Resisting Resistors: Resistance in Critical Pedagogy Classrooms

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It is my contention that *resistance* is not adequately problematised in the critical pedagogy literature. Even while many writing about critical pedagogy support a Foucauldian understanding of power, resistance to power is often cast in terms which contradict this. Nowhere is this more evident than in discussions about resistances of students to teachers. Situating resistance with students assumes that resistance to social inequality is only initiated by teachers; that students may not already be resistors to social inequality prior to coming to the classroom; and that teachers may not also resist social inequality. By positing resistance with students, teachers, including critical pedagogues, never have to examine their own resistances.

Je soutiens ici que le concept de *résistance* n'est pas problématisé de manière adéquate dans la littérature relevant de la pédagogie critique. Bien que beaucoup d'écrits relatifs à la pédagogie critique soutiennent l'approche Foucaldienne du pouvoir, la résistance au pouvoir est souvent présentée en des termes qui contredisent celle-ci. Nulle part ceci n'est plus évident que dans les débats à propos des résistances des élèves aux professeurs. Situer la résistance au niveau des étudiants laisse présumer que la résistance à l'inégalité sociale est initiée seulement par les enseignants; que les étudiants peuvent ne pas être des résistants à l'inégalité sociale avant de venir en salle de classe; et que les enseignants puissent aussi ne pas résister à l'inégalité sociale. En positionnant la résistance du côté des étudiants, les enseignants, y compris les pédagogues critiques, n'ont jamais eu à examiner leurs propres résistances.

One of the most difficult challenges for those who want social change is to find ways to resist unjust social structures. Because "critical pedagogy calls into question forms of subordination that create inequities among different groups as they live out their lives" (Giroux, 1991, p. 118), it is not surprising that calling for resistance is an important part of critical pedagogy literature. Henry Giroux thinks, for example, that resistance is

the point of critical pedagogy. He argues that resistance is the praxis of learning an intolerance of social inequality (Giroux, 1992).

It is my contention that *resistance* is not adequately problematised in the critical pedagogy literature. Even while many writing about critical pedagogy support a Foucauldian understanding of power, resistance to power is often cast in terms which contradict this. Nowhere is this more evident than in discussions about resistances of students to teachers. Few of the critical pedagogues of whom I am aware have considered that teachers may also resist. Notable exceptions are Patti Lather who argues that teachers must "explore what these [student] resistances have to teach us about our own impositional [resistant] tendencies" (Lather, 1991, p. 76) and Jennifer Gore who writes of being aware that students may resist her own resistant regime of truth (Gore, 1993).

In a special issue of the *Canadian Journal of Education* (1992), this observation was made in the overview article:

> Three assumptions should influence such an exploration [of feminist pedagogy]: first, *both teachers and students resist*; second, patterns of resistance are race-, class-, and gender-specific; and third, the *sources of student resistance* may come from multiple political and/or personal locations and is (sic) not necessarily progressive or reactionary. [italics added] (Briskin & Coulter, 1992, p. 259)

Any headway the first two assumptions may make in including both teachers and students as resistors is undermined by the third assumption which focusses on students and recognizes only student resistance coming from multiple sources. Situating resistance with students assumes that resistance to social inequality is only initiated by teachers; that students may not already be resistors to social inequality prior to coming to the classroom; and that teachers may not also resist social inequality. By positing resistance with students, teachers, including critical pedagogues, never have to examine their own resistances.

Those writing about critical pedagogy often valorize resistance, implying that resistance is an impetus to end social injustices (Freire, 1989; Giroux, 1992). Paulo Freire, for example, argued that resistance is constitutive of his entire model of "pedagogy of the oppressed." A pedagogy of the oppressed is to empower individuals towards awareness of and resistance to their class position within a socio-economic hierarchy. His model is directed at the empowerment of students to resist economic structures of inequality. Conversely, resistance has been seen as negative – an unwillingness by students to take up ideas and strategies of critical

teachers who are attempting to effect social change. Patti Lather's work in *Getting Smart: Feminist Research and Pedagogy Within the Postmodern* (1991) in part questions why students resist techniques and content of critical pedagogy.

Freire, too, thought that students may resist critical pedagogy. According to Freire, students must overcome "false consciousness" if they are to resist. False consciousness is evident when students resist a pedagogy which makes possible resistance to economic domination. Interestingly, Patti Lather cautions against seeing "student resistance to our classroom practices as false consciousness" (1991, p. 76). Casting resistance *to* critical pedagogy as false consciousness opens up the possibility that any resistance to pedagogy as is false consciousness, including those instances in which students may resist pedagogies which contribute to social inequality.

