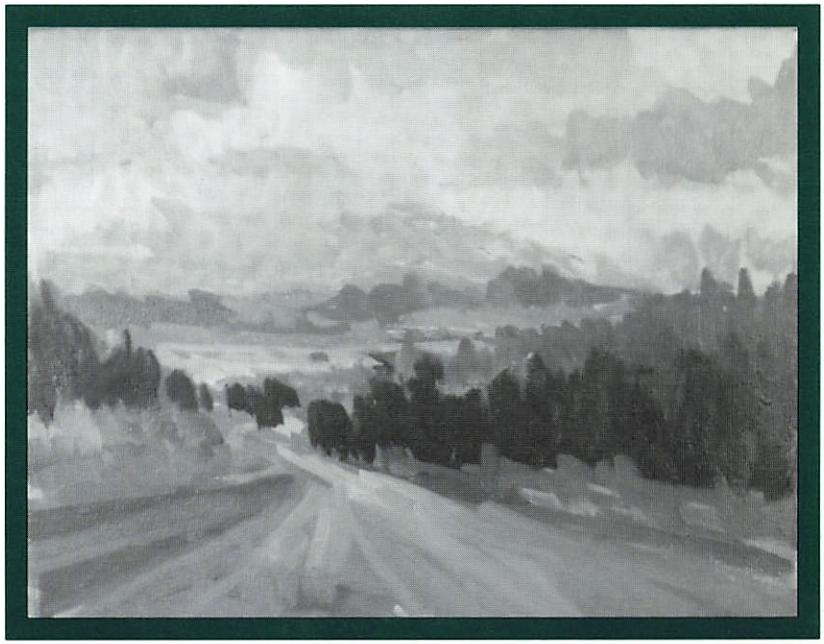
The Community College *Moment*



Volume Two Issue One
Winter 2002

Managing Editors:
Anne McGrail, Ph.D.
Maurice Hamington, Ph.D.

Editorial Board:
Don Addison, Ph.D.
Gary Mort, M.S.
Hyla Rosenberg, M.A.
Russell Shitabata, Ph.D.
Jody Suhanek, M.A.

Production Coordinator:
Dorothy Wearne

Layout/Graphic Design:
Anne B. McGrail

Art Editor and Webmaster:
Roka Walsh

Chartering Organizations:
Strategic Learning Initiative, Lane Community College
Faculty Professional Development, Lane Community College
Faculty Council, Lane Community College

Front Cover:
"On the Way to Lane Community College."
Oil Painting
by Jerry Ross.

Back Cover:
"9/11 Collage"
by Roka Walsh

The Community College Moment

Spring 2002

The *Community College Moment* is a faculty-led journal committed to offering a forum for high quality progressive articles of interest to community college instructors, administrators, and staff that reflect a new vision of scholarship at the intersection of academic, activist, and community interests.

The *Community College Moment* [ISSN:1533-8851] is published by Lane Community College, which assumes no responsibility for statements expressed by authors. The journal is provided free of charge to the L.C.C. community but is available by subscription for $12. Address all subscriptions, sponsorship, or advertising inquiries to *Community College Moment,* c/o McGrail/ EFLS/ Lane Community College, 4000 East 30th Avenue, Eugene, OR 97405. Visit us on the web at http://sliunix.lanecc.edu/~ccmoment/index.html

Are you interested in sponsoring or advertising in the *Community College Moment*? We are currently seeking additional stable revenue sources. If you would like to be a special contributor and be recognized in future issues, a number of giving or advertising options are available. Please contact the editors for more information.

© *2002 Community College Moment. All copyrights revert back to authors upon publication. Printed in the United States.*

The Community College

Moment

Volume Two Issue One
Winter 2002

The Community College Moment
Volume Two Issue One
Winter 2002

A Special Section: After September 11

Works-in-Progress

Introduction

Anne McGrail and Maurice Hamington

Welcome to the second issue of the *Community College Moment.*

The authors in this issue take us on local and distant journeys—into the classroom, to Spain and Greece, to Mt. Pisgah and Depoe Bay in Oregon, and on more philosophical journeys as well. There is another, implicit, journey in these pages, one whose destination is unknown: in the wake of the September 11 tragedy, where do we go from here? Freud says that love and work are the two things that can save us from our most destructive impulses. We think that you will find instances of both in this issue.

Dan Armstrong's "Spoken World" begins our journey with a meditation on the importance of language in our lives, and a call to enter into a space opened up by words. While not explicitly an occasional poem about war, readers after the bombing may find themselves lingering over the wrenching words resonant of war's devastation:"orphaned" "struck dumb" "fear" "overwrought"; in recent months many of us have felt these feelings, and are still haunted, left blinking at the world and its apparent madness. In spite of its somber nature, the poem is framed by persistence; the call to "whisper dreams into rhymes" reminds us of the abiding power of language to produce and sustain hope.

Writers try to answer the question, "where do we go from here?"

Alison Cadbury's lyrical language takes us on a trip to Greece through the eyes of the tourist who has come to see the foreign land as a second home. Cadbury's essay weaves the detail of travel narrative with the suspense of an adventure tale. Her use of the second person "you" distinguishes the piece. This "you" calls to the reader to take the journey with the narrator, and at the same time echoes the idiomatic use of the word "you" to mean "I". This usage allows us to feel the vicarious thrill of "approaching" the Greek island, of feeling the calm upon returning to a beloved place. When the islanders yell, "It's good you've come!" we smile as upon being greeted; at the same time, we share Cadbury's joy in the salutation. We feel that it is good we have come to this story; we feel welcome in Cadbury's world.

Jean LeBlanc's "Memories of Water" opens in March in New England, and those readers living in the Northwest or any other place where spring comes in cold fits and starts will welcome her reflections upon this wet and muddy month. LeBlanc's writing coaxes us into an appreciation of nature's patience and persistence. She describes an experience of smelling the ocean in the landlocked hills of Vermont—and then, later, is surprised to

find the ocean where it could not be. Reminiscent of Anne Morrow Lindberg, LeBlanc extracts the wisdom of nature out of the very fern and fossils she encounters. To be alive to our deep connection to all living things is a *locus classicus* of nature writing, one into which LeBlanc breathes new life, causing us to pause and ponder, once again, the wisdom of stillness.

This sense of stillness continues in Frank Rossini's "Climbing Mount Pisgah." Through this poem, we seize the moment and walk up its path, feeling our lungs fill. We watch with Rossini as wind, water, grass, and rock fill our view. If we listen, we can hear the song that this poem records for us, and take in the climb for ourselves. This natural landscape encourages a leisurely stroll, while the urban landscape in Rossini's "moving pianos" takes us breathlessly through streets infused with music and heavy with keyboards. We follow the narrator past innocence and into the danger and dignity of moving pianos and moving into manhood.

The authors take us on local and distant journeys

Bill Woolum gets us in the mood with his play on words and insightful and playful writing about non-writing. Woolum reflects on the importance to the community college teacher of not being a community college teacher so-called. Bringing an integrated self into the classroom, he suggests, allows students to integrate writing into their lives. The "non" in Woolum's title, then, is ironically essential: by looking at the relationship between a subject we study and teach and all that it is *not*, we are really looking at the interconnectedness of all knowledge; we see the arbitrariness of disciplinary boundaries that educational institutions impose upon us in order to "manage" knowledge acquisition. What is lost in that acquisition is what Woolum wants to find—and wants his students to find with him. "We can be more receptive to the different ways [students] learn, think, feel, and move through the world," writes Woolum, if we develop the receptivity and attentiveness brought by the non-aspects of every subject.

In translating Rosa Montero's novel from contemporary Spanish, *Bella y oscura* (*Beautiful and Dark*), Adrienne Mews displays a keen sense of storytelling that is all her own. This moving story will allow the reader to marvel at two tales at once: the one written by Montero, and the one seen through a lens of a Chicagoan. As Mews puts it, this is both a gritty, urban tale and a dreamy story of magic and myth. Like many pieces in this volume, *Beautiful and Dark* deals with memory: "there are . . . moments in your life that remain glistening in your memory even though time has passed" translates Mews, and we are taken into the passionate embrace of a story of love with a "brilliance that hurts." This tale is a treat for all lovers of story—which is to say, for us all.

This year has been a challenge to educators across the country, as we come to grips with September 11. What will this event mean to us as individuals and as national and world citizens? We invited faculty to submit work that addressed the topic "after September 11," and are very pleased to present here a special section with that title.

Pam Dane takes us on a personal journey into her experience of war, from the time immediately following the bombing, back in time to her earliest memories of the effects of war on her own development. At a time when most of us are experiencing this war long-distance, through mediated images of strangers in strange lands, Dane turns our attention to the importance of understanding war in an intimate context: its effects on women, children, men, and the earth itself. As the daughter of a soldier, one who grew up deeply affected by the absence of her father away at war, Dane outlines a coming-to-knowledge that is as important as international debates.

Mews shows us a gritty, urban tale and a dreamy story of magic and myth

Michael McDonald's essay, "Critical Theory and the Community College" responds to the common complaint that community college education should focus on practical skills and leave theory to those with the time to waste. In essence, McDonald argues that "theory" so-called is itself a "practical skill," in the sense that it gives all those who will learn its rigors the possibility of understanding the complexities of the world more deeply. McDonald suggests that as public educators our role is not only to produce workers but also to be mentors of growing citizens; "theory" offers ways to develop critical thinking in students. With the understanding that the dominant ideology and its expressions in corporate culture do not always have the best interests of the American citizen—or employee, as we saw with the Enron debacle—in mind, theory can offer a path to critiquing and developing alternatives to such an ideology and its traps and obstacles. This, it seems, is a fundamental goal of public higher education today.

Anne McGrail's elliptical poem, "Stripes," engages with the current flag-waving fervor and seems to ask for its origins. What is it that Americans lost on that day in September, and what is the relationship between that loss and patriotism? We have all lost someone or something of value to us in our lives, and this poem ponders the consequences of collapsing personal pain and public policy.

Part of the *Community College Moment's* commitment to a broad definition of scholarship is found in a regular section titled "Works in Progress." Here we publish work whose ideas are significant and timely and still developing. Mark Harris and Drew Viles share their ideas in three works-in-progress.

Mark Harris's provocative essay, "The Community College Moment: Loving Your Enemies Who Bomb the Garden of Eden," advocates the development of cross-cultural knowledge and appreciation of difference as we sort out the meanings of the current conflict over definitions of and solutions to terrorism. What are some of the causes of the development of fundamentalism—in its many guises—around the globe? As Harris writes, how can we make the "alien known and familiar?" The stakes of this question for educators are high, as a superficial understanding of the Middle East, its history and culture, and its relationship to the United States can only produce the lawlessness seen in the "Wild, Wild, West." Harris calls for American citizens to beware of facile metaphors of cowboys and posses, and instead to learn what it really means to love—that is, to know, to understand—your enemy. He points out the wisdom of looking inside as well as outside—national borders, ourselves—for our "enemies." This is a process of self-knowing that is threatening to many of us. But to "fill yourself and others with knowledge, hope, and life," we all must engage in that process.

Drew Viles' works-in-progress lead us through a sensory world of music, language, and the land- and seascape of Oregon. His first piece, "The Name of a Musician of Choice," traces the relationship between naming and history, between the way that nicknames grow out of experience and how that experience can be buried and unearthed by paying attention to sound. Viles' allusive style demands much of the reader: the story he tells of the history of land allotments at Siletz is the story of state control—the forced transformation of a way of life from communal control of property to absolute individual ownership. Viles' second work-in-progress, "Music That's Easy," reads like a prose poem, and should be read aloud to be fully appreciated. The repetition of the sounds and rhythms of language that permeate its sentences celebrates community, kinship, and respect for elders. Read together, these essays are about music and musicians, but also about the persistence of Native American values in the face of constant pressure to give them up. Viles' work seems to be part of this celebration of the will to endure.

"All over America women are burning dinners." That's the first line from a poem by Marge Piercy that was the inspiration behind the collaborative poem written by those gathered in the summer of 2001 at the University of Oregon's Northwest Indigenous Languages Institute (NILI). Thirty responses to the writing prompt, "Somewhere in the Americas, Indian people are . . . " culminate in "Our NILI Poem," a collective work of art that expresses the deep connections among Native American peoples. Carol Watt intro-

as public educators our role is not only to produce workers but to be mentors of growing citizens

duces this occasional poem and offers suggestions for faculty who want to adapt it for their own classroom.

Don Addison's research into the relationship between Native American cultures and the Baha'i Faith explores the similarities in the principles of that religion's teachings and those of Native American traditions. He traces the stories of some of the earliest Baha'i members' presence in America. Addison suggests that the openness of the Baha'i Faith to the rich and varied Native American traditions and beliefs has allowed for mutual acceptance and influence between the Baha'i teachings and those who would embrace its ideas. We are pleased to publish Addison's earliest findings, and expect this project will expand into a longer study.

How can we make the alien known and familiar?

Implicitly, Dale Lugenbehl's ideas about deeper learning suggest agreement with Woolum's. In a sense, Lugenbehl is looking at all the things beside the subject matter itself that goes into learning any subject at a deeper level. To make knowledge valuable to our students, teachers must develop methods of helping students change their behavior. Lugenbehl reflects upon a persistent problem in higher education: how do we help students make real transformations? Using Carl Rogers' notion of "significant learning" (which may remind some of Paulo Friere's "problem posing education"), Lugenbehl suggests ways of fostering the interpenetration of knowledge with "every portion of his [sic] existence" (Rogers, 280).

The challenge of the haiku, a short poem of seventeen syllables, often distributed 5-7-5 in the three lines, is to make the concrete image in the poem appear before the eyes of the reader. Bert Pooth's *Four Haikus* bring sound and sense together in vivid and elegant lines. When our mind's eye rests on these images, we may meditate on significance in brevity; these poems' economy of words boils down meaning to its essentials.

After September 11, many of us had the experience of examining our lives in a new light. What was really important, what endures in the face of trauma? We may read Dan Armstrong's "Too Late Now" with these questions in mind. The poem is suffused with the grief that follows the absolute loss of death, the wretchedness of confronting an irrevocable loss. But in spite of the poem's lament that it is "too late now," the fact of the poem itself seems insistent and hopeful. In the space of the poem—or any creative act—lies the possibility of reaching past the curtain of mortality and into a peaceful acceptance of the connectedness of life and death.

We know, as does Armstrong, that the Twin Towers and their disappeared will not rise, like the biblical Lazarus, and come back to life; it is what we do in the shadow of their absence that defines us—as educators, as individuals and as a community.

Spoken World

Dan Armstrong

Spilling neon words
into the winter downpouring rain
the city outside my window

blinks back into my blank
and orphaned stares
the distancing word-weary world

the hovering leper thoughts
of a much overwritten world
now struck dumb.

Pleading night thoughts
stutter pulse beats
and moon sweats see you

again and again touching the world
through fingered words
and silent, grieving eyes

to question all the intricate
overwrought and spoken world
into which you will not step

to speak. Hope runs before fear
to say: stand and walk
onto that troubled, unread page.

Step into that spoken world
and whisper dreams into rhymes.

Arriving

Alison Cadbury

A small island, small as the heart is in your own body, small but the source of your life, the home of your soul.

You approach the island by sea. Wherever you were born, in a white iron bed in a village or in a foreign city far away, when, as so often happens, destiny or need has driven you from this place, to return you come by sea. The salt sea bears you to the island as a mother's waters bear the babe. Whether you are a seaman tanned by Asian suns, a student red-eyed from writing exams, a godmother clutching boxes of tulle-wrapped *koufeta* for the baptismal guests, or a stranger, silent and alone, you lean on the bow rails, heart beating with the throb of the engines, mouth salt-filled, eyes misted. You strain to catch the first jagged blur on the horizon that grows, so slowly, so slowly, rock by rock it seems, into the cliffs and strands of this island in the sea, a small island in a small sea, small as the heart is in your own body, small but the source of your life, the home of your soul.

Out from Piraeus, you have passed a dozen islands, more—two or three dozen. They are all the same—rocks in the sea, the sea shading from sapphire to jade, the rocks from blue-gray to terra cotta, sometimes furred with the violet of thyme, the dark green of myrtle. Here and there, white houses are encrusted upon the rocks like the lime-white barnacles that cling to ancient amphorae rescued from the sea. The rock of the shore rises up in cliffs, which stretch out to become fields criss-crossed with walls of rock (tan, gray); these rise into terraces and stair-step upwards, becoming mountains. The islands are all the same, whether massive or tiny, inhabited or desert, whether rising steeply from the sea or sloping back from sandy coves, all the same except this one which is yours, and which you recognize cliff by beach, lighthouse by farmhouse, cove by bay with implosions of breath and explosions in your blood like children's Easter firecrackers underfoot.

Wherever you came from, wherever you've been, however long away (weeks, months, years), to arrive here is to achieve *nostos*, return, and to be away is to know pain, emptiness, *nostalgia*, the ache to return. Because here everything is real and right (even the illusions and the lies), and there (wherever that is) everything is alien, other, strange—even when you know it well. To arrive is to enter time, real time, where days pass slowly in important weather (there is one word for time and weather), yet life changes steadily: births, marriages, aging, deaths, births. And everything and nothing is the same.

No time passes more slowly than the hour the white ship grinds through from the moment you first make out for sure the two towering rocks (not a Colossus but a natural

divinity, cloven by an unimaginable force) that guard the harbor. Past these rocks the ship ceases to be a sleek machine and becomes a bumbling monster, backing and filling, turning in half circles, fighting buffeting or captious winds, trying to match its stern to an impossibly positioned dock. Each landing seems to be its first; sailors on board and harbor officials on the dock rush from starboard to port, yelling conflicting orders, cursing each other, until the great steel ferry door on clanking chains smashes onto the dock. Even then there is no orderly birth of the enwombed souls, not the quiet one-by-one stream of the seahorse's young, but a melee, a brawl. The old ladies, using every advantage of seniority and every weapon from sharp-cornered valises to plastic bags of oozing squid, fight their way to the front. The decks are narrow and slick with spray, the gangway thresholds shin-high and sharp, the ladders steep and greasy. From the maw of the hold growl and roar large lorries, between which you must squeeze, darting and shoving until suddenly you are out of it, this mass of people and machines, panting, whole, almost arrived. Almost because this port is the *hora*, the main town, not the *horio*, the village, where you are going. The hora has no natural right to its importance, for its shallow, wide-mouthed harbor faces into the dangerous south winds, but you are glad that all this chaos is far from the village.

They seem to be waiting for something --what? A new pair of shoes, an unexpected guest.

To get to the village you can board a bus, which will wait and wait until your excitement has dwindled into exhaustion, or claim a taxi. The taxi drivers stand by their cars, eyes on the ship; will they go to the village? They are equivocal, temporize. They seem to be waiting for something—what? A new pair of shoes, an unexpected guest, or Christ with the seven crowns upon his head, heralded by archangels, rising from the hold to accomplish there in the rowdy port the Second Coming? Whatever they wait for, leaning on the hoods of their gray cars, smoking, ignoring the passengers piling into the seats, front and back, their baggage strewn on the tarmac, it never happens. They are always disappointed, the taxi drivers, and with a sigh, yielding to the expostulations ("Come on! Let's go!" "*Kyrie* Petro, my son is waiting!") of the passengers, now one over the legal limit, and all with baggage, the drivers sigh, turn from the ship, and slide slump-shouldered behind the wheel.

The journey to the village reveals fragments of the history of the island—not as they have it in the books, era by era, one event leading into another (mostly conquests and occupations), but as people tell it every day to their children, themselves, all jumbled up, triggered by sights or scents. Skirting the civic garden (where the roses seem to sigh for Persia and the royal palms for Egypt, and only the oleander and the daphne look at

home), the taxi passes the gates of the Panagia, the oldest church in Christendom in which the liturgy is still sung. It was decreed, they say, by Ayia Eleni, on her way home to Constantinople after finding the remains of Christ's cross, over fifteen hundred years ago. When it was finally built two centuries later, the builders raised it up over a Roman gymnasium, whose marble columns and mosaic floor—the tasks of Hercules in many-colored stones— were recently uncovered beneath the church.

More evidences of the ancient past spring to the eye as the taxi skirts the small pine woods between the church and the road. There, covered with pine needles and censed with the sharp fragrance, is a litter of white marble sarcophagi: on each, the *makaritis,* the beloved departed, reclines on his or her bier, receiving the funeral guests, still after two and a half millennia, with smiles and wine.

Another mile and, if your eyes are sharp, in an ordinary rock wall edging a farmer's field, among the medium-sized boulders of schist and gneiss and marble, you can discern two or three huge blocks. The archaeologists date them from the Cycladic era, three thousand years or more before the church, and marvel that such gigantic stones could, like those of Stonehenge, have been quarried miles away and transported here.

A little farther along the road, a sweet green valley of olive trees stretches up to a pointed hill. The godmother points it out to you, saying it is what's left of the estates of the Venetian dukes, twelfth to sixteenth centuries, still farmed by their descendants (from a hint of pride in her manner, you surmise she carries a Frankish name, Ventouris, perhaps, or Daferreras). A few minutes later, the student, not to be outdone, points to a jumble of stones: walls a foot high surround marble paving, while carved marble lintels and thresholds stand doorless and open, surreal portals to another world. Another church, one perhaps older than the Panagia. The marble pieces were, he says, prudently salvaged from a nearby temple to Apollo, disassembled by an edict of the early Christian church.

