Knowing Differently Situated Others: Teachers and Arrogant Perception

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ABSTRACT: In the context of teacher education, where *practicality* is the chief area of concern for teacher candidates, philosophical analyses of oppression must be perceived to contribute to the pressing concerns of teaching workloads and classroom management as well as justice. This paper proposes to make a link between teaching work and considerations of diversity that emerge as teachers "consider the standpoint of the other" (see Young, 1997, p. 22). Arguing with Iris Marion Young that it is neither possible nor ethically satisfactory to "take the other's point of view" per se, the paper provides an account of what is involved in considering the standpoint of differently situated others. The argument here, however, is epistemological rather than ethical. Specifically? – the paper addresses questions that arise as teachers occupy subject positions of relative privilege either within the society at large or as a function of the normalizing processes of schools. Young's analysis of asymmetric reciprocity is juxtaposed with Maria Lugones' analysis of arrogant and loving perception, "worlds" and "world-traveling" (1990). The analysis offers teachers a means of re-reading their participation in school purposes and their reception of student performances as resistance. The paper proceeds in four sections: the first reports briefly on Young's advocacy of asymmetrical reciprocity, and emphasizes a fragile understanding open to wonder and surprise rather than recognition. The second presents a reading of Lugones' and Frye's conceptions of arrogant perception and world-traveling that pays particularly close attention to Lugones' account of what it means to be at ease in a world. The third section of the paper moves to the level of institutional analysis. The object of study is that body of schooling practices that might be read as positioning teachers in subject positions of institutional arrogant perception. The fourth section addresses three practical ways in which teachers might address notions of arrogant and loving perception: deconstructing their institutional and social locations, using their own world-traveling

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to proliferate non-dominant curricular and classroom practices, and reorienting themselves with respect to students' resistance.

RESUME: Dans le cadre de la formation des professeurs où la préoccupation première des candidats est la mise en pratique, on doit différencier les analyses philosophiques d'oppression afin d'apporter une aide sur les questions urgentes concernant les charges de travail et de gestion de classe incombant aux professeurs ainsi qu'à la justice. Cet article propose d'établir un lien entre le travail d'enseignement et les réflexions concernant la diversité qui ressort dans ce que les enseignants "considèrent le point de vue des autres" (voir Young, 1997, p. 22). A l'appui de l'argumentation d'Iris Marion Young qui déclare que ce n'est ni possible, ni satisfaisant éthiquement parlant, "de juger le point de vue de l'autre" per se, l'article apporte une raison sur ce qui est impliqué en prenant en considération les différents points de vue des autres. Ici, l'argument est plutôt épistémologique qu'éthique. L'article aborde plus précisément les questions qui soulèvent le fait que les enseignants occupent des postes qui laissent la porte ouverte à des privilèges relatifs soit à l'intérieur de la société dans le sens large, soit dans l'exercice régulier de leur profession scolaire. L'analyse sur la réciprocité asymétrique de Young est associée à celle de Maria Lugones qui traite de la perception arrogante et aimée avec les concepts des mots "mondes" et "monde-voyage" (1990). L'analyse permet aux enseignants de reconsidérer leur participation dans les objectifs scolaires et leur réaction face à la résistance d'étudiants d'avis opposés. Le papier se présente en quatre parties: a) la première relate brièvement la préconisation de Young sur la réciprocité asymétrique et met l'accent sur une compréhension délicate lorsqu'on se pose la question et que l'on est surpris, au lieu d'admettre la situation; La deuxième partie présente des lectures sur les conceptions de Lugones et de Frye en ce qui concerne la perception arrogante et les voyages à travers le monde. L'attention est mise tout particulièrement sur la raison qu'apporte Lugones à l'importance d'être à l'aise dans le monde; La troisième partie du papier remonte au niveau de l'analyse institutionnelle. Le sujet de l'étude porte sur les mises en pratique du corps enseignant. On pourrait comprendre ces dernières par le fait que les enseignants en place font face à une situation de perception institutionnelle arrogante; La quatrième partie traite de trois manières différentes de mettre en pratique dans lesquelles les enseignants pourraient parler de notions de perception arrogante et aimée en détruisant leurs positions sociales et institutionnelles, en utilisant leur propre expérience de voyages à travers le monde

> afin de multiplier les mises en pratique extra pédagogiques et extra scolaires et en se réorientant eux-mêmes eu égard de l'avis opposé des étudiants.

