

IN THESE BONES THE ECONOMY OF THE WORLD: A MULTI-LOGICAL,
MULTI-REPRESENTATIONAL CULTURAL STUDY

by

CAROLYNE ALI-KHAN

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Urban Education in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New
York

2011

This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Urban Education
in satisfaction of the dissertation requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

April 29, 2011 _____
Date

Kenneth Tobin _____
Chair of Examining Committee

April 29, 2011 _____
Date

Anthony Picciano _____
Executive Officer

Mark Zuss _____

David Chapin _____

Christina Siry _____

Shirley Steinberg _____

Supervisory Committee

THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

Abstract

IN THESE BONES THE ECONOMY OF THE WORLD: A MULTI-LOGICAL,
MULTI-REPRESENTATIONAL CULTURAL STUDY

by

Carolyne Ali-Khan

Advisor: Dr. Kenneth Tobin

In this work I offer critical interpretations of street skaters, images in schools, collaborative writing and discourses on Muslims in schools. Employing a phenomenological, hermeneutic approach, I have thought back on my experiences, made claims and supported them hermeneutically. As I have (in the tradition of critical pedagogy) told stories of being in the world, a critical perspective has anchored these stories to broader social, political and economic frameworks. Axiological concerns are at the forefront of this work, and the “so what?” question implicitly weaves through it. I do not seek to provide the answers, but rather to illuminate, through example, that asking questions of that which is taken for granted and connecting these questions to issues of power is a valid undertaking. In a world of truncated educational “accountability” this work joins those that seek to offer a counterpoints.

This dissertation explores work that has been done over the past three years in a variety of pedagogical contexts. As a manuscript style dissertation, it sews together freestanding texts with the thread of critical pedagogy. Each chapter (including half of the first

chapter) has been published, only the last chapter (which discusses future work) is new. In each of these research projects I set out to use interdisciplinary and multi-textual approaches to focus on “other” ways of being in the world, and to question privileging practices and discourses that have been normalized in everyday life. As a bricolage, this work brings together multiple disciplines and theoretical discourses. I draw from a range of critical pedagogies and visual and literary methods. Throughout, I employ autoethnography as an entry point, to render accessible the worlds and worldviews that I seek to shed light on.

Dedication

To those who are smiling from the great beyond,
my father, Jaweed “Jay” Ali Khan (who never got to see me be “PhuDed”)
and my guide, Joe L. Kincheloe.

To those who are smiling here,
my mum, Marla
and my “family” Douglas and Natasha.

Acknowledgements

I will never have the words to sufficiently express my thanks for those who have stood by me in this long and winding journey.

Dr. Joe L. Kincheloe changed my life with his words, work, love and wisdom. As I contemplated returning to graduate school I was not sure if studying education was something that I should do. My meeting with Joe six months before I applied to The Graduate Center reassured me on multiple levels. His passion, vision, wisdom, laughter and his way of being in the world, made me want to be here. He was inspiring and encouraging. Joe would tell me that I already knew the concepts I was learning, I just didn't yet have the words. This was a generous assessment! But as I now articulate the world through the lens of critical pedagogy and as I share these understandings in my research and with my students, I see connections between "knowing" and "having the words." Through Joes influence I also grew in the midst of and have been nurtured by a community of scholars. I will be forever in his debt.

Dr. Kenneth Tobin graciously and with the kindness that he exudes, took me in when I was orphaned. As Ken's student I have been awed by the degree of wisdom, intellectual generosity, passion, brilliance, care, laughter and superhero energy that he brings to his work and freely shares with those of us who are lucky enough to be in his world. I did not think that I could be awed twice by my chairperson, but I am. The breadth of knowledge that Ken brings to intellectual pursuits is simply stunning. In addition Ken also reminds us that we are embodied beings, and that emotions, tensions, laughter, twitches and love for our fellow beings are also a part of academe and of being and learning in the world with others. I have learned so much from Ken, in so many different ways. I hope that I can be half of what he is to my students. I hope that I can somehow pay forward my thanks to him. Acknowledging the depth of my gratitude will never be enough.

I am highly fortunate to have an amazing committee, each member has shared their different insights with me and in their generosity together they have afforded me the ability to stretch and fly. Dr. Mark Zuss has been inspiring. Each of the classes that I took with him were wondrous, intense and joyful intellectual adventures. His brilliance and grasp of issues in education is fascinating. One of the many important lessons that Mark taught me was that rigor, social justice, passion and poetry are not incompatible. For this I will be always grateful. In addition his thoughtful comments have always pushed me to think of new and other paths.

Dr. David Chapin has made me literally see the world differently, and to have the courage to try to represent it differently. His insights, thoughts, pointers and support have been invaluable. His careful reading of my work has helped me to rethink it and strengthen my ideas and the forms that carry them. I am very deeply fortunate to have had his scholarship and care help me craft this, in addition his ideas have been instrumental in shaping my future work.

Dr. Christina Siry is my “sista” in this world of academe that became my life. She has been my friend, confidante, editor, and often sanity keeper since our first weeks at The Graduate Center. In her I have had the blessing of being able to share ideas, questions, wine, gossip, and giggles year after year. Her thoughtfulness has been invaluable. I could not have done it without her.

I owe much to Dr. Shirley Steinberg who has been deeply generous with her support of all of my endeavors. Her work afforded me the space to think differently about education and her support provided me opportunities to have my voice heard. Shirley taught me that cultural studies and education can legitimately be the sisters of literary creativity and written joy. Her brightly colored words and her wondrous intellectual plumage always inspires me.

Dr. Nick Michelli has been my quiet angel for many years. I came to him for help in 2006 and he has guided, cared for, supported and advised me ever since. Regardless of my question or either of our whereabouts, Nick’s wisdom, his unwavering humor, and his unending support at all hours of the day and night, have often sustained me. As if he had nothing else in the world to do he has guided and steadied me repeatedly on my doctoral journey. I cannot ever thank him enough.

Dr. Özlem Sensoy became my friend through Joe’s spirit of solidarity and the Paulo and Nita Critical Pedagogy Project. Özlem has been my fairy godmother. She has advised me, allowed me to “peek behind the curtain,” cared for me, thought through for me, and laughed and cried with me. Thanks just don’t suffice. Gene Fellner has been a dear friend, his insights, wisdom, generosity of time and thoughtfulness are greatly valued. Dr. Dr. Tricia Kress has been wise and helpful. Natasha Poloukarova has been simply amazing.

Douglas Taylor has held my hand as we thought, fought, commiserated and mused, in and out of issues in academe and in the world. He has been boundless in his care for me, and unwavering in his support. His faith in me, his tireless energy, and his insights have deeply enriched my journey. He has been my rock.

The faculty at The Graduate Center have been very supportive of me and are too many to name. Thank you all. Special thanks go to Christine Saieh for all of her wizardry and affections. My friends and family not mentioned here have supported me countless times and in more ways than are possible to state. My students have inspired me. My spiritual guides have moved the world to hold me. I am very, very lucky and deeply grateful.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract.....	iv
Dedication	v
Acknowledgements	vi
List of figures.....	xiii
Chapter 1	1
The whole and the parts	1
What's in a name?.....	1
Resonances.....	2
The origins	3
Shaken and stirred: On coming to critical praxis.....	6
Moments	6
That's just the way it is.....	7
Youth responses	9
Responsibilities.....	10
A personal introduction to really bad theory	14
Experts?.....	16
Class.....	17
Art and cultural studies	19
Once upon a time	21
The allegory of Mike	21
Reflexivity and connections.....	24
Chapter 2	26
Go play in traffic: Skating, gender, and urban context.....	26
I skate, therefore I am	26
Half awake and half dreaming	28
The present and the reverse future according to Rollerblade	28
Future	30
Present.....	30
Skating in toyland	31
Skating out of toyland.....	34
11:00 a.m.....	34
Go play in traffic: Sport versus play	35
11:30 a.m.....	35
1:00 p.m.	38
Access to a good drug	40
3:00 p.m.	40
Life is elsewhere	41
4:00 p.m.	41

These streets are home (inclusion vs. exclusion in public space)	44
8:00 p.m.	44
Skateaway	47
12:30 p.m.	47
12:40 a.m.....	48
Chapter 3	49
Seeing what we mean: Visual knowledge and critical epistemology	49
In the grand scheme of things	49
Life is elsewhere. (10am.).....	49
Looking to see more	50
A peering backstage. (11am.)	50
Looking beyond inky fingers	53
Halos, horns, and big wallets: The visual construction of childhood	53
Walking the halls with the ghosts of children past. (In a timeless universe.).....	53
Worldly kids: Common images of children in print media available in schools. (12pm.).....	55
“As you ought to be”: Images of schoolchildren.....	58
Ghosts in the machine: Images of children that are <u>not</u> seen in schools.....	59
Re-loading the Matrix	61
She taught me to walk this way: Advertising images in schools	63
No space untouched! (12:30pm.).....	63
The high price of branding,.....	65
Peekaboo! Advertising images that are not hiding in schools	66
Color me outta here!	68
Spectacle, capital and the future	71
Seeing by the book: visual literacy in schools	72
Reading images.....	72
Seeing others	73
"Here, use this please." (2pm.).....	73
Creating images as pedagogical practice. (3:30pm.)	75
Spanners.....	78
Closing thoughts on the meeting of visual and critical pedagogies	79
Looking forward	79
Chapter 4	81
Common sense, uncommon knowledge and fighting words.	81
Common knowledge for a new generation	81
I. Teaching against...	84
“‘It ain’t necessarily so’”: When tolerance isn’t.	84
Something rotten: Islamic bombs and soccer balls.....	87
And the correct answer is.....	91
Lunatic?.....	93
“Obsession”: Notes on a bad film and a good tool.	94
II. Teaching from...	98
Beyond common sense	98
Non-necrophilic concerns	98

A sense of direction	100
III. Teaching about...	102
Uncommon knowledge	102
Queens and dangerous mangos	102
Singers and rappers	104
Other views of others	104
Against, from, about and out	106
Afterword - Words to chew on	108
Chapter 5	109
Writing We: Collaborative text in educational research	109
Prelude	109
Meeting	110
Sewing worlds together.....	111
Challenging hierarchy.....	111
“No bystanders”: Constructing knowledge together	113
Burning the bank.....	113
Undoing the individual	114
Collaborative Narratives	114
Kyle • Carlyne • Marisol • Chris	115
Framing the collaborative production of knowledge and text in historical and ideological contexts	117
Using history to guide us	117
Polyvocality	119
Living in a (text) box	120
Bodies and hearts in authorship	121
Co-writing is an intimate act.....	121
Equity of voice in inequitable spaces.....	122
Symbiosis.....	123
Bodies and hearts in schools	124
Students as coauthors	126
Relationship to the text	127
Representation and temporality	127
Coconstructed text and community—Knowledge across difference	128
Dialectical relationships.....	129
Poly-vocality in the meeting of text and speech	130
Towards a more equitable “we”	130
Chapter 6	131
To sea in a sieve	133
A world always already there	133
Sewing it all together: Bricolage, criticality and charm	133
The devil is in the details: Phenomenology, narrative and metaphor	135
On roads and paths taken: Implications and significance	138
A world at my fingertips	140
Writing projects on my horizon	140
“More things in heaven and earth Horatio” - Seeing and believing in Second Life.....	143
Rambooboo at attention: Controlling Children in the Service of Empire	145

My world: Children's framing of rural life in Pakistan	146
See Jane smoke: A critical examination of the visual construction of childhood ..	147
Worlds awaiting	148
Paddling away: On broader horizons	148
Endnotes	150
References	154

List of figures

Figure 1: Girl skates versus boy skates	32
Figure 2: Typical skate dolls.....	33
Figure 3: Life is elsewhere.....	50
Figure 4: Typical classrooms.....	52
Figure 5: Youth today	57
Figure 6: Typical school website	58
Figure 7: Missing images.....	61
Figure 8: Typical sponsorship.....	63
Figure 9: School lockers	64
Figure 10: School billboard	64
Figure 11: Mesopotamia illustration.....	74
Figure 12: Pakistan on the brink.....	87
Figure 13: Graphic organizer	89
Figure 14: More on Mesopotamia.....	93
Figure 15: Comics against Obsession the movie.....	96
Figure 16: Two images of Begum Nawazish on TV	102

Chapter 1

The whole and the parts

What's in a name?

The title of this dissertation comes from my reading of Meridel Le Suer. Le Suer was a Depression Era feminist Marxist who used prose and poetry to paint vivid pictures of the struggles, strengths, and power of the working class. In the chapter that inspired my title, she begins by stating, “Women know a lot of things...that they don’t read in the papers” (Le Suer, 1927/1980, p. 172). She goes on to tell us of women who “know” how others fight and suffer because of their own suffering and their own fights for justice. If I were Ken Tobin (2006), I might refer to this as embodied capital and consider the different ways in which our experiences stay with us and inform our perspectives. If I were Maxine Greene (1995), I might suggest that the stories of others give us the emotional space to understand both them and ourselves. If I were Eileen Scary (2004) or Terry Eagleton (2002), I might say that this tragedy and this (terrible) beauty demands to be remembered and demands response. Each of these theoretical lenses makes sense to me and each plays into my choice of title.

Specifically my title here comes from Le Suer’s story of a woman who brings her child to be weighed at a public clinic. The account takes place during the Great Depression. Times are hard and the child is thin. The mother looks to the weighing scale anxiously even though she knows its answer. She can gauge more than her child’s weight. From the bones that stick through his flesh she knows the cost of oranges and the fluctuations of the stock market, she does not read the newspapers but she knows

capitalism's price. In fragile limbs and lines of physical weariness etched in skin she knows how to read the economy of the world, and she can read it in more detail than newspapers ever could provide.

Resonances

I find Le Suer's idea resonates with my work. In what follows I make connections between mind and body, meso and macro discourses, and the relationships between experiences and broader structures. My dissertation is about the power literacy that Le Suer implicitly demands of us all. As a bricolage, this work sews together multiple disciplines and theoretical discourses. In the chapters that follow, I employ phenomenology to connect the insights of the body to the discourses of the world; I base this work on the insights of critical pedagogues such as Paulo Freire (1970/2005) and Joe Kincheloe (2003), in order to keep at the forefront of my scholarship a concern for equity and to keep alive throughout this work the conviction that all knowledge must answer to questions of power. I utilize the work of standpoint theorists such as Sandra Harding (1998), who demand that we acknowledge that all understandings are situated in perceptions that are themselves situated in a framework of hierarchies. To name a few that crystallize my concerns, I draw from David Harvey's (2006) work in critical geography (as he reconceptualizes space as inherently tied to relationships), and from Gillian Rose's (2007) critical visual studies that argue that pictures are not power free spaces and from Edward Said's (1979) post-colonialism that iconically defined "orientalism." As I sew together the insights of diverse scholars, my aim is to uncover the ways that unequal power relations have been normalized and operate to regulate, contain and oppress those who are considered "the other."

This work is undergirded by my experiences of alternately and sometimes simultaneously being “the other.” Through twenty years of working in schools and seeing the way that schooling can both help and harm students, I have learned (I hope) to think carefully about what matters and why. In each chapter that follows I implicitly and/or explicitly ask critical axiological, ontological and epistemological questions. As a whole, this work is grounded in my belief that the macro discourses/dominant narratives are inscribed on our individual and collective experiences, and in addition, they set the perimeters for what we deem worth knowing and valuing. Whether we struggle or thrive, it is our place within the social milieu - what Pierre Bourdieu would call the fields or Kincheloe “the Matrix” (Friereproject.org, n.d.). - that defines all of our projected trajectories. It is the uncovering of these trajectories that reveals the ways that race, class, gender, ability, sexual orientation, and religion are ranked, ordered, and prized in the world.

The origins

Each chapter of this dissertation except for the last has been previously published. Each has been submitted to peer review and each has stood alone. Together, they create a nuanced and personal picture of what it means to live, work, and think as a critical scholar in this moment in time. In the remainder of this chapter I situate this work by inviting readers in to accompany me on my journey to critical praxis. This section can be found in *Critical Praxis Research (CPR): Breathing New Life Into Research Methods for Teachers*. Describing my path of “unfurling into adulthood,” I use autoethnographic narrative to connect a personal history to world events. Utilizing anecdotes from my working-class race-infused childhood, heavily gendered young adulthood and teaching

experiences, I analyze the ways that being situated in an ideologically infused (race, class, gendered) world shapes experiences and perspectives. This chapter addresses some of my questions of epistemology and axiology by offering an analysis of them as they arise in real world contexts. Through this chapter I use examples taken from narrative and fictionalized-fact to reflect on the way that all experiences are shaped by dominant discourses and agendas.

Chapter Two was first published in the journal *Qualitative Inquiry Online First*, in April 2009. In this chapter, I use rollerblading through an urban environment as a lens to examine issues surrounding the movement of the body in public space. I use the autobiographical vis-à-vis political cultural studies to explore gender politics, the regulation of bodies, and the reinscription of public spaces. Using the narrative of a single form traveling through a single day, I address notions of exclusionary gender roles and practices, play versus sport, recreation versus transportation, space versus place, and the ways in which consumption and pleasure are played out in the organic flow of time and space. I argue for the continuing need to raise questions about the exclusionary effects of regulation of the urban body and to explore possibilities for resistance.

Chapter three is published in *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*. In this chapter I examine the ways that knowledge production, interpretation, and representation in educational settings can be contrasted with the world outside the doors of the schools and universities which are exploding with visual ways of knowing and being. As visual text is silenced in education, it is simultaneously exploited in the marketplace. This chapter examines some of the political, epistemological, and ontological questions that are raised by education's steadfast adherence to the

reductionism of “text only” in a richly multimodal and visual world. I use a short autoethnographic journey as a starting point, to examine the connections between critical pedagogy and visual knowledge in the quest for an educational world that literally and figuratively sees more.

Chapter Four is published in *Teaching against Islamophobia*. In this chapter I discuss a post 9/11 moment, in which urban classrooms across the U.S have been forced to be in dialogue with the Islamophobia that has saturated the broader political landscape. I look for the ways that teachers concerned with social justice have had to search for the tools to resist the dominant story of “the bad Muslim.” I intertwine personal narratives, drawn from my experiences (as an urban educator and a person of Muslim heritage), and critiques of common curricula, with insights from critical pedagogy to examine some ways that classroom teachers can rethink portrayals of Muslims. I intertwine multiple voices to present examples of anti-Islamophobic teaching with the intention of highlighting examples of education that disrupt the script of racism.

Chapter Five is a co-written piece in *Critical Pedagogy in the 21st Century* in which my colleague Christina Siry and I examine the critical possibilities of collaborative writing. In this chapter the voices and insights of a college teacher, a high school teacher, a college student, high school students, and PhD students intertwine as two teachers work to produce and understand collaborative authorship. This chapter seeks to challenge the politics, epistemological assumptions, and wisdom; the "do your own work" mentality pervasive throughout education. It uses a theoretical, methodological, and ethnographically thick exploration of collaboratively produced text to offer a different paradigm for understanding and producing knowledge. Cowriting is examined as an

unfolding, polyvocal, and necessarily multifaceted journey toward a new critical pedagogy of working “with.”

Chapter Six draws from previous chapters to reflect on what I have learned in this journey through nascent scholarship. In this concluding piece I reflect upon the themes, details, coherences, and contradictions that were evidenced in this work. I discuss the ways that creative and multifaceted research is moves forward through me and the ways that I move forward through it. I then discuss the implications that this research has for the field with reference to key theorists in critical pedagogy. Finally, I discuss my research interests and agendas moving into the future.

Shaken and stirred: On coming to critical praxis

Moments

Ask yourself how you came to know whatever things you feel are worth

Knowing. (Postman & Weingartner, 2010, p. 128)

Islamabad, 1979: Carolyne, age 15, secretly mourned the death of her (forbidden) friend, Steve, a US Marine, age 19¹. He had made a habit of confiding in her. On deserted swings under the stars, he had shared his story of leaving home to escape a cycle of poverty, only to find himself again looked down on because of class in the Marine Corps. He had spoken often of feeling isolated and trapped. He was killed that year in riots against the U. S. Embassy. After his death, (bereft of school and community, as many of the foreigners were quickly evacuated, and her school was indefinitely shut) Carolyne had listened silently as remaining ‘ex-pat’ adults discussed the angle of the bullet that killed him. She had wondered if the US government hailed him as a hero.

South Bronx, 1992: Ms. Ali-Khan, a high school teacher, received a letter from Bosnia. The letter contained pictures of José, a former eleventh grade student, now in army uniform, “Look” he wrote, “I did what you encouraged, I traveled. I am in Europe!” Ms Ali-Khan walked into her classroom with a heavy heart. She had never thought that to encourage students to see other countries, when their resources were scant, might contribute to their becoming an active part of a much larger political machine. Bosnia was at war. José might not make it home.ⁱⁱ

That’s just the way it is

Sometimes the world suddenly stops making sense. When life as we expect it falls apart, (in Islamabad, the Bronx, or anywhere else), it is often revealed that there is something very wrong. At that moment, when the only question left to ask is “Why?!” the standard answer of “that’s just the way it is” simply falls flat. Moved by pain in the world, Bruce Hornsby (1986), Phil Collins (1990), and 2pac (1998) have all sung powerful protest songs centered around the refrain “That’s just the way it is,” highlighting that injustice demands a more satisfying response than this platitude.

One of the most substantive responses to injustice is Paulo Freire’s notion of “conscientization” (1970). Conscientization involves developing a literacy—developing a consciousness—wherein one learns to “read” the ways in which power operates. By developing awareness about the structural organization of oppressive forces, individuals begin to understand the role they each play in the machinery and systemic patterns of oppression. In essence, conscientization is a fundamental rejection of “that’s just the way it is.” Critical praxis is the evolution of that rejection. A key part of critical praxis involves understanding how we have come to know the things we know. As a doctoral

student, and in reflecting on how I came to my work, I realize that a need for power literacy, critical pedagogy and critical research praxis has been woven through my life, personally and professionally. In this chapter, I share some key moments and connections from my journey.

I was born and bred in a working class neighborhood of London, the child of a German mother and Pakistani father. Despite my cockney accent, in schools I was a “Paki,” subjected to racial slurs and frequently told to “get out” and “go home!” Pakis were not welcome in south London. Then, at the age of eleven, I moved with my parents to Karachi, Pakistan. In a new land, I was given a new identity and suddenly I was reframed as a “Britisher” in schools that taught of a bitter colonial history. Apparently, I was to blame for sub-continental imperialism, and I was again told by my classmates to “get out” and “go home!” So, by the time I was fifteen and reeling from the political events of 1979, I had already crossed the threshold of “that historical moment when one begins to think critically about the self and identity in relation to one’s political circumstance” (hooks, 1994, p. 47). My response (with that absolute certainty that only youth or the truly arrogant can possess) was to come to some conclusions. In the words I had then as a fifteen-year old, I decided that: racism was widespread and confusing; that knowing something in one place didn’t make it at all useful in another; that the media was evil as it made everything into just another story; that people were looked down on for not being good enough because of class; and that the political machines that pit us against each other were powerful, uncaring and deeply, truly, greatly, momentarily, unjust! Race, class and global politics had entered my consciousness. I was fifteen and I was mad as hell.

Youth responses

As a high school teacher now, I see my students struggle with oppressive circumstances and forces. I see them strive to make sense of an unjust world. Often they live in neighborhoods of violence and crumbling infrastructure in which they are blamed for their misfortunes, and abandoned, ostracized or silenced by the institutions intended to serve them (Giroux, 2003). Attending impoverished schools, they additionally suffer from the “structural violence” of blindly enforced educational policies (such as zero tolerance) and insufficient resources (Williams, 2005). As they look forward to what seems a bleak future in their communities, they often seem to be on the verge of deciding that a high school diploma might be what Ken Tobin calls “counterfeit currency,” a paper that has symbolic value and little else (2007, p. 177).

Many of these youth are angry. They understand that impersonal structures impact their lives and communities, but they have little room to maneuver through this insight. Inside schools, youth expressions of outrage are often silenced or punished (Giroux, 2003). Outside of schools their energy is co-opted by predatory advertisers who are quick to repackage resistance as a hot new product (Kilbourne, 1999). bell hooks speaks of the frustration of being, “in resistance without having the political language to articulate that process” (1994, p. 46). As a society we claim to care about our children but I have spoken to countless young people who do not feel this care. I have witnessed them come to schools exhausted, angry and depressed, convinced that they have to “not give a f--” because, “ain’t no one gonna care ‘bout me but me.” Caught in the machine of race, class, gender, and other oppressions without the structures to be agentic, they seem doomed to a-political resistance, mad as hell and lashing out against themselves and their peers.

Side by side with this reality lies a different story. One in which the energy and insights of youth provide them with a powerful vantage point from which to critique the world. Despite coming of age in a culture (and cult) of American/Western individualism and neoliberalism which discourages looking for structural causes of suffering, and despite coming of age at a time when “Individual Responsibility” is the name of the game (wherein all conduct is interpreted as nothing more than individual merit or pathology), many youth are refusing these dominant discourses and demanding different explanations. Their stories (individually and collectively) are complex and full of contradictionsⁱⁱⁱ. While many young people suffer deeply and do not recover enough to thrive in the world, others are able to use their understanding as a place from which to connect their experiences to those of their communities. They organize, mobilize, educate and engage in positive and empowering strategies for resistance; they rap, write, march, photograph, boycott, broadcast and form alliances (Porfilio & Carr, 2010). I have worked with students who have devoted their energies to community activism and engagement, hungry for ways to engage with the world and to connect learning with action. Often they are both fierce and vulnerable, engaged with zeal to challenge authoritarianism and hold accountable those who are in power. In the borrowed Quaker slogan of my youth they “speak truth to power.”^{iv}

Responsibilities

I would like to be able to say that my life has consistently been one of speaking truth to power. But it has not. I have lurched through the world. I left home at barely seventeen and moved across the planet away from my family. I immediately joined Greenpeace, PETA, social justice, anti-war and anti-nuclear organizations. I marched in protests, and

hotly debated politics. I rode on the tail end of the hippy spirit. But I couldn't hold on. Although the connections between systems of oppression and personal suffering revealed themselves to me when I was young, I learned and forgot in equal measure as I unfurled into adulthood. Some years I was politically active, at other times all I could do was stay afloat, and on other occasions myopia was my middle name. I left behind my political consciousness when I struggled with many years of self-destructiveness both caused and compounded by a profound inability to stay out of harm's way. And it took time for me to connect the dots between what I do for a living (teach) and the political responsibility of being an educator.