For a while the road cuts through fields and orchards: almond trees climbing hills on one side (rosy pink if you have come in Spring), olive groves and vineyards falling away on the other, block-shaped white houses and tiny blue-domed chapels scattered among the fields. The shattered mountains tumble stones into the road; the driver swerves to avoid them, nearly grazing a red tractor (loaded with grapes, if it is Autumn) emerging from a dry creek bed.

You climb gradually, mountains on either side of you, mountains terraced to the rocky peaks and crowned with inaccessible chapels, mountains holding in their clefts monasteries. Most of these were built in the seventeenth century, but on older foundations, so that

beneath their smooth white walls, were you to chip away the layers of whitewash, you would surely discover here, a column from a fifth-century church, there, a bas-relief from an ancient temple, perhaps the lost memorial to the island's famous poet, Archilochus . . . .

Suddenly you are awakened from your daydreaming. The taxi is cresting a rise where exactly at the watershed stands a small church (perhaps you have arrived on its nameday, when multicolored flags flutter over its newly whitewashed façade, its powder-blue dome). At the summit, the car seems to pause, to hang in air for a moment—a moment when even the taxi driver, bored with the road, bored with the ruins, bored with stones of any kind, even he will stop and take in his breath.

The shattered mountains tumble stones into the road.

For this moment, the whole of the *koinotita*, the community of the village and all its environs, is spread out beneath you: the mountain terraces, the valley farms, the vineyards, the wide bay almost closed by pincers of rocky peninsulas, the dozens of small coves scalloping the shore, and at the heart, the white, white (*kataspro,* they say, intensely white) village, house upon house, squares and rectangles of white tumbling down three hills like a cubist's rendering of a cataract, pooling in a level space, flowing into the sea.

You forget about the past; you are in the present now, rushing toward the present. Swiftly you descend the almost straight road, passing on one side the wheatfields (golden, if you have come in July, when whole households are gathered at the threshing circles, tossing the glowing grain to the winds with shovels, as white doves circle in the blue air, seeking their share of the harvest), and on the other side, the vineyards, the citrus orchards, the olive groves ("My great-uncle's," says the seaman).

Gathering speed, the taxi roars past the small cypress-guarded chapel of the Holy Apostles; the driver crosses himself with the hand not holding a cigarette. A curve around a massive cliff of dark brown gneiss, a sprint along the sea and over a small bridge, and suddenly, before you quite realize it, you are in the *plateia*, the village square, stopped beside a giant eucalyptus tree.

Sitting at the café tables, sipping coffee, are the grandfathers, their canes between their knees, their grandchildren playing around them. Crossing from bakery to grocery, baskets on their arms, are the housewives. A group of high-school boys, tossing a football, are heading for the field beyond the plateia. As the taxi rolls up, they all stop their work or their play or their gossip and turn to see what the ship has brought today.

As the other passengers get out, the bystanders cry, "*Gianni!*" and "*Mana!*" and rush to fold them into eager arms. "*Kalos ilthas*!" the coffee drinkers and the shoppers and the

footballers cry out to the godmother and the seaman and the student, "It's good you've come!"

If you are a stranger, you stand alone, your baggage at your feet, lost perhaps, until someone—the café owner, one of the grandfathers, your old friend (late as usual, hurrying to meet you)—calls your name: "You're back, are you? Kalos ilthas," he says or she says, "It is good you've come." And so it is.

Memories of Water

Jean Leblanc

I

It is late March in New England, and I am looking forward to mud season. This regional expression has been newly taken up by advertisers: "mud-season sales" are now going on at local stores. Pretty soon I expect we'll be seeing "Happy Mud Season" greeting cards. But regardless of the amount of hoopla, April will bring the requisite April showers, and I for one would much rather be walking through puddles and muddy lawns than through the cold, ankle-deep slush of February and March.

Literature is filled with examples of weather phenomena: Dorothy's tornado, Shakespeare's tempest, the dust-laden drought and winds that drove Steinbeck's Joad family from their Oklahoma home. But it is rain that whets our imagination like no other meteorological occurrence. Rain is often the backdrop of our myths, such as the forty days and forty nights of rain that challenged the endurance of Noah and his family. What would horror movies be without a torrential thunderstorm? Deluge and despair, loneliness and loss are evoked by the sight of rain, and perhaps even more by the sound of rain. Of course, we sometimes find ourselves singing in the rain. We associate many subtle qualities with rain: gentleness, softness, freshness, youth. Describing the grace and beauty of someone dear to him, poet e. e. cummings wrote, "not even the rain has such small hands." Snow can be lovely or treacherous, but, except for deadly drifts or avalanches, it usually falls, gets dirty, passively melts. Rain is active: it mists, drizzles, sprinkles, pours; comes down in torrents, sheets, buckets, cats and dogs; arrives in showers, downpours, thunderstorms, hurricanes, monsoons, typhoons; causes everything from puddles to flash floods.

Dorothy's tornado, Shakespeare's tempest, the dust-laden drought of winds that drove Steinbeck's Joad family from their home.

In her memoir *Out Of Africa*, Isak Dinesen wrote:

> One year the long rains failed.
> That is a terrible, tremendous experience, and the farmer who has lived through it, will never forget it. Years afterwards, away from Africa, in the wet climate of a Northern country, he will start up at night, at the sound of a sudden shower of rain, and cry "At last, at last."

Today I inspected the garden and found sprouts from the bulbs I planted last autumn peering up through the semi-frozen earth. A good warm rain will thaw the ground and bring the gardens into their vigorous stage of new growth, when crocuses seem to spring up overnight and creeping phlox bursts into color, a patchwork quilt on the lawn. A few days ago we had an inch of snow, a rather disheartening occurrence this late in the season. It is rain we (and the gardens) crave, perhaps even more than sun. On that wonderful day, beneath a gray sky, when the first southwesterly breeze of the year ushers in a gentle drizzle that awakens the sleeping iris and lily plants, I will tilt my head back, breathe in the cleansed air, and say, "At last, at last."

II

I am sitting several hundred miles inland, at an elevation of 1360 feet above sea level, in the mid-western portion of the only New England state with no marine coast. Beside a mountain stream, I contemplate the riverbank plants: hemlock, yellow birch, wood sorrel, pink lady's slipper, foam flower, clintonia. Suddenly, I smell the ocean: a salty, almost acrid smell, faint on the breeze. It's as if I'm a child again, sensing the nearness of the ocean after a hot summer morning's journey in the family station wagon. I sniffle and blow my nose, then I raise my chin and sniff the air again. I can still smell the sea breeze.

I don't know what combination of water on mineral-leached earth and stone creates this smell in the middle of the Green Mountain National Forest. The scent of ferns and moist forest floor returns, but the ocean stays with me, like a dream on the edge of memory. I love the mountains and the forest, but the sea calls to me.

Small facts swim in my brain. Sailors crossing the upper-mid Atlantic knew they were nearing land even before sighting the North American shore: they could smell the scent of pine wafting out to sea from the virgin white pine forests of seventeenth-century New England. Our body fluid, like that of other vertebrates, contains approximately the same ratio (though only about one-third the concentration) of minerals as sea water, linking us to our most primordial ancestors. At first, these seem like two random, disconnected thoughts. But if the sea breeze can conjure itself the mountains of Vermont, perhaps no two facts regarding the sea are totally unrelated.

We have the sea in us. The moon may influence our bodies the way it influences the tides: a human female's 28-day menstrual cycle (give or take a heck of a lot of variation); or the observation of teachers, mental health workers, and police officers that students, patients, and the general public are rowdier when the moon is full. Scientists may cast a

The scent of ferns and moist forest floor returns, but the ocean stays with me.

skeptical eye at the relation between the full moon and human behavior, but I think, in this case, I'll defer to the experience of teachers, cops and care givers.

If we have our time of "high tide," then must we not also have an ebbing of the sea within, a time when our senses are tuned not to that vast saline place of food and mates and danger, but toward a sheltered thing called 'home'? Greener pastures where we can age "over the hill" and enjoy our nest egg? For as much as the sea within us longs for reunion with the ancient source of our bodily fluid, the thought of firmer footing also urges us onward toward journey's end. Those sailors, who lived for going to sea, still couldn't help but turn their sights in the direction of land when that scent of pine told them they were closing in.

The Green Mountain State was not always landlocked. The teeming life of a tropical coral reef can now be seen as fossils on the shores of Lake Champlain. That coral reef and its warm shallow sea is a five hundred million year old memory, about as old as the Appalachian Mountains and their northern kin, the Green Mountains. Then there are the whale bones, dating from ten to twelve thousand years ago when an Atlantic estuary curved down from the St. Lawrence Seaway. In the Ice Age's waning millennia the land had yet to rebound from the weight of the glacier, and Vermont did indeed have ocean-front property on its western border, where Lake Champlain is today. From the tundra-matted western slopes of the Green Mountains, woolly mammoths watched the sun set over the Champlain Sea.

To be able to spend months at sea and then go weak at the first hint of pine is a blessing of inter-dependent contra-dictions.

A sea breeze in Vermont. Mountain and ocean are two very different habitats, but thy are not unrelated. Mountains are washed to the sea, and what was once sea floor may grow into a mountain as continental drift shuffles the geologic deck. There are undersea mountains, and mountains that emerge from the sea as volcanic islands. To sit on a mountainside and smell the sea, or to be able to spend months at sea and then go weak at that first hint of pine, is a blessing of interdependent contradictions. We carry the seemingly opposite longings for earth and for ocean within us. To really understand one, we must understand the other.

III

My husband and I are hiking the Widforss Trail on the north rim of the Grand Canyon. We are about 8,000 feet above sea level. Beneath our feet, imbedded in the Kaibab limestone, are the shells of sea creatures. Fossils: crinoid stem disks; brachiopods which superficially resemble clam shells. Our hike comes to a stop before we've gone a quarter-mile as we get down on our hands and knees to inspect every loose chunk of rock. We

keep saying, "Sea creatures at the Grand Canyon!" Two hundred and fifty million years ago, we would have been standing underwater (*Homo sapiens*, of course, being merely a twinkle in some ancestral reptile's genes 250 million years ago). Now we are standing in the memory of water.

Our trip through the American West has been dry, hot, sandy, stony, arid, parched, did I mention hot, and has made me homesick for rain. In Utah's Capitol Reef National Park, we hiked the Frying Pan Trail. You can't squeeze water from a frying pan. It did rain that day, a few desultory drops which made tiny round dark stains on the rock and then disappeared back into the atmosphere: the water cycle playing itself out in fast-forward. Our friends, who know this area, assured us that a real downpour would result in curtains of water cascading over the smooth canyon walls, and would probably cut us off from our vehicle which was parked in a "wash." The canyons are of course formed by water, the canyon walls textured with the dovecotes and ripples of ancient glacial meltwaters and ancient, ancient seas and tidal flats. The backbone geologic formation of the park is called the Waterpocket Fold. A map of south-central Utah shows numerous rivers, all ultimately feeding into the Colorado River: the Green, Grand, Dirty Devil, Escalante, San Juan, and their tributaries. Exploring the area in 1869, one of John Wesley Powell's men noted, "Got pretty wet but expect to be wetter before we reach our destination."

Of course, this sentimental rambling for water is a human thing. Capitol Reef's mammals, reptiles, amphibians, birds, trees, shrubs and wildflowers are just fine, adaptable to the extremes of stone-scrubbing rainfall and stone-searing heat, winter snows, flash floods, and more stone-searing heat. On the Frying Pan Trail, we stopped to listen to a canyon wren's trickle of notes. Coleridge's thirsty Ancient Mariner would feel at home here, with water, water everywhere but only the tepid quarts in our daypacks for us to drink. We are two-legged land sponges. The thought haunted me throughout the desert Southwest that we are mere visitors to this ecosystem, and it would be easy to outstay our welcome.

I am a lover of paradox. My first visit to Utah and Arizona and Nevada and souther California gave me a taste of how water is simultaneously a life-giving force and a potentially deadly power, a natural substance and a political commodity, a presence in space and time as well as a memory recorded in the mineral landscape. All those things are true in the Northeast, but mostly taken for granted. My trip through the Southwest has made me a little more aware of the implications of every bath, every flush of the toilet, every half cup of tea poured down the drain, every fat blade of sprinkler-fed grass on every lawn

in August. It is all too easy to imagine a time when water will be just a memory. By then, we'll be a long-forgotten species in the life of the universe, a species that was never able to immerse its imagination in fluid metaphor: water is life, water is time, water is justice.

Work Cited

Dinesen, Isak. *Out of Africa* and *Shadows on the Grass*. Vintage International, 1989.

Climbing Mount Pisgah

Frank Rossini

it takes time to slow breath to mountain
for two to fill their lungs as one
walking the way teaches
you to breathe to measure
step by breath breath
by mountain's steepness
& below river moves effortlessly
at every point deep
stillness

back against rock breeze
trembles dry grass solitary
soul drifts
in/out of sleep
bamboo flute leans
against knee wind
sings
through it

In the *Muhd:* Teaching the Non-Writing Aspects of Writing

Bill Woolum

— *The* muhd *'s at the root of it all.*
Murtaugh Molloy

Last winter quarter, my Writing 122 (Composition: Argument and Style) students seemed puzzled when one of the "texts" for the course was the 1982 recording of Glenn Gould playing Bach's *Goldberg Variations*. No doubt buying Kim Barnes' *In the Wilderness*, Jon Krakauer's *Into Thin Air*, and Thich Nhat Hanh's *Being Peace* seemed unusual for a composition course, but at least they were books. Why, wondered my students, was this course asking them to buy a CD of a pianist none of them had heard of playing a composition not one of them knew?

Answering this question will begin to explain a simple insight I've arrived at about teaching writing and writing itself: what matters most to writing and teaching writing are acts of not-writing. Until I began to immerse myself in this insight, I believed, largely because of what I had been taught and had read, that what helped writers most was to write, write, write, and then write some more. I think differently now.

In November 1999, I was convalescing at home, fatigued by a bout with meningitis. My frail condition left me vulnerable to subversive ideas and one arose from a most unexpected source. In the spring of 1999, I had assigned Robertson Davies' novel *Tempest-Tost*, set in the fictional Canadian city of Salterton, to my literature of comedy students, but had never read the subsequent two novels in Davies' Salterton Trilogy, *Leaven of Malice* and *A Mixture of Frailties*. In the latter novel, a Salterton naïf named Monica Gall seeks the support of the local Bridgetower Trust to study singing abroad. So far, at age twenty, Monica's training is wholly parochial, epitomized by her participation in the Heart and Hope Gospel Quartet, who sing on local radio five mornings a week on behalf of the Thirteenth Apostle Tabernacle, a local Christian sect. Her musical experience is thin, but all agree her voice is lovely ("...something in her voice suggests beauty, and calm,

and even reason . . .," says the Cathedral organist, Humphrey Cobbler). She wins the support of the Bridgetower Trust and travels to London for training.

Once in London, Monica comes under the tutelage of Murtaugh Molloy who immediately seizes upon developing Monica's *muhd*, which is what the word "mood" sounds like in his way of speaking. Molloy tells Monica, "The *muhd*'s everything. Get it and you'll get the rest. If you don't get it, all the *fiorituri* and exercises in agility and *legato* in the world'll be powerless to make a good singer of you. The *muhd*'s at the root of it all" (Davies 577).

It's a mysterious quality, this *muhd*. *Muhd* will tap the untouched reservoirs of emotion, character, intelligence in Monica's person; *muhd* will animate, vitalize, color, enlighten, and give depth to her lovely, but immature voice. To develop Monica's *muhd*, Molloy first instructs Monica in Shakespeare. She learns to perform the opening speech to *Henry V* and Jacques' Seven Ages of Man passage from *As You Like It*. He sends her to the theater, the opera, and art galleries; he puts her under the care of Amy Neilson who takes her to Paris for three months to coach her in history and literature and to teach her to spend money, buy clothes, furniture, and other nice things, and to be further exposed to art, music, and theater.

Murtaugh Molloy trains Monica as a singer by having her not sing for several months. He first worked to unlock her *muhd*, the not-singing elements of her being. His approach invigorated my imagination. Immediately, I wanted to teach a whole term of composition in which the students didn't write, but rather developed their *muhd* in various non-writing ways. I knew I couldn't do that. Not for a whole quarter. Instead, I began to reflect on how my former team teaching partner Rita Hennessy and I taught philosophy and composition. Our students used street chalk to make parking lot mandalas; they took trips to both the University of Oregon Museum of Natural History and the Art Museum; they acted in class, made drawings, video-tapes, collages, consulted the *I Ching*, and wrote dialogues that had characters of Louise Erdrich's in conversation with Monet and Descartes on a late night train flying across the Polish plain. At the time, I knew what we were doing deepened our students' learning. I knew it made the course fun, kept morale up, made the study of philosophy and writing memorable, but in moments of self-doubt and self-criticism, I feared we were having fun at the expense of teaching the content of the course's subject matter.

But one day all my doubt was erased and I realized our methods were more than mere merry-making. I ran into a former student of mine, Ellen, at a local bagel shop. Ellen is in

Why, wondered my students, was this course asking them to buy a CD of a pianist none of them had heard of playing a composition not one of them knew?

her fifties and had decided to complement her years and years of private study and enjoyment of music, film, poetry, fiction, and world religions with studies at Lane Community College. In fall, 1995, she was in my Shakespeare class. Ellen was a most sensitive reader, full of *muhd*, and a profound thinker. But, she struggled to write her insights, seemingly unable to support her abstract insights with detail. Ellen sought my assistance. I was little help. I could not seem to explain effectively how supportive detail and purposeful structure would vivify her marvelous insights.

When I saw Ellen at the bagel shop, I already knew her writing had significantly improved. In past months, I had read two or three of her letters to the editor. They were forceful, replete with detail, and had a sure sense of structure and powerful momentum. At the bagel shop, Ellen asked me if I remembered the problems she'd had with composing details in her Shakespeare essays. I remembered vividly. "Bill," she explained,

The *muhd*'s everything. Get it and you'll get the rest.

My work with sculpture has made all the difference. When I begin to give form to a formless slab of clay and as I focus on how I want my emerging piece to look, my attention turns to the details of line and curve and perspective and I begin to see what details are necessary to make the sculpture work. It's the same with writing. I now see so much more clearly what you were trying to teach me. It took becoming a sculptor and working with clay to learn to really write.

Leah, an artist and paramedic, was recently a student of mine in research writing. She wanted to write an essay on Socrates, but was stuck. Her words describe how she finally made her breakthrough:

There are so many things I want to understand, yet do not. I want to know who I am and what I am. I want to know what is truly important. I want to know if what I believe matters. I want to know how to find my path. When the voices in my head become overwhelming, I draw. Today, I am drawing with charcoal. After nearly breaking my neck in order to study my own profile in the mirror, the picture begins to take shape. The murky smudges develop sharp edges and the darkest darks stand out against the whitest whites and the many shades of gray. After hours of oblivion, my return to reality is met with charcoal staining both forearms and smeared down my cheeks and across my forehead. The picture has a female face standing out in profile against a black background. She is looking upwards with a mixture of hopelessness and hope, doubt and faith. The top of the page is filled with white light. A shape, a divine form reaches down and lays a hand upon the searching face of the woman.

The drawing actually turned out to be Leah looking into the light and seeing Leah. It was her own hand reaching down and compassionately laying a hand upon her own searching face. Creating this image opened Leah's eyes to a basic tenet of Socrates' philosophy: there is no real philosophy until the mind turns around and examines itself. Leah's drawing, rooted in her *muhd*, opened her eyes to the image of her own self-examining, her own search for truth, and cleared the way for her to write compelling research about Socrates' search for understanding.

I find new directions for how we might think about community college teaching embedded in Monica, Ellen, and Leah's experience. Through physically creating art, Ellen and Leah experienced a breakthrough from inertia to powerful motion in their thinking and writing. By encouraging Monica to experience non-singing elements of cultural life and by encouraging her to buy pleasing clothes and new furnishings for her flat, Murtaugh Molloy works to unlock the *muhd*, the vitality that sleeps in Monica, with the hope that awakening the beauty within her will animate and deepen her singing. Sculpting and charcoal drawing similarly affected Ellen and Leah. Monica, Ellen, and Leah each became more receptive: Ellen to detail and structure, Leah to philosophical inquiry, Monica to a world of plays and poetry and pleasure beyond her provincial rearing. If their experience is to instruct us as teachers, we must examine how we might cultivate a similar receptivity in ourselves and in our students. We must begin to see that the *muhd*'s at the root of it all.

When the voices in my head become overwhelming, I draw.

As I see it, such a move requires that we examine how we view the nature of reality. Last winter quarter, when teaching Thich Nhat Hanh's *Being Peace*, I gradually awoke to why my mind was alert and receptive to Monica Gall learning to sing by not singing and to Ellen and Leah learning to write by not writing. I was wakened by Hanh's understanding of non-duality, the way in which everything is what it is and, at the same time, is what it is not. I knew that things and ideas can be seen as distinct from one another, but this is a partial view. So is seeing things and ideas solely in light of their respective opposites. The mindset of non-duality understands that all is in each thing. Hanh explains how non-duality can be seen in a piece of paper:

The *Avatamsaka Sutra* tells us that you cannot point to one thing that does not have a relationship with this sheet of paper. So we say, "A sheet of paper is made of non-paper elements." A cloud is a non-paper element. The forest is a non-paper element. The paper is made of all the non-paper elements to the extent that if we return the non-paper elements to their sources, the cloud to the sky, the sunshine to the sun, the logger to his father, the paper is empty. Empty of what? Empty of a separate self. It has been made by

all the non-self elements, non-paper elements, and if all these non-paper elements are taken out, it is truly empty, empty of an independent self. Empty, in this sense, means that the paper is full of everything, the entire cosmos. The presence of this tiny sheet of paper proves the presence of the whole cosmos (46-47).