Practicality is a mantra for teacher candidates and teachers alike. Even those committed to principles of social justice, diversity, and inclusive education, often resist philosophical analyses that explain oppression but fail to illuminate ways that teachers can make a difference. In this paper I take this demand to heart. I offer a reading of epistemological issues related to knowing well others who are differently situated.

The desire to know others well is familiar to any teacher who has worked within a child-centered model of public education at least since the time of John Dewey. Practices of instruction, discipline, and assessment all depend on the assumption that teachers can perceive and act upon accurate understandings of what they know about others.[1] The problems I want to address in this paper stem from a common but errant set of expectations about the possibilities of knowing others that is the collective inheritance of those of us who have been schooled within liberal democracies. In particular, I am concerned with errors to which teachers are prone as we attempt to know others well through processes of empathy, identification, and respectful dialogue, each of which commonly assume an underlying symmetry between self and other.[2] With this assumption, I argue, some over-simplified expectations regarding teachers' capacity to know differently situated others well. We believe that by guarding against bias and prejudicial treatment, caring and respectful teachers can come to trust their capacity to know students well.

In contesting the assumption of symmetrical reciprocity that underlies the epistemic and moral regard associated with liberal democracy, I aim to show that teachers who want to engage in child-centered teaching must take on additional epistemic responsibilities. In particular, we must be prepared to enter into specific forms of consultation with others, we must be prepared to identify and step away from institutional mandates that narrow our capacity to see and hear others as they see and hear themselves, and we must be prepared to attend carefully to the resistance of students who defy the characterizations we project onto them.

Philosophically, I juxtapose the positions of two theorists who challenge assumptions of epistemic and ethical symmetry: Iris Marion Young's work on asymmetric reciprocity and Maria Lugones's analyses

of arrogant and loving perception, *worlds* and *world-traveling*. What Young and Lugones illustrate is that differently situated knowers face different epistemological demands as they attempt to understand or know one another. Drawing upon Young and Lugones, I claim that arrogant perception is a particular type of epistemic error to which people who are in positions of social privilege are systemically oriented. Further, I argue that the challenges implicit in knowing across difference can be exacerbated by the effects of institutional power relations. Specifically, I show that arrogant perception is an institutional hazard that warrants systemic reform.

Part One: Symmetrical and Asymmetrical Reciprocity

The entry point for my discussion is Iris Marion Young's assertion that it is neither possible nor ethically satisfactory to "take the other's point of view" (1997) per se. She advocates ethical responses based on "asymmetrical reciprocity." Young contrasts her view with that of Seyla Benhabib (1991) who argues that taking the standpoint of the other involves "imaginatively representing to [oneself] ... the point of view of all others" (Young, 1997, p.40). Benhabib's position is representative of the liberal democratic view that I suggest dominates discourses of teaching in the context of public education. Young questions the symmetry and reversibility upon which Benhabib's account rests. She claims that Benhabib's appeal to ontological symmetry is dependent upon a Hegelian reading of the relation of self to other. Benhabib sets the relation as follows:

> To know how to sustain an ongoing human relationship means to know what it means to be an 'I' and a 'me,' to know that I am an 'other' to you and that, likewise, you are an 'I' to yourself and an 'other to me'. (Benhabib, as cited in Young, 1997, p. 40)

Teachers exercise this understanding of themselves and others when we try to "put ourselves in the other's shoes" or when we try to understand another's point of view. A point of view, as a point of view, is presumed to work the same for anyone. It may be located in a different place – overlooking a balcony rather than peering out from underneath one – but it's movement from a point of origin outward toward an unassuming world, is universal, it applies to anyone in the same respect.

Young, contests the adequacy of this logic. She says "this structure [of self and other] neither describes nor presupposes a reversibility of standpoints. In fact, it precludes such reversibility because it describes

how each standpoint is constituted by its internal relations to other standpoints" (1997, p. 40).

