ALL ABOUT

MENTORING

A Publication of Empire State College

Over the last several years, many people have contributed to the work of the Mentoring Institute and thus to the publication of *All About Mentoring*. Lee Herman and Miriam Tatzel served as editors of the first issue in September 1993. Jay Gilbert, Chris Rounds and Xenia Coulter also became editors. Their efforts were enormous. Over the last several years, other colleagues have been members of the Mentoring Institute Advisory Board and have helped to sustain the workings of the Mentoring Institute and of this publication. Great appreciation to Eric Ball, Anne Breznau, Tina Wagle, KD Eaglefeathers, Julie Gedro, Margaret Clark-Plaskie, Frieda Mendelsohn, Wayne Ouderkirk, Deborah Noble, Marie Tondreau, Betty Wilde-Biasiny, Lorraine Lander, Peggy Tally, Judy Gerardi, and, of course, there have been many others. Thank you. AM

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Too Much Talk?

I've been talking too much.

You haven't been talking "too much" to me; it's been a long time.

I've been busy, a bit overwhelmed with work. But it's been something like an accumulation. I finally had to call.

So who's born the brunt of your verbosity?

My students.

I hate to break the news to you, but isn't talking part of what we're paid to do? Silence seems a rather odd option.

I said "too much."

"Too much" compared to what?

The other day, it happened a few times within hours of each other. I imagined that there was someone in the room who was counting my words.

A ghostly word counter?

I thought: if someone counted my every word and counted the words of the student sitting across from me, my numbers would have been staggering. She was overwhelmed.

You've made a leap. Your rather peculiar fantasy was about word count; now you're claiming that you crushed her.

I didn't say "crushed." I said that she – and I could also mention the guy I had met with two hours before and the group of students I saw four hours later – I think they were overwhelmed.

Did anyone complain? Was there even a peep? What makes you so worried? Were you good – clear, informative, maybe even entertaining?

In the little group I gave a mini-lecture. Pretty spontaneous.

god forbid … you've dirtied yourself!

Completely carried away. A small opening and I took it.

OK then. What did you talk about?

One student was describing her understanding of alienation. She mentioned Boal and work she had done in South America and its relationship to Ehrenreich's description of folding clothes as a worker at a Wal-Mart. The student obviously knew what she was talking about. I could have just let her go.

Did you cut her off?

I'm not that pedagogically crude. Basic etiquette gave me at least a second's pause.

So what did you say?

When's the last time one of us lectured on the *1844 Manuscripts?* It just poured out.

Were you coherent? Did they think you were clever? Are you actually thinking that you were cheating?

Not the right questions. I was embarrassed – embarrassed in front of myself.

Be honest. The group needed the information, didn't it? You had an opportunity to provide your students with a theoretical context they lacked. That's why you're there. How many of them knew anything about Marx? I bet – actually I'm sure, not one of them was aware of any problem. I expect some took notes and recognized they were learning something that their student-colleagues – even the most articulate ones – couldn't offer. This is actually good news! Your vision is skewed if all you see is your ghost.

There were alternatives: there were questions I could have asked and urged them to pursue on their own and together.

You're confused: stubborn and stuck. What are you being unfaithful to? Confess! Confess!

You've got to care about something other than your fount of knowledge and your articulateness.

I do. I care that I know what I'm talking about. I care that my students are learning. I don't care about a bizarre superego that makes judgments based on word counts. That's just silly.

Our performances, however erudite, are not what our students need.

Who are you to make such a judgment? You claim that your expertise as a social theorist is irrelevant to your students, that, literally, you should hold back from telling them what you know and what you know they need to know, because you've gone over the maximum words allowed. But here you are claiming that you're an expert on your student's learning. Don't try to deny that you know something and that your knowledge is important to your students. What you're describing is self-denying and academically irresponsible, and incredibly presumptuous, both at the same time. As someone else I hope you'd be willing to admit you've read, Mr. Habermas, might put it: it's "systematic distortion."

Actually, the "distortion" is your surety about what you know and your willful disregard about what our students know. You wouldn't have cared if you talked right over that student. You're obsessed with your meticulously sculpted online course designs that take you a year to create.

Your Boal woman might have been able to describe her community performances; she might have even made an interesting connection or two between Boal and Ehrenreich, but I promise you, she couldn't tell anyone one iota about what it means to consider our alienation from our "species being." I can't believe you don't think that's incredibly important – even to her.

I should have given them something to read by Marx or, even better, asked each of them to do some searching for interpretations of alienation and to then share what they found with the group. And the earlier guy who had tons to say about Victor Frankl – we could have opened the book together, talked about how he understood one of Frankl's examples, or even read a

paragraph or phrase right then and there. And, of course, because I was so wrapped up in my own trenchant analysis of Frankl's "logotherapy," even when the student started talking about how his dying friend's advice to him was a perfect expression of Frankl's "will to meaning," I changed the subject. Why? Because I thought the student was moving too far off track. I should have stayed with him – pursued this new angle. Another error.

You're confusing self-reflection with self-punishment. Nothing cruel or unusual about what you're doing.

I wonder.

Keep wondering, but your precious obsession with process and open-endedness is going to tie you up into knots. You'll be hearing even more voices. You'll be asking question after question of your students and of yourself, so much so that they will be crushed – crushed by the weight of your obscure methods. All you're perpetuating is a strange elitism of not-knowing. I've missed the student-centeredness in all of this, especially because – admit it – so many of your students don't even finish these studies.

And I worry that unless we watch ourselves more closely, we'll be fantasizing about perfectly sculpted online course designs with *your* words and words and words and little to no wiggle room for your students to shape things for themselves – like the one that took you almost two years to hand-in – and air-tight curricula and knowledge-stuffed graduates. So secure, so solid – or so you hope.

Oh no. I think it's your ghost again … melting into the air.

Alan Mandell

> *Certainly some do not at all think about this thing whether the one teaching them anything is knowing anything about that thing. Certainly not, they certainly are not at all thinking about this thing in any one regularly teaching them anything, very many who are being taught something, very many who have been taught something. When I asked something they did not answer that question, certainly they can teach some something, did they or did they not answer the question I asked, certainly not, certainly they did not answer that question, certainly they answered about a good many things, let me know if they answered my question, certainly they did not answer my question, the question I asked, and I will ask a question again, they will not answer the question I will ask them to answer.*
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> – Gertrude Stein, *The Making of Americans* (1925; U.S. edition, 1995, p. 768)

Dimensions of Meaning: Beads on a String, Steps on a Ladder, Candies in a Box and Images of Significance

Julia Penn Shaw, Center for Distance Learning

Communication with our students, as teachers and mentors, is a topic of compelling interest at Empire State College. Fortunately, we work in an environment where reflection upon mentor/student communication is encouraged and supported. One aspect of this support was my part-time reassignment for 2006 - 2007 with the Mentoring Institute to "continue research and writing" on my model for symbolic processing among adult learners. One commitment I made to myself and to Alan Mandell, as part of the reassignment opportunity, was to write an article for All About Mentoring *showing how knowledge of meaning-making styles enlightens our work as mentors and teachers. This article is written with that goal in mind. Thanks to Alan and Frieda Mendelsohn, also on reassignment, for their reviews of these ideas (for which I bear full responsibility).*

Understanding variations in the personal construction of meaning seems essential to understanding the dialogue between teacher and student called "learning." Meaning is the key to learning. It is operational – the body of the learner responds to and reconstructs the offered stimuli. In teaching, the goal is to map the educator's motivation to teach to the learner's motivation to learn. A correlate of this is that an activity declared to be "educational" may or may not be educational depending on its reception by its intended audience.

Studying individual differences, such as differences in styles, traits, personality, learning, cognition and other designators, is one way to investigate the magic of meaning. Knowledge of individual differences helps both the motivated educator and the motivated learner engage more effectively in learning by improving understanding about the learning process. Research on learning styles articulates differences that influence communication between learners and teachers.

Research on learning styles, for example, has provided several useful theories and assessment tools (with varying levels of supportive research). A few that are most common and well-established are: the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) (Elliot, K, 2006, Mupinga, *et al.,* 2006, Rimmerman, 2005); Gardner's Multiple Intelligences (Gardner, 1983); Kolb's learning styles (Kolb and Frye, 1975); neurolinguistic programming (Bandler and Grinder, 1979), and Knowles' andragogy (Knowles, 1984). The individual differences that I have chosen to study, however, are those related to meaning-making – starting points for our motivation to learn.

The question informing my research, therefore, is one that is not answered by current learning paradigms: How do learners actually construct meaning? Associated with this basic question are others: Are there identifiable differences in patterns for construction of meaning? Do personal meaning structures become more complex with age, education, and experience? Are there gender differences in the construction of meaning? Are some meaning structures more effective as the basis for building more complex systems than others? How does culture impact the construction of meaning? My research goal is to "see" the structures that adults use to organize their meaning – to make them visible. As a mentor and teacher at Empire State College Center for Distance Learning, primarily in the areas of human development and social science research, these broad questions become more focused: How can mutual meaning be enhanced between student and mentor? Are there identifiable differences in the patterns that learners use to construct meaning that impact their success at Empire State College? Is the complexity of personal meaning structures measurably greater as a result of one's experience as an adult student here? Are there gender differences in construction of meaning of which we should be aware?

Results in a Nutshell

My research on the construction of reflective/personal symbol systems composed of single abstract symbols (patent pending) (Shaw, 1996, 2002) addresses all but the last question on cultural differences. My research has been with educated, reflective, and socially concerned adults – a population representative of mentors and tutors here. Knowledge about these individuals is helpful because they have attributes that many of our students seek. It is from the perspective of the characteristics of successful learners that this article is written.

My research showed that there is a hierarchy of levels of meaning constructed by this population. To simplify this discussion, the following concepts will be used:

- **Meaning unit** – a single abstract symbol (Fischer, 1980) constructed by a reader from a narrative symbol in a story. It is the basic building block for constructing personal meaning structures.

- **Meaning dimension** – this population uses its 10 meaning units (narrative symbols from the story) to create one or more of four basic meaning patterns: sequences, rankings, partitions, and gestalt images.

- **Personal meaning structure** – a personal symbol system that an individual identifies as personally meaningful. It can be as simple as a collection of individual meaning units or as complex as a structure integrating multiple meaning dimensions.

- **Construction of personal meaning structure** – the process of generating meaning units from narrative symbols and using them to create a personal meaning structure.

- **Meaning-making style** – one's preferred process for constructing a personal meaning structure, based on the preferred meaning dimension/s. For example, most people construct personal meaning structures with the meaning dimensions of narrative or partition as their basis.

The research process is simple, but novel. More than 400 educated, middle class, largely Anglo-American adolescents and adult participants, ages 10 to 84, engaged in an individual or small-group audio-taped interview. First, each participant read a fourth grade-level picture book, *Encounter,* by Jane Yolen (1992). Each was asked to find 10 narrative symbols from the story (the units used as the basis for construction of personal meaning structures) using this definition: *"a narrative symbol is an entity in the story which is important from a perspective in the story because it represents something important from that point of view."* Then each put a narrative symbol/meaning on a separate index card, explaining the meaning to the interviewer. When asked to arrange the separate cards "in a personally meaningful way," they do so, explaining to the interviewer (and themselves in the process) why this arrangement is personally meaningful.

Research results indicate that participants, using their meaning units as building blocks to generate personal meaning structures, generated four basic dimensions that they used to construct meaning: 1) narrative or progression; 2) value ranking; 3) partition based on attributes; and 4) a thematic image (p = < .001).

The title of this paper, Dimensions of Meaning: Beads on a String, Steps on a Ladder, Candies in a Box, or Images of Significance, provides mnemonics for the four meaning dimensions that participants used to organize personal meaning structures: beads on a string (narration or sequence of progression), steps on a ladder (hierarchy), candies in a box (partition), and scenes of significance (gestalt image). What

is the relationship between the meaning units and the meaning dimensions they form as the basis for personal meaning structures? A description of the four meaning dimensions is given below:

- **Beads on a string** represent a sequential dimension of progression (**Narrative).** The progression may be a story or a logical sequence. It may be personal or related to an external stimulus, but in the dimension, the relationships between the meaning units create a path of meaning. Each meaning unit is an action leading to change (Propp's functions, Propp, 1968). This dimension is linear.

- **Steps on a ladder** represent another distinct meaning dimension, the hierarchy (**Ranking**). This dimension is not related to chronology but to differences in value. The values may be personal, perhaps based on emotions, or they may be related to a standard, such as amount of money associated with different actions. Each meaning unit in a ranking represents a response to relative value, such as positive to negative, hot to cold or, most valued to least valued. This dimension also is linear.

- **Candies in a box** represent the meaning dimension of **Partition,** which draws distinctions of meaning among different groups. The meanings may be personal, such as different responses to events, or conventional, such as different cultural groups. A characteristic of a partition is that, given the categories, no one meaning unit belongs in more than one group. Each meaning unit shares attributes with other symbols in its group and each group is distinct. For example, the candies are chewy, nutty, or soft-center. No candy could belong to more than one group in the box, and the box represents the partition (types of candy). This dimension is spatial.

- **Scenes of significance** represent a meaning dimension of an **Image,** which builds a picture or theme from the meaning units, as if they were building blocks. A simple scene for this study is a bird with dangerous pointed teeth, which represented the theme of

impending doom in the story used. This meaning dimension is different from the others because it is the total image that has meaning – not attributes of the individual meaning units. Each meaning unit is reduced to a spot on an image canvas. For example, the same meaning unit could as easily represent the head or the foot of the bird in the image. This dimension also is spatial.

In each of these meaning dimensions, a different attribute of a meaning unit is salient, while other attributes are suppressed or ignored. Thus, for beads on a string, the salient aspect of the meaning unit is its part in a logical progression. For steps on a ladder, the salient aspect of the meaning unit is its value according to a standard of measure or feeling; for candies in a box the salient aspect of the meaning unit is what identifies it as part of a distinct group; and for scenes of significance, the salient aspect of a meaning unit is the part it plays in the construction of a gestalt image. Each of these meaning dimensions, string, ladder, box or image, is a distinct way to organize personal meaning, and each of us has a preference for one as the basis for constructing personal meaning structures.

Four different people could select the same meaning unit, such as the sword, for example, but use it in a different meaning dimension. For one person, the sword would represent an action in a story; for another a step in a value system, for another, a part of a category in a partition, and for another, a building block for a thematic image. For older educated adults, the sword could be part of a complex personal meaning structure composed of a story, a partition, and a ranking, therefore, simultaneously representing attributes from all of those meaning dimensions.

Age Differences

Younger learners (teens and 20s) more frequently use these four meaning dimensions in isolation (a simple progression, a simple partition, a simple hierarchy or a simple image). Using their favorite meaning-making dimension as the basis of the construction, older learners (ages 50 and beyond) typically combine the four dimensions, whether implicitly or

explicitly, into much more complex personal meaning structures involving narratives with partitions embedded within an image of thematic personal importance (p < .001) (Shaw, 2002). Although older participants can easily create the simpler personal meaning structures of younger participants, they are reluctant to do so, because simpler constructions no longer capture their personal meaning. Inversely, younger participants are not able to meaningfully construct more complex personal meaning structures – even when exposed to examples generated by others – because this requires the capacity to embody the organization of meaning in much more complex ways, which they have not yet mastered.

What Keeps Different Meaning Structures Separate Within One Person?

Every learner has a favored style for constructing personal meaning structures, and as each form of meaning requires somewhat of a flip in orientation from another, it matters to learners whether educational experiences are presented in a way that enables them to assimilate them into their preferred meaning dimension for constructing personal structures. When the educational experience is in sync with their meaning-making style, there is a flow. This flow especially matters to learners for whom prior learning experiences have been traumatic (Johnson and Taylor, 2006).

Implicit within this discussion is that an individual does not automatically integrate his/her different meaning dimensions with each other: one's personal narrative, personal partition, personal gestalt image, and personal value ranking may not be "in touch" with each other. A common division is for the personal narrative to emerge from personal experiences (diachronically), particularly those related to success or failure in overcoming obstacles, but for categories about the self to be a view of expectations of others (synchronically). Therefore, one's personal narrative may not be in sync with one's personal ranking (one may not be as valued as he or she would like). My observations are that these distinctions within the self vary with age, stress level, and trauma experiences.

Why Do We Care?

What difference does it make, to us as educators, that we each have our own favored meaning-making style, and that our students do as well? What is the impact on learning when a learner constructs different aspects of knowledge about herself in different meaning dimensions that do not yet work together in the psyche? What difference does it make that many people, as they age, actually develop greater flexibility in their constructions of personal meaning structures?

> *What difference does it make that many people, as they age, actually develop greater flexibility in their constructions of personal meaning structures?*

The rest of this paper will be devoted to articulating how knowledge of meaning-making styles for construction of personal meaning structures could influence our teaching and mentoring with adult learners. That is, how do meaning-making style preferences potentially impact our relationships with our students (and, of course, with each other and also with ourselves)? Different meaning-making styles are characteristic of different genders (females are more likely to be narrators than are males, while males are more likely to be partitioners than are females). Different meaning-making styles also are characteristic of different age groups, with older learners usually having a greater capability to integrate different dimensions into one personal meaning structure. Different meaning-making styles are characteristic of different approaches to the disciplines (hermeneutic versus positivistic, for example) and also are characteristic of different cultures (oral narrative cultures versus categorical cultures).

First, a meaning-making style integrates meaning from the internal *and* external representations of the self: it is a bridge. One's most comfortable meaning dimension is a well-worn path for known issues and also a path for seeking closure on an unresolved gnawing issue. The relaxation that is frequently visible (and audible in the interview tapes) as someone constructs a personal meaning structure appears to be associated with the connection of internal sensations with an external manifestation of something meaningful. Each meaning-making style achieves this relaxed state differently. A Narrator "talks something out" to reach a personal consensus between internal and external dialogue. A Partitioner creates more and more complex partitions, and tries different arrangements of meaning, to get at an arrangement that helps to solve a problem. Once a Valuer has a comfortable rank within a constructed hierarchy, he or she can act based on that knowledge. And once an Imager gets an image/metaphor/theme that relates internal reflections to external reality, she or he reaches a meaning-making plateau from which to view the world. Someone who constructs complex personal meaning structures, involving multiple meaning dimensions, will not relax until they have integrated them all (for example, a narrative with partitions representing an image). Examples of personal meaning structures (symbol sort, patent pending) show variations in meaning-making styles.

Second, a personal meaning structure highlights certain aspects of reality and downplays others. A Narrator will not be as comfortable with power issues as a Valuer, because the value component of meaning in the narrator's world is subsumed within the story; in fact, the endpoint of a story may be to rearrange power relationships. An Imager will not even register details of a story or partition as meaningful unless the details provide an avenue for better understanding his/her theme. A Partitioner will use the stories or themes of others to help build his meaningful categories, negotiating partitions introduced by others. If someone constructs her world as a narrative, then rankings, group identities (partitions) and theme/image will be subsumed within the narrative.

Third, higher anxiety leads to greater dominance of the person's primary meaning-making style. The good news is that a well-developed meaning-making style can be used as a tool to create new meanings. The bad news is that it can erect blinders, which prevent the consideration of the many varied aspects of meaning (units). For example, if a Narrator has a pent-up story, as many of our new students do, then the perceived role of the companion (mentor) from the perspective of the student is to be a listener. The narrator constructs herself as the hero in her personal myth (Campbell, 1990). Comments and suggestions may be seen as interruptions. Changing the direction or content of the student's personal story in small ways, from the mentor as audience, may be the first step in the mentor/student relationship.

Fourth, our meaning-making styles influence every aspect of our communication. For example, they influence both the mode and content of conversation. Narrators suffer when another person interrupts them before they have chosen to stop talking. An interruption to the narrator (perhaps a request to speed up) is an interruption to closure on an issue. Likewise, Partitioners suffer when interrupted (perhaps a request to slow down and explain something) because that interruption also prevents their meaningful closure. The concept of dialogue takes on a new meaning when seen through the lens of meaning-making styles. What is, in commonsense parlance, conceived of as a back and forth exchange, becomes something quite a bit more complex – and possibly more enlightening – when seen through the multiple lenses of meaning-making styles.

Fifth, the integration of meaning dimensions takes energy and must be motivated – motivated by love (integrating the needs of a newborn into a formerly carefree life), by respect (considering unfamiliar conceptual frameworks introduced by a mentor), or by personal success (developing more successful tools to handle existing or new situations).

One example of increasing personal success comes to mind. A person who was trying to break out of a pattern of dominating conversations with personal narratives, discovered that he could talk less if he thought about saving his narrative examples for points in a conversation (determined by some categorical analysis) where they would have the most impact – for example, reinforcing a point made at an earlier time. This enabled him to continue to have a strong influence in a group discussion, but to speak less.

When individuals have different meaning-making styles, the differences can impede communication and cause confusion. For example, there can be different meanings within one style (stories that have different endings), different meaning constructs across styles (the same meaning unit being interpreted in very different ways), and different levels of complexity (where one worldview is much broader than another).

We can see how dimensions for construction of meaning influence some activities that we as mentors and teachers care about deeply.

Credit by Evaluation of Prior Learning

We encourage our students to consider whether their life experiences have provided them with a college-level understanding of a particular subject. This sounds straightforward until we consider it from the perspective of construction of meaning. Consider the example of Sally, a mother of three children, age 33, who wants to translate her experience in child-raising into college credits for early childhood development. She is likely to organize her experience as a personal narrative about the developmental progression of each child, and about her growing knowledge of children as she became more experienced as a parent. This progression is highly imbued with personal value. It also is embodied as actions that she and her children experienced together.

College-level credit in this field, however, requires Sally to access and make use of her personal experience, and also requires her to find categories in which to place her experiences as different types of development, such as language, motor control, social and cognitive development. To gain college-level credit for her prior experience in this area, Sally must integrate her personal narrative experiences as a parent with the professional categories used in the discipline. This means that she must simultaneously represent her experiences both as personal progressions taken by her and her children, and also reorganize her narrative flexibly in the unfamiliar categories used in academia. She must restructure her personal experiences by breaking them up into pieces so they fit into categories. Pieces of her personal narrative may become examples of the new concepts she is learning, such as language development, social development, etc. Her mentor can help her with this challenge by first helping her clearly understand her experiences as she has lived them, allowing that story to be the foundation for the developmental categories she next begins to embody. Rushing her to learn the categories of development at the expense of her personal story may not strengthen her learning, but rather may undercut its foundation, causing multiple dimensions of meaning to become confused.

Because the process is new, Sally is likely to need help from her mentor through conversations and exercises that help her create a bridge between her old meaning structure of personal narrative and the new meaning structure of academic categories.

Most students at Sally's age of 33 (and usually at younger ages with nontraumatized students), are able to integrate their personal narratives with academic categories, because they have the developmental maturity to do this. Sally may have to work at rethinking her personal experiences in new ways and re-embodying those experiences in these new categories. Because the process is new, Sally is likely to need help from her mentor through conversations and exercises that help her create a bridge between her old meaning structure of personal narrative and the new meaning structure of academic

categories. If Sally is not able to do this, she may struggle with college-level work. If she cannot relate her more established narrative dimension for meaning with the newly imposed categorical dimensions, then her college experience may be so confusing that she cannot reflect upon it nor build upon it.

Educational Planning

An expectation frequently used for educational planning at the Center for Distance Learning – to integrate one's personal, academic, and professional goals – is actually closely geared to the increase in complexity of personal meaning structures of adults in adult learning situations. For many students, the personal, professional and academic aspects of their identities are stored in different meaning dimensions. The story of Mary is not atypical. At the beginning of Educational Planning, her view of her desired profession, psychology, was not integrated with a realistic assessment of her academic skills. She announced that she wanted to be a psychologist, putting statistics and experimental psychology into her degree plan without having the prerequisites for either. She was creating a plan that included studies beyond her current success level. From my perspective, her planning was not grounded in her prior personal experience – her personal narrative. She needed to create a personal auxiliary narrative for a sequence of learning in each of the categories of learning required for psychology: for example, she needed to "see" herself enacting the steps to succeed in statistics. She was not yet able to do this.

Then, one day, Mary mentioned that she was concerned that her son in the 12th grade was not thinking realistically about college. "It just doesn't seem real to him," she said. I used her comment as an opening for her to think about what her son would be doing if he were taking Educational Planning now – to think about her son being in her shoes – to think about her son taking statistics. In this way, seeing Educational Planning through his eyes, she saw that she was not being realistic about her own plan. As a result of this realization, she began to connect her personal story with her academic plans. Without my having to tell her, as she saw herself going through the necessary learning sequences in statistics, she

saw that she needed to get more grounded in her plans. She began to ask what the studies would be like, imagining herself in the online courses and thinking about how she could get help with statistics so she would succeed in the class (now a strong desire!). Connecting each study that she had in mind for her academic success (such as statistics) with a personal story vignette (an auxiliary story subsumed within her personal narrative of her engaging in that learning), was a factor in her engaging seriously and successfully in educational planning.

A reversal of this situation happened with Frank, who underestimated his ability to succeed in school. Although his confidence in himself was impaired, his confidence in his daughter, who was just accepted into a prestigious school, was great: He was sure she could do anything she took on. When Frank, with his mentor's help, began to connect academic expectations for himself with those he had for his daughter (her abilities didn't come from thin air), he was able to create a new personal narrative based on higher expectations for his academic success. He told his mentor a story about his daughter, saying that she was able to succeed by working hard, paying attention, and being optimistic. He then laughed a little when he saw that he, too, had these personal attributes to help him succeed in school.

Independent Study and the Integration of Meaning Dimensions

There is an academic cost when students are "one-dimensional" in their meaning-making, and also in having too narrow a scope in their meaning-making style. Being an independent learner requires, at some point, integrating multiple aspects of one's identity within oneself, and also placing one's self within a larger sphere. This manifests itself in different ways in different academic environments.

 Using citations as an example of academic behavior influenced by dimensions in meaning-making, I have seen at least two types of limitations, which are gender-related. The first is by women students who prize their personal narratives at the expense of a broader audience. Perhaps they are just becoming acquainted with their own "voices" and sorting out their own personal

story with respect to their degree. The step beyond this – which is to put their personal narrative in a broader academic context – is one that they have not yet addressed (a challenge for the mentor). This student exhibits connection to the warmth of her past story at the expense of the cognitive clarity of seeing her story among other stories.

Valuing research and a canon of opinion on a subject reflects the student's ability to put her personal story into a larger context. For example, a student's understanding of the need for correct citations and references in an essay requires a view of one's personal story within the larger time/space frames: 1) the student understands the place of her personal opinion within the larger sphere of discourse on the subject (her personal narrative fits into a larger narrative of academic discourse); 2) she values her experience in light of reviewed research (her personal story can be *heard* within the larger narrative of academic discourse); 3) she recognizes that she might later refer to this essay (her personal narrative places her schooling in the larger context of her professional future); and 4) that her work might be viewed as a serious contribution to the field at some point in time (she may actually be the hero that she envisions herself to be).

The second limitation is frequently characteristic of males (at least in my experience in the social sciences). A man may have a well-developed public voice, learn quickly to properly cite the most honored references, but does not tap into his personal narrative as a source of information on a topic. He may be comfortable putting people into distinct categories (such as "normal" and "abnormal") at the expense of the personal narratives of individuals. This student exhibits cognitive clarity at the expense of connection to his personal story that might have led him to take this course.

Perhaps one reason I like human development as a subject matter is that the most effective learners in the field (whether identified as students or teachers) tap into both their personal stories and the broader categorical and value-laden hierarchies in a world view – both personal intuition and objective science. This deeper capacity to integrate meaning about the self with

meaning beyond the self (which in other contexts I call "empathic reflection," Shaw, 2002), characterizes many successful theory-builders in psychology and beyond, including Darwin, Freud, Erikson, Piaget, Montessori, Ainsworth and Vygotsky. Cognitive clarity (manifested in academic categories) and human empathy (manifested in one's personal story) can be brought together and effective tutoring can assist the process. But this is a complex process, and one that demands we be attentive to the meaning-making styles upon which a particular student relies.

Conclusions

Perhaps you can see from the examples given here, that a student who has not yet developed one strong meaning dimension for personal meaning structures (that is, does not have a distinct meaning-making style) will have difficulty keeping conceptual frameworks clear: the student has no firm meaning dimension to use as a foundation for learning. Or, a more positive but still possibly problematic limitation, is that the student has one and only one firm meaning dimension from which to work. I say "possibly problematic" because a student may be attracted to a field that requires strength in the meaning dimension in which he or she has confidence; that is, it would only be in other fields that either another meaning dimension, or the integration of multiple meaning dimensions, would be required.

As I view my research in the context of mentoring and teaching at Empire State College, I surmise that the mentoring relationship has a built-in potential to help students both develop their existing meaning dimensions to be used as secure foundations for college-level learning, and to help them integrate their different meaning dimensions, which formerly may have been disconnected within them. The integration of meaning dimensions maps to Erik Erikson's lifelong psycho-social stages of development, supporting the premise that integration of meaning dimensions into more complex personal meaning structures is an indication of maturity in adult reflection – a concept that I call "personal wisdom."

Is this developmental perspective about the construction of meaning helpful in teaching adult learners? Yes, in that it gives a foundation for successful adult learning practices, leading to new directions in adult learning. Is it necessary to be aware of it at our institution? No, in that the cases I have cited, practices already exist at Empire State College that fit with this model. The theory about construction of meaning presented here is not necessary in teaching adult learners, any more than a theoretical knowledge of physics is required to throw a fast ball. In both situations, however, knowing the underlying theory can improve performance.

No claim is made that the construction of personal meaning structures is the only important way to understand how adult students adjust to their adult learning experiences, but I find that my knowledge of these four dimensions used in our culture for constructing personal meaning structures helps me better serve students. Erikson believed that we have a natural desire over a lifetime to integrate our modes of understanding, with the alternative being despair. It is my belief that adult learning helps students integrate their possibly disparate meaning dimensions, thereby integrating meaning in their lives in powerful ways. I surmise that the integration of our dimensions for construction of meaning across the adult lifespan addresses adult "zones of proximal development" (Vygotsky, 1978).

Based on my own experience, I believe that our commitment to our adult learners also helps us to integrate our own meaning structures more effectively. That is one reason why working with adult students can be so rewarding. Students contribute to our "zone of proximal development" with respect to integrating our personal meaning structures, while we contribute to theirs.

It has required much reflection on my part to think about how personal meaning structures work within our mentoring environment, but doing so has enriched and enhanced my experience with adult students. Many successful practices at Empire State College have intuitively responded to these natural dimensions for meaning, giving us a head start on thinking about how they fit with our college culture: the focus in CDL Planning and Finalizing on helping the student integrate their personal, academic, and professional goals is a perfect example of this, as is the opportunity to integrate prior experience into college-level credits.

Consciously and reflectively keeping meaning-making styles in mind as we look at the "academic skills" of students will enable us to serve our students better. Knowing that we, as mentors, have our own comfortable meaning dimensions that influence how we present and receive information, gives us useful insight into student/teacher interactions. Being attentive to dimensions for the construction of meaning gives us a tool for enhancing student enjoyment, student success, and student persistence.

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The core missions of higher education systems (to educate, to train, to undertake research and, in particular, to contribute to the sustainable development and improvement of society as a whole) should be preserved, reinforced and further expanded, namely to educate highly qualified graduates and responsible citizens and to provide opportunities (espaces ouverts) for higher learning and for learning throughout life. Moreover, higher education has acquired an unprecedented role in present-day society, as a vital component of cultural, social, economic and political development and as a pillar of endogenous capacity-building, the consolidation of human rights, sustainable development, democracy and peace, in a context of justice. It is the duty of higher education to ensure that the values and ideals of a culture of peace prevail.

– Summary of the World Declaration on Higher Education: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), 2005, item 2.

Retirement Thoughts

Deborah Kleese, Hudson Valley Center

Place has always mattered to me. It played a significant role in my decision to take early retirement. The pull of the boreal forests of northern Minnesota ultimately became so strong that I just had to be there. It wasn't easy to leave the Hudson Valley. It too has its own pull – of history and legend, and, of course, the river. My center, the Hudson Valley Center, shares this river with the Metropolitan Center and the Northeast Center, yet my center is defined, in name and in geography, by this river's presence. Each unit within our center draws students from river towns and from a somewhat different geography that is partially informed by the river's changing temperament as it flows through Ulster, Dutchess, Orange, Rockland, Putnam and Westchester Counties. The river creates commonalities, since six of the seven counties that are within reach of our various units touch the Hudson. There are other rivers that also unite parts of our center. Sullivan County, along with a part of Orange County, share the Delaware, and the Wallkill River flows through parts of Orange and Ulster. Yet, it is the Hudson that links our units, and to a large extent, our students.

Each unit within our center has its own feel, and our faculty and staff, to a great extent, understand our students in the context of where they come from. In the 20-some years that I spent with the college, I always thought about my center as a *gestalt* formed by the geography of its unique units. Throughout my time at the center, moves from place to place were significant milestones, often changing this center *gestalt*. When I think about my colleagues, I think about them being somewhere. The Highland Unit was the place to be in spring and summer, since a pond and wetlands stood out the back door. The New City Unit was a central location, the balancing point of the center. Hartsdale, on the east side of the Tappan Zee Bridge, allowed us to cross the Hudson at one of its most

Deborah Kleese – her place in the forest.

magnificent spots. And Middletown, of course, was home. This unit is the one I knew best, and I would like to spend some time, in reflecting back on my years with the college, in describing my perceptions of the Middletown Unit as place.

Mentors in this very dispersed college are often called upon to ignore place. I think that is a mistake. Not only does our being "in place" give us an important identity, over and over again, within New York state, but it unites us with our students in very real, concrete ways. Students have chosen this college because it is close to their homes and a part of their communities. Most of our centers reflect place in their names: Northeast Center, Central New York Center, Genesee Valley Center, Niagara Frontier Center, Long Island Center; even the Center for Distance Learning (CDL) conjures up visions of places far away and remote. We may be a decentralized college, but we are certainly not a displaced one. In my field, psychology, researchers in the specialty

area of environmental psychology have examined concepts such as "rootedness," "centeredness," and "place attachment." The research suggests that place influences self-identity and a feeling of belonging. We form mental maps that mark places of significance. I have already partly drawn for you my cognitive map of the college; it includes my units, with the features that distinguish them, such as the pond at Highland and the bridge to Hartsdale. It also includes Saratoga Springs, with the Union Avenue complex looming large on the map, along with several hotels and parks.

When I arrived at the college, the critical mass of Hudson Valley Center was in Rockland County, with its largest office in Nanuet, New York. Three other units were in operation: a unit in Ulster County, on the grounds of SUNY/New Paltz; a unit in Westchester County's White Plains, and a small outpost in Middletown, situated in Orange County. My office was in Middletown, on the campus of Orange

County Community College (OCCC). I was hired as a part-time mentor, to serve as a replacement for Miriam Tatzel while she was on maternity leave, and then to help the one full-time mentor at Middletown with rising enrollments at that location. We started out with one large office and a tiny, windowless one. We were in the Student Commons, a general purpose building that housed the bookstore, registrar, counseling center, and cafeteria. We established some lasting relationships with a few of the counselors, who often referred adult students with potentially lots of experiential knowledge to our program. A member of the counseling staff responsible for CLEP testing still remains a valuable contact, someone to whom we can refer our students when they have questions about the CLEP exams.

After a few years, we moved to larger quarters in the library. Student numbers were increasing, and part-time mentors were added. Our space was divided: two offices were located on one side of the library, and two other small offices were assigned to us across the hall. Being in the library had a number of advantages. We often taught students how to locate materials (this time was largely pre-Internet; the card catalogue was still the primary means of finding resources). We developed a good relationship with the reference librarian, who invited our students to his periodic workshops on how to research a topic. I should mention that our great relationships with the library staff came through a simple act initiated by former mentor and community organizer Rhoda Miller. She set up a coffee pot in our main room, and let all of the staff in the library know that we would supply the coffee pot, and that, if participants agreed to contribute to the coffee fund, we would start it in the morning and keep track of the supplies. There was a general policy that the person who finished the pot should refill it, and that, more or less, worked out. That simple gesture provided a lot of good will. Staff would come to our room on their breaks, and informal discussions ensued. We occasionally heard about a good tutor through these talks.

Probably the best good will toward the college was generated by Rosemary Kearns,

our unit secretary. Rosemary is a fantastic baker, and we were often recipients of her largesse. On the days that Rosemary supplemented our coffee with her baked goods, people flocked to our main office. She inspired the rest of us to bake, or, if not up to that challenge, to at least contribute food occasionally as well. We felt very accepted by the library staff; they had made us a part of their community, and we reciprocated in kind. Students from OCCC also noticed us. Many of them stopped in our offices to find out about us, and sometimes we saw them again at our Information Sessions. The library also had some good meeting rooms and classrooms; typically, we held our study groups and Information Sessions there.

We were always at the mercy of OCCC's space needs. Eventually, two events precipitated our move off campus. First, new programs housed in the library required our space, and second, OCCC was expanding to a building off campus, both to meet its own expanding space needs and to provide a presence in downtown Middletown. Like many small cities within New York state, Middletown's downtown was suffering from the building of malls and other strip developments on the outskirts. A once vibrant downtown was now showing empty storefronts as the commercial center shifted. OCCC leased a large, newly renovated building, and Empire State College and SUNY/New Paltz's extension programs were asked to share the upstairs space. The new setting had interesting outcomes. Not only were we physically separated from OCCC, but we were now closer to staff from SUNY/New Paltz. That physical dynamic was mirrored in a psychological dynamic as well. Through propinquity, we established a close working relationship with New Paltz. While separate, and sometimes competing institutions for local students, we managed to help each other more often than not, and we realized that we both shared the SUNY mantle.

For the first time, the Middletown Unit had ample space. We had moved less than a mile from the main campus, yet the shift in location brought with it many changes. When we were on campus, many OCCC students would stop in for information; they were curious about us, and often times

counselors would refer students to our program. When we moved downtown, it seemed as if we added an additional group that was interested in what we had to offer: an older population of working adults, and other residents in the neighborhood. There was an entirely different feel to being right smack in the middle of downtown. There were many restaurants and stores within walking distance of the unit. The Middletown public library was across the parking lot; their building was a lovely Arts and Crafts renovation that added vibrancy to the area. Many of our students were residents of Middletown, and used the large interlibrary loan system available through the library to locate books. By now, the old VAX system was up and operating, but the online offerings were still limited. Students were still relying on local public and college libraries for many of their materials. We stayed there until our lease expired, and then moved once again, along with the New Paltz program. The move took us back closer to OCCC's main campus, but still only a few blocks away from the downtown. We moved into a one-story building right on a busy street, with a big sign and lots of visibility. We were a little further from the restaurants, but right next door to the post office.

Over the years, Orange County was changing; it was becoming one of the fastest growing counties in New York, as the commuting radius from Manhattan continued to spread north and west. Not only were we drawing students from Orange County, but Sullivan County residents also were a major student pool. Sullivan students often traveled an hour and a half to reach us. For a short period of time, we had a small office on the grounds of Sullivan County Community College, but resources were stretched too thin, and the decision was made to discontinue a part-time presence there. That was a tough decision, since, as a county without a four-year college, and with the closest other four-year SUNY campus in Binghamton, this county had a high need for Empire State College's program. Middletown's name is appropriate; it sits in the central part of Orange County, with roadways easily connecting it to our other units. Students typically work as far away as New York City, although many

work within the county. As mentioned, students working and living in Sullivan County also come to the unit.