This view of the nature of reality moved me to begin looking at the non-teaching elements of myself as a teacher, moved me to recognize that in the same way that paper is empty of a separate self, so I, as a teacher, am empty of an independent teaching self. My life as an occasional golfer is a non-teacher element. So is my life as a husband, parent, gardener. What I do and have done as a golfer, gardener, husband, and parent are all present each moment in my teaching. On a given day, the act of teaching is always made up of the non-teaching elements of that day (and countless other ones). Today my teaching will be made up of what my students and I do in the classroom as about ten of them present to the class what each regards as her or his finest talent. Today my teaching will also be made up of the writing I am doing right now, the walk I took with my wife this morning to her place of employment, our kiss good-bye, the sweater I retrieved for a person who dropped it at the bus stop, the game of cribbage I played online with britam_71.

With this view of reality, I also see how vital Hanh's concept of non-action is to my teaching. Non-action is not a passive doing of nothing. Rather, non-action is the stillness, the calm, the sense of one's being at the heart of action. Any action is made up of all that was not that action. Likewise, what we write or how we teach or how we practice calculus or how we dance or how we create computer programs is made up of all that is non-writing, non-teaching, non-calculus, non-dance, and non-programming. It makes what we do in the moments we don't write or teach or dance or program vitally important. These moments of "not-doing" are the moments that define the quality of what we do. If we spend our not-teaching time in ways that are harried, frivolous, or in any way mean, the color, the *muhd*, of our teaching will be stained; on the other hand, if we spend our not-teaching time cultivating inward stillness and calm, the *muhd* of our teaching will be more peaceful and we will be more inwardly receptive.

As teachers, if we view reality as non-dualistic, if we consider the non-student elements of our students, the non-teaching elements of our teaching, or the non-subject matter elements of our subject matter, what new directions might our work take? Why does such a view of reality matter? It matters because it wakes us up, increases our attentiveness. As teachers, we need to be awake to the totality of who our students are, as much as

we can. Being a student is a sliver of our students' experience and being. Being awake and attentive to their non-student selves will help us understand them better as students, will help us understand all that they bring to our classes that is not in our class curriculum. As we better understand the not-student dimensions of their experience and being, we can be more receptive to the different ways they learn, think, feel, and move through the world. Such receptivity is inseparable from our attention to the non-subject matter elements of the content we teach. The more receptive we are to our students' multiple talents and passions, the more we can help our students see what we would have them learn in terms of these other things: writing in terms of sculpting clay, singing in terms of performing Shakespeare, philosophy in terms of charcoal drawing.

When I assigned my Writing 122 students Glenn Gould's recording of *The Goldberg Variations*, I had decided to experiment with what would happen to my students' writing if they were assigned a project that was asking them to devote contemplative time to not writing. The course's focus was "Exploring Exploration." Before we listened to Glenn Gould, all of our exploring had been through reading written texts and writing dialogues and essays. I wondered what would happen if students were asked to listen meditatively to *The Goldberg Variations* and, rather than being pressed to critically assess the work, were asked while or after listening to jot down impressions, images, thoughts, stories, anything that came to mind. I suggested they might want to draw while listening. They were then to write an essay about their experience with the music. They could not do the essay wrong. In giving this assignment, I hoped, on the one hand, that my students would hear in the music the kinds of repetitions, movement, coherence, and even argument in a non-verbal text that they had been reading in verbal texts. On the other, I held out great hope that Bach would help unlock their *muhd*, help inwardly soften them; help them both become more receptive to this music and experience having their work strengthened by their listening.

We must examine how we might cultivate a similar receptivity in ourselves and in our students.

And that's what happened. The music unlocked the *muhd* in each student. As they read their essays aloud to the class, the students and I were finely touched by Heather's memories of speeding with her father down an open Kansas freeway, radio blaring, in his sleek convertible; by Leslie's elaborate fantasia of romance and dancing, her writing bringing to life a detailed and enchanted evening with *The Goldberg Variations* as its soundtrack; by Marielle's sweet memories of music and dancing in her grandparent's Parisian home made bittersweet by her desire to have back again not only those days, but her love of dancing;

and by the passions and hopes Jenny attached to her love of listening to and singing Puccini, Verdi, and Wagner.

One student especially benefited. Dana held a demanding sales job that required much travel. Dana was also afflicted with a variety of physical ailments. Listening meditatively to *The Goldberg Variations* slowed him down. It gave his mind and body rest. He found it therapeutic. With joy and intellectual vigor, Dana wrote about how the speed and frustration of his job and life exacerbated his physical pain, but how *The Goldberg Variations* eased his physical pain and inspired him to seek further relief by sitting and resting and meditating while listening to music. He came to understand that such non-action might be crucial if he were to restore purpose and vitality to the chaotic nature of his daily life.

Non-action is the stillness, the calm, the sense of one's being at the heart of action.

I realize, as I close this essay, that my thinking about the non-writing elements of writing began about twenty years ago when I first read Adrienne Rich's essay "When We Dead Awaken: Writing as Revision." As we consider new directions for instruction in community colleges, we need to see that what's at stake is what Adrienne Rich calls an "imaginative transformation of reality." As Rich reminds us, "human lives are full of fantasy – passive day-dreaming which need not be acted on." Such use of the imagination is drifting, purposeless, wasteful. To enter into a constructive and transforming life of the imagination is, writes Rich, "to question, to challenge, to conceive of alternatives, perhaps to the very life you are living at that moment. You have to be free to play around with the notion that day might be night, love might be hate; nothing can be too sacred for the imagination to turn into its opposite or to call experimentally by another name" (610).

We must be willing to turn our classrooms into what might seem their opposite, imaginatively transforming the classroom reality by playing with notions of making the impersonal personal, the objective subjective, time normally reserved for content into time devoted to *muhd*. For years, the classroom has centered on the teacher. Recently, it has centered on the students. Such a move is the beginning of transformation, but such transformation will be incomplete unless we take class time once reserved for "content" or "subject matter" and imaginatively create ways for our students to learn all they can about each other, not only their names, but their talents, convictions, dreams, visions, and lives. If we are willing to play with making the private public and subvert the old idea of a student's work being only for the teacher by making student essays and other projects part of the class's public life, a better and transformed classroom will emerge. Such "non-teaching" cuts into teacher presentation time. Content sometimes plays a secondary role

to class relationships. But, student receptivity grows in such transformed environments. *Muhd*, the root of it all, is enlivened. Receptive, spirited students learn more quickly, think more deeply. Time spent currying relationships in the classroom might seem inefficient, but it becomes, in the long run, more efficient. Students learn better. And what once seemed not teaching might be the best teaching of all.

Works Cited

Davies, Robertson. *The Salterton Trilogy: Tempest-Tost, Leaven of Malice, and A Mixture of Frailties*. New York: Penguin Books, 1986.

Hanh, Thich Nhat. *Being Peace*. Berkeley: Parallax Press, 1987.

Rich, Adrienne. "When We Dead Awaken: Writing as Revision." *Ways of Reading: An Anthology for Writers*. 5th ed. Ed. David Bartholomae and Anthony Petrosky. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1999: 603-616.

Skrines, Leah. "Socrates and the Search for Understanding." Research essay. Lane Community College, December 14, 2000.

Bella y oscura (Beautiful and Dark)[1]

Rosa Montero *Translation by Adrienne Mews*

I. Introduction

According to the author this contemporary Spanish novel is about the splendor and darkness of life. This compelling novel, Rosa Montero's sixth, combines two seemingly disparate elements: the seamy underbelly of the postmodern urban landscape and the dreamy qualities of magic, fantasy and myth. The narration encompasses two marginalized voices. An orphan girl recounts her childhood experiences in the red-light district of the city, and a dwarf woman weaves alternative tales of love, creation, nature, and her own divinity. Montero masterfully crafts a fascinating novel rich in imagery and poetic language. It reflects not only the darkness of our reality but also the enchantment of our dreams and desires and offers Montero's own brand of social and feminist commentary.

Montero's writing reflects not only the darkness of our reality but also the enchantment of our dreams and desires.

Synopsis

The story begins as Baba, a young orphan girl, rides a train into the city. As she recalls she, "was born out of that tunnel's blackness, daughter of the clamor and clatter of the tracks, birthed from the entrails of the earth on a cold April afternoon at an enormous and desolate station." There, she meets her Aunt Amanda, an awkward woman, who leads her through the labyrinthine streets of the city until they reach the red-light district, where they live.

Along with her young cousin, Chico, Baba learns the ways and unwritten laws of the neighborhood, yet maintains a certain degree of innocence. She meets her Uncle Segundo, an intimidating and aggressive man, who is alternately on the run, making deals behind closed doors, or performing magic acts with the dwarf woman, Airelai. By day, Airelai entertains Baba with amazing stories: her illustrious past as a child goddess in her land, her memories of blissful moments with her convict lover, tales of human cruelty, a new version of the Biblical story about the fall from Paradise, and a narration on her magical powers. By night, Airelai sells her body on the streets to support the family. Baba also spends time walking through the cemetery with her proud Grandmother Barbara, despite her grandmother's declining health. All the while Baba nervously awaits her father, who has been in jail all of her life.

Throughout her time in the neighborhood, Baba learns dark family secrets and sees the harsh realities of city life. However, she keeps hoping that someday the dwarf woman's shooting star will flash through the sky, a sign that she will be able to live a happy life. In the last pages of the novel, Baba meets her father for a brief moment just before he disappears with Airelai, and they take off on a plane that suddenly bursts into flames in the sky above Baba. Her magic star finally arrives.

The Author

The highly respected Rosa Montero was born in Madrid in 1951. Since 1976 she has worked as a journalist for Madrid's daily newspaper, *El País*, and continues to write weekly opinion columns. She has published eight novels since the early eighties, all of which have become best sellers in Spain. At the same time, her works receive high acclaim for their literary merit as they are studied in universities around the world.

Translator's Note

This novel's highly descriptive language proved to be a challenge for translation. For instance, in the passage translated below, the narrator refers to, "*ese territorio en el que la noche empieza a remansarse.*" *Remansarse* refers to how water pools up like the water of a dammed or blocked river. Since there is no specific word to describe this phenomenon in English, I translated it as, "the landscape . . . brimming with the night" to convey the liquid quality of the description. Then in order to transmit the semantic idea of "pooling," I translated the phrase, "*como una isla de luz en la sopa de sombras,*" as "like an island of light in a pool of shadows." This transposition solved another challenge, that of "*sopa,*" which is literally "soup." The Spanish word "*sopa*" can be used in a wider context than the English "soup," which would have lowered the register of the passage considerably.

II. The Translation

The following excerpt is my translation of a short story told by Airelai, one of the main characters in Rosa Montero's novel, *Bella y oscura*.

. . . It was on one of those days, after Grandmother's death, when Airelai told us the following:

"I know full well what it is for a man to want you. Many men have wanted me with a need like that of fire that has to keep burning things up in order to survive; and so it burns

straw if it's nearby, and if not, wood, or cloth, or cardboard; thorns and brambles, soft plants and ferns, and even little live animals that try to escape its roasting tongue. This fire burns indiscriminately; it devours everything it touches, and in that very way, so hungry and blind, some men have wanted to burn me up. But that kind of fire has no power over me; only other flames can catch me.

"Many men have desired me and for different reasons: because I'm a monster or because I'm perfect, because I'm very old or because I look like a girl. They all wanted my body, and they took it. Some, more savage and cruel than others, also possessed my pain or my fear. But just one man got my will and my time. That man made me his slave, because I loved him and I love him still. And passion is a sickness of the soul that makes you lose your freedom once and for all. Passion cannot exist without slavery; and if you love without that sense of disaster, without that anxious dependence on the one you love, then you just don't love him truly. Love is nature's strongest drug and its most perverse; it's a brilliant evil that tricks you with its colored sparks, while it devours you. But once you've lived that feverish passion, you can't let yourself go back to the dismal life of living sensibly.

"If you love without a sense of disaster, without the anxious dependence on the one you love, then you just don't love him truly."

"When I met him he was good to me, which says a lot, because those were hard times, and people were vulgar. He had enormous, bony hands that never left a trace on me; unlike his breath, which engraved his initials on my soul. Because for us Lilliputians, just a small soul can fit in our bodies. He never desired me as blindly and voraciously as fire does; he was there with me, he talked with me, he listened to me. He looked at me as if my eyes were at the same height as his: he is the only man who ever looked at me that way. We went together for many years; I worked with him, lived with him, we shared everything except a bed. But it didn't matter too much to me that that part of our relationship was missing, the element that slightly scrupulous fires had scorched. If we were together—and we were together many hours of the day—I felt satisfied.

"But one day something went wrong, and he was obliged to flee at once. I saw him pack his suitcase hurriedly. I was sure of losing him. Tears ran down my face and I didn't bother to hide them because I knew that, in his excitement, he wouldn't even have time to look at me. And then something marvelous happened, the most beautiful thing that had ever happened to me in my whole life: he turned around, he gazed at me from his unreachable height and exclaimed, 'But aren't you ready yet?'

"I have recalled that moment so many times now that his face is fading on me, worn out by remembering it. But I still see his profile, the shadow of his body bending over

me, the gleam in his eyes between foggy features, and I still feel that fiery tongue, the flash that ran down my back when I heard his words, a lightning bolt of pure and complete happiness. I think that I levitated, I floated, and the Caravacan cross on the roof of my mouth surely became incandescent. Today, so many years later, my eyes still sting foolishly when I remember it.

"We traveled through, or better yet, we were on the run through most of the country, without ever spending two nights in the same place; and in the end we pulled into a good hideout, a run-down stone cabin in a remote valley. We stayed there and we were content.

"You two are still very young and don't know what it's like to have your life at your back, like a messy bag of leftovers, treasures, and trash all mixed up; a bundle that keeps growing as it hangs over your shoulder and weighs you down more and more each day. Recollections are fused onto your memory, past years, fulfilled and unfulfilled desires, dreams and tears; the scenes of yesterday lose all of life's light and rhythm. They are melted into a gray conglomeration of confusing, dusty, and faraway images that you might say had been lived by some other person, and not by you. It's as if someone were walking in the country and crossed a valley and climbed a hill; and she looks back and notices that the valley that she has just crossed is filled with shadows, and she can no longer make out the path that she followed through the landscape, which is just now brimming with the night. Because the hollys that were shining so brightly in the sun before, have lost their luster now, the flowers have no color anymore, the river no longer glimmers, the switchbacks of that same path are just barely distinguishable in the obscurity. The fact is that the night that waits for us is also devouring the footprints left by our steps.

"But there are times, moments in your life that remain glistening in your memory even though time has passed; and when you look back you see that memory blazing in the shapeless grayness of the past, like an island of light in a pool of shadows. That's how the days that I spent with him in that cabin burn in my mind; it's a fire that blinds me when I look back, a brilliance that hurts. Among the shadows of my life, those days still keep glowing.

"It was an exquisite valley; it was nearly abandoned with just a few stone and slate houses. An old, damp forest stretched along the hillsides, with centuries-old oaks, knobby and covered with mushrooms and lichen. There were lush chestnut trees with spiny fruit, prickly hollys, and soft, silky ferns like peacock feathers. The ground was as cushiony as a mattress, with layers of dead leaves, mulch, roots, fungi, microscopic organisms, busy insects, and critters of all shapes and sizes. Everything was crackling, rustling, and decay-

ing, driven by life's unstoppable force. And the air smelled like freshly cut hay, like juicy moss, like cattle, like thick decomposing earth.

"We both knew that it wouldn't last. We were fugitives in our last hideout. I felt as if I were condemned to death, as we all are really, waiting for my happiness to end: because it always comes to an end. But in the meantime I drank the days, hours, and minutes greedily, feeling the wind of time pass right over my face.

"There was an orchard near our little house; it was owned by the man who rented us our cabin. Every day his daughter, a girl about ten or eleven years old, went there. She spent her hours sitting next to a beautiful fig tree, singing one song after another to scare the birds away so they wouldn't eat the fleshy figs. I listened to her sing when the sun shined and during the heat, while the flies buzzed and the hills boiled, while he slept for a while in that rickety old bed. I watched him as he slept; he was so beautiful and mine when he was still, and I knew that life could never be better.

"At those moments, the world acquired a perfect geometry, a visible order that I felt I could understand. I felt at home, in the exact place that belonged to me in the universe, and all the rest of the planet's creatures were in their right places as well. I could see and understand everything in that moment of balance: the infinite leaves in the valley, each and every one, even the smallest; the worn rocks, buried in the flesh of the earth: every single flower was unique, and they were all trembling during their short lives; the tiny insects' legs, their transparent wings, their sucking stingers; and that tumult of budding flowers and wilting petals, of creatures being born and dying, between death's fruitful wind and life's silent howling.

"Until that time came to an end, as it always inevitably does. And they came to the valley; they found us, and they took him away. But I know that he'll come back someday, and I'm waiting for him here. I would do anything for him: kill, betray, lie, even deny myself. I was always awkward, except with him. I was always weak, except with him. I was always a dwarf, but not to him. Ever since he left, my life has just been a time of waiting. An in-between time. A dead time.

"I remember that at dusk, the clamor of animals' bellows and shrieks from the opposite hillside would blow our way in the wind. We often stayed there contemplating the sunset, while the air was painted a bluish green color, and the animals' wild voices came to us echoing through the valley. I always thought they were mating calls, moans of heat and pleasure. But then, after they discovered our hideout and took him away, I found out that the uproar was coming from a slaughterhouse, and they were screams of agony torn

by the butcher's knife. From then on, every time I think of those last twilight hours, I see them in my memory in the color of blood: beautiful, transparent, and terrible. That's how close sweetness is to horror, in this life that is so beautiful and dark."

Note

[1] Rosa Montero. *Bella y oscura*. (Barcelona: Seix Barral, 1993).

Notes On War

Pam Dane

October 1, 2001

I have been keeping notes on war for some time now trying to explore what war means to civilians, especially to women and children. I've cut out clippings from the newspapers, written notes on the back of envelopes, and kept a journal. However, until September 11th, war was only a distant concept for me. When I contemplate this new reality in my life, I have many thoughts and feelings that are difficult to articulate. As I read through some of my notes on war, I realize, that although I have thought about war in the past and I have felt sorrow and fear for those involved, I have never felt a true sense of war's terror and impact until now. I am coming to understand in a new way the meaning of fear.

September 30, 2001

Last night I woke up to the sounds of bombs exploding in the distance. In my mind's eye I could see the smoke and hear the cries, while in my consciousness, I knew that the sounds I was hearing were actually train cars being coupled. A few weeks ago it wouldn't have occurred to me that bombs could actually be exploding in my town. I lived with a false sense of security, a sense that most people in this world don't possess. I lived believing that war happened somewhere else. Before September 11th, war was something I read about in books by some of my favorite authors like Virginia Woolf and H.D. Now it has taken on new meaning.

September 29, 2001

Just back from my morning walk. It's a gray rainy day. The weather fits my mood. Last night on the radio it was reported that we can expect other attacks. Of course I've known this, but I have tried not to think about it. I desperately want my world to return to "normal" where I am worried about such things as classes and what I'll fix for dinner. It then occurs to me that I have a sense of entitlement, something I have accused others of having, but have never considered that I too possess. After all, who do I think I am? So

many in the world live with continual pain and fear, live in dirty camps without decent food or water, worry about providing shelter for their families and about being killed.

I, on the other hand, worry about new carpeting, getting a raise, petty, unimportant things. I have assumed my right to everything in my life without really understanding what it means not to have the kind of security I've always taken for granted. Now my life seems so tenuous. Of course it has always been like that, but I've never felt it in this way. I'm helpless against someone who decides to poison my water. While I'm not afraid to die, I am afraid that I won't be able to live without all of the things I'm used to in this life of mine.

Then I think, if nothing else comes from all of this, realizing, even for a short while, that I have taken so much for granted is an important new awareness. The fact that I have taken so much in this world where so many have so little is now central to my thinking.

As I consider these things, I reach for the old journal on war that I have kept for a number of years. I turn to the page written in April of 1993.

April 1993

I've been thinking about war for weeks now, ever since I've been away from my work. It all started with an autobiography of a Vietnamese woman who described her experience of the Viet Nam War, an experience unlike anything I had ever read before. This was a book that put a face on war, a face that told about the day-to-day workings of war on a population. Most of us only read and hear about war through the eyes of the military. We never read first hand accounts of war from women, children, and old people left back home, or from people who are living in the midst of war. While reading this book, I realized that war really affects common people, not only soldiers, but families. It also affects the land, destroying the trees, the grass, and the air we breath. It destroys birds and animals.

Perhaps my discovery of the personal aspects of war is one that many people have already found, but it opened my eyes to the suffering that war causes that I had never perceived. It made me wonder again about whose view we are given about the world. As I thought about this story, I found another book by Susan Griffin called *A Chorus of*

Stones: The Private Life of War. This book profoundly moved me to tunnel deeper into my thinking about war.