Resistance and Social Change

Often social change seems possible only through revolution in which power is taken from those thought to control social institutions including education. If taken seriously, this would require that educators and students overthrow the power of perhaps principals or superintendents. It may, in the case of Alberta and now Ontario, require overthrowing provincial legislatures. The prospects of carrying this out are daunting as well as problematic to many. Realizing that revolution is unlikely leads to resignation – if revolution cannot be achieved, neither, then, it is thought, can social change. Fortunately, social change does happen without revolution through day to day actions of resistance. Social change and social inertia are both effects of everyday resistances between and among individuals and to social institutions. Understanding that both social change and social inertia can happen in local sites through individual and group resistance requires another way of understanding power.

One of Michel Foucault's important contributions was to show that an analytic of repressive power, as exemplified by prohibitions in Law set out by a sovereign, has been appropriated as a means to understand the way in which power operates generally. Power has come to be understood as "the capacity (literally or metaphorically) to lay down the law, and hence with persons or forces who possess this capacity" (Minson, 1985, p. 42). Foucault argued that "an analytics of power" must be constructed "that no

longer takes law as a model and a code. We must ... conceive of ... power without the king" (Foucault, 1980a, pp. 90-91).

Foucault showed that power is productive. Productive power produces subjectivities, institutions, and social practices and is exercised through disciplinary mechanisms of surveillance, reporting, and classification. Power exercised by sexologists through surveillance, reporting, and classification in the latter part of the last century, for example, produced *the homosexual* and institutions to understand and punish the homosexual. Social practices to exclude homosexuals as well as practices engaged in by those who took up this identity were also produced. As Foucault wrote: "power produces knowledge ... power and knowledge directly imply one another; there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations" (Foucault, 1979, p. 27).

Foucault understood resistance in relation to power. Any discourse of power can be reversed into a discourse of resistance (Simons, 1995, p. 83). For example, discourses of sexologists which produced homosexuality "as a species" also enabled political work to be done by those who took on this identity. This exercise of power through resistance by homosexuals, in turn, produced anti-gay identities and organizations to resist gay rights.

> There are no relations of power without resistances; the latter are all the more real and effective because they are formed right at the point where relations of power are exercised; resistance to power does not have to come from elsewhere to be real, nor is it inexorably frustrated through being the compatriot of power. It exists all the more by being in the same place as power; hence like power, resistance is multiple. (Foucault, 1980b, p. 142)

What is clear from the example of the homosexual is that resistance cannot be understood strictly to describe attempts to achieve social equality. Gays and lesbians, in this example, are not the only resistors. Those who disagree with gay rights or with the notion that rights for gays and lesbians is a social equality issue at all are also resistors. Since everyone can exercise or perform acts of resistance, it is necessary, then, to distinguish those resistances that reproduce the status quo from those that have social change as their impetus and those that seem to have no effect.

Just as power is not owned and exerted by those in charge, resistance is not owned by those who are oppressed. Both power and resistance are exercised in relation to actions of others. Not only do students sometimes

resist exercise of power by teachers, teachers often resist this resistance by students. A belief that resistance in classrooms is unidirectional – students resist teachers or that students must learn to resist a more powerful inequality – assumes that power is repressive – exerted by those who own it on those who resist it. A notion of resistance which assumes a unidirection to resistance reinvokes top-down repressive power which Foucault rejected. Top-down repressive power is also assumed when resistance is thought to occur only in relation to social inequality and not also to the status quo. When resistance is seen only in relation to social inequality, power is construed as possessed by those in power who have an interest in maintaining social inequalities and resisted by those who want change. When resistance is conceived only in relation to social inequality, it is not possible to notice that those who do not want change are also resistors. Moreover, if resistance is thought to be only to the status quo and students are thought to be the only resistors, one is left with the implication that educators work to maintain the status quo.

Since resistance occurs wherever power is exercised, it is important that critical pedagogies expand their understanding of resistance so that resistance not be seen only as student obstinance to good pedagogy or as a valorized opposition to social inequality. Social equality can also be resisted and this resistance can occur in classrooms by either students or teachers. Teachers who resist social change may and often do resist interventions or resistances by students who wish a more inclusive curriculum and a more democratic pedagogy.

