, in issues such as abortion, both sides of the dilemma need to be presented, with equal weight and validity. No side can be cast as deserving of disrespect, nor can any point of   view be ignored. Mentors must strive to augment underrepresented points of view. The omission of a point of view, through happenstance, is as serious as its deliberate and willful exclusion.

The adage of leading a horse to water but being unable to make it drink seems appropriate at this juncture. Students can decline to participate in discourse and we can attribute that to apathy, which in some cases it maybe; nevertheless, we have an obligation to investigate non-participation and seek out its root causes. If students choose not to participate in discourse they are in fact excluded, and right-mentoring is not happening. At the very least, students should be asked to explain their nonparticipation. This "explanation" treads a fine line between rationalization and coercion (more of this shortly). It may well be that students are insufficiently grounded in their own history and their community's history and culture, and through this omission they are unable to participate in certain levels of discourse. This though is not an issue of exclusion but of learning (studies, for example, may be of a too advanced nature!). I cannot resist to mention the other side of the coin of apathy — boredom. Too often, students raise the issue of boredom; this generally creates guilt in mentors. To combat boredom we seek upbeat presentations, multimedia with sound bytes and rapid paced discussion. Boredom is a symptom, but as much as being attributable to mentor deficiency, the student too bears responsibility. Mentors are not entertainers; students should not be passive receptors of edu-tainment but active participants in their own education. If there is ample opportunity for student involvement yet boredom is still complained of, then the issue has returned to apathy.

Chambers points out that a rational and non-coercive discourse is a necessary condition for the force of the unforced argument to be realized. A resolution wrought of coercion (overt or covert) has neither moral nor rational force; it is interim and awaits the opportunity to be negated. Covert coercion, the tensions of power and the class separation between mentor and student, have a deadening effect on the force of the unforced argument. The mentor-student relationship is one of potential coercion. The mentor can, through various instruments, "force" the student to "learn." This coercive learning does little to foster autonomy in students or mentor. Coerced false-learning cannot be transformative.

Mentors can and do apply overt coercion through evaluation. Students for a multiplicity of reasons need evaluations of their progress. These needs range from financial reimbursement, acceptance into a graduate school, and/or a desire to rank their progress. All of these reasons are valid, but do they outweigh the coercive effect of grading? Within a system of grading, students mistake good grades for good learning and mentors substitute substantive evaluation with grading. Ungraded narrative evaluations appear to retain the best of all worlds. The student is given feedback and encouraged to improve, while avoiding the mesmerizing effect of a grade. If I grade a student as A, but offer suggestions for improvement, isn't the possibility for confusion rife? Would or could the student discount the narrative as irrelevant in the face of "superior performance?"

A right-mentor approach is to use narrative evaluation throughout the study, applying a grade only at the end. Such formative evaluations would be encouragement with directions for improvement. The cumulative evaluation would be a synopsis of study accomplishments and growth, as well as areas of needed improvement. Grades would be given only after all narrative evaluations have been completed.

Insidious or covert coercion in the mentor-student relationship results from intellectual imperialism. The role of mentor carries with it assumed expertise/knowledge of the area of learning. I would hope that in the study of economic theory I know more than my students! This intellectual imperialism can result in students uncritically adopting mentor pronouncements, a poor substitute for discourse. This type of coercion is seductive to mentors; it strokes the ego and panders to vanity, vices that we all harbor. To avoid this imperialism requires a disciplined approach. Mentor opinions are not appropriate seminar fare. For example, if we are discussing abortion in an ethics seminar, and I start the seminar off with a resounding defense of the right to life, discourse is irreparably damaged. The force of the "free choice" argument had been blunted before its forging. Students who had wanted to express a "free choice" opinion may have decided to quell their arguments and become spectators; indeed, some may have, on the basis of my conviction, accepted the right to life argument. None have experienced the force of the unforced argument. A similar spirited defense of right to life by a student participant is, or would be, a substantial contribution to the group learning process. These views, from student to student, are not substantiated by any assumptions of greater validity or subject to intellectual imperialism. With student-to-student discourse, the force of the unforced argument can be developed and experienced.

One of the balms to coercive forces is transparency, in other words, to put the possibility of coercion on the discussion agenda and as a group to consider it and to consider what remedies could be applied to its occurrence. Throughout the study, this issue should be revisited and its prevalence considered. This type of wholesome discourse, while not solving the issue of overt or covert coercion, can dampen the effects of its force and direct the discourse to more rational conclusions.

Another means of coercion is by obscuration; that is, we, as mentors, can intentionally or unintentionally make topics inaccessible by expressing ourselves in a language impenetrable to our students. If the language of discourse is not the lingua franca of the community of communication, discourse grinds to a halt (even if the illusion of discourse continues). To be understandable doesn't mean to gear one's vocabulary and grammar to the lowest common denominator, but to use vocabulary wisely and always provide context for difficult words. Personally, I choose the rhetorical crutch of repetition to ensure that my points are understood. I will challenge my students with new and exciting vocabulary, but I will repeat the point in more fundamental terms. I hope that by this simple device the new vocabulary is understood and inculcated into the repertoire of my students. Though one of our mentoring responsibilities is to increase vocabulary, not understanding the language of discourse reduces discourse to monologue.

Reciprocity is the willingness of participants in discourse to view the argument from the other's perspective. Chambers argues that respect, sincerity and impartiality are the requisite conditions for *approximate* reciprocity. Strategic actors will not engage in reciprocity, and throughout the discourse they generally remain oblivious to the ethos of the other. Approximate reciprocity does not require us to become ethical chameleons, but rather, as Chambers states:

Discursive actors allow the other to speak her mind, listen to what she has to say and respond to her questions and claims. Discursive actors will also be open to persuasion, willing to meet people half way, and sincere in their search for agreement. (Chambers, S., *Reasonable Democracy: Jürgen Habermas and the Politics of Discourse,* Cornell University Press 1996, p. 207)

Reciprocity is a major element that needs to be taught by example and practice. How willing I am as a mentor to consider opinion and argument from others is a critical measure of how my students will absorb reciprocity and use it in their learning and life. The viewing of arguments from the perspective of the other is a skill that will and does pay benefit throughout life. It is also a fundamental building block of intellectual growth. To understand both sides of a bitter debate (for example, abortion) doesn't require a lessening of personal convictions nor a changing of one's own opinion. What this understanding does is add civility to any debate. If I understand your position, I am willing to listen to your argument about your position, to expand my knowledge of that position, and at the end of the day to let the force of your argument guide me in my opinion. This type of willingness is sustained by the knowledge that as I strive to understand what you have to say, you too will strive to understand my arguments.