As a new teacher, I worked in a primarily boys vocational school in the impoverished neighborhood of the South Bronx. It was a classically "tough" school and I loved it. I thought I was doing good work. I paid attention to my students' social and emotional needs. I respected and believed in their ability to do well. I trained and became certified in HIV Education, Conflict Resolution and the like. Then I received the letter from José in Bosnia and it rattled me to my core. Reflecting on it, I became aware that I needed a more complex understanding of my job. I began to see how epistemologically (with regard to the way I thought about knowledge) I had been naïve. I started to think about how the knowledge that is in (or not in) classrooms might influence life choices. I began to question the "why" in teaching. When I switched to teaching in Alternative Schools that served a population of "at risk" youth, I found myself increasingly radicalized. I was lucky. I had a dream job. I worked in a mini high school with brilliant, politically radical, driven, iconoclastic colleagues and passionate, fiery students. We met together frequently (as teachers and with students invited). In our meetings and in our

practice we were constantly researching our experiences and pushing each other to engage more fully in embracing what education means in a lived world. I was perpetually humbled by the insights of my colleagues and the students. It was the most exhausting and fulfilling job in the world. By the time, (many years later) that I met my first dissertation advisor (Joe Kincheloe) and decided to enter a PhD program, I knew that education was political and that I needed a theoretically solid framework for fully understanding it, (I wanted to live up to the people I had worked with) but I didn't know how to proceed.

Under Joe's guidance, I began to understand the political dimensions of knowledge production. Prior to this, on the one hand, I had understood and respected the fact that my students knew many things that I did not. I trusted that I had experiential knowledge about education from being a veteran teacher. I had fought fiercely with colleagues in some schools, and (unwisely) with professors in graduate school. On the other hand, although I had a strong personal sense of what harm in education could mean, I lacked the language through which to critique the theories on which unjust policies and practices were predicated. In addition, it simply did not occur to me that my own life might have shaped what I knew. Epistemologically, I had been brought up to believe that knowledge was something given, an object handed down from the elders. It was the ideas of critical pedagogy and praxis, which encouraged me to connect the contradictions and connections in my personal and professional worlds to broader struggles.

I have learned to name axiological questions. Axiology is the study of values. I use it to help me think about questions such as: what is valued in teaching (test scores, classroom control, and so forth) and in learning in schools? Who decides what is valued,

on what basis, and benefiting whom? How do the things that are valued shape what we all (as participants in education) understand about what is important in education and in the world at large? As a critical pedagogue and critical praxis researcher it is my concern with axiology that prompts me to question whose interests/stances/voices are prioritized/valued/erased and to further question for what/whose purpose. Although (and with good reason) axiology is rarely separated from ontology (the study of being) and epistemology (the study of knowing) I believe axiological concerns are at the core of critical pedagogy. A focus on this concern reminds me that “that’s just the way it is” should never be an acceptable answer. For me, axiology needs to be the starting point for all educational decisions (in classrooms and in research agendas). At its heart, on a macro level, critical pedagogy asks, “what are the educational structures and practices that perpetuate suffering?” Rephrased in personal and meso terms this can translate as, “why me?!” (or Steve, or José). As I interpret it now, these are not cognitive or emotional questions alone; they do not simply ask for explanations of sequence and causation, or even blame. They are axiological questions that interrogate hierarchies of value in systems of privilege and oppression. It is this axiology that provides the language to name and fight injustice, and this fight is at the core of critical pedagogical research and praxis. This paradigmatic focus stands in sharp contrast to the positivist, rationalist, efficiency oriented, pedantic agendas of “accountability” as they are conceived of and set in motion through policy imperatives and test-based education. Ostensibly the claim that is made (in educational systems I have worked in) is that “accountability is about good teaching.” But when good teaching is squeezed through simplistic measures of “accountability,” it is stripped of an ability to address issues of axiological complexity. In the words of Myles

Horton (co-founder of the Highlander Center where Dr. King and Rosa Parks trained):
“It’s not important to be good. It’s important to be good for something” (1990, p. 35).

A personal introduction to really bad theory

Some knowledge is “good for something” and some is quite the opposite. In 1989 Shahrazad Ali wrote *The Blackman's Guide to Understanding the Blackwoman*. It quickly made her famous. I do not know if my sweetheart at the time ever actually read the book or if he just watched her on The Sally Jesse Raphael Show, but when her theory met his life, my life changed dramatically. I had become involved with this boyfriend five years earlier in Cairo, Egypt, where I was studying to get my BA in Anthropology. We quickly moved in together. He was an African American musician from a heavily segregated neighborhood in Chicago. When I met him I was barely 20 and still shaken from my second sexual assault. I had all of the symptoms of PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) and (I realized years later) it was probably because of this that, despite all of the sizable evidence to the contrary, I felt safe with him. We lived together in Egypt, then in London (until he was deported for fighting an off-duty police officer), and finally in Chicago before coming to New York. Chicago was the most alien world I could have ever imagined: aside from being consumed by the newness and strangeness of the United States, I was involved in an interracial relationship without having any understanding of race in America. After a few months we moved to New York. I found a job as a cocktail waitress and worked “off the books.” He busked in the subways for change. We had a “music studio” in our tiny tenement apartment and lived the lives of those who are not “traditional” (in ways that “traditional” is commonly understood). “Off the grid,” we were poor, uninsured, not quite legal, and happy - too young to worry. I was

completely unprepared for domestic violence.

Shahrazad Ali (in her book and in her lectures) claimed that physical violence was an acceptable recourse for the Black man with a woman who questioned his authority over her. I was informed of this after feeling its consequences. My boyfriend assured me that he felt no remorse. And with Ali's theory supporting him, he explained that he needed me to *understand his logic* and behave accordingly. Freire explains that for oppression to succeed, the oppressed must buy into the oppressor's way of seeing the world (1970). It was an insight I would have appreciated at the time. I did not have any of the resources necessary to leave him, so, although I left anyway, I was forced to come back. Gender, age, class, and new immigrant status had positioned me poorly; I had little power in my world. With logic typical of the working class (and not unlike many of my students), I simply accepted that life was tough. But I had received a fully grounded introduction to the ways that theory can directly shape experience.

Most theory doesn't make itself as visible (as a structure underlying behavior) as it did with me then, but its impact is no less real. In critical theories, it is widely accepted that theory and ideology operate beneath the radar, working to define and shape who we are (our ontologies) and what we can know (our epistemologies) in ways that masquerade as "common sense." To question common sense is (of course) to have none.

Perhaps it is this logic that explains the unpopularity of theory, or perhaps anti-intellectualism has given theory a bad name, or it might be that theory has been abused by being disconnected from life. Whatever the case, I often get the feeling that theory is considered irrelevant in education. In addition to teaching high school, I have also taught graduate students studying to become teachers. These students sometimes come to

educational foundations classes hesitant about studying theory, being more concerned with the “how to” than the “why to.” Their concern is understandable - new teachers need strategies. They believe (or perhaps hope) that these strategies lie in entirely concrete answers. But to learn strategies without theory is to have the proverbial tail wag the very sharp-toothed dog. Ozlem Sensoy and Robin DiAngelo (forthcoming) point out that cultural ideological structures house our behaviors; they afford meaning-making and define how we are able to view and therefore treat each other. As I view my experiences through their insights, I am able to see how theory is not just the lingua franca of “experts.” It shapes all of us, and all of our experiences.

Experts?

“Phhhhhhhhhh!” my father would hiss at the TV, “another *so called bloody expert!*” Disgusted, he would change the channel. Dad had little respect for the kinds of credentialing that position “experts” as authorities who dare to speak for *real* people in real jobs. Life, as he saw it, was in the trenches, not the towers, and he knew that the only thing you can do from an ivory tower is look down. In epistemological terms, he was contesting positivist paradigms. Kincheloe and Tobin define the epistemological dimensions of positivism using the acronym FIDUROD (2009, p. 519-520). In this paradigm knowledge is Formal (acquired thorough a step by step process), Intractable (true forever), Decontextualized (removed from the context that gives it meaning), Universalistic (applicable to every instance), Reductionistic (simplified down to the easily measurable) and One Dimensional (unable to accept other realities). As a member of the working class, my father understood knowledge as just the opposite. It was embodied rather than formal (knowledge was acquired by doing and being-in the work

that you did); contingent rather than intractable (knowledge was dependant upon circumstance and happenstance); context based rather than decontextualized (knowledge was useful and possible because it was in the world or in the work; based in action not removed and isolated from it); complex (it was not easy to measure, not easy to label with some new fancy word); and multidimensional (it was enacted differently in Pakistan, where he came from, than it was in the UK). Most importantly knowledge was accessible and for those who needed it, not a thing to be owned by those who talked about it. “Bloody experts” as he saw them, violated his sense of what it meant to know the world.

To make matters worse, my father sensed that experts did not want to acknowledge the likes of him. I feel his pain. As a teacher in public schools, my voice joins the unanimous groans of my colleagues when yet another expert-decreed teaching method is mandated as the new order of the day. When my principal begins a sentence with, “The research shows...” all of me cringes. This type of “research” in schools is often a weapon for control, denying teachers the validity of their experiential contextual knowledge and disempowering them (Kincheloe, 2003). Although teachers often feel victimized by factory-style, supervisory control of their work (Kincheloe, 2000), the possibility that *social class* (managerial v. worker) hierarchies might influence the dynamic of these interactions is rarely discussed. We are simply not that *déclassé*.

Class

Externally, I carry few signifiers of my class background. Internally, I am filled with ambivalence, I am both at home and completely ill at ease in academe. (Perhaps everyone is?) Aside from my family history, and my preference for being around “fringe” cultures

and individuals, I was born in the mid 60s and came of age in a time of strong class-consciousness. This has been reinforced by my spending a large portion of my adulthood moonlighting in and around the working class environments of dive bars and street art and music. *I think about social class a lot.* On a professional level, it factors into the way I read the world and my research. My academic work centers around trying to understand the ways that “those on the edges” of society (in recent work teens, skaters, and Muslims) are un/represented and socially constructed as well as exploring ways to speak back (such as co-authorship and visual methods). On a personal level, I am plagued by the possibility that to work in academe as *I* am able to do it might be to simply become “another bloody expert.” I fear that I won’t live up to brilliant colleagues and mentors who can and do write and teach in ways that are beautiful, powerful, and change the world. “Don’t worry” a teacher friend of mine reassured me recently, “after all these years in schools you’ve paid your dues. Anyway it’s not really bad, there are much worse ways to sell out.” From a working class perspective to become a PhD *is* to risk selling out. I know a hundred instances where that is not true, but still it haunts me.

On an entirely different level, (although I feel connected to those who value ideas), I always feel like an imposter, one who will be found out and banished at any moment, the peasant who has snuck into the banquet. Walking past the Sorbonne this summer, my boyfriend half joked, “Apply for a job here. We should live in Paris.” I looked at the rows of marble busts we were passing, all seemingly Caucasian, all male, with reserved countenances and starched collars. I saw myself cartoonized in their eyes: just a little scruffy brown girl (doctorate be damned). I simply could not fathom *ever*

being accepted among them. Valerie Walkerdine (1990) connects this type of internalizing and insecurity to class and gender:

She received more or less straight A's for all her work, but she cannot believe that the distinction belongs to her; it is as though the person with her name exists somewhere else, outside of her body: this powerful person whom she cannot recognize as herself. Instead she feels that she is hopeless, constantly panics about her performance. (p. 133)

Richard Kahlenberg notes that the working class is both underrepresented and silenced in “the vast majority of colleges and universities” (The Chronicle of Higher Education, October 6, 2010). Perhaps this is not surprising. Shirley Steinberg observes that in academia we refuse to acknowledge class while expecting people to follow middle class rules (2007). Still it seems gauche to speak of these things. Self-indulgent. And whiney. To make matters “worse,” although I know that class means more than economic status (hooks, 2000) because I am not suffering economically, and live in many ways a privileged life, I worry that I have no right to my perceptions.

Nonetheless, like Cinderella, I feel grateful to have a pass to the ball. So, for the most part, I pull my socks up and get on with it. But I am always crossing my fingers behind my back. Hoping not to forget my family/personal history. Hoping to somehow be able to do good work without getting caught in my own expert myth. And hoping not to be found out and have my guest pass revoked.

Art and cultural studies

One of the things I love most about the arts is their epistemological egalitarianism. We are all welcome. When my students speak of learning things that

matter to them they often reference ideas that are transmitted through affect and the arts (in particular TV and music). Perhaps one of the reasons popular culture is popular is its democratic accessibility. Much popular culture is based in the artistic mediums of music, film, video, fiction, poetry, visual art, dance and performance. As most education happens outside of schools, and popular culture is an important site of knowledge for youth. This is not true only for youth. When I need to learn things to sustain me and offer “truths” about the world I too turn to the arts. I skate, stare at pictures, play CDs, and read poems. Art gives me hope on demand. (Sartre’s darkness made me find God in no God, Caravaggio and Kiki Smith gave me beauty in blood and tragedy, T. S. Elliot gave me comfort from the Wasteland). The knowledge that I access by looking, touching, hearing, and moving is knowledge that I cherish. It informs what I know/can know (my epistemology) and who I am (my ontology). A well-written sentence, beautiful painting, fine poem, good skate or sing- along make me feel alive. My affect-based, aesthetically-prone ontology seeps into academe: the educational theorists I admire move me in ways that I can only define as spiritual, and I desire their way of understanding the world.

My interest in the plastic, kinesthetic, and literary arts (including cultural studies) stems both from my visceral reaction to, and from my fascination with, the kinds of complex connections to the world that art can afford. On a political level, media educates and positions us (Kellner & Share, 2007) and the pedagogy of popular culture is sophisticated and infused with powerful ontological, epistemological and axiological messages. On personal levels, art is a pathway to access affect and meaning. Arts education theorist Maxine Greene, quoting John Steinbeck, argues, “ain’t got a soul of (my) own, but only a piece of a big one” (1995, p. 33). Art can reconnect us to that big

soul; it can make us feel like we are not alone in history and not isolated in the world. These are not simply emotional declarations. They have ontological, political and methodological implications for teaching and for research. As an educator, I have capitalized on students' willingness to engage with the arts. In my work, I strive to utilize ways of understanding and representing the world that are based in aesthetic approaches (using photographs, pictures, poems and fiction), in the hope that I can create research that is widely accessible and that legitimizes the insights of affect-driven interpretations and social realities.

Once upon a time

Using arts-based inquiry (Finley, 2008) and "fictionalized fact" as a way to acknowledge the truths of fiction (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008, p. 16), I return to questions of axiology in education, to examine (for a moment) the idea of "always becoming," and to also ask "how do we know what we value?" I offer a fictional tale based in the tropes of popular culture. As a teacher I have heard this story many times. (It is a companion to the newer tale, "Ways teachers ruin the world.")

The allegory of Mike

Once upon a time, there was a child who did not do well in school. (Perhaps you know this child?) Let's call him Mike; let's say he's fifteen years old. Mike was "not in a good place," (as one of his more sympathetic teachers put it). He got in trouble for breaking school rules, he failed most of his classes, he felt that his teachers didn't really deserve much respect, and he couldn't find it in him to care about the things they wanted him to. Mike appeared to be perpetually distracted, unfocused about his future, and

particularly disinterested in his education. He seemed destined to be “the kid who fell through the cracks,” another dropout among thousands. But then something amazing happened. Mike’s school hired a different teacher, a teacher unlike the others. And through the course of the semester with this teacher, Mike changed. He learned to pass his classes; he was able to compete in school. Mike was healed, actualized, and transformed. He was suddenly able to flourish in the world. Mike became “a winner.” (The crowds cheered.)

Mike’s story is one that pop culture celebrates. It is the stuff of violins, it is the advertisement in the bus that invites bored commuters in less than meaningful jobs to change careers and embrace the glory of “doing something that matters.” To be a part of Mike’s story is to be able to sleep at night, warmed by the comfort of believing.

This type of popular narrative unnerves me for multiple reasons, not least among them is that tales like Mike’s are usually soaked in neoliberal ideology. In this discourse, teachers are to blame for the failures of the educational system (structural inequity be damned, all that is really needed is a visionary/one good teacher to shake things up). Kids are dolts waiting to be saved. And the rest of the working class is in need of saving too, as they have no cultural heritage, no sources of pride, no inner strength. The poor don’t really care about their kids, or if they do, they don’t know how to, and it takes a brave hero from the middle class to show them how to love, learn, and parent. And, of course, they are poor because they didn’t try hard enough. In neoliberal savior narratives (“Dangerous Minds” is the film that most encapsulates these stereotypes), the hero is always middle class and more often than not white, but tough enough to venture into the “jungle” of the child’s neighborhood, bringing his or her saving light to one lucky home.

Portrayals of non-white communities are usually demeaning and simplistic. Ultimately, knowledge is never about collective power, it is never about the search for justice, or a critique of the status quo. Mike succeeds because he personally strives to get ahead of the rest. His individualism is his saving grace. The purpose of education in these tales is to provide a path to equity by allowing kids like Mike to climb up the food chain, eyes firmly closed.

Yet, critiques aside, these stories tell us about the way that we (as a nation) are caught in a schizophrenic place. They point to the disconnect between what is apparently a collective desire for some type of meaningful education and the endless media headlines on education that focus on “accountability.” In the language of accountability, “better education” means “increases on standardized test scores.” But cultural tropes tell us that it is worth believing that education is about our collective desire for something more. They remind us that we need to know the difference between a child and a scope and sequence chart (Ohanian, 1999). Tobin offers us the vision of an alternative to neoliberalism in education. In this world, schools refuse knowledge oligarchies, are clear on what social justice means and reflect an ethic in which, “At all levels of social organization there is a civic responsibility, an ethic of care, whereby individuals act in ways that afford others’ agency—acting not just for oneself but also for others” (2009, ¶ 87). However unsavory the specifics may be, in the world of tales like Mike’s, adults and students make connections as human beings who care about one another. They are not brains on stems. They are full human beings, complex and nuanced, each bringing their history and their lifeworlds with them into the school, always interacting and always in the process of becoming.

Reflexivity and connections

Freire says that we are always in the process of becoming (1970). As we learn, we engage in this process of becoming with others (Siry, forthcoming). I have focused largely on the autobiographical to provide a discursive hermeneutic (interpretive) analysis of some the connections that I have made journeying through my early steps in critical research.

Echoing Tricia Kress it is my hope that, “through illustrating and analyzing my own experiences, other educators can make connections and come to heightened awarenesses (sic) of their own experiences as well” (n.d., ¶ 6). Heeding Freire’s call to reinvent him, Kincheloe argues that it is our critically aware connections that make us able to act as ethical and agentic beings. From the perspective of critical ontology, he states, “A critical ontology involves the process of reconnecting human beings on a variety of levels and in numerous ways to a living social and physical web of reality” (2003a, p. 21). From the perspective of post-formal psychology this also means that we need to be pedagogically concerned with connecting with each other as well as reintegrating emotion and reason within ourselves (1999). As Kress reinvents Kincheloe, she offers us a paradigm in which self, art, and affect matter. Kress’s critical praxis research acknowledges Sandra Harding’s point that objectivity needs to be unmasked and instead encourages us to examine our standpoints (1998). Positionality, or the intersection between race, class, gender, age, location (and other social categories), as well as the ability to belong to dominant groups and the fluidity with which we can pass between categories, defines what we are able to see and care about both in research and in life. On one level, this chapter is about the archeology of positionality in a struggle toward conscientization. It is about the way that ideology infuses the day-to-day, about the way that structures collide

with agency, and about how identity perpetually comes into being. On another level my tale is just that, a story that might resonate, one woman's attempt to connect the dots in the struggle toward meaningful and justice based academic work.

Chapter 2

Go play in traffic: Skating, gender, and urban context

I skate, therefore I am

I am a skater, a woman, and a student of cultural studies - often in that order. In this article, I use my experience to examine skating as a means of resistance against the consumerization of the female body, the capitalist regulation of the movement of bodies in cities, and notions of health/sport/play. These ideas are discussed as they are incorporated through my journey on a typical day. I assert here that urban street skating offers women a site for resistance to some of the oppressive norms reified in the everyday. I seek to probe (through a personal narrative of plotting movement) a way that difference can exist and be interpreted in a contemporary urban space. The word *can* is operative, as my question “arises out of my own experiences and attempts to locate those experiences in a language that gives them meaning without rendering them universal or dogmatic” (Giroux, 1994, p. xi).

Since the emergence of the Age of Reason in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, modern Western thought has accepted positivist epistemology and the bifurcation of intellect from emotion as scientific truths (Kincheloe, 1999). This philosophical legacy has led to the creation of a highly fragmented cultural experience. In the hyperspeed of myriad cyberworlds which signify our most recent experience of Western culture, existence is fractured into bite-sized modules of (mis) information and experience, arguably at a great cost to the human spirit (Kincheloe, 1999). The world

keeps getting smaller and more bittified. Postmodern reductionism and the capitalist impulse have fragmented even the body into discrete component parts. Women in particular are endlessly dissected to better serve media and consumer interests. In the face of this disorienting fragmentation, I strap on my skates and run like hell.

Knowledge contained through bodies that live and resist, organic and messy, have little place in positivism's world. Tales of the body's inherent coherency and its complex narrative that doggedly navigates time, ecology, and ideology, seem all but forgotten. Joe Kincheloe (1999) has noted, "(the) logocentric masculinization of thinking negated the possible insight derived from the body, feeling and subjective personal experience" (p. 6). Erica McWilliam (1996) concurred, "the fact remains that, in the history of Western thought, a mind/body dichotomy has privileged the mind as that which defines human 'being,' while the body has been interrogated as the excess baggage of human agency" (p. 16). My focus here, is on slivers of cultural knowledge centered in and derived from the personal and the corporeal, as my *baggage of human agency* navigates a specific urban context. Through my narrative and interpretation, I seek to "locate a body that is conscious of its own manufacture and constructedness" (Palmer, 1996, p. 87), and conscious of the broader politic of the (urban, public) world that contains this body. Using the experience of performing what I perceive as a libratory action (skating) through the coherence of one day, I endeavor to bring a moment of knowledge (writ small) back to one of many places it lives, the sticky reality of streets, minutes, and flesh.

Half awake and half dreaming

The present and the reverse future according to Rollerblade

8:00 a.m. or 10:00 a.m. It's a beautiful day, Saturday morning or Tuesday or Monday and the weather is fine, or rainy, or freezing. I wake, pet kittens, drink coffee, and reach for my skates. The heels of both frames are cracking. I hope they live through the summer. I scheme, "Duct tape and superglue? Probably not as sound as it should be." I decide to look online to see what's out there to buy...

In the mid-1990s, there were more than a dozen inline skate companies marketing their goods in the United States. Today, a look at the main skate retailers, Paragon Sports, Modell's Sporting Goods, and Blades-Skate and Board, shows that only two skate companies are generally available, K2 and Rollerblade. Both have functioning Web sites. K2's Web site features a few small photographs of active skaters who are not quite discernible, but it has many photos of skates. Rollerblade is a different story.

The Rollerblade Web site home page advertises "new skates" and shows four slides. Two are of men. One shows a man's lower leg clad in his shiny new skates, the angle of his legs and the blur of the road depict speed and technical prowess. The other male is an adolescent youth jumping high (*getting air*). His jump is so spectacular that it is framed by trees and sky. Of the two women who appear on the site, neither have skates visible. One woman leans forward, her chest pushes into the frame. She is wearing pink, her helmet and wrist guards *allude* to skates, although the photograph cuts her off at the top of her thighs. Her shorts are short and possibly linen (they look like shorts typically purchased at stores like The Banana Republic). Her skin is a tan hue that could belong to a number of *ethnic* women, but her hair is blonde. Her lipstick matches her shirt. The

other photograph is, fundamentally, a side angled crotch shot. It shows a young White woman in a form fitting pink and white tank top and tight short shorts. The frame begins at her breasts and ends at her knees. She has no head, no lower legs, and no feet (or obviously, no rollerblades). What she does have is a hand in blurred motion that almost seems to be caressing her ass.

Skating, on the Rollerblade home page, is not sold as recreation or fitness (although both are legitimate arguments for skating). Nor is it sold as freedom through resistance, (though I will also argue later that rollerblading can offer this). Nor, sadly, is it sold as pleasure. Instead, it is directly marketed through the tropes of standard advertising mythology. It offers me sexist, racist, ageist, promises of a *better* future. Neil Postman (1986, p. 128) critiqued and explicated how advertising is used to sell myths about ourselves and our history, while promising consumption of the product as transformative therapy that will lead us to a place where we are valued more. Advertising begins by asserting, (often insisting on), viewer malcontent. It also favors a peculiar pessimistic orientation to time. It works to negate the present, in favor of the future or the past (Berger, 1972). If pleasure existed in the present, would we ever *need* the latest product? Of course, for women, the present is portrayed as only worth itself for a certain age group (12 to 22 years?), only to the few with the body marketed as desirable, and even then, only if/when pimped, preened, made-up, displayed, splayed, and outfitted correctly. In part, I skate to escape. Everywhere I look, the advertising industry attacks me in intimate ways, it peers and probes, it dissects and dismisses. My clothing, my skin, my age, my scent, my bleeding, sweating, eating, lips, eyes, manners, orgasms are fodder for public

debate in women's magazines in the postmodern age. But I can be fixed, made younger, whiter, thinner; I can be valued more. This I am assured by billboards and Web sites.

Future

The images presented to me by Rollerblades girls work to suggest that I can use their product to outskate time. Their bodies in motion are the bodies of perpetual youth. There is a tension between performative practices and representations of those practices. Wendy Morgan (1996, pp. 23-47) analyzed issues of culture, pedagogy, and the particulars of the body through the lens of a personal trainer. The personal trainer talks about how her clients discuss *slipping* or *being naughty* and come to her, (to fix them). "What seems to be distinguished here is on the one hand a sense of aberration from a youthful form (if not norm) and on the other a paradigm of abstract, general perfection as a fixed standard for comparison" (Morgan, 1996, p. 23). In compliance with these reified ideas, the Rollerblade Web site offers me its (half-woman's) visual promise: *get back the youthful form of perfection*, it croons in my brain, *look like her*. I cannot help but compare myself. Never mind that I am a five foot two inch, Anglo Pakistani woman in my forties; the Rollerblading woman on my screen is my fairytale mirror and my question is quickly being reduced to the fairest. This morning, gazing into my Rollerblade future, I am *perfect*. John Berger (1972) explained, "Publicity does not manufacture the dream. All it does is to propose to each one of us that we are not yet enviable—yet could be" (p. 149).

Present

The men on the Rollerblade site exist to perform; the women exist to be seen. Apparently, it is not important for the full body of the woman to be seen, the bits that

matter in her body are impressed into the screen of the prospective skate buyer, “tall-thin-white(ish)-young-clad-in-pink.” What could be better? But the headless *sexy* midriff isn’t just about the body dismembered, (arguably with these *important bits* focused on for the consumption of men who are of course *never* thusly displayed). The woman of Rollerblade is the woman in possession of the body that is the absolute of carefree. With no head there is nothing to think about, there is nothing to worry about^{vi}. How can a woman worry without a head? Why should a woman want a head? I am, arguably, easier to manage headless. Although Rollerblade sells the idea of liberatory freedom to both men and women, the gendered contrast in the implied meaning of freedom and liberation is striking. The men in Rollerblade use skating to buy an idea of freedom by connecting to exerting their strength and skill; the women access a Rollerblading freedom by having a desirable youthful body and no longer having a brain.