Griffin says that war is made to create warriors. If this is so, then what else are we creating? At what cost? One of the most startling statements that Griffin makes is that all of our lives are shaped and framed by war. As I considered what she said, it became clear that she was right, that war had shaped who I was and how I saw the world.

July 1997

I'm sitting at the kitchen table drinking my morning coffee and reading the newspaper. On the front page is a picture of war. It is a picture of three young men. They are not soldiers, but teenagers, wearing crew neck sweaters and blue jeans. They look like any teenager dressed up for a day at school, but they are learning a very different lesson. Two of the boys are squatting on the ground holding the third boy between them. He has a look of surprise on his face and his friends have looks of disbelief on their faces. The caption under this picture says that the boy on the ground, being held in his friend's arms, is a Palestinian who was shot and killed on his way to school.

As I look at this picture, I imagine this young man getting out of bed that morning, perhaps turning on his favorite tape as he takes a shower and brushes his teeth. I imagine his mother and sisters in the kitchen eating breakfast with smells of coffee and toast hanging in the air. I imagine his smile, his teasing of his sister, his mother's kiss, and his turning and waving goodbye as he leaves to meet his friends and go to school.

Then I can no longer imagine what happened, how the bullets came from nowhere and penetrated his body as he and his two friends strolled along the sidewalk on that sunshiny day. I cannot imagine the surprise and horror when the bullets hit. I cannot imagine the pain felt by his mother and father and sisters and friends. I cannot imagine a world without a young man like this one, one who began the day in sunshine and happiness, and then was no more. His is the face of war that I cannot imagine nor accept.

As I think of my own life and how war has shaped it and continues to shape it, I think of my childhood. I think of my father who was a soldier in World War II. I was born before he left for Europe, but was so young when he went that I did not remember him as a part of my early life. I look at a picture of this young man walking down a Paris street dressed in his army uniform. His hat is set at a jaunty angle. He notes on the back of the picture that the building behind him is filled with bullet holes.

When my father came home, he never talked of that war, nor the war in Korea where he was later sent. Yet that war, and the next one, changed my father from the 21-year-old man who grew up in a small Midwestern town. It also made me who I am.

I spent the first four years of my life in a world mainly inhabited by women and old men. It was a gentle world. It did not seem strange to me not to have men around, for that was how the world was. When my father came home however, my world changed. It became louder and in some ways more frightening.

I remember my father walking down the sidewalk to our house. I didn't know who he was, although I had seen many pictures of him and my mother talked about him to me. I hid from him. He brought with him a big red tricycle. The tryke coaxed me out, but I didn't know what to say to him. Later I remember sitting on his lap studying his face and his arms. He had moles on his arms in the same places I had moles on my arms. This cemented my relationship with him. We were just alike.

However we never became close. I wanted him to like me. I'm sure he did, but he had missed the early years of my life and we were unable to establish a relationship. Our household changed and I resented that. Daddy came first. He was now another voice I had to listen to in a house that had been just my mother and me. I didn't like that.

I later found out from my mother that my father had met a woman in Paris, and he had fallen in love with her. He hadn't wanted to come home and he had stayed on longer than necessary. It was shocking to me that he didn't want to come back to us, but he did. His coming back to small town America, taking on the role of husband and father, after serving in Europe for three years must have been a jolt to him. I don't believe he ever recovered.

When I was a little older my father was called up to Korea. Again he was gone for about two years. My mother had to take over the management of our business, as well as the management of my sister and myself. I remember my mother being tired and worried about my father. He was lonesome in Korea and he was cold. His feet were frozen.

The day he came home was unexpected. We had all gone swimming at the lake. When we drove up to our house, there was a man on the front porch. It was my father. We all hugged and kissed and cried.

Daddy took off his uniform and put on his own clothes. Then we all walked downtown to show everyone that he was back. It was like a homecoming parade. Daddy was so happy. After dinner and gift giving, I left the kitchen and climbed the tree in the back yard. I remember wearing the green silk jacket from Korea with the dragon embroidered

on the back that he brought me. I remember sitting in the tree listening to the cicadas and feeling the warm Midwestern air and thinking that my life would be different again. I felt so alone and so lost. Finally my dad came out in the backyard to find me. He took me in his arms and hugged me. He said he loved me and was glad to be home.

I wonder if what I just said was true. I did go climb the tree and think all of the things I just wrote, but I don't know if my father came out and found me. I remember looking at the light coming through the kitchen windows as my mother and father sat at the kitchen table and talked. I think I remember hearing my mother say to my father that he needed to pay special attention to me. I think I remember that, but do I? Or did I sit in that old tree feeling alone and angry that they were in the kitchen with each other and I was outside alone? Did I just finally sneak back in the house?

I have never considered that my life was shaped by war until now. After all, wars were fought somewhere else and only soldiers were hurt and killed by them. But that's not true. Families like ours were hurt and many were killed by them too. Because of war I was never able to know a father like I wanted to know him. I wonder what my life would have been like with no war to claim my father's youth. Because of war, my father's life changed in ways that he could not articulate. Because of war, my parents' marriage came apart. I am who I am because of wars: Vietnam, Cuba, Bosnia, Somalia, Israel, Northern Ireland, all of them. What happens in one place affects me, affects us all. One young Palestinian killed on the way to school changes the world I live in, changes everything forever.

October 1, 2001

As I read over these old journal jottings, I realize that war will continue to shape my life as well as the lives of everyone in the entire world. Now I have a much deeper understanding of what this means. In the days and weeks to come, I am sure that both my fear and understanding of the affects of September 11th will be woven into my life in ways that I cannot at this time imagine. I only hope that I will be strong enough to survive this, and that all innocent men, women, and children of this world will be safe and will be able to lead lives of grace and love.

Critical Theory at the Community College

Michael McDonald

Ten years ago, as I was completing a dissertation focusing on the work of James Joyce in light of recent developments in critical theory, I could scarcely have conceived the urgency with which I now wonder, given the historic events of the past year, what is at stake, in the deepest sense, in pursuing critical theory? What is theory for, and for whom? A sense that many would wonder why one might even ask such questions isn't lost on me; in what follows, therefore, I will seek to address not simply the implications that I believe follow from the question itself, but why asking such questions, at a moment when reevaluation of a host of human endeavors is so clearly called for, is not simply academic but critical.

What is theory for, and for whom?

To those outside the academy, "the race for theory" has often seemed laughably self-indulgent, at best, and a kind of arrogantly hermetic exercise in navel-gazing whilst the world burns, at worst. Journalists covering the annual convention of the Modern Language Association (MLA)—a convention attracting as many as 20,000 college-level instructors in English and Foreign Languages every year—have gleefully derided the unusual-sounding session titles which are a staple of the convention program, titles like "Queering Shakespeare," "Anti(phon)al Tele(phon)y: At Play in Bloom's (Phon)y Underworld in *Ulysses*," and "Weathering the Delillean Storm: The Postmodern Atmospherics of *White Noise*." Yet amidst all that might seem genuinely risible, amidst what might seem an endless parade of posturing and facile imitation, the MLA convention—and the profession it both represents and embodies—remains a locus of genuine intellectual exploration, in my view. And this exploration has been bound up, over the past thirty years, with an unprecedented growth of interest in critical theory.

One of my chief aims, in reflecting on the possible uses of critical theory at the community college, is to provoke dialogue about the life of the mind among community-college instructors. I assume that, like me, many community college instructors at least initially undertook graduate study in the expectation of working at a four-year college or university, rather than at a community college. I also assume that many new community-college instructors are therefore engaged with the sort of process of professional revision and readjustment that has occupied me. And I imagine that this process of

readjustment might often be closely attended by questions concerning the role of theory at the community college, just as it has been for me.

No longer faced with the pressure to "publish or perish," to teach in a theoretically-informed way, or even to remain responsive to the demands of a more or less theoretically-aware academic culture, it may certainly seem possible, even easy, simply to let one's theoretical training lapse, to let questions of theory gradually abate and attenuate, in light of changed circumstances. Understandably, in the wake of the events of September 11, 2001, it might seem especially apt to forsake theory for that which no longer *seems* theoretical, but historically established: a pedagogy based, for instance, on traditional ethics and a more-or-less conventional understanding of cognitive development. But this essay marks my own attempt to resist this very tendency simply to let theory go, as it were. I shall therefore seek to identify certain theoretical issues—and ways of approaching those issues—that remain indispensable, certainly for academic and intellectual culture broadly conceived, but most particularly for the unique concerns and circumstances of community college teaching and study.

In the wake of September 11, it might seem especially apt to forsake theory.

My own theoretical training can, I daresay, be taken as fairly representative of that generally undergone—and in many cases deeply enjoyed—by graduate students in English, during the 1980's and early 90's. My theoretical studies ran the gamut from Derridean deconstruction to the interesting family quarrel between American and French feminisms, from the tricky Marxian cultural analysis of Theodor Adorno to the socialist psychoanalysis pioneered by Slavoj Zizek, who has proven remarkably adept at forging a synthesis between such unlikely tentmates as Karl Marx and Jacques Lacan. I was lucky enough to study such topics with first-rate instructors, at the University of Oregon, and a summer at the School of Criticism and Theory proved helpful in making the transition toward writing my dissertation, *James Joyce and the Aesthetics of Dissonance*.

Now, as an English instructor at Lane Community College, I enjoy the opportunity to explore new pedagogies and new courses, but find precious little time for theoretical investigation. With the exception of a rather pleasant rediscovery of Jung (largely via the work of Joseph Campbell for a course in Folklore and Mythology I frequently teach), theoretical concerns have all too often seemed tangential, and even dispensable, for working with students at Lane. Furthermore, teaching courses for which I had little prior preparation—courses ranging from Children's Literature to a Survey of Asian Literature—has kept me so busy just learning new fields that setting theory aside has often seemed rather easy. Yet, I find myself profoundly discomfited by this. For after real or imagined

pressures to publish, to remain intellectually viable and competitive have more or less dropped away, something remains.

Recasting the psychoanalytic terminology of Jacques Lacan, I will call this "something" the irreducible real of theory. For just as the Lacanian real is that which remains untouched—or unsymbolized, if you will—by the child's passage from the imaginary to the symbolic, the real of theory is that which cannot be accounted for by the effects and vagaries of academic careerism, trendiness, or posturing alone. The real of theory is comprised, rather, of the indissoluble questions that remain when all else, everything that is arguably inconsequential and extraneous, has been pared away. In what follows, then, I will reflect on several occasions which mark, from my perspective, the irreducible need for, and sheer inescapability of theory.

On the first occasion, I sit with two colleagues over coffee, discussing the newly appointed, but as yet unseated president of our college. We have been discussing, more specifically, tensions that have arisen during collective bargaining, and whether the incoming president will be able to mend relations between faculty, on one hand, and the college administration and board of education on the other. I mention Michel Foucault's insight that, while we may ideologically adhere to the notion of the individual as a sovereign and independent agent (especially one so seemingly empowered as a college president!)—and thus look to strong and powerful individuals to effect social change—this ideology tends to prevent our recognizing that which complicates and perhaps confounds it. Indeed, Foucault's lasting contribution to critical theory has centered on his notion of "genealogy," by which he means a form of history which can account for the constitution of knowledges, discourses, domains of objects, etc., without having to make reference to a subject [understood both as the individual person and field of discourse] which is either transcendental in relation to the field of events or runs in its empty sameness throughout the course of history.

This notion of the profound and constitutive contingency of the subject, well-known to professionals not just in English but in psychology, sociology, and cognitive science as well, remains rarely articulated in everyday discourse, at least in my experience. In other words, people still tend to allude to the subject as though he/she/it were sovereign, all theoretical and scientific insight to the contrary notwithstanding.

Another French philosopher, Louis Althusser, has argued that we are "interpellated" (or more accessibly, "hailed") as social subjects, by a dominant ideology that, in this case, holds the individual as a sovereign agent. To the extent that this dominant ideology helps

to constitute the lens through which we see the world, we may tend to miss the ways in which individuals are enmeshed in often competing discursive systems, and how this condition limits the freedom of the ideologically delimited "sovereign individual." To the extent that perception is shaped by this dominant ideology, it becomes all too easy to miss how an incoming college president may actually experience *less* freedom to act than she did in her previous post as a vice-president of the college; it becomes easy to overlook the ways she may be caught between, and inescapably beholden to, the dominant modes of discourse characterizing her administrative team, on one hand, and the board of education that has hired her, and to which she must answer, on the other.

Lane has recently hired a new president, who, I believe is likely to accomplish extraordinary things in her new role. And my point is not about the quality of her work. The point is rather about the ways in which a community informed by the dominant ideology of the sovereign individual forms expectations on the basis of such ideologies, rather than on the basis of a more studied examination of human agency. Despite the apparent supremacy of our incoming president's position in the system which gives meaning and sense to the very idea of what a president is, or can be, critical theory helps one see that there are always discursive modes at work to counter, undermine, and simply complicate those of official culture, and its hierarchies.

A little later on during the same occasion, we discuss a student who, in the course of recalling his experience in Vietnam, breaks down, crying over his youthful inability, at the time, to recognize his foolishness in going off to fight a misbegotten and pointless war. Again I recall Foucault's insights about the ways in which we tend to blame ourselves, as "sovereign" individuals who somehow should have known better, for the events of the past. In putting so much emphasis on the individual as sovereign agent, we often fail to recognize the force whereby competing discursive systems bespeak, and indeed hail us into the agency of *their* being. Nothing, or at least very, very little in our society encourages us to recognize the workings of ideology in competing discursive systems, and yet this disconsolate veteran berates himself for not somehow "seeing through" those systems, at eighteen or nineteen years of age! As I finish saying something to this effect, a colleague turns to me, and very quietly, very firmly says, "This is why we need theory."

Now I recognize that these stories might seem self-serving. But my point in relating them is not that they demonstrate any particular strength of insight, on my part, but rather something quite to the contrary. For this discussion has reminded me of the way

that, in some schools of Zen Buddhism, even the insights of the most beloved and revered forebears are regarded as "nothing special." For this view, when the mind encounters the silence and simplicity of truth, the resulting moments of keen insight, or *satori*, are deemed nothing special because they are part of the *ordinary* consciousness that conditioning and the busy-ness of civilization tend to obscure, to such an extent, that what is really a birthright comes to seem exotic and unusual. Just as, for this tradition, the ordinary, everyday mind *is* the Buddha mind, I would argue that the ordinary mind is "always already" theoretical, and that any insights yielded by theory should, indeed *must* be available to so-called ordinary people. The problem with academic theory and theorizing, then, rests not with theory itself, but rather with the jargon that can proliferate to make it opaque for most readers.

Nothing, or at least very, very little in our society encourages us to recognize the workings of ideology in competing discursive systems.

What I find crucial for this discussion is simply the manner whereby Zen practitioners enter a tradition, a habit of thought and discourse, that orients them toward the horizon of *satori*, of keen, life-changing insight. While such insight may seem "nothing special" from the standpoint of those practicing within the tradition, it can seem special indeed to those who lack such orientation, such saturation in an everyday context that encourages its realization. Likewise, I believe that by placing ourselves in the context of theory—by orienting ourselves toward a theoretical horizon—we become increasingly able to bring insights that are "nothing special," but nonetheless crucial, into play. Far from holding that one must become part of an elite in order to appreciate the value of theory, or to consider the value of theoretical implications, I believe that one must simply see the necessity for ways of thinking that take one beyond the commonplace, too easily intuited, or banal redactions served up by so many of the forces at work in contemporary culture.

Consider, in this light, an anecdote where the stakes of theory might seem a bit more complicated. At a recent meeting of the faculty union at my college, a question arose about certain motivations underlying our current process of collective bargaining with our college administration, for a much-needed salary increase. A faculty leader explained that we should remain confident in our bargaining team because the folks who take on such work are typically motivated by altruistic ideals and values. This statement clearly reassured many of the faculty members in attendance, and I myself was certainly predisposed to take, and appreciate, the statement at face value.

Given my predisposition to theory, however (or at least to recall that predisposition, from time to time), I was surprised on this occasion, as I have been generally, to note a

newfound ability to act and speak as though Freud never existed. How is it possible, in other words, to be *so* post-Freudian that we find ourselves able to talk as though we can adequately describe human motivation simply by noting what is consciously intended? Interestingly in this regard, I have noted, in others, and myself a tendency *not* to be so post-Freudian when speaking of the motives of those with whom we disagree. It's always convenient to speak of the preconscious, unconscious, or shadowy motives of the other, but is it not strange that one could then fail to acknowledge that such motives attend the human condition generally?

Again, my intention is not to evaluate the character (or intentions) of any particular colleague, or group of colleagues, but rather to note a general tendency instead. For I wonder not so much about an individual's making the sort of statement I've paraphrased above, as at an audience that can accept such statements without voicing any concern about, or objection to, this sort of flattening out of the dimensions of human motivation. I wonder at the lack of general acknowledgment that, while individuals may consciously become active with an organization like a faculty union for the very best of reasons, we should nonetheless be able to acknowledge that other, more obscure motivations will likely be present as well, and that this too is nothing special. In other words, I fear the lack of acknowledgment of shadowy motivations more than I fear the fact that such motivations exist.

One problem with ignoring the insights provided by theory is that one risks standing above the tendency to create categorical dualisms.

But as I sit writing this, more obviously urgent matters than the question of conscious and unconscious psychological motivations have presented themselves, for yet another United States president has committed the nation to war. As he pledges to rid the world of terrorism, even to rid the world of "evildoers," the mainstream American press accepts these sorts of statements uncritically, and reports that the American people, in overwhelming numbers, accept such statements uncritically too. As has happened so often in the past, an American president has adroitly articulated lofty generalizations that, taken at face value, are indeed hard to fault. What sane person could take exception, after all, to the notion of ridding the world of terrorism? But as usual, ridding the world of terrorism patently means not taking responsibility for the U.S. role in helping to create it. Recall the case during the Vietnam conflict. There our leaders proclaimed that it was *they*, those not quite fully human "gooks," who had no appreciation for human life. They made this claim even as we proceeded to slaughter millions of Southeast Asians, including countless noncombatants, not only in Vietnam but in Laos and Cambodia too. Then as now the official rhetoric insists that the U.S. has never had, *could* never have, a hand in worldwide

terrorism. For this view, America and Americans are best equipped to rid the world of evildoers, not simply, or even primarily because of our military power, but because the "evil" is not within us.

One certainly doesn't have to resort to the sort of framework offered by critical theory to notice the unfortunate tendency in American thought to create categorical dualisms that alienate much of the world, even as such dualisms also possess the curious virtue of rallying Americans to support, quite self-righteously, a renewal of our historic militarism. One problem with ignoring the insights provided by theory, however, is that one risks doing the sort of thing I just did, in criticizing the "tendency to create categorical dualisms" as though I somehow stand above or beyond that tendency.

Jacques Derrida, whose famous term "deconstruction" has unfortunately been made unrecognizable through an everyday usage wherein it has become merely synonymous with "critique" or "destruction," has much more interesting things to say about the formation of categorical dualities than the wording of the preceding paragraphs might suggest. Paying particularly close attention to the play of binary oppositions in the structure—and inmost *structuring*—of ways of thinking he associates with "Western metaphysics," Derrida notes an "event" in the "history of the concept of structure," an event whose "exterior form would be that of a *rupture* and a redoubling."

The rupture of which Derrida speaks has made visible that which structure traditionally works to suppress: its own informing processes, "the structurality of structure." Derrida argues that, in its unruptured state, the structurality of structure depends, however paradoxically, on a center, which guarantees its soundness by being outside it. This guarantor is nothing less than the "transcendental signified"—the divine Word—that supports all acts of signification precisely by being beyond them. As long as the agreement not to notice this constitutive paradox holds, there is no "event," no crisis, in the history of the concept of structure. But if Derrida's ideas are sound, then we should expect the structurality of certain traditional formulations to have become increasingly visible. To the very extent that structurality has become *discernible*, this fact is in itself emblematic of the rupture of which he speaks.

It might be helpful to consider the example of Nietzsche in this regard. From a Derridean perspective, a rupture in the structure of transcendental signification occurs not so much with Nietzsche's proclamation that "God is dead," as with the establishment of the sociocultural ground that enables him simply to make such a remark in the first place, without being dismissed as a fool or lunatic. In other words, the long period of skeptical inquiry

preceding Nietzsche's remark arguably enabled his utterance far more than did the agency of his own, inimitable iconoclasm. For this view, a general advent of skepticism about divinity as the center and ground of discourse—and as that which stands beyond discourse to guarantee its authenticity—was and is enough to cause the Derridean rupture, inasmuch as the very structure of Western philosophical discourse then becomes subject to skeptical inquiry.