Reciprocity differs from strategic compromise. With a strategic compromise, I give up part of what I want, so that I can get most of what I want. With reciprocity by understanding the other's argument, by being willing to stand in the shoes of the other and look at the back end of the dilemma, I am able to change what I want. In a fully reciprocal system when a resolution occurs it is what we both want; thus, neither party loses, unlike in a system defined by strategic consent. In a world replete with such strategic intrigue, it is hard to imagine a negotiation or argument that ends with a reciprocal solution. This is the ideal and what I hope we teach and practice. We should strive for reciprocal solutions, and allow strategic compromise as a temporary measure, one that remains viable until a more reciprocal solution can be evolved. The striving for this reciprocity is the cornerstone of civility; in fact, most of the animosity we endure is the spawn of strategic compromise. We need to be careful to recognize strategic expediency for what it is, and not what some disguise it as. It is not truth.

An obvious component of reciprocity is respect, without which it becomes impossible to assume the place of the other and see the world from his/her perspective. Respect and autonomy walk hand in hand in a rational world. Like autonomy, respect is earned and is given before it is earned. Common courtesy and civility are predicated on respect. Our learning groups should be, and most are, exercises in mutual respect. Without this respect, it is difficult to expect that views at odds with the norm could be expressed in a free and open manner.

Sincerity occurs when speakers listen and respond to opposing views, acknowledging that the other's view is a legitimate moral stance. An integral part of sincerity is a disposition to openness, which although not requiring a weakened commitment to one's own position, does require participants to be willing to modify their position if they encounter "unanswerable objections" or face more forceful arguments. When our students learn, they face and succumb to the force of the unforced argument, their convictions are forged into sharper truths, and their learning is directed towards expanded autonomy. As mentors, we must seek reasonable growth in our students and hope that these reasonable startings grow and flourish. I hope that we can and do take pride and sustenance from the nurturing of this growing autonomy.

> *How willing I am as a mentor to considering opinion and argument from others is a critical measure of how my students will absorb reciprocity and use it in their learning and life.*

End Notes

1. Perfect, as with Utopia has its place in real applications of critical theory. While we strive to do what is reasonable, the "perfect" provides a metric to evaluate the reasonableness of reason. I am sure that I will never be "perfect" nor will I live in Utopia but nevertheless I hope to strive towards those goals, albeit asymptotically.

2. These correspond to Benhabib's symmetry and reciprocity conditions that have been discussed in previous articles (*All About Mentoring* issues 21 and 22).

Book Review

Land, Value, Community: Callicott and Environmental Philosophy.
Edited by Wayne Oudekirk and Jim Hill. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2002.

Deborah Kleese, Hudson Valley Center

Philosophy, especially as exemplified by applied ethics, has once again emerged as an essential discipline for our times. Issues in biomedical ethics and business ethics are ever-present reminders of the significance of philosophical debate in everyday life. It is no surprise, then, that the environmental crises that increasingly inform our daily lives demand the attention of philosophers. J. Baird Callicott has been one of the seminal thinkers among those applied ethicists and has helped define the growing subfield of philosophy called environmental ethics. *In Land, Value, Community: Callicott and Environmental Philosophy,* Empire State College's Wayne Ouderkirk and Jim Hill, professor of philosophy at Valdosta State University, describe the significance of Callicott's work to environmental philosophy and assemble a group of pre-eminent environmental philosophers, political scientists, theologians and biologists to comment on and critique Callicott's work. The interdisciplinary nature of the contributions reflects Callicott's own perspective, which draws not only on classical western ethical theory, but on evolutionary biology, quantum physics and postmodern worldviews.

J. Baird Callicott began his initial work in this area over a quarter of a century ago as a member of the philosophy department at Wisconsin State University-Stevens Point (now the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point), where his course in environmental ethics attracted not only philosophy majors, but students in forestry and wildlife management. Through his teaching and writing, he pushed the envelope of conventional western moral theory beyond what he described as its usual anthropocentric focus — human welfare and the intrinsic value of humans — to include an ecocentric approach, the ecosystem as a whole. This shift in the target of moral consideration was a revolutionary reconfiguration of western moral and ethical theory; indeed, Callicott's goal was nothing short of building "from the ground up, new ethical (and metaphysical) paradigms" (Callicott, 1989, p. 4). Callicott seeks to expand moral considerability beyond sentient vertebrates to the entire biotic and abiotic community; such an approach, as he sees it, demands not an extension of classic approaches, but a serious overhaul of the very foundations of moral philosophy.

Callicott found inspiration in the writings of another resident of the sand county of Wisconsin, Aldo Leopold. Leopold was the founder of game management, and, in 1933, the University of Wisconsin-Madison named a chair in game management after him. Leopold used principles of ecology to suggest a new way of considering the human-environment connection. Callicott took Leopold's observations, especially as reflected in his essay, "The Land Ethic" (Leopold, 1966) and created "a holistic environmental ethic" (Callicott, 1989, p. 7). The ethical implications of Leopold's views were clearly described in Callicott's essay, "The Metaphysical Implications of Ecology," reprinted in his book of essays, *In Defense of the Land Ethic* (1989). Numerous articles and several books by Callicott have both described his evolving views and pinpointed his disenchantment with both traditional western moral philosophy and with other positions within environmental philosophy. As such, he has been an inspiration to both his followers and critics alike, and it is both his philosophical stance and his position within the field of environmental philosophy that Ouderkirk and Hill examine in this edited volume.