Martha Minow makes a similar point when she refers to the tendency, when ascribing difference, to apply an unstated point of comparison: an other is different *from me*, yet the difference as identified rests solely with the other (1991, p. 22). In general terms, what Young and Minow are asserting is that in epistemic terms, in contexts of diversity it matters from where one looks.

Young offers the relation of mother and daughter to illustrate her view that, by virtue of both generation (age) and position, the subject positions are not reversible. Further, she emphasizes the need to take into account the asymmetry of such relations of difference in order to address their political impact.[3] Young concludes that it is the character of the relationship between one and the other, as well as the fluidly situated subject positions of one and another, that must be considered to achieve the "enlarged thought" of moral regard.

Young's skepticism of the reversibility assumption of communicative ethics is important for teachers to think about. The irreversibility of teacher-student relations means that teachers must beware of relying exclusively on our own experiences of learning and schooling as we consider the standpoints of our students. In the following passage Melissa Orlie speaks to the risks of extending to another a viewpoint that originates with an understanding of oneself:

> When one presumes to adopt another's perspective without reflection on the boundaries of one's own body and location, more often than not one simply imposes the view from there upon another. Indeed, this is the principle way of bolstering one's location and demonstrates the effects involved in doing so. In such cases, one's own view *arrogates* another's and threatens to violate or do away with it altogether. (Orlie, as cited in Young, 1997, p. 45)

In the face of the complexity and the political saturation of asymmetrical reciprocity, Young advocates moral humility which, she says, "starts from the assumption that one cannot see things from the other's perspective and [must] wait to learn by listening to the other person" (1997, p. 49).

I believe that Young's incorporation of the concept of asymmetrical reciprocity to theories of communicative action introduces an *epistemological* event at the core of moral regard. Though Young does not address this possibility directly, she articulates three claims that support my reading. First, in a discussion of understanding across

difference, she advocates an interpretation of understanding that involves "sometimes getting out of ourselves and learning something new" (1997, p. 53). She states that,

> Communication is sometimes a creative process in which the other person offers a new expression, and I understand it not because I am looking for how it fits with given paradigms but because I am open and suspend my assumptions in order to listen. (p. 53)

Second, she proposes that *questions* play a more significant role than in analyses of communicative ethics than is typically articulated. She writes:

> By contrast, a theory of communicative action that [gives] more attention to the asymmetry of speakers, to the ways in which there are always *excesses* and *resistances* despite overlaps in the speakers' interests and understandings, *would attend more to questions* as uniquely important communicative acts. [Italics added] (1997, p. 55)

Finally, and as a consequence to the preceding observations, Young suggests that wonder' which she describes as "openness to the newness and mystery of the other person," and which she means also to include "being able to see one's own position, assumptions, perspective *as strange*, because it has been put in relations to others," [Italics added] (1997, p. 56) [4] is a necessary concomitant to the mutual identification and sharing that constitute moral communication and respect.

I believe that Young's analysis speaks to questions of regard for others in contexts other than communicative ethics. Teachers, I argue, engage differently situated people in communicative ethics projects of the learning variety. What I hope to describe throughout the remainder of this paper are the ways teachers undermine our efforts to consider the viewpoints of differently situated others by neglecting to address the asymmetric elements of their relationships with others. Following Lugones and Frye, I refer to this danger as arrogant perception. As a corollary, which I can entertain only briefly in this short presentation, I suggest that, at least frequently, teachers' institutional subject positions virtually *require* this kind of neglect from them, such that they are put in positions of institutional arrogant perception.

Part Two: Arrogant Perception

In the following passage, Maria Lugones describes a particular, spectacularly unsuccessful, mode of taking the standpoint of the other.

> I am particularly interested here in those many cases in which White/Anglo women do one or more of the following to women of color: they ignore us, render us invisible, stereotype us, leave us completely alone, interpret us as crazy. All of this *while we are in their midst.* (1990, p. 165)

Lugones does not consider White/Anglo women or men to be the only people capable of arrogant perception. She opens her paper with reflections on the ways she was taught, as a young woman of a certain class in Argentina, to perceive others arrogantly, including her mother and the servants who worked in her home. She was taught, and White/Anglo women and men are taught, to *graft the substance of others onto ourselves.* As arrogant perceivers our integrity (or our perceived integrity at least) does not require regard for the other. Lugones writes, "there is no sense of self-loss in them for my own lack of solidity ... they rob me of my solidity through indifference, an indifference they can afford and which sometimes seems studied" (1990, p. 165).