Issues facing the county, such as rising real estate costs and taxes, and increasing traffic on the major roadways, are issues we share with our students. Cars, not public transportation, are the means of travel in the county, so our students spend a great deal of time chauffeuring children to events. Our schedules work around the constraints of commuting and taxiing children. As residents of the county, we have experienced the same demands. We live in their towns; we have or have had children in the same school districts. We shop at the same stores. These dynamics are not unique to Middletown; they occur in every center of our college. The importance of place is persistent for our students. They are generally not passing through, as dorm or town residents for a four-year period. They are here, as we are. Our units become part of our students' cognitive maps, the mental representation of locations of value.

There has been a push, of late, for uniformity, and for consistency across the college. I think that we do not need to confuse uniformity of services with uniformity of place. New York state is a wonderfully diverse landscape of people and places. These unique areas give meaning to our lives and to the lives of our students.

Our locations become landmarks of importance on a larger map, one including other features, such as home, school, stores, and community. The unit may triangulate between job and house, or house and soccer field, and it may very well matter that it is reachable within thirty minutes' time, or within the space of a lunch hour. We may find ourselves spending more time communicating with our students within the cyberspace of phone or computer, but our physical presence somewhere on the map still matters.

These diverse places where we serve students are important features of the college. Empire State College is more of a college of place than any other college within the State University of New York. We may not be defined by one big location, but we do exactly what the other SUNY campuses do; we draw students from a wide geographic area of New York state. The college "knows" New York state in a far more intense and intimate way than any of our sister institutions, public or private, precisely because of our presence throughout the state.

So far, I have been addressing my cognitive map of one unit within the Hudson Valley Center, with some generalization to the other place-bound centers. What about the Center for Distance Learning? They do have a place, if one considers the offices

in Saratoga Springs, but that is not the main location. Largely through the efforts of CDL, Empire State College attracts out-of-state and international students, comparable to the large campus-based colleges and universities within SUNY, and it does so very much by being "in place." One of those places is cyberspace, a place that more and more is developing its own geography and topography. One only has to spend some time in Second Life to witness the sheer physicality of the virtual world. People entering Second Life not only take on new identities, but take on new locations. Property in Second Life is valuable and meaningful as well. It would not surprise me, in the future, to see Empire State College setting up a location there, as other institutions have done. The power of place seems to be so strong that we create simulations in cyberspace as well.

Ironically, as someone so rooted in place, it is now CDL that is my home at Empire State College. Teaching an online psychology course keeps me connected to the college and dampens my feelings of homesickness (a word loaded with place meaning). When I log on to my course, I am not just floating free in cyberspace. I think about Saratoga Springs and the people and places there. And when I think about my old center, the people I worked with are imagined in place.

Photo by Deborah Kleese

Clash, Interplay and Interaction: Organizational Development at Empire State College

An Interview with Timothy Lehmann (Part II)

Richard Bonnabeau, Center for International Programs

What follows is the second part of an interview with Timothy Lehmann, who came to the college in 1973 as director of program evaluation in the Office of Research and retired in 2000 as mentor in the graduate program and director of the National Center on Adult Learning. The first part of this interview was included in All About Mentoring #32. *The interview (newly edited by Lehmann, Bonnabeau and Mandell) was conducted by Empire State College historian, Richard Bonnabeau on January 14, 1991, as a component of the Empire State College Oral History Project. Thanks again to Tim and Richard for their strong interest in helping us present this material in* All About Mentoring.

Bonnabeau: As you look back at the history of the college, in addition to your observation about the emergence of specific center cultures, what are some of the major themes that you see regarding organizational development?

Lehmann: I'm fascinated by and interested in organizational development, the cycle of an institution, the stages it goes through. So I think there are developmental periods in institutional life; and, of course, the beauty of this college is that we started from zero. That is, we really were a new institution. So you really do have a founding phase. Most of us who went somewhere else (like to Skidmore or SUNY Albany) were joining an ongoing institution. You're walking into something that's already in place. When you're starting out at an institution that has a founding phase, you have a founding president or a founding dean, a first generation of faculty, a second generation of faculty and so on. It's a very different kind of experience.

As I look at it, there are the ups and downs, the pushes and pulls, the focus between what is centralized, what is decentralized, what is common and what is okay to be diverse. The balance or shape of those tendencies can be explored within a context of the basic question: what does it take to found a college? Because you are bringing new people together in a new place, there is diversity and strongly held views among the founding folks about how best to get a new institution underway. So you're bringing that diversity together to try to form a college with a strong mission – a mission that people will agree upon. It takes time in order to hammer out that mission, even though Empire State College was fortunate to have a guiding prospectus and some direction set before 1971, and then to develop the other key concepts of the college and get those under the mission in a way that people could agree to.

Bonnabeau: And then, of course, there is the question: What happens once that founding phase is over?

Lehmann: If you look at the '70 - '71 period, the start of the college, the founding phase, up to '75 - '76, which is probably where you'd draw the line, the top administration is hiring the faculty and setting out where the college is going to go physically. The other critical part is the academic program. The mission of the college gets built-in in the '72 master plan, and in a '76 master plan. Empire State College went through its first hurdle of accreditation in '74. That event – preparation for and successfully achieving accreditation, helped greatly to bring the college together. It was a consolidation, a binding phase. And then you look at all the procedures and policies that get put into place, and I think there's a whole cluster of that activity that got cemented somewhere between '71 and about '76 or '77.

Bonnabeau: And then there was a great deal of development.

Lehmann: The college then entered a period of what organizational theorists talk about as the "growth phase." This was a rapid period of growth, or at least when you go back to the '72 master plan when Empire State College was projected to have 10,000 students by 1980. So the plan called for growth by 1,000 students a year. Empire State College ran into a major snag in 1976 with the state budget. Dramatic cutbacks occurred all over New York state and New York City, as well as the state picking up a substantial part of CUNY's budget. The projected growth of the college was, in effect, put on hold. In some ways the founding phase overlapped with the growth phase because we picked up steam in '73, '74, '75, We were growing by a 1,000 or more students a year.

Next, the college went into a period in the late '70s to early to mid-80s of institutionalization. That is a period where we really had to get the individualized billing system straightened out. We had to get our computer systems on line, functioning and doing the job. We had to focus on all the nuts and bolts of the place. We also were going through a period of creative leadership under Art Chickering as academic vice president when he was throwing out 50 ideas an hour. There was a joyous sense of trying to get things going, moving, and accomplished and so on. Then you needed somebody else like a Ron Corwin [the founding dean of the Long Island Center and then the college's executive vice president] to say, "Okay, we've got to stick with this idea for more than an hour. We've got to nail these things down. We've got to have a computer system that works. We've got to link this college together." Corwin and others knew that otherwise, the college would develop along very dispersed, diverse and individual ways. That's been interesting to me – interesting dynamically.

Bonnabeau: You mean the centrifugal, centripetal kind of forces working against one another?

Lehmann: Right. Or about a period of time when you want to say, "Okay, decentralization is fine. Let's go with that. We want centers; we want faculty; we want deans to develop, to reach out." And then there comes a point when there is too much growth. You've got to consolidate. You've got to institutionalize. You've got to get routines down in a way that stability can be restored. You can't run continually on excess energy in the founding phase. You know, we used to go to All College meetings that would go until midnight; people continued to talk. And so, you'd get the lifeblood of the college in many ways. It has always struck me that one of the characteristics of this place has been this total commitment. Erving Goffman wrote about this when he coined the term "total institutions." He did this in the context of a sociological analysis of prisons, insane asylums, military academies and other "total environments." There are certain social institutions in society in which you're a prisoner in their environment and their value system (e.g., a monastic order and the military academies) and you get totally committed to the mission. We're talking total commitment, working for the organization 100 hours a week. And when you're not there, when you're out raking leaves, you're still thinking about it.

Bonnabeau: Yes. That's Empire State College. Especially in those early years. There was an incredible pioneer spirit.

Lehmann: That's what required in a founding phase. People became totally committed to this new emerging enterprise. That's what commitment is about. Yes, there's only one model and that's the way we do it in Genesee Valley. No, but this is the way we do it, you know, somewhere else. And you can't do it another way. In order to drive one line of activity and think forward, you have to block off others. And then you have to consolidate and when that phase is over, you've got to rejuvenate or renew. Because, of course, if you've institutionalized too deeply, you shut off the vital blood of the organization. And so you've either got to bring in new people from the outside or undergo major reorganization from the inside.

It's interesting if you go back and look at the hiring process in this college. It's very revealing because, at the founding phase, everybody's from the outside. Then you get into a series of decisions that have to be made. For example, when does the college start promoting associate deans to deans? Or when do we start bringing people up that are good from inside. There is a real dynamism here that you have to protect and enhance. I didn't get any sense, sitting in Saratoga, that this was consciously picked up. When I would look at the patterns of this, you could see it in every center. There's a dynamic. I think it's related to these phases of development, which say, we want to bring in somebody from the outside because we've done the insider effort and now it's time to change by drawing upon ideas and strategies of outsiders.

Bonnabeau: When would that come, in the growth period or the institutionalization period? When do you stop bringing people from within and moving them up in the organization?

Lehmann: Obviously, you're bringing in everybody from the outside during the founding phase. Then you move into a promotion from within. That's the second step in that it coincides with the growth phase. Then after a consolidation period, or an institutionalization period, you want to get new initiatives and renewal. A lot people will argue at that point you need to bring people in from the outside.

Bonnabeau: So you think that was a natural evolution rather than something that was consciously planned following a paradigm of organizational development?

Lehmann: In a way, there's a natural history to innovative organizations. I think Jim Hall has been very concerned about keeping the college innovative. And in order to do that he's got to keep shuffling things up and that upsets a lot of the people. Just about the time when you think you've got things nailed down, then there's turbulence.

Bonnabeau: Can you think of examples of that?

Lehmann: I think there's been a shift in the locus of the development of the college. We were talking about the consolidation and institutionalization phase. I think we've been

at a crossroads since about the early 80s. We're trying to figure out how we're going to renew ourselves, reaffirm ourselves, or do something different. What's our next act besides the programs we've created? Now, the Center for Distance Learning (CDL) provides a wonderful opportunity, although in 1981 CDL was just getting started. It was nowhere near what it is in 1990.

> *I think we've been at a crossroads since about the early 80s. We're trying to figure out how we're going to renew ourselves, reaffirm ourselves, or do something different. What's our next act besides the programs we've created?*

There was an effort in the strategic planning processes to move the college in new directions. It started in the early '80s. The first one dealt with enrollments. Next came a focus on faculty and then new program developments. How can centers, how can faculties decide they're going to develop new things, e.g., the circulation management program in Rochester, or FORUM in Syracuse, or New York City's Arts in the City, or transforming the urban studies center into a new dimension of the Metropolitan Center? Well, a lot of energy got focused on some of those activities, but they never seemed to bear fruit in a very solid sense compared to Jim's more recent support of continuing education. It depends on the people that you've got, how fragmented their jobs are and other factors.

Bonnabeau: We're back to the centralized-decentralized tension.

Lehmann: Yes. Continuing Education, International Programs, the Center for Learning and Technology, and the National Center for Adult Learning seem to be efforts to try to reach out to do something different externally than something just based on the

successful workings of a regional center. Or consider the special purpose centers that also are successes. The Center for Distance Learning certainly is the dominant success here, and The Harry Van Arsdale Jr. Center for Labor Studies is a success to a lesser extent, and the Center for Graduate Programs is another success. In a sequence of things, the first generation was the individualized degree-granting model. The second generation was the special purpose centers. And then the third generation involves these other kinds of developments like continuing education. You plan and invest in five of those and maybe one turns out to be a success.

Bonnabeau: Why do you think that's happening? Is that something that evolves naturally out of our model, which, of course, is very flexible? Are we doing that consciously?

Lehmann: Yes, I think there is a conscious effort. I don't know what Jim [Hall] has going through his mind, but there is a conscious effort; e.g., the corporate initiative. We've talked about the idea of a corporate college. Centers were given the opportunity to reach out and establish ties to local corporations in their regions – our usual decentralized approach. I think that's another way to look at this. What do you throw out and what gets picked up? What you develop centrally or in the field depends on external support and local conditions and the right staff to be champions of new program initiatives.

Bonnabeau: Yes, that's right. When [Ernest] Boyer decided to create an alternative college, a nontraditional college, he believed fervently that SUNY Central should not run programs. That it was up to the State University campuses to do that. And I think he learned that from SUNY of the Air when he was running the central offices and it collapsed. It didn't get enough support. I guess you could say the same thing about Empire State College. The administration cannot run programs and expect them to survive. They really have to be seeded and then grow and develop under their own momentum with the right kinds of support initially. Would you say that's true?

Lehmann: I think that's true, but it depends on the scale of the program. That raises the

question about how you account for some of the differences?

Bonnabeau: Do you mean why some things fail and why others succeed?

> *The grapevine serves as a flow of tremendous information, not all negative, and that also serves as a way to bind people together around common things that transcend the immediate daily life at centers.*

Lehmann: No. That's another question I'm interested in. For example, the development faculty – the group that developed the "learning modules." That was an enormous centralized development that failed. The second one that came along in some ways was the Learning Resource Information Center. That was a cluster of people for whom an investment was made for a number of years, but we could never get our learning resource-act together. And then, of course, the British Open University was another piece of this. We bought many courses and Empire State College was going to be the headquarters for the U.S.A. market. And there was a lot of energy put into some of that. Now that's more of a success story than a failure as CDL has adapted some of those courses for our use.

Bonnabeau: That became a success when it was made part of an independent, faculty-based program separated from the central offices, so to speak, of the college.

Lehmann: The old office of Academic Development was a pusher or developer, but obviously programs have to be anchored in a meaningful faculty context, or else it's not going to work.

Bonnabeau: When you look at this theme, this tension between the forces of centralization that work toward creating a uniform culture within the college, as

opposed to separate collectivities (almost separate colleges) emerging around the state, you had to have some shared ground, some commonality in order to say you have an institution that has a common spirit or substance. What were the kinds of things that this college did in order to allow some kind of diversity but at the same time guarantee some kind of continuity or uniformity? Can you think of examples?

Lehmann: Yes. Because of our geographical spread, in the early days, as you know, we brought people together frequently. We had at least two All College meetings a year. In other words, it was one of the ways you bind people to a common culture or you get people talking to one another, besides sending paper back and forth among the centers. I think that was very important. It was not just the two, at least two, All College meetings a year, but there were a whole host of task forces. Again during the pioneering phase of organizational development, boundaries were very flexible. Although you had a center in Long Island, a center in Rochester, and headquarters in Saratoga, there was tremendous communication and networking involving faculty, staff and administrators across centers. There were face-to-face meetings that were very important in creating common values as people came together. Empire State College had lots of governance meetings in the early days, task forces on what the learning contract is going to be like, and on what we would do with the portfolio? Those kinds of groups were created alongside the governance structure. In addition, the Administrative Council met frequently and worked hard to resolve issues of development, program and direction.

Bonnabeau: Obviously this served as a way to build common values.

Lehmann: That's a whole cluster of very significant groups and meetings that serve a value-creating function. Once again, consensus emerges from that kind of thing. Another thing that strikes me as enormously important to this interaction, besides our commitment to the written word and the flow of things, is that the college runs on an oral history or oral network. For many colleges there is always a formal level of interaction and formal organization chart. You have committee reports and all this

kind of thing, but then there's always the informal communication that goes on. You'll have informal gatherings at a bar after a meeting, whatever. And in this college, and certainly in its early history, there's an enormous grapevine of links, contacts, communication and relationships that exist across center cultures. The grapevine serves as a flow of tremendous information, not all negative, and that also serves as a way to bind people together around common things that transcend the immediate daily life at centers.

I think another avenue for an interesting kind of the historical analysis of this college would be to study who hired whom. I think in early the days there were clusters of people – well this goes back to the early generations of the faculty and administrators – who were brought in and how did that kind of work its way out? And that gave a lot of shape to the character of the college in the first 10 years. We had talked a little bit earlier about Chickering. He was responsible for hiring a number of faculty who were familiar with nontraditional or innovative colleges like Goddard. People like Forrest Davis, George Drury, Denis Cowan and others. Chickering introduced the ideas of contract learning, recognition of individual differences, the need for portfolios to encompass the prior learning and experience of the adults, the individualized degree program plan, and in the early years, he focused our attention on developing a responsible academic program to build off of these ideas.

Bonnabeau: There were camps, weren't there?

Lehmann: Yes, there were camps. And I've tried to look at this beyond the personalities involved. Because I think that is limited in the sense of what the legacies for the college really are. The significance of some of these earlier debates is that they may have benefited the college. For example, I think the efforts of the development faculty, the concerns of Loren Baritz [provost for instructional resources and then the college's executive vice president], early on, as I understood them, concerns about quality, concerns about legitimacy, concerns about bringing the academic stars in to do something that could serve an external credibility function. And these efforts

protected the institution. It protected a new struggling institution from outside attacks by saying, "Look, you know, we've got Leslie Fiedler writing modules, we've got Doris Grumbach doing something else; we've got some big-name people here." That adds legitimacy to this struggling institution, which obviously hasn't got it, hasn't created it, hasn't earned it, hasn't done it on its own. And it also puts a real focus on a certain kind of quality and academic standards – a certain concern for content development in the program.

Now we both know that the module program was a disaster in terms of having it implemented at the center level. There was no strategy. This is a tricky question in a centralized/decentralized environment. Who comes up with a good idea? Where? How do you develop that? And then how do you get that into the lifeblood of the college? How do you introduce those things?

Bonnabeau: Not only "introduce," but how do you decide what direction to go in?

Lehmann: Chickering's ideas about individualization were appealing, but so were other arguments about more structured learning. So, for example, Empire State College established contact with the British Open University (BOU), which was founded in '69. There were early trips there, bringing back to the college the BOU model of development, strength in learning materials, strength in quality, strength in producing things that had credible scholarship behind it and so on.

At the same time, we were trying to keep this flexible to meet individualized needs from a learning contract perspective, from a portfolio idea, from an individualized degree program idea, from the perspective of narrative evaluations rather than letter grades. And the college also was really trying to come to grips with the "time" question. That's the place where SUNY won. We floundered around with time and couldn't separate out the credit unit and the question of time versus what the student is learning. You know, some argued, time is really less important. It's what you're learning. From a cost standpoint and so on, we get trapped into a time-bound framework. So what really got forged and debated, it seems to me, in the early

days of the college are two sets of ideas that sometimes got crisscrossed by the individuals articulating them at a particular juncture in the unfolding history of the college. There were the more structured, more formal, more traditional kinds of ideas about content, about quality, about what the student really needed to learn and could demonstrate as an outcome versus the process, the flexibility, the contract openness, the ability to change as the student went through the program, the importance of incorporating prior learning into the degree program. To me, it is this clash, this interplay, this interaction, which made an extremely powerful program – far more powerful than most of us, I think, realized.

Bonnabeau: So actually that was a very healthy situation, institutionally speaking. I mean you're arguing that having two people, Chickering and Baritz, two different camps with opposing ideas, opposing ideologies fighting to develop their own positions as central in the mission of Empire State College, was vital the college's growth.

Lehmann: That's right. And also bringing in a cadre of disciples. Each side recruited its advocates who also would articulate these values as deans, as associate deans, as faculty members of governance committees. There was some masterminding and planning for this, but by and large, a lot of it was just unfolded out of the process itself and the developing opportunities at the college.

Bonnabeau: There was some kind of dialectical process taking place.

Lehmann: I think do. I think you phrased it earlier pretty well. There were competing philosophies, competing ideas out here. It got, at times, personal, and at times it got maybe out of hand a bit and became taxing for some individuals. But, on balance, on the whole, and this was Jim's role, the college advanced and grew stronger from these competing interests. How much he really knew or how much of it just sort of happened, I do not know. But Jim's leadership here and the position that he occupied kept this balance, kept this dynamic going and kept it on a healthy enough plane so people wanted to stay here and continue to develop this unique institution. They

really didn't say, "Well that's it! I'm going to get a full professorship and I'm off to Louisiana or someplace." They didn't say that. They were really committed to this place or committed to what they didn't like about higher education elsewhere and wanted to see if they could make it work here. And because it was a freestanding and public institution, the place had tremendous advantages. I think the public story in this really needs to be told. That's a whole area that we have not talked about.

Bonnabeau: In what sense "public?"

Lehmann: Well, when you look at innovative institutions in this country, what do you think of? You think of Antioch, you think of Reed, you think of Swarthmore, you think of Goddard, you think of Bard. How many public institutions do you think of as innovative? Name me one, two, three. Now, you know, there are some, but they don't come to mind in the same way. When you think about private education as an ideology saying, "We're innovative. We're for academic freedom. We're for all these good kinds of liberal arts studies as well as high cost programs." But when you really look at, yes there is a Regents [now Excelsior] College, or yes, there is a Sagamon State, or yes there is a Santa Cruz. But there are only a handful of really dramatic instances, in my acquaintance with higher education, that show a public system spawning something like Empire State College, and a public institution being able to carry this out and build on the $20 million budget and to exist and grow long enough to have an impact on higher education as a whole. That's a key point.

The public dimension is particularly true in the east. If you look at the east in its 300 years of higher education development, the first 250 years of higher education have been private-dominated. Private institutions control, really, the flow of key graduates into the legislature, governorships, and the political structure of decision-making. This is where the history has been, especially with Massachusetts and to an extent, New York state. SUNY didn't even get formed until 1948. You had Columbia, New York University, and other private universities. So, to have an institution like this one be given the breathing space and the support and

have it protected by Rockefeller, by Boyer and others was a breath of fresh air.

Bonnabeau: In interviewing Boyer, one of the things that I asked him was why he established a separate campus of the State University to undertake a nontraditional program for the State of New York. Well, it was his fear that if it were part of any other existing campus, the tendency would be toward conservatism, going back to the traditional concept, however you were to define that. He believed that Empire State College really had to have its own institutional existence in order to survive. I think it was probably smart to realize that, because if you look, nontraditional programs that have been spawned at the state university level, or elsewhere that had been part of existing traditional programs, all had a quick death.

Lehmann: The likelihood of being washed out or minimized is high, unless they have a secure administrative leadership program and financial base. And even then, there are precarious moments in our history.

Bonnabeau: When I consider the dialectic that was occurring, for want of better words, between the Baritz camp and the Chickering camp, I see Jim in the middle, helping to sustain this tension in productive ways. Do you see the outcome of that dialectic as moving back, moving toward conservatism, or is it more or less an embellishment or fulfillment of the college's original charter?

Lehmann: Of course, some of this does depend on how one is defining "conservatism."

Bonnabeau: I think some people would argue that this college was founded on a broad educational charter, and that the loose constructionists among us might say, "We're fulfilling the constitutional mission of this enterprise." Some strict constructionists, possibly, in the Chickering camp might say: "Well, the college is becoming conservative. We're moving backwards. We're endangering the further progress of this institution, because we are moving toward structured learning. We're moving towards norm-referenced criteria to judge student performance rather than learner-referenced criteria. There's danger there. The individualized mode which is part of the spectrum of our educational mission is being diminished."

But, individualized learning really became the ethos and culture of the college. What has been unfolding and happening more recently is change in the center of gravity at the college.

Lehmann: Well, I think there's a lot to that in how I view the college and what I see from the data collected and what I hear over the years from an historical vantage point. Again, this goes back to what we were talking about an hour ago. If you look at the founding phase of the college, that period that coincided with the development of the individualized model of the regional learning center, there was no special group of more structured programs of any meaning at that time, except for those students who went off and cross-registered somewhere else. But, individualized learning really became the ethos and culture of the college. What has been unfolding and happening more recently is change in the center of gravity at the college. You know, we've been talking about the structure, but there are a lot of terms that can be used; for example, the flexible versus the more closed ways of approaching and looking at this. The growth areas have been in the more structured programs although it's been a struggle to get the resources to carry them out. And that seems to me to be an inevitable trend. We are in a sense shifting the direction of Empire State College under a closed resource-environment base. The value of the growth period in institutional development is the fact that you keep generating more resources. You cannot always do what you want, but you can take from here and give to there and adjudicate among competing claims on those resources in a much better way than under restricted and confined and now declining resources. In regard to the future, we are now in a whole new ball game, it seems to me. We have stabilized our enrollments the last two years and for the next couple of years, we are into an era of declining resources. So,

that's another way of explaining some of Jim's focus on continuing education and other approaches to get additional resources to support the program.

Bonnabeau: Can we also return to the question of structure?

Lehmann: That's one major division of the college that maybe has never been satisfactorily addressed. I've never felt that we've had the kind of discussion and forthright debate concerning the regional center model and these special purpose centers with a statewide mandate. I mean it's not easy to do. It's hard, it's personal, it's challenging, to say: "All right, what do we really want to do here with the graduate program or CDL? And what does that mean for the regional centers?" Now we're going to have an overlay of jurisdictions, but what are we talking about in terms of resources and what are we talking about in terms of goals? And how are we going to bring that about without either continuing to treat developments as if they didn't exist when in fact they do exist, or to put more resources and more staff into CDL without deciding how large CDL can be? We need to get beyond where one dean at one center can say, "I'm not going to have anything to do with CDL courses and another dean saying I'm going to have 50 percent of my faculty using CDL courses." You know, we do have that kind of situation. So that's bizarre in the sense of the academic policy part of the discussion.

I think there's another major piece here that takes on a different slant on conservatism. That is how, over the years, we've tightened up our policy and procedures documents. I think we have slowly moved away from some of the key principles that some people have held critical. I identify with the pioneer generation, so it is the pioneers looking back saying, "Some things have gotten lost here that shouldn't have been lost." But I think real focus on student-centered, learner-centered education, and what that really means as a philosophical anchor point, can have a constructive purpose just as much as an individualized one.

That has been tarnished or has been watered down. For example, we got rid of sections 3A and 3B on the degree program document for all kinds of reasons – big faculty fights and so on. But how do we identify what the student's goals are in his program? Where do we record these? What does this mean? How do we publicly acknowledge this? I think we've got much more rigid in our whole assessment process. And we've moved, for some good reasons earlier, to tighten up our process. The State Education Department wanted to question our work in this area. We have to be careful. For example, if you ask supervisors to evaluate students for credit, you may jeopardize objective evaluations to some extent. But this has been going on for more than eight years with the overall result in smaller numbers of credit for prior learning being awarded. This is but one example from many where institutional constrictions on the academic program reduce flexibility and innovation. So I think rather than saying, "hold it," we've still got to say: "We want to experiment. We want to innovate. We want to try out something different, something new. Let's experiment. It may not work. Nine out of 10 experiments don't work, but we've got to be doing more in this area."

Bonnabeau: The history of the Catholic Church roughly paralleled the phases that you identified, including that first stage where the Church consumed the totality of a person – total commitment. Then the Church went into a growth phase, and then into the institutional phase during which time it developed a theology. The Church's response to the kind of calcification that occurred as a result of that institutionalization, which took enormous periods of time, was to allow the rise of monastic movements that would revitalize the faith – returning to the spiritual core of Christianity and carrying the Gospel to the far reaches of the world. Are you saying, in a sense, that perhaps Empire State College needs to think about that – to sustain that early spirit, that faith, that creed?

Lehmann: And reaffirm it or reinvigorate it. It may take off in a little bit of a new direction. But I think we need that kind of infusion throughout the leadership. Not only just by President Hall, in a hierarchical sense, but it has got to come from a lot of different directions. I hear and I see the faculty at various centers that have never been a part of this kind of discussion. What are the critical things? Probably the Catholic Church has a much better handle on this.

What's the "training book" for Empire State College? Well, it's on-the-job by the seat of your pants. You know, you can plug into your informal grapevine. You can try to figure out as best you can what the hell's going on. But that's not a training program. I don't think we do enough. I only work with a handful of students every so often. I don't know what it's like to be in your position as an academic, but my sense from the outside is: I don't think we do anywhere enough talking about, what are you doing with a student? What is this student learning? How do we know? The story of this college is what faculty and students do. Now when do we talk about this? What happens? Now that's what's exciting.

Bonnabeau: Now we had that kind of conversation with the Center for Individualized Education (CIE). It was an effort, in a sense, to create a college culture. We did look at some of those educational questions very closely, for example, the psychological dynamics of the adult learner. We looked at things like the degree program planning, assessment, contract learning. The center brought faculty from all over the college together, statewide and regionally, to do that. But we have lost that center.

Lehmann: How often does CDL faculty get to tell a story of what it's like to work with a student? I'm talking about rich case-study detail. For example, having the opportunity to have an exchange with a mentor in Rochester and say, "Okay, I want to come to Rochester and I want to lay out on the table and explain what a good, interesting degree program a student did and bring the student in." And they do the same thing with one of their students. I mean it's that kind of fertilization we need to enliven the program because we do operate on the basis of the informal grapevine view of things which are full of myths about what's done "there" is not as good as what's done "here." Part of that comes out of a center culture that says, "We're a better center in this college than you are. We won't listen to you." In this sense, we've spent a lot of time building up this center culture as seen from the inside rather than cutting across and sharing the cultures as a whole college. It seems to me that we've got to find ways to do that.

The Summer of 2006, Our Mentors in Lebanon: Risk as Reality

Betty Lawrence, Xenia Coulter, Evelyn Williams, Carol Yeager, International Programs

What follows is an edited transcript of a panel presented at the All Areas of Study Meeting 2006, in which four of our colleagues associated with the Empire State College program in Lebanon reflected on three interrelated questions: How does one work with students who live lives of risk? What are the risks of teaching students of and in other cultures? And, how does the experience of mentoring being in a situation-of-risk change the ways in which one thinks about teaching?

Thanks to mentors Lawrence, Coulter, Williams and Yeager for their participation in this process, to colleague, Judy Gerardi, for on-going discussions about the Lebanon program, and to Sandy Coulter for her initial editing of the transcript.

Carol Yeager took the photographs included here.

Students in Beirut

Betty Lawrence

I thought it would be helpful to give a very brief description of how Empire State College's Lebanon program works. The program was started in 1997, and our first contact was with Marcel Hinain, an administrator at one of our host Lebanese colleges. Until two years ago, we held our student-mentor residencies (two or three per year) in Cyprus; they were then moved to Beirut. The Lebanon program operates as a blended model, which includes the residencies and online courses. For the last number of years, I was the academic coordinator (at a 40 percent reassignment) that ended in August of 2006 when Karolyn Andrews became the full-time Lebanon academic program director overseas.

All of us thought that the actual words of these students were the best way for you to get a sense of them as students. I did send a note to a large maillist, asking our students to tell us if, as a result of the extraordinary events of the summer, they were safe and where they were. We knew they were moving around, at least temporarily. "Thanks for your concern," one student e-mailed in response. "I'm fine but a bit concerned for everything that is going on right now … I still have an assignment due for Mr. Jon Harbison, but I'm not finding time to finish it seeing how Lebanon is being attacked every two minutes … " Another wrote: "Dr. Betty, thanks for your prayers, but believe me, we were praying for you all the time and worried on how you will be safe to reach your country, but it seems you are safe in your country now. Thanks for your mail and thanks for preparing our paper and documents … " Finally, a student responded: "Personally, I am safe, I was glad to hear that you are all safe and you came back to the states. We are facing a very difficult moments, we are so depressed because its not our fault, we are out of the game and we are facing all of that."

I want to talk very briefly about a few of our students who made an impression on me. As you will see, they are all very different. I think that "difference" is another thing that is helpful for us to understand about the students who are a part of this program.

The first is Hadi. Hadi's family moved from Palestine in 1948 to Kuwait to Lebanon to Syria – back and forth. Here are some words from his degree program rationale: "All these events made me think about my identity. Am I Kuwaiti or Lebanese or Palestinian? At a later age, I knew that all the problems I lived were do to [with] the fact that the Kuwaitis hate Iraqis, the Iraqis hate the Iranians, the Iranians the Arabs, the Lebanese hate the Palestinians, and now they hate the Syrians as well. All this hatred should have a reason. How come people hate me and they don't even know me?" And later he writes: "I don't want to live in Palestine, but I demand to hold a Palestinian passport, which we don't have now. I don't want the Lebanese nationality, but I want my political and civil rights. I ask for the right to go back to Palestine."

War and peace live side by side.

Yet, Hadi is an optimist: "I believe our world is living in a deep darkness and in each corner of the world there is a war pulling the innocent souls, and thus we have to do something to stop that and to prevent these wars. I believe that capitalism is feeding these wars exactly as communism did a while ago. I see people killing each other, making me motivated to seek a solution that is able to fix this world. I am sure that good people will be able to change the whole system. It might take a year or 10 but it will be changed sooner or later. The process to do this is mentally. We have to change the mentality of the world. Sure we have to change the ruling governments in the Arab world and to remove those that were raised on the war mentality. All today's leaders are war criminals; they pronounce few international laws and apply only the law of the forest. And since our method is mental we have to be well educated. We have to possess high positions in the community. We have to be on a high level of patience."

I also wanted to briefly mention another student, Hussein, who graduated from our program in 2001. Hussein is one of the few students we know who was a member of Hezbollah, and we were aware of this because he wore this identity proudly. We had many discussions with him, and I vividly remember one discussion between Hussein and one of our Christian students because of the way in which they talked very respectfully about their different views. Hussein's parents had sent him to Empire State College because they wanted him to continue his education and to earn a college degree. I don't know what happened to Hussein, but I often think of him, his experiences, and his desire to talk about what he believed.

For many, living conditions are ravaged by poverty.

I have learned a great deal about Lebanese culture and about risk from these and other students. First, is the central recognition that they interpret the world differently than I do. Second, is their strong optimism and ability to adapt in the face of incredible pain and danger. Third, and most striking, is that they are risk-takers. Actually, they are risk takers even for enrolling in our program. But sometimes, their risk-taking ways get to the point of recklessness. For example, one thing that saddens us is the number of car accidents and other types of injuries these students are involved in. Above all, the thing that continues to impress me is their warmth and caring. In the e-mail communications back and forth since we left Lebanon, their concern for us was always present, even while they and their families were facing such immediate dangers.

A final thought: in many ways, our Lebanese students don't trust the written word. For them, communication is really very much person-to-person. This accounts for their incredible family orientation, which is, I believe, the context in which they interpret the mentoring role. Perhaps, as mentors, we are joining their families. In this sense, I also think our students offer us a wonderful example of Gardner's "Interpersonal Intelligence." These students are, indeed, "people smart," sensitive to

and adept at thinking about the motivations and desires of people around them. Still, this is my understanding, my interpretation. As faculty in the Center for International Programs we not only have to try to be very aware of their experiences, learning styles, strengths, and limitations, but, at every turn, of our judgments and our assumptions about them.

Xenia Coulter

One of the exercises my writing teacher once devised was to hand out a page of random odd, colorful, or interesting phrases from the *New Yorker,* asking us to choose one of the phrases to write about. Never one to blindly follow directions, I decided instead to write a piece that included **all** the phrases. They were totally unrelated, and the challenge was to write a narrative that somehow made them fit together. In thinking about this panel today, I was confronted with a similar challenge. I had our three questions, I had the experience of being in Beirut this summer, I had the theme of this conference, "the risk society," and somehow for this presentation, I had to find a way of putting them together into a coherent whole. If I succeeded in making structure out of New Yorker phrases, why not also in combining education, international travel, bombs in Beirut and risk?

The first sensible place to begin, I think, is to recognize that the perception of risk comes from knowledge. Without knowledge, there **is** no risk. If you don't know anything about transfats, you won't know that it's risky to eat Wendy's french fries. You may get hurt, but you remain blissfully happy until the end. Problems with risk begin to emerge when you acquire some information – but only enough to realize that it isn't enough. Now the risk makes you anxious, and while the end may not be bad, you are never free of worry. These different states of knowing are pretty much how one might characterize my experiences in Beirut.

At the beginning, I was in a state of happy ignorance. When we heard that Israeli soldiers had been kidnapped, I was surprised, but oblivious to any possible risk to myself. (Other of my colleagues were apparently less naïve.) When the airport was bombed the next day, my only concern was

Temples mirror strong religious underpinnings in people's lives.

whether it would be fixed in time for us to leave.

It was only as the war escalated that I moved into the insufficient-knowledge mode. I remember this phase as being stressful and frustrating. If we couldn't fly out, should we drive to Syria; if so where? Or should we go by boat to Cyprus, but then how? Or should we wait for the American Embassy to decide whether or not to rescue us? What risks did each option bring? In our endless discussions, however, we kept coming up, not with answers, but only more questions. What did **we** know about Lebanese or Syrian transportation systems? What did we know about how far Israel was willing to go? But if we were ignorant, then who were the experts? Should we trust the judgment of the host college administrators? students and alumni in high places? the Internet? worried friends from the U.S.? On whose say-so were we supposed to decide what action to take?

What it ultimately came down to, we eventually realized, was that the necessary knowledge simply did not exist. There were no books, no experts, no policy analyses, none of the familiar sources academics rely on. They say that in the absence of information, people tend to be thrown back into a primitive, fatalistic state, letting what may happen just happen. But, of course, for us, inaction was not an option: We had to

find a way home. Even when we recognized we might never know what was best, we had to do it anyhow. So, in the end, the decisions we made were dictated by our personal histories, cultural backgrounds, dispositions, the order in which we received information, the information we felt most reasonable (even knowing that we had no basis that belief), whether we happened to be around when a particular nugget was shared, or perhaps just the mood we were in at the time we had to decide.

Facing the unknown with insufficient information is always a risky enterprise; foreign travel itself is a good example. Moving around in a different culture, with weak skills of communication, armed only with a tour book as guide is certainly riskier than if you just stay in familiar territories. And yet, people **do** travel – and they do so because they want to experience something new and different. Unfortunately, the risk is that they can never know until afterward whether these unknown experiences will be worth it or not.

Similarly, exposing ourselves to the lives of people different from us, no matter where they live, is also a risk. Just as in a foreign country, you are forced to face different common understandings, concerns, opinions, and perspectives from your own, often too with serious problems in communication. If you are genuinely

open to personal diversity, then your own understandings, concerns, opinions, and perspectives are subject to attack. So, just as it's safer to stay home, it's less risky to stay with your own kind.

But it is a familiar and frequent risk that faculty take at Empire State College. Mentoring requires a kind of intimate contact between a teacher and a student – and we frequently find ourselves working closely with individuals we might otherwise never have encountered. In my years as a mentor, students have brought me into situations – some comic, some tragic, some sheer wastes of time – that would have been hidden to me had I remained a safer distance from them, such as behind the podium in a lecture hall. As a mentor, I developed serious relationships with people forced to deal with psychiatric disorders, battering husbands, abuse in prison, serious illnesses, loss of parents, wives, children. They raised issues and approaches to problems that were often unfamiliar to me, and no guide existed that could tell me what to do, how far to go, when to stop.

So, working with students in a war-torn country – while certainly unique compared to what we know about students in the United States – was a somewhat familiar experience – at least in the sense of having to understand, support, sympathize with, and otherwise respond to personal situations that were foreign to us. And, just as with our adult students, I found when faced with circumstances that really stretched my capacity to understand, I could not avoid wondering about the values, beliefs, and educational assumptions I ordinarily take for granted.

But, you might ask, isn't that learning? Isn't being unsettled, challenged, exposed to new information exactly what we think learning is about? And don't we academics welcome this kind of experience? Yes, I think we do welcome it. Why else would we volunteer to work in this program? But I think we feel protected by our background, our institutional context, and our sense of intellectual control. The problem is that we tend not to recognize the other side of this risk – namely, that our students, exposed to us as authorities in education, and with fewer resources than we have, may also be unsettled and challenged by our relationship,

but with the possibility of misreading us or being misdirected or dealt with in inappropriate ways.

Consider the question of what we teach. With our American adult students, this question can be addressed more or less directly. Aside from our sharing a common understanding of what Americans need to know, our students can easily request courses that are personally meaningful. We don't have to stretch to understand their context; we don't have to read their minds to understand their general situation. But with our young Lebanese students, the situation is different. Neither their culture, their educational background, nor their age, give them the kind of wisdom to know what kind of education they might best need. Faculty are supposed to tell them what to learn, but how do we know this when we have so little in common?