When Foucault's notion of power and resistance are taken seriously, it is possible to notice the multiple ways that resistance occurs in classrooms – students to teachers, students to each other, and teachers to students – and that each of these set of resistances are multiple. For example, a white student may resist a teacher because she is Black and female; a teacher may resist a student who undermines her pedagogy; a student may resist another student who seems too enthusiastic; a student may resist another student who uses his male privilege in the classroom; a teacher may resist a student who wants a more inclusive classroom; a student may resist a teacher who wants a more inclusive classroom. What must be further explored in talk about resistance is *what* and *who* is resisted when resistance occurs.

Recognizing that resistance is multiple also undermines the student-teacher binary. Freire is one of the few critical pedagogues who, by positing that students are also teachers, problematises the teacher-student

binary. Most other writers in the critical pedagogy literature leave the student-teacher binary intact by strategizing how to contend with students who must learn to resist social inequality or students who create problems by resisting critical pedagogy. Students are cast as either lacking or delinquent and consequently the boundary or border between teachers and students is maintained by establishing teachers as those who can remedy a lack of resistance or delinquent resistance in students. Maintaining the student-teacher binary depends upon not noticing that student and teacher identities can be claimed as unified identities by ignoring other overlapping features of students and teachers. In any classroom, there is the possibility that some students will resist the teacher, the teacher will resist some or all students, and that some students will resist each other and in each of these cases this resistance may be because of pedagogical approach, gender, interest, race, learning styles, class, approaches to social justice, sexuality, and so on. In each situation of resistance, there may be a number of more appropriate ways to group participants than according to their status as teacher or student. Noticing these other ways exposes the artifice of a strict adherence to student or teacher identities in particular contexts, including classrooms.

What Makes A Critical Classroom Critical?

If, as Henry Giroux claims, resistance is the praxis of intolerance of social inequality, and, if it is accepted that resistance, like power, is multiple, teachers may learn to resist social inequalities as a result of interaction with students who are already doing this work and students may learn this resistance from other students as well as teachers. As well, a critical classroom is one in which it is possible to resist social inequality in the classroom and not just as a task to be performed outside the classroom. When the work of resistance is thought to be necessary in relation to structures outside the classroom, classrooms are assumed to be innocent sites free from social inequity (Ellsworth, 1992).

How can a critical person bring others to resist social inequality? As I indicated earlier, this question cannot be answered without paying attention to *whom* is resisting and *what* is being resisted. When one starts to pay attention to these questions, it becomes clear that learning resistance to social inequality in classrooms is fraught with complexities. As a praxis of intolerance to inequality, resistance is differentially available in the classroom to those who are treated unequally in the larger culture. The dynamics of a Native child attempting to convince white

classmates of the importance of resisting those who would resist Native land claims are not the same as the dynamics of a white child resisting social inequality of Natives among other whites. As an outsider whose people have been treated unequally, the Native child risks dismissal and stereotyping when he or she attempts to talk his or her resistance into classrooms. This is true for those who occupy other outsider positions as well. Consider, for example, the lesbian or gay student in the classroom described by Linda Eyre in which many students did not believe the information contained in an assigned essay on heterosexism. "Most men and a few women questioned Wicks' statistics on the number of people who define themselves as lesbian or gay. Some men said Wicks exaggerated the extent of homophobia in schools" (Eyre, 1993, p. 277). How do lesbian or gay teachers or students in this classroom begin to resist this resistance by insiders to their unequal treatment? How do they convince insiders to resist?

Resisting or convincing others of the importance of resistance often requires speaking. Gayatri Spivak asks, "can the subaltern speak?" (1988). With this question she considers what it means for someone who is not part of a dominant discourse to attempt to speak within a discourse whose terms are not controlled by her. In order to speak about resistance, outsiders must translate their experiences into the terms and values of the inside, thus defusing their resistance. The subaltern can speak within her own discourse but in order to speak with those who do not countenance her values and assumptions, she must abandon her own discourse or not be understood. Yet, what *is* understood as she speaks into the dominant discourse are the terms of the dominant discourse. Resistance through speaking is even more difficult, when it is assumed that classrooms are universal communities in which any one person in the group can resist in the same way as any other.

Resistance in the Classroom

According to Foucault one of the ways in which resistance is possible is through transgression of the limits which construct subjectivity. Transgression is the "illumination of limits ... transgression is not a site beyond limits, but consists in work on them" (Simons, 1995, pp. 69, 71). Foucault thought that limits could be transgressed by becoming aware of the ways in which limits frame one's life. This is certainly work which can be done in the critical classroom. Resistance consists of uncovering hierarchies, their construction, what is included and excluded and

therefore refusing or resisting their ultimate truth (Giroux, 1992, p. 69). By exploring how limits frame one's life, one can become aware of the ways in which these limits contribute to social inequality. It may be possible to notice, for example, that the limits which construct one's identity as white are the very same limits which keep people of colour outside and unequal.