I decide to wait until the duct tape dissolves on my skates.

Skating in toyland

Skating is child’s play. Old-fashioned roller skates as well as Rollerblades are consistently marketed to children. Of course, wherever there are children, there is Disney in hot pursuit. Disney’s Wide World of Sports has an “All Star Kids Classic” skate marathon. Henry Giroux (1994), a critic of Disney’s corporatization of childhood, notes, “Disney’s power and reach into popular culture combine an insouciant playfulness and the fantastic possibility of making childhood dreams come true—yet only through the reproduction of strict gender roles . . .” (p. 31). But Disney is not alone. In tandem, on the market there are Barbie skates (pictured below) - that are, of course, pink - for girls, and Barbie safety pads, also in pink. Shirley Steinberg (2004) deconstructed the spiritually

and morally vapid messages of Barbie, *The Bitch Who Has Everything*, by looking critically at the messages and the silences of this multi-million dollar icon. In contrast to the girls, there are boy's skates with names like *Prowler* (figure 1). Apparently, there is no need to be concerned about encouraging boys to think of themselves as prowlers in a world of Barbies. The girl's skates are always pink or white; the boy's skates are always blue or black.



Figure 1. Girl's skates versus boy's skates

In addition, video games, such as Playstation 2, "Aggressive Inline" features a cast of male characters in gymnastic *aggressive* skate poses. The boys are the stereotype of the healthy counterculture youth; the music reinforces this image. *The girl* in the game is reminiscent of Laura Croft and wears tiny outfits. Points are gained by daring tricks that in real life involve considerable skill and practice. If video games are for boys, for the girls there are dolls (figure 2). There is a doll that looks like an infant, there are the dolls (including Barbie) that look like long limbed anorexics, and there are those dolls that exist to market clothing from fashion houses for the trendy, White, upper middle class.



Figure 2. Typical skater dolls.

Judging by this (postmodern) skater's world, all life, including the life of children, exists for looking and judging. The gender/class coding in these products is almost too obvious to explicate at length here. Skating, thus billed, embodies the exclusionary; it is middle class White and it exists for show or for competition. Girls are expected to use skates to *play nice* (clean) and look desirable, whereas boys are expected to use skates to *kick ass*.

Abigail Feder (1995) noted, "femininity and athleticism are mutually exclusive concepts in American culture" (p. 22). Jean Chow (2003) has worked to render visible the pain of girls who feel that they do not fit the female *norm* as portrayed by the media and so identify themselves as "freaks of nature." Using the concept of Foucault's medical gaze she contended, "It is a disciplinary gaze situated within apparatuses of power and knowledge that constructs the female figure as pathological, excessive, unruly, and potentially threatening of the dominant order" (Chow, 2003, p. 117). Chow argued that internalizing these binaries and reacting to them by attempts at self-taming causes adolescent girls to buy into the idea of themselves as *freaks*, a message laden with pain.

With regard to skating and children, a gender biased exclusionary/pathological way of thinking is pushed through messages of different appropriate behaviors evident in the gender differentiated products above. The boys should use their skates to be happily *excessive* and *unruly* (get dirty, jump, perform tricks, *prowl*); the girls' use should their skates *to be seen*, pristine in their outfits. Fortunately, it doesn't always work that way.

Skating out of toyland

11:00 a.m.

I hit the streets on my wheels, hugging the side of the road, "*I am the freest woman on the planet.*" The wind strokes my face and tosses my hair. A favored song plays in my head, *I believe I can fly*. In these moments I do, "*These are my wings.*" I saddle alongside cars with their ecto-skeletons holding ridged forms, "*I am not you.*" I skate past people walking, moving at normal speeds for humans, "*I am not you.*" I pass pedestrians, and play tag with buses. I am moving just fast enough to feel the endorphins spike my blood. I am just a little too fast to care much about the sidewalk. Aware, yet pleasantly unconnected, the street life is soft blur around me. "*I love being and being a body different and in motion.*"

Steinberg and Kincheloe (2004) pointed out that all cultural messages offer the opportunity for both compliance and resistance. The medium of the skate offers itself as tool for resistance for girls and women regardless of, and in direct opposition to, the way the medium is marketed to them. Skating offers an opportunity to reinterpret the body. Chow (2003) noted that for girls, "The(ir) differently formed body, evidence of perhaps divine wrath, arrives with a variety of names and is always an interpretive occasion" (p.

114). The female body in the magazines (the body that Chow's girls' reference) is self-conscious and still. The viewer can never be still enough to match the model, or the ultra smooth choreographed repetition of the actor/model in a television advertisement. This idea of the woman's body presented for consumption is the body static and frozen in time in a two dimensional frame as subject for comparison. This female body that surrounds us on billboards, in magazines, and in media images is cut off from the flow of life; her image is discrete. The *form* of this body is its all.

When the body skates, it is "differently formed" because it moves in ways that are different from the norm. It is not two-dimensional but four-dimensional, moving in substance, direction, and time. In this state, the 'interpretive occasion' of difference can expand beyond self-consciousness. When I skate, my *wheels as wings* offer me the chance to access a feeling of a differently *formed* body as a metaphor of a differently *functioned* body. I forget my body as it appears when static, and note instead its ability to produce speed, to feel wind, to react, to play with gravity. I am aware of its power over distance and away from the chatter of the everyday. I am much more conscious of not becoming road-kill than I am of how my lipstick looks. When I skate, I write a story with my limbs, embodying a physical discourse (of a commute or play) with my stride, my differently formed body becomes an interpretive site of resistance against the perfection of fossilized flat female norms.

Go play in traffic: Sport versus play

11:30 a.m.

Playing in traffic. Skating up First Avenue, I stop at a traffic light. The van next to

me is playing LL Cool J. I dance around in the bike lane. The light changes and we take off. Slowing down for the next traffic light I skate past an exuberant puppy. He lunges and barks. I yelp. He wags his tail. I wag mine. As dog and owner cross the street, they pause to greet me. I remark to the owner that all dogs see skaters as either monsters or dog toys. I play with the dog for a moment before the light changes. The next patch of road takes me uphill. The wind is against me. This is my game: I skate as hard as I can to beat the hill . . .

On skates, the streets are my playground, rain, shine, summer, winter. I skate approximately 90 to 140 miles per month. Year round. My inner child took over long ago. I am not an aggressive skater (I do not do tricks), I am not a speed skater (I do not run races), I am not roller-hockey, roller-soccer, roller-basketball, or roller-derby player (I do not participate in team sports), I am not a skate-dancer (my pirouettes are not pirouette-like). But sometimes I participate in any of the above^{vii}. “Skaters are unlikely to conform to normative ideas and narrowly circumscribed regulations classifying skating as either recreation or transport” (Stratford, 2002, p. 194)^{viii}. I am a garden (urban)-variety street skater^{ix}, inherently goalless, easily distracted. Even when strictly operating from point A to point B, I think of my commute as play. Diane Ackerman (1999) explained play,

The world of play favors exuberance, license, abandon. Shenanigans are allowed, strategies can be tried, selves can be revised. In the self-enclosed world of play, there is no hunger. It is its own goal, which it reaches in a richly satisfying way.

(p. 6)

The body that skates and plays, embraces the subversiveness of the solitary yet interactive, “*I can leap on this curb,*” “*I can wander, there, and there, and there,*” “*I can chase this feather’s dance.*” Erica McWilliams and Peter Palmer (1996) explained the error of an epistemological framework that privileges the cerebral, “Desire is collapsed into motivation, pleasure becomes performance indicators, eros is rendered excellence,” (p. 164). Skating is play; it is fun; it is desire, pleasure, eros.

Play is not sport. In contrast to notions of *play* and *fun*, *sport* is instrumentalized and the body in sport is increasingly commodified as a symbol of self-value (Wright, 2000). Henning Eichberg (2002) examined the play *pedagogy of the unserious*. He notes that sport, unlike play, is focused on twin goals of achievement and rules (performance according to a *right way*). Sports, he contended, are ascribed a variety of functions (health, educational, social, and psychological, and political). “The *function* is furthermore characterized by a conservative undertone. Implicit, the notion postulates some ideal, normally hegemonic societal goals as *functional* and rejects oppositional values as *dysfunctional*” (Eichberg, 2002). Movement, in and of itself, is not inherently functional; function is ascribed. “Movement is a bodily medium showing—like the navel, the breath and the hearing—that the human being is not alone in the world. Human is the interbody” (Eichberg, 2002). It is the interbody that skates in an urban context, pushing up against the city. When, while skating, I play with the wind, movement, inner song, when I fight hills to careen down the other side, my driving force is not achievement and the Nike “just do it” sport mantra. My driving force is the impulse to embrace the interplay between the world and the body, and the intersection or meeting of these two forces is a personal site of *anti-functional* joy.

One element of the subversive and liberatory nature of street skating is its inherent refusal to buckle down to single attachments. To skate can be to detach into the playful by literally detaching from the ground, from the mechanics of normal human movement, from the types of paths and journeys expected of an adult. I skate unattached to anything that moves at my speed, from the rhythm of the commute and all of its humdrum. On the other hand, I attach to corporeal knowings and connectedness, to a sense of a body owned for my pleasure and to this urban earth as a home for my body's narrative.

1:00 p.m.

Tompkins Square Park, I stop at a bench and watch "*the little ones.*" A parent is skating with two children; they chase each other, trip and laugh. On the other side of the space a middle-aged man is practicing his skate-dancing^x. I skate over towards him to watch and learn . . .

I did not learn to think of my body as able to learn until I was well into my adulthood (in my mid-20s). *Living in this body* was not a concept I understood through sports or gym lessons in school. I shunned physicality as it was presented to me. In the panopticon of the gym I was humiliated by my body (newly haired and oozing, bursting unruly mess). I was ashamed to have nowhere to feel safe from the gaze of the teachers, of the mirrors, of the other students. I couldn't get the ball where I was supposed to, or the rules right. My body was my enemy. Mostly I wanted, in my awkward adolescent way, "*to just die*" in every gym class.

Sports, in particular, team sports are generally billed as good for the self-esteem and mental and physical health of girls (Title IX, info, 2007). Overall, this is probably true. But team or group sports require a certain cultural capital that is not universally

accessible. At the very least, a girl has to be “in” enough to be accepted as a part of a team (I was not), have the time and access to the space to practice, and have parents who supplied the right equipment or uniform (I was thankful not to have either of these). Rules have to be understood and obeyed in sports, and the activity of sport is a slave to the dictates of exact time. In sharp contrast, the pedagogy of urban skating is noncompetitive, nonlinear, personal, dictated only by the safety, and flatness of the surface, playful, classless.

What are the values developed and encouraged by participation in team sports? In a 20-year study, using a database of 72,000 individuals, Andy Rudd and Sharon Stoll (2004) empirically examined the moral character of college athletes. Their findings were overwhelming; “team sport athletes learn that winning takes precedence over the moral ideal.” A portion of their conclusions are worth quoting at length when thinking about the pedagogy of the body as athletic,

Results on male athletes’ moral reasoning have been fairly consistent—the longer they participate in sport, the more morally calloused they become—the same appears to be happening with female athletes, especially team sport athletes. It appears that female athletes are being socialized into the current capitalistic, commodified model of moral callousness—less of a concern for others and more of a concern for self.

The moral impact of participation in athleticism, as defined through team sports, is apparently one fraught with contradictions and imbued with the tinge of corporate turpitude. In contrast, the playfulness of street skating simply cannot carry this type of power.

Access to a good drug

3:00 p.m.

Hard skate, 10 miles. My blood is racing, I am flushed, out of breath, giddy. A thick bead of sweat traces my spine. An endorphin rush leaves me in an almost euphoric skate, "*this is my drug.*"

We know the deal. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC, 2006), as a nation, Americans are empirically overweight, under-exercised and nervous/restless or sad/hopeless in record numbers. Men fare better than women. The American Heart Association is one of a long list of research communities that advocates exercise to improve mental and physical health, citing the benefits of exercise training for physical (hemodynamic, hormonal, metabolic, neurological, and respiratory), psychological, and cognitive functioning (Fletcher et al, 1996). Exercise reduces all causes of death in postmenopausal women, and lowers the risk of breast cancer. So why aren't we doing it?

Environmental contexts influence physical activity (Humpel, Owen & Leslie, 2002, p. 188). Context with regard to exercise is not equal for men and women^{xi}. Culturally, men have an advantage in the messages that they are sent about exercise, as exercise for men is still connected to ideas of virility. Women are expected to have thin, desirable bodies, but not necessarily strong bodies.

Materially, women are also disadvantaged when it comes to ability to exercise. Although middle class women may have access to exercise sites and the time to do so (which may also include the money to hire baby sitters as well as the capital outlay for gym or dance/pool/yoga studio membership/fees), poor women have fewer options. Outdoor facilities for men favor fields and courts that are the sites of primarily male, or

male dominated, athletics (basketball, baseball, soccer). They also assume comfort with public gaze. Recreational paths for jogging are not always well lit and women may have more safety concerns about running in public spaces.

Skating doesn't favor the physical attributes of a particular gender. There is a relatively low initial cost for good skates and protective gear (\$150) that lasts almost indefinitely. Parking lots, roads, and parks are all skateable. Safety is less of an issue, as skaters are able to travel on sidewalks and roads, with or against traffic, and being fleetier than foot, are hard to catch. Women skating on the streets are less subject to the penetration of the (male) gaze as their pace is difficult to match. Skating facilitates aerobic and anaerobic strength, is low impact, and burns approximately the same amount of fat as treadmill running (International Inline Skaters Association, Clarian, 2007). In short, for environmental and physiological reasons, skating is good for girls.

Life is elsewhere

4:00 p.m.

I stop at my friend John's house on 37th street. We are headed uptown. I skate him to the bus and will meet him again when he disembarks. Each time his bus stops for a passenger, I skate past and wave, grinning hugely. An SUV roars past me too close for comfort (although the street is wide), it attempts to pull directly in front of me to turn and doing so cuts me off. I keep skating, "Get off the street" the driver venomously yells, "Streets are for traffic." "I am traffic!" I yell back.

But it's gorgeous out here and I am not losing my grin . . .

Kincheloe (1999) uncovered the pain of the postmodern moment, pointing out that

rewarding work is a joke and, “A crisis of motivation accompanies the loss of meaning in the postmodern condition” (p. 8). If rewarding work is scarce, what about rewarding travel to work? The root of *travel* is the middle English word, “*travail*, to toil or labor” (*Webster’s Unabridged Dictionary*, 1998). Apparently, linguistically speaking, both work and travel are ordeals to be bourn. A glimpse at the denizens of urban public transport (attempting to crawl into their iPod life support systems), suggests that we currently find travel to work a less than satisfying experience. Pleasure and travel are firmly divided and thus commuting becomes toil. The existence of commuters, however, opens up a captive audience to advertisers. There is nary a bus or subway space unplastered by ads, (newly including the underside of the steps to the trains and the pillars supporting the station roof). There are ads now projected by laser on the sidewalks, and tickertape commercials on the roofs of taxicabs (with advertising screens inside them). *Being in transit* is apparently synonymous with *waiting to buy*. Life during public transportation is about a specific elsewhere, not just of geography, but of a consumerist future.

The consumer machine is not about sways and circles, nuances of the street, pauses and dalliances. It is about goals. It does not weave; it flies straight. In commuting differently, skaters and other self-powered travelers quietly and personally challenge the underpinnings of consumerism’s *bigger–better–faster–more* mentality and the wisdom of speed and hyperspeed. As a skater, I am not subjected to (or for some public transport banned from) in-transit access to consumerist ways of being. For me life is not elsewhere. My travel is a moment of respite from capitalism’s public ubiquitous hold. I cannot read billboards and skate (without risking serious injury). I cannot window shop. I move too fast to take in advertisements that are stationary, and hazard too many risks to pay

attention to those that are on moving vehicles. I also do not participate in any consumerism for my journey. I use no fuel, I pay no transit fee, I don't park, I don't need air for my tires, I pay no road tax. My movement as an embodied refusal of consumption (and my deviance from car centric entitlement) can be considered to be subversive behavior^{xii}.

The body in public transportation is regulated almost to nonexistence. Any attempts to exist as an idiosyncratic organic being are (in the name of public good) ruled away. The Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) has a myriad of regulations disciplining the amount of space, noise, and types of movement allowed during transit^{xiii}.

What is disturbing about the regulation of the body in ways that are routinized, stabilized, disciplined, predictable, and efficient is not what happens but what is normalized. I do not argue that to keep people moving when there are literally millions of us trying to get to work is a good idea. I worry that the idea takes over. At what point do regulatory practices reify a certain type of movement so that it becomes accepted as the only way of being? Are skaters, homeless people, people with bags on seats, people dawdling, or stopping, or listening to music, or protesting, or dancing on the streets, or having any different agenda, and not moving at the normalized pace necessarily a threat to the social order? Kincheloe and Steinberg (1999) pointed out that disciplinary regulatory policies have been used to cultivate “bourgeoisie (middle class) white values of punctuality, emotional restraint, frugality and rationality” (p. 38). Moving differently in the city (as a skater) challenges these values as it refuses and refutes, *frugality* in movement, *rationality* of speed, and the *emotional restraint* that is etiquette in subways and buses.

One element of bourgeoisie values is the notion of discretion. The middle class body is never too loud, it does not sweat (unless playing sport). It does not work, publicly. Yet it is desirable and desired (as evidenced by a myriad of advertising imagery). Popular magazines insist: in order to get the desired body, one has to consume; one must learn the newest tricks, and be replete with *health* products and equipment. The desirable middle class body is to be worked on in the gym or on the courts. It is not to be worked on in the streets. In the streets you are a nuisance. The working body is not revered. The laborer is not held up as the pinnacle of fitness, even though he or she probably is. Bodies are not to be used for anything as gauche as work. The public use of physicality by skaters, (bicyclists and similar non-motorized commuters) disrupts traditional signification of the body and challenges the value system that divides work from the body and the body from class.

These streets are home (inclusion vs. exclusion in public space)

8:00 p.m.

Wandering the city at sunset. I watch the kids (teenagers) do railslides, sip my juice and pet random dogs. In the summer the kids will stay here well into the night. They get chased off one set of steps to find another, or wait until the coast is clear and come back to leap into the air, again and again. I leave them and skate ovals in Union Square Park until a police car reminds me that skaters are not longer allowed . . .

“Originally home meant the center of the world—not in a geographical, but in an ontological sense” (Berger, 1991, p. 55). Using the streets for transportation and

recreation, I develop an intimate relationship with them. In a sense they are home; I am conscious of the streets that hold my skating body as meaningful space.

Home was the center of the world because it was the place where the vertical line crossed with a horizontal one. The vertical line was a path leading up to the sky and downwards to the underworld . . . The crossing of two lines, the reassurance their intersection promises, was probably already there, in embryo, in the thinking and beliefs of nomadic people, but they carried the vertical line with them” (p. 56).

As I skate, perpendicular to the asphalt, I carry the vertical with me. Like many skaters, during the day I am nomadic. Escaping a tiny apartment, I feel close to the city streets as mine. It is city that gentrifies around me and as it does so it pushes skaters further to the edges.

Skaters are part feral in their claims of terrain; public space does not always welcome multiple publics. In many parts of the world, and even here historically, there is one road, and it is shared. In America it is most often a bifurcated road, one side for the pedestrians, (although some sidewalks aren't even wide enough for a double stroller), one for the cars. Usually none for skaters/bikers/runners—they are told to get off the road, off the sidewalk, off the park. Elaine Stratford (2002) argued that skateboarding (and by extension here skating) is part of a larger discourse on uses and rights in urban space. She notes a tendency to stereotype, “unproductive skaters and (against) productive commercial interests and citizen consumers” (p. 194). Elizabeth Wilson (1995) documented that cities are becoming ever tidier, more uniform, and less eccentric, “The heritage industry and the development of cultural tourism, plus gentrification, certainly

has turned some cities and centers into museums of a kind” (¶ 26). The city/museum is not tolerant of claims laid to it by unproductive public elements.

Space and place can have multiple functions and meanings and allow or prohibit a variety of narratives. A park (such as Union Square), for example, houses my skater narrative which notes its, size, shape, and uniformity, its curves, slants, smoothness, the preferred angles and trajectories of pedestrians, and dogs, the clientele it favors (human, quadruped, winged, wheeled), the moments when it is quiet, the way it reacts to rain and the freedom of movement that all of these forces allow. My body is the central reference point for understanding and experiencing place and space. Other bodies notice different realities and different uses of space. Critical geographers “often argue that place and identity are simultaneously constructed” (Berquist, 2002, ¶ 20). The experience of space is political in whom it includes/excludes and what identities and activities it favors. Shared space allows for equitable access for everyone and is tolerant of diversity. There is a single yet communal experience that results from the sharing of public space. The social and personal impact of inclusion and exclusion shapes who we are and who we can become, “Social effects of sharing space are intimacy, social nearness and a higher tendency to cooperate. Being in the same place is a reciprocal situation where seeing implies being seen. This creates both vulnerability and trust” (Hornecker, n. d., p. 17). Although we tend to think of cities as surfaces on which life is arranged, it is useful to remember that cities and bodies are coconstituted (Ausch, Doane, & Perez, 2005). A city that welcomes differently moving people (such as skaters), creates a more equitable society in ways that reach beyond the visible.

Skateaway

12:30 p.m.

. . . Bed . . .

Street skating is a particular vantage point from which to see the world. It is a positionality centered in the (corpo)real world. Skating through the city provides me a means to contest manifestations of dominant power as they play out through normalized control of movements. It is important to keep in mind that cultural meanings are contested. It is also important to keep in mind that individual choices are not the final answer. I heed the words of John Berger (1972) who cautioned against this myopia, “The choice of what one eats (or wears or drives) takes the place of significant political choice” (p. 149). I do not mean to suggest that women donning skates and taking to the streets can solve the problems I have attempted to illuminate, (although a part of me believes this). But there is a dialectical relationship between the actions of the body and the world that physically houses it. I do, therefore, mean to suggest that we should not take for granted the uses and erasure of diverse or different bodies in the public space. If we are to live in a world which values everyone, then it is important to question the reification of human purpose that accepts the rifts between reason and emotion, reason and body, and the idea of the (female) body as nothing more than the vestibule of a consumerist ideal. However we choose to do it, we can individually and collectively continue to search for places and ways to resist single definitions of being, and to define our own paths.

12:40 a.m.

“Goodnight Hermes, patron saint of roads and boundaries, watch over me again tomorrow.” Lullaby in my head, “Well the cars do the usual dances. Sames old cruise and the kerbside crawl. But the roller girl she’s taking chances . . . Skateaway that’s all.” (Dire Straits, 1980) . . .

Chapter 3

Seeing what we mean: Visual knowledge and critical epistemology

In the grand scheme of things

Life is elsewhere. (10am.)

My students are bored. They need to “know” ancient Chinese history (for the looming New York State exams), and they can’t find any reason to care. The T’ang dynasty isn’t giving them any joy. I am unsettled by the idea that maybe they are bored because I am just an awful teacher, so I have been quietly peering into other classes. Over the past eighteen years as an educator I have seen lots (thousands) of bored kids. Or, to be fair, kids that look suspiciously like they are bored. It is possible that I am an awful teacher, but my reach is not that of a superhero. I didn’t bore them all...

As I reflect on almost twenty years of teaching high school, I realize that I have become increasingly aware of how terribly deep the mismatch can be between the school and the child. It hardly seems worth stating that (with good cause) many kids don’t much like school^{xiv}. The urban teens I have worked with have expressed a myriad of reasons: There is the outdated curriculum, the endless rules, the sense of surveillance and mistrust, fragmented divisions of time, (the school slop), the hard seats and the soft intellectuality, the cheery (“cheesy”) posters, and dull self-important textbooks. While the classroom textbooks lie (often in every sense of the word) dutifully open, students, animated in a very different world, are often texting each other in emoticons under the table.



Figure 3. Life is elsewhere?

Classroom lessons may rumble along, but for many youth, as the Czech author Milan Kundera famously stated,^{xv} “life is elsewhere” (figure 3).

Looking to see more

A peering backstage. (11am.)

“I don’t want to learn this...This shit don’t mean nothing to me...I want to go

home...What is knowing this going to do for me?” (New York City students commenting on standard curriculum). “YO! Check out this picture!” “Have you seen this?” “LOOK at THIS!” (New York City students commenting on their cell phone content)...

What is going on? Answering this, critical pedagogues have problematized school life to expose structural inequities. The theorists of critical pedagogy, such as Joe Kincheloe (2001), Henry Giroux (2003), and bell hooks (1994), have argued that the “hidden curriculum” of school is a curriculum of power that reinforces current social hierarchical positions. Masquerading as meritocracy, it privileges those (individuals and schools) who have already benefited from the system, reifying their perspectives and lauding their “strength”, while simultaneously blaming or “holding accountable” those who do not succeed. I have witnessed the way that this operates as a child, a teacher, and a researcher in schools, noticing how schools often succumb to the positivist logic of one way of being, one way of knowing, and a one right answer world. This epistemological, ontological, and axiological narrowness comes at a great cost. I have seen countless students “fail” out of schools that could not engage them and could not speak a language that mattered to them.

It is not easy to make school learning matter in a visually robust and information-saturated world. Keith Kenny (2009) argued that visual communication (or the use of visual medium to exchange information) is on the rise in every area of life. Visual communication involves a powerful symbolic system that is different from (but no less competent and complex than) linguistic systems. According to Kenny, visual

communication has become a major source of *our* knowledge (p.182, italics mine). In the United States it would be hard to argue against the idea that the visual has not contributed increasingly to “our” knowledge as a society, but I believe it has not been acknowledged (for the most part) as contributing to “our” knowledge in *schools* (figure 4).



Figure 4. Typical classrooms.

However, as I have noticed it, visual *rhetoric* (the art of using images to persuade) is alive and thriving in school spaces, both in its overtly, (through the use of visuals in textbooks), and beneath the radar, (as it is used by students and quite differently by corporations in schools).