It is interesting to compare the language Lugones uses to build an analysis of arrogant perception distinguishable from an earlier account written by Marilyn Frye. For Frye, the arrogating perceiver fails "to countenance the possibility that the Other is independent, indifferent" (1983a). She or he "is a teleologist, a believer that everything exists and happens for some purpose ... imagining attitudes toward her/himself as the animating motives." [5] The arrogant perceiver is a seer who is, her/himself, "an element of [the other's] environment." "The structures of his/her perception," Frye continues, "are as solid a fact in her situation as are the structures of a chair which seats her too low or of gestures which threaten." Finally, Frye alludes to the significance of the arrogant perceiver's expectations, saying, "the power of expectations is enormous; it should be engaged and responded to attentively with care. The arrogant perceiver engages it with the same unconsciousness with which she/he engages her/his muscles when she/he writes her/his name" (1983a, p. 69). Frye's indictment of the arrogant perceiver leaves little doubt as to the ethical desirability of she or he who inhabits the world in such a fashion. What Frye's rhetoric can obscure, however, is the ordinariness of the capacity for unconscious organization that sustains

arrogant perception. Indeed, I want to suggest that the power of reading Young and Lugones together, lies with the ways Young's account of asymmetrical reciprocity – and her characterization of the problematic assumptions of a model of communicative ethics grounded in reversibility and symmetry – illuminates the step Lugones takes in associating arrogant perception with the apparently mundane inhabitance of a *world*.

Worlds and World-Traveling

> To say of some world that it is "my world" is to make an evaluation. One may privilege one or more worlds in this way for a variety of reasons: for example, because one experiences oneself as an agent in a fuller sense than one experiences "oneself" in other "worlds." (Lugones, 1990, pp. 171-172)

My express interest in this piece is to attend to the stunningly elegant philosophical move that Lugones makes by talking about arrogant perception not as the conscious, usurperous attitude of the bigot but as the unconscious, daily-life-constituting, frame of reference of a subject so *at ease* with her place in "her world" as literally to ignore, render invisible, stereotype, and leave untouched, the others upon whom her perceptions of the world does not depend.

Lugones offers numerous references to what she means by *world*, though she avoids defining it. A world is a place inhabited "by some flesh and blood people." "It can also be inhabited," Lugones says, "by some imaginary people. It may be inhabited by people who are dead or people that the inhabitants of this 'world' met in some other 'world' and now have [presence] in this 'world' in imagination" (1990, p 168). It may be an actual society, a society given a dominant culture's framing of gender, race, or class, or it may be a society given a non-dominant construction. Pressed for brevity I want to assert a reading of world here that situates people in social contexts within which they more or less inhabit. It's important to note Lugones' insistence that people can, and almost inevitably do, inhabit multiple worlds, moving in and out of them, moving from one to another, or inhabiting more than one at a time.

My reading of world focuses on two characteristics: organization and self-other construction. Lugones writes:

> In a "world" some of the inhabitants may not understand or hold the particular construction of them that constructs them in that "world." So there may be "worlds" that construct me in ways that I do not even understand. Or it may be that I understand the construction, but do not hold it of myself. I may not accept it as an

> account of myself, a construction of myself. And yet I may be *animating* such a construction. (1990, p. 169)

Lugones postulates that people who are positioned outside the mainstream of dominant societies *travel* between these worlds as a matter of necessity and survival. She writes extensively of "playfulness," the attitude of those who would want to *world-travel* for purposes of developing loving perception. To represent the work and possibility of world-traveling I select a passage from Lugones' study of her efforts to perceive her mother through loving rather than arrogant perception:

> Loving my mother also required that I see with her eyes, that I go into my mother's world, that I see both of us as we are constructed in her world, that I witness her own sense of herself from within her world. Only through this traveling to her "world" could I identify with her because only then could I cease to ignore her and to be excluded and separate from her. (1990, p. 166)

With the possibility of loving perception and world-traveling established as an aim, then, I want to return to Lugones' account of what it means to be *at ease in a world* for it is from within a position of being maximally at ease, that Lugones suggests people might "have no inclination to travel across 'worlds' or have no experience of world-traveling" (1990, p. 171).