In his own life, Foucault attempted to transgress the limits of his identity by seeking out "potentially transformative 'limit-experiences'... deliberately pushing his mind and body to the breaking point ... thus starkly revealing how distinctions central to the play of true and false are pliable, uncertain, contingent" (Miller 1993, p. 30). Foucault thought limit-experience to include "all those experiences rejected by our civilization" (Foucault, cited in Miller, 1993, p. 200). It is unlikely that classrooms can be sites of transgressive limit experiences but it may be possible for classrooms to be places where participants learn to resist social inequality by playing with or parodying the limits of identities. Playing with the limits of identity may make it possible to expose these limits or at least may make it possible for those who have been unable to speak in classrooms to resist by acting. As Maria Lugones writes:

> When in one 'world' I animate, for example, that 'world's' caricature of the person I am in the other 'world.' I can have both images of myself and to the extent that I can materialize or animate both images at the same time I become an ambiguous being .... One then sees any particular 'world' with these double edges and sees absurdity in them and so inhabits oneself differently. Given that latins are constructed in Anglo 'worlds' as sterotypically intense – intensity being a central characteristic of at least one of the anglo stereotypes of latins – and given that many latins, myself included, are genuinely intense, I can say to myself 'I am intense' and take a hold of the double meaning. And furthermore, I can be stereotypically intense or be the real thing and, if you are Anglo, you do not know when I am which *because* I am Latin-American. As Latin-American I am an ambiguous being, a two-imaged self: I can see that gringos see me as sterotypically intense because I am, as a Latin-American, constructed that way but I may or may not *intentionally* animate the stereotype or the real thing knowing that you may not see it in anything other than in the stereotypical construction This ambiguity is funny and not just funny, it is survival-rich. (Lugones, 1987, pp. 13, 14)

As a resistant strategy in classrooms, students and teachers might play with or parody stereotypical notions of themselves by exaggerating perceived characteristics of, say, masculinity, femininity, whiteness, or

heterosexuality. Critical thinking about limits would need to be done in advance of parodying limits because, if the participants in the classroom are not already aware of the artifice of limits, playing with stereotypes can as easily consolidate a category as disrupt it, as Maria Lugones's example illustrates. In a context in which people take their identities as real, playing with gender or sexual identities, for example, may reinforce the notion that identities are natural and that the identity of the performer is deviant. For this reason, playing with the limits of identity as acts of transgressive resistance, like speaking, may be undesirable for the person whose performance reconsolidates him or her as deviant.

If participants are willing, playing with the limits of identity in classrooms, will allow opportunities to parody the student-teacher binary. Parodies of student and teacher may make it possible to recognize those instances in which maintenance of this binary is not necessary for classroom learning as well as those instances in which these identities are necessary if other educational goals are to be accomplished. Whether participants in critical classrooms will wish to maintain the boundary between teacher and student in instances which do not have educational purposes or which contribute to social inequality will be a valuable test of the injunction to resist social inequality.

Closing Remarks

While I agree that learning resistance is important in classrooms, I believe it is necessary for those writing in critical pedagogy to be more clear that there are multiple resistances in classrooms and the implications of these multiple resistances rather than situating resistance only with students and only in relation to social inequality or critical pedagogy. As well, more needs to be said about whether only those designated as teacher can teach others to resist. Both teachers and students can and do resist attempts to change the status quo. Because teachers do often resist change to the status quo, it will be important to recognize that learning about resistance in classrooms can be initiated by students who already oppose social inequality. It will be important for those writing about critical pedagogy to seriously explore how or whether resistance to social inequality can be actively taken up in critical classrooms. Because resistance will occur in classrooms whether or not it is acknowledged, more attention will need to be given to what resistances are possible – is resistant speech equitably available, for example? – and what resistances are desirable – are, for example, limit experiences desirable? With a focus

on these and other questions, participants in critical classrooms will have a better sense of what is involved in a call for resistance as the praxis of intoleration of social inequality.

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Book Reviews

Ricker, E.W. & Wood, B.A. (Eds). (1995). *Historical perspectives on educational policy in Canada: Issues, debates and case studies*. Toronto: Canadian Scholar's Press, 298 pp. (Softcover).