Looking beyond inky fingers

Maria Sturken and Lisa Cartwright (2001) asserted that *seeing* is arbitrary (we *see* all the time); *looking* by contrast, is directed. Gillian Rose (2007) referred to *visuality* as the cultural construction of sight (p. 2). *Looking* (or *visuality*) is the act of making sense of what we notice in the world. In what follows I examine images as pedagogy in schools. My intention is to encourage a closer *looking* at images in educational spaces, to problematize them and to raise questions for educators and researchers^{xvi}. I first discuss visual images in schools that address the construction of childhood itself. I then turn to some of the other visuals that are prominent in school spaces and, in conclusion, I discuss some pedagogical and ideological considerations on the use (and abuse) of visual images in schools. The questions I ask include the following: How do images of children circulating in schools contribute to contesting notions about childhood? Aside from classroom lessons, what other visual knowledge is circulating in school spaces? How has the language of images entered schools? By whom is this visual knowledge created, with what messages, and for whose benefit? Why should visual methods be utilized more in classroom teaching to abet the creation of counter-stories and to resist hegemonic influences? I draw on insights from the disciplines of critical pedagogy, cultural studies, media studies and art theory, as I navigate the world of the visual in schools.

Halos, horns, and big wallets: The visual construction of childhood

Walking the halls with the ghosts of children past. (In a timeless universe.)

What is a child anyway? Answering this question, psychologists, sociologists, educators, scientists, clinicians, and lawyers have raged across academe and popular culture,

fighting to define the child. According to the case made by Anne Higonnet (1998), in addition to “scientific” proofs (exorcized in text), *visual information* has also been instrumental to the cultural formation of current conceptions of childhood. While popular media is currently (and yet again) asserting that children are not what they used to be, and are (in contrast to the good old days) too old, too worldly, too sexual, too violent, too cognizant of things that should be beyond their ken (and therefore in need of more parental, educational and policy control), Higonnet used an analysis of art history to argue that the very notion of childhood innocence is itself suspect, and that it is largely a “pictorial invention.” Using plates of paintings and photographs as accompaniments to her text, she illustrates how the Enlightenment created the idea/ideal of the innocent child, which was then reinforced and reified by an accompanying “visual fiction” (p. 8). Once a “visual habit” (of accepting this pictorial truth) was in place, the advent of “photography made it possible for the ideal of Romantic childhood to seem completely natural” (p. 9). The pictorial provided visual evidence of “children’s true nature.” According to Higonnet, pictures tell a story of childhood but the story has changed. Our current photographic discourse of childhood rests on a narrative that stands in opposition to the idea of “childlike innocence,” the contemporary child is pictured as adult-like, overly-knowing, and far from innocent.

As a society, we seem uncomfortable with the notion that children should know things that they are not necessarily taught in school, preferring the idea of their “natural innocence.” In *The Way We Never Were*, Stephanie Coontz (2000), used an analysis of history to argue that the demonization of youth today is supported by positioning them in contrast to the earlier better times, yet in actuality the “Leave it to Beaver good ole’

days,” never were. She cites compelling social statistics to argue that the perfect world (and the innocent doe-eyed child) of the 1950s (for example) is a figment of our collective imagination, supported largely by the images on television. Kincheloe (2004) used the movie *Home Alone* to shed light on the way that popular films support stories filled with “adult hostility toward [postmodern] children” who both desire and *know too much* (p. 235). In all of these cases, “knowing versus innocent” children are anxiety-laden fictions, visual tropes that embody a good/bad binary, and function to support adult fears about children.

Worldly kids: Common images of children in print media available in schools. (12pm.)

I am walking out to lunch. I stop in the school library to see what new magazines have arrived. The face of a child stares at me from the cover of a school edition Time magazine. He looks dazed. Several students sit at tables nearby intently reading the newspapers, others stop into pick up a newspaper on their way out. Ambivalence about children is also evident in the multiple and sometimes contrasting ways that children are visually represented through the images that are circulated in schools. Images of youth in schools can be found primarily on posters on the walls, the websites that advertise the schools, and the print literature that is available to the students. In addition, “school edition” (i.e., free) tabloid newspapers and national news magazines are widely available in schools. It is to these images that I now turn.

A few covers of Time magazine illustrate the ways that children have been photographed (and Photoshopped) as knowing far too much for our comfort. Here are some examples: August 27, 2007 features a white baby with a moustache and wild long white hair. The text makes the claim that schools fail our smartest kids but the picture

shows a child who, in his adult-baby combination, is nothing short of monstrous. March 27, 2006, shows a white boy somewhere between the ages of 9 and 12 who is plugged in to headphones and surrounded by orbiting electronic gadgets (cell phones, iPods, computers and wires). The blue screen he is staring at tinges his eyes, and his pupils are dilated to give him a vacant, expressionless, unfocused, and dazed stare. The text reads, “Are kids too wired for their own good?” The answer, according to the picture, is not up for debate. The child looks like a cyborg, half-human/half machine, and clearly someone to be both feared and rescued. November 3, 2003, shows an “ethnic” brown-skinned boy of about 6 or 7 years of age reaching out of the magazine cover, to offer us a pill. His head is slightly tilted, he stares straight at us. “You want it?” we almost hear him ask. The headline next to him reads, “Are we giving kids too many drugs?” but the picture goes beyond this, as we are not giving the child drugs but instead are being offered drugs by the child.

Echoing the theme of fear and suspicion of youth, the local New York tabloids, available free in many schools, are constantly filled with images of poor black and brown kids who are portrayed as “the problem.”



Figure 5. Youth today?

Visually confirming the need for “moral panic” over youth, they are often photographed in gang paraphernalia, suspected of criminality, involved in drugs or posturing defiantly into the camera. By and large these images of urban youth (figure 5) support the observation of Eric Margolis and Sheila Fram (2007) who, citing Dorothy Roberts, noted, “The powerful western image of childhood innocence does not seem to benefit Black children. Black children are born guilty” (p. 205). Meanwhile, to turn the page in the same newspapers is to find multiple full-page advertising that uses (mostly white) “girls” (i.e., teenagers who are supposed to represent adult women) to sell shoes, make-up, clothing, and electronics. These model children (literally and figuratively) are the image of (airbrushed) perfection, their radiant smiles confirming their inherent goodness. In both the positive and negative portrayals, the bodies of children seem to be inscribed with a right wing agenda: Know “the streets” and get rightfully punished, know consumerism and live happily ever after. Visual images provide the proof. Ironically,

although they stand in opposition to each other, both of these tropes portray sophisticated beings: one set of youth is worldly in the ways of crime, the other is savvy to the nuances of market hip.

“As you ought to be”: Images of schoolchildren

Perhaps it should come as no surprise that the images of youth as schoolchildren (both in the pictures used in schools and in those used to advertise schools) conform to a narrow theme that presents children “as they should be,” clean-cut obedient and innocent beings, perfect for what Freire (1970/2005) called the banking system of education.

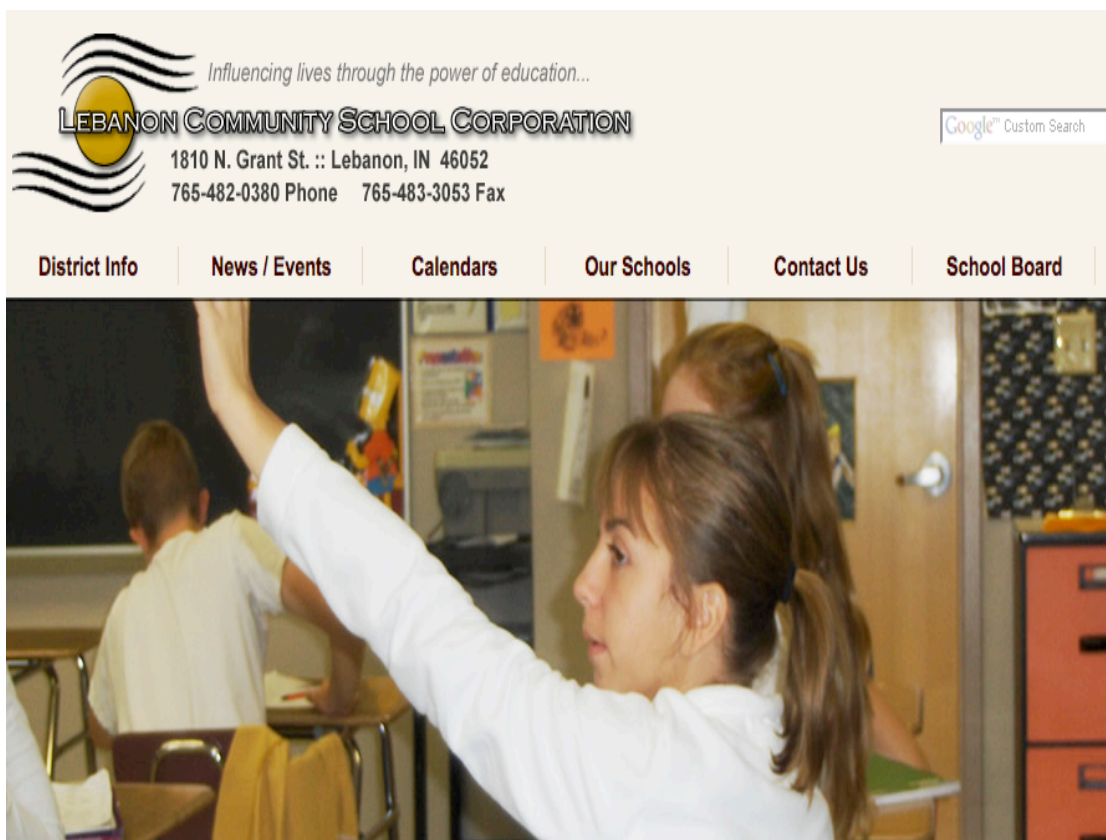


Figure 6. Youth in a school website.

Once again, the images carry ideological inscriptions. If the students are middle class and/or white, by and large we see them seated in an orderly fashion, (figure 6)

presumably waiting to be filled with knowledge. If they are not, their bodies and behaviors tell us that they have all of the wrong knowledge and are in need of the school to save them. The most obvious example of this is the still relevant, (ridiculous) and hugely popular film “Dangerous Minds” in which a tough, leather clad Michelle Pfeiffer swept into a school to convince snarly urban youth to believe in education, in part by taming them with Butterfinger candy.

Images of children involved in school-team sports offer yet another definition of childhood. In contrast to the orderly contained child of the classroom, or the “bad kid” of the tabloids, in the arena of school sports, sweating violence and bursting sexuality are not only allowed, but also cheered on. In these images, the toughness of the jock is that of an adult, a wo/man who is able to withstand repeated physical pain for a good cause. The cheerleader is an almost entirely visual being. As a half- woman/half-child, she exemplifies the age compression that feminists (such as Jean Kilbourne, 1999) have argued has become normalized in current popular and advertising culture. Straddling the space between child and adult, her visible-sexuality-in-the-name-of-the-team seems to allow her to escape the usual critiques about children and childhood. As a whole, I see the images of athletes in schools as providing for them a dubious space in which they are allowed to stand outside of the usual moral panic about childhood gone awry.

Ghosts in the machine: Images of children that are not seen in schools

Monica Casper and Lisa Jean Moore (2009) have asked us all to question how and why some bodies in contemporary society are hyper exposed, while others are erased and denied. The children (in particular the adolescents) who are *not* visible in the images of youth that surround us in schools, also speak of the way we are encouraged to think of

children. Many experiences and facets of the contemporary child are often not evident in dominant images of them. The ways that youth have been betrayed and abandoned by adult institutions does not make it into popular visual discourses. Steinberg and Kincheloe (2004) have pointed out that a postmodern childhood is one filled with adult stress and it largely leaves children to fend for themselves in a world where mega corporations prey on their desires. Toby Miller (2009) noted that the perpetual *moral panic* about youth in the media, combined with the lack of *accurate representation*, renders youth paradoxically both the most silenced population and the noisiest. His point is that children, and teens in particular, are overexposed through stereotypes they are supposed to embody, while simultaneously underrepresented in sympathetic portrayals of the complexity of their lives.

The children who are missing from the popular image are those who do not fit dominant narratives. I rarely see images of the many youth I have encountered in high schools, those who are not innocent, not dupes of the system, nor shallow and narcissistic (figure 7).

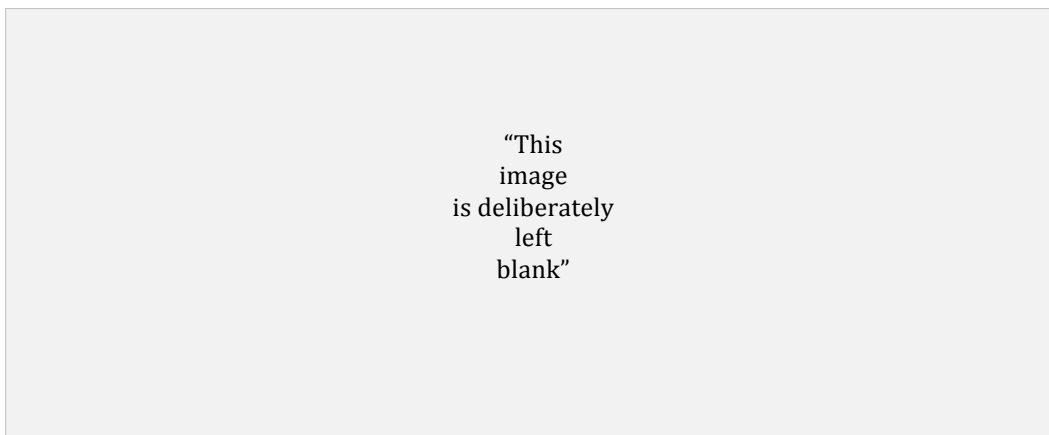


Figure 7. Missing images

There is an absence of visual representations of the hard working and responsible inner city kids, who are not heroic in the celebrity tale of “the star that makes it out of the ‘hood,” but who are heroic in the level of compassion, passion and laughter that they refuse to let go of and freely share, despite lives that are often grindingly brutal. Schools are not filled with promotional pictures of children who work hard to raise their siblings and tend to their elders, functioning as adults, as the social safety nets meant to hold their families have disappeared. The pictures of youth on the magazine racks in libraries aren’t filled with the kids who quietly (legally or illegally, and often at great personal risk) do everything they can to provide economic support for themselves and their families as they seek to combat poverty in the “land of plenty.” Inspirational posters in guidance offices don’t show the kids who have jobs and thus leave school everyday to work long hours for as long as the jobs are there for them, and then search hard for new ones when they are not. Millions of young people “occupy a degraded borderland within the economic and cultural geography of neoliberal capitalism, in which the spectacle of commodification exists side-by-side with the imposing threat of the prison industrial complex” (Giroux, 2003, p. xvi). I have had many hundreds of conversations with youth who are fully aware of the landscape Giroux speaks of, yet who summon the strength (that for all the times I have witnessed it I can still barely comprehend) to come to school, do the right thing and simply, with dignity, “deal.” These children, however, are not the stuff of images of children circulated in schools or in the media. They are ghosts in the visual machine.

Re-loading the Matrix

I find these trends in the visual portrayals of children deeply troubling. In part because

artistic and, in particular, photographic portrayals of children seem to have stood in as placeholders for truth, framing the way we are encouraged to consider and interact with them. Özlem Sensoy (2010) elaborated on Richard Dyer's argument pointing out that "how we treat others is based on how we see them; such seeing comes from representation" (p. 43). Particularly with adolescents, the focus on what are often negative visual stories of them highlight the popular notion of the pathology of youth and make it difficult to place individual stories in a framework of structural critique.

To literally *see* childhood as a construction is to begin the work of unraveling it. Analyzing images of children and images of schoolchildren can be a way for educators to thicken our reading of youth and begin to ask questions about childhood as a cultural construction. As images unveil their ideological inscriptions we can look to other theorists for guidance in interpreting them. Michael Apple (2001) asked us to historicize current ways of talking about "the problem of youth" (p. xi). Nancy Lesko (2001) challenged common myths about adolescence, revealing them to be social constructions. Kincheloe (2009) urged us to problematize childhood as he cautions, "Since childhood is a cultural construction shaped in the contemporary era by the forces of this media catalyzed techno-power, the need for parents, teachers, community members to study it is dramatic" (p. 259). If we locate the construction of youth in the material practices of visual medium (in particular photography and media), what patterns emerge? I have illuminated herein the patterns I see, and I ask, what do you see? As importantly, what do our students see? To approach these questions, we can ask students to make notes about the images they see of children and messages these images carry. We can ask ourselves if/how these images have influenced our own expectations of the students who come

before us. As Kincheloe reminded us, “We can reload the Matrix!” (Friereproject.org, n.d.).

She taught me to walk this way: Advertising images in schools

No space untouched! (12:30pm.)

Returning to the building, I stop at the Snapple machine to get a drink. I walk over the decal promoting school spirit “Go Wildcats” (sponsored by Footlocker) on the floor and past the Sunny D promotional poster (figure 8) that is raising money for books. I walk past the lockers that tell me to watch more PBS with their sheet advertizing (figure 9), past the backlit advertizing billboard (figure 10) with our school news ticker-taped on the top, past the classrooms quietly watching ads on Channel One, past the rolled-up, discarded, free book cover with its crumpled, illegible, faded ad. Stopping in the main office, I check my mail box: it contains 3 fliers for 20% off at JC Penney and a discount coupon for Staples...



Figure 8. Typical sponsorship



Figure 9. School lockers

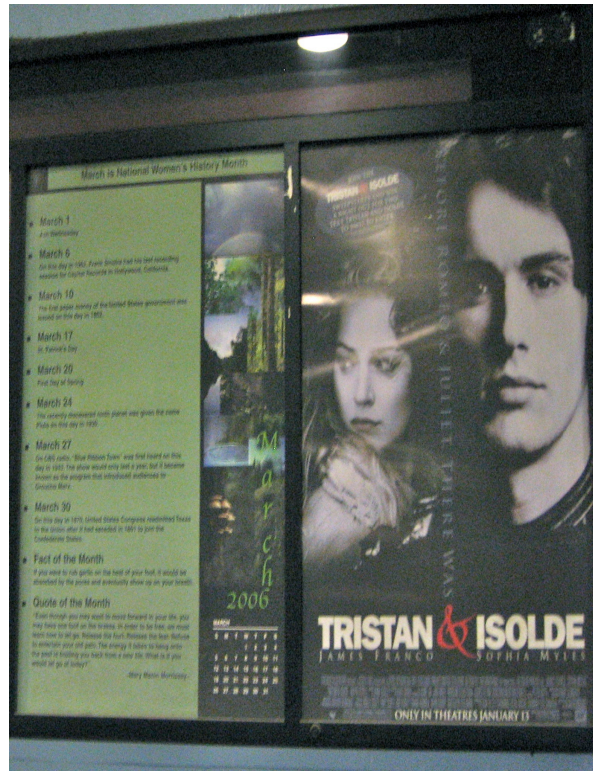


Figure 10. School billboard

Juliet Shor (2004) noted that “Almost anywhere one finds children, their attempts to market to them, whether it's at doctor's offices or nature centers...the jewel in the marketers crown of commercial infiltration has been the nation's public schools.” (p. 85). Marketing presents more than objects for consumption. It presents a vision of life as it should be. In the words of John Berger (1972), “Publicity adds up to a kind of philosophical system. It explains everything in its own terms. It interprets the world” (p. 149). Despite the outcry from organizations such as the Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood, Commercial Alert and the Media Education Foundation, as well as governmental initiatives such as “Admongo,” an online advertising literacy game for tweens (Admongo.gov), schools in the US at the start of the 21st century seem to make little attempt to stand outside of the matrix of corporate-driven commodity fetishism. Consumer Union has listed 234 companies that advertise in schools (consumerunion.org)^{xvii}. In support of corporate America’s publicizing in schools, common arguments range from “it’s harmless” and “it’s nice to help the kids” (by sponsorship that raises money for schools) on individual levels, to “we need to pay for our schools,” as a typical administrative response. But if John Berger is right about publicity interpreting the world, then it is neither helpful nor harmless to have advertising in schools.

The high price of branding,

Ironically, affirming the power of communicating through multiple intelligences and modalities, print-advertising (which is the primary form of advertising in schools) speaks the multiple languages of text and image. Advertising and branding saturates childrens’ worlds, and this generation of children is deeply brand conscious (Linn, 2005). A child

who may have trouble reading a textbook can often read a Nike swoosh. As the visual pedagogy of materialism infiltrates childhood (and schools), it infuses into childhood the lessons of corporate capitalism. Marketers know this, which is why currently companies spend over \$17 billion a year on children's marketing, and children spend almost \$200 billion annually (Campaign for a Commercial Free Childhood, n.d). Adweek magazine recently published a special issue entitled, *What kids Want*, in which they proudly "illustrate how companies are advancing their offerings to further get this young consumer demographic to pull harder on the family purse strings" (Adweek.com, April, 2010). The cradle-to-grave branding of children teaches them (primarily through the use of visual images) powerful epistemological, axiological and ontological lessons: images are knowing, owning is being, and being is achieved and crafted through materialism.

Peekaboo! Advertising images that are not hiding in schools

Encouraging kids to "pull harder on the family purse strings" from the hallowed halls of learning, advertising images are infused through the school day. A few examples: millions of students (who are required to cover their textbooks) receive free book covers and folders adorned with images of business products and services. P. T. Quigley (for example) has a revenue of \$2.7 million (Zominfo.com) from supplying public and private schools with free school supplies on which they offer "The exclusive opportunity for a business or professional to promote their product or service" (P.T. Quigley.com). Walraven (a similar company) refers to itself as "a recognized and trusted name in in-school youth marketing." On their website they do not list their clients but simply show the images of logos^{xviii}. Most of the logos are immediately recognizable. Dairy Queen, Verizon, Dr. Pepper, and the television station UPN43 nuzzle against each other on the

screen in a bid for our interest. Words would clearly be superfluous.

Classmatesmarketing (the name says it all) is a Walraven Company that distributes not only free book covers, but also “student reward coupons” with which to buy products from sponsored businesses. They supply advertising space on “bookcovers, folders, bookmarks, pencils, rulers, erasers, classroom posters, notepads, mousepads...” the list goes on, and on (Classmates marketing.com). The testimonials on their webpage gush with letters from schoolteachers, administrators, kids, and businesses. Randy Hester, the V.P of Marketing and Communications at Cinemark, is an example. He writes, “Our book cover program was a huge success. We had a 9% coupon redemption rate, letters from both kids and schools, and an increase in hits to our web site.”

(Classmatesmarketing.com, Testimonials). Shifting to the spaces of physical education, Titus Sports Marketing “can help you (the business) reach youth and parents at athletic events.” Institutions that are proudly displayed on the Titus site include McDonalds, Capital One, Ford, Gatorade, Pizza Hut, and the Marine Corps logo. Who needs words?

Advertising is not just on the print materials given to students. It is *everywhere* in schools. “Reward coupons for students” are given to schools for local products (such as fast food). Teaching materials sponsored by corporations include logos and promos that are widely available to “help” teachers. Educational posters in hallways advertise candy, footwear, movies, etc. Soft drink machines have logos and brand slogans. School lunch foods include brand symbols. Gyms, sports-fields, libraries, and playgrounds recognize donors by placing their logos in prominent positions. Educational websites are littered with advertising. School buses and school websites sell advertising space, and school lockers have also recently become advertising spaces. Free or low cost magazines (such

as Sports Illustrated for Kids, Scholastic Choices magazine, and Scholastic Science World) are supplied to schools, carrying within them an impressive array of advertisers including: Toys-R-US, Hershey's, Pepsi, Maybelline, Reebok, U.S. Air Force, Clearasil (ConsumerUnion.com). Meanwhile the infamous Channel One News provides schools with a free satellite cable system, TVs for classrooms, cable network and more, in exchange for a (teacher and student material supported) twelve-minute news show with two minutes of "corporate sponsorships" (Channel One Help.com). According to the contract that Channel One schools must sign, the news must be shown for 90% of the days that the school is in session, and in its entirety, thereby *requiring* students to watch advertising.

Color me outta here!

While students are told to not run in the hallways, to read in turn, to sit in ordered rows, and to value reading over recess, images of advertising call on them to think of a very different life, and of themselves as very different beings in it. Kincheloe (1999) argued that the postmodern condition has "torn apart meaning and affect" (p. 7), and students "quickly learn that school has nothing to do with their passions" (p. 8). This fact has not been lost on advertisers who have worked to hijack the desire and passion of youth. The visual knowledge of advertisements in educational sites is snazzy, vibrant and far from the "boring" format of many classroom lessons. For example, one advertisement on a "Channel One Assignment" page shows us a young buxom model in a white satin strapless dress. Her body is twisted as she thrusts her chest into the screen, her hands are on her hips and her head is turned slightly to one side. She has flawless skin, "perfect" exposed cleavage, a mane of tousled hair, pouty lips and charcoaled eyes. The words

next to her ask “or polished, SLEEK and sophisticated?” The logo under this simply proclaims, “LG. Life is good.” LG is an electronics company that sells (among other things) washers, refrigerators and phones (none of which are referenced in this advertisement). What makes life good here is not the products, it is the sexualized “SLEEK,” “polished”, “sophisticated” model. She is a thing, (like a refrigerator), and her valued “sophistication” is that of a thing. Visual rhetoric that is aimed at youth offers them a distorted vision of an adulthood in which adults are nothing more than perfect, poised, and desirable objects. Color, movement and often sexuality fills advertisement frames such as this one, which offer a window to another (more exciting) world, one that exists in sharp opposition to the humdrum architecture, pastel walls and institutional visual aura of the school.

Mobilizing childhood desire, and/or youthful insecurities, advertisements aimed at youth (and circulating in schools) entice students to think of a place unlike school, a place where they are valued and in control. In this world they are not just another kid in the system. Kincheloe (2009) noted, “By drawing on the child's discomfort with middle-class protectionism and the accompanying attempt to ‘adjust’ children to a positivist ‘developmentally appropriate’ norm, advertisers hit on a marketing bonanza” (p. 260). In particular, advertising to adolescents co-opts the subversive as it plays on framing them as major players at the center of a passionate, rebellious corporeal culture. This fantasy identity exists in a sub/cultural universe that is oppositional to the cerebral dispassionate adult middle class worldliness that is revered in schools. Pierre Bourdieu notes:

The denial of lower, coarse, vulgar, venal, servile – in a word, natural – enjoyment, which constitutes the sacred sphere of culture, implies an affirmation

of the superiority of those who can be satisfied with the sublimated, refined, disinterested, gratuitous, distinguished pleasures. (2009, p. 325)

As schools promote this “superiority,” the habitus of middle class, advertisers (in schools) capitalize on opposing it. As these ideological worlds collide, children are caught in the crossfire. This oppositional dynamic plays out in the broader framework of adult fear and moral panic about unruly youth. In addition, advertisers seem fully aware that unlike the success of good grades, (which connects to the cultural competency of knowing how to play the game of school) the prizes of personal consumption are, at least in small increments and for a small fee, universally attainable. From a child’s perspective, it matters that everyone can look “slammin’” in school, and the frowns of the adults just prove how much more kids know about the virtues of being hip. Battle lines are drawn. While schoolbooks tell them to see the beauty of poetry, the smiling faces on their Clearasil school book-covers show them that real beauty is skin deep. While we (as teachers) tell our students to value learning and being, the poster in the hallway tells them to value their shoes. In these “texts,” visual appeal takes the place of verbal reasoning, image stands in for truth, and logo recognition is honorable loyalty. As an example, (proudly advertized on Channel One), *Dicks Sporting Goods* shows us an Adidas running shoe suspended over a young, athletically built African American male. He is muscular, his head is shaven and his expensive sporting attire matches flawlessly. The camera catches him in motion. He is sprinting out of the frame, eyes intently fixed ahead. The words underneath him urge us in capital letters “SHOP NOW.” The messages in this image are additionally disturbing in their implication that for African American males

success is athletics, it is hyper masculinity, it is having an endless supply of new unblemished “kicks” on your feet. It is also being ready to run. Fast.