This work, although ostensibly a critique of one environmental philosopher's approach, also offers a portal into the field

of environmental philosophy. Through an examination of Callicott's ideas the reader is privy to the key concerns addressed in this field. The book examines Callicott's views by presenting his critics' responses to his ideas and Callicott's replies to the critiques. All but six of the 17 essays are original to this volume. The strong introduction by Ouderkirk provides both a snapshot of Callicott's main ideas and an explanation of the organization of the book. The readings are organized into four main sections to address the major foundations of Callicott's approach: the conceptual foundation of the land ethic; intrinsic value in nature; metaphysical and metaethical issues; and the implications of the land ethic. The contributors in each part add their voices to these three essential ideas and their implications. Here, the book works on another level as well; readers get to witness the fine precision of a good argument. The editors, by limiting each contributor to approximately 15 pages, made sure that the readings were clear and precise; these writers slice through Callicott's points with the precision of surgeons wielding micro curettes. I suspect that the editors deserve some credit for both the comfortable length and tightness of the readings. Additionally, the editors made sure that the contributors stayed on task; it's rare that a series of readings provides a seamless whole, clearly speaking to the purpose of the volume. Not one article in this set feels out of place or off the point. While some pieces are easier to read for an audience not thoroughly grounded in philosophy, the articles are consistent in style and tone; readers do not have to struggle with huge variations in prose, which often accompany books of readings. Multiple editors often undertake a project with different agendas or different aims, and the final product may suffer as a result. Ouderkirk and Hill either shared a common vision for this edition, or worked out their differences well in advance, for the selections are even and appropriate to the task. With the exception of one contribution, all of the writers convey respect, and sometimes true affection, for Callicott. They do not spare him, however. Every part of his philosophy is challenged and dissected. By drawing from several fields, he is vulnerable to the criticisms of scientists, philosophers, feminists and activists alike. Yet, in fairness to Callicott, the editors grant him the final word. Including Callicott's replies to his critics is another positive feature of this work; it provides the reader with a sense of dialogue among scholars, rather than a diatribe against one approach.

The conceptual foundations of the land ethic are addressed by philosophers Ernest Partridge and Kristin Shrader-Frechette, political scientist John Barkdull and ecologist Robert McIntosh. Partridge examines Callicott's notion that an environmental ethic cannot stand without a theory of sentiments. For Callicott, theories of moral sentiments offered by David Hume and Adam Smith offer the best choices in support of an environmental ethic. Both Partridge and Barkdull will challenge Callicott's assumption that Hume's and Smith's theories of moral sentiments towards society can be extended to the biotic community. Partridge targets his comments on Hume, and Barkdull does the same for Smith. McIntosh and Shrader-Frechette shift the focus of debate from philosophical concepts to scientific ones. As an ecologist and historian of the science of ecology, McIntosh questions the notions of community put forth in Leopold's land ethic and extended to moral philosophy by Callicott. For McIntosh, the prevailing views in contemporary ecology reject what was once operationalized as the "balance of nature" approach: predictable, integrated, biotic communities that are evolving to some final, successive stage. While Callicott hopes to find support for the tenets of the land ethic in an ecological theory that mirrors this approach, it has generally lost favor as the predominant paradigm. Callicott errs doubly, says McIntosh, by first confusing ecology as a science with ecologism, the sociopolitical transformation of the term, and secondly by using ecologyas- science as a guide to ethics. Leopoldian terms such as "stability" and "integrity," asserts McIntosh, are rhetorical and metaphorical ones, not empirical findings. Shrader-Frechette uses three main arguments to challenge Callicott's position. First, ethics rely on cognition and evaluation, whereas evolution operates randomly, bereft of ends or aims. In ethics, people select theories based on hypotheses about facts and the evaluations stemming from these facts; in evolution, selection arises independently through adaptation. Finally, Callicott uses evolutionary ethics to move from biological theory to realistic ethics, when, as McIntosh noted, diverse perspectives abound in the biological sciences. For Shrader-Frechette, ethicists are better off relying on metaphysics rather than on biological science when discovering value in nature.

The critiques of Callicott's extension of intrinsic value from persons to nature include contributions from three philosophers who take very different vantage points for their analyses. Wendy Donner explains how Callicott's approach differs from animal liberation extensionists such as Peter Singer and Tom Regan and concludes that his ecocentric approach not only discounts individual animals in favor of less specific things such as populations or ecosystems, but, ironically, does end up valuing conscious beings above nonconscious ones. Where his theory fails, says Donner, is in providing clear guidance on how we weigh the value of competing interests that emerge between sentient individuals and non-conscious whole ecosystems. A good theory, for Donner, should have one fundamental principle for resolving conflicts or should at least prioritize the interests and values of different elements. From her perspective, Callicott's approach does neither. Holmes Rolston III finds the flaw in Callicott's attempt to extend value in nature by erasing the

distance between humans and the nonhuman world. For Rolston, if our behavior is to change so that we value the environment, we would need to delineate wild, spontaneous nature from human cultural activities, and therefore set humans apart from nature. How else, asks Rolston, are we to gauge the biological integrity of a healthy, wild environment if we make no distinction between it and culturally modified environments? A distinction between nature and culture is required. The key point that Callicott seems to miss, according to Rolston, is that evolution may direct the processes of human and nonhuman entities, but the course of human evolution produced certain emergent qualities that made us unique in the biotic world. This special humanness may make us different, but it does not absolve us of our responsibility toward nature. Bryan Norton questions Callicott's assumption that an environmental ethic requires independent value in nature; instead he proposes that values cannot be located outside the conscious subject. However, while Norton maintains that value is anthropocentric, it need not only be instrumental. People and nature may be valuable for themselves in addition to the usefulness that they afford to the valuer.

The critiques then turn to the metaphysical and metaethical aspects of Callicott's system. Callicott uses ecology and the New Physics to address the nature of reality and the universe, or at least his metaphysical focus, "the proximate terrestrial environment in which we live, move and have our being" (Callicott, 1989, p. 101). In Callicott's view, Clementsonian ecological organicism and quantum theory converge in a common viewpoint, one that challenges the modern atomistic and mechanistic notions of western science that are depicted by Callicott as follows: "Living natural bodies come in a wide variety of types or species, which are determined by a logico-conceptual order, and have, otherwise, no essential connection to one another. They are, as it were, loosed upon the landscape, each outfitted with its (literally God-given) Platonic-Aristotelian essence, to interact catch-as-catch-can" (Callicott, 1989, p. 104). Quantum theory's focus on energy and energy fields and the community/ ecosystem model together help provide for Callicott an alternative model: "the concept of nature emergent from the New Ecology, as that emergent from the New Physics, is holistic. It is impossible to conceive of organisms — if they are, as it were, knots in the web of life, or temporary formations or perturbations in complex flow patterns — apart from the field, the matrix of which they are modes" (Callicott, 1989, pp. 109- 110).