Mansour Diab, Lebanon Program graduate and officer in the Lebanese Forces.

And so, in Lebanon, we have relatively well-to-do students with the potential to be important figures in their own country, facing horrible and shifting political realities, which we must more or less ignore if we use a pre-set curriculum. We have students who believe that the World Trade Center event was a Jewish plot, who make what must be interpreted as anti-Semitic remarks, who are increasingly critical of the religious groups other than their own. This is a country in which Christian, Muslim, and Jew once lived comfortably together, a world that

is rapidly unraveling before our eyes. This is a country with national boundaries that make no sense in a world of tribal traditions antithetical to nationalism, being taught by American teachers who live in a country where the nation is everything. Should we ignore these political, personal and historical differences and teach merrily away as if none of this mattered? Should we feel that we have done all we can by simply expressing concern in our personal conversations? And if we thought we might actually want to teach courses more directly relevant to their situation, how can we, as Americans, know what they, as Lebanese, ought to learn?

Right now, what they've asked for is an American education, and that's what we give them. We offer an American curriculum and we present them with the best of what we know about our fields from an American perspective. That's fair and it's honest. And it's entirely possible from a psychological perspective, that these students find it comforting to bury themselves into a world away from their own realities. Still, aren't we, in the end, simply tantalizing them with Western culture, spurring them on with a desire to get out of Lebanon – to get away as much as possible from the risks of living in the Middle East? Certainly, that's not what we intend, but we can't ignore the fact that this is often what happens.

The other response that we make still consistent with their avowed desire for an "American" degree, but which avoids the problem of our ignorance of their social, cultural, and historical backgrounds, is to teach them to think for themselves. More specifically, we ask them to think critically – to examine their own assumptions and to not take anything for granted – not even their own beliefs. We may not know the correct answers, but, as academics, we do know how to raise questions.

However, critical thinking is not easy to teach or apply. We cannot expect that if students learn to analyze an article on free speech, this will necessarily translate into critical thinking about what it means to be part of their particular pluralistic society. To think, to question, to try on new perspectives – takes effort, considerable practice, and constant feedback. That means we should help them, not to only to

acquire information, but to think critically about what they already know or think they should know. Somehow we have to integrate into our courses – whether they be about art or computer science or business – not answers, but broader questions that relate to their daily concerns.

To meet such goals, we work – not necessarily in the dark – but certainly without a set of clear guidelines. We improvise as we go along – grope for ways to help these students when we can only approximately understand the complexities they face. Our experience in Beirut at the beginning of the war with Israel thus becomes a metaphor for what happens when we open ourselves to students who

The scene could be anywhere in the college … mentor and student working together.

are different from us and endure the kinds of questions diversity inevitably raises for which there are no ready answers. It is also a metaphor for our struggle to find the right way of helping the Lebanese students learn what they need to in the absence of certainty about what that might be.

This then is the real risk – for us as teachers: that we might not be doing the "right" thing and may somehow be compromising the future of these young men and women. In thinking thus about risk and education and knowledge, I think what ultimately sustains us is the hope that if there is inherent value to us in exposing ourselves to different ways

of thinking, so too there must be a similar inherent value to the student. By that view, the benefits of establishing the kinds of human contacts others in this panel have so lovingly described may be all that is needed to transcend the risk.

Evelyn Williams

First, I want to thank each and every one of you in this room, and I want to thank the other people who are not in this room, for your concern and for your attention to our safety. We felt you as we were traveling. It was clearly a good feeling to know that we were part of a community of people who were sitting in the United States concerned about us getting out of a difficult situation.

Perhaps your attention to us actually helped our journey across Syria into Turkey and then back into the United States. Thank you.

As Betty has already described, when we returned to the United States, we decided to send out an e-mail to our mentees to find out about their status – whether they were still in Lebanon, how their families were affected by the war, what immediate plans they had in terms of staying or leaving. The e-mails I received were surely interesting. The first thing that almost everyone of them said was in the spirit of: "thank you for your concern, thank you for asking, thank you for your sympathy, thank you so much,

I really appreciate your caring and being worried about us."

And such an outpouring of feelings is probably one important reason why I have participated in the Lebanon program since 1999. When our residencies were held in Cyprus, we would regularly receive questions about coming to Beirut: "When can we hold our residency in Lebanon?" our students would ask. And every time we were in Cyprus, we would say soon, and that "soon" went on for many years until we got the word that we could in fact go to Lebanon.

And I remember that our first trip to Lebanon was quite a journey. There were the many years of anticipation because the students were constantly telling us how beautiful their country was, and how great a time we would have when we got there, and that, headline news aside, it was really a safe place and that we really didn't need to be concerned. And, of course, our feelings that we really wanted to respond to their desires and to see them in this more familiar context. When we arrived, the way the faculty from the two host institutions and the students took care of us only confirmed this array of feelings – it only showed us how honored they were by our presence in their country.

So, honestly, I have found it difficult to focus on "risk" because for me, my work in the Lebanon program has been a profound journey of being with a beautiful people, be they faculty, students or friends, who, together, supported me in my process as learning and growing as a teacher. "Risk" was not what has been on my mind.

I would like to share with you a quote from the book called, *The Courage to Teach: Exploring The Inner Landscape of A Teacher's Life* by Parker Palmer. Palmer writes: "The courage to teach is the courage to keep one's heart open in those very moments when the heart is asked to hold more than it is able to so that teacher and students and subject can be woven into the fabric of community that learning and living require."

The time we have spent in Lebanon and our mentoring there really speaks to the fact that we became a community in which our teaching practice was not only about the

particular subjects we were exploring with our students, but was about living. It was about discovering how a relationship would take shape between teacher and student, and about those invisible people – family and friends – who were also in the room with us. It was about keeping our "hearts open" and feeling what it meant to be "woven into the fabric of community."

This last time we were in Lebanon was not the first time there had been bombings and other occurrences in which safety was an issue. So our attitude was "OK, that happened and now we move on." Perhaps this was the reason that we didn't function from a place of some nervousness or even total fear. But I think that another reason was directly connected to the type of community we found and into which we were invited, and to the kind of support we received.

During the first year of teaching in the program (and I work with students in the areas of leadership and quality management), I was amazed by some of the conversations that arose with our students. I had students talking to me about how they saw their best friends blown up during the civil war, how they lost their father, their mother, how they ran away from home but couldn't wait to get back. I was truly amazed at the way they would tell their stories. You did not hear any bitterness and you did not hear fear. What you heard was: "Well, this is what happened and that's just it. Life goes on and I'm here to get my education because you know that I want to see this country change and I understand that maybe one day we'll all have an opportunity to make that happen."

So here is another dimension of these experiences that is connected to how our students think about their risk, which is so very different from the feelings of many of my American students. Our students love Lebanon and they are very clear about that. They may leave because they can't get a job, but leaving Lebanon does not mean they do not love Lebanon. It means they cannot survive in Lebanon at this time, so they are leaving to survive, but their hearts are in Lebanon. And this is also one of the factors that held us there until, no doubt, it was time for us to leave.

Graduation, Lebanese Program, 2006

Here is something that stays with me: When the president of one of our host institutions comes to visit us, she regularly comes with an entourage. When the Beirut airport was bombed and she came to the hotel, she was by herself, and I remember looking at her face and seeing her pain and her embarrassment that we were in the situation we were in. That hurt me because I wanted her to know that I knew that the situation in which we found ourselves was not her fault. And yet, there was her pain, brought on by the fact that she and others had pushed so hard for us to come to their country and now we were in a potentially harmful situation.

As a faculty, we tried to be respectful of the Lebanese people. We tried not to show fear or to display our anxiety in front of them. In effect, we, ourselves, tried to move away from this concept of risk and realize that we just needed to be together and find a reasonable way of moving out. Our colleague, Richard Bonnabeau made a very interesting statement when we were at the Syrian border trying to cross into Turkey. When you hear from people who have been in very dangerous situations, it is not unusual to hear them say that it was truly "an amazing experience." I always wondered why they would say that and Richard helped me understand. It was

because it the way we were with each other – an experience I will carry with me the rest of my life. It was truly a feeling of companionship, of togetherness, of love and caring. I can now understand the Lebanese young people in a much deeper way.

A final thought about risk that connects to our work as mentors in the Lebanon program. As faculty, one has to be flexible – to present new knowledge through the material we utilize, but knowledge that builds a bridge between the academic material and the lives of the students with whom we work. We have to have the ability to see our students' lives more clearly than they sometimes see themselves, and to help them to move more deeply into their life experience. We have worked with them over these many years to develop a better aptitude for asking good questions and, in turn, we have to strengthen our own skills in listening to their responses. And lastly, we need to be willing to take a risk, not just in terms of being in an environment where we might confront immediate physical danger, but taking a risk in terms of walking into a room of students from different cultures and different experiences and perhaps different attitudes about Americans, and at least trying to stand there in our own truth and be willing to listen to their stories and their ideas.

Carol Yeager

There is so much to know and so much information to gain about other cultures and about the importance of educational endeavors around the world. We don't get as much as we would like to just from reading, but we hope some of the materials we have passed out (including Betty's excerpts from her students and this new information) will provide some context for the experiences we have all had. I feel very privileged to have been working with these Lebanese students, to be working with Empire State College in the educational process we offer for students, which is quite different from what they've become used to in any of the schooling experiences that they have had.

What I'm going to do is read a little bit from responses to questions I posed to a few students in the last few weeks. I think their responses are not only interesting but they echo my feelings as well. Also, I hope the images that are included [they were being shown as each of the speakers offered her reflections] haven't taken away from anything people have said, but rather have offered other impressions of the world in which we worked – insights that our spoken and written words do not quite get at. They might underscore the points we have tried to make and stay in our memories just a little bit longer.

I think what we do in Lebanon is extremely important. I think the fact that we have the personal contact – that we actually go to a place, their home, and meet with them has been extremely influential and helpful in their lives. I say this because they have told us. I am very pleased that Empire State College is continuing this relationship and this program, and I am sure that as soon as it is feasible, we will be back with these students face-to-face. In the mean-time, everyone has pitched in to offer these students the best possible educational experience that we can.

I want you to know more about my students:

Interestingly enough, one of the students that I have in my group this term lived in Lebanon, but also lives in the United States. She was born in Lebanon, moved to the United States, and was on the same ship

that took me out of Lebanon. We didn't know this at the time, but in talking to her since then, we discovered this common experience. I wanted to learn more about her impressions about students whose lives are at risk.

Here was her response:

"I think that all of the SUNY professionals, teachers, doctors should all be proud of the advantage they have to actually experience a different culture and learn about the difference in teaching levels. As for risk, what kind of risk should we talk about? Normally people at risk means people in danger or people at risk of losing something. In my point of view, teachers, no matter what degree they have, are always teachers for a specific purpose, which is to guide, to make clear, to give confidence. Isn't that what Empire State College is all about? Once a teacher can provide these three points to students, their overall performance in their courses will be terrific. Whether a teacher is teaching a student in America or a student in Lebanon, it should always be a priority to make the students feel comfortable. As for the risk of teaching students in different cultures, everyone is at risk in sometime of their life, whether it be the risk of getting a bad grade, a risk of losing a job, or a risk of physical danger. We can't run away from the fact but we can learn from it and we can try to help. As for teaching students from different cultures, and what you learn from people outside of your environment, I think that it isn't a risk as much as it is an opportunity."

Another student, this one a male, lives in Lebanon. In Lebanon the student risk is learning a different way of thinking. Here was his response to one of my questions:

"The degree gives the opportunity to leave Lebanon for a better way of life but we take Lebanon with us. Degrees outside of Lebanon are better degrees for learning and for jobs, but we are always still in Lebanon. Lebanese may take the money but they really don't teach anything; politics rules everything. There is a fatalistic attitude here. Poor students can go nowhere; rich students get everything. Empire State College shows they care. Most of the professors take a good interest in students and in our culture."

This was response was from a female student:

"Your topic for discussion is very broad because as you said there are always risks in societies everywhere around the world. Problems never end. In general, the best way to deal with any situation is to gather enough and the right information about it in order to cooperate and communicate in the best way possible. We are the reflection of our background and the product of the information we consume and those who are affected or helped us in determining our values and expectations of life. But when dealing with other societies, it is always best to understand the different cultures and traditions or beliefs in order to communicate better and decrease any misunderstanding or risks. There is no absolute right or wrong in cultures. We just have to accept each other's differences, and when we truly do, we understand each other better, we communicate better and easier and lessen the risks."

In the seven years I've been involved with International Programs in Cyprus and then Lebanon, I've probably mentored about 30 students a year. That's a lot of students, many of whom are still in touch with me. Many of them have also come to this country. From what we have learned, they value their relationship with each one of us and with each one of the professionals and faculty that have visited Lebanon. So I thank Empire State College for that opportunity. I thank everyone for their support for us. We all appreciate the efforts that our college has made to continue this commitment to other cultures because it helps us learn as other cultures learn from us. That is the risk that we continue to take.

A Tale of Organizational Change

Linzi Kemp, Center for Distance Learning

*"Are you sitting comfortably?
Then I'll begin."*[1]

The Tale

Once upon a time there was turmoil in higher education, when "the very survival of the University was at risk" (Boyer[2] foreword; Bonnabeau, 1996, p. 6.). And, in a land not too far away from here, a vision was conceived, that was a "constructive response" to this turmoil. The response was to have an "alternative model of education that would not be time or place bound."[3] And the students came, and the college was a warm place, full of light and energy, as all worked together to grow their promise.

That dim and distant past adds value to the organizational culture and is fondly remembered by all those in the present.[4] Those "present"[5] though have stuff to be getting on with that fills their days, and actually, in recent times, it seems that the stuff is taking over. It is all around, never ceasing. The present sit at their machines, clicking mice, tapping at keyboards at ever-increasing rates, and still the work comes (Zuboff, 1988). The machines keep pinging; as yet another e-mail arrives, causing the present to frantically finish one communication to work on the next in the production line.[6] Phones ring and are answered, as journals are consumed to keep the present up to date for their next paper. Automated alerts sound, causing connection to conference calls, to discuss urgent and important matters. In the name of efficiency, multi-tasking skills[7] abound as those on the conference calls prepare for their next curriculum, assessment, review committee (Schall, 1983). Numerous face-to-face meetings are scheduled, so many in fact that it is hard to get meeting space.

And still it continues – the stuff – it comes from all around and all above and all below. Collaboration is requested on that, the rankers ask for feedback on this, and the drones[8] want a check on the other.

There are claims that the quality of input is suffering as there are increased demands for more output (Fuqua and Kurpuis, 1993 cited in Kreitner and Kinicki, 2006). It is all **now, now, now** and the landscape it darkens and is almost freezing (Lewin, 1951). And the students? They keep right on enrolling.

And then, there is a movement for change, changes in this world in a land not too far away. "How on a planet can we have change, when we haven't time to keep up with all that we've created?" After all, we are here, and this is our job and the load it is ever there and it is always increasing (Moss Kanter, 1985). We cannot survive, the present worry, it is far too risky to make changes now! "It should be the job of the rankers or the drones to make the changes – it cannot be us," they say. New systems, new styles, new ideas are introduced. And the present? They see their life changing around them as what was once known to be solid is now melting into air[9] (Berman, 1982). And the cry from those in the dark continues. "The students, they won't understand this new way, they won't be able to use it or follow it and they might even abuse it." These changes are all a "fallacy of misplaced concreteness" (Whitehead 1929 cited in Chia 1995, p. 583). Many seem to be fearful of the changes, that the promise of a "new kind of institution based on student learning" is in danger (Boyer foreword; Bonnabeau, 1996, p. 6.). The present need and want their voices to be heard in writing, on phones, in any and all physical and virtual space. As they, in their passion, with their expertise, and belief in what they do, they will continue to participate in their change process.

The Analysis

In this tale of organizational change, I have endeavored to address the theme of this All Areas of Study meeting, the risk society: realities, fears and opportunities. The tale is a relatively short and detailed story of a real

or imagined event. You will have decided for yourself how far this short story on the topic of organizational change resonates. The phrase "it's life Jim, but not as we know it!"[10] "comes to mind, but according to the scholars on organizational change, it is ever thus in organizations (Herscovitch and Meyer, 2002).

Researchers agree that change is a risky business, but point out that it is necessary for organizations to succeed in a competitive world. Scholars (e.g., Porter [1980]), recognize that external and internal forces make organizational change inevitable. An external force is the existence of motivated adults in society who are awaiting the opportunity to earn a degree.[11] All those who work in this institution agree on at least one thing, that this is the best place for that learning to happen.[12] Thus, we can recognize that Kotter's (1996) first step in organizational change has been taken: a sense of urgency has been created because of a compelling reason for change. First the need for change is recognized, then comes the resistance to change. As Coch and French (1948) found out, many employees will raise their concerns, but a few remain quiet. The quiet consider their careers are at risk if they speak out against the changes, or indeed if they contradict the resisters to change.[13] Some of you will have picked up on Lewin's (1951) model of organizational change in the tale. A three-stage process of unfreezing; changing; refreezing. Effective communication is vital within an organization experiencing change, so that people have the opportunity to be creators and continuers of their organization. In the change stage, soundings from stakeholders are taken that input to a strategic plan (Empire State College, 2006). We have been there, done that.

We are participant observers in a workplace experiencing organizational change (Hammersley, 1990). As the promise continues across space and time, "We the

Living"[14] can bring together the past, the present and the future through our own organizational change – an indication of a 21st Century organizational culture that is empowered (Belasco, 1990).

Possible Discussion Questions

1. Organizational change involves risk. Do we have an organizational environment where risk-taking is supported?

2. Organizational change needs direction. How far would a cross-functional, cross-level group be helpful for leading organizational change?

Notes

[1] BBC radio program, "Listen With Mother," 1950s; story time began with this invitation.

[2] Ernest L. Boyer, president, Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of E- Learning.

[3] Graduation Program, Empire State College, Internal Document, 2004.

[4] Organizational culture is embedded through stories of key people, e.g., the ceremony to honor the founding president, James W. Hall, 2005.

[5] The "present" represents those working in this time; it is an impersonal classification that I have preferred to personalizing as "we."

[6] Reminiscent of the assembly line installed in 1913 by Henry Ford for the efficient manufacturing of cars.

[7] One can occasionally hear the keyboarding in the background as people listen and speak on conference calls. Colleagues also have spoken of doing their e-mails while participating in conference calls.

[8] J. D. Robb uses this job title to refer to "workers" in future fictional organizations. There is no derogatory implication.

[9] The title of Berman's work on modernism is taken from *The Communist Manifesto* (1848) – "All that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned."

[10] Catch phrase from the popular Sci Fi TV program, "Star Trek."

[11] The average age of students is mid-30s. The college is "dedicated to enabling motivated adults … to earn a degree" www.esc.edu.

[12] An assumption is made, if a person does not, a question arises as to their motivation for working?

[13] In any organization, fear of speaking out can arise from personal concerns of annoying people with whom they work and from professional concerns of ruining promotion prospects. In academia, the untenured may be afraid of seeming opposed to the tenured.

[14] *We the Living* is the title of Ayn Rand's book (1959, New American Library).

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Readers also are invited to hear Linzi Kemp's tale, podcast at http://empire2.esc.edu/facultyweb/linzikemp.nsf/7?openview.

The Guttering of Desire

Robert Congemi, Northeast Center

The first time I knew of Esther's existence was when Gerhardt told me about her over the phone. He had left the small town where we were teaching to go to a more suburban school in another state.

"I tell you, Paul. What a woman. She's so smart – she's the first person I'd ever let teach my class for me." Gerhardt was a slight man, nice-looking, known for being flip when not sardonic. I looked big next to him.

I wasn't quite sure what to make of such a testimonial, but I soon saw Esther for myself. Gerhardt had brought her back to our state, and we were now teaching in schools near each other in Westchester County. Also, he was going to marry Esther, and wanted me to be his best man.

I was complimented, happy enough to do that for him, but I was really surprised – not just at the speed at which Gerhardt was moving, but that he was getting married at all. Gerhardt had loved his first wife very much, but she had died of cancer two years after their marriage.

"How can I talk about it?" he asked me one day, early in our friendship. "Why keep burning your hand on a hot stove?"

We were in a coffee shop in the small town, trying to figure out what to do next in our professional lives, probably our lives in general. Earlier that afternoon I had just finished teaching Keats better than I had ever done before and was wild to do something more than just teach high school.

"Negative capability," I told my seventeen-year olds. "The ability to function even when beset by paradoxes, contradictions."

It's true, Esther wasn't much to look at. She was on the short side, a bit heavy, plain, graying hair – though I liked the sweetness of her smile. Nor did she seem to have an excess of personality.

"So. Someone has finally pleased the great intellectual," I said to her, when we first met, at the old, historic house Gerhardt recently had managed to buy, in an old, historic town. It was circular house, of all things, brick, four stories.

She looked away, so shy.

"Oh … well, I don't know about that, Paul."

At their wedding, however, to my mind at least, she shone better. It was a civil wedding, and we were in a stark room in the offices of a justice of the peace. For a moment, I thought about how secular their wedding was, but then dismissed the thought by remembering the distinct liberalness of this couple.

When the justice of the peace had finished his hurried march through their ceremony, he paused. I wasn't sure what was going on. He waited, cleared his throat, and waited some more. Then Esther touched me on the arm.

"The offering, Paul," she whispered, though we were all so close that everyone heard. She smiled shyly again, and lowered her gaze. "The offering."

Finally, I caught on. "Oh," I acknowledged, and handed the woman helping the justice of the peace his fee for marrying my friends.

"I owe you one," I told Esther, when we were outside on the street, a noisy, busy city street. "I'm sorry I'm so slow."

"No … no … " she assured me, touching me again on the arm.

"He wanted his money, darling," Gerhardt commented. "Gotta have his dough, Paul – even spirituality has its price, you know."

Suddenly, Esther took us both gently in hand. "Come on, you two. Let's celebrate." It was only the spontaneous, aggressive gesture I'd ever know her to make. After all, it was her wedding.

Later, I felt a little sad for them about it all.

After the wedding, for a while I lost touch with Gerhardt and Esther. I had my own life to live, which was a jumble. Like a lot of people, I couldn't shake 9/11 and its endless aftermath – global terror, anti-American feeling, defensive panic on our part, mindless materialism for compensation. Nor could I seem to straighten out my personal life. I didn't know what I wanted to do with myself, that was becoming more and more clear to me, and nobody else seemed to want to help me sort the mess out. The last lady in my life – her name was Gwen – had said it all a few months previous to Gerhardt's wedding.

"Look, Paul, we can still be friends. But I can't be just your moral support. I want more, too. Maybe there's someone out there somewhere who can do that for you, but it's not me."

It was hard for me to believe I was being told this by a person I had been intimate with for some time.

"Do I come at that high a price?"

"You do, my sweet. But that's okay … "

"Apparently, not." I tried to explain, "It's just that I need to think … to read … to study … "

Having nothing better to do, I threw myself into my teaching. It might not have been the perfect answer to my fate, but it was at least something good. I have no problem saying that.

"Why poetry?" I asked my class, rhetorically, at the junior college where I was now teaching. "Because it's everything, all in one package – thoughts that really matter, powerful feelings, language that knocks you out. What more could you want?"

I wasn't sure my would-be dental technicians and heating maintenance men knew what I was talking about.

"I'll read Shelley's "Defense of Poetry" to you next class," I promised them. "He thinks poets are the true legislators of the world."

As for Gerhardt and Esther, I did hear some little things, from Gerhardt. By chance, I was offered part-time teaching at a university. One of my junior college students told his father about me and the father, who was a dean at the university, offered me work on the weekends. It was in New York City, though, and I didn't know how I could take the job, living pretty far away, until I thought that maybe Gerhardt could put me up overnight where he lived, and then I could easily take a train into the City the rest of the way. I called him up, to hear what he thought of the idea.

"No problem, Paul," he said, right away. I had suspected I could count on him, and with no conditions. "Why not? I could use the company, too. Believe me."

"What do you mean?" I was a little confused. "What about Esther?"

"What about Esther?"

" … I mean, she's company for you. Isn't she?" Now, it seems perhaps I should have understood all along. "You told me you had never known anyone like her."

"I don't feel that way anymore."

This was the Gerhardt I didn't much like.

For a moment, I wondered if I should stay overnight with him at all. But the reality of my situation and perhaps the someday-writer in me didn't make me change my plans. That Friday night, I was at his house – Gerhardt's and Esther's, I should say. Esther was nowhere in sight, but Gerhardt answered the old, wrought iron knocker on his front door almost immediately, as if he had been looking out the window waiting for me. He seemed almost wild-eyed.

I didn't remark on how he looked, but allowed him to let me in. In a few minutes, he called upstairs, quite sharply, for Esther to come down, for I had arrived. When she joined us, she looked rather tentative.

She managed a weak smile. Impulsively, I kissed her on the cheek. She looked like she had gotten heavier.

During dinner, apparently prepared solely by Gerhardt, Esther continued to look unsure of herself, the odd person out. She kept glancing at Gerhardt, but he scarcely acknowledged her. I told them both that the dinner was wonderful of course and a kindness, to which Esther clarified that it was not her doing, though she would have been happy to cook for me. I had the feeling that she hadn't been asked.

Finally, almost in desperation, foolishly perhaps, I asked how everything was going for them at their schools. Gerhardt made some nasty remarks about how his students were more interested in rap music than literature.

"It's as if they were oblivious to the impending doom," he said.

With that, I turned to Esther, who was trying to be as unobtrusive as she could, and asked about her work. Esther was ill at ease at my question and kept glancing at Gerhardt more than ever. Finally, Gerhardt said, as dry as possible.

"It's not going very well."

I was surprised again, especially given what Gerhardt had told me about her.

"Oh … " I managed.

Esther bowed her head.

"The kids at the school are frightening her," Gerhardt went on. "She can't keep them under control."

I assumed moving to a new area, and on such short notice, had meant that Esther had not had her pick of schools.

"I … do … try," she attempted to explain.

I wondered what would happen to her. "Well, can you do anything about it?" I asked.

Again, little, if any response, from Esther.

Gerhardt supplied the information. "Apparently, not." Gerhardt breathed in deeply, and then went on. "Esther is calling in sick these days."

"I'm sorry, Gerhardt," she muttered.

Shortly afterwards she went back upstairs.

When she was gone, Gerhardt explained, over a cordial. "It's been happening ever

since the first day, she says. The kids are just too tough for her. She can't control them. They talk in class whenever they want. They leave whenever they want. If she tries to stop them, they laugh at her. Other teachers have to come in and keep the kids under control. So now she calls in sick."

"What's going to happen?"

Gerhardt remained sarcastic. "Who knows? Nothing positive, I suspect. She goes in less and less. Calls in sick more and more. It can't go on much longer. All she does now is pretty much stay up in a room on the top floor."

I looked, at him quizzically.

"Don't ask me. She can do what she wants." He threw down his dinner napkin. "I just know that she probably will never work again. That she'll just stay upstairs. The other day she fantasized about getting a job in a card store or something – as if there are any jobs since 9/11. We don't talk about it anymore. She brings nothing to our relationship. Nothing. Zip."

A short time later, with Gerhardt still pretty upset, I excused myself and went upstairs to where he told me I could sleep, a floor below where Esther apparently now permanently stayed. For some time, I lay abed, assuming that Gerhardt was continuing with his drinking. Though I strained to listen, I heard nothing from Esther's room above me, though once I thought I heard her walking, perhaps even pacing. In the morning, I was happy to be gone from their house, I must admit. On the street, I walked a couple of blocks to where I had been told I could catch a bus. In a few minutes, the bus did appear, and, boarding it, I was on my way to my new teaching job in the city, my thoughts turning to that. Also, later in the week, I called Gerhardt and assured him that I would after all be able to make my trip to my second job without needing to stay overnight at his house.

"Now that I know the way," I explained, a little sad. "And realize it isn't that bad."

"I understand," he said.

In the weeks that followed, my own situation did not change much – indeed, if anything, it got worse. I continued to be

preoccupied with myself, and knowing this, I looked for some kind of distraction. There was my new work. I told myself how really poetic – the beginning of a new school year, and in a place not familiar to me.

"It is simply beautiful," I announced to my class, in the basement of one of the university buildings. "Everyone bustling about, so intent. Ready to push ahead, despite the challenges coming up."

But, if the truth be told, it was not enough, or at least not enough just now. I managed, because of her fundamental kindness, to meet up one last time with Gwen. It was in a coffee shop near where she worked, before an evening engagement, which she told me she would not break.

"We just can't pick up again?" She looked very desirable. You once told me you loved me."

"That's true, Paul. But you don't really love me. What would you have me do?"

At this time, too, the world itself seemed to be becoming nastier and nastier. The war in Iraq had turned into civil war, thousands were dying, America was probably bankrupt, and there seemed no way out. The whole Muslim world was learning to hate us. The president seemed – how could it be denied? – a mere agent of big business, and, in the end, was who we were after all. After all, we had elected him twice, let him stay in power. If he wasn't who we were, our denial of him was awfully hard to see.

"Our country has changed fundamentally," I declared to a colleague, a history professor, late one afternoon in the student lounge of the junior college.

He struck me as merely too analytical, too removed. "Where is it written that this historic America you talk about will last forever?"

It was as if I were alone, at night in my apartment. I started to come apart.

"Sometimes I think there is a heart of darkness in human beings. If it is not a matter of veniality, it is a weakness of will, of spirit. Indeed, it seems worse, there seems a mindlessness at the center of everything. It is all an eat-or-be-eaten world. The joke of the universe, not a miracle." I could hardly believe myself. "Actually, I wonder if the

universe itself isn't a joke, too? An ultimate, unsustainable one, the real heartbreaker."

In such a state, I called – who else was there? – Gwen again, and heard myself telling her these things which I felt so strongly, in my mind, in my heart.

"You must calm down, Paul. You really must."

But I couldn't.

"Are you mentally ill?" I wrote in my notebook, shortly after this. "Shouldn't you be finding a way out of such a situation, such a state of mind?"

> "Our country has changed fundamentally," I declared to a colleague, a history professor, late one afternoon in the student lounge of the junior college. He struck me as merely too analytical, too removed. "Where is it written that this historic America you talk about will last forever?"

And then on top of everything else, as if this were not enough, I received a phone message one morning from Gerhardt telling me – telling me – I still cannot quite believe it, that Esther, his wife, my friend, was dead! Dead! I listened to the message over and over again, hoping that there was some mistake. But there wasn't.

I called Gerhardt, immediately. What in God's name had happened?

"Gerhardt, this can't be true."

"But it is." He sounded strange, different, chastened.

"But how?"

In the end, we agreed to talk in person. Surely, in this case, I could come to him. I would stay overnight one more time.

"Let's meet in the park, whenever you're here on Friday, outside my house. You know – down the street. I like going there these days."

"Of course," I said.

It turned out to be a glorious, late afternoon in the little urban park, an ironic counterpoint to the matter at hand, to my mind. Nature does not reflect the state of individual, human lives as far as I am concerned, regardless of my beloved Romantics. Gerhardt was waiting for me when I arrived, looking very tired, even defeated. Esther's death, so early and suddenly, apparently was no matter for cleverness, or irony, or cynicism.

"So. Please. Tell me everything?" I asked, slipping next to him on a park bench. I wryly noted birds flitting in the sunny air, chirping in the trees.

He shook his head. "It turns out she had cancer. She had cancer. I didn't know."

"But how, Gerhardt?"

"Who knows? Who ever knows?"

I looked at him, carefully, remembering her room at the top of his four-story house.

"I never knew," he said.

I thought he fought back tears.

"She stayed up in her room. Pretty much all the time. She seemed thin, towards the end. But I didn't know. I thought she might have been sick. But not cancer." He wanted me to understand. "Days passed. And then I realized something terrible must be wrong, so I went upstairs. She was dead."

It was beyond me.

"What have I done?" he said. "How could this happen to anyone? How was I to know what was happening? Of course I am a bastard. I was a bastard to her, but I thought I had some reason. It didn't seem too awful a thing to do. After all, I … But for this to happen to – forgive me – to me. To her. Why do things like this happen?"

I touched his hand, so small. He was clearly overwhelmed.

"Can we go back to your house?" I suggested. "Let me help you back to your house."

Gerhardt did not put up any struggle at my suggestion. So I led my friend, seeming now like a much older man, back to his house. Once there, I helped him into his living room and sat him down. Instinctively, I looked up, towards the upstairs floors, a gesture that he noticed.

"You want to go up there?" he asked. "I haven't been there for days. I simply can't. What a fucking fate! Look the place over for me. See if everything is all right. I can't remember if I closed the window."

A few minutes later, I made my way, slowly, up three flights of stairs. Between the third and fourth floors, the stairway became narrow, wound a little, and looked very old, as if it had been neglected by all the previous owners of the house. At the top of the stairway was a small, closed door, which I opened, stepping into the room that had been Esther's at the close of her life. The room was small, too, with just a few pieces of furniture in it – a bed, a bureau, a lamp – enough to live by, get by on. Mostly, there were stacks of books on the floor. Instinctively, I glanced out the window of the room, and peered over the other houses in the neighborhood, then turned my attention back to the books. On the stack closest to the bed, I saw that Esther had placed on top of it – a curious surprise to me – several books by Hindu sages and holy men.

"Vedantic philosophers at the end?" I muttered to myself. Not without a sense of violation, I opened the top book, many passages of which had been underlined in pencil. I read several of the passages, lingering over most, they were all pretty much the usual Eastern philosophy offering comfort and understanding – we are only a drop in the river of life, a moment of the endless cosmos, a transient flame of the eternal light.

"Etcetera, etcetera, etcetera," I thought, quite suddenly growing angry, disgusted by what had happened to Esther. That her fate should be a small, hidden room at the top of a house where she was not welcome, with her pathetic reading of professional gurus and swamis hoping to find a modicum of solace, of preparation for her imminent death! Surely something more, something better, should have been her fate. Couldn't someone do *something* for her, a gesture that might attest to the value of her existence, however small? Couldn't I, for instance, militate against this fate, which is of course our fate, a shake of the fist, upraised, for all the unknown people who die alone and ungrieved – to say nothing of the anonymous geniuses and benefactors of our race for whom there is no requiem?

In the past week or so, I have been trying to relive Esther's last few days, to imagine, comprehend, and recreate what they must have been like. It is all I can think of – to enter sympathetically into her consciousness, to give value in some way and even to honor

what was going on in her mind and heart at the last. In my most alarming moments, I consider this an even spiritual thing. I see her in that room, like a frightened bird, alien, scorned by my friend.

"Husband, my husband," she whispers, looking down several floors to where he is, living his life, reading, eating. "Why have you not loved me? I gave you my soul – I knew nothing else. Why have you exiled me, here, to be always alone?"

I imagine her despair, and then her desperate idea. She will read those who have mastered the mysticism of the near East! She will chant sacred prayers, and ponder thoughts offered her by the teachers of the ancient Vedas, Upanishads, Bhagavad-Gitas!

"Brahma, Krishna, Shiva, help me to believe and to accept wisdom gained thousands of years ago, teach me to transcend mere desire, unquenchable, never satisfying, transient. My soul hungers and yearns to transcend this existence and join with you in extinction. Yes, join with you in extinction! I have heard that I might then attain infinite awareness, infinite being, infinite joy. Indeed, that this is all even somewhere here within me."

In the end, I allow that Esther was happy, feeling illumined totally, not alone and scorned, but connected to all things and outside time itself. And perhaps she was. Also, I imagine her now celebrated a little.

Tomorrow, I reach my 35th birthday.

Bridges in Croatia: Challenges, Possibilities and Opportunities in International Education

David Starr-Glass, Center for International Programs

I must be the bridge to nowhere
But my true self / And then / I will be useful.

– *The Bridge Poem,* Donna Kate Ruskin

I.

For the last 20 years, I have been engaged in what is described as "international" education and although I have always had some awareness of what that meant, it is only more recently that I have been compelled to more carefully articulate the different meanings assigned to "international" and to reflect on the challenges and opportunities contained in these meanings. Much of this recent consideration was suggested by a visit I made to Croatia in the summer of 2006 [1]. Ostensibly, the visit was to attend an international summer course for learning Croatian; however, it was patent to all participants that an understanding of the language was only one of the benefits with which we left. We were all, to varying degrees, enriched by the international nature of the experience; some of us tried more consciously to explore how that international context had been catalytic in the changes we experienced. In this short essay, I would like to consider why I thought I was going to Croatia, what I actually experienced there, and to reflect on what seem to me to be the rich challenges, possibilities, and opportunities in international education.

Learning a New Language: The Anticipated Cogitative Experience

For several years, I have been with the Center for International Programs as a member of the faculty team working with the unit in Prague. Most of my students are Czechs but a sizeable proportion come from other countries of Central, Eastern and Southeastern Europe. Within this context I have always self-identified as a mentor, which I understand as constructing bridges that bring learning participants (both mentor and mentee) to a shared educational engagement. With such considerations in mind, even a limited appreciation of the active learner's language, culture, and social history provides a valuable way of identifying the bridges that might be built and of initiating their co-construction.

In the Prague unit the language of instruction is English; however, acquiring even a basic knowledge of the learner's primary language allows a mentor not only to understand the student's world from a fundamentally different perspective but also demonstrates respect, appreciation, and interest for the "otherness" that the student brings to the learning experience (DiMaria, 2006). Further, in cultural contexts where a significant status difference is recognized between instructor and learner – potentially disingenuous to mentoring – the instructor's voluntary assumption of vulnerability in learning and speaking the student's language encourages a reconsideration of cultural stereotypes of power distance, difference, status, and exclusion (Kolman, Noorderhaven, Hofstede and Dienes, 2003; Tett, 2000). Most of my Czech students have later commented favorably, sometimes quite emotionally, on my willingness to initiate even a curtailed, grammatically precarious excursion into Czech: a beautiful but far-from-easy language.

It was for reasons of bridge building and intercultural awareness that I decided to learn Croatian, a Southern Slavic language. Many of my students have been Croats. They were always patient in allowing me to practice my basic Croatian, and enthusiastic in advocating a more structured study of the language, culture, and history of their homeland. Indeed, one of my Croatian student, aware of my interests, researched summer programs in language and culture and advised me to attend an international language program in Zadar an ancient, picturesque, walled port on the Dalmatian coast [2]. Her recommendation turned out

to be excellent. It also was she who, when I later confessed doubts about ever really mastering Croatian, said "Ah but that's not really the point is it?"

She was again correct: The point of learning Croatian is not necessarily to understand Croatian.

An International Course: Beyond Linguistic Skills

While my initial considerations of the course were intellectual and academically, the first experience was emotional. The four-hour bus journey from Zagreb to Zadar was spectacular. We progressed through rolling plains with considerable agricultural activity, to vast broad-leafed primeval forests; then, to towering weathered rock outcrops often pierced by long well-lit tunnels; then, through maritime forests of conifers and shrubby Holm Oak, before that dramatic moment when we finally caught sight of the sea.

The sea was not a foreign domain separate from the land; it was more that the landscape became fractured and punctuated by vast stretches of water with tiers of elongated islands lying close and parallel to the coastline. Land and sea merged to form a dramatic, unified scenery – a powerful and magical experience. This was the Dalmatian coast of Croatia and I felt excited and happy to be there.

Over the next three weeks, I learned enough Croatian vocabulary and grammar to read simple texts and conduct short conversations. It was wonderful to see meaning loom out of the linguistic mists and to recognize that communication, while limited and tentative, was nevertheless possible. Fears about confounding my modest Czech language skills did not materialize: I was able to keep each language in separate linguistic pockets, while at the same time appreciating the

similarities and points of connectedness between the two Slavic languages.