Spectacle, capital and the future

Douglas Kellner and Meenakshi Gigi Durham (2009) used Guy Debord to warn us, “‘real life’ is...boring in this world, while the spectacle is exciting, enthralling...(and) entangling its devotees in the clutches of consumer capitalism, replicating consumption fetishism, and helping capital to commodify all domains of social and everyday life” (p. 93). Using visual language and visual rhetoric, a vast network of consumer capitalism in schools offers young people tangible material successes that are bright and alluring (rather than ethereal and un-visible). Advertising is about an orientation to time and a promise of the future in which we see ourselves as better. The pictures and symbols of advertisements tempt students through a future that is more immediate than the distant “better future” that educators make claim for. The future in which one owns new Adidas shoes is far more believable (both in its immediacy and in its scope) than the promise of “education for happily ever after.” Many of the “bored” students I have worked with have expressed being acutely aware of what it means to live in a crumbling economy where class mobility is largely a myth. As these students ask, “why should I learn this?” in a world of bleak prospects, they are aided by visual stimuli that offer evidence for a world where visible success is possible, and sooner rather than later. Giroux (2003) noted, “for many young people and adults today, the private sphere has become the only space in which to imagine any hope, pleasure, or possibility” (p. xix). Although it is not an either/or situation, the cerebral joys of learning may be little match for the material gratifications that students can literally see in the school, just at their fingertips.

Seeing by the book: visual literacy in schools

Reading images

Visual literacy is not a priority in high schools, where images are usually treated as incidental. Margolis and Fram (2007) noted, “teachers largely regard the movement from pictures to words as one of intellectual progression” (p. 55). In the lower grades, pictures are epistemologically validated as vehicles for communicating knowledge. (Young children are encouraged to communicate through images.) But as students progress through the grades, the (lack of) value given to images reflects the privileged position of text in the adult world. Whereas schooling for young children is multilogical (appealing to their affect and intellect) and multimodal, (communicating through sound, text and visual images), schooling for older students narrows to define factual text as the primary meaning-making tool and conveyer of knowledge^{xix}. Kincheloe (2001) argued that the “facts” transmitted in school classrooms are usually less than factual but bursting with political ideology. Images in classroom teaching materials are also often thick with political ideological subtext. Wim Wenders argued, “the most political decision you make is where you direct people’s eyes” (Grosvenor, 2007, p. 622). Images construct arguments that can operate beneath the radar of consciousness but send powerful messages. When photographs combine with text they operate together as an authoritative discourse that makes an ideological claim to truth (Kenny, 2009, pp. 202–6). In order to teach our students to understand how pictorial truth-claims operate ideologically, we can learn from visual theorists and the visual rhetoric scholars who show us how pictorial images function as arguments (Olson et al., 2008). In what follows I offer an example^{xx}.

Seeing others

“Here, use this, please.” (2pm)

Prep period, the assistant principal knocks on my door. He is carrying a box.

“Here” he says “these are new books for you from the district. I take the box from him and seated at my desk begin to thumb through them. The fist one is entitled “Mesopotamia.” My interest is aroused....

Images in textbooks are influenced by the images in a broader sociocultural and political context. This is particularly true with regard to how cultural “others” are positioned.

Dana Cloud (2008) pointed out that visual ideographs meld images and verbal (and often hegemonic) slogans to make abstractions concrete (pp. 394–5). Dominant narratives about “others” enter the classroom through visuals that are not unlike those found in public political spaces of TV, news magazines, the Internet, etc. “By the time students ‘get to’ studying the world... they have already received a lifetime of media-based schooling about the world” (Sensoy, 2010, p. 40).

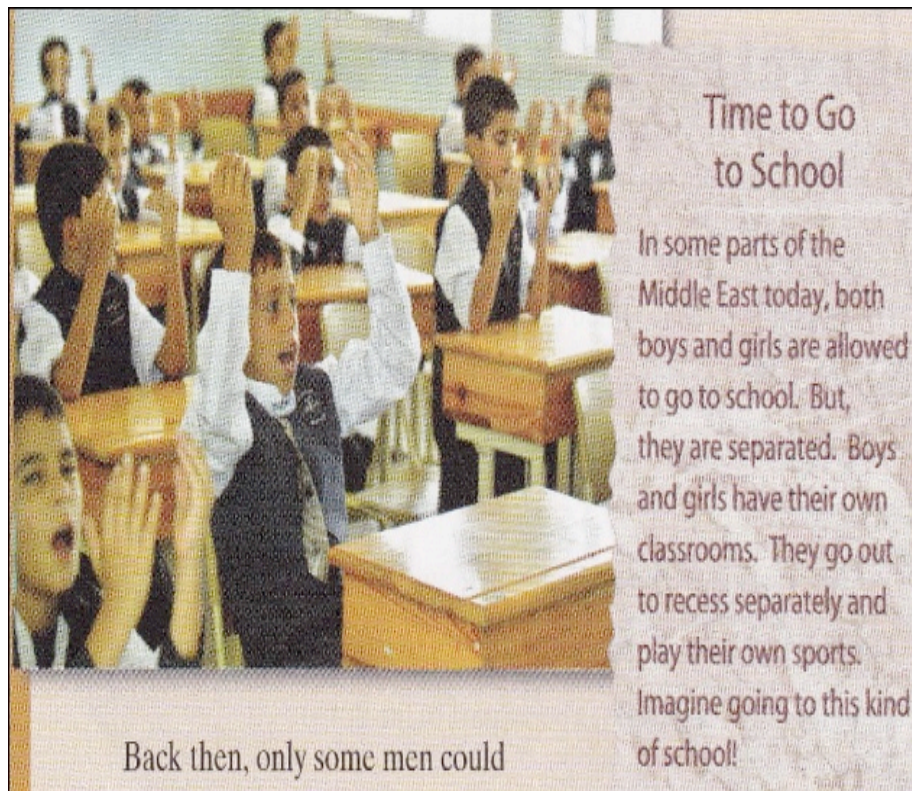


Figure 11. Mesopotamia illustration

For example, currently “Muslims” are endlessly demonized as the “new” enemy of the West. Time magazine has used photographs of Afghanistan to support an Orientalist positioning of “Western reason” against “Eastern irrationality” (Cloud, 2008). Jack Shaheen (2001) powerfully outlined how Hollywood also has a long tradition of using negative images of those from the East to tell a demonizing story about them. Likewise, the visual images in educational materials about Muslim countries are frequently rife with political bias (Ali-Khan, 2010). The pictures in the book I am handed “from the district” on “Mesopotamia (figure 11) serve to illustrate this point. They reinforce the notion of a strange and alien other. They do not elaborate on what the children are doing (praying), while they simultaneously propose through the use of an exclamation point that going to school here is simply unimaginable.

Sensoy (2009) unpacked the images of “The East” in school textbooks to reveal the divisive (and hegemonic) theme of ideological incompatibility between East and West. What these theorists are arguing is that commitment to democratic and anti-oppressive education involves commitment to closely examining of images in classroom materials with an eye to the kind of reality they are aimed at constructing. It involves an awareness that “Language and systems of representation do not reflect an already existing reality so much as they organize, construct, and mediate our understanding of reality, emotion, and imagination” (Sturken & Cartwright, 2001, p. 13). When we examine the ideological subtexts of images in educational materials, we gain a better understanding of both specific images and the claims they make, as well as the way that images work to position us as readers. As John Berger (1972) noted, “we never look at just one thing; we are always looking at the relation between things and ourselves” (p. 9).

Creating images as pedagogical practice. (3:30pm.)

It’s “tutoring” period after school and in my classroom a student is reading Vibe (a music and entertainment hip-hop) magazine. He studies the photograph of a celebrity, then launches into an argument with a classmate about the meaning of the image, all the while texting on his phone (at lightning speed) in a barrage of abbreviations and emoticons. His passion and ability to multitask is impressive, simultaneously communicating in words, abbreviations, and images. His skills are valued as cultural capital among his peers.

Kenny (2009) noted that although there are several different types of communication systems available to us all, they are not considered equal; language systems are valued more than visual systems (p. 46). Schools value one language system and students others,

which prompts me to question the degree to which schools are equipping students to decode and read a world that is thick with visual knowledge (much of which is aimed at them). Are we able to equip them if we wanted to? In an increasingly electronically connected, multimedia, and visual world, my multimodal reach is far shorter than my students. Are we engaging ourselves and our students in the quest to embrace this new multilogicality and to understand and communicate in an electronically based and increasingly ocularcentric world? Kellner and Durham (2009) have argued for “a postmodern pedagogy (that) is concerned to develop multiple literacies, to rethink literacy itself in relation to new technologies and cultural forms” (p. xxxvii). I concur.

Embracing postmodern pedagogy, Tricia Kress (2009) cautioned, “No educational initiatives, including technology initiatives, are free from value-laden historical and cultural resonances” (p. 48). As educators, we must also deal with “the reality that we can never really be as postformal and democratic as we would like to be because we still have to navigate very real structures that, if ignored, could have very real consequences” (n.d. ¶ 31). With these warnings firmly in mind, there are still compelling reasons to embrace using visual methods to create texts with our students. For one, we need the pedagogical ability to make complex ideas widely available to diverse audiences (Kincheloe, 2007, p. 10). Without this ability we not only bore our students, but we do not speak the languages that they are versed in, and we do not equip them to better understand the workings of a rich multi-modal world. Roymieco Carter (2004) argued that when people are involved in creating and encoding images, “the practice of critical inquiry becomes a sister conversation to discussions of form. Why use this image and not that image?” (p. 295). The decisions made in creating visual text shed light on the production and construction

of knowledge and truth. William Kealy (2004) points out that when students become producers of media they become increasingly media literate, aware of the media in their lives and able to discern the politics inherent in the production of media (such as questions about who makes the choices in media images and for what purpose). To engage in visual knowledge production with students is to equip them to be both producers of images and to be critical consumers of them.

Even a passing glance at the pictures on cell phones or the MySpace pages of high school students confirms their engagement with the visual. Snapping pictures with their cell phones even very young, children seem perpetually prepared to freeze, pose for the camera, and to turn any moment into their celebrity moment. The extent to which they are influenced by media images with regard to their own construction of identity is a subject that merits careful consideration (but is beyond the scope of this paper). However, one way that we might learn how children navigate and interpret images is by tapping into their expertise. School aged youth are already creating images and their skills may be far ahead of ours. Whereas those of us who did not come of age in the digital era may be easily overwhelmed by visual communication in hyperspace, our students' creativity and imagination in this world is fluid.

Such a move embraces a democratization of knowledge that is already (for better or worse) happening in the world outside of schools. Nicholas Mirzoeff (2008) noted that digital culture has "empowered amateurism" (p. 6). The "publication" of pictures and photographs in cyberspace has led to a place where visual editorial decisions are no longer the domain of the select few. Arjun Appadurai (2008) pointed out "In the post-electronic world...imagination has broken out of the special expressive space of art, myth,

and ritual and has now become a part of the quotidian mental work of ordinary people” (p. 175). The structures for the production of visual culture are in place (and in use in the private sphere of students’ lives). Margolis and Fram (2007) argue that teachers need to be more sensitive to the range of resources that kids bring to classrooms. Christina Pedersen (2008) argued that images make ideas tangible, and, because they can be multiply interpreted, they operate as a democratic space. Similarly, Donna DeGennaro and Tiffany Brown (2009) noted how the power differential between teacher and student can be disrupted when students can become authors who create artifacts. Ideally, if we are able to build on the visual knowledge and creativity that students already use, we can learn with them, challenging what Freire (2005) called the banking system of education in which students are positioned as knowing nothing.

Spanners

Although I make the case for a greater use of visual methods in schools, I am aware that the path to this work is not easy. The institutional structures that Kress noted are formidable and my experiences in trying to encourage students to venture into other communication languages (like hers) have been met with resistance. The habits of school are hard to break. In a world where students and teachers have been trained to jump through the hoops of standardized testing and to think in single right answers, the ambivalence of the images offers a serious challenge. Elizabeth Chaplin (2006) points out that images are “polysemic, their meanings float” (p. 43). This “floating” intellectual space is substantially different from the one where “what do I need to get an A?” exists. But if we do not embrace the challenge, then we reinforce the idea that only those who can “do school” in the traditional ways belong, closing the door to those for whom the

meanings of the world “float.”

Closing thoughts on the meeting of visual and critical pedagogies

Looking forward

Critical pedagogy and visual studies are natural partners. Gillian Rose (2007) argued for a critical visual pedagogy as, “we need to learn to interpret visual images because they are an important means through which social life happens” (p. xiii). Kenneth Tobin noted that the visual field is a resource for the transformation and reproduction of culture and that as we experience it differently (in schools) our experiences of school life differ (personal communication, May 26, 2010). To take seriously the visual image in schools is to examine the hidden curriculum both inside and outside the classroom, to step away from believing in a single right answer world, and to take seriously the way that youth can be engaged or disengaged by the language systems used in school spaces. Kevin Tavin (2003) asserted that visual culture and critical pedagogy are dialogical partners as they both challenge disciplinary boundaries and problematize universal truths. My own experiences in classrooms confirm that the use of images can in part “(stem) the tide against the large numbers of disengaged students” (Flynt & Bronzo, 2010, p. 528). By designating image literacy as important to education, we can work to illuminate the way that the power invested in images can work to privilege and validate some realities and to craft responses to this.

Although I have only touched the surface of the sea of images in schools, it has convinced me that more research needs to be done. The visual information that is circulating in school-spaces is abundant and rich with meaning that both adults and

children in schools are interpreting, but perhaps also dismissing. “Schooling is only one site where education takes place. As a performative practice, pedagogy is at work in a variety of educational sites” (Giroux, 2003, p. 38). The educational sites of the media and of popular culture have used visual methods to merge seamlessly into schools. They have shown us the world, and acted as agents in defining children, promoted corporate interest and delineated “good” and “bad.” Perhaps you do not agree with my interpretation of images; perhaps you see other images and assign them different meanings. But whatever you may see in your school space, the fact remains that pictures are telling powerful stories about childhood and *about* childhood *in* educational spaces. I have argued here that there is a dangerous mismatch between the school and the child and some of this may be due to different systems of representation, as well as to systems of visual misrepresentation; that we as educators need to increase our skills and fluency with visual culture, and that we need to encourage students to increase theirs. As schools are ever more infused with images and as the hue and cry of the visual world knocks on the doors of our classrooms, it becomes increasingly important that we, as educators, harness the vibrant power of visual communication and that we try to find ways to engage our students in working together with us in decoding images and in producing them.

Chapter 4

Common sense, uncommon knowledge and fighting words.

Common knowledge for a new generation

NYC Student: “No disrespect Miss, but don’t you be scared to go Pakistan? Aren’t your people all terrorists?” “Yo, Miss! Your family is from Pakistan! Do they be blowing themselves up over there?” “Don’t Muslims hate us? That’s what I heard...”

Pakistan, Taxi driver: “Your President Obama, is better? I hear American peoples they happy, they don’t like Mr. Bush... We don’t like our government, and the Taliban, they are very bad peoples, cause too much problems for us here. Pakistan is a very beautiful country but these peoples make too much problem for everyone...”

I have daydreams in which I take my high school students with me to Pakistan. Once there they meet the people “on the street,” who (like the taxi driver quoted) are quick to remind us that the people who make the news are not the face of a country. They meet Pakistani teens with their cell phones and Facebook friends. They watch local television, and see a hugely popular late night talk show that is hosted by a glamorous, intelligent, political “dame,” (who is every bit a diva). Going through bookshelves in Pakistani homes, they read popular local short stories written in English. They notice that the tales are poignant, or romantic, or sardonic and irreverent. Immersed in the rhythm of life

“over there,” they see for themselves that the notion of the hateful Muslim enemy is an absurd myth, propaganda at its finest, (and that “being Muslim doesn’t mean that people blow themselves up”).

I am not surprised that my students connect Islam to terrorism. It has been eight years now since “9/11”. A fifteen year old (young adult) in classrooms today would have been just seven years old when the events of September-11-2001 began to unfold. An entire generation has grown up in the repercussions from that moment. Anne Bakalian & Mehdi Bozorgmehr, (2009) examined in detail the “backlash” from 9/11 on Muslims in America. They conceptualize it as, 1) hate crimes and bias incidents 2) stereotypes and scapegoating, 3) governmental initiatives (against people of Muslim/Arab/Middle Eastern origin). Each of these mechanizations of prejudice is mutually reinforcing, with governmental policies “legitimiz(ing) the backlash in the eyes of the American public” (p. 2). Meanwhile the climate of fear/hate has been further legitimized by the media propaganda machines who, (historically true to form and largely unchallenged)^{xxi} are churning out endless stories, video games, novels and movies that reinforce the notion of “Muslims” as bad and dangerous.^{xxii} Unsurprisingly the majority of Americans report having learned either nothing or only negative things about Islam and Muslims (CAIR, 2006) my experiences in classrooms confirm this (Ali-Khan, 2009). Given this landscape, it is highly likely that (even though not all of the media agrees) bias against Muslims is probably all that my students have ever heard.

The propaganda machines have been noisy but the war machines have been quiet. At the start of this school year only a few of my students knew that the United States (U.S.) is at war with Afghanistan. “*Not just Iraq? Are you sure?*” they ask me, “*We don’t see*

nothing about that on the news.” Meanwhile the U.S administration is considering sending up to 40,000 more troops to Afghanistan (Schmitt & Shanker, 2009). As the military keeps reaching into American schools,^{xxiii} looking for children^{xxiv} to enlist, I worry about students like mine who do not have enough information to be cognizant of all that may be at stake when they formulate their ideas about “*terrorist Muslims who blow themselves up.*” The number of dead and injured is a sobering reminder of one of the repercussions of this ideology of hate: at the time of writing this (October 2009) there are an estimated 1,340,000 Iraqi deaths due to the U.S. invasion, (justforgeinpolicy.org), and over 4,000 Afghani deaths^{xxv} with an additional 1,000^{xxvi} killed by unmanned U.S. drones^{xxvii} in Pakistan. In addition to the dead, there are countless other thousands (probably hundreds of thousands) who have been injured and displaced by the U.S. Department of Defense’s “Overseas Contingency Operation” (which is the new, much nicer sounding title for what was formerly called the “War on Terrorism”).

Regardless of how they are named, these conflicts remain bloody as ever,^{xxviii} and have been largely framed as being against “Muslims” -a tactic that deliberately and erroneously defines them as religious^{xxix} rather than political disputes. Meanwhile, U.S. President Barak Obama received the 2009 Nobel Peace Prize, (presumably for making us all feel good about the future), *despite* the fact that the U.S. is (in effect) intransigently at war with three countries (Afghanistan, Iraq, and Pakistan).^{xxx} Obama’s nomination has come under considerable critique in the international and left-based press^{xxxi} but it is unlikely that this opposition will reach the ears of the majority of teachers and students in the U.S. The implicit message of this particular “prize” for peace, suggests that symbolic

goodwill is more important than actual life and limb. Or perhaps the message is that in the discourse about war/peace, Muslims/“people from over there” simply don’t count.

Although I try to remain wide-awake to this social and political moment, it is hard for me to fully digest the extent of Islamophobia present in the U.S. today, and to really process the way in which this pedagogy, just outside the classroom, can infiltrate more formal teaching spaces. Christopher Stonebanks notes that teachers are likely to hold the ideal of social justice and *fighting the good fight* in high regard, but reality is a little more difficult (2004, p. 100). I concur. Tobin (2009) has argued that there is a neoliberal tendency to quickly fault public schooling and current news headlines on education certainly confirms this. However I still wonder if perhaps as a teacher I am guilty of having not done enough; that I have said less than I wanted to, or meant to, or thought I had to; and that I have underestimated the impact of the common knowledge gleaned from growing up in an Islamophobic age. In this chapter I present a few of my experiences, offering a sample of some the kinds of Islamophobic curricula moments that I have encountered. What follows are examples of what we (as educators) can “teach against,” how we can “teach from” and where we can “teach about” as I explore a few strategies to fight back against destructive “common knowledge” about Muslims/Islam (and Pakistan).

I. Teaching against...

“It ain’t necessarily so”: When tolerance isn’t.

Tuesday morning, 8:20am, on the street in front of a landmark skyscraper in midtown Manhattan, I am waiting to meet half a dozen eager but still sleepy high school students.

We have received a special invitation at my school: We are to be guests at the Simon Wiesenthal Center's museum of tolerance "The New York Tolerance Center." The museum is generally closed to the public, so I have not had a chance to preview the exhibits, this is the description from their website,

The [New York Tolerance Center](#), in the heart of Manhattan, is a professional development multi-media training facility targeting educators, law enforcement officials, and state/local government practitioners^{xxxii}... Through interactive workshops, exhibits, and videos, individuals explore issues of prejudice, diversity, tolerance, and cooperation in the workplace and in the community.

We sign in at the registration desk, and descend a long open spiral staircase.

Architecturally the entrance spaces are impressive, I expect the exhibits to be equally glossy and engaging, I am glad we came. At the bottom of the staircase we find ourselves in front of a huge wall, it references the September 11, 2001 attacks on New York. It proclaims, "*Global hate has inspired international terrorists to target the U.S as a symbol of freedom and democracy.*" My heart sinks. There is no wandering allowed in this museum, no deviation from the tour we are given, (en-masse with perhaps 100 other students and teachers, lockstep). Our next stop is a giant collage of reproduction racist posters and photographs; many of them are about slavery. Although there are dozens of slogans and images about "race" (with "race" being presented as black/white) I see only one poster about sexism. This poster is the cover of a Hustler magazine showing the lower half of a naked woman in a meat grinder, her naked glossy behind is plump,

airbrushed and alluring (this is a sex magazine after all) and centrally positioned. Our guide directs our attention to it. A hundred teenagers dutifully try to direct their gaze. Some look at their feet. I wish I could say that things get better as this tour continued, but they don't. We spend the day trapped in a lair of authoritarianism, righteousness, inappropriate material and misleading information. There are a number of unpleasant incidents that occur. I am depressed at having brought my students to this place. More disturbing is the idea that in addition to all the children I am there with, multiple police departments (including New York, the largest police force in the country) and DA offices are "trained" with this "education." "*They hate us*" is the phrase jumbling around in my head. So much for tolerance.

"We are a symbol of freedom and democracy so they hate us" is a phrase rife with the type of thinking that is antithetical to tolerance, education or understanding. The question "*why do they hate us?*" was the "question" echoed over and over again in the press about 9/11, it ends with a question mark that lies. It is not a question, nor is it rhetorical. It is however, a teachable moment, and it bursts with answers that don't begin with "because." As educators, we can problematize this sadly all too common "question" as we ask: Who is they? Who is us? What is left out of these constructions? What do they imply about Muslims? What do they assume? How do these words suggest both you and "we" should feel? How would you feel if you were a Muslim or Middle Eastern student (or anyone who could be construed as "they") reading these words? How do these sentiments compare with other inflammatory statements that you have heard about Muslims or other non-dominant populations? How do they fit with your knowledge of stereotypes? Take out the words "why do" and look at what is left, "*they hate us.*" In the

way the “question” is constructed, is there any room to refute this idea? Think about the times that you have heard the question before. What answers have you heard? (Spoken by whom, for whom, and in what context?) Who benefitted from these answers? Who was harmed? How does/doesn't this question fit with work toward peace, and the concept of “tolerance”?

Something rotten: Islamic bombs and soccer balls

Recovered from the trip and planning for my lessons, I am watching a link from a teacher resource site. The curriculum package is about Pakistan. The lesson is entitled "Forget the War on Terror. Think of World War III" (performanceeducation.com). So I am watching WWII. Pakistan started it. (And of course it was televised.) This is the story: First missiles flaunting Pakistani flags were paraded through the streets on army trucks (you can see the logo from Pakistani TV, as this is real footage from Pakistan's national Independence Day). Then the rockets were fired. We are given an aerial view. Next, flames engulfed the screen, buildings exploded, forests melted. The obligatory mushroom clouds plumed. (The musical accompaniment to this is credited as the film score for the horror movie *Saw II*.) Figure 12 shows two stills from the film.



Figure 12. Pakistan on the brink video.

Reality check: 1. The United States is the only country in the world to have ever used the atomic bomb, (and used it twice.)^{xxxiii} 2. This footage is fictional documentation, it “documents” through a montage of images, something (WWIII) that has not happened, therefore it is not history, it is not a documentary, nor is it reasonable conjecture. I received this lesson in link e-mailed to me from a teacher resource site, and I remain stunned by it. In a personal correspondence with the publishers about the estimated use of this educational material they informed me that they approximate their readership of this at “10K.”

The site that this educational material comes from is called Performance Education it carries free lessons for teachers, with a marketing approach that uses mailing lists, this site gets between 20,000-39,000 hits per month during the school year (quantcast.com). Their package on Pakistan is comprised of 20 lessons in 31 pages. It is worth looking at a little more. Lesson 1 (figure 3) is a graphic organizer named: “*How are you connected to Pakistan?*” The answers hold both good and bad connections,

which I sum up in the following way: Question: What kind of connections are possible?

Answer: a) Bad connections: Iran (against whom we are considering war, because of their nuclear weapons), Iraq (against whom we are at war because “we thought they had nuclear weapons”), Afghanistan (against whom we are at war “to wipe out the terrorists”) and the “Islamic bomb” (which, although not theirs^{xxxiv} is a term that simply defies all rational explanation). b) Good connections: Angelina Jolie (in a film about an American journalist murdered in Pakistan), soccer balls, and Pakistani food.

Lesson #1: Graphic organizer

How are you connected to Pakistan?

Draw lines that connect you to Pakistan. Brainstorm: How else are you connected to Pakistan?

Urdu

Did you know that the people of Pakistan do not speak Arabic? (They speak Urdu.)