The academic papers published here were first presented at Dalhousie University in October 1986 at the fourth biennial conference of the Canadian History of Education Association/Association canadienne d'histoire de l'éducation – "a special moment in time," according to the editors. The nine-year delay in publication (accompanied by the demise of Dalhousie's teacher-education program) reveals as much about educational policy issues in contemporary Canada as it does about the discipline of educational history.

First, educational history. Eric Ricker begins with an overview of recent historiography in a manner reminiscent of J. Donald Wilson. Then come many of the country's leading practioners of the mid-1980's – scholars representing universities from Atlantic to Pacific whose research interests span the 19th and 20th centuries. Some of the better papers are highly theoretical, like Harold Silver's "Policy Problems in Time" or R.D. Gidney and W.P.J. Millar's "Schooling and the Idea of Merit." Other exemplary papers are narrowly focused in time and space, like Michael Owen on Cape Breton Island in the 1910's or Wilson on British Columbia rural schools of the 1920's, while still others range widely over time (John E. Lyons on Saskatchewan) or across space (Nancy M. Sheehan on World War One's impact on provincial educational policies).

Such eclecticism might enliven an academic conference or brighten the pages of a scholarly journal, but it hardly bodes well for an integrated book. The authors seem to have been given free rein to fit their own research interests under the vague umbrella title of *Historical Perspectives on Educational Policy in Canada*. Even that broad a title, however, cannot contain J.L. Granatstein's polemic on contemporary university standards or Bruce Curtis's treatment of punishment and moral character in early modern British schools. (Why these tangential papers

but nothing on Aboriginal, feminist, poverty, or racist themes in Canadian education – issues that might have given the volume more of an edge?)

The original purpose was even more grandiose: to publish a complete record of the Dalhousie conference – all 49 papers and commentaries. This proved far too ambitious an undertaking, given scholarly egos and unfortunate funding difficulties. "Not all participants wished their papers to be considered for this volume and some who were interested initially decided to withdraw in the face of the publication delay" (p. xii). Despite the fine essays ultimately included, then, the resulting publication seems to be an example of "rump eclecticism;" papers that did not (or could not) get published elsewhere during the nine-year interval are included here.

This nine-year publication delay partially explains the lack of congruence between conference papers and the practical concerns of contemporary policy makers. Historians, of course, should always have the freedom to pursue subjects that interest them, and academic conferences should reflect this freedom. But with declining public-sector subsidies, book publishers have to live by market-place concerns. And through the 1980's and early 1990's, educational policy makers dealt with such divergent and contentious issues as funding cutbacks, inclusion of special-needs children, North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), calls for back-to-basics, and challenges from private schools and charter schools.

Should we try to bridge the gap between the legitimate demands of historical scholarship and the political requirements of contemporary policy makers? Several articles in this collection do so, without sacrificing scholarly integrity. William B. Hamilton's account of Nova Scotia higher education in the 1830's is a fitting backdrop to that province's current struggle to "rationalize" its post-secondary institutions. Paul Axelrod's critique of *The Great Brain Robbery* should be required reading for all university administrators who naïvely believe they have the final answer to the on-going battle between tradition and innovation.

But how many policy makers will read Hamilton or Axelrod, let alone an entire collection of historical essays? As an alternative, should we bring historians and policy makers together in conference or brain-storming settings? Alas, the expectations of the two groups are apt to be too divergent. (One such session held in Ontario some years ago threatened to collapse when policy makers attacked historians for not being able to solve contemporary problems and not willing to predict the future!)

Another possibility is offered by Ronald Manzer in *Public Schools and Political Ideas: Canadian Educational Policy in Historical Perspective* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994). Manzer, a political scientist, presents 150 years of educational policy-making in a tightly-organized, well-written and easily digestible manner. Manzer's approach, however, is all policy and no action. He ignores crying children, bored teenagers, angry parents, stressed-out teachers – all the over-wrought participants in the school dramas of the past 200 years.

So we continue searching for ways to unite the concerns of educational history and contemporary policy-making. Unfortunately, despite some fine individual articles, Ricker and Wood's *Historical Perspectives on Educational Policy in Canada* fails to bridge the chasm. Meanwhile, Dalhousie University's department of education has been abolished, a victim of policy makers!

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Crawley, M. (1995). *Schoolyard Bullies: Messing with British Columbia's Education System.* Victoria, BC: Orca Book Publishers, 186 pp. (Softcover).