But there was another dimension to the experience: an exploration of the dynamics of our little learning community. While the common working language was English, my beginner's class of six students comprised people from Austria, Belgium, Germany, Israel, Italy and Switzerland: I (the Israeli) was the only native English speaker on the program. This linguistic and cultural richness initially provided the opportunity for discussions about expressions in our primary languages, loan words, and grammatical comparisons. Further, while our instructor taught us standard Croatian, he was from the Dalmatian coast and provided a valued insight into local dialect, customs, and culture of the area. These were things that we looked for when we went beyond the classroom.

My experience was only partially a linguistic one. There were 25 students on the program, predominantly from Austria and Germany. About half of the participants had a Croatian spouse, parent, or grandparent and wanted to learn, or improve, their language skills to communicate more effectively, or to strengthen identification with their heritage. The others were professional translators with the EU; graduate historians and economists contemplating research in Croatia; scholars of history interested in the time and conditions of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, when Croatia was an included albeit distanced region; and, regional European administrators with growing Croat immigrant populations. We worked together to acquire linguistic skills. We talked together outside the classroom. We worked together to create and sustain new friendships. We worked together to create meaning – new meaning – about one another, about our histories, and our perception of difference.

Over those three weeks we coalesced into a very close-knit social group. In the mornings and afternoons we were serious about learning, or improving, our Croatian language skills; in the evenings we discussed the other things in which we were interested and involved. Predominant themes included the historic complexities of the region; political, economic and social convergence

(as witnessed by the enlargement of the European Union and Croatia's petition for entry); and, often passionate reconstructions of distinctive – and often divisive – regionalism and nationalism. It was exciting to listen to discussions about these issues, presented with a depth of historical and cultural knowledge and mingled with the personal reflections and experiences of this thoughtful group of Europeans.

While I self-identify as European (I was born and educated in Scotland, which always has had a more Continental outlook than our more insular south-of-the border neighbors), I have lived for the last 30 years in California and Israel and my friends and colleagues are mostly American. Thus there was an excitement of re-navigating old ideas, of forming associations with new-found European friends, and of exploring new histories and personal narratives that had not been part of my old world map.

It was challenging to hear discussions on World War II from Austrian and German historians. It was powerful and deeply moving to have young Austrians and Germans take me – the only and very visible Jew present – and discuss the Holocaust, from their own perspective and from the perspectives of their grandparents. We sat in Croatia with its own history of inflamed nationalism, frustration, and periods of mindless barbarism – the World War II concentration camp of Pag was only a few miles to our north. As we sat another war, savage and without any possibility of being won, was being prosecuted in northern Israel and southern Lebanon. News and images from that war were discussed and analyzed daily. The issues discussed were more the general challenges of identity, mutual respect, coexistence, and aspirations for the future – the challenges that confront all of us whether Israeli, Palestinian, or Croat.

These discussions were not simply displays of erudition or academic chattering. Rather, they mirrored motifs of interest and explored issues of concern in our home countries and in the country in which we were studying. Croatia has a history that is complex and at times brain numbing. For the last thousand years the region has seen domination, exploitation, and repression from its more powerful neighbors to the

north and the west. Croatia, and Slovenia to the north, have always seen themselves are part of a greater Western European world; indeed, from the time of the establishment of Byzantium, Croats perceived themselves as constituting a buffer state between Rome and Constantinople, between west and east.

> *We worked together to acquire linguistic skills. We talked together outside the classroom. We worked together to create and sustain new friendships. We worked together to create meaning – new meaning – about one another, about our histories, and our perception of difference.*

Language can never be taught isolated from its history and culture, certainly not in a country where that language is a salient issue in national identity. So Croatian language was presented within a context of linguistic evolution and development, which of perceived necessity, called for an early and unambiguous notion of Croatian nationhood and identity. Croatian, Serbian, and Bosniak have sometimes been referred to as a single language divided by culture but, while this is not absolutely accurate, we witnessed the active reconstruction of a distinctive Croatian linguistic history; a construction that many might see as revisionist.

At the end of three weeks, we had formed connections and made friendships. Many of these slipped away, but some stayed firm: new horizons and new inputs in our individual construction of reality. For example, I formed a deep and enduring friendship with a young Viennese historian from whom I have learned more about living than about Venetian politics and regional dominance in the 15th century.

We all left with a deeper and enriched understanding of the language and culture of the country and region. But we also left with a richer understanding about ourselves and of things that we deemed important. While my own anticipation had been narrowly focused on language acquisition, I left invigorated and enlivened by the sheer beauty of the Dalmatian coast, and by the social interaction and cultural exchange that was perhaps an inevitable product of the experience.

Of course, it turns out that the kinds of knowledge and affective changes that I describe are, in fact, not idiosyncratic at all. Foreign language courses can do a great deal to expose participants to intercultural and international complexities, differences, and understandings (Planken, van Hooft and Korzilius, 2004). The gains of our little learning community, unexpected but perhaps inevitable, were the result of participant diversity, openness, and willingness to form a community of consideration, interest, and respect. It is the warmth and cohesiveness of that community that I will remember, perhaps even more clearly that the intricacy of grammatical conjugations.

II.

The Ambiguity of International Education

Leach (1969), in an early definition of international education (also termed internationalism) focuses on territorial considerations. An institution in country A wants to educate its own students in country B (unilateral internationalism); or cooperating educational institutions, normally at the university level, in countries A and B exchange students (bilateral internationalism); or more than two countries participate, or are engaged in funding, the exchange (multilateral internationalism). In all of these situations, "international" refers to the involvement of different sovereign states; however, it is normally the case that the education students receive is essentially the same as they would have received in their home countries. Richard Pearce (1994) has referred to this as a "cultural bubble" effect. The cultural bubble may be pricked somewhat, in the case of bilateral and

multilateral arrangements, but even here the scope of such programs is often limited and not generally involved with changing ways of thinking.

Part of the confusion with "international" education, is that it also is understood in the literature not as a matter of physical location but as an overriding philosophical concept.

James Cambridge and Jeff Thompson, in their critical interpretation of Leach, suggest that in unilateral international contexts, where the students are predominantly expatriates, "[they] may see no value accruing from their engagement with the culture of the host country" (Cambridge and Thompson, 2004, p. 166). Of interest are situations in which the international schools are operated not for expatriates but for host nationals: a school from country A operates in country B and provides a bubble of country A's culture for nationals of B. One wonders whether, in choosing to attend such schools, host nationals are making statements about their ambient culture or simply rationalizing their lack of inclusion in local higher education systems? One wonders whether administrators in international programs are making assumptions about the reasons for host national participation, consciously or unconsciously? One also wonders about the degree to which students and administrators are expressing a "lack of confidence in the indigenous educational system of the host country" (Pearce, 2003)? These are questions and the answers might not necessarily be found in the application documents (or rationales) filed by students. What is clear, however, is that international programs cannot exist within a vacuum: cultural, social, and educational values inevitable attach, and are represented, within such contexts even when not made explicit.

Part of the confusion with "international" education, is that it also is understood in the literature not as a matter of physical location but as an overriding philosophical concept. International and internationalism, in this latter sense, represent ways of purposefully seeking to reduce national barriers, boundaries, and distinctions. In this understanding of international education, the goal is to shape graduates, "willing to understand other nations" (Röhrs, 1970, p. 125). The educational dynamic, "emphasizes personal development of the individual in affective rather than cognitive terms … . [understanding it] in terms of being a *process* rather that as a *product*" (Cambridge amd Thompson, 2004, p. 167, italics added).

Here, international education is perceived in a radically different manner: it is a process of reducing social, cultural, and national difference; of popping the cultural bubble; and of empowering graduates to understand difference and diversity as inevitable challenges, as positive dimensions, in their future interconnectedness (Starr-Glass, 2006b).

Internationalism in a Global Context

If the term international is ambiguous and capable of producing different potential organizational missions and objectives, then globalization is even more complex. For some, globalization is seen from an economic and marketplace perspective: effective interconnected markets; reduction of national market barriers; increased competition; and the elimination of state-sponsored monopolies. This would suggest a border-free global continuity for goods, services, and inputs such as labor and capital; the antithesis of distinctive, separated, national states working to promote and protect their individual marketplaces. Seen as an irreversible and inescapable economic evolutionary process, national economies may be thought to converge to a global unity; however, this does not appear to be taking place. Globalization, many critics have claimed, has led to entrenched economic fragmentation in the form of local trading communities (such as the EU) and the marginalization of the most vulnerably outlying countries.

However, in a commonly cited definition, globalization is recognized in a broader, other-than-economic way:

> a process (or set of processes) which embodies a transformation in the spatial organization of social relations and transactions – assessed in terms of their extensity, intensity, velocity and impact – generating transcontinental or interregional flows and networks of activity, interaction, and exercise of power (Held, McGrew, Goldblatt and Perraton, 1999, p. 16).

Here, globalization is understood in terms of, "the widening, deepening, and speeding up of worldwide connectedness in all aspects of contemporary social life" (Held *et al.,* 1999, p. 2). Such interconnectedness neither eliminates, nor reduces, national distinction or difference *per se,* whereas the anticipated "transcontinental or interregional flows and networks" present inevitable and complex social and cultural challenges.

If a naïve economic understanding is used as the metaphor for educational mission statements and educational objectives in globalize international contexts, then we might understand knowledge as a private (rather than public) good, acquired in open markets by students who are essentially transnational consumers. We also might see convergence in the values of education; the eradication of academic barriers in terms of internationally recognized higher education accreditation and the universal acceptance of degrees. Further, in adopting a one-dimensional economic metaphor, higher education providers in these markets would be conscious of, and perhaps judged by, concerns such as "new managerialism, academic capitalism, and entrepreneurship" (Clark, 1998; Slaughter and Leslie, 1997; and also see Deem, 2001). While such new managerialism and academic entrepreneurship are increasingly evidenced by those engaged in international education, there is no evidence of a convergence of educational values.

If the metaphor for international education is not to be rooted in a naïve economic understanding of the process of globalization, then education providers might consider metaphors that are multi-dimensional and recognize the broader social and political ramifications of globalization. Such models might recognize the challenges and opportunities of providing knowledge aimed at reducing difference and confronting more extensive communication, cultural and social challenges.

Of course, a degree of managerialism, capitalism, and entrepreneurship is imperative for finding and remaining in international educational marketplaces; however, the possibility of other-than-economic considerations in globalization suggest that content, curriculum, and process are vitally essential. Such a perspective of international education resonates with the notion that, "[it] emphasizes the personal development of the individual in affective rather than cognitive terms … " (Cambridge and Thompson, 2004, p. 167).

Challenges, Possibilities and Opportunities

We construct our realities – and dreams for that matter – in ways that are unique and that embody deep concepts of structure, order, and congruence. Earlier, I mentioned that my educational philosophy is encapsulated in mentoring: in the co-construction of bridges that bring learning participants to a shared educational exploration. I also see education as very much a *dynamic process,* rather than *a product.* Therefore, it is understandable that I see knowledge production in international settings as one of recognizing, respecting, and exploring difference. If mentoring is a process of the co-construction between several learning participants (one of whom – the mentor – is hopefully more aware of the subject matter and also the dynamics of mentoring), then international education is an analogous process, in which the co-construction spans not simply individuals and their differences but rather the richer – and often more contentious and more salient – differences of race, ethnicity, history, culture, and society.

Education is not simply economics. While embedded within an economic system, education also is embedded within other systems: social, cultural, and political. Education is a process with content, and that content – curriculum, syllabus, learning objectives, evaluation processes, etc. – is

never neutral: it always conveys values and attitudes. Education is a process with its own dynamics; with ways of actively assembling, reviewing, and internalizing new knowledge; pathways for reconsidering prior assumptions and positions; and, an active exchange between participants.

The challenge in international settings is to recognize and explore implicit assumptions, values, and attitudes and see to what extent they are helpful and constructive in the bridge building process. As educators, we should perhaps be more alert to these challenges and more sensitive to the opportunities that are presented by international teaching. If the outcome is an awareness of interconnectedness then care, and a respectful sensitivity, must be exercised in case international education is seen by "relevant publics" as reinforcing suspicions or concerns about elitism, cultural dominance, or intellectual (or perhaps more specifically of an American intellectual) hegemony.

> *At best that educational content is one in keeping with the demands, challenges, and paradoxes of the society within which the process is embedded.*

Naive economists often casually equate globalization with Americanization: this is actually not true. Students do not want to buy "American" education. In global markets they want to buy education that is appropriate to that "widening, deepening, and speeded up worldwide interconnectedness." A recurring theme among the students with whom I speak in Central Europe is not their desire to be transnational citizens or consumers, or to work in America (even if they could get a visa in the wake of 9/11), but their vision of remaining in their homelands and making a contribution to regional transformations. Perhaps the challenge for international

education programs is to develop educational content that might make these aspirations realizable?

Even if international education is viewed from a one-dimensional economic analysis, where it is seen more as produce than process, it would seem fitting to afford the analysis with the dignity of a more robust market approach. This might include an analysis of potential markets and consideration of the cultural and social differences that marketers would normally understand exist in new markets. It also would suggest that a deeper understanding of consumer behavior is important in launching the product. Marketing, in spite of what many critics have suggested, remains concerned about present, and anticipated, consumer needs. Marketers consider consumers – whether students or parents, American or non-American – as ultimately discerning and discretionary buyers, not vacant ciphers.

International educational contexts bring the educator face-to-face with a vast array of challenges, possibilities, and opportunities. They also beg questions of responsibility and accountability. Essentially, these questions and responsibilities are no different from those that confront the home-side educational provider, indeed one thing that often confounds creative and effective international education is a superficial genuflection to "difference" – the focus on the "sari, samosas, and steel band" as Pasternak has quipped (Pasternak, 1998, p. 260).

Students, parents, legislators, employers, and licensing authorities – whether international or domestic – want assurance that educational content and process are appropriate and delivered effectively. At best that educational content is one in keeping with the demands, challenges, and paradoxes of the society within which the process is embedded.

Similarly, in international settings the word "international" in say a course described as "International Marketing," does not represent an exotic variant. The study of marketing anywhere requires an understanding of the context in which the processes will be applied. There is no need for a colorful curriculum for "International Marketing" when the class consists of the representatives of a dozen countries, taught by an expatriate American in the Czech Republic. The course is more correctly understood as "Marketing" and should focus on the core issues of marketing; its presentation inevitably invites the contribution and consideration of the context of the course – it is that context that provides and (hopefully) guarantees that marketing is understood internationally [3].

> *The nature and complexity of change, the fragmentation of images and stereotypes, the awareness of resource availability and utilization, and a growing realization of ecological inevitabilities, have not happened "out there;" rather, they have happened "in here."*

Marketing is not an American or British phenomenon that has to be finetuned for "other users." While both America and Britain have distinctive approaches to marketing these themselves are only variations on a theme: marketing is a construct that has to be fashioned out of the shared assumptions, experiences, and socio-economic context of those who wish to understand and make use of it. This was something powerfully brought home when I myself taught marketing using an American textbook, to Belgian students, in Jerusalem – cultural sensitivity was required (required, not suggested) in order to allow text, students, and location to complement one another and produce meaning (Starr-Glass, 1996).

Seen as a process, not a commodity, international education presents exciting prospects of engagement with students, localities, employers and markets that are in transition. This is particularly true within Eastern, Central and Southeastern Europe. The scene is set for the transfer of ideas and the crafting of new approaches that incorporate difference and diversity. It also is set for the establishment of networks of knowledge that potentially add to regional economic and social transformation, and the accumulation of social capital (Starr-Glass, 2006a; 2006b).

When erecting bridges, engineers work from both ends simultaneously. Within an international context, bridge construction, whether understood in interpersonal or supranational terms, can only result if both students and faculty are sensitized to such possibilities. For students, this requires the crafting of relevant communication and creative skills in coursework and assignments: it is essentially a question of curriculum and syllabus (Starr-Glass, 1996).

For faculty, an awareness of the challenges and possibilities is best encouraged by effective faculty development that is sensitive of the international and intercultural dimension. For administrators and curriculum designers, while academic managerialism and capitalistic perspectives are understandable, there should be an overriding awareness of the dynamics of the educational processes, provision of institutional and academic space for exchange, and the privileging of internationalism. The cultivation of education, especially in areas of difference and diversity, surely goes beyond short-term instrumentalism.

Lastly, international education is not something that is done "out there." It is a process rich in considerations and perspectives that are critical in the 21st century, when we are all coming to terms with living in the global village. The nature and complexity of change, the fragmentation of images and stereotypes, the awareness of resource availability and utilization, and a growing realization of ecological inevitabilities, have not happened "out there;" rather, they have happened "in here." An international dimension an add-on consideration in "external" environments; it is a component of all educational endeavors.

International education is no longer a distant, or peripheral activity, but one that has value and significance in our lives, in our learning communities, and in our college. International education potentially allows insight and experiences of many of these pressing issues to be recognized and shared by a much larger audience. Stateside linkage with international units, the flow of students and faculty, the initiation of research and debate, the cross-fertilization of ideas and approaches, all enhance the social capital of the institution – they can no longer be relegated to outer margins, or viewed as peripheral excursions into exotica.

Donna Kate Ruskin [4] reminds us that there is essentially great futility in trying to be a bridge between blocs of difference. Neither the blocs of difference nor the linking structure are what matters. What is significant is the process of bridging.

As educators – especially those of us fortunate enough to work in international settings – we may recognize difference and we try to encourage the co-construction of bridging structures; however, we cannot be the bridge. It is not about products separated from an inclusive ecological system; however, we can initiate the process. In creating meaning and in educational contexts bridges have no ownership and it is always suspect when one side makes such a claim. The amazing things about bridges – whether constructed between individuals or between individuals distanced by culture – is that, if they are co-constructed with transparency, respect, and compassion they end up reaching our true selves. In my experience, those who thoughtfully and respectfully engage in international education – whether faculty, student, or institution – are themselves presented with richly transformative opportunities: bridges to ourselves as well as to others.

End Notes

[1] Attendance of the international language workshop in Croatia was made possible, in part, by a grant from the State University of New York, Empire State College faculty development fund, which is gratefully acknowledged.

[2] For an initial exploration of Zadar and its history see the Wikipedia reference, retrieved March 28, 2007. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zadar.

[3] The redundancy of "international" in "International Marketing" is a point that has been made on many occasions by my good friends and Empire State College colleague Tanweer Ali, who also is a member of the Center for International Programs.

[4] Donna Kate Ruskin, The Bridge Poem, retrieved March 28, 2007. http://academic.udayton.edu/race/poetry/bridge.htm.

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Evening Ice Storm

The Movement of Still Images

Chabrielle Cartrette, Center for Distance Learning

When I was 22 years old, I was engaged to a wonderful man. We were only weeks away from our wedding, when suddenly he died of heart failure. I cannot begin to describe the shock that ran through my life. As I began cleaning through his things, I became aware of how still they all seemed now that he was no longer living. I was not yet able to be away from his personal things, especially, for some reasons, his shoes, and could not handle having them physically in front of me. So I went to my camera and began taking photographs. This became my therapy. The images captured the stillness that had overtaken my life so abruptly and gave me the opportunity to transition from him being alive to him being gone. I surrounded myself with these images and they brought me comfort.

After this experience, I began to see the world around me differently. I began to see life as many still images piled on top of one another to make movement. And suddenly, I had found the genre of artistic expression that I had always known was within me.

There are many ways that people see the world. It took me years to fully appreciate this revelation. Because any human being only sees from his or her vantage point, we can at times forget that things look differently to someone else, which made me apprehensive about showing my work. But, over time, as I began to share my photographs, my confidence grew. I began to understand that my vision, like anyone else's, is unique. That, for me, is the very key to the art of photography.

The images in this series were created from seeing beauty in the way sunlight forms interesting patterns in everyday objects. I wanted to still those moments and capture them for later appreciation. My camera lens has helped me to stop and see what could easily be passed over.
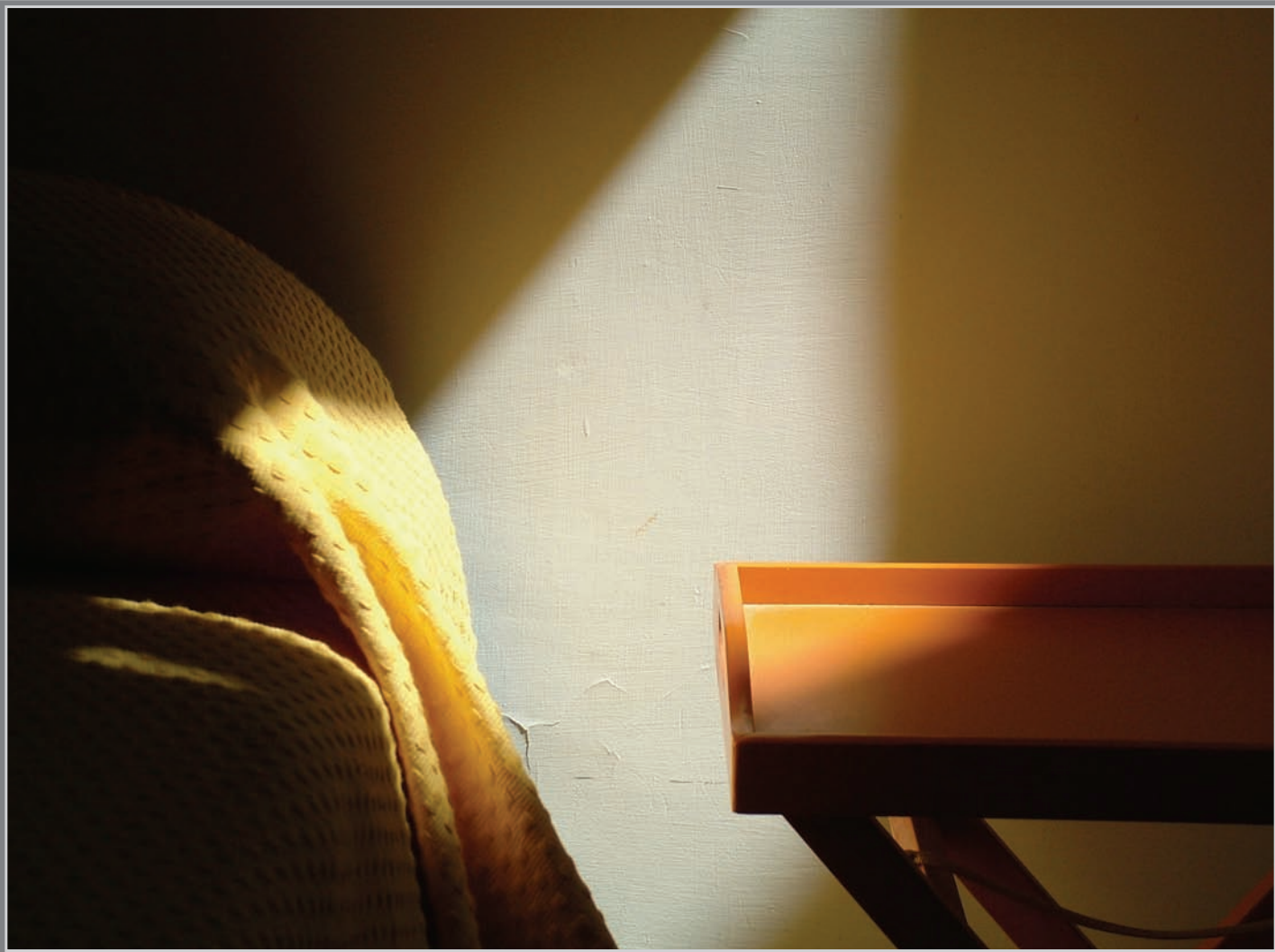
Dawn in Venice

Frozen Tines

Rusted Bridge

Italy Arch

Entrance

Lucca Wall

Fountain

Lighting in Vernazza

Canal Reflections

The Neuroscience of the Mentor-Learner Relationship

Sandra Johnson, Niagara Frontier Center

I.
Introduction

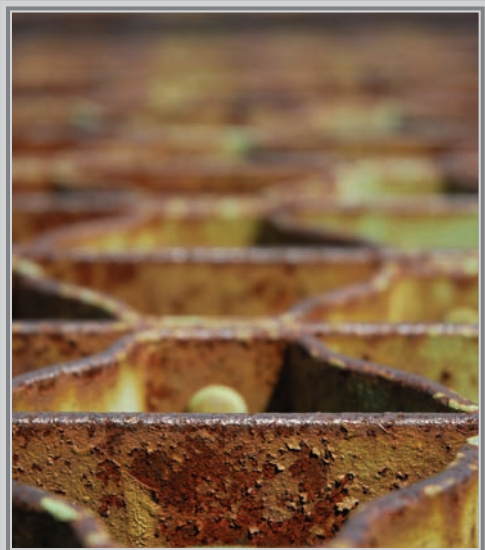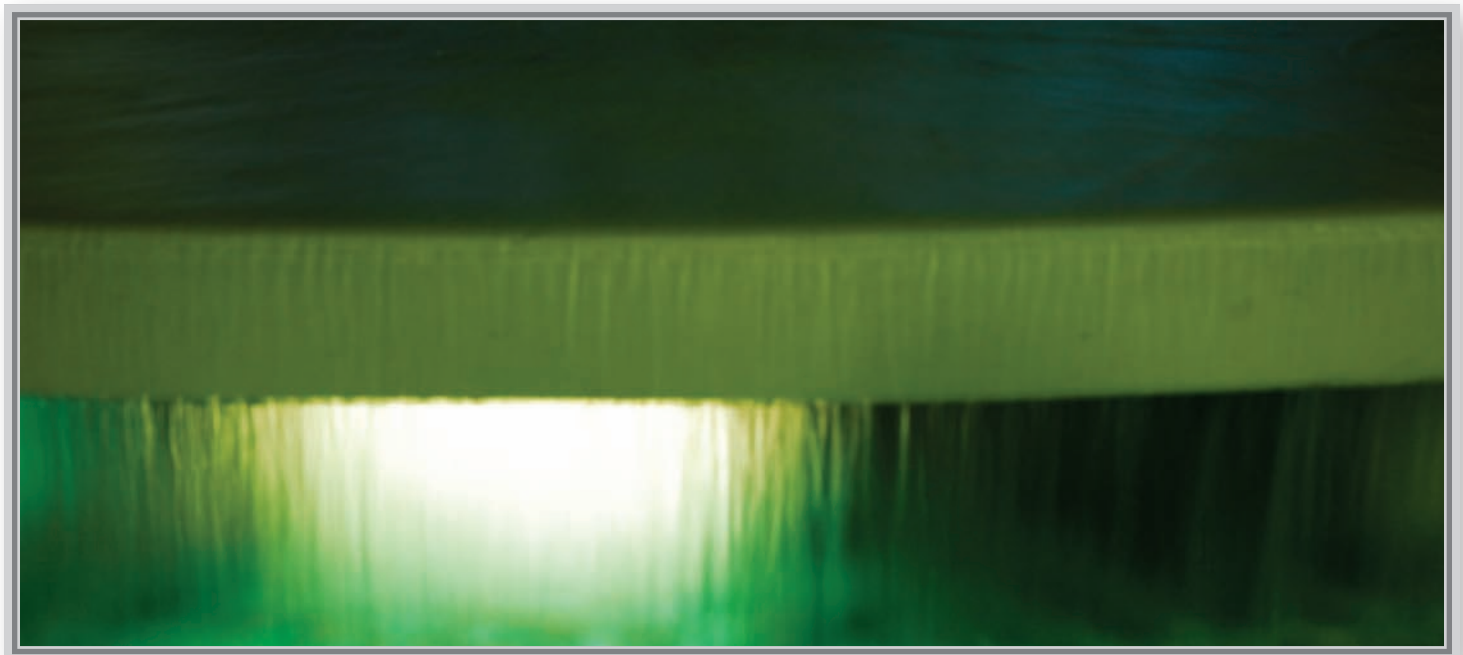*Neuroscientists are now assisting educators in understanding how the brain learns in order to understand best practices in teaching. The National Science Foundation has selected many major universities to fund centers for the science of learning. These centers will use a multidisciplinary team that includes researchers from cognitive neuroscience, psychology, and education to explore how the brain learns (National Science Foundation, 2005).*

Adult learning is profiting from the recent advances in cognitive neuroscience and social cognitive neuroscience. The monograph *The Neuroscience of Adult Learning* that I co-edited with Kathleen Taylor (2006), looks at cognitive neuroscience as the neuroscientific underpinnings of important aspects of adult learning such as: the role of emotions and meaning in adult education, the mentor-student relationship, how the brain learns and changes (neuroplasticity), how the executive function can be sabotaged,

Sandra Johnson

cumulative stress and learning, reflection and critical thinking, and how to engage the higher regions of the brain in learning.

What follows is a brief overview of the chapters of our book, followed by two essays adapted from the monograph, one by Kathleen Taylor and the other, which I contributed. (Please note that we have combined the reference lists of the Taylor and Johnson pieces, which now follow Kathleen Taylor's essay.)

II.
The Neuroscience of Adult Learning: An Overview

The first chapter of the book, "Key Aspects of How the Brain Learns," offers an overview of the brain and how it works, with particular attention to implications for adult educators. James Zull, a biochemist and biologist, describes brain architecture and links brain function to Kolb's learning model, which is familiar to many adult educators. Zull discusses the neuroscience of the reflective process, abstract thinking/creativity according to Kolb's model, and the neuroscience of emotions of learning and meaning-making and learning.

In chapter two, "Neuroscience and Adult Learning," Louis Cozolino and Susan Sprokay, discuss the brain as a "social organ" that is designed to learn through shared experiences. The authors look at how both the brains of the teacher and the learner change during the process of shared academic experiences and how the reflective process changes the brain and allows for greater plasticity.

Chapter three, "Fear and Learning: Trauma-Related Factors in the Adult Education Process" by psychiatrist Bruce Perry reveals that nearly one-third of adult learners return to the classroom bringing a history of abuse, neglect, developmental chaos, or violence that influences their capacity to learn. And,

too, that there are those students who, in response to stress-inducing pedagogical methods, have acquired cumulative educational trauma. Perry discusses how fear changes thinking, feeling, and behaving and the significant difficulty of learning in a baseline state of fear. He also examines how adult educators can recognize and attenuate the negative effects of trauma.

In chapter four, "Brain Self-Repair in Psychotherapy: Implications for Education," Colin Ross, a psychiatrist, examines the educational implications of the potential for brain "self-repair," that is, reorganization of neuronal networks that can not only alleviate earlier trauma but also enhance current potential. He looks at educational strategies that engage and develop higher brain functions including narrative, reflection, and provisions of a safe or "holding" environment.

Pat Wolfe's chapter, "The Role of Meaning and Emotions in Learning," explores the significance of emotions in learning. Wolfe, an educator, also offers neurophysiological support for constructivist approaches.

Chapter six is entitled, "Experience, Consciousness, and Learning: Implications for Instruction." Its authors, Barry Sheckley and Sandy Bell, explore experiences as the building blocks of consciousness and how this multidimensional consciousness guides cognitive processes. The authors describe how educators can use such an understanding to inform practice.

In chapter seven, "Meaningful Learning and the Executive Functions of the Brain," the authors, Geoffrey Caine and Renate Nummela Caine explore current perspectives on constructivism, meaning-making and the executive functions of the brain. The authors call for both the learner and the teacher to initiate and sustain an optimal state of mind for meaningful learning, which they call "relaxed alertness." Relaxed

alertness means creating conditions that reduce or neutralize the survival response.

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III.
The Neuroscience of the Mentor-Learner Relationship

In the mentor-learner relationship, mentors serve as guides in the journey of developmental learning by helping learners become creators of knowledge. Cognitive neuroscience and social cognitive neuroscience provide evidence of changes in the brain resulting from certain aspects of the mentor-learner relationship. Using these scientific frameworks, this chapter examines how mentors promote learners' development by creating trust, being attuned to learners' emotions, and engaging in social interaction that can lead to greater brain plasticity.

Promoting Development Through Trust

Compared with those adult educators who see their work primarily as helping students master course content, mentors believe that learning promotes development and that "development means successively asking broader and deeper questions of the relationship between oneself and the world" (Daloz, 1986, p. 236). According to Brookfield (1987), this happens through "discerning, exploring, and challenging one's own underlying assumptions about the self, society, and reality" (p. 134). A mentor facilitates this journey by inviting learners to question and challenge their assumptions, and by providing emotional support as they do so. Furthermore, during the uncomfortable period of uncertainty and self-questioning, mentors hold out hope by offering a vision of who learners are becoming and of how they will feel when their new sense of self and voice emerges (Daloz, 1999).

This journey has been described in terms of Perry's landmark research (1968/1999), which identifies learners' transitions from (1) only believing what authorities say to (2) recognizing that authorities clash and may not always have the answer to (3) recognizing that each truth has "its own context, meaning, connections that rest on certain assumptions and contain their own

inner logic" (Daloz, 1999, p. 75) to (4) shifting into contextual relativism, where "our view of the world is transformed" (p. 75). The first step on this developmental journey with the learner is to "engender trust" (Daloz, 1999, p. 122). By doing so, the mentor builds a nurturing relationship and a "holding environment," which foster development. Winnicott (1965) first used the term holding environment to describe how the psychological presence of a caregiver can support a child in beginning to develop her own sense of self.

For adults, according to Daloz (1986), such a holding environment enables us to "consolidate each new sense of self so that we can maintain meaning and coherence in the world and yet remain open to a lifetime of fresh wonders" (p. 190). New technologies that look at the cognitive processes of learning and the neuronal interactions that happen when people interact can now furnish adult educators with scientific understandings of what happens in the brain as a result of the mentor-learner relationship. In short, this new field of educational neuroscience can now demonstrate the vital role of a trusting and safe holding environment in promoting learning and development.

A Neuroscientific Understanding of Trust and Learning

A secure attachment process – one in which trust is established – results in a "cascade of biochemical processes, stimulating and enhancing the growth and connectivity of neural networks throughout the brain" (Schore, 1994, as cited in Cozolino, 2002, p. 191). In other words, caring and encouragement from trusted others promote change in these neuronal networks because the brain is plastic, "in the sense [that] it can be remodeled or physically molded" (Zull, 2002, p. 116). The neuronal networks are also where knowledge is stored; thus, "any change in knowledge must come from some change in neuronal networks" (Zull, 2002, p. 92).

When a mentor is supportive, caring, and encouraging, and offers enthusiasm balanced with an optimal learning environment, learners are assisted in moving their thinking activity into the higher brain regions (the frontal cortex), where reflective activity

and abstract thinking take place. (They are called "higher" regions because they are physically above the more primitive parts of the brain that developed earlier in the evolutionary process.) During this process, the learner's neurotransmitters that power the frontal cortex (dopamine, serotonin, and norepinephrine) are stimulated, leading to greater brain plasticity and hence more neuronal networking and meaningful learning (Cozolino, 2002). Experience (learning) changes the wiring (growth and reorganization of neuronal structures) because it changes the activity in the neurons.

The discovery that a trusting relationship with a mentor is connected to brain reorganization, growth, and learning underscores what adult educators have long held true: if the mentor creates a safe, trusting relationship and holding environment, learners are much more able to reorganize their thinking and move through the progressive stages of the developmental journey. Two powerful processes that involve the mentor contribute to "both the evolution and sculpting of the brain" (Cozolino, 2002, p. 213): social interaction and affective attunement. These two processes "stimulate the brain to grow, organize and integrate" (Cozolino, 2002, p. 213).

> *... if the mentor creates a safe, trusting relationship and holding environment, learners are much more able to reorganize their thinking and move through the progressive stages of the developmental journey.*

Social Interaction and Affective Attunement

Mentors contribute to the growth and development of learners' brains through

social interaction, one form of which is dialogue. Through dialogue, the mentor not only attempts to understand the learner's thoughts, but also raises questions that can stimulate the neuronal process of reflection. While experience is necessary for learning, reflection is required because "reflection is searching for connections – literally" (Zull, 2002, p. 164). Thus, dialogue with a trusted other that promotes reflection is a natural way of learning. Our brains search and make neuronal connections between the presented (new) knowledge and what we already know. Reflection, then, is a cognitive process whereby neuronal connections are made; when such connections are made, we have a restructured neuronal map or mental representation of that knowledge. The more neurons there are firing together (that is, the more connections we make while reflecting), the more complex is our neuronal representation of the topic and the longer that neuronal representation will last (Shors and Matzel, 1997).

Social cognitive neuroscience affirms that over eons our brains have developed physical mechanisms that enable us to learn by social interaction. These physical mechanisms have evolved in order for us to be able to acquire the knowledge we need to keep us emotionally and physically safe (Stern, 2004). They enable us to (1) engage in affective attunement or empathic interaction and language, (2) consider the intentions of the other, (3) try to understand what another mind is thinking, and (4) think about how we want to interact (Stern, 2004). These four developmental abilities are the evolutionary underpinnings for reflective social interaction between a mentor and learner.

The notion of affective attunement, another way that a mentor's intervention supports development, harkens back to Dewey's ([1938] 1997) observations that an educator needs to "have that sympathetic understanding of individuals as individuals which gives him an idea of what is actually going in the minds of those who are learning" (p. 39). According to social cognitive neuroscience, the brain actually needs to seek out an affectively attuned other if it is to learn. Affective attunement alleviates fear, which has been recognized by many in the field of adult learning and

development as an impediment to learning (Brookfield, 1987; Daloz, 1986, 1999; Mezirow and Associates, 1991; Perry, 1968/1999). Our conditioned survival and fear responses come from our primitive brain, also known as the limbic system. We are social beings who look to the tribe for social acceptance; this involves taking on the values and understandings of the tribe. When we begin to question those values – as we do when developing greater cognitive complexity – certain primitive defenses and emotions surface. In effect, when learners start to question authority, they face uncertainty and fear of tribal abandonment (I am not like you and therefore you will reject me).

> *According to social cognitive neuroscience, the brain actually needs to seek out an affectively attuned other if it is to learn. Affective attunement alleviates fear, which has been recognized by many in the field of adult learning …*

As learners continue on toward multiplicity, they may feel overwhelmed by varying viewpoints and by "the uncertainty of not being right." This is the time for a dialectical reflective process that can strengthen the connections between the limbic system and the higher areas of the brain: these are called orbitofrontal-limbic connections (Cozolino, 2002). In other words, dialogue between a trusted, affectively attuned mentor and a learner creates the holding environment that assists the learner in moving his or her emotions from the limbic area to the higher regions of the brain (orbitofrontal cortex), where "the voice of reason" is found and the learner can self-modulate those fears. Thus, as we start to see "through the eyes of another" (Daloz, 1986, p. 226) and are able

to contextualize new information, we move into abstract thinking. During this process, we also experience pleasure chemicals from the basal structure in the front of the brain that produce a reward that motivates the learner to continue to move along this developmental path.

In writing about the role mentors can play in promoting development, Daloz (1986) understood learners' fears and discussed the need for mentors to "help our students to accept the confusion and uncertainty, to feel safe with it; if we encourage them to enter the darkness to explore those terrifying opposites fully enough, there is a good chance they will begin to move through them on their own and begin to discern a meaning in 'the starless air'" (p. 83).

Creating Spaces of Support

How can adult educators as mentors help learners feel safe enough with confusion and uncertainty to enter into this "darkness"? In other words, how can we assist learners in self-modulating the fears that originate in the limbic system? The key is in the spaces created by the mentor-learner relationship, spaces where the learner feels uniquely seen by the mentor, valued, and safe. This type of relationship creates "a kind of two-person hothouse" (Daloz, 1986, p. 221):

> Within its walls, the student can reveal herself in ways that she would not to others for there is an understood quality of trust about it. The relationship becomes a special culture in which certain kinds of growth are encouraged and discouraged. To an extent, the outside world is sealed off, as it must be if this "inside world" is to offer special opportunities not available under ordinary circumstances. Because the experience of being closely listened to is so rare for many people, it can also be just the needed catalyst for the cautious emergence of a new sense of self. By listening, the mentor can give that new self an audience, often for the first time, an ear to hear the first tentative affirmations of a position the student knows to be on her leading edge, ideas too risky to entertain outside the safety of this space, a still tender voice speaking itself into being (Daloz, 1986, p. 221).