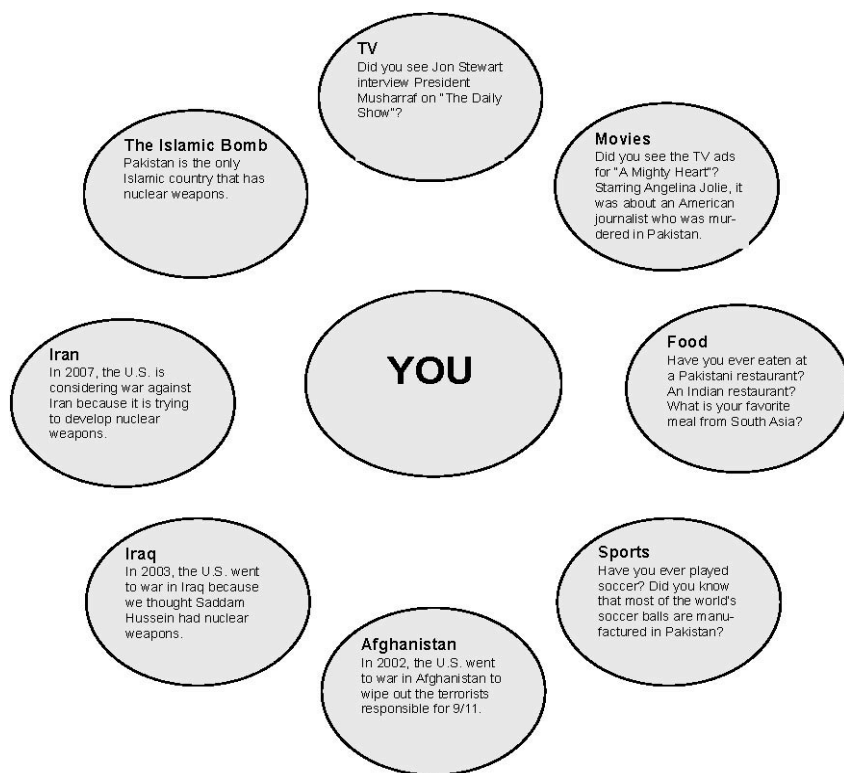


Figure 13. Graphic organizer.

The idea that teachers might use this work-sheet (figure 13) to in effect tell students that they are connected to Pakistan because they/we (in the U.S.) might go to war Pakistan (as we should/have with their neighbors) but, “Hey, we all like eating and soccer”, strikes me as a comedy skit gone horribly wrong. The sheer inhumanity of this definition of “connecting” is stunning. In addition this lesson presents a form of multiculturalism that even when “positive” reduces people/s to the objects that they produce and consume. In this, it offers parallels to other troubling renditions of multiculturalism, such as for example many of the U.S. representations of Native American populations in which their “pretty costumes” are appreciated but the people in them are rendered invisible.

Besides their overt racism,^{xxxv} wide readership, aggressive mailing, and the production sophistication of the materials, I am additionally concerned by the level of care and detail that these materials evidence.^{xxxvi} The “history maps,” “political analysis” activities, graphic organizers, classroom debate activities, You-Tube links, and media news links, are all clear and well presented. *They look legitimate.* As teachers and administrators are pushed toward scripted notions of education, teaching^{xxxvii} and learning it is easy to see how lesson packages that *look* sophisticated and appear to come from a reputable source are tempting to use. But, as Shakespeare famously proclaimed in the play Hamlet, “Something is rotten in the State of Denmark” (1996, p. 43). As educators we must be attuned to the fact that in a racist and Islamophobic world much that tries to find its way into classrooms (like these materials) may in fact be deeply and thoroughly rotten.

And the correct answer is...

I am preparing my students’ for the New York State Regents examinations. Among other

tasks student will need to analyze global concerns and political cartoons. Globe Fearon's classroom textbook, *Using Primary Sources (2004)* prepares students by using the "primary source" of a political cartoon of Saddam Hussein grinningly rolling a carpet over a giant death (skull-and-cross-bone) symbol as he welcomes the UN inspectors. The correct answer to the accompanying question is that Hussein was in fact hiding "weapons of mass destruction." A different exam prep book, *A Key to Understanding Global Studies* (Killoran et al, 2007) lists "International Terrorism" as a "Global Concern," but makes no mention of war and invasion as global concerns. (War matters less than terrorism?) The book informs students that, "Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Libya have not only helped Palestinian terrorists but used terrorism to silence their own opponents" (p. 333), it offers no other mention of Syria and Libya (in over 400 pages) while Iran and Iraq are referenced only in passing. As with the resources from Performance Education these materials reinforce the message that all that is worth knowing about the Middle East/Arabs/Muslims is that they are dangerous/terrorists.^{xxxviii}

I would like to say that we need not be overly concerned, as we can rely on textbook watchdogs to guide us. The American Textbook Council bill themselves as an "independent national research organization to review social studies textbooks and advance the quality of instructional materials in history" (2008, p. 2) which sounds promising. They have issued a recent report entitled, "Islam in the Classroom, what the textbooks tell us" (historytextbooks.org, n.d.). In a 55-page report they argue that American social studies textbooks are *not Islamophobic enough*. On the topic of terrorism they state, "The idea that 'poverty and ignorance lie at the root of the problem' sounds plausible but is not true" (p. 33) and "it is impossible today for American teachers

and students not to be exposed to *a belligerent dimension of Islam*” (p. 53, italics mine). They then argue that a failure to connect this “belligerent Islam” to classroom teaching on Muslims represents a “civic failure,” a “deficiency,” (p. 54) and a misuse of taxpayer dollars. The alternatives they propose include the right wing Fordham Foundation’s publication, “ Terrorists, Despots and Democracy: What Our Children Need to Know.” A closer look confirms that in each of the alternative materials they list as resources for educators, Islam is presented as the cause of violence, all Muslims are characterized as the same, and “we” (the good guys) are obligated as professionals and citizens to stand in collective patriotic educated opposition to “them.”

Lunatic?

All of these texts and examples use a conceptual binary that separates the world into two reductionist and opposing categories. The Pakistani-American scholar Fawzia Afzal-Khan joins those who critique the notion of bad Muslim/good West, She eloquently notes that this positioning is both dangerous and so preposterous as to be “cartoonish.”

Battle positions are now hardening on both sides: the avenging (yet seen in their own eyes as “liberating”) Judeo-Christian armies of the West on one hand, and the so-called terrorist Muslim barbarian hordes massing on the gates of “civilization” on the other. Such a dangerous but surely cartoonish division of the world into these simplistic binaries was popular only amongst the lunatic fringe, I used to think. However that “fringe” has expanded since 9/11 to include most of the U.S. citizenry today.” (2005, p. 21).

Teachers and students can work together to unravel “the lunatic fringe” that Afzal-Khan speaks of. The materials I have referenced are the tip of the iceberg, they exemplify that

“the fringe” is organized, systematic and diligent in producing racist materials against Muslims. As we become more aware of the extent of this cartoonish oppositional positioning and ubiquity of Islamophobic materials, we can use this knowledge to fight back. For example, using vocabulary terms such as “propaganda” “bias” “stereotype” and “inference” educators can work with students to pose questions that unpack the assumptions, silences and messages evidenced in Islamophobic curricula. After a lesson on propaganda (what it is, how it works, when it is used, examples, and common forms of it), it did not take my high school students long to be able to critique a book entitled “Mesopotamia^{xxxix}” (Mayfield & Quinn, 2007) that my school district distributed. Pictures from the book are below (figure 14).

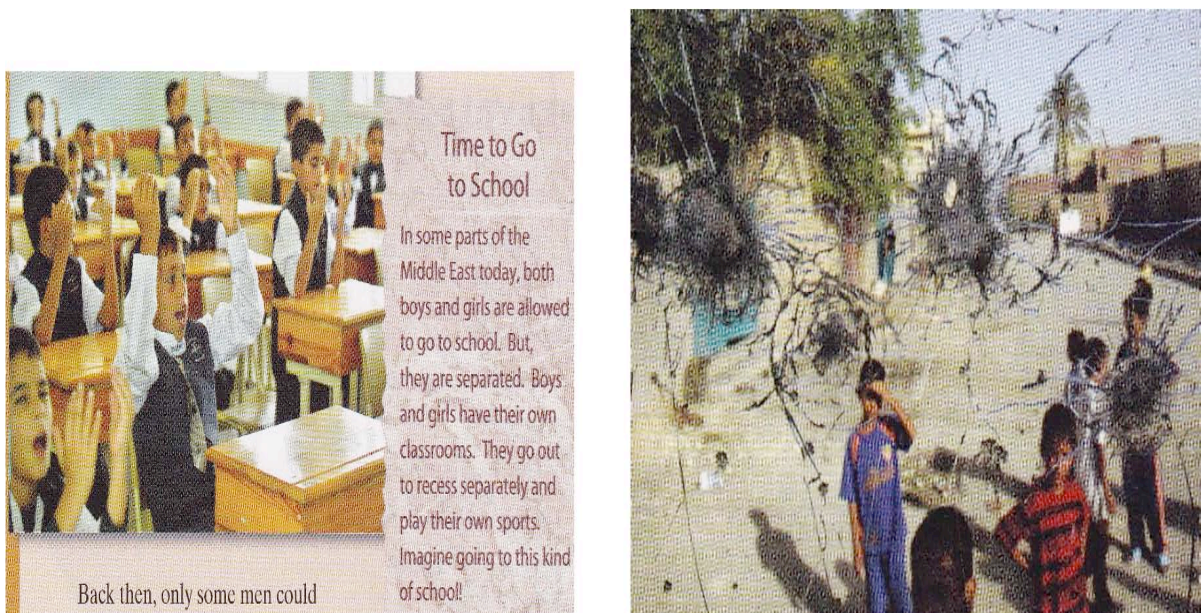


Figure 14. More on Mesopotamia

“Obsession”: Notes on a bad film and a good tool.

I have received an unsolicited free movie. I am not alone. 28 million DVD copies of the *Obsession the movie* were sent (free) to homes as an insert in local newspapers and

magazines (including, I have been told, the Chronicle of Higher Education). Producer Raphael Shore, proclaims, “Obsession...a documentary was seen by one out of six Americans” (Obsessionthemovie.com). While it seems unlikely that this is true, it received extensive media coverage^{xi}. The full title of the film is “Obsession: Radical Islam’s War on the West” which was followed (2009) by a film called “The Third Jihad: Radical Islam’s Vision for America.” According to the linked website these films uncover the truth that innocent looking Muslims are in fact violent, irrational and a “lurking danger” to the American way of life “in the land of the free and the home of the brave” (Radicalislam.org). (Upon reading the words “lurking danger” I cannot help but to envision crouching-shrouded-dagger-clutching-“Muslims” hiding under kitchen tables across America.) The premise of both pseudo-documentaries is that “fanatical Islam” is about to consume us all. Although this may too seem lunatic to many, it has been taken seriously and plays upon old fears^{xli}. Teachers can use knowledge of media literacy and film criticism to examine how the visual tactics and imagery from WWII has been co-opted and recycled over and again to create “the enemy.” More specifically teachers can use Jack Shaheen’s “Reel bad Arabs” (2001), Shirley Steinberg’s “Desert minstrels: Hollywood’s Curriculum of Arabs and Muslims” (2004) and Bryan Johnson and Skyra Blanchard’s “Reel Diversity” (2003) as excellent resources on this topic.

My response, joining the outcry against this film was to use a free downloadable application called “comiclfe” (plasq.comic/comiclfe). Comiclfe allows users to insert still pictures (from films or photos) to go along with captioning graphics that together create a comic book. My idea was to illustrate places to pause the film with a brief guide of questions to ask. It was also to encourage teachers and students to use an art based

technological application to create counter-hegemonic narratives. In my thinking, the strategies for fight against the kind of propaganda evidenced in “Obsession the movie” must both, a) encourage students to a critique of the kinds of tactics used to sway arguments and b) encourage them to research information that contradicts (and in effect “unsilences”) the narratives left out of films like these. Together teachers and students can ask questions about what is represented, left out, or implied and what other story might be told. They can use media literacy or media literacy classes to play the game of finding the fallacies and inconsistencies in a film.^{xlii} The figures on the next page are samples of a few pages from the comics that I created to support a critical reading of the film. They were accompanied by a list of resources about Muslims. This type of art and media literacy based work (figure 15) can be one strategy to teach against Islamophobia to create counter narratives to propaganda.

OBSESSION
RADICAL ISLAM'S WAR AGAINST THE WEST

THIS IS THE FIRST IMAGE WE SEE, BEFORE EVEN A TITLE...
BELOW ARE SOME QUESTIONS TO ASK AS YOU VIEW THIS FILM

...THE "O" IN OBSESSION IS THE STAR AND CRESCENT WHICH IS THE SYMBOL FOR ISLAM. THE "N" IS A GUN...WHAT DOES THIS IMPLY?

...AT THE START OF THIS FILM WE ARE ASSURED THAT THIS FILM IS NOT ABOUT "ALL MUSLIMS." HOW DOES THE STATED MESSAGE OF THIS FILM AGREE WITH OR CONTRADICT THE MESSAGE OF THE IMAGES?

...WHAT IS A STEREOTYPE?

....WHAT CONNECTION IS BEING MADE BETWEEN THE USE OF ARABIC WRITING AND THE USE OF VIOLENCE?

..HOW MIGHT THIS ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO THINK ABOUT ARABIC WRITING AND MORE BROADLY ALL ARAB CULTURE?...

Some people view the current situation in the middle east as a Clash of Civilization...

WHO ARE "SOME"

THE "CLASH OF CIVILIZATION" IDEA HAS COME UNDER CONSIDERABLE ATTACK. READ MORE ABOUT IT AT [HTTP://VIDEO.AOL.COM/VIDEO-DETAIL/ADAM-CHOMSKY-ON-THE-CLASH-OF-CIVILIZATIONS/1837090233](http://VIDEO.AOL.COM/VIDEO-DETAIL/ADAM-CHOMSKY-ON-THE-CLASH-OF-CIVILIZATIONS/1837090233)

There's a whole world of wonder out there that we cannot appreciate with stereotypes'

HERE IS A DIFFERENT IDEA OF A POWERFUL ARAB WOMAN. WATCH QUBEN RANIA OF JORDAN, TALKING ABOUT ARAB MEETS WESTERN CIVILIZATIONS HERE: [HTTP://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=TF897BUN2Y](http://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=TF897BUN2Y)

KEEP IN MIND THE ORIGINAL CLAIM OF THIS FILM NOT TO BE ABOUT "ALL MUSLIMS"...

IS KHALED'S ACCENT IS USED TO GIVE CREDIBILITY TO HIS AUTHORITY AS A SPOKESPERSON FOR MUSLIMS?

DOES BEING A JOURNALIST MEAN THAT WE CAN BELIEVE THAT THE OPINION HERE IS UNBIASED?...

Khaled Abu Toameh
Palestinian Journalist

WOULD YOUR ACCENT GIVE YOU THE AUTHORITY TO SPEAK ON BEHALF OF (YOUR RELIGION HERE) AMERICANS?

Figure 15. Comics against Obsession the movie.

II. Teaching from...

Beyond common sense

“I would say we have to go beyond the common sense of the people, with the people” Paulo Freire (1990, p. 100).

Another way to counter Islamophobia is to counter common sense about Muslims and Islam in America. Common sense claims that the U.S. and her allies are at war with “Muslims” because there is something to be gained; and that this moment is not like other moments when we were wrong. Common sense posits that we are always fair people who do not target the innocent; we are just trying to protect “ourselves.” Common sense lives in the now, removed from contexts that might taint it. According to the history books found in my classroom no one was ever disadvantaged by U.S. actions. These books in effect present us with an, “historiographical Disneyland where all of our intentions are good” (Kincheloe, 2004a, p. 4). Classroom studies of geography and history can help students go beyond the normative dangerous myths of common sense.

Non-necrophilic concerns

The truth of American history is that the type of racism presently deployed against Muslims (both on personal and policy levels) is not new. Villaverde, Heylar and Kincheloe (2006) encourage us toward a history that “gives up necrophilic concern” and instead focuses on looking at the way reality has been constructed and at the forces that have shaped institutions and consciousness (p. 319). They ask us to view history and ask “who is advantaged and who is disadvantaged?” The U.S. has a history that (although admirable on many levels) also includes a legacy of oppressive policies against Native

Americans and African Americans. In addition, there is a history of targeting immigrant groups who have been held accountable for the actions of the few in their home country and have paid a price for this perception (individually and collectively). Linda Alcoff explains the logic at work, “strongly felt social identities are considered by many to harbor inherent political identities” (2006, p. 22). The assumption behind targeting immigrant groups is that some hyphenated Americans (in this case Muslim-Americans) are *not really us* they are “the others” who are a threat that must be dealt with, (of course other hyphenated Americans such as “Italian-Americans” are just *us*).

Cognizant of darker moments in U.S. history, Japanese Americans recently used their own experiences and struggles to understand those of Muslims. In WWII Japanese men, women and children were placed in internment camps that separated them from the rest of the American population. Several teaching resources exist that speak about their plight^{xliii}. In post 9/11 moment they have publicly come out in support of South Asians in the wave of recent anti-Muslim profiling, “We weren’t responsible for Pearl Harbor and we shouldn’t have to prove our loyalty any more than anyone else. They shouldn’t either” (Bakalian, & Bozorgmehr, p. 58). The treatment of the Japanese was not unique: After 1917 German Americans were subjected to cultural suppression and involuntary assimilation. Considered as part of the “Bolshevik menace” Communist party members (including naturalized citizens and immigrants) were forcibly expelled to the Soviet Union. During McCarthyism and the cold war communist party members and sympathizers were detained, blacklisted and stripped of their livelihoods. During the Iranian hostage crisis Iranian students and foreign nationals were deported. Currently

Middle Eastern and South Asian Immigrants are detained, interrogated, deported and deprived of normal legal recourse (Bakalian & Bozorgmehr, pp. 32-54). Teaching about these events is moving beyond teaching children to play nice together as Muslims and non-Muslims in the classroom (much as this is also important) but it is to move toward teaching about structural levels of discrimination. The idea here is not to bash the U.S. but rather to be honest about what has been done, and to use history to help us analyze (and change) the present.

Social studies teachers can examine the history of imperialism and the twinned history of anthropology, to understand how struggles that are often framed as ideological, religious, or racial are often (beneath the surface) struggles over resources. Mark Zuss notes the interplay between struggles for resources and struggles over representation (1999). As teachers we can look at history with our students to pose the question, “what else might be going on?” We can engage students in questions about competing ideologies. For example, in the American logic of common sense Jews and Muslims are often framed as “natural enemies” (like cats and dogs?) Knowledgeable global studies teachers can use history to refute this. Afzal-Khan (2005) argues that much of what has been framed as anti-Semitism against Israel is “the ire of the colonized and neo-colonized people against the colonial Master” (p. 21) and the “legitimate frustration of the world’s have-nots against the haves” (p. 20). Statements such as these raise issues that go beyond the common sense positioning of competing religions and identities to ask deeper questions about power and inequity.

A sense of direction

The notion of a monolithic Muslim identity is dismantlable on multiple fronts. Teachers

can read Ozlem Sensoy's essay, "*Where the heck is the 'Muslim World' anyways?*" (2009) for a good-sense explanation of the unsound ways that Muslims are often represented in textbooks. One strategy to help school age students unpack the redeployment of Orientalist stereotyping can be to design lessons that give them a sense of the differences between nationalities. A teacher might ask: "Where are you from if you are Egyptian, Iraqi, Jordanian, Lebanese, Moroccan, Palestinian, Yemeni, Syrian, Saudi, Iranian, Israeli, Turkish, Afghani, Bangladeshi, or Pakistani? Who are your neighbors? What is your capital city? What is your average income, life expectancy, climate, (etc)? Students can map the distance between the capital cities of these countries. They can use maps to find populations of Muslims around the world (including, for example, Indonesia). They can look for landforms that lie between or are shared by these countries. They can research and compare the countries using different atlas, Internet and textbook sources to understand the physical, geographic, and cultural range of diversity. As they do this type of research in the notion of the uniform Muslim/Arab/Other quickly falls apart. Using a different approach they can respond to similar stereotypes that refer to peoples they are familiar with and who are different and proud of their identity. The statement, "Oh, Puerto Ricans, Dominicans, Mexicans, Cubans, (insert ethnicities here) you're all the same, aren't you?" (said with an exaggerated wink) has worked well to elicit outrage from my students. The absurdity and injustice of lumping people together in a single label and identity quickly becomes apparent when it is applied to groups familiar or close to us.

III. Teaching about...

Uncommon knowledge

In this final section I offer examples of some uncommon knowledge of specific Muslims in the arts. If we are to believe the western media, Pakistan (like other Muslim nations) is populated entirely by barbaric woman-hating hoards. It is a nation of stern men in flowing garments (whom friends of mine in Pakistan like to refer to as “fundos” or “beardies”) who are the most conservative of Muslims. Reality is different; those portrayed in Western press are (unsurprisingly) not the truth of the country. They are often referred to even in the Pakistani press as “the lunatic fringe.” In this final section I offer a few glimpses of a Muslim country and people that make up the Pakistan I know. They are not the lunatic fringe^{xliv}. They are intelligent, complex and rational; they sing, dance, and read; and (perhaps most shockingly) they laugh, merrily poking fun at themselves and at the world.

Queens and dangerous mangos

In essentialist logic “the enemy other” is not only unlike us but also indecipherable. “The other” only laughs sardonically or menacingly or in sadistic glee. A look at the images in the press confirms that Muslims only show their teeth when they are being evil. We all understand that they do not chuckle, giggle or fall over laughing. Muslims are un-fun. Humor either in its folk or its most profound form is absolutely beyond them. Mikhail Bahktin notes how laughter has been philosophically and ideologically important and held “a deep philosophical meaning, it is one of the essential forms of the truth concerning the world as a whole, concerning history and man” (1984,

p. 66). Part of taking oneself seriously is not taking oneself seriously. Americans know this; The Daily Show is serious stuff.

Pakistani TV star Begum Nawazish Ali is also serious stuff; she is popular and adored; a gorgeous, politically savvy, hard-hitting late night talk show host. Often clad in elegant saris (figure 16) she has a sharp tongue and an elegant singing voice, she also can make you laugh. Politicians (even conservative religious politicians like the mayor of Karachi) vie to be on her show. Clips from BBC documentaries (available on You Tube) show her shopping in local markets and being greeted by enormous smiles of admiration and mirth by a range of men and women from all echelons of society. She is not dressed in the elegant attire of her show; she is dressed in the jeans one would expect her to be in. The begum (Urdu for “society lady”) as everyone knows, is a *man*.



Figure 16. Two images of Begum Nawazish on TV

Looking at the press in the U.S. one would be right to think that Pakistani's don't poke fun at their leaders, past or present. " 'This speech is dead. No emotions.' General Zia said. 'People will not only think that I am a prisoner in my own Army House, but that I am also suffering from some kind of dementia.' The Information Minister nodded enthusiastically as if that had been his plan all along" (Hanif, 2008, p. 67). "I mean when they say that thing about your mother, they have absolutely no intention—and I am certain no desire either to do what they say they want to do with your mother... They have not even seen your poor mother" (p. 18). Mohammed Hanif's, *A case of exploding mangos* (2008) from which these quotes are taken, is in places graphic (both with violence and with sexually explicit content).^{xlv} It is not a book to give students unless you have cleared it with parents and school administration, but it has held firm to the top of the bestseller list in Pakistan, (is available on Amazon) and offers a witty deeply irreverent look at Pakistani politics, culture, religious practices and military life. It is insightful, poignant, and sardonic. Not only is it widely read, but when I was recently in Pakistan it was the book on everyone's lips. I include it here to point out that Muslims are capable of poking fun at themselves too and to push readers to ask, if this is not what you expected, what did you expect? Excerpting from this book and books like this, it is a question we can ask our students.

Singers and rappers

Adil Omar is an eighteen-year-old rapper/singer/songwriter from Islamabad, Pakistan. He has worked with musicians such as B-Real of Cypress Hill and magician/comedian/actor Penn Jillette^{xlvi}. I asked him how he has been received in the United States, "People have assumed that I'm either a religious fundamentalist or fanatic, or that I'm not well

educated. I usually break the stereotype when they get to know about my Secular Humanistic views and listen to my music or have a proper conversation with me. People either have crazy assumptions or are very interested and open and welcoming to someone from a different culture and background.” On the role of music for Pakistani youth he continued, “Music has an important role for Pakistani youth but I don't feel it's important enough. I believe it should make more of a social impact instead of just being entertainment for young people” (personal correspondence, 2009). His song “Islamabad” reflects the ambiguity of Pakistani youth,

Pure apathy, establishment's thrusting its hips back and forth as it's robbin' from the public for kicks Under close watch - You, Your's, Your Mother and Sis It's the land of the trapped and the corrupt politicians But it's official that we like it so much. (Omar, 2009).

Adil and his fans in Pakistan are well aware that systemic problems plague their country but they (like many western youth) are turning to music (including hip-hop, rap and rock) to argue back against the establishment. Robert Mackey of The New York Times recently published an article noting and linking to other Pakistani rock music bands that address political issues (NYT, September 11, 2009). DJ Shazia is a woman who has used her dance music mixing radio DJ skills on Pakistan's “FM 96” to successfully fight the influence of the Taliban in the war-torn area of Swat (CNN.com, October 30, 2009). Bakhtawar Bhutto (former assassinated prime minister Benazir Bhutto's daughter) has a rap-tribute to her mother that is popular on You-Tube (n.d) and has played repeatedly on Pakistani television. She raps to footage of her mother (the former leader of Pakistan), “Dear Mom if you can hear me, Crazy intelligence, I've got a

few things I never got the chance to say, but if I could have. Yo. I would take the pain away...” Sadly these are themes that many of my students can indentify with. For students interested in music Coke Studio in Pakistan (cokestudio.com/pk) recently filmed MTV style live shows with performances from popular musicians who encompassed a range of westernized and traditional Urdu folk music as well as hybridized fusion of the two. Each of the episodes was themed (individuality, harmony, equality, spirit, unity) all of the videos can be downloaded.

Other views of others

Against, from, about and out.

A cautionary note, although I have emphasized similarities here, I do not intend by the examples of work from Pakistan to promote the idea that, “Pakistanis are not barbaric because they are in fact like us in The West.” I introduce these examples to offer suggestions for teachers to find organic places where we are most accessible to each other and work outwards from there. There is much to be discovered, a You-Tube search will yield a hoard of music and a cache of BBC documentaries about a Pakistan that is not the place of terrorists and the lunatic fringe. A search at Amazon.com will yield a shoal of books that do not play into the stereotypes of oppressed and rabid Muslims but instead portray individuals who navigate a complex world.