Being at Ease

Lugones identifies four ways of being at ease, and posits that the presence of all of them would equate with a maximal way of being at ease. I add a fifth and explain its derivation below. Being at ease in a world, then, means:

1. Being a fluent speaker in a world, knowing all the norms to be followed, and knowing the words to be spoken. Being a confident speaker.
2. Being normatively happy, agreeing with all the norms, being asked to do just what one wants to do or thinks they ought to do, in the world they inhabit.
3. Being humanly bonded, being with those whom one loves and with those who love one.
4. Having a shared daily history. (Lugones, 1990, p. 171)

and I have added,

5. Being in a position to count on, or have the resources to secure, others' *uptake* of one's emotional expression.

I borrow the idea of social uptake from accounts of emotional experience offered by Sue Campbell. Campbell relates a story she borrows from Marilyn Frye (1983a) in order to illustrate uptake as a factor in emotional expression:

> A woman [snaps] at a gas station attendant who was monkeying with a carburetor the woman had gone to some trouble to adjust: "He became very agitated and yelled at her, calling her a crazy bitch. ... He changed the subject – from the matter of his actions and the carburetor to the matter of her character and sanity. He did not give her anger uptake." (Campbell, 1994, p. 89)

Campbell's nuanced account of the political ramifications of recognizing the strategic value of refusing to offer social uptake deserves more attention than I can offer it here. I do want to cite her conclusion, however, because it introduces questions of the materiality of social uptake that I want to add to the current discussion of being at ease in a world. Campbell claims:

> We require a theory of affect that has a strong focus on the communicative nature of emotional encounters, one that does not regard the failures and achievements of expression as independent of an interpretive requirement. We further require a theory that has something to say about how resources for securing uptake can be unequally distributed so as to reinforce existing patterns of oppression, and how particular emotive criticisms can also serve this political goal. (1994, p. 54)

Though being at ease in a world is not a prerequisite for assessing a world as "my's world," it is a state associated with resistance to world-traveling, and it is this resistance about which I am concerned on behalf of teachers.

In the passage with which I opened this section, Lugones' indictment of the actions of white/Anglo women who perceived women of colour arrogantly ends with the statement "*while we are in their midst.*" Lugones highlighted that passage in her original presentation of the observation. For my purposes in this paper, it is the most critical link in the chain of argument. Arrogant perception is not always a matter of bigotry. Indeed, more often it can be a matter of the worlds into which we are trained, raised to adopt subject positions and, with them, frames of reference within which some people in certain social locations are not visible, *even while they/we are in our/their midst.*

This problem quite likely confronts most of us. Teachers are certainly located within social positions of privilege by virtue of their class, gender, ethnicity, able-bodiedness, as are members of many

professions. What teachers bear uniquely, however, is an institutional location and consequent subject position that, I shall argue in the next section of this paper, frequently requires them to take others into consideration via arrogant perception. Institutional arrogant perception separates teachers from recognizing occasions when world-traveling would be possible, let alone helpful or ethically and epistemologically preferred.

Part Three: Institutional Arrogant Perception

In this section, I sketch an outline of the connections between institutional arrogant perception and the work of Young and Lugones. My concern for institutional arrogant perception stems can be expressed in a series of three postulates:

1. Schools operate as worlds in Lugones' sense of the term; they are places of safety and *social uptake* for some and places of risk, indifference, assimilation, and invisibility for others. Teachers are often people who either have always been *at ease* in schools, or who have come to a place of comfort there.[6] For them, schools are places of safety, comfort, competence, and being at ease. Teachers are usually people who are fluent speakers in that world, who know the norms and the words used. They are frequently normatively happy in school worlds, agreeing with the norms of that world, sensing that they are being asked to do just what they believe they ought to be asked to do.
2. Schools operate in principle and de facto from assumptions of reversibility, symmetry, substitutability, and teleology. Despite decades of rhetorical allegiance to child-centered learning I suggest that schools operate with strong normative profiles framing expectations on every level. I have in mind expectations like compulsory school attendance; assessment practices based on assumptions about what is normal achievement, normal behaviour, or normal definitions of success; and expectations having to do with compliance – with order, rules, authority, or status. Consequently, students and teachers, administrators, parents, legislators, and news media representatives alike presume that school success is available to all students in basically the same way. (Special education, by this logic, is aptly named since it addresses needs that are, by definition, exceptional.)