Social cognitive neuroscience again provides insight into the effects in the brain of what Daloz has called the "space" where the "outside world is sealed off."

Because our first relationships are with our caregivers, cognitive neuroscientists turned to developmental psychology to research the infant-caregiver relationship. They identified profound implications for our future attachment relationships (Stern, 2004). Gallese believes that an infant and caregiver enter an "intersubjective space" (Frith and Wolpert, 2003). This space is created by the infant and caregiver through the process of emotional resonance (Schore, 2002), or affective attunement. It is in this space that the emotional support of the caregiver brings an infant relief from the intense anxiety and fears that originate from the primitive survival mechanisms in the limbic system. The child cannot do this for herself, which is why children are born with evolutionary physical brain mechanisms that enable them to seek out such attachment and receive support. These brain processes continue to develop across our life span because we continually seek out attachment figures with whom we can engage (Stern, 2004).

A particular type of neuron, a mirror neuron, contributes to affective attunement because it enables us to know empathically what another person is feeling (Stern, 2004). When the learner feels her mentor's care and support, her fears start to subside. If she looks into her mentor's eyes and sees reflected what she can become, she will borrow (take in) that confidence until she can produce her own. In other words, mirror neurons will enable her to feel the confidence that her mentor has in her and to join in that confidence.

Although Daloz (1986) discussed being a mirror for the learner – that is, reflecting back her potential – as a metaphor, literally looking into the eyes of the affectively attuned other is another significant form

of social interaction that can assist in promoting development. Schore (1994) noted that the orbitofrontal cortex can actually be stimulated through eye contact because specific cells are particularly responsive to facial expression and eye gaze. Caring social signals activate this higher region of the brain and promote learner safety. While this does not explain the phenomenon of effective long-distance mentoring relationships in which eye contact cannot physically be made, it can illuminate how the brain functions when trust and a safe environment are established.

Another specialized space in the mentoring relationship is the zone of proximal development, or ZPD (Vygotsky, 1978). Although this space shares many features with a holding environment (including being safe), the ZPD is where "scaffolding" takes place. Given what we now understand about the relationship between dialogue (questioning and the presentation of new viewpoints) and neuronal triggering, scaffolding can be interpreted in new ways: it can be seen as a process in which the new information is taken in, the learner searches for neuronal connections, and the learner then integrates the old and new knowledge into a reconstructed mental representation. Creativity or abstract thinking is carried out by the brain's executive activity in the integrative front brain (Zull, 2002). The brain reflects and manipulates (or rearranges) the reflected information to create new knowledge or new belief systems. The ZPD can thus be seen as an incubator of abstract thinking or creativity – a place where the power of "a still tender self [can speak] her way into being" (Daloz, 1986, p. 222).

Supporting the Development of Creators of Knowledge

There comes a time in learners' developmental journeys when they are not just receivers of knowledge but creators of

it (Zull, 2002). How does a mentor lead a learner into the exhilarating power of her own creative process? Metaphorically speaking, the mentor has a special "radar" or listening device that seeks out the voice of the learner's self. Daloz (1986) believes that "calling the student's voice to emerge is of central importance, for clearly we do not learn to speak unless encouraged to do so, or think without practice" (p. 225).

This type of encouragement from a mentor is vital. Abstract thinking, "can be frightening" (Zull, 2002, p. 179): learners are afraid that their ideas may be wrong and that "since these abstract ideas come from the individual brain, they are bound to be different from the ideas of other brains. Abstract ideas may generate conflict. There will be trouble if we all have different ideas" (p. 179). With the emergence of her own voice through the mentor's support, the learner can now take part in a new world – one in which she can contribute through the action of her unique ideas and, best of all, feel the power of her creative spirit, understand the evolvement of that creativity, and perhaps eventually assist another on the evolving journey.

Recent discoveries in cognitive neuroscience and social cognitive neuroscience reveal to educators and mentors of adults the neurological effects and importance of creating a trusting relationship, a holding environment, and an intersubjective space, such as the ZPD, where reflection and abstract thinking can happen. If mentors are to assist learners on the journey from dualistic to multiplistic to contextual thinking, it means choosing to be the guide who "points the way through the fire" (Daloz, 1999, p. 244).

Brain Function and the Mentor's Role

Kathleen Taylor, Graduate School of Education, St. Mary's College of California

Some years ago, as a member of Sandra Johnson's doctoral committee, I found I could not respond effectively to her thesis unless I read several of her citations to research on how the brain actually learns. I was excited to discover that many "best practices" in adult learning correspond to emerging understandings about brain function. This article, which is adapted from a chapter in the recently published New Directions volume on brain function and adult learning I subsequently co-edited with Sandra (Jossey-Bass, 2006), will describe a few of these connections.

Learning and Experience

Experience is the basis of all learning. Everything we know begins with the body's reaction to an event, which leads eventually (through processes that need not be detailed here) to create a network of neural connections we call memory. Although it was synthesized from the philosophical and observational analyses of Dewey, Piaget, and Lewin, David Kolb's (1984) description of learning from experience is a surprisingly accurate description of how the brain gets from sensory input to meaningful learning. For example, James Zull (2002) describes the anatomy of learning in terms of *gathering, reflecting, creating and testing*. These correspond nicely to the learning cycle positions of *concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization and active experimentation.*

The implication for our practice as adult educators concerns the need to start with an adult's experience. Yet many of us tend to introduce new material by starting with the Big Picture, situating the content in terms of the broader field in which we are expert, and then narrowing to particulars. Rather than start with what the learner might (or might not) understand, we focus on what we ourselves understand. Though we do this with the best of intentions, the learner's concrete experience is focused largely on listening to us make meaning.

Even so, the brain's approach to processing new data is to search for some experiential connection on which to build. Absent that opportunity, adults easily fall into the habit of treating the material as something to be memorized, rather than understood. A more effective approach may be for us to first *create* an experience that will enable our learners to "back into" the new topic, rather than meet it head-on. For example, a typical frontal approach to introducing various adult development theories would probably be to first outline how the field of development emerged from the field of psychology, and then to describe major distinctions among various developmental theories, such as age, stage, life task, and so on, associating each with a major theorist. The readings assigned as homework would then fill in more detail.

A more experience-based approach, by contrast, might be to start by asking each adult learner to quickly sketch on a timeline the important personal and professional milestones of his or her life. A class would then be organized in small groups by age and gender, in order to develop a common narrative, or typical life journey, based on their combined timelines. From these representative narratives, an instructor could draw out the framework of a developmental progression, underscoring gender and age-cohort differences.

With the latter approach, the material ceases to be "what the teacher wants us to learn," and becomes instead an illumination of the learners' own life journeys. Thus, rather than adult development being primarily an academic concept, it is recognized as something familiar, of which each of them is a living example. (This and other experiential activities are described more fully in *Developing Adult Learners* [Taylor, Marienau, and Fiddler, 2000], which was written before I had read any research on brain function, but which nevertheless accords with it.)

Although some introductory context for new learning (so-called "advance organizers") can be helpful, they are just as useful *after* the learner has activated a neural network based on his or her own current, prior, or tacit experience.

Narrative Process

Telling a story – including "feeling, thoughts, behaviors, and sensations" – has the potential to "rewire" the brain (Cozolino, 2002, p. 169-70). When adults are given the space and time to describe their experiences with and feelings about a topic, not with the intention of coming up with a right answer, but simply to work through their own process of thinking, they are engaging in narrative. The narrative approach can be even more effective when it is a springboard to peer discussion, because this "co-construction" of narratives includes "significant social relationships [that] build and shape the brain" (p. 292).

Journals are a specialized subset of the narrative process that can encourage adult learners to "develop as knowers … [who understand] that knowledge is constructed by the self and others and that truth is contextual" (Walden, 1995, p. 13). Journals can create a "distinction between the minimum self and the narrative self. The former is an immediate consciousness of one's self, and the latter is a coherent self-consciousness that extends with past and future stories that we tell about ourselves" (Le Doux, 2002, p. 20).

Autobiography is related to narrative and journaling, with the additional proviso that its primary focus is past experience. This way of story-telling also supports development of greater cognitive complexity: "To the extent that our life's experiences contribute to who we are, implicit and explicit memory storage constitute key mechanisms through which

the self is formed and maintained … To be self-aware is to retrieve from long-term memory our understanding of who we are and [make that explicit]" (Le Doux, 2002, p. 28). However, the implicit, hidden parts of the self continue to affect everything we are and do. Therefore, to the extent that we can make explicit those aspects of our systems of thought that were formerly implicit, we develop more flexible, inclusive ways of knowing. (Prior experiential learning documentation, particularly as described by Lamoreaux [2005] is yet another kind of semi-autobiographical narrative process.)

Non-Veridical Learning

Most teaching focuses on veridical learning – that is, how to get right answers to problems constructed for that purpose. However, according to Zull (2002), getting exact answers uses a different part of the brain than decisions that involve comparisons, interpretations, and approximations. Veridical learning also draws primarily on the part of the brain most associated with memorization, and that tends to look toward the concrete past. By contrast, "ill-structured" problems – those that are open-ended, have many possible "solutions," and are far more likely to occur in the real world – require the part of the brain that makes plans, decisions, and choices, and creatively looks toward the future (Zull, 2002).

Transformational Learning and Reflection

Transformational learning practice (Mezirow, 1991, 2000) emphasizes meaning-making based on discourse and critical reflection. Such reflective learning depends on discovering and challenging one's own and others' assumptions as a step in establishing new meaning perspectives. These new perspectives can lead to more than just reframes of current ideas; they foster qualitatively more complex ways of understanding and knowing (Kegan, 2000).

The frontal lobes, also called the "executive brain," which Goldberg (2001) identifies as the "most uniquely 'human' of all the components of the human brain…the 'organ of civilization'" (p. 23-24), are the most likely seat of this accomplishment. Kegan's

(2000) description of epistemological "trans-form-ation" is echoed by Goldberg's description of how the brain might create such new constructs: "the organism must go beyond the mere ability to *form* internal representations … [or] models of the world outside. It must acquire the ability to *manipulate* and *transform* these models (original emphasis, 2001, p. 25).

Reflecting on and questioning one's presuppositions is one way of manipulating and transforming mental models. For example, in their longitudinal research on "learning that lasts," Mentkowski and Associates (2000) found that "when learners reflect on deeply held personal beliefs and assumptions, they embrace a transforming developmental challenge, pulling their self-awareness into an awareness of themselves in a wider world" (p 202).

> *Still, many adult educators have among their goals as educators outcomes that parallel those of professional counseling: greater self-awareness, less anxiety, heightened self-responsibility, increased cognitive complexity.*

The Role of Emotion and "Teaching as Care"

The brain responds to every experience with various alterations in body chemistry – changes that are the substrate of emotion (Damasio, 1999). Some of these changes lead us to run away from a bear or toward a lover; they can also enhance or retard our capacity to learn. When activated in the way associated with, "Aha! What's this? Maybe something interesting?" the brain is on alert in a positive, receptive way. But when there is a potential threat – "The instructor is going to call on me and I won't know the answer" – the brain is less available for learning. Indeed, "emotions influence our

thinking more than thinking influences our emotion" (Zull, 2002, p. 75).

Long-term memory – that is, circuits made up of durable neuronal patterns – is particularly affected by emotions. Generally, the more powerful the emotion that accompanied the initial experience, the more lasting the memory (with the exception of dissociative experiences where trauma has led to "loss" of memory). Since the more complex kinds of self-awareness – involving higher brain functions and the potential for changes in neural networks that correspond to changes in our way of knowing – cannot be accomplished when a person feels anxious and defensive, *"a safe and empathic relationship"* is necessary to "establish an emotional and neurobiological context conducive to the work of neural reorganization" (Cozolino, 2002, original emphasis, p. 291).

However, even as we attend to learners' emotional states, we do not "do therapy." Still, many adult educators have among their goals *as educators* outcomes that parallel those of professional counseling: greater self-awareness, less anxiety, heightened self-responsibility, increased cognitive complexity. The appropriate role for an educator fostering these outcomes has been described by Daloz in terms of "teaching as care."

Adults who experience learning as growthful and changing can nevertheless feel they are standing on the edge of a precipice. "Transformative learning, especially when it involves subjective reframing, is often an intensely threatening emotional experience in which we have to become aware of both the assumptions undergirding our ideas and those supporting our emotional responses to the need to change" (Mezirow, 2000, pp. 5 - 7). And as Brookfield has famously pointed out, learning to question assumptions can, in some communities, lead to "cultural suicide" (1990, p. 153).

There are no simple directions for providing appropriate support for another's journey of development, but Daloz provides memorable and meaningful accounts of his work with adult learners. "When we no longer consider learning to be primarily the acquisition of knowledge, we can no longer view teaching as the bestowal of it. If learning is about growth and growth requires trust, then

teaching is about engendering trust, about nurturance – caring for growth. Teaching is thus preeminently an act of care" (Daloz, 1999, p. 237).

Even so, care and nurturance must include sufficient challenge. This approach to the mentoring relationship – a balance of support and challenge – is confirmed by the literature on brain function: "We appear to experience optimal development and integration in a context of a balance of nurturance and *optimal* stress" (emphasis added, Cozolino, 2002, p. 62).

Conclusion

I do not mean to claim that the literature on brain function is the Philosopher's Stone on adult learning. Nor do I think it is important that my colleagues in the field of adult education become fluent in describing brain architecture (I most certainly am not!). I do, however, however, hope to expand the boundaries of our discourse on teaching and learning practices.

In so doing, I am struck by how important it is to acknowledge that we – adult educators – are also engaged in a lifelong process of development, and may be experiencing challenges similar to those that we pose for our learners. How do we respond to ideas that call into question our beliefs about our roles as educators? How open are we to co-constructing narratives of our practice? How effectively can we bring multiple perspectives to bear? As Cozolino describes:

"The growth and integration of neural networks is the biological mechanism of all successful learning, including parenting, teaching, and psychotherapy … Challenges that force us to expand our awareness, learn new information, or push beyond assumed limits can all change our brains" (Cozolino, 2002, pp. 290 - 91).

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The Travels of Hathor: Journeys with an Ancient Egyptian Goddess

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The following essay is a version of the annual scholarship lecture given by Susan Hollis at this year's all College Meeting held in Saratoga Springs on March 29, 2007.

Hathor, one of the oldest major goddesses of ancient Egypt, has taken me on an unexpected and fascinating journey since I was asked, in November 2000, by Anson Rainey, emeritus professor at Tel Aviv University, whether she was the original goddess at the Temple of Byblos on the Lebanese coast. I had met her, of course, as a student during my graduate school years, but it was not until several years after I had gained my degree that I began serious investigations of the major ancient Egyptian goddesses: Nut, Neith, Isis, Nephthys, and Hathor. In recent years, due to Anson's question, I have put considerable time and energy into Hathor – and, quite honestly, have found myself immersed in areas of study I would never have imagined seven years ago.

Hathor, who appeared in various forms – human, human with cattle ears and horns, the same with a disk, cow, cow-headed – bore many names: the Gold, Mistress of Heaven, Mistress of the Stars, Mistress of the Two Lands, Serpent Goddess, Eye of Re, Daughter of Re, Mother of Re, Wife of Re, Mistress of the West, Mistress of the Foreign Lands, Lady of Turquoise, and Mistress of Byblos, and many others. These names reflect much about the goddess but provoke many questions as well.

Beginning with a bit of history behind my work on Hathor, I actually began my work on Nut, a sky goddess, a most unusual deity in that most sky deities are male storm gods. In Egypt, Nut as sky goddess is responsible for the cycle of the sun, while the fertilizing waters come from her husband, Geb, an earth deity, a configuration which makes sense in light of the minimal annual rainfall and the fertilizing waters of the Nile in its annual flood. I next worked with Neith, continuing with studies on Isis and Nephthys in their earliest manifestations and activities, eventually coming to Hathor, particularly focusing on Anson's question, "Is Hathor the original 'Mistress of Byblos'?"

Initially, I needed to learn as much as I could about Byblos, a very ancient town on the north Syrian coast. This area was first settled in Neolithic times and appears as an urban settlement around 2900 BCE, archeologically known as Early Bronze Age II (EB II). The earliest foundations of the temple, the core of which was dedicated to the Lady of Byblos and is called the Ba'alat Gebel Temple or the Temple of the Mistress of Byblos, appear to have been laid somewhere around 2800 BCE,[1] thus within the early dynastic period of Egypt[2] and during a time of some interaction between Egypt and Byblos, interaction which may have begun even in the late predynastic period.[3] If Hathor had truly been the Lady or Mistress of Byblos at this time, one needs to find clear evidence for her in connection with the epithet at Byblos or in Egypt or anywhere that is at least contemporary with the temple's foundations. Thus I set out find out more about Hathor: Who is she? What are her origins? Is she Egyptian or is she a foreign import to Egypt? If she's Egyptian, how, why and when did she get to Byblos (and other lands)?

Before going further, however, I need to provide the usual caveat of a working Egyptologist: any and all answers are necessarily tentative, for at any point, hitherto unknown materials that can modify an earlier conclusion may come to light, whether from the dust of Egypt or its desert sands or the basement of a museum.

Statue of Hathor

The ruins of Byblos on the Syrian coast

That said, the place to start is with her name, its meaning, and how it is written, for that is the earliest definite evidence I have found that points distinctively to Hathor. Generally Egyptologists read the hieroglyphic form of her name as "House of Horus." Possible meanings include the following: the heaven, the "house," in which the falcon-god Horus flies; the womb from which the god Horus the Elder emerged; the house where princes are raised;[4] and kin of the house of the Horus King, the Distant One (falcon). Each of these possibilities focuses on the royal house of Egypt and/or its king and the king's environment, and thus both individually and as a group they suggest Hathor did indeed originate in Egypt. In addition, one name places her in the sky and three of the four associate her with the falcon deity Horus, the divinity associated with the Egyptian king from before the beginning of Egyptian history.

Then comes the question: when and under what circumstances did her name and thus

Hathor's name in hieroglyphic

her presence first appear. I began by working with the available evidence, among which is the remarkable corpus of inscriptions collected by Peter Kaplony in the early sixties in *Die Inschriften der ägyptischen Frühzeit*. This work brings together most, if not all, of the then known early dynastic and early Old Kingdom,[5] materials with any kind of inscription on them, seals, vases, sherds and the like, discussing, annotating and organizing them. Using with this collection, one finds that neither theophoric names, that is names using the name of a divinity, in this case, utilizing Hathor's name, nor titles and roles related to her service, notably priest or prophet, appear before the reign of Sekhemkhet, the second king of the third dynasty with dates sometime after 2650 BCE. A third dynasty prince bears the theophoric name of Dua-hathor,[6] possibly translated as "one who adores Hathor," and the names of a number of Old Kingdom priests of Hathor attest to her in various of her forms: Hathor of the Wide Hall; Hathor, Mistress of the Sycamore; and Hathor of Every Day.[7] To date, her earliest cult place appears with her third dynasty temple at Gebelein in Upper (southern) Egypt,

Eastern Mediterranean

supporting the lack of evidence for any priests of Hathor prior to this early Old Kingdom period.[8] It thus seems both that Hathor appears originally in Egypt and that the earliest known evidence of her dates to no earlier than 2650 BCE, suggesting then that she was not the original Mistress of Byblos, given that the temple's foundations date to the beginning of the twenty-ninth century BCE. In short, my answer to Anson was "No, Hathor is not the original Mistress of the Temple at Byblos."

I followed this answer, next, with my own questions: How then did this goddess, one with a clear relation to the Egyptian royal house, get linked to Byblos? When did she get linked to Byblos, and why did she go to Byblos? Before addressing these questions, however, one needs to look at

her early forms, development, and roles in Egypt in order to understand her importance there.

As noted above, Hathor's earliest appearances occur in the third dynasty, a time when the name of the sun-god Re also begins to be incorporated into the names of various kings. In the next dynasty, numerous kings bear theophoric names using Re. By the fifth dynasty, the inclusion of Re's name in the king's names becomes the norm as the fifth name in the royal titulary.[9] The importance of this knowledge lies in the relationship of Re and Hathor, for it appears that the rise of Re during the third dynasty led to Hathor's presence in various roles related to him: wife, mother, and daughter.[10] Prior to Hathor's rise, Neith had been the dominant goddess, ubiquitous throughout the protodynastic period.[11]

Hathor's significance becomes very clear with Menkaure, the fifth king of the fourth dynasty and the owner of the smallest of the three great pyramids of Giza. He is known among Egyptologists for his famous triads, each of which depicts him with Hathor and a different local deity. While her exact role in Menkaure's reign continues to be discussed, it is possible that by the fourth dynasty, the Horus king may have had a Hathor queen, though certainly Hathor's significance extends much further than simply being related to the queen.[12]

It is not until one gets to the Pyramid Texts, the funerary texts found on the walls of the sarcophagus and antechambers and the connecting corridors of 10 known royal pyramids beginning with the last king of the fifth dynasty, that we find any textual materials mentioning Hathor, but even there Hathor is notable by her scarcity despite her appearance in Menkaure's triads of the fourth dynasty.[13] In fact, she appears in only three distinct texts. The oldest text addresses the deceased king, stating: "You are Horus, son of Osiris; you, Wenis, are the senior god, Hathor's son; you are the seed of Geb" (Utt. 303, §466).[14] Here the king is clearly "Horus the Elder," the oldest form of Horus in which he is a sky god.[15] As his mother, Hathor may represent the womb, as her name suggests, that is, the sky in which he flies as a falcon, or she may represent the literal womb from which he is born, that is, the womb of the queen[16] or, of course, both.

In the second pyramid reference, the officiating priest states: "How beautiful is the sight of Teti, with [his] headband from the Sun's brow, his kilt on him from Hathor, his plumage a falcon's plumage … " (Utt. 335, §546),[17] reminding one of the cow heads visible on the kilt the king wears on the late predynastic/early dynastic Narmer palette, one of the earliest historical documents known from this culture.[18] In this text, the priest describes the king's regalia, showing that he is, through his adornment, related to Hathor and to the falcon god, and thus he is equipped to join the gods.

Narmer Palette

Finally that Hathor is a deity with horns appears explicitly in the third and last of the Pyramid Texts mentioning her: " … Teti is that eye[19] of yours which is on Hathor's horns … ." (Utt. 405, §701).[20] Here the king is claiming to be the sun or star that is on goddess's horns.

Hathor appears nowhere else in this important corpus of mortuary texts, suggesting perhaps that her role at this time focused on the living king – and the queen – in the earthly realm rather than in the realm of the Otherworld with which these texts deal. Furthermore, these texts provide her with no clear link to Byblos – or even any other foreign lands. While it is conceivable, and indeed probable, that she played a role among nonroyals and nonnobles, that information would not only not appear in these texts but would not be especially visible anywhere.

In contrast, Hathor appears often in the Coffin Texts, those found on the inside and outside of Middle Kingdom[21] coffins, one of which mentions her as the Lady of Byblos, a unique appearance. In this text, the officiant addresses the deceased, stating: "Hathor, Lady of Byblos, acts as[22] the steering-oar of your bark" (CT I, 262b). In explaining the meaning of this text, Siegfried Morenz observed that Hathor's role was to steer the ship of the dead,[23] while Shafik Allam, author of the earliest monograph specifically devoted to this goddess,[24] viewed her as involved in the heavenly journey of the deceased king and thus with navigation and steering, stating that her role derived from her relation to trade and transportation on the Nile and other waters.[25] Such a role would be a natural one from which to relate her to foreign travel and trade, commonly carried out by means of the so-called Byblos boats that plied between Egypt and Byblos at least from the fifth dynasty.[26] On the other hand, Hathor's clear relation to Re, who traveled across the sky in a boat, suggests that her relation to boats may derive from her close connection to her husband/son/father, the sun-god. This question needs more work.

Returning to Byblos and recalling that the core of the temple related to the Lady of Byblos has been dated to approximately 2800 BCE, I learned that interaction definitely occurred between Egypt and Byblos during the predynastic/protodynastic and early dynastic periods,[27] though it was not, perhaps, as regular as occurred in later periods.[28] In fact, Egyptian protodynastic objects have been found in the temple deposits at Byblos: a gold bead, a couple of playing pieces, a small ape statuette, and a bird figurine.[29] A particularly interesting find is the fragment of a stone vase with name of the second dynasty king Khasekhemwy on it. While one cannot say with certainty when any of these objects came to Byblos, William Ward is inclined to believe they actually did arrive during the early period, stating, "[O]ne can hardly imagine crude animal figurines which are obviously Protodynastic in date being sent off to Byblos after the advent of the Old Kingdom when much finer artistic products were available,"[30] a statement clearly reflecting modern, western aesthetic judgment.

From Ward's perspective, evidence of early relations between the two areas appears in the timbers of Syrian origin found in first dynasty tombs at Abydos, in Upper Egypt, along with some pottery types of both north and south Syrian styles,[31] although one might argue these items could have come via an intermediary. Such trade as occurred, however, appears to have been sporadic at best until the time of the Old Kingdom when importation of substantial quantities of cedar began in earnest.[32] In fact, recent archeological work in southern Palestine has shown that regular contacts between Egypt and Western Asia did occur during Early Bronze Age I (EB I), the late fourth and early third millennia and thus equivalent to the Egyptian late predynastic period, but with southern Palestine rather than with the area of Byblos in the northern Levant.[33] Furthermore, excavations at EB I sites such as Arad, Tell Erani, and cEn Besor present, as Ward puts it, a "strong Egyptian character."[34] The same was true further north along the coast during EB I. It would appear, however, that with the strengthening and centralization of the Egyptian monarchy beginning with the third dynasty kings Djoser and Sekhemkhet, a demand for increasing numbers and amounts of luxury products developed, leading to the increased development of relations with areas outside Egypt proper that could supply such goods: gold from Nubia, ivory and spices from other points of Africa, Sinai's turquoise,

and cedar and other coniferous woods from Lebanon.[35] Regular contact with the northern Levant, including Byblos, began only with the fourth dynasty, around 2575 BCE when one finds the earliest use of cedar beams in Khufu's royal ship.[36] In addition, clear Old Kingdom-Early Bronze Age connections appear in finds at Byblos that carry the names of fourth dynasty kings Khufu, Khafre, and Menkaure; fifth dynasty kings Sahure and Wenis; and sixth dynasty kings Pepi I and Pepi II.[37] Correspondingly, the well-attested contacts between Egypt and Southern Palestine show a decided decline, apparently coincidentally, with the inception of regular contacts and trade with the northern Levant.[38] Trade with both southern Palestine and the northern Levant appears to have focused on wood and wood products.[39] In return, Egypt likely traded grains and linen.

At the time that one finds boats designated as "Byblos boats" depicted in Egypt in the later fifth dynasty, the rebuilding of the Ba'alat Gebel temple at Byblos, necessary after its destruction by fire, probably at the end of Egypt's second dynasty around 2650 BCE, shows an apparent Egyptian influence.[40] Excavations reveal that the two main façades of this temple recall the early fifth dynasty valley temple of King Sahure, and contemporary ceramic remains also link the Byblos time period with the fifth and sixth dynasties.[41] Furthermore, not only do we find Egyptian influence in the rebuilding of the temple, but the presence of various sherds found in the excavations of the temple of the Mistress of Byblos attest to the important role Hathor played for Old Kingdom kings in Byblos. Some of the artifacts were apparently sent by various kings to the temple at Byblos to use for celebratory purposes,[42] a few of which carry inscriptions mentioning Hathor as Mistress of Dendera, her Egyptian home locale. For example, a fragment of an alabaster offering plate or disk reads "Son [of Hathor], Mistress of Dendera, Pepi [I],"[43] while another fragment from the same or a similar object reads "Son [of Hathor], Mistress of Dendera, Pepi [I], falcons of gold, Ha[thor],"[44] and in yet a third example, a pair of fragments, again from an alabaster offering plate of Pepi I, clearly mentions Hathor of Dendera, reading "Son of Hathor,

Mistress of Dendera, Pepi I. He makes as a monument for Hathor."[45]

An even more definitive attestation of Hathor's actual presence in Byblos appears on a statuette of a scribe dated to the time of Pepi I found in the Ba'alat Temple where the papyrus on his lap reads "Hathor, Mistress of Dendera, who lives in Byblos."[46] Despite these materials, however, no evidence known presents Hathor as Mistress of Byblos until one meets her in the Middle Kingdom Coffin Text Spell mentioned earlier, a title affirmed by a contemporaneous a text from Kahun in Egypt in which she is designated specifically as "Hathor, Lady of Byblos."[47]

Moving to New Kingdom times,[48] the Amarna Letters, correspondence sent over a period of between 15 and 30 years around 1360 and 1330 BCE from different locales in the Syro-Palestinian area including Byblos to the Pharaoh in Egypt,[49] persistently refer to the "Mistress of Byblos," but they never include the name of any deity with the epithet, much less that of Hathor. Nevertheless most, if not virtually all, interpreters assume the Lady of Byblos in these letters is Hathor.[50] One then asks, given that the senders of the letters are not Egyptian, why do scholars equate Hathor with the Lady of Byblos?

At this point, Corinne Bonnet's investigation of the Canaanite goddess Astarte, with whom the Lady of Byblos was identified in the first millennium BCE, comes into play. In this study, Bonnet finds that Ba'alat Gebel is a title rather than a divine name,[51] though she, like most other scholars, assumes that the identification of Hathor with the Byblite goddess goes back at least to the Egyptian Old Kingdom. Building on Bonnet's work with its suggestion that Ba'alat Gebel is a title that might be used by various goddesses – as it was in the first millennium BCE and later – it becomes clear that no one goddess had the sole proprietorship of the Ba'alat Gebel temple and its corresponding title; therefore this location could serve as a very comfortable neutral point for the many different people who came to Byblos for various reasons, among them trade. Thus, the Lady of Byblos could be Hathor for the Egyptians, Astarte for the Canaanites, Aphrodite for the Greeks, and so forth.

Given that Hathor was clearly present as Lady of Byblos, at least by the Middle Kingdom, 1975-1640 BCE, why was she the deity who appears there? As some of her epithets suggest, she also appears as the protective deity with temples or cult places in other foreign locations in which Egyptians had a presence, notably border and mining areas. Save in Byblos, however, clear reference to Hathor in any of them appears to be lacking prior to the Middle Kingdom, despite the various texts from the Old Kingdom attesting to travel to and working in these areas. It thus seems probable that Hathor's earliest attested foreign role came in connection with Byblos. Because she seems to be the only Egyptian deity connected with navigation prior to the first millennium, the protector of "shipping on the Nile, to foreign ports, and in the sky,"[52] she may have arrived there as protector of the sailors and shipping, as C. J. Bleeker has suggested.[53] In fact, he referred to her as "the pilot of the sun-ship, in which quality her title is 'mistress of the ship',"[54] concluding that Hathor's role as patron of the sailors and traders to Byblos led to her identification with the Mistress of Byblos.[55]

Thus, while it is clear that a deity known as the Mistress of Byblos pre-existed Hathor in Byblos, it appears that Egyptian trade with Byblos during the Old Kingdom led to the early identification of the Mistress of Byblos with the Egyptian goddess. Scholarly commentary suggests that the driving force behind this relationship lay in a combination of the economically protective activities of the deities combined with Hathor's relation to boats and shipping. However, I have had, and continue to have, significant questions about her reported relation to shipping, for the scholars who have discussed this idea have not substantiated it with solid evidence, and to date, such evidence has eluded me as well. Even the Coffin Text describing Hathor as the steering oar does not support their idea, since by the time of these texts, Hathor clearly played a part in the funerary world where her role was to serve as the mother and protector of the sun-god Re who traveled across the sky in a boat or bark. Thus the description of her as the steering oar would not relate her to trade so much as to place her in the sun boat – or funerary bark of the deceased who seeks identification with Re in order to experience

rebirth. Again this topic demands more research.

Next, one needs to look at Hathor in her commonly presented form as anthropomorphic figure crowned with cattle ears and horns, carrying a sun-disk, and her related depictions as cow, even occasionally as a cow-headed female. While some commentators consider Hathor to have been a cow deity at the beginning, I am less certain, given the earliest iconography known to me depicts her in human form with cows horns and a disk on her head. A bit of research shows that there was another bovine-headed deity present in early Egypt, one for whom evidence appears in predynastic Egypt: the goddess Bat, whose home locale abutted Hathor's home. The earliest appearances of Bat appear on a tablet from Gerza in Lower or Northern Egypt and a bowl from Hierakonpolis in Upper or southern Egypt, both dating to the last half of the fourth millennium BCE, the late predynastic period. Each of these shows a human faced head with cow's ears and horns along with five stars, one at the end of each ear and horn and one above the head itself. A similar figure, though lacking the stars appears on the top of the late predynastic Narmer palette as well as on the king's skirt, also from Hierakonpolis. Whether these figures represent Bat or Hathor comprises a topic of much discussion. In the early sixties, Henry G. Fischer[56] argued cogently that they were Bat, suggesting that it was only over time that the two goddesses become linked. Given the problems, however, of attributing a name to a figure that is only named clearly many centuries later, Fischer's argument may yet be questioned. Nevertheless, that the two goddesses, or at least their representations, remain distinct for many centuries, if not generally, becomes very clear, with the mid-third millennium triad of King Menkaure, Hathor, and the deity referred to as Bat and Bat's persistent appearance on sistra[57] at least into the early Middle Kingdom.[58] Thus, while it appears likely that the most ancient roots of the cow goddess belong to the Bat figure rather than Hathor,[59] more work must be done on this issue. Nevertheless, the clear importance of a cattle fetish and/or deity in prehistoric Egypt highlights the importance of understanding how and why


Bat on top of the Narmer Palette

each of them has a close relationship with cattle.

Thus the next part of the journey led me to question the relationship of the earliest Egyptians to cattle, and this led me in totally new directions: to the deserts west and east of Egypt. Following this line of questioning, several years ago, I began investigating the work of those who have explored these deserts, particularly in upper or southern Egypt, learning much about the variations in desert climate that impacted the Holocene settlement of the eastern – or Egyptian – Sahara, beginning about 10,000 bp,[60] circa 8000 BCE to about 4000 BCE. While most Egyptologists rarely go further back in their studies of ancient Egypt than late prehistory, the late fourth millennium BCE, and until recently, rarely considered the desert, this situation began to shift in a serious way about forty years ago. Indeed recent work has shown the eastern Sahara desert, that due west of the Nile and generally thought of as dry and unsupportive of any significant mammalian life such as humans and cattle, has functioned something like a "pump" over the millennia, meaning that people and their animals have moved in and out of it as the land was more or less habitable, coming into it during moist or humid periods and leaving it during arid times.[61] This vivid description, supported by the archeological work in the western deserts and their oases, finds its details

in the extensive work carried out at both the Dakhleh Oasis and around the Nabta Playa[62] as well as at other locales over the past four decades.

Mary McDonald's team in Dakhleh, the westernmost of Egyptian oases, includes many of the kinds of specialists that are becoming common on such archeological teams today: paleontologists, paleobotanists, and others who work in the sciences of prehistoric peoples, flora, fauna, and geology. The Dakhleh Oasis, 800 km/500 miles southwest of Cairo, comprises one of a string of oases that runs roughly from south to north, west of the Nile: Karga, Dakhleh, Farafra, Bahriya, and the Fayoum. Here the 1990 discovery of a series of stone circles which McDonald identified as the bases of huts, the earliest stable structures in Africa dating to 8800 bp, about 6800 BCE, represents the beginning of settlements by the nomadic Masara people[63] as they began to develop at least seasonal settlements on the way to the African Neolithic Revolution. The sites of the next people, the Bashendi, clearly showed more permanent settlements with domesticated grains and importantly, cattle.[64] As Harry Thurston writes, "Researchers now agree that cattle-keeping was probably a response to the drying conditions" of the desert.[65] Thus an evaluation of the movements of people suggests that the beginning of this settlement
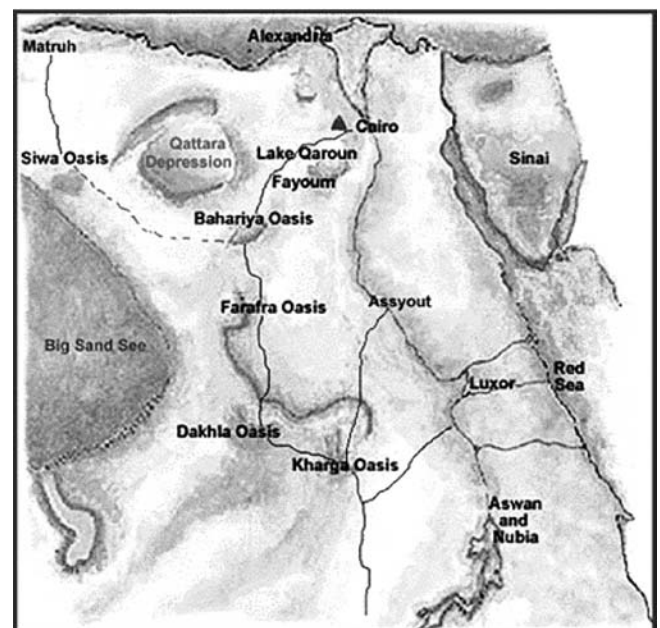
Map of major oases

resulted from environmental pressures, pressures that also led to the domestication of the indigenous wild cattle of the area.

Some further to the south, a team led by Fred Wendorf at Nabta Playa, an area of Sudan near Egypt and also concerned with prehistoric periods, found that cattle bones, when discovered, were often articulated and carefully placed under rock tumuli.[66] This care suggests economic, symbolic, and/or emotional implications about the relation of the people of Nabta with their cattle.[67] The peoples from this area and other nearby locations excavated by Wendorf's team behaved much the same as those from the Dakhleh Oasis: they migrated to where their cattle could have water, for cattle are needy and must be watered daily in order to thrive, and in order to simply survive, they need water nearly every day.[68] Thus their presence in the different parts of the Sahara was dependent on the availability of water such as is found in oases and playas. The accessibility of water dictated the pastoralists' movements, indeed their very presence in the Sahara, hence their presence at Nabta playa and surrounding areas as well as at the Dakhleh Oasis.

Wendorf's team has drawn a link, though it has recently been questioned,[69] between the behaviors of these cattle keepers/herders and the modern Dinka of the Sudan and their tradition of cattle wealth,[70] surmising that like them, the ancient pastoralists viewed their herds as "a walking larder,"[71] using their milk and blood, not their flesh, as sources of protein. And when cattle were killed, it appears they were killed mostly for ceremonial purposes, even as the ancient Egyptian themselves slaughtered cattle. In addition, the cattle remains from the Nabta Playa and environs were mostly mature animals. Thus cattle, because of their procreative potential as well as providing a continuous source of protein, comprised wealth on the hoof[72] for the ancient pastoralists, much as do the cattle of today's Dinka from the same area.[73] In fact, Wendorf and his co-leader Romuald Schild note that by the Late Neolithic, cattle ownership probably contributed to the "rank, power, and authority" of an individual, again as is the case among modern African pastoralists.[74] Such authority would have been needed

for the construction of the megaliths found at Nabta, since building large monuments demanded organization and management skills along with a considerable investment of energy to get people to work on them for significant periods of time.[75]

The challenge for these pastoralists lay in how to move their cattle to the different locations for water, given the endlessness of the desert and its lack of reliable landmarks – the persistent winds from different directions scour the land and make earth-bound landmarks unreliable. In fact, it is quite likely that the herders used stars to chart their movements,[76] very much as it is believed the Polynesians used stars to travel from island to island. One might surmise then that the presence of stars with the Bat fetish on the predynastic bowl and palette refers symbolically to these travels, perhaps suggesting that the cattle spirit deity Bat protected the herders and their cattle during night movements guided by stars.