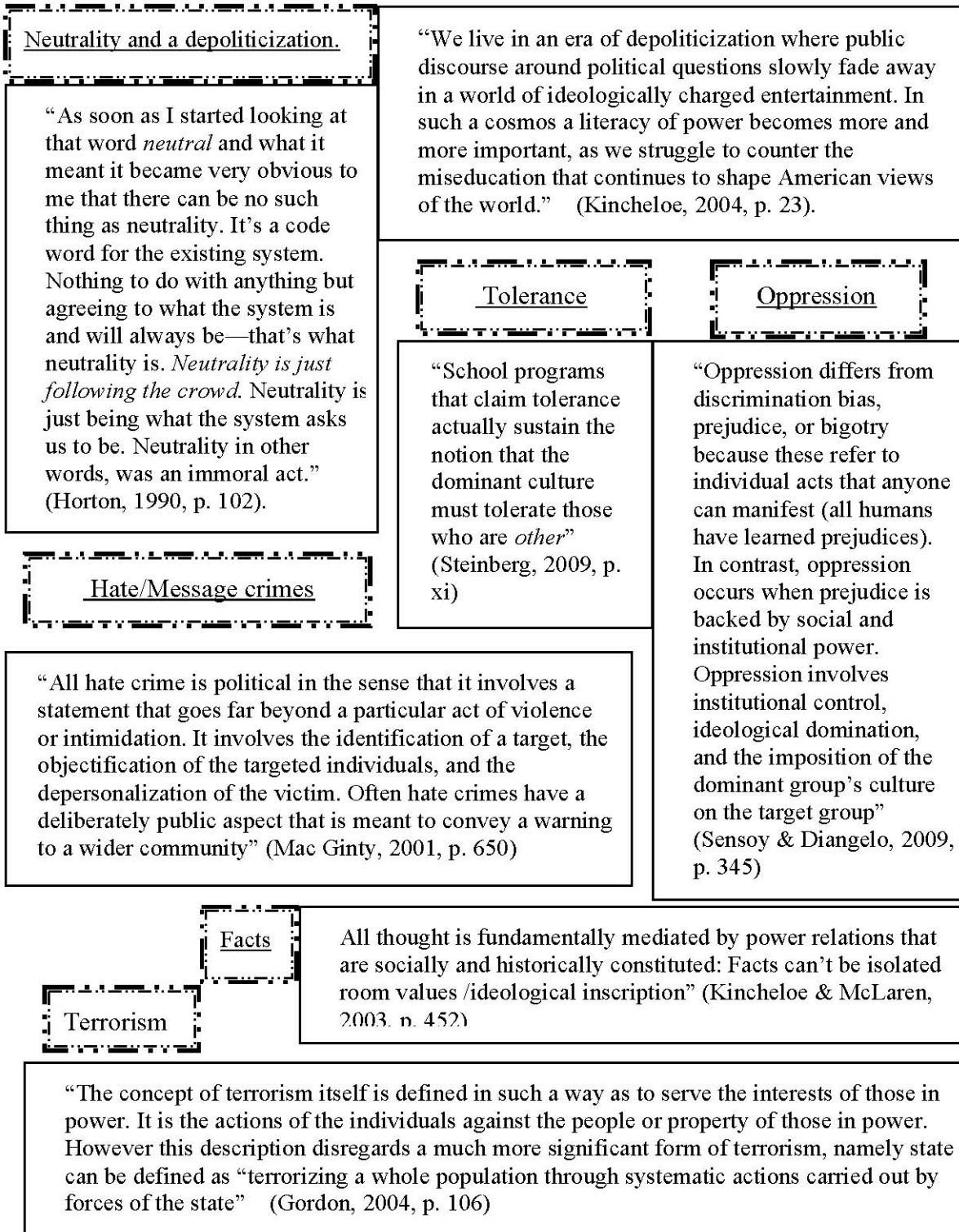
I cannot take my students to Pakistan, and we will probably continue to be bombarded by messages of fear and hate about Muslims in and outside of schools. But I am hopeful that we can work to counter the bloody common knowledge of this racism and all racisms. Remembering my own time in high school I recall a song by the band

Pink Floyd, about a lunatic who starts out “on the grass” and ends-up “in my head.”

Cautioned by these lyrics and encouraged by the work of scholars who fight against Islamophobia, I hope that we can go beyond common sense, the lunatic can be contained and one day soon this work will be unnecessary.

Afterword - Words to chew on

Paulo Freire asks that we problematize the world in which we are immersed, enshewing easy answers as we reach toward a critical consciousness. (1970/1990; 1973).



Chapter 5

Writing We: Collaborative text in educational research

Prelude



We are interested in multilogical resistance to the hegemony of hierarchical thinking/positioning in educational spaces. In this chapter we problematize the institutional structures of roles, rules and conventions about how students and teachers are expected to interact with each other and work together to produce text. Specifically, this work is about the dynamics and intricacies of coming together in the process of coauthorship. As a prelude, we wish to draw your attention to the authorship of this piece. (As this was published we were double authored: Carolyn Ali-Khan, Christina Siry/Christina Siry, Carolyn Ali-Khan. As it is published here we represent this as an authorship circle graphic.) “First author – second author” is the convention in academic writing and there are no options. Hierarchy in authorship is, through this textual practice, presented as truth, and it is the only truth. This is an epistemological structuring that we refuse. We are not claiming that such positioning is never reflective of reality (sometimes

one author does “lead”), just that it is not always so. Our dissatisfaction with the way “we” has been formalized led us to challenge its construction. We are replacing the idea of “coauthored” with that of “double authored.” We are double listed in the authorship. We are equal. We are asking editors, authors and readers to think about how equality in authorship is possible, to rethink a reified literary hierarchy and to embrace options that challenge this convention.

Meeting

Teachers and students enter the same rooms at the same times, but there are often too few places where power relations allow them to truly meet, and the space between their different life worlds and positions can be vast. As educators we find that it is often hard not to feel helpless or to feel that we are only able to fight this on individual rather than on structural levels. Critical pedagogy alerts us to how power works to perpetuate and normalize the distance between teacher and student. Teacher is the knower, student is the recipient of knowledge, and the institutional structures of time deny any but the most superficial contact. On many levels the separation that this hierarchy enforces means that we never really meet as collaborators who share an educational space. Hierarchy is firmly entrenched in classrooms. In our work we have come to believe that coauthorships that use the collaborative construction of words and meanings can work to undo a reified hierarchy. In the research that we explore in this chapter, we use collaboration on text as the means to create a literary, temporal, and power literate space for different members of the educational experience to join forces as we explore the transformations that are possible in a collective sharing of writing and research.

Sewing worlds together

This work is our analysis of the process of creating previous works that were cowritten with students. We each are teachers, and hold multiple positions between us; as elementary, high school, and university educators. As teachers in these different settings, we developed separate projects built upon writing with our students, and then we combined to write with each other about the process and the transformations inherent in shared writings. We believe that we can use words to stitch together different worlds. Crossing back and forth between *worlds* our desire is to challenge the boundaries between positions in education (teacher/student), and positions in research (researcher/researched, subject/object, self/other). Crossing back and forth between *words* we used written collaboration to explore the ways that co-created *text* can be a place to meet and connect different members of the educational experience.

Challenging hierarchy

In the work we are presenting here we have merged experiences, reflected on interpretations, and reached tentative conclusions about our roles as teachers who work to also be collaborators with our students. This merging and reflecting occurs on multiple levels. We have examined the harmony of our voices and the voices of our students through theorists who challenge notions of individualism. Of course using theory to support analysis is normal practice, however the end product (journal, chapter, book) is still generally assumed to be the result of an individual (or a few individuals) and their *individual minds* and it is this assumption that we challenge, arguing instead that the very notion of “the lone creative mind” is deeply problematic.

We believe that the coauthorship that we discuss in this paper has allowed us to broaden traditional narrative strategies, “to open up a space in social science texts for a more protean and engaged portrayal of those lives we observe and live” (Tierney, 2002, p. 385). Text can be protean if it is co-constructed, and collaborative text can create knowledge and meaning, between teachers and students to mutual benefit. Cowriting and collaboration also (importantly we believe) contest the traditional epistemological and ontological relationship that positions student and teacher in an uncontestable hierarchy. That is one in which the teacher always knows more and has more to offer to knowledge production than the student. We argue in this chapter that collaboration is a way to challenge this type of hierarchical thinking and positioning. In addition we argue that “to collaborate” can be synonymous with “to have access to agency and transformation.” Our implicit attack on individualism is inherently political, but from our standpoint we believe that *all* knowledge and all representation is political. Mark Zuss reminds us that knowing and owning are conjoined and that there are sizable and well-documented connections between equitable representation and the equitable distribution of resources (1999, p.16). With all of this in mind, we use collaboration in authorship (both as a *process* and as a *final project*) to refuse the privileging representation of researcher above the researched, and teacher above student. We hope that our work contributes to the din of a chorus that shouts down the practices of a “do your own work” mentality. We also hope that it works to counter current positivist epistemology as it is interpreted through educational practices and the authoritarianism of standardization that dominates our educational landscape.

“No bystanders”: Constructing knowledge together

Burning the bank

As teachers in a neoliberal era we find ourselves in a position that pushes us to operate as the bastions of ‘right over wrong answers.’ Positivist practices and the pressures of (simplistic measures of) “accountability” in our classrooms have lead us to feel that we are foot soldiers of “The Institution,” bravely battling low test scores and spewing truth with our red pens. Our cultural and material resources (most saliently here, our access to sanctioned knowledge) is closely guarded from those who receive education. Noting this in our classrooms we are reminded of Freire’s notion of “banking” (Freire, 1997) in which educators bestow knowledge and understandings upon students’ empty minds. The knowledge they impart is deposited as money is deposited in a bank account, to be withdrawn at a later date (or regurgitated on a test). In our experiences as students and as teachers, we have both been encouraged to believe that it is normal to think about knowledge as a neutral object, passed on through great traditions predicated on the obedience of the hungry ignorant masses. Fighting the normative, bell hooks, quoting Ryan and Sackrey, reminds us that,

nonconformist intellectuals can, through research and publication, chip away with some success at the conventional orthodoxies, nurture students with comparable ideas and intentions or find ways to bring some fraction of the resources of the university to the service of the ...class interests of the workers and others below (1999, p.189).

Attempting instead to be nonconformist intellectuals, for us, means trying to undo a reified hierarchy as we create text with our students. We believe that the act of

collaboration can permeate and change us, teacher and student alike. As we envision it collaboration can “chip away at conventional orthodoxies” to create shared transformation as co-authored text works to undermine and ultimately dismantle teacher-student hierarchies and replace them with complex relationships.

Undoing the individual

We also see collaborative writing in educational research as a means to contribute to a critical epistemology that refutes the Cartesian ontological/epistemological and logocentric privileging of the individual/rational/singular. Joe Kincheloe is one of the theorists who ground us as he critiques educational and social practices in which,

The life-giving complexity of the inseparability of human and world has been lost and social and cultural and pedagogical and psychological studies of people abstracted--removed from context. Such a removal has exerted disastrous ontological effects. Human beings, in a sense, lost their belongingness to both the world and to other people around them (2003, p. 49).

One way for us to acknowledge and explore our multiple ‘interconnections’ is to create multi-voiced textual renderings that acknowledge that ideas, technology, space, and other people *always work together* to construct reality. The construction of reality is shared and we believe that the construction of knowledge must be shared too. Through collaboration we seek to create spaces for dynamic text that locates our students as authors and as *participants* in classrooms, instead of isolated individual recipients of knowledge.

Collaborative Narratives

In what follows, in four voices, we tell our stories of collaboration. Through our use of a

phenomenological hermeneutic approach, we examine the essence of the singular but intertwined lifeworld and the relationship between multiple lived worlds. Polyvocality here allows for multiple interpretations, and stands in opposition to the authoritarianism of the singular. Kenneth Tobin (2008) has written about the importance of acknowledging the voices of all of the “stakeholders” in education, and we heed his call for the expression and representation of multiple perspectives while emphasizing “nuanced approaches to be negotiated that are responsive to difference and respectful of viable subjectivities that are historically constituted, geographically dispersed, and culturally diverse” (p. 795). A phenomenological hermeneutic approach to our work allows us to examine subjectivities and acknowledge and respect differences as they surface in our collaborative teaching and research. Max van Manen writes of the importance of “textual reflection on the lived experiences and practical actions of everyday life with the intent to increase one’s thoughtfulness and practical resourcefulness” (1990, p. 4). By an analysis of the ways in which collaboration can increase our thoughtfulness, and our connections with others, we believe this project holds the potential to strengthen and support other teachers and scholars who work collaboratively with students.

Kyle • Carolyne • Marisol • Chris

Our collaboration is multi-faceted, and extends from our work with our students to our work with each other, and in this section we highlight the contextual complexity of each of these teaching and research relationships.

Carolyne’s collaboration with Kyle began with shared lunches between a high school student and teacher. One day Carolyne received a call for entries to write on “Boy

Culture” for publication. Kyle had often chatted, mused and theorized about his world of boys to Carolyne at lunch so she asked him if he would write about it. He agreed, provided they would create the final text together. At the beginning of the coauthored project they had known each other for a year. As they began to talk, think and write together they worked closely, reflecting both on the subject matter and on the process. Kyle agreed to Carolyne’s documenting of their process of cowriting with the understanding that she would use this knowledge to share the experience. The notes and final product thus comprised two layers of research, both of which were continually shared. One layer was the text about the experience of coauthorship upon which this chapter is based. The other is the original text produced by Kyle and Carolyne and published in *Boy Culture* (Almonte & Ali-Khan, 2010).

Chris’s collaboration with Marisol emerged from a pre-service-teachers’ science methods course on teaching elementary classes that Chris taught at a college in metropolitan New York State. Stemming from experiences teaching this course over time, Chris began a research project to explore the methods course, which was created to be field-based, and structured around coteaching and shared responsibility for teaching and learning science (Siry, et.al, in press). As a teacher participant in this course, Marisol cotaught science with Chris and her classmates in a third grade classroom. It is her transformation as a new teacher in the context of this course that became the basis for a co-written chapter in which critical ethnography was used as a lens to explore the identity shifts and transformations that the co-developed structures of the course supported, as well as the ways in which her developing agency impacted the structures of the course.

As we (Carolyne and Chris) were engaging in these collaborative writing and research experiences with Kyle and Marisol, we were also both completing our own doctoral coursework, and this mediated our co-writing and co-researching experiences. We often met to discuss our multiple, individual and conjoined projects and were struck by the complexity of coauthoring relationships. Initially our writing projects also seemed straightforward. Instead they took many twists and turns as we negotiated shared text and shared time. This research took place in multiple settings: physical, material, linguistic and temporal. These include the school settings in which we teach, the numerous settings in which the four of us wrote individually, the settings in which we wrote in collaborative pairs, and the settings in which Chris and Carolyne explored all the rest together.

Framing the collaborative production of knowledge and text in historical and ideological contexts

Co-writing challenges wisdom of the “do your own work” classroom paradigm. Although the romanticized notion of the Enlightenment male testing a universe of discoverable truths has come under considerable attack in the postmodern era, educational institutions hold dear to the notion of the singular author as an ontological and epistemological truth. In direct opposition to this idea a number of authors in the field of communication and writing contend that *all* writing is collaborative. They examine and juxtapose the historical notion of the isolated writer against an ideological and material reality of interconnected beings in an interdependent world.

Using history to guide us

One question we asked as we began this work, was *how did this idea of the individual as*

the creator of truth gain currency in education? In order to answer this we reference a few key theorists who are relevant to our work. James Leonard and Christine Wharton (1994) trace the history of the idea that solitude brings us closer to the truth. Citing Socrates and then the Romantics, they look at how individualized productivity/sensibility has gained privileged status and has come to stand for authenticity. (We also noted that their choices of worthy historical writers were all male.) They use the idea of co-writing to “disrupt the seductive illusion that an individual can privately (in relation to some absolute) achieve a distinctively original voice to the extent that he/she is (or is at) the primordial source of language” (p. 32) and they posit that collaboration destabilizes the notion of *a single truth*. Their work validates our endeavor as it encourages an epistemological framework centered on plurality, in direct opposition to the idea that truth is an individual construction.

Thomas Inge (1994) traces the history of single authorship back to its roots in the broader American ideal of the rugged brilliant solitary individual (who stands in opposition to the less educated masses). He argues that this myth of the solitary writer persists even though *in reality numerous intermediaries facilitate the production of all text*. Citing a list of editors, typesetters, reviewers and others, as well as the audience to read the work, he argues that no text is a solitary production and a non-collaborative text is simply not possible. Jeanette Harris (1994) argues that all works of literature/art reference previous ones. We expand on this idea as we note that academic scholarship rests on previous scholarship. The lone scholar, we believe is even more of an impossibility than the lone author. By this paradigm we stress the point that collaborative

text is not a departure from the norm but an extension of the hidden reality behind *all* creative work.

The notion of the independent scholar who produces great thoughts alone, is both a social as well as an ideological construct and is “steeped in a philosophical and institutional history that has made the suppression of others, and in particular the suppression of women, one of the conditions of its own realization” (Sullivan, 1994, p. 17). Patricia Sullivan advocates for a collaborative approach to the teaching of writing, and emphasizes that even if an author is seated alone when writing, writing consists of a collection of thoughts and experiences from a broader world. Through the experiences that we present here we contend that text can be stronger when it is created in collaboration and that collective organization and creation of thoughts can allow for a deeper exploration of phenomena and result in a text that embodies polyvocality.

Polyvocality

The rational, non-emotional and linear text has become the standard in educational research and in academe. Anything else is considered frivolous. Rigor, for the most part, is still defined by logocentric and androcentric ideals. However, this ideal has been challenged, as numerous theorists have emphasized the complexity of rigor and multiple truths. C. M. Fairbanks (referencing Bakhtin) notes, “Language is a complex system of languages, a ‘heteroglossia’ which is “never unitary” (Bakhtin 1981, p. 288). Language through this lens is comprised of many disciplinary languages, professional jargons, literary genres, and so forth. Maxine Greene argues that metaphors (words built on images) allow us to access a complex and sophisticated understanding of reality. Art critic and theorist John Berger (1991a) examines the inherent problems of using words

alone to represent others or “truth.” A complex reality requires messy and complex systems of representation. As theorists problematize the connections between language authorship and truth, they push us away from simple answers to the questions of representation. We believe that the complexity of representation that is often quietly polyvocal and inherently polysemic is often flattened out of the end-product of a text that is simply “co-authored.”

Living in a (text) box

Our work considers the possibilities presented by finding the thick textual spaces where our joint writing with our students can begin to present a discourse that is as true to the experienced phenomena as possible. To this end we use text boxes that disrupt the narrative of “we” with the thoughts of “I.”

Thus, this chapter has been written to focus on our shared voice, yet the individual voice also needs to be represented to recognize differences. Our individual voices are introduced with our first. As we write from this voice we share a variety of individual perspectives, and inner thoughts. This style of

“I just want people to know...People have to always understand the other side, you know what I mean?...Understand what they didn’t go through. How to put it? I need a perfect example (pause)...” (Kyle, 10/07/07)

writing is messy, inherently it challenges notions of rationality (in the idea of text as being simple and liner) as the only truth. (We also believe that as we embrace polyvocality and polysemicity, we are challenging the broader capitalist underpinnings of all educational work). The neoliberal merit of individualism as a guiding construct is undermined by true collaboration. With regard to this we work in the framework of a

critical pedagogy that acknowledges the way that power permeates academe and shapes both relationships and the construction of knowledge.

Bodies and hearts in authorship

Co-writing is an intimate act.

Carolyne: By working intensively one-on-one with Kyle I found myself both intellectually and emotionally invested. As we struggled to work together to co-write our boundaries changed, and changed again. We could not maintain the rational distance that is expected between teacher and student. I worried more when he did not come to school.

Chris: I was conscious to not add stress to times that Marisol might be working on midterms or finals, yet these were often the times that I would hear from her the most. She called me from the hospital when her baby sister was born. During another semester, she called frequently when she needed to vent about a class that was not going well for her. These are intimate moments between individuals, when both the ‘good’ and the ‘bad’ become shared.

Carolyne: Kyle and I spent several days looking up news on his friend who had been murdered by a police officer. The story was carried in all of the local newspapers. One afternoon I looked for recent updates on the case and found a photograph that was not one I had previously seen. The hair on my arms stood on end. Jason T was a familiar name because he had been my student many years earlier. Is this a connection between Kyle and I? From the perspective of an outsider it could be construed as one. But I believe it would be dishonest to use this one-degree of separation as evidence of any shared reality. Shared ground may not be common ground. I am struck by how easy it can

be to create the pretense of shared worlds.

My own memories surfaced to join his....	My own not-so-great undergraduate experiences surfaced....
sometimes in the suddenness of, “I too!”...	to commiserate with her...
other times many days later.	over how difficult it is... to feel marginalized.

We shared our histories, as our imagination worked to flesh out their narratives. We struggled with redefining supportive appropriate boundaries. As we reflected on how coauthoring is an emotional endeavor we have realized that the desire to connect with another human being is one of the foundations of teaching, researching, mentoring. We then wonder about the absence of the notion of “desiring to connect” in the literature we have read on teaching and learning, and we mourn the silencing of emotional connectedness as a valuable area of study in teacher education.

Equity of voice in inequitable spaces

Collaboration requires us to work with our students to be one text voice, but the imperative of an ‘ourselves’ (which we see as both a necessary reality, and a necessary fiction), is hard to maintain under circumstances of equitable power. Equity is difficult to sustain in educational buildings that are infused with hierarchical rules of (inter)action. Teachers are deemed to deserve more power (and to own more authority) than students. For both teachers and students our roles and positions have been, to a large degree, internalized. Students have been drilled in the nuts and bolts

hi. how r u? i hope

u r

doing good.
here r da

notes i
rewrote.

of hierarchy, under the guise of respect, teachers have been drilled to accept this.

Chris: Marisol likes to meet either on campus or at a library. This is an academic project, and she prefers to complete it in an academic place. She texts and emails me very colloquially, yet our writing is an academic project. We may have casual interactions in other venues, but her chosen locations of our writing meetings tells me that this is separate from casual texting, chatty phone calls, or laughter-filled coffee meetings.

Carolynne: My bystander position in Kyle's life was made all the more apparent by his dismissal of my concern over his health. I was forced to question what right I have to make the claim of care. Is my right predicated on the very normative power structure that I claim to seek to challenge? How can we talk of 'our' work when I am warm and contented and he is looking tired and thin? How could we acknowledge and celebrate our crossing boundaries of teacher and student as a sharing of energy, intellect and life force, when one of us is so much less sanguine?

Symbiosis

Chris: Co-writing has been a life sustaining experience. Over the years in our journey as PhD students we have shared, redigested, examined and contested knowledge. As we moved from sharing knowledge to sharing writing, I find myself comforted by knowing that our collaboration can move beyond work required for courses to work that inspires and connects both of us. I hear us say repeatedly to each other, "*You are so much smarter than me.*" Cowriting with each other reveals our individual strengths as seen through the other's eyes. As we work on this piece, our writing connects, overlaps, separates, and connects again.

Carolynne: It is in this organic process that we realize our respect for each other as

scholars and as friends. We each see the other as more capable than ourselves yet we bond. In this endeavor to create text, eros triumphs. “School was a place of ecstasy-pleasure and danger. To be changed by ideas was pure pleasure” (hooks, 1994, p. 3). I am struck by how much of my education and inspiration has been eros, the pleasure of ideas, the trust in my teacher/s to not lead me astray, the delicious danger of new thoughts.

Chris/Carolyn: Individually we begin drafting a section of this chapter by feeling intimidated by what the other wrote, and as we struggled to insert our thoughts the intimidation melted away and our words become one with the other’s thoughts, naturally blending into one voice. There are times that one of us writes something and afterwards we cannot remember who wrote it; while the individual process of writing with our students seems on the surface so different, in writing about the experiences we find the commonalities that are deep and meaningful, and that emphasize the universal nature of building relationships through teaching and learning together. This process occurred as we wrote with our students also. We became, in multiple rewrites, less aware of our separate voices as we merged to being of one mind, as our understanding of the subject at hand and of each other was enhanced as we collaborated on text.

Bodies and hearts in schools

We have noticed that the body has been erased in schools. In schools the body simply houses the brain, it is not the home of everyone we love, rather it exists to be contained and tamed by bells, forward facing classroom seats and discipline. Passion and love are suspect in the classroom (hooks, 1994); and schools (in keeping with many other State institutions) implicitly and explicitly claim dispassion as the order of the day. We have also noticed that the erasure of the body seems to be a given in the educational settings

where almost all physical and intellectual movement is instrumental, prescribed and regulated. As we the authors understand this we believe that an instrumental thinking about the bodies of children in schools is part of the broader Enlightenment mind/body dualism pervades that our cultural consciousness. We have noticed how it is expected that we politely *not* acknowledge physicality both in academe, and in the broader world of middle class etiquette. The body and the mind are split in reductionist paradigms that also split knowledge from context. The “factoid syndrome” that has taken over schools, epistemologically this supports the idea of learning as a non-physical, non-emotional, non-contextual and discrete endeavor. Yet, these bifurcations are difficult to sustain when the demands of co-writing pits two human beings nose-to-nose with a single text. The intimacy of cowriting (as we spend long hours pouring over a shared document) allowed us to become aware of and acknowledge embodiment.

Carolyne: Kyle and I share stories, knowledge/s and time. We laugh and are sad together, we muse. I worry about boundaries, but I hope and believe that our coauthorship is in fact a coconstructing of reality and is a humane, respectful and loving experience. Sometimes we share laughter, or food. Maybe this can be a space to share the physical and emotional realities of life as it is complex and intertwined?

Chris: Marisol has not been a student in my class for over a year, but yet we share text, and we share technologically mediated conversations through e-mail, texting, and phone conversations. During one of our recent face-to-face meetings, she shared with me that her childhood friend had just taken his own life. As she told me the details of her story, I couldn't help crying. When she realized I was crying, we both laughed really hard. I am equally struck by the irony in laughing during such a traumatic time, and the emotional

connections that enable us to cry and laugh together. Collaborative student/teacher writing offers the possibilities for students and teachers to imagine themselves as a unit with the ability to see, and be more than either could alone.

Students as coauthors

<p>Marisol has commented several times that the research project is surprisingly engaging, and that she is surprised at how fun it is to work together and maintain a connection with a course “professor” after the end of the course. We have no more institutional requirements for connecting, yet we meet frequently and for longer periods of time than we ever did during our class sessions.</p>	<p>Kyle is excited by the prospect of telling his story to parents and “people who don’t grow up in the hood.” He is enthusiastic about researching statistics and articles related to our writing, he often needs help with vocabulary but he is undaunted by this. He changed from being a student reluctant to share his work, to being both deeply engaged and eager to speak of it both inside and outside of the school.</p>
--	--

We see shared research as having the power to create community and ultimately lead towards transformation; we embrace writing as power. As we co-wrote with students we realized how discovering community is something that comes out of work toward a common goal. In our collaboration with students we seek to support them to take agency to tell their stories and illuminate their experiences. Through our collaboration with each other we seek to make explicit the myriad of issues of representation, power, temporality and positionality that emerge through collaborating with students and each other. Van Maanen cautions us to recognize that a jointly told tale “often means an unruly text” where a reader must develop “a good deal of tolerance for the ambiguity and difficulty such texts display” (p. 137).