Year 2000 was a 1990 plan for sweeping progressive reform of elementary/secondary education issued by the British Columbia Ministry of Education. It was largely inspired by the recommendations of the Sullivan Royal Commission on Education which had reported in 1988. *Schoolyard Bullies* chronicles and critically reviews events and principal characters in the British Columbia *Year 2000* drama. Crawley has manifestly done his homework as an investigative reporter/researcher. One of the real strengths of this book is the breadth and scope of perspective it offers from key players in the *Year 2000* scenario. *Schoolyard Bullies* packs an impressively rich, thick, and multi-perspective description of what happened to elementary and secondary education in British Columbia in the wake of the Sullivan report (1988) into its slim 180 pages.

Bullies is eminently readable. Cast in journalistic rather than academic style and format, the book is much more accessible to noneducationist audiences than are most books focused on particular

educational policy issues or educational policy dramas. On the other hand, the quality of Crawley's writing is variable, even within the accepted rubrics of journalistic prose. Although, on the whole *Bullies* is well and incisively written, it is awkward in places and its organization is not a strong point. Overall, the text reads well, but stylistic signs of haste are evident.

There are two major problems with *Bullies*. First is Crawley's seemingly too pliable – nearly amorphous, in fact – critique of the *Year 2000* process and its aftermath. Second is his tendency to reduce British Columbian's rejection of the *Year 2000* process because he perceives its architects intended something other than what was understood by the public. The reason for the misunderstanding was poor communication, poor implementation, and political exploitation. Perhaps the most telling insight Crawley brings to his critique, however, is precisely the need for implementation theorists to take account of politics in both their critical enterprise and in their implementation prescriptions. A key lesson Crawley extracts from the BC experience with *Year 2000* is the time-honoured, but mostly elided, one of the overweening importance of politics in any educational reform enterprise.

> Education is a political issue and, as a result, so is education reform. Not only do the change-makers need to ensure that staff accept the proposed reforms, the public must accept them as well or else in the political feedback loop that is democracy, the people at the top – the politicians – will extinguish the reforms with one quick puff. By ignoring the need to communicate to the public, the academic literature on education change assumes that the school system exists in a vacuum and that the political leaders in charge of the reforms don't have a stake in the way the public perceives the changes. (pp. 113-114)

Despite this eloquent burst of bedrock insight, Crawley closes his analysis with what comes close to a plea for some sort of disconnection between politics and educational reform. Citing University of British Columbia professor Marv Wideen's observation that what BC schools really need now is a "period of benign neglect" from politicians (p. 174), Crawley notes evasively that "benign neglect probably sounds like a good idea to many" (p. 175). He then concludes that "less interference would allow the best vestiges of Year 2000 to be nurtured and take hold in the system" and that "education battles – whether during or between elections – *must* [italics added] be fought on substantive issues, not slogans and sound bites and controversy" (p. 174). The latter prescription comes close to insisting

that politicians stop meddling and making political hay with educational reform. Or perhaps it is only a suggestion that educational footballers like Mike Harcourt at least not make long wild passes into the end zone like the famous "report card on Year 2000 is in and it's failed" declaration with which he kicked off the 1993 New Democrat Party (NDP) election campaign. After all, Crawley does allow that "ultimately, education is a political and ideological statement about how we want children to be" (p. 174).

An Achilles heel bares itself, however, in Crawley's critique of the policy substance of *Year 2000* itself and of the policy that distilled out of the "confusion, consternation, and chaos" (p. 75) surrounding the *Year 2000* process. The weakness is his rather facile acceptance of currently fashionable nostrums for righting the bark of public education and delivering at last on the ever-elusive goals of excellence and equity. Although he does not use the popular "excellence for all" oxymoron (Paquette, 1994, p. 228) he does use various semantic near-equivalents. One example will suffice:

> The Intermediate (or Graduation) Program is based on the belief that all students can learn and succeed and that no student should leave school without the knowledge and skills that are needed for work, community life or further learning. (p. 127)

To say that all students should leave school with the knowledge and skills needed for work, community life, or further education is, after all, quite a different thing from saying that "if a public school is working properly, it should allow kids [not all kids but a reasonable proportion of such kids] who don't have all the advantages – money at home, parents who care – to blossom and succeed" (p. 168). The former sweeping excellence-for-all prescription is utopian nonsense guaranteed to result in policy charade. The latter is an endorsement of the most important equity justification for public involvement in education.