3. Schooling organization constrains teachers to prioritize institutional frames of reference virtually to the exclusion of other standpoints. Consequently teachers rarely have the time, the freedom of expression, or the normative authority to consider the viewpoints of others with a focus on asymmetrical reciprocity. Teachers must battle to find the room, the right, or even the arena to develop the epistemological skills that would enable them to approach students, their parents, and one another, in ways that do not graft the substance of most others to the service of school purposes. Teachers' institutional relations constrain them from animating playfulness in Lugones' sense, or wonder, in Young's sense. School purposes graft the substance of student others onto the institution; they arrogate students' actions by reading them insistently through institutional frames of reference.[7] Strange or surprising responses are often reduced simply to wrong responses. Rather than greet the complexity of others, their excesses and resistances, with moral and epistemological humility, teachers codify behaviour in accordance with standardized norms. Accordingly, they measure success narrowly.

From the vantage point of either Young's enlarged moral regard or Lugones' loving perception, teachers committed to social justice and inclusive education must resist the forms of arrogant perception endemic to schools. In the final section of this paper I revisit the possibilities for teachers' world-traveling and suggest that analyses of arrogant perception can generate opportunities for teachers to broaden their epistemological worldliness and also highlight avenues for political work advocating institutional change.

Part Four: Loving Perception, Consultation, and Opening to Resistance

Frye and Lugones suggest that, alternative to the arrogant eye, is a loving eye, which is to say "the eye of one who knows that to know the seen, one must consult something other than one's own will and interests and fears and imagination" (Lugones, 1990, pp. 165-166). As clearly as the metaphor of a loving eye refers to a form of moral regard, I want to emphasize, once more, the extent to which it also represents an epistemological regard.

Teachers who want to operate with loving perception can start, I suggest, by incorporating three kinds of consultations into their teaching practice. The first is with students. The second is with communities outside the school and the third, is an indirect consultation with people who challenge teacher's efforts.

To paraphrase Young, in order to honour the asymmetry of their relationships with students, teachers must ask more questions with greater humility and be prepared for students' answers to be surprising. Teacher candidates spend a good deal of time learning to develop questions that will advance their curricular goals: questions that incite higher order thinking. Seldom are they encouraged, on the other hand, to develop questioning strategies that invite ground-shaking revelations of the full and active lives students put aside in order to be in class. Seasoned teachers walk into land-mines of misunderstanding or misconstrual simply because they forget that students' responses to a lesson, or to each other, are affected in profound ways by events outside the school gates.

The narratives teachers speak – of school purposes, curricula, learning outcomes, and assessment protocols – can be read into useful strangeness through the narratives students offer.[8] One teacher shares a writing folder with students within which any of the participants (including the teacher) can place writing they want to share (Orner, Miller, & Ellsworth, 1996, p. 75). The singularity of institutional frames of reference can be challenged by setting aside parts of the day, or the week, or the semester, during which time the prioritization of school worlds over the profusion of students' other worlds is reversed. When students set agendas, invite guests, and allocate resources, they provide opportunities for active listening (mystery and wonder) on the part of students and teachers alike.

Teachers cannot obviate the asymmetry of their institutional positions *vis a vis* students. They can, however, more effectively notice "the boundaries of their own body and location," by paying attention to the conditions of possibility for being at ease in their particular school worlds. Are students fluent in the language of instruction?[9] Are they normatively happy with the values that frame the classroom activities? Do they have opportunities in this space for human bonding? Do they have opportunities to create shared daily histories and can they count on receiving emotional uptake?