In Part Three, comments come from philosophers Eugene Hargrove, Catherine Larrère, Clare Palmer, Peter Wenz, Andrew Light and Lori Gruen. Hargrove is skeptical about use of a single metaphysical framework suggested by Callicott and cautions him to "stay within the limits of ordinary life, custom and discourse" (Ouderkirk & Hill, p. 147). Larrère cautions against using concepts from any one science to provide an overarching, interdisciplinary metaphysics. Science cannot provide a philosophy, but rather, says Larrère, should be used to help answer preexisting philosophical questions. She also reiterates points made earlier; there is no agreement within the two sciences that Callicott uses as exemplars. Perhaps even more crucial is her reminder that concepts that may be used by several fields undergo "regional ontology," transformation by each discipline into its own particular discourse. In a similar vein, Palmer questions the validity of "reading up" from science to philosophy. What she finds especially problematic is "to read up from the microworld of quantum physics into the macroworld of individuals and things" (p. 173). Competing models of the new physics are also ignored, says Palmer, as Callicott buttresses his argument for the postmodern scientific paradigm by using a very particular interpretation of quantum theory. By taking concepts out of a particular, limited context and applying them in a more general way, Callicott moves beyond the evidence and distorts the very particular intent of the original scientific descriptions and understandings. This "metaphysicalization" of science is, for Palmer, unacceptable.

Wenz, Light and Gruen shift from Callicott's metaphysical issues to metaethical ones. Wenz takes issue with Callicott's claim that a moral theory should be all encompassing, providing solutions to each and every moral quandary. Callicott himself, says Wenz, fails in this regard. For Wenz, Callicott fails to see that the land ethic cannot be reduced to a single master principle. As Wenz explains the difference between moral monism, minimal pluralism and moderate pluralism, the arguments may become too specific for a general readership. Light's article, too, ventures a bit too far out of the territory of ordinary discourse that Hargrove warned about. He too thinks that Callicott, by insisting upon a monistic and nonanthropocentric position, is asking too much of the new field of environmental ethics. Gruen's ecofeminist critique of Callicott's monism both defends a pluralist position while at the same time acknowledging its dangers. A highly relativist position could lead to an inability to distinguish a moral stance that is better than others in guiding treatment toward nature. What advice does she offer for adjudicating between conflicting claims? For Gruen, context takes a central role; participants in the culture should determine normative legitimacy. Such an approach at least highlights something that moral philosophers have traditionally excluded: the role of power and oppression in dictating worldviews.

The final part of this volume addresses other implications of the land ethic. Callicott's views have often opposed the

views of the animal liberation movement; he himself asserts that "I am probably best known for driving a wedge between animal welfare and environmental ethics" (Callicott, 1989, p. 6). For Callicott, not only must moral consideration extend beyond sentient beings, but at times the broader good of ecosystem integrity may demand the taking of individual members, as in the culling of deer herds to prevent overbrowsing and the ultimate crashing of the population. Angus Taylor both defends the animal liberation position and seeks to find some common ground between that perspective and Callicott's land ethic. Taylor pinpoints three reasons why environmentalists fail to ascribe rights to wild animals: First, there is a misunderstanding of what liberation philosophy means when it ascribes rights to animals; second, humans want to perpetuate continued human interference in wild nature, via hunting and fishing; and third, the misperception that preserving ecosystems requires the harming of individual animals. It is on this last point that Taylor concedes that compromise must occur. Liberationists must acknowledge that individual rights may occasionally have to be overridden, but likewise environmentalists must realize that such an override requires a heavy burden of proof. The next two authors take issue with the implications of Callicott's views for religious traditions. Susan Bratton accuses him of verging on "anti-religious discrimination" (p. 239) in his favoring of non-western traditions over the Judeo- Christian perspectives, while Hester, et al. accuse him of just the opposite: privileging western thought over indigenous world views. Ouderkirk takes issue with Callicott's opposition to the concept of wilderness, first by challenging the notion that the term is a western construction and then by disassembling Callicott's assertion that the term implies a nature-culture dualism. In a conclusion similar to Rolston's, Ouderkirk argues that evolution has created both differences and continuities; culture, as an evolutionarily emergent phenomenon, imbues humans with unique features.

> A highly relativist position could lead to an inability to distinguish a moral stance that is better than others in guiding treatment toward nature.

In the section titled, "My Reply," Callicott faces his critics. Admitting that "some of the criticisms … are painful to read" (p. 291), he organizes his responses by grouping the authors around general themes: Hume and Smith; ethics and ecology; culture and nature; intrinsic value of nature; ecoquantum metaphysical foundations; moral pluralism and multicultural ecological ethics. He is forthright in admitting his own biases, as in the case of supporting the Clementsian superorganism concept even though this view has fallen out of favor. He is willing to tinker with the Leopold land ethic by replacing outmoded concepts of integrity and stability with ones more in keeping with the individualistic, dynamic and disturbance-prone model of ecology. He demurs to Larrère's critique and defers to Palmer, and while acknowledging that his stance toward moral pluralism is ambiguous, he is clear about what he thinks the main role of moral philosophy should be: "the a the ecofeminist discomfort with "true" and "correct" beliefs by noting that there is a place of agreement about beliefs and obligations; this middle line emerges by developing the most consistent, coherent and comprehensive set of beliefs possible.

Callicott's work is at the same time ambitious, provocative and frustrating. His attempt to create both a monistic moral theory that unites the great ideas of several disciplines is a courageous act. Interestingly, Callicott's approach has the feel, although neither the intent nor the conclusions, of the parson naturalists of the 18th and 19th centuries, who attempted to couch religious beliefs within the scientific revolution of the Enlightenment period. The natural theology of that time tried to connect nature, science, religion and social theory (see Foster, 2000, for an excellent discussion of the parson naturalists). Callicott, it seems, tries to do the same. It is no wonder; the natural world is so astoundingly beautiful and awesome, in its often frightening power, that it is difficult to regard it absent of value. For the parson naturalists, value was awarded because God's existence was evident through the work of nature. For Callicott, value for nature is in our genes, by virtue of the evolutionary process. He hopes to convince us that our appreciation and care for the world stems not from something otherworldly, but from something profoundly human. By casting his ethical net so far and creating a grand theory that can encompass evolutionary biology, postmodern thought and classical philosophy, he opens himself up to attack on all of those fronts. He has taken great risks, yet he is not afraid. The evolutionary biologist E.O. Wilson has

taken a similar risk from the opposite perspective; he is a scientist formulating ethics through sociobiology. Callicott's venture is both more logically cohesive and persuasive than Wilson's.