It is reasonable, of course, to wonder what this sort of thing has to do with everyday life. But given the modes of discourse that have become so prominent in American media and politics, in the weeks and months following the devastation of September 2001, it seems to me that what *can* be at stake in deconstruction has become remarkably clear. But this requires working against the grain of standard descriptions of deconstruction as a matter primarily of reading the play of binary opposites, in language. For this view, which is fine so far as it goes, it is especially important to note how one term of the binary has been traditionally privileged over the other, in their play and, most crucially, to observe the consequences of such privileging. For instance, we may note Shakespeare's acute awareness of the consequences of privileging white over black, long before the advent of institutionalized racism in the New World made such consequences materially visible. This awareness is demonstrated perhaps nowhere more poignantly than in the Duke's defense of Othello:

> If virtue no delighted beauty lack,
> Your son-in-law is far more fair than black. (I, iii 289-90)

In reminding his audience that fairness runs deeper than the skin—even as he reconfirms the privileging of whiteness in its equation with virtue—the Duke's speech shows precisely the degree to which the discursive opposition between black and white has already been fatefully skewed.

Even as this sort of reading has an important role to play in textual studies, I maintain that accounts of deconstruction too often skirt Derrida's idea that reading binary oppositions becomes urgent precisely to the extent that the history of structure has been ruptured. In the absence of this historic dimension, "deconstruction" might just as well be a mere synonym for "critique" or "destruction." For instance, Derridean insight is hardly needed to note the play of opposites in the following, widely praised excerpt from George W. Bush's address to Congress on the night of September 20, 2001: "The course of this

conflict is not known, yet its outcome is certain. Freedom and fear, justice and cruelty, have always been at war, and we know that God is not neutral between them." Nicely done, is it not? The apparent balance between such mighty opposites as "course" and "outcome," "freedom" and "fear," and "justice" and "cruelty" is effective indeed, especially given the presence of "God" to ensure that the play of opposites will not court the despair embodied in endless process. With God on our side, we can confidently express certainty that the United States will not be embroiled in a ceaseless Manichean conflict, that the forces of good will not be forever locked in struggle with those of evil. This is perhaps the best light in which the initial code name for the American attack on Afghanistan, *Operation Infinite Justice*, can be understood: The U.S. government wishes its efforts to be understood *not* with respect to their temporal unfolding, but rather as informed, and indeed guaranteed by, a justice that stands outside, and thus transcends, the vagaries of time.

How can we know that God agrees that America always fights on the side of freedom and justice?

The structurality of this structure depends, just as Derrida insists that any philosophical structure must, on a center that is beyond its circumference. But if the structurality of philosophical structure flows from a center that must paradoxically be assumed to be present only as that which transcends that structure, then Bush's words bespeak precisely the crisis for which Derrida argues. For in calling attention to God's non-neutrality, Bush himself makes visible the principle of structurality that *must be assumed in silence* for the formulation to be effective. Once hailed into conscious attention, all sorts of troubling details surface in company with the principle of structuration here: For how can we know that God *agrees* that America always fights on the side of freedom and justice? Those very words about God's non-neutrality, so patently designed to be inspiring and unproblematic, draw attention to the assertion's structure, and thus complicate—and for legions of readers and listeners, will necessarily overturn—its intended effect. Even as Bush's formulation seems to rely on inarguable universal principles, its effectiveness paradoxically diminishes with the direct and open appeal to God's non-neutrality. For this invites inquiry into the manner whereby such non-neutrality manifests itself, not *as* a universal, but in time, and thus ultimately points not toward the infinite, but at highly debatable particulars of American and world history instead.

In concluding this discussion, I find it important to return to my earlier claim regarding the need for a "nothing special" approach to critical theory and its possible applications. It will be obvious to readers that the work of Derrida is hardly required to mount

a criticism of Bush's aforementioned speech, or of any other discourse that relies on binary oppositions that the speaker/writer would prefer remain unexamined. But by recalling my own theoretical orientation, and turning myself toward that theoretical horizon anew, I have sought to show how such an orientation can, at the very least, open up dimensions of inquiry that dominant ideologies, with their attendant modes of discourse, tend to obscure.

I believe that, unless community college instructors possess some *other* way of opening up what might initially seem counter-intuitive ways of thinking for their students, ways of thinking that help them see that there are alternatives to the wisdom offered by any dominant ideology, a theoretical orientation is absolutely vital to what we do. Indeed, this imperative engages the deepest dimensions of our ethical status as teachers, as exemplars of what it means to embody the life of the mind. For the conceptual and cognitive problem with any dominant ideology stems not so much from the fact of its dominance, but rather from the fact that, as ideology, it is frozen, rather than living thought. And to paraphrase Matthew Arnold, who was himself unable to avoid the real of theory, the legacy of human greatness shows us that simply acceding to any dominant ideology is far from the best that we can do.

Notes

[1] Many observers of the contemporary academy have noted that various theories entertained in English departments, over the last thirty years, have often been extraliterary, and have thus tended to increase the range and scope of what people in English departments do, for better or worse. Throughout this essay, I have chosen to use the term "critical theory," rather than the more common "literary theory," because this usage tacitly acknowledges the shift whereby many academics have expanded the scope of their reading from literature to include any and all texts, broadly defined.

[2] Barbara Christian, "The Race for Theory," in *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader*, ed. Bill Ashcroft et al. (New York: Routledge, 1995, 457-462).

[3] I put it this way because many of the recent, revolutionary insights emerging from cognitive science resonate quite strongly with recent developments in literary theory, and challenge certain traditional conceptions of pedagogy as well. For representative and thought-provoking discussions of this dynamic see Tony Jackson, "Questioning Interdisciplinarity: Cognitive Science, Evolutionary Psychology, and Literary Criticism," *Poetics Today* 21 (2000): 319-47, and Paul Miers, "The Other Side of Representation: Critical Theory and the New Cognitivism," MLN 107 (1992): 950-75.

[4] Slavoj Zizek calls the real "a nonsymbolized kernel that makes a sudden appearance in the symbolic order, in the form of traumatic 'returns' and 'answers.'" *Looking Awry: An Introduction to Jacques Lacan Through Popular Culture.* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1991), 39.

[5] Michel Foucault, "Truth and Power" in *The Foucault Reader*, ed. Paul Rabinow (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984, 51-75), 59.

[6] See Louis Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses," in *Lenin and Philosophy* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1971, 127-186), especially 162-83.

[7] Shunryu Suzuki, *Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind* (New York: Weatherhill, 1983), 46-49.

[8] Jacques Derrida, "Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences," in Alan Bass, ed., *Writing and Difference* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978, 278-93), 278.

[9] Bob Dylan's eponymous song mounts a devastating critique of this ideological position.

[10] Ironically, though the new code name, *Operation Enduring Freedom*, is also clearly meant to denote an atemporal or transcendent value, it too can come to seem mordantly temporal, when considered from the perspective of those who might feel that they are forced to endure the freedom of the United States government to act as it chooses.

[11] The reader will recognize my debt to George Orwell's "Politics and the English Language," in his *Collected Essays* (New York: Harvest Books, 1970, 156-170).

Stripes

Anne B. McGrail

Once, years ago,
your berry-stained smile rose and fell
unreturned.

This slight leveled you.

Daily you remember that crumbling feeling,
feel the powder in the air,
and run for your life.

You live with a grief unexpressed
except in your smile,
which fades before opening.

Now, everywhere, the flag beams at you,
and gives you a public banner for your private grief.

And you borrow their loss;
they shudder and you ride the waves.

The Community College Moment:

Loving your Enemies Who Bomb the Garden of Eden

Mark Harris

I reflect upon the summer of 2001 when I spent a total of three weeks in the shadow of the Twin Towers in Lower Manhattan, about two weeks before they were to become history. Both times I was in New York to participate in weddings where the couples had dared to cross the racial, cultural, and religious barriers erected by their relatives, their respective religions, and society at large. These were as much educational processes for all concerned, as celebrations of rites of passage. I had to admire the couples who dared to love despite one couple consisting of an African-American Hebrew Israelite and a Puerto Rican Catholic; or the other couple: my sister an African-American Southern Baptist doctor, and her husband, a British Jewish record executive who favors the creation of a Palestinian homeland. Opposites may attract, and find a deeper union, but often they must maintain that union in the face of resistance—and often from the most intimate and familiar, (and familial) quarters. In the same way, in resisting the domination imposed by an enemy, one may find that the enemy is both alien, and right next-door.

The educational process can make the alien known and familiar. This knowledge can sometimes make the common domestic experience startlingly alien. A vital part of the community college mission as I see it, is to make those links between the domestic and the alien, and make them known, rich, and strange. This knowledge can be a kind of power, a multicultural capital, if you will, to be invested profitably in the pursuit of human freedom and justice.

I think about the events of September 11th, and the governmental response: rounding up an international posse, and riding off to bring in the bad guys, dead or alive. I think of an image from the movie *Independence Day*. A chess game in Brooklyn, and across the

river is the Manhattan skyline. Chess is used in the movie as a throwaway metaphor for the actions of the enemy aliens. But in our real-life case the "enemy aliens" come from the same global neighborhood where chess was born. The news media continually harps on "religious fundamentalists meticulously planning for months, even years." They struck deep in our territory, the Twin Towers falling like bishops in chess; the Pentagon, one of the rooks. They even made a move on the king, but he moved out of check. By their actions, the enemy is playing chess; by their statements, the government is playing "cowboys and Indians."

Chess requires patience, planning, boldness, and the recognition that your opponent may have plans, within plans, within plans. To win, it requires that you take the time to position your players and strike. Most cowboys I've seen in movies played checkers, not chess. (Though there was that series Paladin whose logo was a knight). A vital part of the community college mission as I see it, after making the links between the domestic and the alien, making them known, is to help "cowboys" (stereotypically boorish migratory agricultural workers, untutored, illiterate, impulsive, quick to anger) become chess players (studied, internationally literate, skilled in the cities as well as the open range, able to produce food for the mind as well as the body). Additionally, the community college mission is to help those cowboys think critically and sharpen their skills of discernment, so as to be able to not only detect the expelled byproducts of male bovine digestion, but additionally the difference between a Sikh turban, a Muslim turban, a noose knot and a Windsor knot (i.e., the Western standard business necktie knot). Cowboys need the historical and cultural reasons for the origins of all those things and how they relate to our present situation. It won't help to bomb someone back into the Stone Age if someone who looked a lot like you already did that.

A vital part of the community college mission as I see it, is to make those links between the domestic and the alien, and make them known, rich, and strange.

As I teach Ethnic Studies, I know the stereotypical black cowboy (or as they called themselves originally, "cattlemen," "cowboy" being a deprecating and racist term applied to them by white Texans) could and did speak Spanish, English, and several Indian languages, unlike the stereotypical images presented by John Wayne and Clint Eastwood. They would know better than to say that the only good Indian is a dead Indian, and be able to tell friend from foe, and why friend was friend and why "friend" suddenly became "foe." They would know that while many led hanging posses to unjustly kill innocent people, whose only crime was being the wrong color, the posse leaders could come from families or communities who did not share their views.

A terrorist, whether homegrown Nazi-Skinhead-Klan-militia, or imported, may have family who do not support their views. It is a good thing to make a distinction between the bad terrorist, and the bad terrorist's good sister or brother, who says, "This is where they went wrong and how you may stop them." Developing a relationship like this takes time, skill, patience, and knowledge. What kind of knowledge? Strategic, creative, cultural, spiritual. If your opponent is a chess player, then maybe you need to know about where chess came from, and how chess strategy applies to domestic and foreign affairs.

In this moment in time, community colleges are among the places promoting knowledge, hope, and life.

In the language that Christ spoke Aramaic, the phrase, *Ahebw labwheldbabaykhun* translated into English as "Love your enemies," is not pie-in-the-sky, turn-the-other-cheek, pious sentiment, but instructions on how to love your enemy. In Aramaic, a sister language to Hebrew and Arabic, *Alaha*, the word for the Supreme Being, means Sacred Unity. Our enemy has fallen out of that sacred unity. The word *ahebw* refers to a force, which acts in secret to bring separate beings together to create new life. The root *hab can* refers to planting seed, suggesting a sexual relationship, and metaphorically the germ of a grain.

The word for "enemy," *bwheldbabaykhun,* suggests a being out of rhythm, moving with jerky, harsh movements. The enemy are out of time with themselves, with you, and most importantly, with Sacred Unity. Another image is of one who is empty, void of inner vitality. This causes them to swell with pride on the outside like a boil. Or to act with puffery, self-importance, self-righteousness, vanity, and bombast. In other words, our personal or societal enemy is out of step, and puffed up in relationship to us. At the same time, we could be puffed up in reaction to all this puffery and intimidation on the part of our enemy, and meet it with bombast and intimidation of our own. Or not. It is the "not" that is critical.

In Aramaic, the instructions suggest that to get along with other people, bring yourself back into rhythm personally, then with whatever you perceive to be Sacred Unity. From that *unity*, find the rhythm that harmonizes with that of your *enemy*. As if another image suggests that you were two lovers making new life from the dust. This kind of love is not blind. It sees clearly. In order to use it you must not be blinded by your own anger, and see their anger for what it is. Like the insight you may have about a lover, notice the emptiness in the center, at the heart of your enemy that causes them to swell up. Find within yourself that which fills their inner void and fill that void in yourself. This process is an act of love, which as the original word *Ahebw* is a mysterious force which acts in secret to bring new life out of dust. The statement does not say anything about being "nice" to an enemy, letting that one walk over you, or turning the other cheek. It requires

By their actions, the enemy is playing chess; by their statements, the government is playing "cowboys and Indians."

an act of inner courage similar to firefighters charging up the stairs in a burning sky-scraper to save lives, knowing that you may be going to your death, but you will apply your skill, and your knowledge to fight the enemies of life: whether visible smoke or invisible toxins; hot flame or the crushing cold forces of gravity.

I spoke with a girl who had shouted to a friend on the bridge between buildings at Lane Community College, that she was going to be either a cop or a paramedic. Feeling it was a public conversation, I asked her why. She said she had held one of the Thurston shooting victims in her arms as he died. She wasn't sure which she wanted to be, a cop or a paramedic, as Lane Community College offers training programs for both. I suggested at the time, if her motivation was keeping people safe, cop was a choice that many people chose for that reason. Contact with criminals tended to sour you on humanity, though. If her motivation was to directly save lives, I continued, firefighter/paramedic was the better choice, and you get to see the results of your work more immediately. You can't save everyone and you will see death in its various guises. But you will save lives with your knowledge, courage, and passion. This is a different type of homeland defense, against another variety of terrorist: the school shooter.

A colleague of mine in another state generates psychological profiles of serial killers and terrorists. He insists they have the same profile, and even goes so far as to include law enforcement officers who have strings of "justifiable homicides," judges, lawyers, and politicians who use their positions of power to shield them from their offenses which range from murder, to sexual abuse or assault against minors, or women. I have to agree that those people are terrorists that we have tolerated in our midst for some time. I'm not certain we have a handle on the cultural forces that create the kind of person who perpetrates such actions, but those conditions have not gone away because we are "in a state of war" against terrorism. While we can deplore those acts, we have yet to identify them as acts of terror. We live in a state and a town where schools, streets, buildings, and businesses can be named for people who once burned crosses to express their patriotic fervor, and to place fear in the hearts of those who were different. And we act as if that legacy of homegrown terrorism was not still present. Recent events have shown us that it is very much so.

In a land where we use Arabic numbers, where mastery of Al - Gebra is considered a gate-keeping requirement to pass on to higher learning, some of us know surprisingly little about the cultural forces that generated the effects we saw on September 11th. A lesson from that culture is a conviction that peacemaking is not passive pacifism, but

active healing work. The Romans persecuted Aramaic-speaking Christians, and they sought sanctuary among the enemies of the Romans, the Persians. Persia, now present-day Iran, not only welcomed the Aramaic Christians, but also allowed their religious practice of freely disseminating both an oral and written tradition of their Gospels among the common people.

The Romans promoted the version of Christianity we are most familiar with, in which European common people could be killed for attempting to read the Bible. Knowledge of the Gospels was strictly controlled, and the Aramaic versions of the Gospels were never referred to in Western Civilization. Instead we are told the Bible had Hebrew, Greek, and Latin roots. Romanized Christians led to the concept of Christian soldiers, which led to the Crusades, genocide in the Americas, and other atrocities including bombing churches, lynchings, and numerous acts of domestic and exported American terror.

Indeed, when I saw the bombardment of Iraq ten years ago, I recalled the line from Genesis, which spoke of a river running out of Eden. The Euphrates runs through downtown Baghdad. There were a number of archaeological sites dating from Biblical times that were being bombed into rubble. It made me think of the logic of domination: in order to save Eden, we had to destroy it.

While Christianity is not the only religion given to such violently fanatical fundamentalism (against it's own professed beliefs), it is often forgotten that Christ led no armies. Feeding people foodstuffs and insight, healing people in body, heart, mind and spirit, keeping people from stoning other people are acts of courage greater than simply rounding up a posse to bring 'em back, dead or alive. To meet the events of September 11th, verily we must be as insightful chess players, who know the strategies of the enemy, and see the emptiness inherent in promoting ignorance, fear, and death. In this moment in time, community colleges are among the places promoting knowledge, hope, and life. To Love the Enemy is not as the Roman Christians would have you believe—to turn the other cheek to domination—but to meet the emptiness of domination with the courage to love and actively fill yourself and others with knowledge, hope, and life.

Works in Progress

A Name of a Musician of Choice

Drew Viles

The late William Depoe is my musician of choice. His instrument is the piano. And it has been told to me by Mr. Depoe himself that he played piano for the Lawrence Welk Orchestra.[1] It was once my pleasure to hear him play the piano in his home. My guess is that he played for many guests at his home. In his later days, his domicile was in Depoe Bay, Oregon.[2]

There is a connection between the name of this place and the name of my chosen musician. To appreciate the connection, it helps to pay attention to soft sounds in both areas. Depoe Bay is pronounced by the locals with stress on the first element–DEE po. This is just how the word "depot" sounds in English. The place is named "Depoe Bay" but pronounced "Depot Bay."

There is a connection between the name of this place and the name of my chosen musician.

The history of the Depoe family name provides an exercise in symmetrical sounds. William Depoe is the grandson of a Joshua man known in English as Charles Depoe. But before this Joshua man was known as Charles Depoe, he was nicknamed "Depot Charlie." There are two stories that have reached me about this name. One is the story my mother tells which is pretty short: "Wasn't that because he liked to come to the railway depot? That's the reason people started calling him Depot Charlie." The other story is written–in fact, travelers to Siletz can read this story on the highway that leads from Toledo, Oregon to Siletz, Oregon, by pulling off to the side of the road and paying attention to a big wooden sign with words scooped out and painted in the wood. That story goes like this:

Ships carrying food and supplies to the Coast Reservation in the 1860s and 1870s traveled north from San Francisco to Yaquina Bay, and then traveled up the bay into the Yaquina river, and then traveled up the Yaquina River to present-day Toledo, and then traveled west up a slough to a point visible from this sign. This place is where ships were unloaded onto land conveyances, which would then travel the remaining distance to Siletz.

This slough came to be called Depot Slough. And whenever a ship was scheduled to be unloaded on Depot Slough, the presence of a certain Joshua man would be noticed. This person was nicknamed by speakers of English as Depot Charlie.

Nicknames are given in English on a variety of occasions for a variety of purposes. Some nicknames are insulting and others are endearing. It is possible to begin to appreciate the nature of this particular nickname[3] by paying attention to its later alteration.

Charlie, which is a diminutive form, became Charles, a name of several historical French and English Kings. Depot becomes Depoe. What was the English name of an inanimate object (Depot) transforms into a name of a distinctly French-sounding family[4] (Depoe). What came first (stress) now comes second. "DEE po" becomes "de PO." That's the small pattern. But it also serves as the general rule governing how this nickname was changed into a name. The difference between Depot Charlie and Charles Depoe is this: What was first now comes last and what was last now comes first.[5]

People speaking English have certain tangible and observable power when it comes to giving a name. And with the case of the Depoe family, this denominational power has

People speaking English have certain tangible and observable power when it comes to giving a name.

Notes

[1] Music directed by Lawrence Welk began to be heard via radio broadcast as early as 1927 under the name "Lawrence Welk's Novelty Orchestra." The band was later known as "Lawrence Welk and the Hotsy Totsy Boys" and then as "Lawrence Welk and his Honolulu Fruit Gum Orchestra" from 1934 - 1937. Online. "Lawrence Welk's Novelty Orchestra." 9 March 2001. Available http://www.redhotjazz.com/ welk.html. As recently as March 8, 2001, "Ralna English, Henry Cuesta, Ava Barber, Jack Imel & Mary Lou Metzger with the entire 20 piece Lawrence Welk Orchestra under the direction of John Bahler" was scheduled to perform live at Shea's Theatre in Buffalo, New York. Online. "Welk Star Schedules." March 9, 2001. Available http://www.lennonfamily.net/welk_star_schedules.htm.

[2] Depoe Bay has long been noted as home to the smallest harbor in the world. Online. "Depoe Bay, Oregon." March 8, 2001. Available http://oregon101.com/maps/central/ depoebay/dep.htm. This small community between Newport and Lincoln City has more recently been called the "Whale Watching Capital of the Oregon Coast." Online. "About Depoe Bay." 8 March 2001. Available http://www.depoebaychamber.org//about.html.

[3] Of course, another way to appreciate the nature of this nickname is to note that the story of the nicknaming is a popular one among people speaking English, and has appeared prominently in written English for many decades.

[4] DePoe is a family name known in the eastern part of the U.S. Online. "SW Pennsylvania's Premier Real Estate Source Washington - Greene - S. Allegheny Counties." March 8, 2001. Available http://www.depoe.com.