Addressing these questions can put teachers at odds with institutional mandates. As Lugones' discussion has shown, the situation

need not be Orwellian. A coach who confronts a player about an absence from a championship game, without creating space for the multiplicity of that player's worlds, without retaining an openness to surprise, arrogates that player's substance. A counselor who remarks on the lack of ambition of a student who takes her alienation from school purposes to the streets, or the shopping mall, potentially misreads her resistance as apathy. In such circumstances, a move toward loving perception involves conscious activity to mark, and step away from, the institutional frame of reference long enough to greet the other with epistemological humility.[10]

A second set of consultations, with communities and discourses outside of the school, addresses what Campbell referred to as the materiality of emotional uptake. Students from cultural or ethnic groups whose social positions deny them sufficient material resources to ensure that their emotions are taken up are more frequently misread by teachers. Anger appropriate to a given experience of racist or homophobic baiting, for instance, can be construed within school zero tolerance policies as grounds for dismissal. Professional development workshops retrench rather than contest school frames of reference. They are typically organized around the better achievement of school purposes and can not generate the kind of openness to strangeness that is necessary to develop genuinely creative appreciation of differently situated others. In contrast, teachers involvements in cultural events, arts-based performances, and collaborative projects in varied communities are more likely to offer them opportunities to world-travel.[11] Teachers who have not experienced surprise or wonder in the face of social diversity are not in an adequate position, epistemologically, to offer nuanced appreciation of students' responses within the classroom.

The third set of consultations comes into play in those contexts where teachers have the most at stake in their professional purposes, that is, when they most fear opposition and when they most passionately believe in particular values. In her paper, "On Being White" (1983b) Marilyn Frye describes an encounter with a Black woman who had attended a talk she'd given on the subject of anti-racism, Frye describes the woman as having "exploded with rage" in response to the narrative Frye offered regarding her work with a group of white women engaged in unlearning their racism. Frye writes:

> She seemed to be enraged by our making decisions, by our acting, by our doing anything. It seemed like doing nothing would be racist

> and whatever we did would be racist just because *we* did it. ... It seemed that what our critic was saying must be right but what she was saying didn't seem to make any sense.
>
> She seemed crazy to me.
>
> That stopped me. (1983b, p. 112)

Frye opened the possibility of world-traveling to herself in the moment that she read the resistance of her critic – the anger of her critic – with surprise, with wonder, with a suspicion of the capacity to name another "crazy," and with a readiness to learn from newness.

Students resist having the substance of their lives grafted to the being and purposes of schooling. Resistance is one of the ways others encourage us to step away from our arrogant perceptions.

A Concluding Appeal

Even with the best of efforts, teachers' capacity to open to the standpoints of differently situated others and thereby communicate more effectively and creatively with colleagues and parents as well as students, is constrained profoundly by the systemic, singular, instrumentality of institutionalized schooling. The readings of asymmetrical reciprocity and arrogant perception that I have offered in this paper indicate clearly that systems of reference, interpretation and/or analysis geared only to school purposes – shaped by assumptions of sameness, interchangeability, and transparency – predispose practitioners to errors of arrogant perception. The problems inherent in normalization are beyond the scope of this paper, but several key reforms are supported by this analysis.

First, taking seriously the epistemological work required to open to the standpoints of differently situated others requires curriculum design and implementation practices that place a higher premium on the processes by which teachers and students develop capacities to communicate. The enlarged moral regard of which Young writes is surely to be advocated as a teaching ideal,[12] yet curriculum reforms driven by learning outcomes alone seem to be predicated on the assumption that one need only decide to adopt an adequate moral point of view in order to make it so.

Second, and probably most radically, teachers need to be afforded time for preparation and time allotted with the program of classroom work – to address consultations of the sort listed above as part of their teaching load. Co-curricular activities that offer students opportunities to practice the epistemological tasks associated with a capacity to

receive others with wonder, to perceive their own positions within society as strange would also be valuable.[13]

Finally, it seems to me that educational research must address the questions raised by Young's account of asymmetrical reciprocity and Lugones' account of world-traveling. Investigations of student resistance have the potential to identify systemic errors of arrogant perception, to read educational systems as strange. The pedagogical ramifications of not only learner multiplicity (such as are take up by proponents of multiple intelligence theory) but also of discourse multiplicity beg attention. And educational administration practices and policy development strategies that privilege the conditions of possibility for loving perception rather than arrogant perception are in desperate demand.