Not surprisingly the so-called Eastern Desert, the land between the Nile and the Red Sea, also provides evidence of prehistoric inhabitants. In his 2003 book, *Genesis of the Pharaohs,* Toby Wilkinson notes the importance of cattle and the movement of the cattle herders between the Nile Valley and the desert areas to its east. Like the Sahara, the Eastern Desert, while perhaps not so harsh, may be viewed as a pump: people come and go according the climate – or the season – using the wadis, or watercourses, of the Eastern Desert as guides for travel. During moister times of year, people and cattle could and did live and pasture in the desert area through which the wadis run, while in drier times, movement of the herds and families closer to the Nile occurred. Clearly when the Nile was in flood, moving into the desert may well have been a necessity. Certainly the types of artifacts found in burials within the Nile Valley from these early periods suggest the type of goods such movement requires, identified by David Wengrow as items like "small pottery vessels, simple cosmetic palettes … and implements made of bone or ivory such as spatulas, hairpins and combs."[77] In fact, he notes: "It is striking that nearly all of the items interred with the dead were designed to be easily carried by, or wearable on, the individual

person, many relating to the decoration and ornamentation of the body."[78]

Due, however, to the lack of significant excavations until very recently – and even those have been limited – our knowledge of the peoples of this area is restricted to what is available by means of the content and locations of rock drawings and carvings, all of which are very difficult to date. While boats play a very large part in the depictions,[79] many of the representations depict cattle and bulls, leading to Wilkinson's observation that cattle herding comprises one of the major themes seen in the petroglyphs.[80] In fact, like McDonald's and Wendorf's teams, Wilkinson observes that cattle keeping was the most important and widespread form of subsistence by 5000 BCE.[81]

Thus we find that the care for and close relationship with cattle by the early pastoralists comprised a major feature of life in both the Egyptian Sahara and the Eastern Desert in prehistoric times. Furthermore, the sense of mutual connection and support between the desert pastoralists and their cattle as they moved could conceivably lead to the idea of mobility of the cattle spirit, itself related to, even guided by, stars. This cattle spirit would accompany the pastoralists in their travels, both around the desert and into the Nile Valley.

From the perspective of the Egyptians living in the Nile Valley, however, a different picture emerges. For them,

> the valley was home. Only there could life be lived as it should be. [The Egyptian] attitude to the desert … was essentially that it was foreign, and the word he [sic] used for it meant both "hilly country" and "foreign country." Those who were doomed to live on it [they] referred to contemptuously as "crossers of the sand."[82]

On the other hand, as with the desert pastoralists, cattle represented wealth for the Nile dwellers, and seeing how the "crossers of the sand" clearly had gained protection from their cattle spirit, they might well have reasoned that their own cattle-related deity, Hathor, would do the same: serve as their protector deity when they ventured outside the Valley. The concept was surely strengthened by the Egyptians' use of stars

for navigation in their sea travels to the Levant, and since Hathor was already related to the celestial realm through the sun, certainly she functioned as a star deity as well. In fact, she is said to "shine" in the portion of the Coffin Texts,[83] and she bore the epithet, "Lady of the Stars" in the Middle Kingdom narrative of Sinuhe.[84]

In the end, many questions remain, such as how and why Hathor became associated with Bat; how Hathor, originally a sky deity, became associated with cattle; and even how, when, and why Hathor arose. The journey continues: it's led me way back into prehistory and into the deserts of prehistory both east and west of the Nile; it's led me to learn more about the respective deserts' relationship to the Nile Valley; and its' led me to ask questions about shipping and navigation. In short, it's been quite a journey, and it is continuing as I expand my work on these goddesses and four other early Egyptian goddesses into a book.

Footnotes

1 Nina Jidejian, *Byblos Through the Ages* (Beirut, 1968). 15 - 16.

2 Mary Wright, "Contacts Between Egypt and Syro-Palestine During the Protodynastic Period," *Biblical Archaeologist* 48 (1985).

3 William A. Ward, "Egypt and the East Mediterranean from Predynastic Times to the End of the Old Kingdom," *Journal of Economic and Social History of the Orient* 6 (1963).

4 Wolfgang Helck, "Herkunft und Deutung einiger Züge des frühägyptischen Königsbildes," *Anthropos* 49 (1954): 976.

5 The dates for the Early Dynastic Period go from about 2950 to about 2650, while the Old Kingdom dates from 2650 to 2150 BCE. These dates will vary some depending on the source used and whether the third dynasty is considered part of the Old Kingdom, as I do, or the Early Dynastic Period, as many English scholars do.

6 Peter Kaplony, *Die Inschriften der ägyptischen Frühzeit,* 3 vols., Ägyptologische Abhandlungen 8 (Wiesbaden, 1963). 43 and note 105,

abb. 569. Aidan Dodson and Dyan Hilton do not include this prince in Aidan Dodson and Dyan Hilton, *The Complete Royal Families of Ancient Egypt* (London, 2004).

7 Kaplony, *Die Inschriften der ägyptischen Frühzeit.* #104.

8 Ibid., 43.

9 Jürgen von Beckerath, *Handbuch der ägyptischen Königsnamen,* ed. Günter Burkhard and Dieter Kessler, 2. verbesserte und erweiterte ed., vol. 49, Münchner Ägyptologische Studien (Mainz am Rhine, 1999).

10 Helck, "Herkunft und Deutung einiger Züge des frühägyptischen Königsbildes," 976. More work is needed on Helck's assertion, now some 50 years old.

11 For further discussion of this topic, see Susan Tower Hollis, "Neith: Bees, Beetles, and the Red Crown in the Third Millennium B. C.," in *Annual Meeting, American Research Center in Egypt* (Chicago, IL, 1988), Susan Tower Hollis, "The Goddess Neith in Ancient Egypt through the End of the Third Millennium BC," in *Annual Meeting, American Academy of Religion* (Boston, MA, 1987).

12 See also Helck, "Herkunft und Deutung einiger Züge des frühägyptischen Königsbildes," 975 - 976. and Lana Troy, *Patterns of Queenship in ancient Egyptian myth and history,* ed. Rostislav Holthoer and Tullia Linders, vol. 14, Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis BOREAS Uppsala Studies in Ancient Mediterranean and Near Eastern Civilizations (Uppsala, 1986). index.

13 James P. Allen, *The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts,* ed. Theodore J. Lewis, vol. 23, Writings from the Ancient World (Atlanta, GA, 2005). 2 - 3: kings Unis, Teti, Pepi I, Merenre, and Pepi I, and queens Neith, Iput II, Wedjebetni, Ankhesenpepi II, and the king Ibi of the eighth dynasty.

14 After the translation in Allen, *The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts.*

15 Beckerath, *Handbuch der ägyptischen Königsnamen.* 6 - 7.

16 The same text (§467) also includes the question if the king is Horus, the son of Osiris, but this question reflects a different genealogy.

17 Allen, *The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts.* 70. Teti was the first king of the sixth dynasty.

18 This well-known palette relates to the early years of the Egyptian state, perhaps its establishment.

19 Possibly not the sun-eye but a star. Cf., Rudolf Anthes, Das Sonnenauge in den Pyramidentexten: ZÄS 86 (1961): 1 - 21, rpt. in Rudolf Anthes, *Ägyptische Theologie im Dritten Jahrtausand v. Chr.* Studia Aegyptiaca IX, Budapest, 1983, 223 - 243.

20 Allen translates "wpt" as "brow" (Allen, *The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts.* 92.); Faulkner translates it as horns. I am inclined to go with horns, as that fits with the many depictions of Hathor in the Old Kingdom.

21 The dates for the Middle Kingdom generally go from 1975 to 1640.

22 I have translated the Egyptian verb "iri," commonly translated as "do" or "make" as "act as," another accepted translation.

23 Siegfried Morenz, *Egyptian Religion,* Ann E. Keep trans. (Ithaca, NY, 1973). 235. A related question asks when and how she became the one who steers the ship of the dead and which came first, her activity in the present world or in the Otherworld. Given her role as a this-world deity and her portrayal with Menkaure in his temple, I suspect that her role steering the boat of the dead comes after her activity with relation to shipping and trade.

24 Geraldine Pinch, *Votive Offerings to Hathor* (Oxford, 1993)., addresses votive offerings to Hathor, while Alison Roberts, *Hathor Rising. The Power of the Goddess in Ancient Egypt* (Rochester, VT, 1997) investigates the serpent or cobra goddess, one of whose appearances is Hathor.

25 Ê Schafik Allam, *Beiträge zum Hathorkult (bis zum Ende des Mittleren Reiches),* vol. 4, Münchner

Ägyptologische Studien (Berlin, 1963). 52, 77f, 119, 132, n. 4.

26 There are over 140 words for boat or bark in ancient Egyptian. *Kpn.t* designates the boat that traveled to Byblos.

27 Ward, "Egypt and the East Mediterranean from Predynastic Times to the End of the Old Kingdom."

28 Ibid.

29 Ibid., 18.

30 Ibid., 19.

31 Ibid.

32 Amnon Ben-Tor, "New Light on the Relations Between Egypt and Southern Palestine During the Early Bronze Age," *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 281 (1991): 4.

33 Ibid. See also Ruth Amiran and Ram Gophna, "The Correlation Between Lower Egypt and Southern Canaan During the EBI Period," in *The Nile Delta in Transition: Fourth. - Third. Millennium B.C.*, ed. Edwin C. M. van den Brink (Tel Aviv, Israel, 1992)., for detailed correlations of dating in this time period.

34 William A. Ward, "Early Contacts Between Egypt, Canaan, and Sinai: Remarks on the Paper by Amnon Ben-Tor," *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 281 (1991): 14.

35 Ibid., 11 - 12.

36 Ben-Tor, "New Light on the Relations Between Egypt and Southern Palestine During the Early Bronze Age." Björn Landström, *Sailing Ships in words and pictures from papyrus boats to full-riggers* (Garden City, NY, 1969).

37 Martha Sharp Joukowsky, "Byblos," in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Archaeology in the New East,* ed. Eric M. Meyers (New York, 1997), Muntaha Saghieh, *Byblos in the Third Millennium B.C. A Reconstruction of the Stratigraphy and a Study of the Cultural Connections* (Warminster, ENG, 1983). 99.

38 Ben-Tor, "New Light on the Relations Between Egypt and Southern Palestine During the Early Bronze Age," 4 - 6.

39 Ward, "Early Contacts Between Egypt, Canaan, and Sinai: Remarks on the Paper by Amnon Ben-Tor," 14.

40 Saghieh, *Byblos in the Third Millennium B.C. A Reconstruction of the Stratigraphy and a Study of the Cultural Connections.* 130, see table on p. 109.

41 Ibid., 131.

42 Harold H. Nelson, "Fragments of Egyptian Old Kingdom Stone Vases from Byblos," *Berytus, accessed from http://almashriq.hiof.no/ddc/projects/archaeology/berytus-back/berytus01/19.html, March 4, 2002. (1934).*

43 Ibid.: No. 5023a. Pepi I was the second king of the sixth dynasty.

44 Ibid.: No. 5023.

45 Maurice Chéhab, "Noms de personnalités égyptiennes découverts au liban," *Bulletin du Musée de Beyrouth* XXII (1969): 14, pl. II, Maurice Dunand, Fouilles de Byblos, 1926 - 1932, vol. I (Paris, 1934). No. 2856, p. 181, pl. XL. In his discussion of this pair, Dunand Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos,* 1926 - 1932. suggests the possibility that the "fragment of a 't' still visible might be part of an epithet, Mistress of Byblos. He wants to see some light marks as the "b" of KBN, "Byblos" so he might restore "Mistress of Byblos" here, noting, however, that the very light line going right is very close to the "t" Dunand, *Fouilles de Byblos, 1926 - 1932.* No. 6496, p. 417, pl. XXXVIII. When Maurice Chéhab writes about the same piece (actually two pieces), he writes that the signs which follow the signs "Hathor, Mistress of Dendera" "permit la restitution de Dame de Byblos" Chéhab, "Noms de personnalités égyptiennes découverts au liban," 13. Of course that one might restore such does not equal that it should be done; still the possibility is there, though one must take care in making gaps say what one want them to.

46 The sign used in this text does not appear in the sign list in Gardiner's, *Grammar,* though it is clearly part of a printer's font, and Dr. Gerald Kadish has suggested in a personal communication that it was a variation of R 5, a censor, not uncommonly signifying kp as part of kpny, Byblos. Subsequent research in Grimal, et al *Hieroglyphica: Sign List* suggests that it is sign S 105 or W 109 Nicolas Grimal, Jochen Hallof, and Dirk van der Plas, *Hieroglyphica. Sign List – Liste des Signes – Zeichenliste,* ed. Dirk van der Plas and Nicolas Grimal, 2nd, expanded and enlarged by Jochen Hall of Hans van den Berg Gabrielle Hallof ed., vol. 1, Publications Interuniversitaires de Recherches Égyptologiques Informatisées (Utrecht – Paris, 2000).

47 Pierre Montet, *Byblos et l'Egypte: Quatre campagnes de fouilles à Gebeil 1921 - 1922 - 1923 - 1924.,* vol. text (Paris, 1928), Francis Llewellyn Griffith, ed., *Hieratic Papyri from Kahun and Gurob (principally of the Middle Kingdom) Plates* (London, 1898). pl. XXVIII and p. 70.

48 Commonly dated from 1539 to 1075 BCE.

49 William L. Moran, *The Amarna Letters* (Baltimore, 1992). xxxiv.

50 Ibid. Index.

51 Corrine Bonnet, *Astarte. Dossier documentaire et perspectives historiques* (Roma, 1996).

52 C. J. Bleeker, *Hathor and Thoth. Two Key Figures of the Ancient Egyptian Religion,* vol. XXVI, Studies in the History of Religions (Supplements to *Numen*) (Leiden, 1973). 72., referring his reader to Moftah's "Die uralte Sycamore," 3 which is, in fact Ramses Moftah, "Die uralte Sykomore und andere Erscheinungen der Hathor," *Zeitschrift für Ägyptische Sprache* 92 (1965): 44., who refers his reader to Allam, *Beiträge zum Hathorkult (bis zum Ende des Mittleren Reiches).* See also Brigitte Altenmüller, *Synkretismus in den Sargtexten,* vol. 7, Göttinger Orientforschungen, IV Reihe: Ägypten

(Wiesbaden, 1975). 134 for Coffin Text references.

53 Morenz, *Egyptian Religion.* 341, n. 16, referring to Dieter Müller's Isis-Aretalogien.

54 Bleeker, *Hathor and Thoth. Two Key Figures of the Ancient Egyptian Religion.* 73.

55 Ibid.

56 H. G. Fischer, "Bat," in *Lexikon der Ägyptologie,* ed. Wolfgang Helck and Eberhard Otto (Wiesbaden, 1973), Henry G Fischer, "The Cult and Nome of the Goddess Bat," *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 1 (1962), Henry G. Fischer, "Ba.t in the New Kingdom," *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 2 (1963). See also Allam, *Beiträge zum Hathorkult (bis zum Ende des Mittleren Reiches),* A. J. Arkell, "An archaic representation of Hathor," *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 41 (1955), A. J. Arkell, "An Archaic Representation of Hathor," *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 44 (1958).

57 Sistra, the plural of sistrum, a celebratory, noise-making instrument in honor of Hathor.

58 See, for example, figure 7 in , as well as various other sources such as illustrated in William Stevenson Smith, *A History of Egyptian Sculpture and Painting in the Old Kingdom,* second ed. (Boston, 1949). fig 191.

59 Fischer, "The Cult and Nome of the Goddess Bat," Joyce Haynes, "Redating the Bat Capital in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston," in *Studies in Honor of William Kelly Simpson,* ed. Peter Der Manuelian (Boston, MA, 1996), Toby A. H. Wilkinson, *Early Dynastic Egypt* (London and New York, 1999).

60 "bp" represents an abbreviation used by those working in ancient prehistory meaning "before the present" where the "present" is set about 1950 CE.

61 John Reader, *Africa. A Biography of the Continent* (New York, 1997). 151.

62 A playa is the bottom of a desert basin which is occasionally covered with water, thus making the surrounding area habitable.

63 Harry Thurston, *Island of the Blessed. The Secrets of Egypt's Everlasting Oasis* (2003). 76.

64 Ibid. 87.

65 Ibid. 106.

66 Alex Applegate, Achilles Gautier, and Steven Duncan, "The North Tumuli of the Nabta Late Neolithic Ceremonial Complex," in *Holocene Settlement of the Egyptian Sahara,* ed. Fred Wendorf, Romuald Schild, and Associates (New York, 2001), 488.

67 David Wengrow, "Rethinking 'Cattle Cults' in Early Egypt: Towards a Prehistoric Perspective on the Narmer Palette," *Cambridge Archaeological Journal* 11 (2001)., presents a thorough discussion of why we should look at the people's relationship with cattle as more than cult. In fact cattle bones come from site dating as early as 9500 bp, cattle which are clearly of African origin as shown by mtDNA analysis, putting to rest the idea that north African cattle came from the Middle East Fred Wendorf and Romuald Schild, "Conclusions," in *Holocene Settlement of the Egyptian Sahara,* ed. Fred Wendorf, Romuald Schild, and Associates (New York, 2001), 653 - 658. In fact, these cattle had been a separate population for over 20,000 years.

68 Fred Wendorf and Romuald Schild, "Nabta Playa and Its Role in Northeastern African Prehistory," *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology* 17 (1998): 101.

69 Wengrow, "Rethinking 'Cattle Cults' in Early Egypt: Towards a Prehistoric Perspective on the Narmer Palette."

70 Applegate, Gautier, and Duncan, "The North Tumuli of the Nabta Late Neolithic Ceremonial Complex," 487.

71 Wendorf and Schild, "Conclusions," 657.

72 Ibid.

73 Applegate, Gautier, and Duncan, "The North Tumuli of the Nabta Late Neolithic Ceremonial Complex," 487.

74 Wendorf and Schild, "Conclusions," 657.

75 Fred Wendorf and Halina Króik, "Site E-96-1: The Complex Structures or Shrines," in *Holocene Settlement of the Egyptian Sahara,* ed. Fred Wendorf, Romuald Schild, and Associates (New York, 2001), 503.

76 James Lowdermilk, "Unit Fractions: Conception and Use," *The Ostracon: The Journal of the Egyptian Study Society* 14 (Summer 2003, 2003).

77 Wengrow, "Rethinking 'Cattle Cults' in Early Egypt: Towards a Prehistoric Perspective on the Narmer Palette," 96.

78 Ibid.

79 There is one with a star in the area above its bow (Toby Wilkinson, *Genesis of the Pharaohs. Dramatic New Discoveries That Rewrite the Origins of Ancient Egypt* (London, 2003). pl. 10.), possibly for navigation.

80 Ibid. 138.

81 Ibid.

82 Nicholas Millet, "Valley and Desert: The Two Worlds of the Egyptian," in *Man in Nature,* ed. Louis D. Levine (Toronto, Canada, 1975), {34 - 35.

83 CT I, 261b. In CT I 262b, she also carries the epithet "Lady of Byblos."

84 Sinuhe B 271.

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"There would still be hero-worship in such a [post-philosophical] culture, but it would not be worship of heroes as children of the gods, as marked off from the rest of mankind by closeness to the Immortal. It would simply be admiration of exceptional men and women who were very good at doing the quite diverse kinds of things they did. Such people would not be those who knew a Secret, who had won through to the Truth, but simply people who were good at being human."

– Richard Rorty. *Consequences of Pragmatism* (1982)

My Sabbatical: Anticipated, Too Short, But Productive

Lear Matthews, Metropolitan Center

With much anticipation and excitement, I began a six-month sabbatical in February 2006. This was the first since my mentoring sojourn at Empire State College began – the first, in fact in my academic/teaching career. I was pleasantly surprised when my proposal was approved, and had no idea what to expect and how much I would or could accomplish. In the beginning, six months seemed like such a long time, but at that point I hadn't realized that a half-year could be but a fleeting moment relative to other aspects of my full, busy and eventful academic/professional career, so far.

In preparation, I decided to have conversations with a few veteran colleagues at the Metropolitan Center and in the wider Empire State College community. I felt that engaging these seasoned mentor/ academicians would provide me with the confidence required for a successful sabbatical stint. Those conversations were definitely helpful and as my departure drew nigh, the faculty, professional and support staff wished me well with encouraging words such as: "Congratulations!" "Good luck with your project!" "Get lots of rest!" "Don't think about this place!" I am absolutely convinced that this last salutation of goodwill did not reflect my colleagues' commitment to our esteemed institution from which I was about to take temporary leave, but instead symbolized their best wishes for me. With no illusions about the challenge or anticipated freedom, I was ready and off I went.

My proposed project was to complete the prospectus for a book on Caribbean immigrants in the United States, a life-long academic/research interest. As I began this long-awaited sabbatical, which I purposely designed for research, travel and rest, I quickly learned the inevitability of "rest" as a priority. Although my plan was to hit the ground running, I did not realize how tired I was after a intense last pre-sabbatical month, trying to complete all outstanding mentoring responsibilities (as if that were possible), and, admittedly perhaps suffering from a small dose of separation anxiety. I believe that many of my colleagues can identify with the mental and physical fatigue, but perhaps not the separation syndrome to which I refer. I was surprised that this kind of anxiety existed, but it surely did. This could reflect the extent to which one becomes wedded to one's profession and to the rituals of work it demands.

As I embarked upon the initial stages of this seemingly ambitious venture of writing a book, I realized that the process would take me into areas of related academic and community activities that I had postponed for many years.

The first activity was my participation in the National Social Work Month Conference at Medgar Evers College. The theme was: *Social Workers serving the needs of NYC's Changing Population: An International and Intergenerational Perspective,* which provided an important perspective regarding immigrants from the Caribbean. Secondly, I attended the 23rd Annual Social Work Day at the United Nations. On this, my first visit to the U.N., I was able to network with experts on immigration issues and international poverty studies. Pertinent information regarding problems affecting immigrants and the exploration of intervention strategies were discussed. These events served as a promising "kick off" for my sabbatical. In particular, the U.N. visit was instrumental in helping me to conceptualize my plan to address an important dimension of global citizenship. Listening to and interacting with diplomats, researchers, and others who influence policy on global humanitarian issues provided a profound knowledge-base and model for initiating my own research and writing.

Drawing from this exposure, I began to frame my work by thinking about the reality of globalization and its implications for the transnational identity of immigrants.

By the end of my first sabbatical month, I was quite relaxed, slowing down a notch from my usual hectic schedule, and spent more quality time with my family. With their support, I was ready to embark upon the project of my dream. Poised and armed with a spattering of ideas, the most exciting period of the sabbatical was yet to come.

I traveled to the Caribbean, a region in which I have more than an academic interest. There I collected data pertinent to my research, which involved interviews, questionnaires, and focus groups. I was a guest (visiting lecturer) of the University of Guyana. I conducted a series of workshops and seminars for human service practitioners and social work students. Topics included Disaster Counseling, Research Methods in Social Work, Coping with the Psychological Effects of Violent Crime, and the Impact of Emigration.

I visited several social service agencies and educational institutions including an adult education association. I met with clients, students, teachers, clinicians, and administrators. In both structured interviews and informal discussions, we talked about social and psychological concerns and the push/pull factors that currently influence emigration. Participants were well informed about contemporary issues that shape international and regional relationships, with no shortage of suggestions for possible solutions to problems. Their uninhibited sharing of ideas was a researcher's delight. They presented their perspectives in both personal stories and macro-analyses. Some of the meetings were even reported in the local media – a rare moment of celebrity for a humble soul. These activities enhanced my knowledge of contemporary indigenous Caribbean society and the impact of

transnationalism on both sending and host societies, an aspect of the overall theme of my developing book.

Not only was this dimension of my sabbatical personally gratifying and experientially rewarding, but it added to my intellectual and spiritual growth. I cherished the opportunity to spend more leisure time with relatives and friends and to return to the place of my birth. Visiting the institutions where I once worked, journeying through the communities where I once lived, and trying to fathom the inevitable changes, including the eroding of traditions I embraced, was a bittersweet excursion. The realities of returning home often wreak havoc on the one's emotional attachments and national sentiments. Although I was impressed by the some of the infrastructural transformations brought about by new technology, I also was struck by the adjustments made in aspects of the local culture to accommodate the changes.

Observing the new trends in international travel in a time of pervasive global security consciousness also was quite revealing. It offered poignant lessons about the post-9/11 immigrant experience. In these ways, I could not help but to become a self-imposed participant observer in my own research. The stringent security, the conversations among some immigrants about their experience during departure and arrival, the care taken "not to raise any suspicion," and contacts with immigration officials, which varied from extreme politeness to unexplained detentions, all provided useful

data for both analytical and intervention purposes.

By the end of my sabbatical, I had completed the planned objective of presenting a prospectus for the book entitled: *The Revolving Door of Global Citizens: Caribbean Immigrants in the United States*. I finished the second draft of the introductory chapter. In it, I argue

> *Visiting the institutions where I once worked, journeying through the communities where I once lived, and trying to fathom the inevitable changes, including the eroding of traditions I embraced, was a bittersweet excursion.*

that at the dawn of the 21st century, transnational forces of new migration to the United States have redefined the interconnections between "homelands" and the host society, resulting in the emergence of global citizens. I focus on the experience of Caribbean immigrants, who are among the burgeoning numbers of people comprising the most recent wave of new global citizens in North America.

Framed by the reality of globalization and its implications for transnational identity, the titles of the other five proposed chapters are: Chapter I, "Occupational Change among Caribbean Immigrants: A Transnational Perspective," Chapter II, "Caribbean Immigrant Families: Global Citizens at the Crossroads," Chapter III, "Remittances and the Development of the Homeland: The role of Immigrant Cultural Organizations," Chapter IV, "Caribbean Immigrant Women Making the Transition: Cultural Traditions and Compromises," and Chapter V, "Confronting Challenges after the World Trade Center Tragedy: The Role of Global Interconnectedness in Coping." It is my hope that this book will foster a better understanding of the evolving relationship between the host country and sending societies, especially in a world that is increasingly globally connected.

Indeed, I was correct about my suspicions regarding the six months as a "fleeting moment." Although the experience was rewarding and productive, I wondered: Where did the time go? It was difficult returning to Empire State College, but I soon readjusted to the beloved "Metro" surrounded once again by my illustrious colleagues and looking forward to meeting new students.

Note

Risky Times and Shifts in the Collective Psyche

Miriam Tatzel, Hudson Valley Center

Miriam Tatzel

I have been noticing since 9/11 how current events connect with social psychological phenomena. Here we observe groupthink and there we see Zimbardo's prison study replicated in real life at Abu Ghraib. But overall, the trend I am concerned about is that we are sliding down the scale of human betterment. Over here, the country has been polarizing, red vs. blue, and over there they are literally killing each other. The present environment of war, the Bush administration, Islamic threat, and other ills put our personal well-being and our collective quality of life at risk. I will talk about several theories that mesh together. In one way or another they point to how living with insecurity affects us.

I'll start with Abraham Maslow and his hierarchy of needs (Maslow, 1970). I fear that our country's emphasis is shifting away from the higher-order growth needs for knowledge and self-development and shifting toward lower-order security needs. When needs for safety are "prepotent" (Maslow's word) we tend to prefer orderliness, lack of ambiguity, strong authority, and material striving. The growth motives for self-determination, curiosity, aesthetics, complexity and novelty take a back seat.

I study consumer behavior, and I am especially interested in the place of money and possessions in people's lives. Materialism as a value system is typically defined by three components: acquisition as a central life goal, the belief that possessions are the route to happiness, and the belief that a person's worth is measured by possessions (Richins and Dawson, 1992). It turns out, in line with Maslow's theory, that children who are raised with deprivation, who don't experience economic and/or emotional security, tend to become materialistic as adolescents and adults (Kasser, Koestner amd Lekes, 2002; Rindfleisch, Burroughs and Denton, 1997). When basic needs aren't met,

security becomes the paramount goal, and acquisition can be a compensatory form of security.

Is being materialistic a risk factor for well-being? Generally, yes. People whose values are materialistic tend to be less satisfied with life and less well-adjusted than those whose central values are more intrinsic (Kasser, 2002). I think we've all come across the distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic goals are ends in themselves, and extrinsic goals are means to an end. Financial aspiration is an extrinsic motive. It's about the benefits of being well-off. Other extrinsic aspirations are for fame and image. Examples of intrinsic aspirations include close relationships, community feeling (helping others, wanting to make the world a better place), and self-actualization. People are generally happier in life when they follow their intrinsic aspirations. Thus, one of the responses to feeling insecure is to be materialistic, and materialism is associated with lowered well-being.

Then I came across another take on materialism, by Ronald Inglehart (1997). He compares materialist and postmaterialist values. The root of the difference is whether a society is oriented toward security needs or growth needs. It's like taking Maslow's theory and applying it

on a societal rather than individual level. Here are some examples of materialist values: "maintain a high rate of economic growth, make sure that this country has strong defense forces, maintain order in the nation, fight rising prices, maintain a stable economy, fight against crime." Here are some postmaterialist values: "progress toward a less impersonal, more humane society, progress toward a society where ideas are more important than money, see that people have more say in how things get decided at work and in their communities, try to make our cities and countryside more beautiful, give people more say in important government decisions, protect freedom of speech." Inglehart took the position that world cultures are moving in the postmaterialist direction. I guess I'm seeing some regression. But what do Inglehart's materialist values, like law and order, have to do with acquisitiveness, our usual understanding of materialism? The common basis is that they are all ways of trying to achieve security.

Now we turn to something called Terror Management Theory (TMT). The term predates the war on terror. This terror is our fear of death, a fear that we keep at bay with our daily preoccupations. But when something happens that makes our mortality salient, that shunted away store of terror cracks through. And then what? This is where is gets interesting. One consequence is that when people are reminded of their death they become more materialistic (Arndt, Solomon, Kasser and Sheldon, 2004). Mortality salience, as it is called, makes us greedier, more competitive, and less caring about the environment.

Here's another dimension to TMT. During the last presidential election, people who were made to experience mortality salience (though experimental methods, such as asking people to write about their death, or priming them with death-related cues) were subsequently more likely to say they were for Bush over Kerry (Landau, et al., 2004).

This finding was replicated generally: when people are frightened, as with mortality salience, conservative leaders and opinions become more appealing (Jost, 2006).

Along with the insecurity since 9/11, there is the response to that insecurity with the Iraq-Afghanistan wars. How has being at war influenced our collective psyche? What are the consequences of living in aggressive times? In talking with my students in social psych, we note that for many reasons, aggression begets aggression. When we observe aggression, that behavior is being modeled for us: this is how to deal with conflict. In a way, war sanctions aggression. When aggression becomes commonplace, we become inured to it. Even the mere visual presence of aggressive cues (weapons) primes people to be more aggressive if they are provoked (Aronson, Wilson and Akert, 2005, pp. 402 - 403). Overall, being at war is not good for civility.

From the perspective of social psychology, one of the greatest human flaws is the need for self-justification. It's bad enough to make a mistake, but we compound it by not wanting to know we are wrong (it's bad for the ego). So we bias our construal of reality, perpetuate the wrong decision, and make matters worse. But when the counter-evidence is too blatant, the story unravels. I think that's what happened in the '06 election. The Bush administration's self-justification crumbled, and their use of fear and threat could not override their incompetence.

In summary, in times of risk and threat, survival and security take precedence over self-actualization and the flowering of civilization. Under such circumstances, it's as if there are pressures on us to lean toward becoming more materialistic, more conservative, and more hostile. We touched upon several social psychological perspectives – Maslow (basic and growth needs), materialism, Inglehart (materialism and postmaterialism), Terror Management Theory, aggression, and the need for self-justification.

Notes

1. These findings puzzled me, because I thought that people who escape death change toward the more intrinsic values. I then found research that compared experiencing near death with thinking about death; people in the first group tend to become more intrinsic, and those in the latter group (mortality salience) become more extrinsic (Cozzolino, Stapes, Meyers and Samboceti, 2004).

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Essais

Viktoria Popova-Gonci, Central New York Center

I close my doors, and only scarce rays of light

From the dawning suns of candles

Connect my eyes with the glitter of the paper.

It is blanc.

Is it white or blank?

The words to be seen are already there.

The Sun of tomorrow is not another Sun.

The other eyes may see it.

The other voice may sing of it.

I am just learning to see it in

Le papier blanc,

I am trying to voice it.

I am just another voice who is trying …

Letters to the World:
Narratives of Neurodiversity

Maureen Kravec, Central New York Center

During my sabbatical break in spring 2006, I studied a semi-hidden population among our students: those who have nonverbal learning disabilities, autistic spectrum conditions, and attentional differences. Having spent the past several years reading current research in neuroscience, I was anxious to learn as much as I could. Because my academic training has been in literature, writing, and education rather than social and natural science, I felt some trepidation about whether my research could extend beyond a literature review. Yet, Disabilities Studies is emerging as an interdisciplinary scholarly field, with connections to literary theory and the Modern Language Association now has a division devoted to Disability Studies. A fast-growing body of personal narrative has contributed to the field by opening doors into the perceptual worlds of neurodifferent writers, many of whom have asserted the value of independent study, and of writing as the best means of communicating their experiences.

Since diagnosis is not an exact science, and since neurodifferences often coexist in an individual, I read about learning disability, obsessive compulsive disorder, Tourette's syndrome, attention deficits, and Autistic spectrum issues. Yet, as a mentor in literature and writing, I was particularly interested in nonverbal learning disability (NLD). Controversy exists about whether NLD should be placed on the Autistic spectrum, although children with NLD are as likely to be misdiagnosed as having attention deficit, but NLD appears to have a separate etiology (Rourke, Palumbo) and an equal prevalence among men and women.

Throughout my career, first at a junior college and then at Empire State College, I have worked with a small but clearly identifiable minority of students who excel in verbal arenas (usually including poetry), but experience significant difficulties in other subjects – usually the ones that involve complex visual-spatial tasks. Mathematics, physical education, and handwriting often suffer, as do social interactions that involve interpreting visual cues.

At Mater Dei College, I had advised two adult students, one male, the other female, both gifted poets, both excellent student literary magazine editors, who never successfully completed the mathematics courses they needed for graduation. Despite encouragement from our patient and understanding math faculty, they gave up. The male student told me he had been in his childhood the youngest card-carrying member of the Boston Public Library, but

Maureen Kravec

had been told by a teacher he was not bright enough to attend college. He finally was tested and received a diagnosis of "learning disabled in mathematics." He transferred to complete a bachelor's degree in a program – not in his original area of interest – that did not require mathematics. The other student, who had retired from a secretarial position, never finished her degree, but continued to write and read for enjoyment. She was puzzled that she could not seem to "do math," while some other students, who had struggled in all their subjects, finally had passed math and graduated. Because both of my students had such excellent verbal skills, I wondered whether they had simply convinced themselves they could not "do math" well

enough to reach the high standards they had set for themselves.

Yet in them I recognized something of myself. I had grown up in an "IBM town" involved in the race for space, and had attended a school system where both girls and boys were encouraged to excel in math and science. I had enjoyed these subjects but abandoned thoughts of majoring in these areas when, suddenly, faced with trigonometry and physics, I found my grades dropping to barely passing. Fortunately, I was able to capitalize on my strengths in verbal areas, and fulfilled my dream of becoming a Cultural Studies: Literature and Writing mentor when I grew up.

Conversely, I recall an opticianry professor who questioned me after I had given one of his students an "A" in composition. She was struggling with the mathematically oriented opticianry coursework and he was surprised to find she did well in English. This student went on to finish her opticianry degree and a bachelor's degree in business. A few years later, she became president of a small optical company. She returned to Mater Dei years later as a commencement speaker. She may not have had nonverbal learning disability, but she was fortunate in finding strategies to capitalize on her strengths.

In the past two decades, Byron Rourke, Joseph Palombo, and a growing number of other researchers have identified the syndrome that very likely was responsible for my students' and my difficulties, and perhaps our strengths as well. Nonverbal learning disability, which seems related to irregularities in the white matter in the brain, manifests itself in areas that require visual-spatial coordination. Often, people with nonverbal learning disabilities love to read and write, and poetry, which perhaps more than any other genre relies on language to convey sensory images.

Much research in the field of composition studies has concerned strategies for

helping struggling writers. Students with nonverbal learning disabilities may excel in writing, although some have difficulty with organizing ideas and interpreting metaphoric language. Often, however, writing is the least of their difficulties. If they have reached college, they probably have learned to compensate by developing their verbal skills to the point that they can succeed in most of their studies. Unlike students with classic autism, they exhibit normal affect and interest in other people, although they may have difficulty making casual conversation and picking up social cues. They may seem to be bright, talented people who could, with more effort, overcome their academic and social difficulties. Yet Rourke, who has pioneered in researching NLD throughout his career, has found that because of their hidden perceptual problems, people with nonverbal learning disability face greater risk than the general population of being unemployed or underemployed, of suffering from depression and anxiety, substance abuse, and suicide (142-46):

> Despite the damaging effects of their early experiences, many of these individuals manage to complete secondary school and move on to obtain college or university degrees. It is likely that the structure inherent in the academic milieu increases the probability that they will be able to cope and even succeed within its confines, especially if courses in mathematics, science and similar subjects can be avoided. The most serious crises seem to occur at the point when they leave school and attempt to enter the competitive workforce. It is at this juncture that they begin to experience the most devastating effects of their deficits. (145-46)

Empire State College offers an attractive environment for those students who focus best in one-to-one settings, or who communicate best in writing, or who are socially awkward and fear navigating the dangerous waters of dormitory social life. Co-morbid anxiety disorders, which affect many students with learning, attentional, or autistic issues, may cause problems in eating or speaking in public, using public restrooms, or sitting in crowded classrooms. Online and face-to-face study allow these students to remain in a comfortable setting and focus on academics. Therefore, we can assume that we already serve a population of neurodifferent students, many of whom will continue to hide the degree of their social anxieties.

If we can offer these students strategies for self-understanding and success, we may be able to help them make the transition into other realms as well. Simply by providing access to information and inviting them to read personal narratives, we can enhance their skills and self-knowledge. By their own accounts, many students with nonverbal learning disability can use literature and writing to connect with others and to understand their own and others' behavior. If they can understand their cognitive strengths, these students usually can find strategies to learn subjects like mathematics and physics, as well as to cope with sometimes inexplicably confusing visual signals in the everyday world. For such students, concentrating in literature, writing, or another verbally oriented field may provide a bridge to other areas of learning, as well as serve as a satisfying end in itself. Yet most of us have heard students recounting their families' disapproval of their choice of literature, writing, or another highly verbal area of study. We also have encountered female students attempting to unravel a history of educational stereotyping that has led them to fear math and science, to assume that girls are naturally shy and inept at physical activities. Because women's stories can be especially perplexing – and perhaps because I am a woman myself – I read women's narratives with special interest.

The first autobiography I read, Deborah Green's *Growing up with NLD,* provides a wealth of strategies and accommodations, as well as an account of the author's struggles to teach students with cognitive skills different than her own. Green, who writes poetry and teaches English, reinforced my theory that for students with NLD, studying literature and writing can provide a vital link to understanding and connecting with other people and with the physical environment.