[5] It has been told to me that a person, through the practice of certain Asian arts of movement may learn to respond to a forceful attack so as to end up assuming a posture of elevated defense.

[6] Allotment, in this case, refers to the effort on the part of persons acting in the name of the United States of America to assist Siletz people (and others) by eliminating habits of communal control of resources, such as land. Communal lands at Siletz, in conformance to these designs, were broken up and "allotted" to individuals. The Allotment Act of 1887, a.k.a. the Dawes Act, passed by the U.S. Congress, enabled this and other dissolutions of tribal lands, and may be reviewed on line at the following address: http://www.csusm.edu/nadp/adawes.htm.

Music That's Easy

Drew Viles

When the singers sing, the dancers dance. The drummers sing for the dancers, the dancers dance for the singers. All go together. All parts come together. Tongue, mouth, teeth, air, throat. Toes, knees, chin, belly, back. All parts come together. All go together.

This is the music I like. This music can be heard at pow wows. Pow wows are where drummers drum for the dancers. Pow wows are where dancers dance for the singers. It is like starting a suction on a hose connected to some sweet tasting wine that is going into bottles and having the warm fresh wine flood your mouth–which is a lot like when a person is small and the milk tastes good to that little person and the milk feels warm inside that little person and that little person's mother is smiling just in part because her breasts were getting too heavy with the milk inside. It is sort of like telling a story in a place where you know the people who listen to you want you to tell a good story with a good ending and a good middle and a good lot of places to laugh all in between.

This music is a group activity where people recognize the group in the activity. Or try to. Or want to. Or believe. Yes, the people believe they can. And people will gladly help one another to make the music better.

It is sometimes as easy as walking down to the drum circle and meeting an elder, who used to dance a lot himself but is now not dancing but talking to a boy you think maybe is his son.

It is as easy as this elder recognizing you on your way to the dance circle. It is as easy as this elder speaking to you in the language of the English but in a soft way and a sweet way–like speaking makes his mouth all sweet. It is as easy as listening to his words come out slowly. It is as easy as finding that you can now speak back sweetly, too.

It is as easy as not crying when this elder recognizes you and speaks sweetly to you. It is as easy as not crying as you see this elder turn away from the dance circle as the drum starts up. It is as easy as not crying as you hear this elder say that he'd better sit down someplace out of the way to read a book. It is as easy as not crying as you remember that this elder was a Siletz Whipman[1]–the first of the modern era–who only reluctantly gave up this office (the only ceremonial office given at Siletz) because an old-Korean-war injury caught up with him in his sixties. It is as easy as not crying as you see this elder walk, with only a hint of a limp, away from you as the drumming grows louder. It is as easy as not crying as you stand in that spot now alone. It is as easy as not crying as you remember where you were going. It is as easy as not crying when you raise your feet one after the other. It is as easy as not crying when you hold that elder in your thoughts.

It is as easy as holding a dear elder with you dancing in your thoughts. It is as easy as singing someone's name sweetly in cadence to a drum.

Our NILI Poem

With Notes by Carol Watt

Somewhere in the Americas, Indian people are gathered together sharing their languages. Somewhere, they are learning from their elders how to be in the world, playing with their children, shopping for groceries, driving cars, playing basketball - living their lives.

Somewhere in the Americas, an Indian chief is cutting his braids and attending his aunt's funeral. Indian people are also swimming, laughing and playing in the cool, clear, deep water, escaping the afternoon heat.

In the Americas, we the Tananma "people of this land" cherish this Ticham "land" because the mother earth provides many foods that we use for Traditional Ceremonial Feast. This is my joy of being a Tanan and Food Gatherer for Traditional Ceremonies.

Somewhere in the Americas, Indian people are gathered together sharing their languages.

Somewhere in the Americas, Indian people are proud of their heritage because young people are really getting into their lost languages. Some of these languages are returning. They are taught in the Rez, and teachers are learning about how to teach their own languages.

Somewhere in the Americas, Indian people are cramming two weeks of knowledge and learning. Some are teaching their language to the younger generation to carry on.

Somewhere in the Americas, Indian people are running away from guns, begging for work because they are hungry, still strong because they believe in themselves, struggling to save Mother Earth, praying for mankind.

Somewhere in the Americas, Indian people are looking for jobs, sitting in jail, doing homework, eating fry bread, driving rez cars, plowing their fields, waiting for subcomandante Marcos, sitting in the backyard, arguing at council meetings.

Somewhere in the Americas, Indian people are confined to 6 x 15 feet of space. They are wearing prison clothes. Who are these people? They are the lost people. They don't speak their own language. They have been deprived of their identity and culture. Alcohol and drugs dominate their lives. They are the homeless, the Shadow People you don't notice in the streets in the cities.

Somewhere in the Americas, Indian people are unique because we carry on our culture and traditions, united even though we live miles apart, and rich because we are filled with love!

Somewhere in the Americas, Indian people are greeting each other with gentle hands, counting young to old in sweat lodges, burning sacred sage, and inhaling peace.

Somewhere in the Americas, Indian children are outside swimming in the creek, jumping, laughing, smiling, waiting for their mom who's preparing a barbecue for them all. Dad is at work, working away for them all.

Somewhere in the Americas, Indians are reclaiming the heritage they were deprived of. They are coming together to relearn what has been stolen and to synthesize beliefs. They are decolonizing their minds!

Somewhere in the Americas, Indian people are having fun learning. Grandma is tending to her grandchildren, teaching them culture with everyday tasks. Grandma's planting roots for her grandchildren to grow.

Somewhere in the Americas, Indian people are picking huckleberries and eating more than they pick, cuz their teeth are purple!

Somewhere in the Americas, Indian people are dancing and singing for a whale whose grease will fill the bellies of children and smooth the hair of elders, whose bones will make the tools of creation, and whose life will breathe life into the songs and dances of the people.

Somewhere in the Americas, Indian people are Dancing... Praying... Singing...

Somewhere in the Americas, Indian people are lost from their culture, do not know what is wrong, are acting out in alcohol and drug abuse.

Somewhere in the Americas, Indian people are singing a native love song, cruising to the general store, brushing and braiding their children's hair, respecting elders by letting them be the first to sit or eat, getting older realizing they are the elders, getting younger realizing they can be a child with their children again, sitting on the couch watching Fred Flintstone, eating fish heads and potatoes, preparing food for the winter.

Somewhere in the Americas, songs are being sung from the heart, the language is being reawakened, and the elders are smiling with tears in their eyes. Somewhere close, a man is talking to his children always and their children will talk to their children. Somewhere, men and women decide alcohol and drugs are not the Indian way and take a step to teach about true livelihood.

Somewhere in the Americas, Indian people are brilliant - laughing because the dogs are smiling, working to pay the rent, ouching because they stuck their fingers with porcupine quills, eating blackberries, making strategies, hugging their children, imagining a future, singing songs.

Somewhere in the Americas, Indian people are Dancing . . . Praying . . . Singing . . . Cooking good foods . . . Mourning the loss of a loved one . . . Learning about who they are . . . Listening to the elders teach about life . . . Loving one another . . . Standing together in solidarity.

Somewhere in the Americas, Indian people are dancing to the beat of the drum, preparing to gather for a big feast, a huckleberry or root feast, making beaded outfits, going to some kind of training for their tribe, working hard at their jobs, getting ready to gather foods for the winter, shopping for children's
school clothes.

Somewhere in the Americas, a happy face, and I see this every day! People are smiling when they drive their cars. People visit and laugh after they eat. Kids giggle if they are

teased. People use the custom to shake the hands of one another to show they respect being together.

Somewhere in the Americas, Indian people are reclaiming the language of grandmothers, singing the songs, greeting the dawn, weaving together the past, the present, the future . . . joyfully!

Somewhere in the Americas, Indian people are having a feast after ceremony, laughing, talking, eating. Somewhere, Indian people are respectful, listening to a friend, singing to creator, stepping carefully through small plants.

Somewhere in the Americas, Indian people are drumming, breathing, working together, crying, beading, raising children, feeding strangers, laughing, teasing, singing, praying, giving thanks, building a future on today and yesterday.

Somewhere in the Americas, Indian people are gathering plants, speaking their languages, weaving baskets for holding nourishment.

Somewhere in the Americas, Indian people are dancing and sending prayers to the creator to heal their brothers and sisters, dancing to put a smile in the heart of an elder, eating together and sharing stories of life, looking at the sky, making fry bread and laughing.

We are about thirty people who came together because we believe teaching Native American languages is essential and we want to do it well.

Notes on "Our NILI Poem"

Carol Watt

In August 2001, about thirty Lane Community College faculty, staff and community members came together to study how to teach Native American languages at the University of Oregon's Northwest Indigenous Languages Institute (NILI). Six of us were sponsored by Lane Community College: faculty members Pam Dane, Jerry Hall, Jeff Harrison, Don Macnaughton, and Carol Watt, as well as Mike Johnson, LCC student and Foundation Scholarship recipient.

We wrote our individual responses to the phrase, "Somewhere in the Americas, Indian people are . . . ." On the last day of the Institute, we each read someone's stanza of Our NILI Poem aloud. With thirty different voices, our poem sounded beautiful. We gladly share it with others here.

Who are we, the writers of the poem? We are about thirty people who came together because we believe teaching Native American languages is essential and we want to do it well.

We NILI participants are from all parts of Oregon and North America, Europe and Asia. We are full-blooded Indian, multi-heritaged, bi-ethnic, and full-blooded something else. We have high-school and graduate-school degrees. We are beginning and rounding out our careers. We live on reservations and farms, in towns and cities. We are young and well-seasoned, grandchild, child, parent, grandparent.

About the Assignment

The prompt, "Somewhere in the Americas, Indian people are . . . " is inspired by Marge Piercy's "What's That Smell in the Kitchen?" in which the phrase "All over America, women are. . ." appears twice. I use this prompt in a creative writing class I teach called A Writing Workshop about Women. "Our NILI Poem" affirms the power of collective/community endeavors. At NILI we learned that one Native American language has at least six forms for the first-person nominative plural; clearly *we* is an important pronoun in that culture. English may have only one form, but it is powerful.

This assignment can be adapted to many classroom settings if you change the writing prompt: "Somewhere in America, mothers are . . ."; "Somewhere in Rhuwanda, children are . . ."; "Somewhere in the ocean, coral reefs are . . ."

Directions:

What we write here will become a part of our group poem. Relax. What we write will become a poem because of the pictures, smells, tastes, textures, rhythms, and heart in each of us. Thank you for your word images. Please write down what specific pictures come to mind when you hear,

"Somewhere in the Americas, Indian people are . . ."

Options—you may want to use the singular (an Indian or an Indian man/woman/child) instead. Also it's your choice to complete the sentence with describers (the people are thankful for the rain) or verbs (the people are singing their thanks for the rain)—or both. Write as much as you wish.

See http://lanecc.edu/library/don/natlang.htm for more information.

Some members of the Northwest Indian Languages Institute, Summer '01.

Native Americans and the Baha'i Faith

Don Addison

Introduction

Wearing a blue and white "grass dancer" outfit, Kevin Locke steps onto the stage to demonstrate a powwow dance. The eye-catching luxurious tufts of fringe, consisting of large sculptured clusters of yarn strips hanging from portions of his clothing, flow gently in all directions as he steps up to the microphone. This well-known Lakota dancer, educator, musician, and recording artist speaks to the audience.

His discussions of traditional Native cultures, however, link quite naturally to a relatively new religion from a different part of the globe. Before he plays the Native American flute, he adds words similar to the following: "I offer this song to honor Baha'u'llah,1 the Glory of God, toward whose sacred light the whole earth is turning."[2] Even though the Baha'i Faith emerged in the Middle East during the nineteenth century, Kevin Locke explains to the audience that increasing numbers of Native Americans of many tribes find that the Baha'i Faith enhances Native cultures,[3] rather than seeking to displace them, profit from them, or patronize them.

What reasons explain the growth of the Baha'i Faith among Native Americans? Why do indigenous Baha'is find such ready acceptance of their peoples and traditional cultures among Baha'is of other cultures and ethnic groups? Why has the Baha'i Faith steadily grown among Native peoples from its earliest Native converts dating back only approximately seven to eight decades?

No previously published extensive investigation of this historical development has yet appeared. Since published materials seem scarce, this study attempts to draw some of this valuable documentation together and fill a need few scholars have previously addressed. In addition, research at the community level for this study stems from individual interviews I have carried out with both Native and non-Native peoples, both Baha'i and non-Baha'i, over approximately 40 years in both the U.S. and Canada. Such a study poses interesting questions for students of the social sciences and the history of religion.

Documentation of the Baha'i Faith in Native Communities

Some of the earliest helpful references to Native Americans and the Baha'i Faith date back to the 1960s. In the 39th Annual Report of the Board of Evangelism and Social

Service of the United Church of Canada, 1964, William Wuttunee, Chief of the National Indian Council in Calgary, Alberta, writes of the success of the Baha'is. He states, in part, that they "are moving along quite quickly." He continues,

> They only started a few years ago and yet one-third of their people [one-third of the whole Baha'i population of Canada] are Indians. I think they are converting practically whole Indian Reserves[4] which hitherto had been Catholic or some other denomination. Why is it that they are making such headway? Because their attitude is different. Their attitude is this: Your religion [Native spirituality] is correct, the way you worship the great Spirit [Creator or God] is right. You should worship Him that way. But in addition we [the Baha'is] have something new to offer you. We have a new Prophet[5] for this era. They are increasing the faith of the Indians, not detracting or replacing [it]. They accept Indians whole-heartedly . . . and Indians take an equal part [in Baha'i activities and administrative institutions] . . . .[6]

Not only Native writers but also some non-Native anthropologists (and other non-Baha'i sources) have documented the all-embracing manner in which Baha'is view indigenous peoples and cultures.

The anthropologist Alice B. Kehoe encountered the Baha'i Faith among aboriginal peoples and documented this in a pamphlet published in March, 1963, by the Saskatchewan Museum of Natural History in Regina. In *Saskatchewan Indian Religious Beliefs*, she describes the influence of traditional Native religions, Christian beliefs, and other movements such as the Native American Church.[7] Not to be confused with some type of eclectic movement, the Baha'i Faith, she notes, is considered by its members to be a universal faith, not tied to any one particular culture, religious background, language, or even country of origin. She adds that it "does not deny the validity of native Indian beliefs, [and the Baha'i Faith] . . . appeals to many Indians who are seeking a religion that is neither exclusively Indian nor dominated by white values and customs."[8]

Increasing numbers of Native Americans of many tribes find that the Baha'i Faith enhances Native cultures.

Although commencing in Persia in 1844, the Faith has steadily grown throughout the world, culminating in published statistics in the year 2000 stating that more than 5 million represent the worldwide Baha'i population. The religion was established in 190 countries and 45 territories. The total localities where Baha'is reside number 127,683. There are 2,112 tribes, races and ethnic groups represented in the international Baha'i community. Baha'u'llah's writings have been translated into 802 languages.[9] One reason account-

ing for this growth stems from Baha'i beliefs which attract members from very diverse communities.

Basic Baha'i Teachings

Some of the Baha'i teachings which have had a significant influence upon the manner in which the Faith has expanded, and become so admired by various scholars and leaders[10] in many cultures, include concepts such as the basic oneness of humanity, the goal of establishing world unity, world peace, and acknowledgment of the rights of women, support for minority rights, the importance of the family, and the necessity of abolishing prejudices of all kinds. Rather than being ideals which some people might dismiss as impractical, eclectic, and even utopian, these principles have formed the very fabric upon which the central figures of the Faith raised its international administrative order.[11] The latter simply refers to the way local, national, and international elected bodies carry out the administration of every level of Baha'i community life.

Anthropologist Alice B. Kehoe encountered the Baha'i Faith among aboriginal peoples.

Likewise, the Baha'i Faith must not be mistaken as some "New Age" movement, where non-Indians claim to be Native "spiritual guides," selling so-called Native ceremonies for money. Such individuals lack ties to legitimate Indian communities and authentic Native spiritual traditions. Such organizations are offensive to Indians and they bear no relationship to Baha'i beliefs, practices, or communities whatsoever.[12]

The remarkable expansion, in part, can be attributed to a number of appealing principles in the Baha'i teachings which may, at first glance, appear very modern and suited for a contemporary age. It is actually striking, however, to discover how many similarities exist between Baha'i principles and central elements of Native American traditions. A brief survey of some Native believers' experiences with the Baha'i Faith will help explain how Native cultures are not denigrated or compromised by the Faith. The Baha'i Faith, having no clergy, is a religion based upon community-wide elected administrative institutions, referred to earlier. Members of these "Assemblies"[13] represent a cross-section of the various racial and ethnic population groups. The Faith was originally brought to the U.S. in the late nineteenth century, but it was not until around 1912 when Native peoples report first noticing the Faith's existence.

James and Melba Loft

One of the earliest Native people to encounter the Baha'is probably was James Loft, according to sociologist van den Hoonaard. When 'Abdu'l-Baha[14] was riding the train in Canada in 1912, passing through the town of Bellevue, on his way to Toronto, a "four-year old Mohawk boy, Jimmy Loft, was sitting on a fence . . . watching the train . . . . 'Abdu'l-

Baha stood up . . . smiled and waved at the child . . . . It was many years later, in May 1948, that James Loft would become one of the first Native Baha'is in Canada."[15] Even though he was not the first, he was among that early group who did join the community, widening the cultural diversity of the Baha'i Faith in ever more increasing multicultural dimensions.

James was born in Hiawatha, Ontario, and passed his early years in Bellevue and Oshawa. Feeling discriminated against in school, he disliked it and decided not to pursue much formal education. His experience is chronicled in Baha'i history, which notes that in response to this early experience, "he sought, from early childhood, for something that would enable him to feel equal to the rest of humanity."[16] He eventually accomplished this goal by adopting the Baha'i Faith when he learned of it from his wife.

In 1930 Melba Whetung, a Chippewa Indian from Curve Lake, near Peterborough, Ontario, married James and they settled in Detroit, Michigan. Melba had long been searching for explanations to the mysteries of life, and as a result of this quest, she became the first Canadian Indian believer. She became active in the Baha'i community, sharing the Faith with those who would listen, but she never pushed it onto James. Ten years later, James likewise became a Baha'i.

He had been impressed by the friendliness and sincerity of the believers. Melba and James decided they would return to their home reservation in Tyendinaga, Ontario, Canada to teach the Faith. Tyendinaga was the birthplace of an important fifteenth-century Native spiritual leader named Deganawidah. The latter is regarded as a prophet by many Native peoples, and he founded the Iroquois Confederacy, peacefully uniting the Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, and Seneca tribes.

When the Lofts first moved back, they were treated with suspicion by Indians who were church members, because the latter did not understand the Baha'i teachings or the genuine motives of James and Melba. They felt isolated because the closest Baha'is lived 120 miles from them. Eventually one of James' fellow workers, Bert Curtis, and his wife Elizabeth, accepted the Faith in December, 1949. They became friends for life. Another family, Mr. and Mrs. Russell Hill, became the first Indians to become Baha'is as a result of the Lofts' move to Ontario.

James is reported to have had a marvelous sense of humor and everyone appreciated his loving kindness. According to another believer, Roger White,

> The Lofts were partly instrumental in my becoming a Baha'i . . . and I attended my first [devotional community gatherings] in their home. I remember the bus ride to Tyendinaga, the long hike from the highway

> across the unlighted reservation, the warm welcome, the meal of potato gruel, the laughter, Melba moving with the dignity of a queen in the rude surroundings, and the great reverence with which devotions were recited.[17]

The Lofts were well known for caring for many homeless children. "Jim and Melba loved children and many of those whom they helped to raise and educate became Baha'is, and all show great respect for the Baha'i Faith. As the years passed the Lofts won increasing love and respect from the residents of Tyendinaga."[18] When he passed away in 1973, James was buried on the reserve within the shadow of a monument erected to the revered Deganawidah. On his grave marker is an Indian thunderbird symbol with a Baha'i nine-pointed star, thus memorializing James' two great loves, his Native culture and the Baha'i Faith.

The Baha'i Faith must not be mistaken as some "New Age" movement.

After James passed away, Melba continued her Baha'i activity. Although the Indian Band Council had initially been unsympathetic towards the Faith, Indian Baha'is living in the region stretching from Ontario to the Maritimes, held their first Canadian Native Council at Tyendinaga Reserve in November 1976. It was a great success. In February 1977, Melba made a respectful and open-hearted gesture by asking the Chief and the Council if they wished to send a message through her to the Mayan Indians she was going to visit during indigenous Baha'i activities in Mexico. Melba was interviewed on television and she shared the Chief's message over a wide region. Because she had been patient for so long, she finally won personal acceptance of her and admiration for her Baha'i activities, even though she had endured past rejection and suspicion.

She traveled to numerous other international places including Denmark, England, Ireland, Austria, and Switzerland, speaking about the Baha'i teachings and representing Native believers. When the hall at the Yukon Baha'i House in Whitehorse was opened, it was named after Melba. *Kinaaj-Kwe* is an Indian name meaning "good, kind and gracious lady," a name her father had given her when she was very young. After her death, she was buried along side James.

Marian Steffes

In the U.S., Milwaukeeans began reaching out to Native Americans to share the Baha'i teachings commencing around 1915. According to records in Baha'i publications, Marian Steffes is considered to have been the earliest American Indian Baha'i to enroll in the U.S., and she became a highly active teacher.[19] Marian was an Oneida Indian who learned her Native culture from her parents at an early age. This culture strongly influenced her life.