Yet, his boldness may be his undoing, as his critics have been quick to point out. While Callicott's rebuttal does offer some closure and hope for partial reconciliation, naive readers may come away with the idea that no agreement is possible among philosophers. There are actually quite a few points of agreement, and philosophy, like all the other disciplines, differs on the microlevel while often agreeing on macrolevels. An afterword by the editors might have been useful, in order to reiterate points of synthesis and to provide the reader with a better sense of comfort at closure. This volume wasn't really intended for beginners, and that realization is both the book's strength and weakness. For readers who have been following Callicott's work, this book offers perhaps the best unified and clear critique of his position. It would also work for advanced students who can work backward from the critiques to investigate the key issues in the field of environmental ethics. Yet, I fear this wonderful little book will be read by a small audience and in a sense, that it is "preaching to the choir." The reasons why we should value the natural world are well articulated in this work, both from Callicott's point of view and through the views of his critics. If our practices toward the world are dictated by deep-seated beliefs, as philosophers, psychologists and conservation biologists all agree, then this book is essential reading.

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> … *in any adult learning group there will always be people with a range of different learning styles. We can never assume that all our student participants will prefer to learn only through one form of activity. This means that it is necessary for any teacher to adopt a wide range of teaching-learning activities in order to help those who prefer to learn through active engagement with experience, those who prefer to reflect critically, those who prefer to develop more generalised views, and those who prefer to experiment and test out other people's theories.*
>
> Alan Rogers, "Learning and Adult Education" (2002)

ALL ABOUT MENTORING

A Publication of Empire State College

Land, Value, Community: An Interview with Wayne Ouderkirk Deborah Kleese, Hudson Valley Center

Wayne Ouderkirk

D.K.: Why Callicott? Of all the environmental philosophers, why start with Callicott?

W.O.: It was very coincidental. Jim Hill, the co-editor, had the idea originally. He was to be the senior editor but during the long duration of putting it together, I took over as senior editor. Jim taught a seminar on Callicott's work and he invited Callicott to his university, and he got the idea of having an author-critic format and that's where it came from. That's the coincidental or accidental aspect from my perspective. I was happy to work with him and to start working on the project. Callicott was one of the earliest environmental philosophers, although Rolston started writing a year or two before Callicott; Rolston was Callicott's mentor, or one of his mentors. Another reason for Callicott is that, clearly, he's become one of the lightening rods, if nothing else, of philosophy worldwide; he's not just American in his influence. He and Rolston in particular have lectured on environmental thought in many countries. They have not just lectured; their thoughts have been responded to. Callicott also has attracted so much attention, especially early on, because he wrote, as he says in his response section of the book, deliberately and provocatively. He said some pretty wild things, and did it purposively, to generate discussion. He has succeeded in that goal, so that more discussion has been devoted to his material and ideas than to Rolston's. He is, therefore, worthy of the attention. His theory is a development of that one strand — Leopold's land ethic — that has been very influential in non-philosophical circles as well. Biologists and ecologists have looked to Leopold even before philosophers have. Callicott's contribution to the land ethic, then, is quite

significant.

D.K.: Who should read this book?

W.O.: We were trying to make it not too philosophical, but I don't think we entirely succeeded. We do have people from other disciplines, and I do think it's accessible, with the possible exception of one essay, to the general academic population, and useable for a variety of instructional contexts graduate seminars certainly. But undergraduates could use it as well, and people interested in environmental theory.

D.K: What do philosophers have to offer for the solution of environmental problems?

W.O.: Well, some say nothing! There is some sentiment, even among philosophers, that we need action rather than thought, but to me, the two are inextricably linked. If nothing else, philosophers have shown that there is a close linkage between how we treat the rest of the natural world and our conceptual frameworks for understanding it. Through the analyses that Callicott and other people have made about the history of how we have thought about nature, they have added an important dimension. Our understanding of conceptual frameworks won't change everything, but this information goes hand in hand with what activists are doing. Philosophers contribute the conceptual framework—that explanatory dimension that helps us to think, in order to reconfigure our actions. I think that this approach is inconsistent to what Marx said. In his thesis on Fuerbach he said that philosophers have only talked about the world; the point is to change it. Marx was obviously very practical, but he was also a theorist! He never gave up theorizing, so we do need to talk about it, too, to help change it.

D.K.: What was your greatest challenge, in preparing this work?

W.O.: Getting everybody to get the essays in! It was challenging getting 17 articles from academics across North America, England and France. The essays had to have consistency, so that we could get them into a manuscript.

D.K.: From your reading of those contributions, have you changed your views about Callicott?

W.O.: I think I got a little more critical of Callicott. Although I did a book on Callicott, it doesn't mean that I totally agreed with him. I think I am more critical of his thought now, but simultaneously, I appreciate the reach of his intellect. He's just amazingly well read; he covers a really broad spectrum, including philosophy. He knows philosophy quite well, especially its history. In terms of my changing my views, I think there is an influence of Callicott in my thinking. He has helped me move away from an acceptance of Rolston's theory of intrinsic value, but that was probably a combination of my work on this book and reading other critiques of Rolston, which will hopefully come out in the Rolston volume that I will next be working on. I have become convinced of the importance of understanding the scientific dimensions of things that Callicott covers, and his work has influenced me in that way, and probably in other ways that I am not even aware of.

D.K.: How have this book and your general work in environmental philosophy influenced your work with students? Your scholarly work is in a pretty specialized area, so how do you make it accessible to students?