As a young teacher, Green had to learn to offer her students visual cues – through such basic activities as writing on the blackboard – rather than simply lecturing. She developed physical coordination through dance, movement exercises, and individual physical activities, such as running and cycling, which require less complex visual-spatial processing than team sports. She recounts how she painstakingly learned to master the lateral coordination she needed to play piano. And she discusses her childhood joy in reading fantasy and science fiction, writing poetry, and petting the family cat when she felt insecure at school. Green feels she has made much progress, but hopes to continue to grow, develop relationships, and help others.

Another fascinating autobiography is *My 13th Winter,* by Samantha Abeel, who identifies as having a "math disability." Abeel, who published a book of poetry at fifteen, offers insight into her own increasing social anxieties and depression as she entered her teen years and felt she no longer could succeed academically or fit with her peers. Like Green, she was eventually labeled "gifted but learning disabled," a diagnosis she believes allowed her to accept herself and find strategies to succeed. Of publishing her poetry, she says:

> I saw the book as an opportunity to show others what was going on inside me, to show everyone that I was more than just the silent girl in class … The book became my chance to have a voice, to here was my chance to let others know what it was like. (107)

For comparison, I found several autobiographies by people who identified as having autism and Asperger's syndrome. Reading some of them; I wondered whether the "autistic" author might instead have NLD. Lianne Willey, author of *Pretending to Be Normal,* has a Ph.D. in Communication. Donna Williams, who has written a series of autobiographies, beginning with *Nobody Nowhere,* has become a teacher and writer. Many of the women who have contributed to *Women from Another Planet? Our Lives in the Universe of Autism,* ed. Jean Kearns Miller, express themselves through poetry. Some of them, contrary to the stereotype of autistics, work in people-oriented fields such as teaching and human services. Indeed, challenging the stereotypes seems to be major motivation for many of the writers.

Like some of our adult students, both Willey and Miller discovered their own Asperger's syndrome when their children were diagnosed. Miller joined an e-mail list and began communicating with her "wyrd [sic] sisters." Eventually, she edited a book of their writings on identity, education, relationships, and careers. The title, *Women from Another Planet?*, references John Gray's bestseller *Men Are from Mars, Women Are from Venus* – an especially apt title, since many people with NLD and autistic spectrum delight in science fiction and fantasy. Most of these women have developed self-identities somewhat at odds with the "feminine" stereotype. They discuss their strategies for navigating the intricacies of education, careers, gender identity, and family life. Despite their own feelings of difference from the "neurotypical" population, women on the autistic spectrum may have difficulty obtaining correct diagnoses, as our composite picture of autism remains to a large degree male. Miller describes the group's evolving methodology: "Given the relative inattention of the research community to women with AS and our own dismay at the inadequacy of diagnostic description especially as it pertains to women, we began the process of self-definition through interaction with each other … We were, in effect, observer-participants in our own ethnography" (xxiii). Through her Internet-based group, Miller had found qualitative research, and autobiographical writing, the best media for expressing the internal realities of women on the autistic spectrum. Her perspective gave me positive direction for my own inquiry.

Anthropologist Dawn Prince-Hughes, author of *Songs of the Gorilla Nation,* also engages in ethnographic research. Like Willey, Williams and Green, and the better-known Autistic Temple Grandin, Prince-Hughes describes her connection to animals, having experienced her first meaningful communication through her work with gorillas. Like Green, Abeel and many of the women in Miller's anthology, she writes poetry. She also advocates independent study. Prince-Hughes, who is lesbian as well as autistic, describes being bullied in school. As a young adult, she experienced homelessness and alcohol abuse, and worked for a time as an exotic dancer, a job that she feels suited her well

as an autistic because she could so easily keep mentally detached from her audience and focus on the dance. She stresses that without having found a bond with and a compelling research interest in the gorillas, and without her professors allowing her to complete most of her coursework through independent study, she would not have achieved her Ph.D.

> *Research indicates that students with other types of learning differences, such as attention deficit, can benefit from individualized education …*

Prince-Hughes' experiences led her to compile and edit the anthology *Aquamarine Blue Five,* in which students with autistic spectrum disorders discuss their college education and learning processes. Many of them reinforce Prince-Hughes' own story of the importance of individualized education, in which students can follow their interests, using their own learning styles, and avoid the gratuitous social conflict they might risk in dorm living.

Research indicates that students with other types of learning differences, such as attention deficit, can benefit from individualized education (Solden, Ratey and Hallowell). Grandin suggests an individualized approach to the job market and college as well: "The successful people on the spectrum often get in the back door by showing a portfolio of their work to the right person. That often means avoiding the traditional front door with a job interview or the normal college admissions process" (118).

Although each of these authors suffered setbacks and uncomfortable moments, each one ultimately gained in self-knowledge and found strategies that worked well for her. Not all succeeded or stayed in their first careers. Some autistic-spectrum students are visual learners like Temple Grandin, while others are verbal like Dawn Prince-Hughes,

Donna Williams, and Lianne Willey: each writer believes learning to use her cognitive strengths was absolutely crucial. Most of the narratives are success stories. Yet in some quarters, such as Internet autistic communities, there is concern that placing too much emphasis on "success stories" will mask the pervasive misunderstanding and discrimination this group still suffers. The terms "pretending," "passing," and "coming out" recur, as do discussions of "coming out" and identifying. What about those who cannot even "pretend" to be "normal" – or "neurotypical," to use the autistic community's term? Many voices raise the question: should such neurological differences be called "disabilities" – or, as many develop strengths to compensate for their difficulties, are they really better labeled "differences?"

Without sentimentalizing, or demanding normality, can we respect neurodifferent individuals and value their contributions to society? Current research into creativity suggests some, though by no means all, creative people possess significant neurodifferences. Since poetry seems to be a highly favored genre among people with NLD and autistic spectrum disorders, I also wanted to explore whether anyone exhibiting characteristics of NLD had written great, enduring works that resonate with "neurotypical" readers. In re-perusing Andrew Motion's biography of poet and librarian Philip Larkin, I felt quite convinced Larkin is one such writer. Others piqued my interest; for example, I wondered whether Emily Dickinson also might have had NLD. I spent several weeks chasing this theory, but with inconclusive results. Dickinson did not seem to have difficulty learning math and science, and her poems reference both. Her physical isolation could be explained by social and health factors. Yet she did have a problem with eyesight; and she did carry on a voluminous letter-writing correspondence with her sister-in-law/neighbor Susan, whom she easily could have visited in person, and she famously stated in a poem, "this is my letter to the world." Aldous Huxley, who complained about his nonvisual imagination, took peyote to expand his consciousness, but did not experience the vivid visions he had heard the drug could elicit. Huxley had eyesight problems that began in adolescence. His experiences, well as those of others

with documented visual problems, raised reminders for me about the old tradition of the blind poet. A cognitive approach to the work of these writers may yield new insights.

Studying cognitive approaches to literature may enhance our understanding of a few well-known writers; yet current research can assist all of us in interacting with our students. As we admit a new generation of students, we will encounter many more with various official diagnoses – not all of them accurate. Many students will have received years of individual tutoring in special education classrooms within the public education system. Others will have been homeschooled. Most will feel at home in the cyber-world, where there are few visual cues to miss, as well as communities of like-minded people with whom to discuss their interests. Web-based courses and one-on-one tutorials will provide comfortable, logical educational choices, and some students will be very forthcoming about diagnoses and the accommodations they need. However, some students may be reluctant to disclose disability, particularly because they hope to succeed academically – at least in their favorite subjects. And, as Tonette Rocco argues, some may be concerned that stigma still attaches to these diagnoses, and wish to avoid being labeled "disabled" or "disordered." We also may occasionally encounter students who have emotional difficulties resulting from years of fearing stigma and, sometimes, new challenges. The neurological differences discussed above are not "mental illnesses," and the vast majority of students with these conditions are quite safe and stable. In this regard, Abeel's autobiography offers an especially sensitive portrayal of her in intellectual and emotional development, and her transcendence of anxiety and depression.

Some in our current generation of adult students, in contrast, are discovering their own neurodifferences – autistic spectrum and attentional issues as well as learning disabilities – when their children are diagnosed. These adults may feel relieved and excited to learn about their own "extreme learning styles" and discover how they can build on their strengths to succeed. Yet these students may have to overcome years of feeling failure. We must approach such a situation very tactfully to avoid

violating a student's privacy. Of course, there is a plethora of possible reasons, most of them quite remediable. Yet finding those reasons may involve untangling a web of social and cognitive issues. Occasionally, a student might opt for testing, sometimes at considerable expense. However, if a student wishes to forgo testing, he or she may still benefit from trying learning strategies originally suggested for learning disabled, Autistic or attention-deficit students.

Because most of us have had limited training, and because of the legal and ethical issues involved in discussing disability, we may hesitate to broach the subject. While turning to our student services and academic support professionals will not necessarily provide simple answers, we can at least count on their help as we venture to understand our students. Empire State College always has provided a supportive, individualized approach to learning, and in such an atmosphere, good will and honest inquiry will allow many of our students – and ourselves – to make progress and their potential.

In speaking with colleagues, I have discovered that some of us have reservations about the current penchant for labeling and (its sometime sequel) medicating, as well as about our own abilities to work with neurodifferent students. It seems a sad commentary on our multitasking milieu that we may have to worry that working with such students can be time-consuming. In an ideal world, we and our administrators might well realize that if our efforts translate into students developing skills that lead to their becoming happier, more productive individuals, our time will have been well spent. Furthermore, not all neurodifferent students take up extra time. Those with nonverbal learning disabilities, for example, may need only a little time, and some help in finding appropriate strategies and studies that require visual/spatial imagination. In a culture that values education primarily as a means to lucrative and satisfying employment, students also may need reassurance that concentrating in literature and writing can be a viable academic and career move. They also may benefit from internship opportunities that allow them to engage with people and improve their communication skills.

Since my sabbatical ended, I have had several opportunities to share ideas with colleagues. At the fall 2006 All Areas of Study conference, I scheduled a session on Neurodiversity at Empire State College. Ten faculty and staff, from a range of different programs and areas of study, shared ideas about working with neurodifferent students. We discussed issues of disclosure, and accommodations. Several people supported the philosophy of building that universal design principles into online courses to accommodate all learning styles. It was a joy to meet with these colleagues, and I hope ours will be the first of many such discussions at the college.

In spring 2007, I mentored a session at the Women's Studies Residency on Narratives of Women with Autism Spectrum and ADHD. Each of the three students read from a common list: Abeel's *My 13th Winter,* Miller's *Women from Another Planet;* Sari Solden's W*omen with ADHD,* and Temple Grandin's *Thinking in Pictures;* and each also is developing an individual research project.

We at Empire State College, with our emphasis on serving students as individuals, and our emphasis on interdisciplinary learning and praxis, are already well positioned to offer our neurodifferent students a rich and welcoming learning environment. A number of faculty and professionals at the college are conducting exciting research. I learned about one of these in spring 2007, when I attended Mentor Sandra Johnson's presentation on neuroscience and adult learning. Drawing from her background in counseling psychology and her knowledge of neuroscience, she discussed the ways in which students experience stress as adult learners because of past negative educational experiences. Her presentation, and the monograph she has edited with Dr. Kathleen Taylor [sections of which also are included in this issue of *All About Mentoring],* are among many resources that can offer us exciting new perspectives on adult learning

References

The following are some of the books, articles and web sites I have found helpful as I have studied students with learning disabilities, Autistic spectrum issues, and attentional differences.

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Berube, Michael. "Disability and Narrative." *PMLA* 120.2 (2005): 568 - 76.

Grandin, Temple. *Thinking in Pictures; My Life with Autism* (expanded ed.) NY: Vintage, 2006. Autobiography of an autistic Ph.D.

Green, Deborah. *Growing up with NLD*. Silicon Heights: Silicon Heights Computers, 2002. Autobiography of a young woman with nonverbal; learning disability, who now teaches English and writes – excellent discussion of accommodations and strategies for learning.

Huxley, Aldous. *The Doors of Perception*. London: Chatto and Windus, 1954; rpt. Shaffer library of Drug Policy: The Psychedelic Library. http://druglibrary.org/schaffer/lsd/doors.htm.

The renowned author discussed the dearth of visual imagery he experienced on his own psychedelic trip. Huxley. Who experienced problems with eyesight due to uveitis as an adolescent, who wrote sad poetry about isolation, and who seems to have had a poor visual memory, may himself be one of the "NLD" people.

Incidentally, Huxley provides a satire of the deleterious effects of our penchant for labeling children at early ages in his novel Brave New World.

Johnson, Sandra, and Kathleen Taylor, eds. *The Neuroscience of Adult Learning: New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education* (J-B ACE Single Issue Adult and Continuing Education). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2006.

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Palombo. Joseph. *Learning Disorders and Disorders of the Self in Children and Adolescents*. NY: Norton, 2001. Excellent scholarly discussion of emotional and intellectual issues in learning disabled children and adults.

Prince-Hughes, Dawn. *Aquamarine Blue 5: Personal Stories of College Students with Autism*. Athens: Swallow Press, 2002. Short pieces by college students with Autism and Asperger's Syndrome who discuss their college experiences Several cite the importance of independent study in their success.

————————. *Songs of the Gorilla Nation: My Journey Through Autism*. Bourbon: Harmony, 2004. Autobiography of a woman who identifies as autistic; she acquired her higher education, including her Ph.D., largely through independent study.

Ratey, John, and Edward Hallowell. *Driven to Distraction: Recognizing and Coping With Attention Deficit Disorder from Childhood Through Adulthood*. NY: Simon and Schuster-Touchstone, 1995. The authors, psychiatrists who themselves have ADHD, provide a clear, entertaining overview.

Rocco, Tonette S. "Hesitating to Disclose: Adult Students with Invisible Disabilities and their Experience with Understanding and Articulating Disability." Midwest Research-to-Practice Conference in Adult, Continuing and Community Education. October 15 - 17, 1997. http:www.anrecs.msu.edu/research/gradppr.htm (2/16/02).
This was the Winning Graduate Student Research Paper presented at the 1997 conference, and it is one of my favorites. It addresses the difficulties students with hidden disabilities face in disclosing, including faculty incredulity that these students are not just "making excuses" for poor work or trying to obtain special treatment.

Rourke, Byron P. *Nonverbal Learning Disabilities: The Syndrome and the Model*. NY: Guilford Press, 1989. One of the pioneering researchers in this field, Rourke has studied NLD for years; many of his articles are available through the nldline and nldontheweb sites.

Solden, Sari. *Women with Attention Deficit: Embrace Your Differences and Transform Your Life*. Nevada City: Underwood, 2005. Solden, a psychotherapist with ADHD, discusses the particular issues of women with ADHD (as contrasted with the typical image of the male ADHDer.

Webb, James T., *et al.*, *Misdiagnosis and Dual Diagnoses of Gifted Children and Adults: ADHD, Bipolar, OCD, Asperger's, Depression, and Other Disorders*. Scottsdale: Great Potential Press, 2005. Deals with issues relating to Misdiagnosis and dual diagnosis.

Willey, Liane Holliday, and Tony Attwood. *Pretending to be Normal: Living with Asperger's Syndrome*. London: Jessica Kingsley, 1999. Autobiography of a Woman with a Ph.D. in Communications who identifies as Autistic.

Williams, Donna. *Nobody, Nowhere: The Extraordinary Autobiography of an Autistic*. NY: Harper, 1994. The first of several autobiographical volumes, this one describes Williams' early struggles in a non-nurturing environment. In later volumes the story becomes brighter, as Williams teaches and writes, and gains a measure of acceptance.

In addition to these print sources, the following web sites offer access to various scholarly and nonscholarly (primarily for parents) articles on NLD:

NLDLINE. 1 October 2006. <http:www.ndline.org>. This site features articles by and about consumers, as well as scholarly articles.

NLD on the Web. 1 October 2006. <nldontheweb.com>. This web site offers links to many articles, including those of Bryon Rourke and Sue Thompson, an educator who pioneered in developing accommodative strategies.

Nonverbal Learning Disabilities Association. 1 October 2006. <http:www.nlda.org>. Home of the national advocacy and research organization.

Life Thereafter?

Robert Seidel, professor emeritus, Genesee Valley Center

Wayne Willis' spring 2007 All About Mentoring *article "'Killing the Spirit'? Empire State College in the 21st Century" says things have changed in Empire State College from the first decade or so of my service that began in 1974.*

I recall creative engagements with colleagues and students and a joyful eagerness among peers to construct an accredited yet truly unconventional institution dedicated to guided independent study for adults. I recollect too the adventurousness, the audacity and occasional over-reaching, of highly individualized mentoring, program design, and credit by evaluation processes.

The inevitable process of institutional regimentation began long ago. To its credit, Empire State College has made a mark and continues well to serve diverse, highly motivated men and women.

Yet nostalgia is powerful, and mentoring became fundamental to my life. Here I hope to show that audacious, individualized, fruitful mentoring exists beyond or after Empire State College.

Mentoring is for me a function of neighborly affection, community, and sustaining and healing relationships. Its basic qualities and phases are similar in the college and community settings, as I expect the stories below will demonstrate. (For your information, fictitious names take the place of many true ones.)

Intrinsic motivation

Seven years ago, Joshua invited me into his life. A skinny, infinitely polite 14-year-old student at a Rochester middle school, he walked up to me and asked, "Will you help me?" Explaining, he went on, "They [teachers and counselor] have an IEP [Individualized Educational Plan] for me and they're not doing it." Naively, I accepted Joshua's challenge. We shook hands.

Mentor Bob Seidel helping Josh learn to read

The journey began. I met some of Joshua's teachers and his family. I shared the frustrations of a youngster whose inadequately addressed learning disorders were evident. Unselfconsciously, Joshua's extended African-American family accepted me; simultaneously, his segment – mother, sister, niece, and nephew – struggled and eventually reached stability and a state of well-being.

Joshua and I met. I strained to assist Joshua to read, which he never mastered. I became his coach and a confidant. From nearly the first day, I was Dr. Seidel, an epithet he only changed much later, and unwillingly, to Uncle Bob. In contrast, my wife was always Aunt Betty.

Program planning

Joshua had preliminarily settled the issue of "what to do." However, we had continually to adjust Joshua's goals from academic success, to getting by, to modifying high school curricula, to finding a job. Qualitatively, it also meant coping with anxiety attacks and depression.

Keeping up

At Empire State College, keeping up with students was often problematic. With Joshua it was a new type of learning. The second of two children, Joshua was the caretaker in his fatherless home. From when we met, Joshua tried to look after his mother. He attended to his sister and her children through frequent relocation apartment to apartment. For the young ones, Joshua babysat, ironed clothes, made sure they had breakfast, and got then off to school.

I understood the ramifications only later. Researching bullying, I found that caretaker boys, praised for admirable behavior, within a few years cease accepting older adults' advice. They're highly likely to be violent and commit criminal acts.

Joshua and I came to verbal fisticuffs on this score. When he got his first job, I tried to dissuade him from buying a car. "You don't understand," he'd say forcibly. "I need it." The difference between Joshua and 17-year-old children of affluence is wealth, not ignorance of the world or susceptibility to

American consumerism. Joshua and I nearly split many times over the issue and the directly related one of what it meant for him to "be a man."

Paperwork

The requirements were exasperating, as when I had to have Joshua's mother's written permission to discuss his status in the high schools. Joshua disdained paperwork, never keeping check stubs, for example. Later, when it became absolutely necessary, Joshua kept his wallet scrupulously well organized.

Complications

How Joshua got along with school, family, jobs, and girls became entangled with mentoring. What is a mentor to do?

The instances at Empire State were legion: a student's circumstances trumped our conferences, made contract extensions necessary, and explained distractions. Seeing his niece and nephew off to school caused Joshua to miss his own bus and hence school altogether. His infatuations and partying irked his mother, so they also came to me. Joshua's sense of being slighted at work led to his walking away from it, to poorer legitimate positions, and then to increasingly tenuous situations. This last period was Joshua's "leave of absence;" it lasted 18 months.

Then, Joshua fell in love with Michelle, a bright, lovely woman seven years his senior. He was hooked. He and I got back together, he straightened up somewhat in the work department, and was enamored of and possibly overwhelmed by his devotion to Michelle's five bright children.

Evaluations

Joshua had to know how he was doing. I never had to say an activity would not earn "credit;" he knew the score. Yet he wanted my perspective. Even more, he was keen to know if he was right with God. I'd swallow and respond in a version of "God talk." In the middle, between failure and salvation, Joshua sought practical results about banking, tracking money, application forms, earning "his" GED, and scoping out folks with potential to help but whose bearing presented dangers of exploitation

– a grave danger. Joshua's personal hygiene was meticulous, but he disdained medical attention. This caused me to be hard on him, yet I couldn't dent his antipathy to preventive medicine.

Referrals

Joshua often found his own learning activities; we'd consult or he'd tell me later. One involved Urban League employment training, another a GED exam preparation course. These served, each in its own way.

> "To Joshua's mom, I want you to know that your son touched our lives. He mattered to us even more than we knew. You can be proud of the gentle man you raised."

Most successful was Joshua's response to a storefront program designed for males. My friendship with Donald Hardaway and Ed Lemon was instrumental in part. More important was that Joshua saw Don and Ed as "strong African-American men," Joshua's words, even as Don warned Joshua he should not make unwarranted assumptions. One day Don was happy to say he'd met Michelle at a volunteer neighborhood service event in which Joshua and she took part.

Joshua's success in the program led to a full-time job at Rochester General Hospital. For the first time, in my experience, Joshua seemed pleased. He proudly wore his uniform off-duty, trousers fully up on his slender hips, and his colleagues encouraged him. In the new setting, Joshua demonstrated his natural willingness to pitch in, his warmth and courtesy. I was ready to write a glowing evaluation. Affirmation appeared in Susan Fredericks Hodes' January 17, 2007, letter to the Rochester *Democrat and Chronicle:* "A gentle man who moved quietly through our lives, Joshua cleaned up after us and made the

Lipton Cancer Center a better place for our patients and for us … To Joshua's mom, I want you to know that your son touched our lives. He mattered to us even more than we knew. You can be proud of the gentle man you raised."

Bull sessions and God talk

Joshua naturally sized-up others. His words insightfully described them. When we discussed his observations, Joshua would think about what I said and bring it back later. As a little child, he'd been immersed in the values of fundamental Baptism and inherently retained most of them. Yet, he's ask, "What does God want from me?" My responses were at odds with Joshua's religious acculturation, yet he'd comment, "You're right. I needed to hear that." In such conversations, I constantly faced a dilemma: What business has a left-liberal in laying his conceptions on this guy?

In December 2006, Joshua experienced a crisis, and we did a bit of calming down. He looked away, down at his hands, and became apparently serene. "Why should I fret and be down? When I wake up in the morning, I'm going to think about the joy of the little ones scurrying around in the house. They're alive, and this is living." I managed a rejoinder: "Joshua, you're as near to God as any person can be. This is what being a man is really about."

Graduation

Last January 5, Josh and I met briefly in the early afternoon, then he walked over to visit his Aunt Gloria. Early next morning, Joshua's mother called: "Joshua was murdered about 5:30 last night." Walking on the street, he'd been shot three times in the back. Joshua had turned 21 three weeks earlier.

Time collapsed. Being with Joshua's family and Michelle at the medical examiner's office was an ordeal. The wake followed. Ed Lemon told endearingly of Joshua's sincerity and work program completion. The female pastor of Joshua's small church spoke. Joshua's nephew and his cousins gathered around me, a comfort in our sorrow.

The funeral service was an event like no other, the setting a male dominated,

fundamentalist Baptist congregation where Joshua had been baptized. Remembering Joshua, his pastor was not allowed to stand at the altar yet she spoke with grace. In contrast, the church's pastor invited me to the podium from which I delivered, in my pale imitation of Baptist cadence, the eulogy Joshua's family had requested.

Snow fell lightly on the immense cavalcade that accompanied Joshua's body to the chilly cemetery. As final prayers were said and his uncle was lowered into the ground, I tried to console Ryan, Joshua's nephew.

Coda

Yesterday, Ryan, 14, and his younger stepbrother accompanied me to a Hip Hop E*Mass at St. Luke and St. Simon Cyrene Episcopal Church in the city. Ryan and I have been seeing each other for six months. Ryan has kept up the practice begun by Joshua of calling Betty and me on holidays. About this, Ryan's grandmother said, "It's just like him."

Obiter dictum

Mentoring is challenging, sometimes heartbreaking, and doles out many rewards. Its settings are many and recognized. This is a difference from the situation when I arrived at Empire State College in 1974. Then, persons who might otherwise have become colleagues would ask, with apparent disdain, "Mentoring? In a college? What the hell's that?"

Reentry

Mentoring for men and women released from incarceration and creating reasonable comprehensive systems to assists them have become a passion for a circle of associates. Throughout the country, reentry is a bleak phenomenon. The prospects are gloomy that a formerly incarcerated person lacking outside assistance will be integrated into society. Rejection by family, relapse to addiction, mental illness, and lack of learning and work preparedness produce astronomical recidivism, higher than normal mortality, and despair.

I've joined my friends in the cause by mentoring and doing research, public education, and advocacy. Three examples illustrate the mentoring activity.

Sydney

Meeting Sydney at a public policy gathering led to friendship, collaboration, and mentoring. Sydney taught me authoritatively about the experience of incarcerated women and of good reentry programs, particularly in the Bronx. Together, we researched and wrote on reentry issues. I'm now Sydney's "brother." She's making her way in community voluntarism and family relationships and into rewarding, gainful employment.

Morris

In his mid-thirties, Morris has been an alcoholic for over 20 years. On parole last year, when we met, the state re-incarcerated him after a crisis, binge, and criminal acts. We corresponded. Having maxed out and been released last spring, Morris refused my counsel to enter a solid, disciplined group home program. "I'll make it on my own," Morris said memorably, but he couldn't. Morris conned me, mainly for cigarettes. An acquaintance sheltered him until the landlord put them out. Homeless, Morris languished for two days, and then staged shoplifting to get arrested. In jail, he barely overcame shame on Friday to call me. "Will you plead for the help I need?" Pre-Trial Release Services and I had already talked about Morris's needs. Yesterday, in the jail visiting room, Morris said he felt "defeated." I outlined a "degree program." It's barely possible now that we'll be doing lots of exhausting work.

Dwayne

I'd mentored Dwayne, 34, for well over two years. He's developed a life plan that included art, college study, and attention to long-term chronic disease. On the exact day, one year ago, when Dwayne's term on parole ended, however, he despaired. He was unable to cope with a reality that he'd not experienced since he was 18 – freedom from state supervision. Dwayne had assimilated an innate understanding that the "system" would feed, house, and medicate him if he screwed up. Intensive talking got us beyond that day. Fourteen months later, Dwayne is persevering. He's still grappling with certain adolescent conditioning that he would benefit by overcoming. In company, he smiles coyly, points to me, and says, "He's my mentor."

Circles of Interest: Research in Adult Development and Learning

On June 25, 15 colleagues from around the college gathered in Latham to learn more about common interests and research in adult development and learning. The gathering, co-sponsored by the Circles group and the Mentoring Institute, became another opportunity for us to share ideas and search for common agendas, a major impetus behind the development of the "Research and Study Circle" created by mentor Judy Gerardi and others in 1997.

What follows are summaries of presentations by Nan Travers, Viktoria Popova-Gonci, Gary Krolikowski, and Joyce McKnight. A version of Julie Shaw's presentation is the opening essay in this issue of All About Mentoring. *Thanks to these presenters and to Lorraine Lander and Margaret-Clark Plaskie, who have caringly guided the Circles group over the last several years.*

Some Thoughts on Adult Learning, Self-Regulated Learning, and the Empire State College Degree Planning Process

Nan L. Travers, Office of College Assessment Services

Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) is the learner's ability to process actively and control information, affect, and behavior to acquire knowledge and skills. The components of SRL include reference standards (self-schema developed over a lifetime that is used to guide behaviors), perception of choice on the part of the learner, learning alliance (formed relationships with significant others in the learning environment, especially with the instructor), feedback seeking, and internal calibration (self-monitoring and self assessment (i.e., metacognition) to select, adapt, and generate tactics and strategies to guide actions). The key difference between

Figure 1. Principles of Adult Learning compared to Self-Regulated Learning	
Principles of Adult Learning	**Self-Regulated Learning**
1. A rich body of experience is essential for learning to occur best.	1. Experts develop higher levels of self-regulatory abilities than novices.
2. Experience yields explicit knowledge only if reflected on.	2. Self-reflection research has concentrated on metacognition, a critical component of internal calibration.
3. Individuals learn best when focusing primarily on the goals of their learning and their needs related to doing that learning.	3. When students perceive choices they perform at higher standards, set more challenging goals, and have higher efficacy toward making decisions. Goal commitment is highly related to metacognitive functioning.
4. Using the solving of genuine problems as a means of learning enhances motivation, energy and memory.	4. Broader-based instruction (e.g., genuine problems, case-based instruction) rather than specific task focus increases SRL. When students are encouraged to connect new experiences with previous experiences, SRL improves.
5. Learning occurs best if learners understand early what is to be learned and how it is to be learned.	5. When faculty model learning processes, coached students, and/or indicated clear outcomes with expectations, students increased SRL and scored higher than counterparts in classes where faculty did not do these things.
6. Deliberate practice is a more effective means of learning than less focused efforts."	6. Effective instructional methods: Guide self-images Set goals and expectations Provide reflective dialogue Provide corrective feedback Connect abstract concepts Link new experiences. Deliberate practice engages the self-regulated learning process.

SRL and self-directed learning models is that the SRL models include the ways in which an individual defines him/herself, interacts within the learning environment, and integrates and utilizes experiences.

Using Sheckley and Keeton's (2002) Principles of Adult Learning, we can draw a parallel between learning experiences based on adult learning principles and the

development of SRL (Figure 2). Research (Travers, Sheckley and Bell, 2003) has shown learning environments that utilize these principles enhance adults' development of SRL, while learning environments that are traditional, didactic in format shift students to other (teacher)-regulate.

When we look at the Empire State College degree planning process and the prior

learning assessment, there is also a parallel to the Adult Learning Principles. At Empire State College, we ask students to use their rich body of experiences; to reflect upon these experiences and determine college-level learning; to set learning, personal, and professional goals; develop a degree plan; and to continue their studies. In essence, the degree planning process is a "genuine problem" that we give the students to solve: "How is your learning equivalent to college-level learning and how can you best design a program that meets your goals and expectations?"

There are also strong parallels between the degree planning process and the types of structures that need to be in place to enhance the development of SRL. Effective instructional methods that enhance SRL guide self-images, set goals and expectations, provide reflective Ê dialogue, provide opportunities for a learning alliance, provide corrective feedback, connect abstract concepts, and link new experiences. Figure 3 illustrates the degree-planning process with the elements of SRL. Based on the research and theoretical models of SRL, there is support for the hypothesis that the act and process of self-designing a degree program actually increases students' ability to self-regulate their own learning. Albeit there are multiple variables at hand and large variation in the learning alliances, but overall the transformative process witnessed by many mentors may be that we are actually seeing our students increase in the complexity of how they self-regulate. This would be a great area for further research in our college.

Figure 2: Self-Regulation and the ESC Degree Planning Process
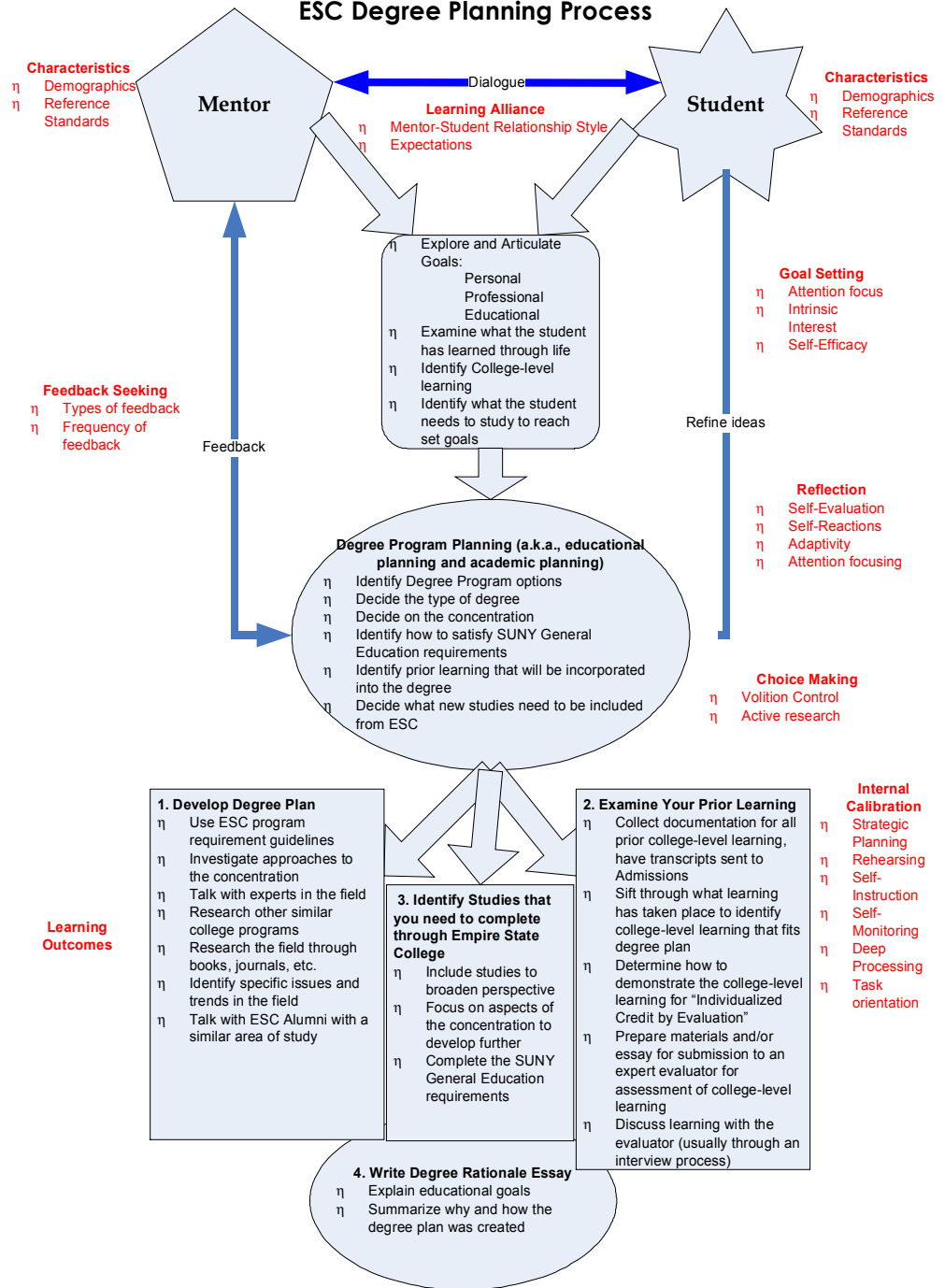
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Don't Memorize, Recognize: Teaching Foreign Languages to Adults Students

Viktoria Popova-Gonci, Central New York Center

My research concerns developing instructional materials for English-speaking students learning other Indo-European languages (such as French, Spanish, German and Russian).

Even though the fields of historical and comparative linguistics have addressed lexical and syntactic similarities between English and other Indo-European languages, this knowledge has not found appropriate applications in foreign language education.

Reference to cognate structures in foreign language education is not uncommon. Such reference, however, is frequently limited to the presentation of "identical" cognates, international vocabulary, and warnings of false cognates. Even though many foreign-language textbooks suggest that English and, for example, French languages share a common vocabulary, lists of cognates offered by most textbooks are scarce and not designed to be used as one of the primary tools of learning.

The goal of the instructional materials I have been researching and trying out, is to assist students in using their native language as a knowledge base, and to encourage them to be involved in the active process of linguistic exploration.

Adult Learners: Reasoning Capacities and the Impact(s) of Technology

Gary Krolikowski, Genesee Valley Center

This presentation shared scholarly and nonscholarly viewpoints relative to what reasoning capacities a successful college student needs. I am also interested in posing questions regarding the positive/negative impact(s) of technology in the 21st century. The tradition of liberal arts education usually viewed the required capacities to include:

- Recognizing, Identifying, and Controlling of Variables
- Arithmetical Reasoning
- Forming and Comprehending Propositional Statements
- Ability to Paraphrase a Text in One's Own Words
- Gaining Awareness of Gaps in Knowledge or Information
- Understanding the Need for Operational Definitions
- Translating Words into Written Symbols and Written Symbols into Words
- Understanding a Line of Reasoning in Terms of Underlying Assumptions
- Drawing Inferences from Data and Evidence, Including Correlational Reasoning

- Ability to Discriminate Between Inductive and Deductive Reasoning
- Performing Hypothetico-Deductive Reasoning
- Performing Qualitative, Phenomenological Reasoning or Thinking
- Checking Inferences, Conclusions or Results
- Developing Self-Consciousness Concerning One's Own Thinking and Reasoning Processes
- Developing the Skills of One's Discipline

With the rapid changes in our society that are technology based, we have seen transformations in both how study is offered, as well as what capacities are required of students in order to be successful. Computer literacy, multicultural sensitivity, and global economic awareness are just a few examples of these changing expectations. How do these expectations differ from those identified above? How are our Empire State College students able or not able to respond to these new reasoning capacities that a college student is supposed to either possess or gain? And how do we know?

Table One: Paths for Adult Education

	Create "Human Capital"	Individual Self-direction	Enhance Democratic Participation	Empowerment	Community Self-direction
Key Ideas	Workers are "human capital." Education increases their value.	One of the main purposes of life is to be engaged in lifelong learning.	A viable democracy requires an educated populace.	Life is a constant power struggle between "haves" and "have nots." Education should give the powerless a voice.	Members of geographic communities and communities of interest are capable of deciding on their own destinies.
History	Liberal and neoliberal agenda. Human worth is defined by market economy. Dates back to Adam Smith and *The Wealth of Nations*.	Has an individualistic framework, emphasizing personal growth, happiness and control of learning.	Goes back to the founding fathers especially Thomas Jefferson who believed that democracy requires citizens who can make good decisions for themselves and their nation.	Goes back to dialectical materialism and the idea that the powerless should be enabled to realize how they have been mistreated and enabled to gain a voice for themselves.	Goes back as far as Tocqueville and his discernment of associations as the way Americans care for themselves and one another, "citizen led."
Representative Institutions and Movements	Entire education structure from infancy to graduate schools.	Humanistic education and psychology.	Hull House Chautauqua Institute	Popular education Participatory research Liberation theology	Antigonish Highlander Alternative economics movement Mutual aid/self help Membership organizations of the poor
Major Adult Education Figures	*Zeitgeist* various times*	Rogers, Knowles Hiemstra Mezirow, Tough, Brookfield	Jane Addams Eduard Lindeman	**U.S.:** Cunningham, Vella **Developing World:** Freire	Coady Horton **McKnight**
Relationship to Empire State College	Many students embrace this ideology to improve marketability	The college was founded primarily on this principle	"Civic participation" mission	Emphasis on diversity Emphasis on understanding power and privilege	Combines civic participation and self-direction

Overview of Adult Education as a Field of Social Practice

Joyce McKnight, Center for Distance Learning

My presentation was intended to:

- Provide colleagues with an overview of adult education as a field of professional practice

- Describe the portion of adult education that has historically been defined as a field of social practice.

- Provide an overview of my work as a researcher/practitioner

- Elicit comments from colleagues on a portion of my work.

Principle "Paths" of Adult Education

The following table outlines several of the main "paths" adult education has taken over the years, as well some of the principle players in each.