NOTES

1. In this paper I refer primarily to teachers' knowledge of students, however, the themes addressed here apply readily to teachers' knowledge of one another as well as of parents, supervisors, or allies in the larger public domain.
2. It's useful to distinguish between symmetry and sameness. Liberal practices of respect for difference can often accommodate differences of kind, category, instantiation. People differ with respect to all sorts of registers: gender, race, age, height, food preferences, pain thresholds, and so on. What symmetry refers to is the way another person is regarded, or respected, as a person. On this substantive level, the regard for one is, in liberal terms, the equivalent or symmetrical to the regard for another. This form of symmetry establishes many of our expectations about coming to know one another: that respect is reciprocal, that what one owes to an other the other owes to one (see Boyd, 2004).
3. See also Martha Minow's (1991) analysis of the dilemma of difference.
4. Unlike Young, Ellsworth (1997) favours an account that rejects understanding as impossible and, politically suspect.
5. I have changed the pronouns of Frye's original because, in the current context, both men and women are presented as capable of arrogant perception.
6. Teachers whose situatedness does not prepare them to be at ease in schools, by virtue of speaking English as a less than comfortable second language, or by inhabiting social positions that are not read within the prevalent hegemonic norms as fully entitled to social uptake, clearly face complications I have not addressed in this paper. I would argue that, institutionally at least, these teachers can be constrained to perceive student others arrogantly insofar as they can be required to act as if

students are – for school purposes – the same. Where they inhabit those positions vulnerably, they may have fewer options than other teachers to resist such institutional mandates.

7. Here I note that schools are constituted to require that students represent themselves via the normative frames of reference dominant within the school and the wider community. Addressing this form of productive power is beyond my reach in this paper. I have discussed it elsewhere (see Ford, 2003).

8. Inviting student narratives is not risk-free. See Alison Jones' account of teaching a feminist theory and education course with Maori academic Kuni Jenkins. Jones describes problems that arise as Pakeha (white) students express entitlement to learning from their Maori and Pacific Island classmates. Teachers can make similar errors, expecting students to voluntarily participate in their efforts to democratize the classroom. (See Jones, 1999).

9. Lisa Delpit widens this notion of linguistic fluency by referring to "cultural codes of power." She advocates direct instruction whereby teachers might allude to linguistic and social conventions even – or especially – when these contravene the linguistic and social conventions predominant in students' homes. Acknowledging the gap, providing space for students to negotiate the travelling from one world to another, inviting students to help one another as well as the teacher, to negotiate these gaps collaboratively, are all strategies consistent with moral regard grounded in asymmetrical reciprocity. (See Delpit, 1995).

10. Speaking to a recent class of teacher candidates on the subject of implications of educational policy for children's mental health, Betsy Martin of the Thunder Bay Children's Centre, spoke of errors that teachers make vis à vis students who experience limited future orientation due to Post-Traumatic Stress. To illustrate her point, Martin asked the group to consider the hypothetical possibility that they had just learned they had only two years to live. When questioned, only four of 30 people indicated that within such a context they would choose to complete their professional program. Twenty-six people chose to leave school. The exercise opened new interpretive possibilities for the teacher candidates when faced with student resistance or disinterest as it dissolved the hidden assumption that students would share a similar orientation to the future.

11. Consider again the significance Freire placed on teacher's labouring together with, and at the workplaces of, the students of their literacy classes. The vocabulary to be used in class was taken from the contexts within which the students made sense of their lives.

12. There is considerable irony as I write this paper the week of two national radio broadcast news stories addressing the need for cultural sensitivity training for soldiers and for business people are aired. In both, the need for cultural sensitivity is aligned with recognition of the possibility

for mis-perception and, correspondingly failed collaborations. Education is frequently identified with moral regard yet curriculum reforms in the United States and Canada are dominated in this same time frame by movements toward standardization, intensified curriculum content, and rhetoric of accountability.

13. There are youth who argue that they are already engaged in the development of global connections capable of informing and transforming educational practice (McCarthy, Hudak, Miklaucic, & Saukko, 1999; Vauto, 2004).

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