W.O.: It has helped me in a lot of ways in our work with students, especially in the unit situation, where I work. I work with students in all areas. In working with those students, I do not lean heavily on them to do environmental-related studies. In talking with them about education and learning, however, I have been able to use my work in environmental philosophy to illustrate the importance of reaching out beyond one's narrow perspective. When I went to philosophy graduate school, we didn't talk about the environment; we didn't talk about medical issues or business ethics. We talked about "pure" philosophy. I think I am able to talk convincingly to students from a personal experience about expanding the boundaries of their interest. If, for instance, they want to study marketing, they may want to not only examine the psychology of consumer behavior, but other dimensions as well. I can make that case because I can talk about myself as an example. Because of the interdisciplinary nature of environmental philosophy, it has exposed me to many different areas. Sometimes I can then use it to work with students. I can refer them, for instance, to a piece that somebody wrote about the environment in reference to an area of specific interest to the student. Sometimes I can use it as a stimulus for students to look further into environmental issues. I can tell them about the Adirondack Residency, where they have the opportunity to choose from a number of topics, or I can let them know about my particular area of expertise. Sometimes

students will want to study some other area of philosophy.

D.K.: What's next? You mentioned that you would like to do a similar format on Holmes Rolston. What about other work as an environmental practitioner, especially in terms of your time spent in wilderness areas hiking?

W.O.: As a hiker—that's an ongoing thing. I have been working on climbing all of the 4,000 plus peaks in New England.

D.K.: Is hiking, the "practice" of the wild, so to speak, necessary for your thinking and for your work as an environmental philosopher?

W.O.: It has been an important factor in my thinking. It has been interesting for me, as I expand my contacts in the field, to find that there are environmental philosophers who do not spend much time outdoors or in wilderness. It is an important dimension for me, probably more spiritual than intellectual. In terms of other pursuits, I am working on a conference on environment and community. For over ten years it has been held in the southwest — in Utah and Nevada. In 2003, it will be held in Arizona, and in 2004, for the first time, it will be held out of the southwest and we will be holding it in Saratoga Springs.

D.K.: Are there any other things you would like to mention?

W.O.: The college has been very supportive of my academic work in many, many ways. I was encouraged by the college and would hope that it continues to encourage others to do scholarship. Mentoring work has very heavy workload demands, and it's not easy to find time. I hope the college will find even more ways to make it easier for people to find time to carry out scholarly activities.

ALL ABOUT

MENTORING

A Publication of Empire State College

Research Note: Educational Planning in the First Learning Contract: Is it a Good Idea?
Miriam Tatzel, Hudson Valley Center

In 2000, I had a reassignment from the Office of Academic Affairs to do research on student retention. In 1998-1999, there had been a serious enrollment shortfall in the regional centers, and a major purpose of the reassignment was to investigate enrollment patterns in the centers. The college had recently converted its records system to Datatel, and by doing the research using the Datatel system, the reassignment also was a beginning exploration of how Datatel could be used to track student enrollment patterns. Some of the variables related to enrollment and retention that I looked at during the reassignment included: following the application to orientation to enrollment process; gender and ethnicity with respect to retention and graduation; retention in centers vs. units; part-time vs. full-time students; age; and time to graduation. Several of the completed studies were reported in Exchange. *The following report addresses the question of when to do Educational planning. As mentors meeting with new students, we wonder whether to start the student in planning the degree and evaluating life experience. So I asked, how likely are students to re-enroll if they do (or do not do) educational planning in the first learning contract?*

During this reassignment, I was a member of the Outcomes Assessment Committee, which advised me on the research and its presentation. Special thanks go to Carol Mulcahy and Pamela Malone, who helped with the programming and with navigating through Datatel's Colleague system.

We know that the greatest attrition in our students' careers occurs from the first enrollment to the second. As I reported in the Research Note on "Benchmarking" (September 14, 2000), the overall first contract non-re-enrollment rate for the regional centers is around 32 percent. You may recall that early attrition is common for nontraditional students, with the national rate around 38 percent, and early attrition is also common among students in public, open admissions four-year colleges (of which we are one), around 44 percent. While Empire State College is, relatively speaking, successful at retaining students, we are nevertheless losing a large number of those who start with us, and we would like to increase our first contract retention.

Many students do educational planning (also called degree program planning or academic planning) in their first enrollment. It has often been expressed that educational planning (EdPl) is a "make or break" experience for students: if they make it through the process, it's relatively clear sailing to a degree, and vice versa. Moreover, many students do EdPl in their first enrollment. If both these events — first contract and EdPl — are risk factors for retention, what happens when they occur together?

In this Research Note, I look at first contract retention in relation to educational planning. I took as a cohort the students who first matriculated into regional centers in fall 1998 and spring 1999, a total of 2110 students. Table 1 shows how many students took EdPl and how many re-enrolled. Overall, we find that EdPl was a typical component of first learning contracts, with 64 percent of students enrolling for it. We find too, that 67 percent have re-enrolled, which is typical first contract retention. By October 2000, when I collected these data, the students had well over a year to complete their contracts and re-enroll.

What is the relationship between EdPl in the first contract and re-enrollment? Of those who took EdPl, 66 percent re-enrolled, while 69 percent of those who did not take EdPl re-enrolled. Thus, we find a small difference in favor of not doing educational planning. But let's look further. Maybe the critical issue for EdPl and re-enrollment has to do with whether or not the student receives credit. Table 2 shows the relationship between getting credit for EdPl and re-enrolling.

Among those who took EdPl and got credit, 84 percent re-enrolled. This is lots better than the 67 percent overall re-enrollment rate. Among those who took EdPl and did not get credit, 42 percent re-enrolled. Thus, the likelihood of re-enrolling is twice as high for those who got credit for EdPl as for those who did not.

Consider now those who took EdPl and did not re-enroll. How would we know if EdPl contributed to their not re-enrolling? If EdPl were like any other contract component, then they should be just as likely to complete it as to complete the others. If EdPl were more of a stumbling block or was less successful than other components, then these non-re-enrolling students should have a lower rate of completion for EdPl than for other contract components. Table 3 shows the completion rate for EdPl components compared to other contract components for those students who did not re-enroll.

Whereas Tables 1 and 2 reported numbers of students, Table 3 reports number of contract components. These are the components for the 695 students who did not re-enroll.

_ For their first (and only) enrollment, they signed up for 1179 contract components and got credit for 475 (40 percent completed overall).
_ 469 of the 1179 components were for EdPl and 128 of the 469 were completed (27 percent).
_ If we subtract the EdPl components from the total enrolled for, we find that the completion rate for the non-EdPl components is 49 percent. [In other words, subtract the 128 completed EdPl components from the total 475 completed to get the completed non-EdPl components, 347. Subtract the total EdPl components enrolled for, 469, from the total number of components, 1179, to get the total non-EdPl components, 710. Dividing 347 by 710 gives us 49 percent as the completion rate for non- EdPl components.]