McKnight Model of Community Self-Direction

In my dissertation, as well as in academic research and practice since then, I have explored the nature of "altruistic grassroots initiatives" or self-directed community groups and associations formed by those attempting to solve a problem or by those already serving them. This form of learning precludes those forms of adult education that are primarily focused on the creation of human capital or on self-enhancement, as well as those forms of adult education as a field of social practice that are ideologically based, but "teacher centered" (i.e., education for democracy or education for empowerment).

The dissertation involved over 60 case studies. It involved creating "grounded theory." It bears the rather lengthy title *Toward a Grounded, Substantive Theory of the Control of Learning in Altruistic Grassroots Initiatives,* and had both sociological and adult education components. I have used this framework for both research and practice since its completion in 1995.

Table Two: McKnight Framework for Altruistic Grass-roots Initiatives	
Category	*Description*
General Neighborly Affection	General neighborly affection groups arise naturally and organically in communities. They are often loosely constituted and focus on improving the quality of life for all the people in a delimited geographic area. Key participants are "catalysts" who are often persons with recognized roles in the community such as pastors, other religious workers, social workers, teachers, health care providers etc. who become connected to natural community leaders such as the "matriarchs" of extended families. Together these leaders form a bridge that brings needed resources into the target community.
Focused Neighborly Affection	Focused neighborly affection groups arose from people who had a desire to those with specific needs. They are probably the most common type of altruistic initiative. There are two types … those with a strong, charismatic "founder" and those that are begun by small groups. Such projects may serve a particular geographic community or a broad "community of interest."
Advocacy or Self-advocacy	Advocacy or self-advocacy groups are formed to "right a wrong." Often they are formed by people who feel they have suffered an injustice or are about to suffer an injustice, but sometimes they are formed on behalf of those who cannot speak for themselves such as children, the disabled, the elderly, or even nonhumans such as animals, trees or sacred sites.
Mutual Aid/Self Help (MASH)	MASH groups form to enable individuals suffering from a particular personal problem to help one another, such as the well-known Alcoholics Anonymous groups, or to provide alternative economic support.
Common Good Initiatives/Collaborations	Common good efforts are often called collaborations in the literature. They are formed by representatives of local institutions and agencies to address issues and problems that are common to large portions of the population. They differ from the other initiatives because participants represent organizations rather than simply their own views. They are very prone to competition and in-fighting, but are likely to have more extensive resources than other types.

Question for Colleagues

One of the goals of this research is to provide a heuristic framework for students who may be involved in altruistic grassroots initiatives as professionals and as citizens. I have found that they will be playing one of three positions. "Insiders" are those who "belong" to a target group or community and who may be sent to gather information or who may already be acknowledged to have necessary information and skills. "Insiders" have a clear role in altruistic grassroots initiatives and probably have the easiest time contributing their ideas and gaining acceptance. "Outsiders" are persons who come in to an area and offer their expertise and ideology, or those who are invited in by the group as consultants. Their position is clear. They neither expect to belong to the group nor are they expected to do so.

"Inside-outsiders" have a more difficult time. They are those who want to be a continuing part of the community or group, who could contribute a depth of community organizing knowledge and skill but are not already known for those skills. "Inside-outsiders" may be newcomers to the community who are relative unknowns, they may once have been insiders but have traveled far and have returned "home" or they may be long-time residents who play familiar roles in the community, but have gained community organizing knowledge and skills in experiences outside of the local area. Whatever the case, their challenge is to gain acceptance and credibility, not so that they can "take over" a grassroots effort, but so that their knowledge and skills can be of use and so that they can have the satisfaction of belonging.

I have often found myself in the "inside-outsider" role and, in fact, am struggling with how I can be an effective citizen in my current hometown of Hadley-Lake Luzerne, New York. Moreover, many of my undergraduate and graduate students struggle with similar issues. They are citizens and professionals who want to be involved in their communities and bring the knowledge and skills they have gained in their coursework to the table, but are unsure how to proceed. The "Circles" group gave some useful suggestions about the "insider-outsider" position that have been incorporated into this paper and are being incorporated into a textbook on community organizing.

Math Anxiety and Adult Students

Gohar Marikyan, Metropolitan Center

Introduction

"Math anxiety" is an expression that I first heard during the years when I started to teach mathematics in the United States. I had previous teaching experience in my native Armenia where introductory-level college math includes calculus, and students learn it without any problem. Eight year-olds work out multi-step word problems that include fractions and everyone is comfortable doing calculations without the help of a calculator.

The detection of the existence of math anxiety among my students made me get interested in math education as a topic worthy of research, and I did my first presentation to a very interested audience at the "Fifth European Summer University on the History and Epistemology in Mathematics Education," entitled "Anania Shirakatsi's Seventh Century Methodology of Teaching Arithmetic Across the Centuries and Diverse Cultures." I hope to write a book on math anxiety when I get a little more time, concurrently with managing my everyday mentor load.

Math Anxiety: Why So?

We all know about math anxiety. The problem is more serious with adult students who had their last math training some years ago, thus making the problem worse. When students are faced with college-level math, generally speaking they have two types of problems: one problem is that by the time they get to college, they may have forgotten everything they might have learned; the second problem is the resultant math anxiety. On the other hand, ironically, unnecessary anxiety about learning mathematics is the reason why they haven't done well in high school. It is unclear what came first, the chicken or the egg. Likewise, the differentiation between cause and effect is a big question. Which came first, the unfounded math anxiety or anxiety as a consequence of an initial weak foundation?

I believe they feed on each other making the phenomenon of math anxiety worse.

My Strategies

In my experience, anxiety about mathematics prevents students from doing better at school. To address this issue, I have devised a few strategies that have had a positive impact on the math anxiety of our adult students and have helped them learn mathematics more easily and effectively.

1) Refresher Workshop

I have named one of my strategies "Refresher Workshop." Briefly, a few days prior to the start of the term, I organize a workshop for those who are going to start an introductory math study. I put together topics for a two-day (one hour each) workshop consisting of fundamental concepts of pre-algebra. Flyers are posted everywhere around the center, accessible to all students, inviting them to take the workshop. Having seen positive results, my mentor colleagues support the Refresher Workshop by encouraging their students to participate in, and take advantage of, this opportunity for a "refresher." Since their inception, these workshops have been more and more successful. During the last workshop, almost 90 percent of prospective math students participated.

A student under my direct supervision conducts the workshop. A few of the outcomes are:

a. Review of fundamental math concepts refreshes the student's knowledge and brings back what is forgotten. This prepares students for the study group they are about to join.

b. Students start working with math prior to joining the class. This prepares them psychologically, and it releases some of the tension caused by math anxiety.

c. When they see how another student Ê works so easily through math Ê

problems, they follow suit and get encouraged in trying to overcome their own fears.

2) Peer Tutoring

Through a second strategy, I have organized peer tutoring to provide additional help to math students. I try to maintain a good deal of control over these sessions, and I regularly speak individually with both students and tutors. Peer tutors like to share their experiences about problems that other students face in covering this or that topic. Moreover, these sessions offer excellent experiences for peer tutors. (Currently, the management of all peer tutoring has been officially transferred to Dr. Brett Sherman, the director of academic support services at the Metropolitan Center.)

Student help is an effective tool for those who need a little push to get on track. Obviously, there is more to do.

3) Use of Computers

Blended learning, that is, the use of computers in teaching and learning is another strategy that addresses math anxiety. (I will further explain the benefits of the computer in the learning process below.)

Computer Based Tutorial and Course Management Systems: What Works, What Doesn't

There are quite a few computer-based tutorial and course management systems. Although these systems appear to be very similar with few discernible advantages and disadvantages, their effectiveness mainly depends on how they are integrated into the teaching and learning process. As a result of my work with adjuncts to integrate computers into teaching mathematics, approximately 80 percent of all current math studies at the Metropolitan Center are blended to some degree or another.

Immediate Computer Feedback Helps Understand Mistakes

In teaching mathematics, I use the computer. I use Internet-based tutorials and course management systems for assignments. As I cover the topic in study group meetings, I encourage students to be attentive, I require them to take notes, and I suggest that they review the textbook and go over their notes immediately after our group meeting. I also post practice assignments and quizzes online. I require my students to complete their assignments over the next day after the meeting while the topic is still fresh in their minds.

Of course, this kind of supplementary computer-work could be useful for any study. However, there are a number of important advantages in using online course management systems for assignments in mathematics. First, the system grades the performance and shows the correct answer for each problem. Thus, students get immediate feedback – the results of their performance – while their own solutions are fresh in their mind. They can review their errors. This also is the moment of "aha," when the student sees and understands her/his error and often "learns" for good.

Opportunity for Practice

I usually allow students several attempts to complete the practice assignments, which gives them the opportunity to improve their results. It is true that "practice makes perfect." Practice helps students learn better. This is true for all students. Without the help of the computer, a student can complete quite a few problems but repeat the same error over and over, and learn in the wrong way. With the help of the computer, the student sees the errors immediately, understands her/his mistakes, and learns the correct way.

Privacy

I believe that the use of the computer for practice is especially valuable for adult students. They don't need to bring pages and pages of their work to the teacher for feedback, or feel uncomfortable that both the teacher and their classmates can see how much they have practiced in their attempts to learn. Instead, they can sit in front of the computer and practice as many times as they need – all in private. "Do you know how many times I have tried and how many hours I have spent to complete my assignments?" confided one of my students. "I am sure it wasn't easy, but I know that you learned for good," was my response. "I sure did," she said, to my utter gratification.

Online Live Tutor Service

Online tutorial and course management systems have other features that can help students learn and succeed. These systems offer students the opportunity to access online live tutors. Students can ask questions by typing in the "messenger window" and can get answers immediately. The "messenger window" provides a toolbar to facilitate writing formulas and to draw graphs. Interestingly, although this feature seems useful, data obtained from my students indicates that only 10 percent of all students have put it to use.

Reading the Textbook While Completing Assignments

Another advantage of using these systems is the flexibility that students have in knowing what their assignments are and in completing them. Our adult students with busy schedules can access their assignments from any computer. They do not need to have their notes or the usually thick mathematics textbooks with them. If they need to read the textbook while completing assignments, they can access the corresponding page of the textbook and read right on the system.

Awareness of Progress

Normally, a student's final grade is not a surprise. During the entire term, students can see their performance. This helps them to get better organized and to improve their results. This is especially helpful for our adult students who are usually very attentive to their grades and want to know how they are doing.

An Interesting Disadvantage

One of the disadvantages of using a computer-based tutorial and course management system in a group study is that students come to overly rely on it and sometimes become less scrupulous about attending study group meetings. My experience shows that the students who do not care about the study usually miss meetings anyway, and that those who are serious (and most are) successfully complete the expected work in their own way.

Mathematics Teacher, the Principal Solver of Math Anxiety

Every mathematics mentor constantly faces math anxiety in a majority of students. Although all of these strategies and tools are effective and do help, the principal solver of math anxiety is the mentor, and the most effective weapon is conscious and very direct addressing of the problem.

Math Anxiety and the First Meeting

The struggle against math anxiety starts with the very first study group meeting (post- "refresher workshop"), which is quite important in structuring the foundation for addressing math anxiety. We first have to gently ease the student into realizing the problem and then to feel comfortable in talking about it.

Starting an open discussion among students is not an easy task. It requires a bit of psychological insight, plus a patient and quiet approach. In fact, what takes place is that students are invited to "open up" and not be uncomfortable in admitting to what they don't know, that is, their lack of knowledge of the foundations of mathematics. Student behavior during this discussion is very informative. Invariably, the student who makes every effort to show her/himself as knowledgeable is the one who, in fact, needs the most help. This student will do everything to hide things at any cost.

To create a relaxed atmosphere between students and mentor, I begin this first study group meeting by asking the students to introduce themselves. It starts a conversation about students' experiences with mathematics. As they listen to others, students cease to feel isolated. They realize that many in the group have similar problems and fears. They all are in the same boat. A controlled give-and-take creates a sense of community and a friendly atmosphere within the group. Indeed, the

study group becomes a place where the student feels free to ask questions and to seek help in learning. I nurture these friendly relations in the group and I encourage students to work together. The net effect is that students freely discuss topics, help each other to learn, and openly share their thoughts and feelings about the study. This kind of process helps students to gradually do better in mathematics and to easily overcome their math anxiety.

The benefits of this openness among students go far beyond overcoming math anxiety. They stay with the student and trickle into other areas of their Empire State College studies. Indeed, it is not unusual for students to continue to communicate with each other in their other studies as well. It is my experience that building a community in a study group setting is especially important at Empire State College because our students do a good number of their studies independently. Particularly when dealing with a topic that causes anxiety, feelings of isolation are strong and being in contact with others struggling in the same area can make a great deal of difference.

Comments from Students

I am constantly aware of my students' math anxiety and try to address the issue ever so gently over the term, whenever the need manifests itself. And it often does. Student reaction is fascinating. I would like to share a few of their comments:

"I hated math, but now I love it."

"Math is fun."

"You make it sound so simple."

"I didn't know that there is so much math in music."

"I couldn't ever imagine that I can understand and learn math."

Conclusion

Math anxiety is an interesting topic of research for me. I notice it daily in my students, and I address it in the new activities that I continue to create for them. As described above, I have devised a few strategies, like the Refresher Workshops, Peer Tutoring, and the use of computers in the process of learning. These have had positive impact on adult students and have helped them learn mathematics more easily and effectively.

> *… the most important input comes from the mentor, who needs to consciously, directly and consistently address the problems students bring to their studies of mathematics.*

Although my observations show considerable progress in learning mathematics, I believe there is more to be done, and I have created and started a new tuition-free Internet-based, self-paced, no-credit, no-teacher Mathematics Refresher study. This workout is available to students in need of preparation prior to taking any General Education Mathematics study. Already, there are students who are taking advantage of the study, and I will be happy to report on its effectiveness once I gather sufficient information to share with my colleagues. All of these strategies can

be effective in different ways for different students; however, the most important input comes from the mentor, who needs to consciously, directly and consistently address the problems students bring to their studies of mathematics.

As noted above, I made my first presentation in the art of teaching mathematics at the "Fifth European Summer University on the History and Epistemology in Mathematics Education." My focus was on work done in the seventh century because it seemed to me that it might be worthwhile looking to the past and into the ways in which our ancestors taught mathematics so smoothly and effectively. My search led me to a seventh century Armenian scholar and a teacher of arithmetic to children, Anania Shirakatsy. My presentation was about Anania Shirakatsy's methodology of teaching addition to first grade children. His method of teaching is based on incremental addition to acquired level of knowledge, connecting topics and thus creating new level of knowledge. Through his tables of addition Shirakatsy teaches the commutative property of addition, composition of numbers and place value.

I plan to pursue my research in this topic. I constantly apply results of my research in the classroom, regularly addressing student anxieties. The results are rewarding and they inspire me to try out new ways to help my students. I hope my findings will help my fellow teachers improvise new ways and to find their own methods in introducing mathematics to students and to teach without causing undue fear.

What They Believed

James Shelland, Long Island Center

In contemporary politics, state/church issues have come to the fore more than at any other time in recent history. Religion, according to some communicators, played a significant role in the 2004 election. Other analysts have pointed to efforts on the part of fundamentalist Christians to legislate their beliefs into a range of public policy areas. And many others fear that religion has been exploited for general partisan political purposes. Secular nation? Religious nation? The debate goes on.

As a consequence, the religious beliefs of our leaders, both past and present, have come under increased scrutiny. Shedding light on this issue is an excellent study by David H. Holmes, *The Faiths of the Founding Fathers* (Oxford University Press, 2006). Holmes is the Walter G. Manson Professor of Religious Studies at the College of William and Mary. He finds that the religious beliefs of the nation's founders were not what some, usually in an effort to support their own agendas, have tried to portray them. More specifically, our early leaders were not, according to Holmes, either fundamentalist Christians or agnostics.

Holmes begins this scholarly work by placing the founders in the religious and intellectual contexts of their times. They lived, he points out, in a time of prevailing Anglican religious belief and a pattern of thinking broadly influenced by the Enlightenment. The latter stressed reason and science as the way to truth. Closely intertwined with Enlightenment thinking was Deism, a faith system difficult to describe because it has no sacred book and no hierarchy to interpret its teachings. Reduced to its simplest terms, it accepts a belief that a divine being created life, but then left, allowing humans to run their affairs by themselves. Holmes then goes on to analyze the religious beliefs of the most prominent of the nation's founding leaders, namely, Benjamin Franklin,

> *Washington felt that religion played a necessary role in society because it promoted morality, but, like the Deists, he was more concerned with ethics than with adhering to the doctrines of a particular church.*

George Washington, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, James Monroe, Samuel Adams, Elias Boudinot and John Jay. He also has a chapter on the religious beliefs of their wives and daughters.

Holmes classifies Benjamin Franklin as a Deist. A remark Franklin made when he was in his eighties that seems to best summarize his religious outlook was, "I have … some Doubts as to his [Jesus'] Divinity, though it is a Question I do not dogmatize upon, having never studied it, and think it needless to busy myself with it now, when I expect soon an opportunity of knowing the Truth with less Trouble"(57). Washington felt that religion played a necessary role in society because it promoted morality, but, like the Deists, he was more concerned with ethics than with adhering to the doctrines of a particular church. Holmes places John Adams in the category of either Unitarian Christian or Christian Deist. Unitarianism taught that God was one unit, not three. Unitarians claimed that they had restored the original Christian belief that Jesus was in some way commissioned or sent by God, but that he remained subordinate to God.

Thomas Jefferson is considered to have epitomized the spirit of the Enlightenment more than any other of his fellow founders. He abhorred the mythical parts of the Bible, leading him to edit his own version in which he left out everything that couldn't be proved. Madison was a staunch advocate of religious liberty playing a leading role in the freedom of religion clauses in the Constitution. After going through many changes in his religious views, Madison, according to Holmes, seems to have ended up affirming the existence of a Deistic God. As for James Monroe, he seems to have been an Episcopalian, i.e., Anglican, of Deistic tendencies, who valued civic virtues above religious doctrine.

Holmes identifies three Orthodox Christians among the Founding Fathers: Samuel Adams, Elias Boudinot and John Jay. Adams, a radical in the politics of the revolutionary period, was a New England Congregationalist who remained staunchly loyal to the Calvinist orthodoxy in which he had been raised. Boudinot, who had been president of the Second Continental Congress, mixed the new spirit of evangelism spreading through early America with his Calvinist faith. Jay, the first Chief Justice can be summarily described by the inscription put on his tomb by his son. It reads, "He was in his life and death an example of the virtues, the faith and the hopes of a Christian."

As for the wives and children of the Revolutionary and post-Revolutionary generations, Holmes notes that they tended to be more orthodox in religious belief than the men.

Reading this book clearly leaves the impression that the early leaders of the country were men of great faith, but neither dogmatists nor proselytizers. While scholarly in its approach, Holmes' writing is clear and uncomplicated. It should be a valuable read for anyone interested in the religious beliefs of those who founded our country – certainly a relevant topic for all of us in this pre-election year.

Welcome: Creating a New World

Deborah P. Amory, Central New York Center

The following talk was given at the International Resource Network-L'Afrique Meeting held at L'Hotel Saly Princess in Senegal on February 10, 2007. The goal of this meeting was to bring together researchers from the academy and the community to examine the state of gender and sexuality teaching and research in Africa, and to establish an African regional editorial board of the International Resource Network (IRN). The IRN is currently constructing an interactive web site that will house a directory of scholars and researchers, articles, newsletters, syllabi, e-journals, and other materials relevant to "a global community of teachers and researchers sharing knowledge about sexuality." The site is currently under construction, but you may preview it at http://staging.jasperdesign.com/irndev/index.cfm.

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Bienvenue nos amis, nos souers et nos fils, nos rois et nos reines d'Afrique et, pour dire vraiment, du monde.

Hamjambo, marafiki, makaka na madada, Wafalme na Malkia wa Afrika na, kusema ukweli, wa Dunia.

Welcome, my friends, my sisters and brothers, kings and queens of Africa and in fact the world.

En francais, je m'appelle Deborah Amory; kwa Kiswahili, na itwa Fatma, and in (American) English, I am Deb Amory, chair of the Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies (CLAGS) board of directors and a member of the International Resource Network (IRN) advisory board.

It is no small feat to gather 26 divas in one place from across the continent of Africa and beyond. Thus, I would like to thank those people who have made this meeting possible as, over the past year and a half,

Dean Deborah Amory (front row, second from right) in Africa with other researchers

we have worked to both conceptualize and then to organize it. For your help, I would like to thank Mark Blasius, Thomas Glave, the IRN-Latin America/Caribbean board members, Bernedette Muthien, and especially Paisley Currah, executive director of CLAGS. *Et je porte mes grandes remerciment a Cary Alan Johnson, Sybille Ngo Nyeck, et Amadou Moreau.*

We are gathered here at an auspicious moment in political and scholarly time. A few of us (Dorothy Aken'Ova, Bernedette Muthien, David Kuria) have come most recently from the World Social Forum in Nairobi, where the Gay and Lesbian Coalition of Kenya – GALCK – has made history by proclaiming "We're here, we're queer," on African soil.[1] In the heat of that moment and its aftermath, we are reminded again of both the pleasures and the dangers of same sex desire. And I refer here to

the classic volume, by that title – *Pleasure and Danger* – the result of pro-sex radical lesbians in New York theorizing both the pain and the delight of perversity, as Kopano Ratele might put it.

In fact I have experienced great delight these past few days as I witness the blossoming of a new generation of scholars and activists, activists and scholars, passionate in their pursuit of truth, and beauty, and love. And I have been reminded, too, of the dangers of the backlash always lurking so very close to that pleasurable surface.[2]

In that spirit, and with great hope, I would like to note that we have gathered here at *l'Hotel Saly Princess* to create a new world, or more precisely to continue creating a new world, for as Gertrude Fester is wont to remind us, *a luta continua.* This new world

grows out of the work and the struggles of all of us, in so many different ways.

And I have one humble request. As we continue this work in the next three days, may we refuse all binaries. (I refer here to Riki Wilchin's new book, *Queer Theory, Gender Theory: an instant primer.*) May we refuse all binaries, may we even refuse the idea of a spectrum that rests indeed upon a binary – hetero/homo, white/black, rich/poor.

I ask that we refuse the binary between old and young: as I just mentioned, the young people among us have already achieved great things, and the wisdom of our elders is as powerful as ever. I ask that we refuse the binaries between English and French; *kama waswahili wanavyosema, raha tele, tabu ya nini??* (As the Swahili people are known to say, "so much pleasure, what's the problem??") And I ask that we refuse the binaries between black and white, for there are so many beautiful colors of the rainbow. May we even refuse the binary between right and wrong: here I would invoke feminist theories that highlight a politics of location, emphasizing the veracity of multiple points of view.[3] For three days, let us refuse the binaries between gay and straight, between male and female even. *Alors! Walaahi!*

Some will say this is a dream; this is not reality. For we do live in a world structured, unequally, through global white hetero-patriarchal capitalism, a system that in some countries is expressed as an African hetero-patriarchal neocolonialism. Homosexuality is, after all, unAfrican, or so they say! But again, we have returned to those binaries, African/unAfrican, hetero/homo, the very binaries that constitute the building blocks of a global system of inequality.

And I wish to acknowledge that this system of crushing inequality is very real. But again I ask that, for three days, we refuse this binary of real/not real, sometimes articulated as politics versus theory. Indeed today I ask that we make a very strategic choice, and turn ourselves to the task of building a dream, of theorizing a politic, the task of being realistic in our dreaming.[4] Finally, I propose that we call this very real dream the IRN-L'Afrique.

I do think this dream is possible because we who have gathered here today are people who believe in justice, who believe in truth, and who believe in the power of knowledge. In our refusal of binaries, and in our realistic dreaming, may we all continue to speak in tongues (as Leo Igwe, the humanist from Nigeria, observed in the past few days), and may we all learn a great deal from the speaking, the thinking, *and* the doing.

> *And I ask that we refuse the binaries between black and white, for there are so many beautiful colors of the rainbow. May we even refuse the binary between right and wrong: here I would invoke feminist theories that highlight a politics of location, emphasizing the veracity of multiple points of view.*

Notes

1. It is not without some nostalgia that I remember the summer of 1991 in San Francisco, California. For the Gay Pride celebration that year, the theme was "The Year of the Queer," and there was a raging generational battle over that offensive (to some), fierce (to others) terminology. Those were the days when Queer Nation took to the streets, sponsoring kiss-ins in places such as North Beach, the historically Italian (and notoriously homophobic) neighborhood. I never in my life would have expected to hear those words, "we're here, we're queer," uttered in Nairobi, and Oh, how I wished I'd been there at the Q Spot!

2. A lesbian activist from Uganda is reported to be in hiding following her public appearance at the World Social Forum, and the subsequent threat of arrest when she returned home.

3. For feminist theories that highlight a politics of location approach, see post-colonial feminist theorists such as Inderpal Grewal and Caren Kaplan. Also see Donna Haraway's essay on situated knowledges that explores the idea that different perspectives might produce different truths.

4. Even as today I ask participants to consider refusing all binaries, in other times and places I absolutely endorse claiming specific identities for (also) strategic purposes. Gayatri Spivak has theorized this politic as one of "strategic essentialisms," invoking a particular identity for particular political purposes. I can be here, and very queer, for example. I also can be found over there, that big butch lesbian. And in other times and places I self-identify as transgender. For every time, and place, there is a politic, and these politics are sometimes different.

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Students Write About "Highly Qualified" Teachers

Xenia Coulter, International Programs

Last winter, the *Harvard Educational Review* published an issue devoted to an assessment of the 2001 No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). One of the 12 articles – buried at the end of the issue, actually – attracted my attention because it appeared to have been written by students.[1] It's not often that the actual words of students are given equal weight in a scholarly discussion of education. And I certainly wondered what they had to say.

The article began with an introduction written by the social justice instructor of four diverse[2] high school students in her class. She described how the class investigated the NCLB definition of a "highly qualified teacher," which the students then evaluated in light of their own experiences. Perhaps not surprisingly, they concluded that credentials and educational background, the defining attributes of the NCLB act, had little to do with what they believed made teachers qualified to address the learning gaps among highly diverse students, which is a primary goal of NCLB. However, the summary of the teacher attributes they did find essential, as stated in the article abstract,[3] does not do justice to the clarity and power of expression in the four short student essays. Indeed, the student words, found after navigating seven pages of respectable journalese in the introduction, were gripping. In these essays, the students were starkly unapologetic about who they were, what they experienced, and what they needed.

"I have come a long way, seen a lot of things, and learned many lessons," begins the first essay. "I read to hide from the world but I write to relate to it through poetry, music, literature, and painting." Another student begins: "Dear Ms. Keller, I am currently a student in your 12th-grade English class, but here are some things you may not know about me." Or a third: "My name is Oscar. I am a 16-year old student whose ethnic background in Guatemalan."

He continues, "Because of my ethnicity and where I come from, people expect me to fail in America's school system and not stand a chance in postsecondary education." Or, the last: "To be or not to be?' I choose not to be because it is better to be what has not been than to be what is. My voice is hardly heard, therefore I am vaguely seen."

Each student, in his or her own way, made perfectly clear the various ways "highly qualified" teachers can utterly fail to be effective. They also painted compelling pictures of the kinds of people they have encountered, or imagined that they might encounter, who could make a difference in their education. What was so striking to me was that their visions of an effective teacher could be mapped exactly to the vision Empire State College had in establishing the concept – and practice – of mentor.

To be effective, you have to know us, these students cried out. What does it matter how much you may know about your subject area if you don't understand my background, my situation, my understandings of the world so as to make your knowledge relevant to mine? As one student put it, " … tests and credentials do not reflect the nature of the person." A teacher, she writes, has to be capable of building relationships with students, an attribute, she observed, that was not even mentioned in the NCLB act and certainly not found in tests designed to certify knowledge in a particular subject area.

Knowing one's student can help teachers make the curriculum seem worth learning. However, knowing our students also means being aware of the state of their learning. As another of the students put it, an ideal teacher should be able to "sense" a student's level of understanding, "as if he has some invisible 'student radar' that he purchased from the local RadioShack electronics store." It is not effective teaching when an instructor "gives us problems, expects us to get it right away, and then moves on,"

which is how he described a recent math class. "I could tell by the confused looks on some of the students' faces that they did not understand the lesson … [But] he couldn't read the expressions on the students' faces saying, 'We just don't get it.'" To develop the "invisible radar tool," this student argued that teachers must actively learn how to assess student understanding so as to know the approaches necessary for students to engage, enjoy, and make sense of what they are trying to learn. Of course, identifying corrective actions that will work depends entirely upon how well the teacher can meaningfully listen, relate and attend to each individual student in a meaningful way.

The desire of each of these students to learn was palpable, and they were outraged by teacher behaviors that suggested their learning abilities were in some way limited. "Dumbing down" the requirements is not the education that they seek. Yes, they wanted teachers who were prepared for class, eager for students to learn, capable of engaging them, and responsive to their individual needs. But just as importantly, they wanted teachers to establish high standards, maintain them, and believe that with support these standards could be attained. As one of the students wrote, "When teachers harbor low expectations of students, they [the students] will not be focused, won't come to class, and will probably end up dropping out of school. A friend of mine dropped out of school during her senior year because she felt like no one really cared whether she graduated or not … She was one of those students who needed that push to get started and keep going, but no one was there to lift her up and believe in her."

Thus, knowing your students is important in helping them learn. However, these student essays suggested that the inverse also is true. Not knowing your students may prevent them from learning. It is routine now for teachers to advocate diversity and espouse

tolerance. However, we tend to forget that, whatever our principled stand, we also are prisoners of our own background and experience. Certainly, by being self-aware and carefully monitoring our words and actions, we can control our biases. The problem is that we cannot truly open our minds and "hear" our students unless we are able to cultivate authentic relationships with them. Without a deep understanding of where each student comes from, we can actually shut down the student's learning process as we unknowingly promote our own narrow and exclusive worldview – without even being aware of what is happening.

One of the students captured this process well as she described how Mr. Potter, a teacher of world history, conducted his class. In his zeal to point out how much better a democratic society is than what is found in the Muslim worlds of the Middle East and East Asia, he in effect denigrated Muslim women for failing to "stand up" for their rights. The student poignantly described her feelings:

> I sunk to my lowest low; a low I never thought I had in me. A ball of anger and hatred passionately tore at my emotions. Do you really know what it feels like to wake up in the hot blazing morning every day of your life from the time of your birth, knowing you have to cover up not only your physical traits but your pride, hopes, dreams, beliefs, and identity? … Do you know what it's like to live as a ghost and live in the shadows that you cast? … Not to be entirely mute but to have an infinite flame of eternal silence as your voice of words? Where you are seen only as a tool of continuation, a breeding object of mankind's existence on Earth? Can you imagine the feeling of rejection? When it comes to the point where people have said you are barren and you start believing it yourself? All these questions I bestow on you, Mr. Potter, and your 'democratic' class.

Mr. Potter no doubt believed that this student's continued silence in his class simply proved his point about the submissiveness of Muslim women. He probably would have been surprised about her rage and perhaps even regretful about his words. But

the real tragedy here is by being blind to the student's experience; his words not only were hurtful but made it impossible for the student to learn.

It is hard not to conclude that what these students see as highly qualified teachers are precisely what we at Empire State College call mentors. It also is hard not to conclude that mentoring is a brilliant way of addressing the obvious problems of a "one-size-fits-all" educational bureaucracy poorly suited for a highly diverse student population. By requiring faculty to develop mentoring relationships with their students, Empire State College found a way of assuring that the unique needs of the individual student would always be well served. Written rules and faculty development exercises weren't needed to promote sensitivity to student background, interests, capabilities, and unique qualities; instead, a system was put into place – mentoring – that made such sensitivity an automatic byproduct. Our byword might well have been "Know Thy Student," which is surely the unstated byword of the article.

As we all know, however, there is an Achilles' heel in this remarkable approach to education – namely, the limits of human nature. Given their varied backgrounds and tacit conceptions of education, faculty don't necessarily come to teaching with a desire to know their students, and even if they do, they don't necessarily know how to establish an authentic relationship or to convert their personal knowledge of a student into a feasible plan of learning. Some faculty, not surprisingly, are teachers solely because they interested in their field of study or in the pursuit of new knowledge or in scholarly reflection. They are happy to invite students into their discipline and to share with them their expert understanding, but they view attempts to reshape a field of study in order to make it relevant as somewhat contrary to the point of their teaching.

We need for mentor/teachers to be dual experts: knowledgeable in their fields of study, but also knowledgeable about the workings of the human mind. Instead of modifying a discipline to make it palatable for naïve students, we have to use our personal knowledge of the students to modify their minds. We have to understand the process of learning well enough to figure

out how to make a particular human mind receptive to material that may otherwise be foreign, irrelevant, mentally challenging or simply incomprehensible – and all without compromising the basic structure of the discipline to be learned. The problem is that to ask this of all faculty may be simply asking too much.

Given their varied backgrounds and tacit conceptions of education, faculty don't necessarily come to teaching with a desire to know their students, and even if they do, they don't necessarily know how to establish an authentic relationship or to convert their personal knowledge of a student into a feasible plan of learning.

Thus, if faculty see mentoring as a way of watering down "real" scholarship, or if they see mentoring as too difficult because they don't know how to deal with a mind different from their own or if faculty see the enterprise of mentoring as simply too time-consuming, given all else that a scholarly person is expected to do, then we must conclude that the "highly effective teachers" called for by these four student authors will never materialize. Perhaps there are limits to the energy, intelligence, open-mindedness, and empathy of faculty that cannot be surmounted by good will or good systems. Or perhaps teachers with the right combination of knowledge, skills, and interpersonal sensitivities that make them true mentors are simply too rare to be counted on.

If so, we can read this article and weep. Despite the best efforts of these talented students, highly qualified teachers will

continue to be defined in terms of their educational credentials rather than by the quality of their internal student-learning radar devices. Students who don't fit within the parameters familiar to those who teach them will continue to drop out, become enraged, or fail to grasp the educational perspectives valued in our culture. Our best hope, and theirs, is that some students will find, somewhere within themselves, a way of obtaining the education they seek, despite the deep contradictions in the educational system they must endure. Or, they may be lucky enough to find an occasional mentor, and that one such individual may be sufficient to sustain them.

Notes

1 Garcia, Veronica, with Agbemakplido, Wilhemina, Abdella, Hanan, Lopez, Jr., Oscar, and Registe, Rashida T. (2006). High School Students' Perspectives on the 2001 No Child Left Behind Act's Definition of a Highly Qualified Teacher. *Harvard Educational Review,* 76 (4), 698 - 724.

2 All four were students of color: Wilhemina from Ghana, Hanan, born in Sudan with Ethiopian parents but raised primarily in the U.S., Oscar whose parents are from Guatemala,

and Rashida, born in America of West Indian parents.

3 Stated thus: " … highly qualified teachers should cultivate safe, respectful, culturally sensitive, and responsive learning communities, establish relationships with students' families and communities, express … high expectations for their students through instructional planning and implementation, and know how students learn (p. 698)."

" … the approach to adult education will be via the route of situations, not subjects. Our academic system has grown in reverse order; subjects and teachers constitute the starting point, students are secondary. In conventional education the student is required to adjust himself [sic] to an established curriculum; in adult education the curriculum is built around the student's needs and interests. Every adult person finds himself in specific situations with respect to his work, his recreation, his family, his community et cetera – situations which call for adjustments. Adult education begins at this point. Subject matter is brought into the situation, is put to work, when needed. Texts and teachers play a new and secondary role in this type of education; they must give way to the primary importance of the learner … The situation-approach to education means that the learning process is at the outset given a setting of reality. Intelligence performs its functions in relation to actualities, not abstractions."

– Eduard C. Lindeman, *The Meaning of Adult Education* (1926)

In Memoriam: Jane Dahlberg

Jane Dahlberg, who died on May 17, was one of the founding mentors of this college. She came to Empire State College after having taught at City College, and having been dean of students at New York University and associate dean at Sarah Lawrence College. In addition to working with students as a mentor in the areas of American politics and government, Jane served as both associate dean and dean of the Metropolitan Center in New York City. Very engaged her whole life in the work of the American Civil Liberties Union, Jane Dahlberg was particularly proud of her Empire State College mentoring activities and her deep connections with members of the New York City police force for whom she developed a study on the American Constitution, which always led to lively debate and abiding mutual respect.

Core Values of Empire State College (2005)

The core values of Empire State College reflect the commitments of a dynamic, participatory and experimenting institution accessible and dedicated to the needs of a richly diverse adult student body. These values are woven into the decisions we make about what we choose to do, how we carry out our work in all parts of the institution, and how we judge the outcome of our individual and collective efforts. More than a claim about what we have already attained, the core values support our continuing inquiry about what learning means and how it occurs.

We value learning-mentoring goals that:

- respond to the academic, professional and personal needs of each student;

- identify and build upon students' existing knowledge and skills;

- sustain lifelong curiosity and critical inquiry;

- provide students with skills, insights, and competencies that support successful college study.

We value learning-mentoring processes that:

- emphasize dialogue and collaborative approaches to study;

- support critical exploration of knowledge and experience;

- provide opportunities for active, reflective, and creative academic engagement.

We value learning-mentoring modes that:

- respond to a wide array of student styles, levels, interests, and circumstances;

- foster self-direction, independence and reflective inquiry;

- provide opportunities for ongoing questioning and revising;

- reflect innovation and research.

We value a learning-mentoring community that:

- defines each member as a learner, encouraging and appreciating his/her distinctive contributions;

- recognizes that learning occurs in multiple communities, environments and relationships as well as in formal academic settings;

- attracts, respects, and is enriched by a wide range of people, ideas, perspectives and experiences.

We value a learning-mentoring organization and culture that:

- invites collaboration in the multiple contexts of our work;

- fosters innovation and experimentation;

- develops structures and policies that encourage active participation of all constituents in decision-making processes;

- advocates for the interests of adult learners in a variety of academic and civic forums.

Submissions to *All About Mentoring*

I f you have read a book or article that interested you; attended a stimulating conference; had a valuable, surprising or difficult mentoring experience, or a "mentoring" moment you would be willing to describe, please consider submitting it to *All About Mentoring.*

If you have a scholarly paper-in-progress or a talk that you have presented, *All About Mentoring* would welcome it. If you developed materials for your students that may be of good use to others, or have a comment on any part of this issue, or on topics/concerns relevant to our mentoring community, please sent them along.

If you have a short story, poem, drawings, or photographs, or have reports on your reassignments and sabbaticals, *All About Mentoring* would like to include them in an upcoming issue.

Send submissions to Alan Mandell (Empire State College, Metropolitan Center, 325 Hudson Street, New York, NY 10013-1005) or via e-mail at Alan.Mandell@esc.edu.

Submissions to *All About Mentoring* can be of varied length and take many forms. (Typically, materials are no longer than 7,500 words.) It is easiest if materials are sent via e-mail to Mandell as WORD attachments. In terms of references and style, *All About Mentoring* uses APA rules (please see *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* or http//library.albany.edu/users/ style/ap2.html).

All About Mentoring is published twice a year. Our next issue, #34, will be available fall 2008.

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This special issue of *All About Mentoring,* to be edited by Cathy Leaker, Margaret Souza and Alan Mandell, will focus on the theory and practice of Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) and Educational Planning.

We invite contributions from a variety of perspectives and on a variety of topics, including:

- Reflections on the history and theory of PLA;

- Reviews of key texts on PLA and educational planning;

- Interviews with those involved in this work;

- Materials for students engaged in PLA and educational planning that have been developed by mentors;

- Case studies of PLA and educational planning work with students;

- Descriptions and analyses of PLA and educational planning models at other institutions in the U.S. and across the globe;

- Examination of the meaning and use of experiential learning opportunities in on-going study.

We invite submissions to this special issue of *All About Mentoring* by March 1, 2008.