Crawley's overall assessment of what is best in the *Year 2000* legacy from *A Legacy for Learners* (Sullivan, 1988) weaves its way quite eclectically and inconsistently between public-sector schools of choice (but not charter schools) and diverse curricula for multiple intelligences on the one hand, and core curriculum with subject focus and/or with subject integration on the other, between school and teacher accountability on the one hand, and student responsibility on the other. On balance, Crawley seems to favour (although not very clearly) pursuing the enigma of highly equitable diversity. In more ways than one, the implicit vision of

educational purpose and process which distills out of Crawley's analysis and critique is hauntingly similar to that embedded in Ontario's common Curriculum (Ontario Ministry of Education and Training, 1995). In such a vision, however, as Emberley and Newell suggest, there is little possibility that students can transcend solipsism or social conformity. Education with no or few canons, and again, on balance, that seems to be Crawley's preferred vision of educational policy and practice, "locks individuals in their own private worlds or, worse, merely mirrors back the tastes of global society" (Emberley & Newell, 1994, p. 47). Furthermore, equity becomes a largely empty concept when there is but minimal consensus on what students should know and be able to do. Where no convincing answer exists to the "equity of what" question, there can neither equity nor meaningful evaluation of equity.

If you want a compressed, lucid, and thoroughly interesting account of how the Sullivan commission report mutated into *Year 2000* and how *Year 2000* ran aground on the reefs of political reality, read this book. Do not, however, expect a coherent vision of what education in the year 2000 and beyond might become.

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Salter, L. & Hearn, A. (1996). *Outside the lines: Issues in interdisciplinary research.* Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 212 pp. (Hardcover).

Originally a report undertaken at the initiative of the authors with the support of the then President (Dr. Paule Leduc) of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, this well written text seeks to explore the nature and potential of interdisciplinary research. The authors argue that too many academics promote interdisciplinary research without being aware of the problems associated with this form of knowledge creation, and in this regard the authors let several practitioners express in their own words the experience and practice of interdisciplinarity. However, to its credit, the text is more than a collection of differing viewpoints, for the authors present, not only a history of both disciplinarity and interdisciplinarity, but also a review of the major problems confronting interdisciplinary research as well as some possible solutions.

Interdisciplinarity itself is defined as any challenge to the limitations or premises of the prevailing organization of knowledge or its representation in an institutionally recognized form (p. 43). Despite this definitional broadness, the authors delineate two major variants: instrumental and conceptual interdisciplinarity, where the former is characterized by a pragmatic, nonsynthetic, problem-solving approach, and the latter by unity-seeking with respect to all areas of knowledge or by a critical attitude toward disciplines as dominative upholders of different power structures. In any case, each of these variants have their problems, and the authors make a significant contribution to interdisciplinary research by clarifying these difficulties.

With respect to instrumental disciplinarity, there is the problem of bringing together the insights of different disciplines when terms and the significance of terms are differently perceived in each discipline. For example, it takes years to learn the language of law and how that language is used. Thus, sociologists, who wish to make use of legal terminology, can easily fall into misunderstandings, and the same is true for those in law who wish to make use of sociological concepts (p. 141). Yet here the authors fail to consider the possibility of texts designed to overcome such difficulties. In other words, it is by no means proven that a text on sociology for lawyers or on law for sociologists could not be written and be used to cut short the time required to familiarize scholars with key

differences in interdisciplinary usage. It is true that many such prolegomenas to interdisciplinary usage have yet to be written, but that does not mean that they cannot be. If there were such aids, then the authors' solution to the problem of interdisciplinary misunderstanding or even incomprehension could be mitigated without overly lengthy periods of immersion in the literature of the other discipline.

Considering the problem of hostility to interdisciplinary initiatives on the part of older disciplines, the authors suspect that such hostility is at a maximum when the older discipline is tightly bound in terms of its methods, or protocols and driven more by empirical investigations than theoretical speculation. In response to this problem, the authors do little more than emphasize the importance of a self-reflective attitude (p. 157), an attitude which interdisciplinarity seems to embody. Here, I think, is a point where one can go much deeper. For hostility is not just a matter of narrowly defined protocols and an empirical emphasis. It is also a matter of the existence of different, but unrecognized, forms of knowing that might underlie tensions within and between disciplines.