That's 27 percent completion for EdPl vs. 49 percent completion for other studies. Clearly, the non-re-enrollees are especially unlikely to get credit for EdPl. This suggests that EdPl may have contributed to their not re-enrolling, especially when we consider that 84 percent of those who got credit for EdPl did re-enroll.

Conclusion

Educational planning seems to have a polarizing effect on retention. If students get credit, their re-enrollment rate is much above average (84 percent vs. 67 percent). If they don't get credit, their re-enrollment rate is much below average (42 percent vs. 67 percent). Moreover, students who don't reenroll are much less likely to get credit for EdPl than for their other components (27 percent vs. 49 percent). This, in a nutshell, summarizes the findings.

What is happening when students do not progress far enough to earn credit in educational planning? One possibility is that the student gets bogged down in the process. Writing the essays for prior learning may feel overwhelming (too complex, too much), evaluators may be hard to connect with, and the evaluators themselves may procrastinate. By the contract's end, the student may have little to show for all the struggle and frustration. Another scenario is that the student doesn't actually work on the task. Other demands seem more pressing or just plain more interesting. The motivation, the *oomph,* to write the essays and to follow through simply isn't there.

What's a mentor to do? Plan or not plan? Overall, there seems to be no imperative to do educational planning in the first contract. What I as a mentor glean from this is that if the student is a long way from graduating and/or the assessment process is especially complex, it might be better to postpone educational planning rather than risk having the student drop out with a legacy of frustration or boredom. Let the student have

some good experiences and successes at Empire State College first.

Of course, the patterns described here — of EdPl, re-enrollment, and credit earned — cannot capture the mix of considerations that go into the decision of whether to do EdPl in the beginning, not the least of which is how close the student is to graduating. There are other empirical questions we can ask to inform the decision:

_ Is EdPl likely to be more successful if students bring a lot of transcript credit (because they have more experience with college study and are closer to graduating)?
_ Are students who have a lot of prior learning to be individually evaluated less likely to successfully complete EdPl — and therefore more likely to drop out?
_ Is it better for retention to spread EdPl over two contracts?

	Took EdPl in LC1	Did not take EdPl	Total
Re-enrolled	905 66% re-enrolled	510 69% re-enrolled	1415 67% re-enrolled
Did not re-enroll	469	226	695
Total	1374 64% took EdPl	736 36% did not take EdPl	2110

Table 1. Educational Planning in the First Learning Contract and Re-Enrollment: First-Time Center Students, Fall 1998 and Spring 1999 (as of 10/00)

	Got credit for EdPl	Did not get credit for EdPl	Total
Re-enrolled	659 84% re-enrolled	246 42% re-enrolled	905
Did not re-enroll	128	341	469
Total	787 57% got credit for EdPl	587 43% did not get credit for EdPl	1374

Table 2. Credit for Educational Planning and Re-Enrollment

	EdPl	Other Components	Total
Received credit	128 27% of EdPl components got credit	347 49% of non-EdPl components got credit	475 40% of all components got credit
Did not receive credit	341	363	704
Total contract components	469	710	1179

Table 3. Credit for Educational Planning vs. Other Components: Non Re-Enrolled Students

Found Things
Robert Rodgers, Niagara Frontier Center

When I emptied files (and files and files!) on retiring from mentoring, I came upon many memos and notes addressed to students that I had written over the years. They were designed as learning resources concerning particular areas of study, problems, themes or disciplines. I thought that most mentors must have designed similar works and that making them public could sometimes be useful to the students of other mentors.

The following memo was intended to help students of "Play, Games and Sports in Human Development" start focused thinking about some of the psychological dynamics of the topic. In fact, the most recent student to read this is now basketball coach of SUNY at Buffalo. How's that for a recommendation?

TO: Students of Psychology of Play, Games and Sport

FROM: Robert R. Rodgers

SUBJECT: The developmental transition from play to games

Question: Assuming there is an age progression from play to games to sports, why and how do humans make the transition from one to another?

1. Garvey (1977, p. 105) says that game playing first appears as early as one year in things like peek-a-boo and pat-a-cake. These are begun on parental initiative, but the child obviously enjoys the activity and interaction. Parent and child in these games are the first "team."

2. The essence of a game is shared rules. Psychologically, these are a set of mutual expectations.

a) The rules are communicated and, therefore, explicit. This is not necessarily true of play.

b) Telling the other the rules is not part of the game, but part of social context of the game.

c) Rules can be taught and learned; therefore, they are not "innate," but the capacity to learn and behave according to them is innate.

d) There is an implicit contract among players to accept and abide by the rules. Hence, transmission of games within a culture is easier than across cultures.

e) Penalties must exist for rules to be rules. Concepts of fairness and cheating must exist. This implies that a mutual activity without penalties and ideas of fairness may not be a game.

f) Games have names and they have boundaries in time (beginning and ending), in acceptable behaviors, and in space. Thus, they are entities, which is not true of play. Watching how a game ends is interesting. What cues do the players use to communicate to each other? What outside interferences are accepted or rejected? "Tommy, come home to supper." "In a minute, Mom."

g) A game must have some element of repetitive sameness, perhaps just in the rules. But it must also have some element of change and variability. Play peek-a-boo with a small child and do it exactly the same for 10 minutes. What happens? The variability is the play element in the game.

3. Can dogs and cats play? Certainly. Can either play a game? Watch a dog that has learned to fetch a stick or ball. Dog brings stick/ball and puts it down at feet of human (never at feet of another dog!). If human does not throw stick/ball within a certain time (note that waiting time is regular, and, therefore. is a rule!), the dog reminds, urges, and expresses annoyance (but never violence), because the human has broken the rule, the expected behavior. Therefore, the dog is playing a game. Do cats do this? I think not. The clue is that when a cat is playing with a human controlled object, its behavior is the same as when the object is not controlled by a human, and the cat never addresses the human directly, but always the object. Well, I think I have seen a cat look up, expectantly, at the human who controls the string; so to that extent the cat has an expectation, i.e., a concept of rule.