The Oneida and James' tribe (Mohawk) are two of the Six Nations confederacy alluded to earlier.

About 1935, when Marian was thirty-five years old, she discovered the Baha'i Faith in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, a religion "which to her represented a rediscovery and rebirth of the spiritual principles inherent in the true Indian way of life."[20] She was so enthusiastic about her newly found Faith that she devoted herself to teaching it to members of various Indian tribes throughout the United States, "using her own funds to cover her traveling expenses."[21]

Marian was not only attracted to the Baha'i concepts of social justice, respect for human rights, and the need for developing spiritual faculties, she was also impressed with the beliefs focused upon maintaining sound health of mind and body. Of particular interest to Marian was the emphasis on peace among the nations "in which she saw hope for harmony among all Indian tribes."[22]

She was apparently known and loved by people of many backgrounds for her kindness, gentleness, and warm-heartedness. Devoted to her children and grandchildren, she passed on good values to them. When she passed away on June 14, 1978, the message written upon her headstone was "She walks in beauty"—a well-known line from a Navajo prayer.[23]

Marian's life story seems to illustrate the value of Native culture in Native lives, an interest which was not compromised by her acceptance of the Baha'i Faith. Her belief in the oneness of humanity gave her hope for establishing intertribal harmony among the diverse Indian groups through the Baha'i teachings of peace. This does not mean she believed all Indians would become the same culture upon becoming Baha'is, but this illustrates unity in diversity. She did not have to deny her Oneida culture to believe that peace among the various Indian tribes could be achieved in the Baha'i Faith.

Marian's life story seems to illustrate the value of Native culture in Native lives, an interest which was not compromised by her acceptance of the Baha'i Faith.

Addressing Social Issues

Individual Native Baha'i narratives often credit the Faith as a solution to social problems faced by Natives, societal ills originating in part because of racism exerted on them by some members of the Euro American community.[24] Among these Native believers, the following is typical. The first Canadian Blackfeet peoples to become Baha'is were Edmund Many Bears and Jean Many Bears. In the Baha'i teachings, Edmund "found a solution to the depressed state of his people and a heightened understanding of the spiritual capacity and noble station of man."[25]

According to writer Roger White, the Many Bears' "teaching efforts and the example of their lives created a bridge of friendship between the Indian and white communities, and their influence assuredly will direct in some measure many whose lives they touched."[26]

Baha'is in every community trace their ancestry to any number of various ethnic and cultural backgrounds. In fact, the lack of any one dominating cultural community or perspective in the Baha'i Faith clearly illustrates its all-embracing nature, and Native Americans quickly notice this characteristic of Baha'i communities. At the international level, Amoz Gibson,[27] who descended from both Native American, African American, and Scottish Irish ancestry, was elected to the first Universal House of Justice in 1963 at the Baha'i World Center in Haifa, Israel.[28] Native peoples were elated and deeply moved when this happened because Gibson's election to that august institution became a clear and powerful demonstration that Baha'is were putting the Baha'i teachings into practice.

As a result of developments identified in this study, recent Baha'i publications can point to the healing that takes place between peoples who begin to see one another as equals.[29] A review of research into the growth of the Baha'i Faith around the world, published in 2000, concludes that "As community after community steadily awakens to the possibility of unity in diversity, the pain caused by centuries of racial and ethnic violence is being openly acknowledged and addressed, and the first glimmerings of healing can be discerned."[30] This healing process, which is ongoing, is also a major contributing factor that will ensure that Native American peoples and cultures, with the flute performances and powwow dancing of culture-bearers such as Kevin Locke, will survive.

Notes

[1] The founder of the Baha'i Faith, whose name Baha'u'llah is an Arabic title meaning "the Glory of God", lived from 1817 to 1892. He was born in Iran, exiled from his homeland due to religious persecution against him and his followers, was imprisoned in 'Akka, and is buried in Bahji, across the bay from Haifa, Israel, where the Baha'i World Center is now located on Mt. Carmel.

[2] See Kevin Locke (Tokeya Inajin), *The Flash of the Mirror: Traditional American Indian Flute*, CD jacket liner notes, Meyer Sound Studios, Bismarck, North Dakota, 1993.

[3] See Kevin Locke interview on the video entitled *The Power of Prayer* published by SidCorp for the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States, 1999.

[4] In Indian Reserve in Canada is similar to an Indian Reservation in the U.S.

[5] Baha'is the world over believe that the founder of the Baha'i Faith, Baha'u'llah, is a Prophet, Mouthpiece, or Manifestation of God, similar to the founder of any other independent world religion, such as Christ, Moses, Muhammad, Buddha, Krishna, or Zoroaster.

[6] Quoted in Patricia Verge, *Angus: From The Heart*. (Cochrane, Alberta, Canada: Springtide Publishing, 1999), 106.

[7] The Native American Church is also known as the Peyote religion, a cultural hybrid, representing a synthesis of traditional Indian beliefs and ritual with Christian dogma and symbolism.

[8] Quoted in Verge, 106-107.

[9] The Baha'i World Center, *The Baha'i World 1998-1999: An International Record*. Haifa, Israel: World Center Publications, 2000. 317.

[10] See, for example, statements of appreciation of the Baha'i Faith by such individuals as Queen Marie of Rumania, Leo Tolstoy, August Forel, and others in *The Baha'i World: A Biennial International Record*. Volume IV. 1930-1932. (New York City: Baha'i Publishing Committee, 1933), 217-236.

[11] For further discussions on Baha'i beliefs and international development, see William S. Hatcher and J. Douglas Martin, *The Baha'i Faith: The Emerging Global Religion*. (Wilmette, Illinois: Baha'i Publishing Trust, 1985, 1989, revised 1998).

[12] See, for example, *Native American Spirituality: A Critical Reader*, ed., Lee Irwin. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000).

[13] The Baha'i term for this administrative institution (or committee) is a "Local Spiritual Assembly" in every town or at the local Baha'i community level, and a "National Spiritual Assembly" at the national level in every country or nation where Baha'is reside.

[14] 'Abdu'l-Baha was the son of Baha'u'llah and His appointed successor. He became the head of the Faith when Baha'u'llah passed away in 1892. Although 'Abdu'l-Baha had been imprisoned for much of his life because of his beliefs (in what was then called 'Akka, Palestine), he spent a couple of years, in the early twentieth century, traveling and speaking to various groups around Europe, Canada, and the U.S., before returning to the Holy Land, where he subsequently passed away in 1921.

[15] Will C. van den Hoonaard, *The Origins of the Baha'i Community of Canada, 1898-1948*. (Waterloo, Ontario, Canada: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1996), 62.

[16] The Baha'i World Center, *The Baha'i World: An International Record. Volume XVI, 1973-1976*. (Haifa, Israel: The Universal House of Justice, 1978), 514.

[17] Ibid., 515-516.

[18] Ibid., 516.

[19] American Baha'i National Center, *The American Baha'i* (newspaper), Wilmette, Illinois, January 19, 2001. 13.

[20] The Baha'i World Center, *The Baha'i World: An International Record. Volume XVII, 1976-1979*. (Haifa, Israel: The Universal House of Justice, 1981), 317.

[21] Ibid., 317.

[22] Ibid.

[23] Although this is also the very well-known title of a Byron poem, the origin of this particular reference to "beauty" is a translation of the Navajo word *hózhóó*, beauty, blessedness, or harmony. It is drawn from a very old and well-known Navajo traditional prayer that likely pre-dates Byron's poem. See David P. McAllester in *Worlds of Music: An Introduction to the Music of the World's Peoples*, 3rd Ed., gen. ed., Jeff Todd Titon, (New York: Schirmer Books, 1996), 44-45.

[24] See, for example, Sam Bald Eagle Augustine, *Our Elders Speak: Baha'i Talks from the Heart* (cassette)(a Micmac Baha'i of Canada). SBEA-001. Volume 1. Thornhill, Ontario: Baha'i National Center, n.d.

[25] The Universal House of Justice, *The Baha'i World: An International Record*. Volume XIV, 1963-1968. (Haifa, Israel: The Universal House of Justice, 1974), 357.

[26] Ibid., 358.

[27] Verge, 101.

[28] The Universal House of Justice is the nine-member internationally elected administrative institution that is the governing body of the Baha'is throughout the globe.

[29] Alex Poorman, a Cree Baha'i of the Poorman Reserve, said, in reference to the first National Baha'i Convention Indians had attended in Canada, "'[W]hen the diversity of the human race comes together, there's a tremendous power released. And this was the first time that this had happened in Canada, where we have two different cultures, the Native people, and the people that had come from Europe. Two cultures and we came together in the Baha'i Faith.'" Verge, 75.

[30] *The Baha'i World*, 2000, 89.

Learning at a Deeper Level

Dale Lugenbehl

What is the good of discussing a musical masterpiece? It is the performance that counts.
Thich Nhat Hanh, *Zen Keys*

Philosophy is not a theory but an activity.
Ludwig Wittgenstein,
Tractatus, *Logico-Philosophicus*

. . . Do not speak much . . . about philosophical theories and precepts: but do that which follows from them. For example, at a banquet do not say how a person ought to eat, but eat as you ought to eat. . . . For even as sheep do not vomit up their grass to show how much and how well they have eaten; but when they have digested the pasture . . . [their health and energy is obvious for all to see]. Do you also not show your theories to people, but show the acts which come from their digestion.
Epictetus, *Enchiridion*

I. What is Deeper Learning?

I teach philosophy, which traditionally has been viewed as a subject matter that is more abstract than most. However, I have always seen philosophy as a highly relevant and practical discipline, and have tried to help students become aware of, and question, their unconscious, culturally-produced assumptions about who they are, how the world is put together, and what is really of value. Over time, I have come to recognize that much of what we call education emphasizes knowledge that reaches no deeper than the verbal level—and, in fact, I believe this is true of much of what we learn, whether it is in a class, from a book, or from a conversation. If what we learn does not go beyond the *merely* verbal or conceptual level, then we have missed something very, very important.

Let me begin with a story from several years ago. This story is a little bit long, but please bear with me—it's a story that contained a very important lesson for me.

The first week of each philosophy class, I always devote time to talking about, and giving concrete examples of, learning to delay judgment. Delaying judgment simply means resisting our habitual impulse to immediately leap in and agree or disagree—to evaluate—some idea that we have just heard about. To delay judgment means to take the trouble to understand what is being said—identify the main claims being made, clarify

I have come to recognize that much of what we call education emphasizes knowledge that reaches no deeper than the verbal level.

the meaning of key concepts, and understand the reasons being offered in support of a view—*before* deciding that it makes sense or doesn't make sense. We also spend some time examining *why* it's important to do this: you can not do an adequate job of evaluating something without first understanding it and it is also unfair to the person presenting the view to attempt to do so. In talking about this in class (and we revisit this topic periodically throughout the term), students readily agree with the idea of delaying judgment and freely admit that rushing to judgment is neither intelligent nor fair-minded. But this is where things start to get really interesting.

Several weeks later in the term in one particular class, I spent about 10-15 minutes explaining and laying out on the board Descartes' views regarding knowledge and how he arrived at them. I then looked at the class and said "Are there any questions here about what Descartes is saying; anything that you don't understand and would like clarified? I'm not asking right now for criticisms of his views; we'll get to that in a little while. First, I want to make sure that we're understanding what he's saying and why he thinks it's true. OK, are there any questions about Descartes?"

At this point several hands went up and I called on the first student to speak. She said something like "I don't see how Descartes can make the leap from saying such-and-such to his conclusion that so-and-so. He's not taking into account the fact that . . . ." At this point I intervened and said, "Wait a minute. Aren't you *critiquing* Descartes' views, rather than focusing on understanding what his views are? Is there something unclear in Descartes' views that you have a question about? Or is it that Descartes has said something that you think is mistaken and you want to point it out?" Student: "I understand what he is saying, I just think he's wrong. I was criticizing his views."

At this point I asked the class to remember our discussion the first week of class about delaying judgment: we need to work on resisting the habit of leaping in and evaluating something (agreeing or disagreeing, liking it or not liking it) until we have first taken the trouble to really understand what is being said to us and also the author's reasons for thinking that it is true. Only then are we in a position to do an adequate and fair job of evaluation—deciding whether what has been said really makes sense or not. We need to understand Descartes' views before we are in a position to decide whether they make sense or not. "Doesn't that seem reasonable?" I asked. They remembered that we had discussed this previously, agreed that it was a good idea, and I commented on what a strongly ingrained behavior pattern this is and how important it is to be aware of it and work at learning to delay the judgment process. I said that there would be plenty of time

to critique Descartes later. "Right now we are focused on understanding what he is saying."

I began again and said, "OK, let's try it again. Are there any questions about what Descartes is saying to us—things you don't understand that need clarification?" Several hands went up again. I called on someone, and the person proceeded to give a criticism of Descartes' views, stated in the form of a question: "How can Descartes say that *x* when we all know that *y*?" I pointed out that this is criticism, not clarification. "That's right. I guess I was doing criticism."

I then went on to call on another *four* students, and each in turn offered what turned out to be a criticism of Descartes. Each time I pointed this out, and said something like "That's a very important point, so hold on to it, but we're not doing that now, we'll be doing criticism later. Right now we want to make sure we *understand* the views in front of us." Again, there was recognition that we had agreed to work at understanding the views before doing criticism.

The same mistake was made, and pointed out, *six* times in a row in the space of about 5-10 minutes. Clearly, there is a lesson here for me as an instructor; what is it?

The lesson, I believe, is this: If the students in this class had been given a test and asked to explain or define the concept of "delaying judgment," many of them would have been able to do an adequate or excellent job. They could have written down the words, "Delaying judgment is taking the trouble to find out what someone is saying and why they are saying it *before* leaping in and evaluating whether it makes sense or not. In order to be able to do a good job of evaluating an idea you must first have a good grasp of what claims are being made, clarify key concepts, understand the reasoning, etc." So in some sense they had "learned" the concept of delaying judgment. As an instructor, it had always been easy for me to read such exams and be pleased with the answers, and go away thinking that students had learned something important and useful.

But in another sense, it now seems clear to me that they have clearly *not* learned about delaying judgment. It has not filtered down into their consciousnesses to the point that they can *recognize* non-delayed judgment in themselves or others on their own (without someone to point it out to them). Nor is delaying judgment something that they actually know how to *do* in carrying on their lives. And even if they did know *how* to do it and did *recognize the various opportunities* to do it, would they see the value in it and actually *choose* to do it? So far, they were still *behaving* exactly the same way that they always had.

This is a significant and widespread deficiency in our educational institutions. A great deal of what students "learn" is how to describe or define some idea in words—they learn how to *talk* about it—but it very often does not become anything more to them than a bunch of words on paper or spoken into the air. When the day's class is over, they go outside and it's "business as usual."

A good friend of mine provides another example here. He has had numerous communication classes and describes himself as a "good listener." He can, for example, explain quite articulately what is meant by "reflective listening." If you asked him, he would say that "Reflective listening is listening to someone without adding your own opinion or judging what is said, and it involves periodically restating or paraphrasing what the person has just said to you--reflecting it back—so that they have the opportunity to correct any misunderstandings. Reflecting what the person said also helps them to feel really heard."

This is a good explanation! If this were a test he would get full credit. But is my friend someone who practices good listening skills? Unfortunately, he is not. Does he actually listen without giving advice or judgment or interrupting, and then reflect back what was just said? No. So he has learned how to *talk* about reflective listening but he hasn't really learned to listen reflectively. Deep learning has not occurred here, only learning at the level of being able to verbally explain a concept.

It is easy to find numerous examples of similar results in classes across the curriculum. In logic or psychology classes, for example, students frequently come to the point where they can explain on a test why a correlation between two things does not prove a cause and effect relationship. But—will they think this way about cause and effect in their day to day lives? The answer here is often not what we would like.

Much of what we learn in our schools is what might be called conceptual learning—it has to do with acquiring a knowledge of concepts, factual information, and theoretical constructs. While this can be valuable, there is the possibility of something deeper than this and that is the kind of learning that alters how we feel, how we see the world, and how we behave. This is what Carl Rogers has called *significant learning*.

> By significant learning I mean learning which is more than an accumulation of facts. It is learning which makes a difference—in the individual's behavior, in the course of action he chooses in the future, in his attitudes and in his personality. It is a pervasive learning which is not just

> an accretion . . . [of facts or theories], but which interpenetrates with every portion of his existence.[1]

How many times do we learn something in class, from a book, or from a conversation and then go on about our lives in exactly the same way that we did before we acquired this piece of learning? It seems to me that the really significant things that we learn are the things that change our way of being in the world, and we all can recall things that we've learned that forever changed our lives—instances in which things were never the same again for us after realizing that _____. You can fill in the blank from your own experience. I know that the world forever looked different to me after the day I learned that what we call "race" is simply a way of subdividing the human species based on arbitrarily selected physical characteristics and that it would make just as much sense to call tall people or large-eared people a race as it does to say that people with similar skin pigmentation are a race.

Personally, I am not satisfied with learning that only results in people being able to *talk* about certain concepts but does not have the potential to transform people's lives for their betterment and the betterment of their community. What can we, as teachers, do to promote deeper, more personally meaningful learning? I believe there are at least four things we can do.

We need to work on the habit of leaping in and evaluating something until we take the trouble to understand what is being said.

II. Moving Toward Deeper Learning: Suggestions

A. Seeing the Benefits

An important component in producing deeper learning is that students must have some reason, motive, incentive, perceived benefit to *want* to learn and *want* to use that learning and behave differently when they leave our classes. For conceptual learning, a grade in a class provides some incentive to learn for a test or to write a paper, *but for deeper learning to occur there must be something else.* Students need an explanation or demonstration of why actually having and using this learning will be of *benefit* to them in their lives. Often we ask students to learn something, but we don't tell them what's in it for them if they do. We need to spend some time on "Here are some of the things you can do with this once you've learned it . . . . Here are some of the ways that people are hurt by *not* knowing this . . . ." Anecdotes and stories from our own personal histories can be very

useful here, as well as stories from the personal histories of class members or our class readings.

The most powerful way to learn the importance of a behavior is to *experience* the benefits yourself. If I actually try out the new learning and directly and personally experience benefits as a result, it is extremely likely that the new learning will become part of who I am. Sections B and C below attempt to give some specific examples of how this can work.

By significant learning I mean learning that is more than an accumulation of facts.

B. Modeling the Learning

We must be *the change we wish to see in the world.*
--Gandhi

Gandhi recognized that if we want to produce change in the world, we must start with ourselves. If, for example, I want to work for peace in the world I must start by practicing peace in my own life. I can vividly remember many peace demonstrations over the years in which angry and hostile demonstrators shouted in people's faces, and I can also remember how ineffective they usually were as far as advancing the cause of peace.

Likewise, if I want students to learn to easily acknowledge their mistaken beliefs, I must start by freely acknowledging my own mistaken beliefs and actions when they come up in class (as they surely will). Each one of these can be viewed as an opportunity to model how to respond when one has been proven to be mistaken. (Actually, whether we like it or not, *everything* we do is modeling *something!)*

The example we set is so much more important than what we tell people to do verbally. If you have children and you tell them why it is important not to eat junk food, what are the chances they will learn from your verbal instruction if you continue to eat junk food yourself?

It is crucial for the instructor to model the behavior to be learned. If students see me delaying judgment, not being personally attached to ideas and not adopting a competitive stance in discussion, it has a much more powerful impact on them than anything I merely *say* to them about how to have a philosophical discussion.

Furthermore, if they can see how the learning I have (and am asking them to acquire) benefits me, they will have some reason to move toward adopting the new way of doing things as well. For example, suppose I am able to listen carefully to someone in class who

is disagreeing with what I've said and then easily acknowledge that what I have said is mistaken and thank the student for bringing this to my attention. If students can see that this creates a conversation that is productive, free of anger, fun, has not made me appear weak, and has actually strengthened our liking and respect for one another, then they have been given a powerful incentive to try out nonattachment to beliefs in their own lives.

Here's an additional example: I print exams and handouts on secondhand paper (used on one side), and I tell students that I do this because it is an easy way to reduce the rate at which trees are cut down to make new paper. If they see me taking a little bit of extra trouble to act on my values it becomes slightly more likely that students will learn to take a little more trouble to act on their own values, too. They may also be willing to try out some of the less damaging environmental lifestyle choices that we have learned about in class and actually learn what it is like to live a more environmentally friendly lifestyle. I have found my own behavior to be one of the most powerful teaching tools I have at my disposal.

C. Reward the Learning in Class

Teachers should reward students' learning as it occurs in the classroom. They can praise and acknowledge students' success and learning when it shows up in discussion; they can offer graded assignments that integrate students' learning into their lives; they can construct tests that measure students' activities to make use of what they are being asked to learn.

Logic class is a good example in regard to the latter. It is very easy to give the students tests in which they are required to analyze writing samples that they have not seen before, grading them on their ability to identify conclusions, reasoning patterns, recognize and refute faulty arguments, and so on. They are graded on their ability to use concepts in applying them to real examples of communication. How much more appropriate this is than testing them on whether they can correctly define or explain "argument," "premise," "unstated assumption," and so on. Would you rather have a surgeon who knows how to talk about surgical instruments and who can correctly define and explain what a "scalpel" is, or "forceps," or a "retractor," etc. Or, would you rather have a surgeon who has learned how (and when) to skillfully use these instruments to improve human health? In philosophy, what is

truly important is our ability to "operate" on our beliefs, practices, unconscious assumptions, and choices.