What the authors might have considered in greater depth is that most academic knowledge is dominative, that is, characterized by an emphasis on power over the known. While the authors do talk about the need to integrate other approaches to knowledge (p. 167) as a key theme of conceptual interdisciplinarity (e.g., women's ways of knowing, native forms of understanding), they fail to characterize this form of knowing in a positive way or to relate it to the tensions within a given discipline. For example, to the extent that a native approach to knowledge is oriented to closeness to the known as opposed to domination of the known, such closeness or intimacy might also be linked to forms of humanist psychology forms which are in tension with a more academic psychology that is dominative to the extent that it strives to reduce the phenomena of consciousness to brain events (subsequently to be reduced to electro-chemical processes).

This review is certainly not the place to develop a typology of ways of knowing, but the point to be considered with respect to the problem of resistance to interdisciplinary research is that a greater degree of consciousness with respect to different ways of knowing might mitigate hostility to other approaches whether or not these be interdisciplinary. The authors' call for more self reflectiveness on the part of all scholars (p. 172) is more likely to take place if one has a method by which this self-reflection can take place, and the possibility of developing a typology of

ways of knowing might be useful in this context. While one can agree with the authors that so-called core disciplines (e.g., psychology or sociology being 'core' with respect to the more derivative and hence interdisciplinary forms such as criminology) might be forged in conflict and have less in the way of consensus than is usually assumed (pp.175-177), there nonetheless might be disciplines that articulate core ways of knowing. Thus, the hard sciences might reflect in more fundamental ways the dominative approach to knowing than do aesthetic disciplines which feature an approach based on intimacy with respect to the known. Understanding disciplines from that fundamental perspective can only broaden one's understanding of the potentials of interdisciplinary research; and while the authors have provided us with a valuable introduction to the problems as well as the values of this kind of scholarly activity, the text would have been much strengthened by some consideration of the nature of knowledge itself.

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Morris, R.W. (1994). *Values in sexuality education: A philosophical study.* New York: University Press of America, pp. 108 (Softcover).

"Lieben und arbeiten" (i.e., love and work) Freud said, are the essential tasks of life. It is in the context of intimate love relationships that sexuality becomes a way of expressing care and desire. How can we foster an ethic respect, mutuality, and responsibility in our sexuality and sexual education? In struggling with this question, Morris offers several observations. First, the values clarification approach which has dominated sexual education over the past decade has proven insufficient. Second, the assumption that teachers can take a neutral objective stance outside of language and history, and free of prior value commitments is a myth. And finally, that sexual education has been hampered by a reductionistic and instrumental approach that views it primarily as a solution to the problems of teenage pregnancy and sexually transmitted disease.

Morris believes values clarification represents a significant advance in its affirmation of the subjectivity and integrity of the valuing object and

its respect for a pluralism of values, but it has failed to distinguish subjectivity from subjectivism, integrity from validity, and pluralism from relativism. Morris also argues a stance of neutrality does not require the clarification of values "already there," but entails challenging the validity of our value positions while respecting the integrity of the valuing subject. Sexual education needs to both affirm and challenge values, using vehicles such as dialogue, contemplative silence, narrative, and story-telling. As an alternative to the crisis-instrumental paradigm, Morris recommends an approach based on the work of Robert Kegan wherein the value of sexuality and sexual education is determined by its capacity to be "celebrational, hospitable, meaningful and life enhancing" (p. 93).

In arguing this view, Morris begins with a brief historical review of sexual education, and then critiques the assumptions and implications of the current crisis instrumental paradigm and the values-clarification approach. Kohlberg's philosophy of moral values education is reviewed, and then Kegan's developmental theory (with passing reference to Piaget and Erikson) is presented. Kegan's theory, views meaning making as a foundational human activity which is influenced by the surrounding culture. In turn, the meaning making is played out in a dialectical tension between autonomy and attachment. Morris maps issues of sexuality and valuing into Kegan's developmental model and discusses their implications for educational practice.

Unfortunately, by addressing both the psychological and philosophical aspects of sexuality, Morris does not do complete justice to either. Similarly, the attempt to speak to both the philosophy and pedagogy of sexual education limits the scope and comprehensiveness of both discussions. In castigating the reductionistic instrumental approach, Morris appears to downplay concerns about teenage pregnancy and sexually transmitted disease. Implicitly, Morris suggests that an emphasis on the mutual character and celebratory nature of sexual intimacy will naturally resolve these social issues. Despite these shortcomings, Morris' work provides a readable and thought-provoking discussion that argues effectively for a mutual, celebrational, and meaningful ethic of sexuality and for a dialectical approach that allows existing values to be challenged while still affirming the integrity of the individual.

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