4. There is also a playful element in breaking rules. There are contexts for ritual insults and limited aggression. There is a context for testing the limits of tolerance for rule breaking, which is itself a learning experience. But there is also a point at which rule breaking is responded to with warning, then retaliation.
5. My tentative conclusion is that game playing develops partly independently of play, and has different needs, purposes and competencies. Yet there is also an intimate, complementary relation between them — the impulsive, unpredictable pleasure of play fulfills emotionally, while it is supported and extended by conformity to the shared rules of a game.

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Teaching for Transcendence

Sandra Johnson, Niagara Frontier Center

Sandra Johnson

Kegan (1994) describes adult learners who have reached into what he terms the "fourth order of consciousness" as capable of critical reflection, critical thinking, and the ability to "see through the eyes of the self." Perhaps what Kegan (1994) has tried to capture is the transcendental function of the self — the ability, as Mead (1968) discussed, to be an "I" and still be able to join and have empathy with others. This "joining" can be compared and contrasted to the notion of a "unified self" that Mumford (1956) introduced in his book *The Transformation of Man.* Mumford posited that society is preparing for a "new transformation of the social order" in which education and learning would come to the forefront. In this world culture where the planet is conceived of as a single unity, the development of the "unified self" is essential to bring this concept into fruition.

Only by a concentration on our inner world, sufficient to counterbalance our present externalism, can we hope, in time, to achieve that balance and wholeness which will permit a steady flow of energies back and fourth between inner and outer. In the fullness of time, a unified self will bring a world culture into existence, and that world culture will in turn sustain and bring to a higher pitch of development this new self. (Mumford, 1956, as cited in Boucouvalas, 1983, p. 46).

Mezirow (1990) has answered the call to bring about personal and social transformation through critical reflection. Mezirow (1990) believes that the cardinal purpose of the educator of adults is to foster critical reflection; namely, "to help

learners become critically aware of the cultural and psychological assumptions that have influenced the way we see ourselves and our relationships, and the way we pattern our lives" (p. 101). According to Heaney (1996), Mezirow includes both individual and collective action. "This critical process is necessary for such change as leading the learner to take action to change social practices and institutions which implement and legitimate the distorting ideologies which enthrall us" (Mezirow, 1995, as cited in Heaney, 1996, p. 36).

However, Mezirow (1990) recognizes that this self-differentiating process of adult learners can be hindered by the dynamics of traumatic development. He utilizes Gould's theory of adult psychological development to discuss the dynamics of traumatic development resulting in a lost function that impedes learning. Gould (1978, 1988) suggested that traumatic events in childhood can result in prohibitions, that though submerged from consciousness, continue to inhibit adult action by generating anxiety when there is a risk of breaching them. This dynamic results in lost functions, such as the ability to take risks, which is a necessary part of challenging assumptions. Adding to this dilemma of traumatic developmental events, Ferro (1993) states that adults bring with them "emotional baggage" from previous negative learning experiences when they enter the classroom. Ferro (1993) further points out that recognizing the role of memory and emotion can help educators to understand what is happening to many adults returning to formal schooling when "emotion-laden memories flood back" (Ferro, 1993, p. 31).

Brookfield (1987) maintains that making the attitudinal shift to reinterpret as culturally induced what were initially held to be personally devised value system beliefs and moral codes, can be highly intimidating. To realize that the moral and behavioral codes regarded as personal creations are, in fact, culturally induced is threatening to one's sense of self. Brookfield (1987) recommends that learners have empathetic educators and other skilled helpers to turn to at this point because the threat to the self can lead to depression. The educators and other skilled helpers who seek to encourage critical thinking are like "psychological demolition experts" (p. 30). Brookfield is certainly acknowledging that the demolition requires training and sensitivity.

When educators-as-helpers assist people in questioning the assumptions underlying their structures of understanding, or in realizing alternatives to their habitual ways of thinking and living, they must act with care and sensitivity. "They have to ensure that when the foundations of these structures are shaken, the framework of the individual's self-esteem is left relatively intact" (Brookfield, 1987, p. 31).

It is apparent that self-reflection is the key to challenging psychological and cultural assumptions and that the self is created and recreated through self-reflection (Dewey, 1938/19770; Fosnot, 1996; Mead, 1977). Kegan (1994) points out that the ability to self-reflect means that adult learners can experience a shift in perception. This shift in perception can lead to developmental growth and the differentiating process of the self. Kegan (1994) further describes that there are two main stages of the development of the self in adulthood. In the first state, the self is embedded in the tribe and in the other. The learner cannot be self-directed, as there isn't a self. In the second stage, the learner is able to maintain a clear sense of self and yet still merge with others — dissolving and reconstructing the self when appropriate (Kegan, 1994 as cited in Daloz, 1996).

However, once again it is important to recognize that challenging assumptions leads to depression and anxiety because the self feels threatened and cannot dissolve and reconstruct when appropriate. Discovering the reasons why challenging psychological and cultural assumptions constitutes a threat to the self, and why depression and anxiety happen when assumptions are confronted during the attempt to reconstruct the self, is crucial to adult developmental theory. Perhaps if we can more fully understand these dynamics, we can facilitate the self-reflective process and help adult learners to construct and reconstruct the self, thereby moving adult learners through Kegan's (1994) developmental model.

Neuroscientists (Damasio, 1999, Schore, 1994, Siegel, 1999), have looked at pieces of this puzzle such as: (a) the developmental history of the self;(b) how affect is regulated within the self and through others; (c) how autonomy is developmentally created; (d) how coherence of the self allows for shifts of perception; (e) the dynamics of adult metacognitive thinking; and (f) how resonance (the joining between the mentor and the adult learner) brings about an expansion of consciousness. These findings pertain to adult learning in such areas as:

(a) challenging assumptions;
(b) the role of affective cognition;

(c) self-reflection and critical thinking; and
(d) the role of the mentor. This is thus a body of literature that we must continue to study and whose ramifications we need to become more aware of.

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As adult educators, we must continue to foster this complex "science of self-reflection" by incorporating research from a range of fields and topics — from educational psychology, psychological trauma and educational trauma, consciousness studies and neuroscience. It is through explorations of such work that we better help our students bring about a more integrated sense of self — one that is more capable of the self-reflective process and indicative of Kegan's (1994) notion of the "mental complexities of the fourth order of consciousness."

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