I am hoping that people from disciplines other than philosophy will be reading this paper. I hope anyone reading this will ask themselves: "What is truly important for the students in *my* classes to be able to do as a result of taking my class?" I cannot answer this for anyone else, but I have found it very useful to keep this question continually before me as I work through each class I teach.

D. Create Opportunities to Use the Learning Outside of Class

It is crucial to set up opportunities for students to *use the new learning outside of class* and for them to *receive the benefits from the learning in their lives outside of school.* Students must *do something different from what they usually do* that actually makes use of the new learning. If the new behavior produces better results than what they've gotten in the past, they *will* incorporate the new learning into their lives on a regular basis. Here are some concrete examples of some approaches I have taken in philosophy classes:

• What would it be like to try living a different way as a result of exposure to some philosophical idea? One can read and talk about the Buddhist concept of compassion in class. This is conceptual learning.

When Naropa, seeking the meaning behind the words [of the Buddhist teachings about compassion], set out to find a teacher, he continually found himself squeezed. Intellectually, he knew all about compassion, but when he came upon a filthy, lice-infested dog, he looked away.

—Pema Chodron[2]

Did Naropa understand compassion at a deeper level? Probably not. Why not both read about compassion *and* try it out for a day in your own life and then write a report on what happened and what was learned?

• Epictetus says that suffering is the result of a gap between what you have (your external circumstances) and what you want or expect (your internal dispositions): we suffer when we don't have what we want. Could you keep a journal of your day-to-day irritations and unhappinesses and write about how much of your suffering in each case comes from your own desires and expectations?

· After doing some reading and hearing some class presentations on environmental issues, many students have a good grasp of how personal food choices directly impact how much environmental damage each of us causes. For most, however, this tends to be knowledge at the verbal level only. Students can be given the opportunity to devise an environmentally conscious diet for themselves: one that is bioregional, plant based, organic and uses primarily or only whole foods with minimal packaging. They can then actually eat this way for a week and write a report on what they did and what they learned.

· Here is a very simple thing any instructor can do. If you've talked about sustainability and re-using (rather than the more energy-intensive recycling) in your class, you can ask students to turn in all their written work on the back side of paper that's already been used once so that they actually get some practice trying out a new behavior. You can do this in your class even if you have *not* talked about sustainability—not all the important learning that takes place in a class will (or needs to) fall within the boundaries of some specific academic discipline. Interestingly, in the past I have actually received student papers that railed against wasting resources and against deforestation, but were written on new paper when the student had the option of using second hand paper!

· In a fashion similar to the above suggestion, when assigning papers, you can ask students to choose gender-neutral language and to avoid other discrimination in their language choices. You can even make it part of how the paper is graded. As in the previous example, I have found that some students who wrote papers that were critical of sexism chose, ironically, to use sexist constructions in their own papers!

Anything that will get students to attempt to integrate the new learning into their lives has the potential to become a very meaningful class activity. This is not how I was taught as a student, but it is how I want to work at this point in my evolution as an instructor.

Tell me, I forget. Show me, I remember. Involve me, I understand.
--Ancient Chinese philosopher

I have found my own behavior to be one of the most powerful teaching tools I have at my disposal.

III. Concluding Remarks

It continues to be a fascinating challenge for me to try to find ways to help students take things from class that will actually help them to transform their lives for

the better. With some thought, and a willingness to break with tradition, it can almost always be done.

However, if the learning we are attempting to produce will truly not impact how the student feels, sees the world, or behaves, then I believe we must be willing to consider the possibility that this learning should perhaps not be a part of the course being taught. It is surprising how many things are parts of our classes simply because they have always been taught as parts of that particular subject. Tradition and sheer inertia can be powerful forces that shape what we do without us really being aware of it.

Let me cite a personal example. Venn diagrams have been taught as a standard part of logic classes for decades. So have truth tables. Though I know how to use Venn diagrams and truth tables, I never actually *do*, in fact, use them—and I am a professional philosopher. When I realized this some years ago, I stopped including them as part of my logic classes. *How can I ask students to learn something that I don't find useful myself?* It is interesting to note that I have since then asked many people who teach logic "Do you ever use Venn diagrams or truth tables either in your philosophical research, writing, and study or in you day-to-day life?" The answer I have received back is always the same: "No." So why should we ask students to learn this material?

I have heard some instructors say that lower division classes have a major portion of their value, not in producing learning that will impact student's day to day life, but rather in laying the groundwork for more advanced classes in a particular discipline. The purpose of lower division classes, it is said, is not to give students something of value now, but to give them terminology, facts, and methods that will serve as a foundation in their more advanced classes in the discipline.

I do not agree with this perception. Classes cannot have their primary value in laying groundwork for more advanced classes because most community college students never take the advanced classes. Many of them do not go on to a university, and the ones who do still typically take only one or two lower division classes in disciplines other than the one they ultimately select as their major. Outside of their major, students typically take only enough credits in a discipline to satisfy the general education requirement. Furthermore, if we ask the students to spend their time memorizing terms and classification systems and theories, will this not simply *ensure* that they never take another class in our discipline?

I do not know enough about teaching in other disciplines to make suggestions about specific things that could be done to work with students at a deeper level in those areas—that is something that each of us must do for ourselves. It can be done, and I believe it is well worth doing—but it involves becoming aware of, and then questioning, some of our most deeply held unconscious beliefs about what we are doing as teachers.

We need to start by asking ourselves: "What are the most important things I want students to take away from this class and still have with them in six months, a year, or ten years?"

We can also ask: "How has studying/acquiring a knowledge of this subject area changed *me* as a person, altered my life, changed how I experience the world, how I feel, how I see myself and my choices in life?" Because you know how these specific items of learning have been integrated into yourself and your own day-to-day life, you will be able to create class activities and assignments that will help students acquire this same learning and do it on a deeper level where it will transform *their* lives the same way that this learning from your discipline has already transformed *your* life.

Notes

[1] Carl Rogers, *On Becoming A Person* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1961), 280.
[2] Pema Chodron , *When Things Fall Apart* (Boston: Shambhala Press, 1997), 116.

Four Haikus

Bert Pooth

Sensuous as smoke,
Jasmine's dance kisses my eyes,
melting ancient ice.

Silk robes of summer
cling to the shivering monk
as he runs through fall rain.

Blizzard drives us in
to cuddle in a blanket
that smells of wood smoke.

On springtime prairie
a buffalo lies dying.
The vultures hover.

moving pianos

Frank Rossini

for Eddie Leichtman, my grandfather
and founder of Leichtman Bros.

i was "the kid" the bosses' nephew the boy
they sent to the bank with weekly receipts
my pockets bulged with cash checks & rolls
of coin as i walked the Spanish Harlem streets
before they became mean with junk past Israel's
bodega Ramos' record store its tinny speaker
wired above the door blasting the beautiful

sounds of Tito Puente Celia Cruz the young
Willie Colon past the corner drugstore where
a thin young man daily imagined himself Dracula
covering then uncovering his mouth with a black cape
his eyes revealing nothing on the way back
i stopped at the hot dog cart & fell in love
with the Puerto Rican girls their eyes black

as the beads of my mother's rosary their tongue
sweet as Latin at 12 i was the office help
adding long columns of numbers in the account books
till i became fast as my uncle calculating
the sums in a small place just above my heart
i could **feel** if i was right i was the janitor
sweeping the concrete aisles between the pianos

i couldn't lift my arms thin adolescent wires
used to hours of basketball but not to music's
weight in the slow afternoon's in the back
of the warehouse i'd try to lift one end
of a spinet imagining myself Murphy cigarette
dangling from a corner of his mouth laughing
at insults tossed between "the men" blue outlined

women writhing on his forearms as he raised a piano
with a slight straightening of his bent knees
then dropped his pants to prove he had eyes
tatooed on the cheeks of his ass the next year
i smoked three packs a day & could hold my end
of a Wurlitzer i learned how to "dutch" a piano
onto the truck's tailgate throw one end onto a

canvas pad the other into the air turn & drop it
in your partner's hands slip a wooden roller under
its sliding board crouch at the low end & push
i learned the knots to secure it to the truck
how to pad where to place the wooden chocks
to save the legs how to take it up stairs
around corners through doorways made for the thin

i learned how to carry a baby grand an organ
an eight-foot Steinway concert into houses
where Big Henny said "the only thing they know
how to play is the fuckin' radio" & i learned about
"the men" Butch the shop steward who did everything
by the book & always wore a spotless uniform
of heavy cotton shirt & pants & read the racing forms

between stops Preacher who had a storefront church
in Harlem & would caution me that the men's harsh words
about one uncle were nothing but they were the truth
Russell whose solemn strength stopped the racist
jokes he was shot resting on his stoop one Friday
evening for his weekly pay Benny who lived in his
unpaid for Cadillac & always offered to balance

the keyboard when there was an upright to "hump" 4
stories Murphy who lived on the edge
whose back was a tattooed map of navy ports
& his face the path of coming disasters
who sang & played an old upright as it slid
from the back of the truck into traffic
& i learned about my uncles the bosses Howard

the career military man squeezed out
when they decided they wanted the degreed
to lead the uneducated into slaughter his motto
there was always work
& if there wasn't he would make some
moving stacks of pianos from one side of the warehouse
to the other in the heat which covered us

like dusty burlap & George my uncle of the big heart
the one they'd ask for an advance a day off some time
to get things straight who'd buy beers
on hot Friday afternoons & send the men home
early whose heart burst from too much
smoke & food & sweet times i learned how
the day could break

a man with its labor turn on him
like a dog slipping back into wildness
how fragile the back & bone hand & shoulder
how the strength of the whole can bring
down each part i learned how to be
the weight i carried to move
like the masters i learned the art of work

Too Late Now

Dan Armstrong

The mortuary sits in a wide, treeless lot
waiting at the side of the road, cars speeding by
as we swing around the curving drive and park.

Inside, you lie in a gray funeral suit
like a rejected suitor gone to drunken sleep
your mouth pulled into an iron mail slot.

"He looks pretty good," Dave offers hopefully
"but they didn't get his mouth right."
I peer over the edge of the casket to see for myself.

Tell me, Dad, what redundant Darth Vader dreams
have fixed that steep gloom on your face
pushed your mouth into that deep pout?

Is it the yellow rose that sprouts in your lapel
Mother's rose that blooms a canker on your heart
raising the chill shadow of a doubt?

Or do you dream of me as the black priest
reciting the funeral beads
trying to unfrown your iron face

dream of me dreaming of dropping you
through the round trap door in the too bright room
into the vat of acid that bubbles by the hour

remember me raising the door to find
what remains in the dark below? Nothing left but your
chattering teeth, clacking fast and white against the cold.

Too late now for my green love, Lazarus-like,
to unfreeze your cold, cold sleep.
Too late to release my tears.

Author Notes

Don Addison is an anthropologist and ethnomusicologist who received his Ph.D. from the University of Oregon. He has taught American Indian Studies at Lane Community College in Eugene, Oregon and at Chemeketa Community College in Salem, Oregon for seven years. He has taught African and Middle Eastern ethnology at Portland Community College, as well as ethnomusicology courses at the University of Oregon since 1992. Being Choctaw Indian, he is active in the Native American community, serving as a drummer, singer, dancer, teacher, and artist for many years. Addison has worked as a program coordinator of Native American Arts and Performances for the Smithsonian Institution in Washington D.C., and he has taught at the University of California at Los Angeles, and the University of Nigeria, West Africa. He has published scholarly articles, original creative musical compositions, and sound recordings in Taiwan, Hong Kong, Israel, Belgium, and Germany. He is a specialist in Native American Studies and has created Native American courses at several academic institutions.

Dan Armstrong received his Ph.D. from Indiana University in 1976 and taught at the University of Arizona, Oakland University, and Oregon State University before coming in 1991 to Lane Community College in Eugene, Oregon where he teaches English and film studies. He has won the Department of English Award for Teaching Excellence at Oakland University and, in 1988, the prestigious Burlington Award, the top teaching award given annually at Oregon State University. At Oregon State he also received numerous research grants for work in film studies from the Oregon Committee for the Humanities, the Department of English, and the Center for the Humanities. In addition to previous publications of fiction and poetry in small magazines, his publications include academic articles on literature, and articles on film studies in *Film Quarterly*, *Cinema Journal*, *Quarterly Review of Film and Video*, and *Film Criticism*. He currently lives with his wife and son in Eugene, Oregon, a city dubbed "The People's Republic of Eugene" by a local conservative talk-show host.

Alison Cadbury is a part-time instructor in English at Lane Community College in Eugene, Oregon. She lived for many years on the Greek island of Paros, and most of her writing is devoted to describing island life in its eternal and changing aspects. Her work has been published in *Georgia Review*, *Missouri Review*, and *Ascent*. In 1995 she received a fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Pamelyn Nance Dane attended Portland State University and the University of Oregon, where she received a Ph.D. in 1993. The title of her dissertation is *The Passionate Years: Women Who Lived on the West Bank of Paris, 1920-1940.* She has taught English at Lane Community College in Eugene, Oregon since 1993.

Mark Harris coordinates Lane Community College's Multicultural Substance Abuse Prevention Program, and teaches a three-term class in Ethnic Studies: African-American Experience, and Understanding Addictive Behavior in Human Development.

Jean LeBlanc is an adjunct professor at Sussex County Community College in Newton, New Jersey. She teaches composition and literature courses, and loves showing her students the value of poetry in their own lives. As an undergraduate, she was a biology major, but a course in statistics and probability made her realize that a career in a laboratory setting was probably not meant for her. While working towards a graduate degree in English at Middlebury College's Bread Loaf School of English, she discovered nature writing with Edward Lueders. She has published essays in *Appalachian Trailway News* and poetry in various journals.

Dale Lugenbehl has taught philosophy for more than twenty years, the last eight of which have been at Lane Community College in Eugene, Oregon. His current areas of interest include environmental ethics, discrimination (racism, sexism, speciesism), voluntary simplicity, and Buddhism. He is also a community educator, giving presentations and workshops on a volunteer basis on the above topics.

Michael McDonald's graduate work included a very productive summer at the School of Criticism and Theory in 1989, when the school was still associated with Dartmouth College. This experience helped him prepare to compose his Ph.D. dissertation, *James Joyce and the Aesthetics of Dissonance*, where McDonald's readings of Joyce's major works are shaped by recent developments in literary theory and criticism. His publications include several essays on Joyce, a comparative reading of E. L. Doctorow's *Billy Bathgate* and E. L. Doctorow's eponymous novel, and a study of Spike Lee's use of John Coltrane's *A Love Supreme* in *Mo' Better Blues*. His recent research and writing interests reflect his experience as a student of various musical traditions, especially those of India. McDonald is presently working on a fictional depiction of Kabir and Mirabai, and has begun a comparative study of the songs of Mirabai, Hildegard von Bingen, and Rabia al-Adawiyya.

Anne B. McGrail received her Ph.D. in literature from the University at Buffalo in 1998. In addition to being founding co-editor of *The Community College Moment*, her editing credits include the journal *theory@buffalo* and a history of the School of Engineer-

ing at the University at Buffalo. She is publisher of Prosillipo Press, which produces poetry broadsides, including *First Aid: Poetry Station*; the name "prosillipo" comes from the Greek word for "pause from pain." She has published articles on Henry Fielding and Jane Austen, but she will only come out in print when she finds a publisher for her essay, "Femme in the Streets." She is currently working on a project about flag-waving in America entitled, *Iron John Nationalism*.

Adrienne Mews was born and raised in the Chicago area. While traveling throughout the U.S., she discovered Oregon and decided to make it home. Mews currently teaches in the Academic Learning Skills Department at Lane Community College in Eugene, Oregon. Formerly, she taught at the University of Oregon and at an alternative high school for at-risk youth. Mews earned a B.A. in Spanish and Sociology and an M.A. in Romance Languages at the University of Oregon. She also completed graduate work in second-language acquisition and pedagogy and holds a teaching certificate in Spanish, English as a second language, math, and social studies. Mews attended the *Mundo a Mundo* literary translation workshop in Mexico City, where she began her translation of the Spanish novel *Bella y oscura* (Beautiful and Dark), for which she is currently seeking a publisher.

After working as a carpenter for about fifteen years, **Bert Pooth** returned to school, earning a B.S. in biology from the SUNY College of Forestry in Syracuse. He is finishing the re-write of his dissertation for the University of Miami and is currently a temporary, full-time biology teacher at Lane Community College in Eugene, Oregon. An avid birder, camper, and canoer, he loves the outdoors—as a biologist, because it provide an endless supply of questions to ponder, and as a human, because of its powers to both soothe and exhilarate.

Jerry Ross holds a BA in Philosophy with a minor in Math from the University of Buffalo, New York, where he attended on a Regent's Scholarship. He graduated from University of Oregon in '84 with a M.A. degree in Computer Science. Ross has taught mathematics, science, and T'ai Chi Ch'uan while remaining active in civil rights, peace, and labor union activities. In 1984, Ross was hired by Lane County to head the Unit for Education and Documentation of the Regional Information System (RIS) and then hired at Lane Community College as a full-time computer science instructor. He joined the New Zone Art Collective in 1989, and founded the Salon des Refuse in 1991. Ross began traveling to Italy during the summers. In 1998, he won second place in a landscape painting contest in Livergnano, Italy. In 2000, he had painting shows in Italy (Milan and Bologna) and had a painting accepted into Eugene's Mayor's Show, winning the Mayor's

Choice award. This year, Jerry had five paintings in a group show in Rome, Italy. He is currently the President of New Zone Art Collective and leads an effort to bring an art academy and an art museum to downtown Eugene.

Frank Rossini grew up in New York City but has lived in Eugene for the past thirty years. He recently retired from full-time teaching at Lane Community College in Eugene, Oregon. Rossini has published poems in various journals and worked as a lyricist with the late singer/songwriter, Tom Intondi. Their songs are on three releases from City Dancer Music, and a few have been covered by other artists including Dave Van Ronk and Debbie Diedrich.

The father of four sons and a daughter and the man of one woman, **Drew Viles** has lived in Eugene, Oregon since moving down from Siletz with his family in 1987. A graduate of Blue Mountain Community College, Oregon State University, The University of Michigan, and the University of Oregon, Drew has won awards for his writing from the Native American Journalist Association and *Northwest Magazine*. Drew served as an Associate Tribal Court Judge for his people, the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians of Oregon, immediately before becoming an Instructor with Lane Community College's English, Foreign Language, and Speech Department in 1999.

Carol Watt, who holds a Ph.D. from the University of Oregon, is an instructor in the English, Foreign Language, and Speech Department at Lane Community College in Eugene, Oregon. She, along with other faculty and staff from L.C.C. are part of the new Lane Native Languages Project, which is developing an American Indian language program at Lane.

Bill Woolum is licensed by the Oregon Diocese of the Episcopal Church as a lay preacher. He teaches composition and literature at Lane Community College in Eugene, Oregon. Woolum has organized the Copia Lecture Series, a community lecture program in Eugene.

The Community College Moment
CALL FOR WORK

The *Community College Moment* offers a forum for high-quality progressive articles that reflect a new vision of scholarship at the intersection of academic, activist, and community interests. We invite articles, interviews, photographs, artwork, poetry, and other original work that reflects your interests as a community college teacher and scholar. Submissions should address a thoughtful, but not specialized, academic audience. Articles may address issues of interest to local, regional, or national readers.

DEADLINES for submissions:

FOR WINTER 2003 ISSUE:
Monday, September 30, 2002

WINTER 2003 SPECIAL SECTION: CLASSROOM DYNAMICS

For the Winter 2003 issue, in addition to general submissions on any topic, we invite articles for a special section titled "Classroom Dynamics": these articles may explore issues such as freedom of speech in the classroom, grade inflation, current multicultural issues in education, or discussing politics and religion in the classroom, for example. As with all submissions, we are open to a variety of possible formats.

Examples of kinds of work considered for inclusion:

- Full-length articles [5000 words maximum; work in languages other than English welcome]
- Collaborative projects
- Web-based projects
- Works-in-progress [i.e., provocative ideas you haven't fully worked out]
- Collages of your work over time
- Plans and reflections on innovative pedagogies
- Artworks of any kind: poetry, paintings, sculpture and choreographic projects (which we would feature through photographs), musical compositions (print and / or taped), etc.

CALL FOR BOOK REVIEWS

We invite you to submit for consideration short (300-word) essays that summarize and evaluate a book you would like to share with your community college colleagues. Deadline: September 30, 2002.

Send all submissions to: The *Community College Moment* / Attn: Anne McGrail / English, Foreign Language and Speech Division / Lane Community College / 4000 E. 30th Avenue, Eugene, Oregon 97405. For submission information, contact Managing Editors Maurice Hamington (hamingtonm@lanecc.edu) or Anne McGrail (mcgraila@lanecc.edu).

Errata

The following lines were left off of page 59. The editors apologize for this omission.

been reserved to the right to pronounce the name of a certain place, Depoe Bay, which is situated within the boundaries of a denominated allotment[6] deeded in name to Charles Depoe during the latter part of the 19th century, as though the first word ended with a "t" instead of an "e."