Relationship to the text

As we seek to reflect upon a meta-analysis of our coauthoring process and product we emerged with a blurred genre that moves between narrative, autobiography, interviewing, conversation, reflection. We attempt to achieve an interpretive richness through a heterogeneous swirling of ideas and experiences to lead to a bricolage. Kathleen Berry (2006) writes of the purpose of bricolage, and stresses that it is to provide “new knowledge, insights, ideas, practices, structures that move towards social justice, inclusiveness, diversity, plurality and so forth” (p. 90). This process is complex, as it moves through the work we coauthor with students and the work we coauthor with each other. It is a textual practice that leads to both sense making and self-making through writing. We tell our story in many voices, and through our multi-voiced writing, we seek to achieve a collective text. Multivoicedness becomes a way to reveal issues of power and how it plays out in our work with our students. Collaborative writing and research offers the space to present a portrayal of the process of writing and of the lived experiences themselves.

Representation and temporality

At the heart of this text, we are asking, “How can we use coauthorship to produce useful knowledge, and who is it useful for?” Aggressively refuting the myth of any political neutrality in educational research, Kincheloe and McLaren (2003) challenge researchers to examine and reexamine purposes. They urge us to question: Why is research being conducted? Who benefits? Whose voice is heard loudest? Whose is softest? Who makes the decisions about the nature of the research? Who is the subject? What assumptions or

agendas remain hidden? We also question, have we really attempted to challenge inequitable power dynamics in our work or do we just pay lip service to the notion of true collaboration that is a true sharing of power? Are we really being power literate? In an unjust partisan world, how is it possible to create research methods that are truly about the good? We believe that collaborative writing offers some answers and more importantly it provides concrete ways to address these questions.

As we create coauthored text with students, we see our work as motivated by two purposes—our students' impetus to tell their stories, and our need to create a space in the world for their voices to be heard. In telling their stories, we hope they are able to forge a sense of authority and accomplishment. In having their stories be told, we hope that others learn about their experiences. Questions that have moved us through this project are issues of trust, representation, and purpose. We ask continually, what are the ethical implications of writing with our students? Trust has to be earned, negotiated and developed. It can be meliorated through the shared purpose of co-authorship. Our research has shown us that collaboration offers the possibility of a representation that is systematically distanced from the colonial "once removed" vantage point traditionally used to represent "others." Leonard and Wharton (1994, p. xv) discuss the fear that collaboration undermines "authoritorial authority" and it is precisely this undermining that we seek.

Coconstructed text and community—Knowledge across difference

In our multilayered collaborations we seek to break away from the hegemonic structures created through schools and through student and teacher divisions of labor. We move away from what Freire (1997) called the banking system of education in which

knowledge is deposited into students by teachers. We struggle to find, or create a new language of we. School based literacy “especially in standard written language, is to grant authority and primacy to forms of knowledge that veer toward the impersonal, decontextualized, and non-relational ...

echo(ing) very real structures of hegemonic power and constraint” (Zuss, 1999, p. 26). As we work to connect and combine our experiences through all the varied writing projects (Carolyne and Kyle, Marisol and Chris, Chris and

It releases stress...
 Meaning like things that
 I gotta say...
 I don't get people to say it to.
 And it sends a message...

You are funny... you really don't
 stop thinking of all this stuff
 ...do you?

Carolyne) we work to create knowledge that is built across difference (Flower, 2003, p. 42). As we seek to bridge gaps in power, cultural capital and language we enter into what Flower refers to as intercultural rhetoric, which operates, “by definition and by choice, in a space where discourse practices and complex networks of situated knowledge are known to differ. Moreover, it chooses to build knowledge on the constructive potential and reflective agency of everyday people” (p. 43). We see this reflective agency in Marisol’s reflections on the meaning of our coconstructed text as it pertains to her and as she thinks about it in the world.

Dialectical relationships

Lander and English (2000) posits that “I” and “We” in writing are dialectically related. In a dialectical relationship, each part presupposes the other, they cannot exist in isolation. “The dynamic boundary between I and you are explored in the considerations of authorship and the role of the reader and the writer” (p. 354). We add to the dialectic

relationship of we and I in writing to emphasize that we and I are dialectically related beyond writing. I cannot exist without having a we, and we cannot exist without having an I. Lander clarifies “Moving between ‘I’ and ‘you,’ self and other, public and private, text and context, reading and writing, fitting and refitting the pieces of the puzzle in the milieu of difference” (p. 355).

Poly-vocality in the meeting of text and speech

Both Chris and Carlyne noted that our students were eloquent and confident with communicating in oral form but intimidated and hesitant with the written word. On one level it is precisely because of this that we wrote together. On a second level we are aware of the power imbalances that permeate such an endeavor and render it problematic. Killingsworth (1993), details a difference of communication method between those comfortable with orality (or in our case with Kyle and Marisol’s use of nonstandard English) and those comfortable with literacy, noting, “product is to literacy as process is to orality” (p. 26). She notes that the difference here is one of more than (what we would call) cultural capital, as literacy demands a more, “centralized authority and managerial control process and orality demand (sic) an atmosphere of free and open-ended exchange among social equals” (p. 26). As we collaborated to move orality to text we sought to equalize power. Killingsworth quoting Mina Shaughnessy explicates the mistrust students may have of formal text. For the [basic writing] student, academic writing is a trap, not a way of saying something to someone. The spoken language, looping back and forth between speakers, offering chances for groping and backing up and even hiding, leaving room for the language of hands and faces, of pitch and pauses, is generous and inviting. Next to this rich orchestration, writing is but a line that moves haltingly across the page,

exposing as it goes all that the writer doesn't know, then passing into the hands of a stranger who reads it with a lawyer's eyes, searching for flaws. Writing with Kyle and Marisol was our attempt to quell this distrust through an assurance of coresponsibility. Kyle's fear of writing 2,000 words for publication was appeased when he was assured that "we will do it together." Marisol's fear that she is not giving what is being asked for is still being navigated as trust continues to be established and as she begins to see her own authority in telling her story.

Towards a more equitable "we"

We have worked to achieve a poly-vocal text that paints the different perspectives inherent in teaching and learning together. However, poly-vocal is not enough—we see that the crucial part of poly-vocality is working to achieve a poly-semicity that allows, encourages, and celebrates the multitude of perspectives, opinions and experiences that are a part of social life. We use poly-semicity to mean multiple perspectives and multiple ontologies; a way of life that acknowledges, encourages, and celebrates the complexity of our relationships with the other. Thus, we contend that we need to have a multilogical resistance to the hegemonic idea of authority and legitimized knowledge passing from teacher to student. We add to this call a methodological resistance that includes restructuring equity in relationships, and we see it as crucial that we work to move away from the mentality of "me first, you second" in our relationships in colleges and schools. Our work here stems from our dissatisfaction with the current formulation of "we" in classrooms and in educational research. We have shared some of the possibilities that we found, and we hope that other people who are dissatisfied can start to look at what they can do with their dissatisfaction to work towards transforming the hierarchical structures

that push against a notion of a collaborative, collective, emotional we. While we have shared in this chapter our individual and collective, yet particular, instances of collaboration, we take issue with the institutional structures that set expectations for us as “teachers” and for our “students.” We do not intend to script what should happen in collaboration. Critical theory serves as our foundation as we have looked beyond the individual instances of collaboration in order to consider structural changes in the way things are being done, both theoretically and methodologically. As we have worked with our students to change the structures and thus increase our collective agency as learners and as researchers, we have worked together to close the gap between different life worlds with text.

Chapter 6

To sea in a sieve

A world always already there

Sewing it all together: Bricolage, criticality and charm

“I say, *strict boundaries have no charm, just like being restricted inside a locked room*” (Bal Chandra Luitel, 2011, p. 198)

I agree with Luitel, strict boundaries have no charm in qualitative research. Charm is important. I believe that it is charm that elicits in us a willingness to engage in a topic, to dance with the ideas of another, and to allow ourselves to be swept away by a torrent of thoughts. It is a bricoleur’s critical charm that convinces us to suspend a *will to truth* for a journey through complex uncertainty. Luitel’s comment on charmless boundaries was taken from Luitel and Peter Charles Taylor’s response to Kincheloe’s work on *critical bricolage* (2001a). According to Kincheloe *critical bricoleurs* engage in multi-methodological research with “philosophical/epistemological/ontological sensitivity to context” (p. 183). Kathleen Berry (2006) working from this sensitivity notes that bricoleurs also embrace chaos and complexity as they struggle to avoid a monological single path or method (p. 89). As I interpret it, bricoleurs are charmers and jesters; they push topics, violate disciplinary borders and evoke discord.

In the spirit of bricolage, in this dissertation I have drawn from multiple disciplines and contexts while seeking to build on the work of the theorists who have charmed me. Striving for Kincheloe's sensitivity to context, I have learned to journey through a panoply of theories and methodologies, employing each as the need arose. I have grown (epistemologically, ontologically and axiologically) as this research emerged, and I end this chapter with an outline of future work that is based in the insights gained through this work. As this text unfolded I have peered through a tumultuous childhood, skated a city, journeyed a picture filled school, howled, shrieked and pointed at racist Islamophobic curriculum and co-typed (like one hand in a piano duet) across cyberspace with scholars young and old. I have placed kinesthetic insights (in chapter two) along side visual ones (chapter three); I have volleyed between inner dialogue and collective discourse (chapter five); I have reflected on the meanings of "tolerance" by contrasting the way it has been argued, with the way it has been presented (chapter four). This work is marbled with the contradictions of a pastiche. Bricolage has afforded me the intellectual luxury of leaving as Luitel put it "a locked room" to journey through different disciplines and theoretical approaches, learning from each along the way. This in turn has allowed me to access the rich contradictions of different ways of understanding and representing reality.

What I believe unites my work is (as I asserted in chapter one) a critical axiological coherence. Operating from the belief that all knowledge must answer to questions of power, I have learned to stand with those who argue against positivism's pervasive sway, firm in the belief that scholarship must refuse to be an endeavor toward objectivity (Kincheloe & Tobin, 2009). Agreeing with Slavoj Zizek, (2009) the work I

have presented here “is not a neutral analysis but an engaged and extremely 'partial' one-- for *truth is partial*, accessible only when one takes sides, and is no less universal for this reason" (p. 6). As I have journeyed through my research I have learned to place myself in the tradition of critical pedagogy. In this spirit I do not envision my scholarly role being a producer of an impartial truth, instead I firmly take sides in the stories I tell. As I weave my words I am always connecting meso to macro and always looking for ways to connect partial truths to larger narratives. My work is grounded in attempts to use my voice to, as Freire argued, demystify the everyday workings of ideological discourses (1998). My individual stories are connected to broader ones and my ontology is connected to the work I do. This process is always dialectical, as Kincheloe noted, “The process of social construction is always a coconstructive process as individuals and structure create one another” (Kincheloe, 2011, p. 393). I have learned, through the languages of critical pedagogies (as a structure), how to voice my concerns about hegemony and hierarchies as they are evidenced in policies and practices that rank, order and determine the value of us all. My ontological subjectivity is not linear; different standpoints have brought me to different insights (kinesthetic, visual, textual, personal, and collective) about the ways that unequal power relationships have been normalized. As I have worked on this research I have become aware of the extent to which I am (as we all are) always in chaos, always in process, and always coconstructed in dialectical interplay with a rich and moving world.

The devil is in the details: Phenomenology, narrative and metaphor.

My axiological stance is supported by my methodology. I am a storyteller. Whether

visual or verbal, narrative is my home. Epistemologically I believe that knowledge does not reside between the ears but rather is constantly created and recreated in the interactions that occur in the world. Tobin (2009a) points out that what is known and claimed is always socially constituted. It is also physically constituted, and acknowledging both of these my research is grounded in my interpretations of the corporeal reality of lived moments. Rather than using empirical evidence, I have learned a phenomenological, hermeneutic approach. I have thought back on my experiences, made claims and supported them hermeneutically. As van Manen (1990) noted phenomenology allows us to be more fully present in the world while it connects the particular to the general. The subjectivity of phenomenology has allowed me to tell stories (creating knowledge) about lived reality while a critical perspective has anchored these to a framework of social, political and economic hierarchy.

I began this work by describing my journey through childhood. As a child and young adult the world was (as near as I could tell) *a world that was always already there*. It was immutable and unjust because, “that’s just the way it is.” I argued that Le Suer was right, that in “the bones” of children (and of all persons who have little voice, power or control of their lot) lies the economy of the world. I interpret this to mean that not only is truth of oppression always inscribed in flesh, but those who have felt injustice may not have the language to articulate it but they know it in their bones. I claimed that Le Suer’s idea resonates with me, and as such, it flows through this work. I return to this idea as I conclude this work.

If the economy of the world is imprinted in our bones, (through implicit understandings and in lived moments), then narrativized corporeal experiences are

important sites for hermeneutic analysis. In this work I have incorporated stories of being a body in the world, while (succinctly put) growing-up (chapter one), skating (chapter two), teaching (chapters three and four) and researching/writing (chapter five) and surrounded these stories with analysis and interpretation.

I have interwoven narratives with theory in an attempt to create, “holistic representations of systems of knowing” in which “stories (were) objects on which to focus dialogues from which meanings (could) unfold” (Tobin, 2011, xxii). I believe that narrative is also important (in part) because it is inherently accessible. The access that it provides is emotional as well as intellectual. Greene (1995) argues that the narrative metaphors that are found in art (in this dissertation prose, poetry, photography, comics) allow us to decenter ourselves and step in to another’s reality. I have used language, metaphors and images with the intention of broadly opening access to other realities. It is my hope that this has created a space for the polysemia of multiple interpretations to occur. The critical perspective underlying my narratives is grounded in my belief that personal and idiosyncratic realities are embedded in larger ones, and that the explication of this is the essence of critical praxis. As Zuss notes, “The process of narrativization, in Freire’s generative terms, is the development of a historical consciousness. It is made actual through individuals’ realizations of their narrative embeddedness in human made conditions” (1999, p.13).

Narratives do not float free of physical realities. My focus on bodily experiences, (growing, moving, seeing, teaching, writing) are aligned with my choice of dissertation title. The economy of the world is multifaceted; it is manifest in stories of wealth and poverty as well as in the multiple forms of privilege that pass as normal. Judeo-

Christianity, able-bodiedness, maleness, middle class affect, consumerism, whiteness, efficiency, ageism, and individualism are some of the norms against which I believe we are all measured and ones that I have sought to interrogate in this work. My methodological position has obvious epistemological and ontological implications but it also has axiological ones. I implicitly argue that the insights of embodied experiences constitute in themselves standpoints, as Freire explicates, “Knowing for me is not a neutral act, not only from the political point of view, but from the point of view of my body, my sensual body. It is full of feelings, of emotions, of tastes.” (1990, p. 23).

Antonia Darder (2002) urged me as a teacher and researcher, to join with those who develop “our critical faculties in conjunction with our bodies, hearts and spirits in the collective struggle to learn and protect” (p. 85). Wanda Pillow, (2002) referencing the ideas of Elizabeth Grosz argues that paying attention to bodies “literally and figuratively” is essential to critiques of power (pp. 377-8). The devil is in the details, and the details of lived and interpreted experiences are the meat and bones of this work.

On roads and paths taken: Implications and significance

In chapter one I shared a story of colliding with Shahrazad Ali who (in her advocacy for domestic violence) taught me that theory is connected to the practical realities of daily life. My journey toward understanding the ways that theory constructs reality has been enriched and deepened by the insights of this research. I would argue now that our ideological/axiological orientations are (almost) more important than opposable thumbs. They are the essence of being human in the world with others. As such as they structure the perimeters of interactions, they also structure our present and our futures. The implication of this standpoint is that it works in diametric opposition to dominant

efficiency oriented positivist agendas. Using the definition crafted by Kincheloe and McLaren (2003) I hope that this work stands as critical qualitative research, that has achieved its aim to emancipate self and other from oppression and exploitation by questioning the 'normal,' and that it has been successful in examining history, context, language, signs and institutional/corporate use of culture to expose exploitation and inequality.

I hope that this work stands as worthy of placement in the tradition of critical pedagogy. It also exists next to the work of emergent scholars who have recently graduated from the institution in which this work took place (the Graduate Center, CUNY). As my work examines Islamophobia in schools (chapter four), it stands next to the dissertation work of Mayida Zaal (2009) who examined Islamaphobia (sic) in schools in the Netherlands. In my concern for the demonization of youth in schools (chapter three) and particularly as I move forward, my research interests are aligned with the dissertation work of Patricia Krueger (2009) and her concern with zero tolerance policies in schools. As a critical pedagogue who uses her own experiences in New York City high school classrooms as a starting point (chapters one, three, four and five) my work is similar to Kate O'Hara (2010) and Johann Carris (2008). The implication and significance of making these connections is to frame this work as one voice in a harmony of larger choruses.

As I reflect on the implications and possible significance of this dissertation here I realize that any claims I might make are inherently suspect. Time alone will tell. However the significance of this work to *my* journey into scholarship is unquestionable. This research serves as a base for my future works. Reflecting on this I am reminded of

one my favorite books, *We make the road by walking* by Miles Horton and Paulo Freire.

It is an inspiring book and an inspiring title. As I see myself,

I do not make roads.
 I tread on well-worn sticky tar lanes.
 I look to those who have gone before
 and to those around me, for clues and markers.
 I try to reach across chasms and hold hands
 with those who are on different paths.
 I strain to hear—in the leaves of words,
 in the school bells and the garbage trucks—
 the whispers of a world that speaks of pain and hope.
 I search for just the right words, to magnify those whispers with my
 own voice.
 In short, I am no pioneer. I am a watergirl.
 I add droplets to ocean tides,
 and hope for the swell to carry us.

A world at my fingertips

Writing projects on my horizon

This manuscript is both the end of my journey and the beginning. I am newly armed with theoretical perspective to guide my research and newly versed in language with which to voice my concerns. So it is that I set forth as a fledgling scholar. I have several writing projects that are on my horizon. In what follows I list salient proposals that have been accepted for publication. I then outline my writing desires that are currently housed in folders of notes. As I see myself joining an intellectual tradition, I believe that critical pedagogies will continue to inform all of my research. Research through this lens answers Kincheloe's call for reloading the Matrix (Friereproject.org, n.d.) with the aim of a justice based future. My research will continue to investigate the intersection between formal educational spaces (such as schools) and other pedagogical sites (such as the media,

popular culture and material culture). Axiological concerns will remain at the forefront of my work. And building on the work of others I will continue to look to those who have gone before to guide me in challenging the hopelessness of an immutable world.

“More things in heaven and earth Horatio” is forthcoming in the book, *Sociocultural Studies and Implications for Science Education: The Experiential and the Virtual*. This chapter will examine the idea of the brave new world of the Internet as an egalitarian educational space. Employing the methodology of bricolage it will use the four-hundred year old literary character of Hamlet as a lens through which to view current and future possibilities in the world of Avatars and cyberspace conferences. The proposal for this chapter builds on the work in chapter three, “Seeing what we mean: Critical knowledge and visual epistemology” as it seeks to unpack visual epistemology in educational space. It also builds from the work in chapter five, “Writing we: Collaborative text in educational research” as it examines the ways that identity is constructed through specific structures and textual and technological mediums.

“Rambooboo at attention” is forthcoming in the book, *Education for peace in a time of permanent war: Are schools a part of the solution or the problem*. It will be co-written with my colleague Christina Siry. As Rambooboo is envisioned he is a working class cartoon character in a working class cartoon school. He is the embodiment of our outrage at the old socialist adage that the poor of the world are still mobilized to fight the “other” poor. This work draws from the insights from chapter four, “Common sense, uncommon knowledge and fighting words” in that it unpacks the concept of *the enemy* with a critical eye. As a working class adolescent cartoon character Rambooboo is both a future enemy combatant and already (in the way he is framed through policies and

practices in schools) the enemy himself. These contradictions are manifested in metal detectors and zero tolerance policies and the like. Although he is poor he is not unique in his experiences as the spirit of neoliberalism, "safety," "security" and "protection" work as veneers to hide the contempt and control over children that exist in schools for all but those of the wealthy. This chapter will be self consciously structured by time, in this it is similar to (chapter two) "Go Play in traffic: Skating gender and urban context." This structure is chosen as it allows for in-situ discussions of broader discourses on political realities that inherently frame discussions of militarism in schools.

The final two research projects outlined here "See Jane smoke: A critical examination of the visual construction of childhood" and "My world: Children's framing of rural life in Pakistan" will draw from work that critically examines the construction of childhood. Both of these research projects will draw from image-based research and childhood studies. They build upon the theories and methodologies utilized in (chapter three) "Seeing what we mean: Critical knowledge and visual epistemology." Both chapters are based in a critique of childhood as a sacred space that is often polluted by the misbehavior of *Others* (that is non-White, non-middle class, non-Western) children. I begin this work (as I often do) with the autoethnographic details. One of which is that my paternal Indian grandmother was married at twelve, an unusual but not impossible age to grow up and assume the responsibilities of a fully loaded life. Childhood, I will argue, is a construct that has never been (nor currently is) afforded to all children.

The impetus for these research projects comes from my outrage at the endless examples from newspapers and film reveal that both inner city youth and Muslim/Arab/Eastern youth are typically demonized in dominant discourses. This

research also draws from (chapter four), “Common sense, uncommon knowledge and fighting words” and from (chapter five), “Writing with” as both present counter-narratives about “othered” children. Consistently, and often with barely hidden vitriol, Muslim/brown/poor children are portrayed in popular culture as either victims or victimizers, unwise from a wisdom beyond their years, or simply irrational and dangerous. The moral panic around these “othered” youth is a longstanding theme in America, and the reactionary discourses that dominate the landscape of adolescence are rooted in an oppressive history. One example of this is the generally contemptuous portrayal of the contemporary urban teen in popular culture, this child is implicitly positioned as in contrast to the better teenager of the better past. The reality behind tropes such as this is rarely subjected to scrutiny. My research agenda here is intended to uncover the role of images in normalized conceptions of childhood and to argue that ideas about childhood are not neutral facts but rather ideological constructs born of and serving specific social, economical and historical forces.

“More things in heaven and earth Horatio” - Seeing and believing in Second Life

I first entered the virtual space of “Second Life” in the summer of 2010, when I was invited to attend a *Cultural Studies of Science Education* virtual conference. Cyber space confused me, and reflecting on this I was reminded of Hamlet, Shakespeare’s Prince of Denmark, who, upon seeing his dead father, was not conflicted about seeing a ghost, he worried about following the admonishments of a being that could so easily not be what it seemed. Was the ghost-king an angel or a devil? What to do, when the way forward suddenly opens to reveal a world that bears resemblance to this one, but both is, and

simultaneously is not, *us*? As I see it Second Life/Avatar-land, is the land of ghosts that appear to lead the way forward in the sharing of educational research.

As I contemplate the doors opened by Second Life, like Hamlet, I too find that netherworldliness gives me pause. The questions I am prompted to ask about this new heaven and earth of cyberspace for education are questions of seeing and believing, longing and belonging. Is the world where we can shed and/or don all signifiers of race, class, ability, etc., and where we can link/share information, the neutral space of utopia? Or is it the heavily weighted space of the technological divide, the new way of guarding knowledge in a gated community? What should we, as denizens of these spaces, pay heed to as we seek to craft them together? As we learn to interact in these new hyperreal realms, that are both communal and isolating, what guides us? What should worry us?

In this forthcoming chapter I intend to explore some of my questions pertaining to Second Life as a netherworldly educational space, both real and unreal. I will do this through a personal lens and with an eye to the lessons and theories generated from ocular-based spaces and critical pedagogy. Noting Kenny's observation, "not only has a mixture of fiction and non-fiction visual media become a major source of our knowledge, but now we can also interact with these visuals" (2009, p. 182), I question the place of Second Life as it operates as *interactive visual fiction and non-fiction*. I look to the insights from culture and media studies for pointers on how to understand and navigate this ghostly new world. Drawing from Berger's (1972) and Kellner and Durham's (2009) insights on visual rhetoric and Kincheloe's (1999) observations on the emotional draw of hyperreality, I situate Second Life (as it was used by *Cultural Studies of Science Education*) in a framework of other new technology spaces. By doing so I ask, what we

should perhaps see, what we should perhaps believe, who got there before us, and for whom might all of this truly be the way forward?

Rambooboo at attention: Controlling Children in the Service of Empire

Rambooboo is 6, 12, 18 years old. He is a student in a public school, where he is in training to be a good soldier. He is learning to obey, to walk, talk, eat, move and think correctly. Rambooboo is a sprightly, spirited and energetic child, worldly beyond the comfort levels of the institutions that house him. As Rambooboo moves through the school day he is being taught that he is in need of control, restraint, and most of all, “discipline.”

School policies and practices reflect the recognition that children in general (and working class, minority teenage boys in particular) are potentially threatening and must learn “how to behave.” Focusing on the corporeal and the ways that discourses are inscribed on the body, this work notes how Rambooboo’s body is regulated and how his movements, language, voice, food consumption, and gaze are tightly choreographed through policies and practices in schools. Drawing from our combined 35 years as educators and grounded in critical literature my colleague and I reflect on and probe the ways that children are (and historically have been) taught to understand themselves as physical beings in schools and we connect the ways that these understandings fit into militaristic agendas.

In this chapter a day in the life of Rambooboo will be the creative vehicle that is utilized to interrogate typical school practices. This is done by describing Rambooboo’s history, experiences and interactions in detail and then analyzing them from a critical theoretical perspective. Drawing from the work of Giroux (2003), Lesko (2001) McLaren

(1999) Steinberg and Kincheloe (2004), and others who offer insights on the way that childhood has been demonized, this work will examine current subsequent mechanisms of controlling children with an eye to the ways that these are aligned with militaristic structures. The argument that will be made through this work is that schools are often (if unwittingly) preparing children for their roles in the service of empire. The aim is to contextualize notions of “discipline” “managing” and “order” and highlight the need for educators to question them.

My world: Children’s framing of rural life in Pakistan

This work will draw on ethnographic visual data collected in a village of Banigala, in Pakistan in 2010. The children (ages 8-14) were given cameras and the opportunity to interpret and discuss their photographs, following the photo-elicitation guidelines outlined by Ewald and Lightfoot, (2001). The final research product will examine the complexities of using photography with children, while also addressing the possibilities of images created and interpreted by children as weapons against deficit narratives. This work will combine photographs taken by children with multiple layers of narratives. My aim is to create polysemic and polyvocal knowledge as children (individually and collectively) used their photographs as a base from which to document and analyze their understandings, while allowing researchers and the audience (who read this text) do the same. This research will explore the ways that images helped to facilitate the creation of meaning across cultural and age differences. The photographs of and by children combine with their words to allow them to “speak” for themselves.

By providing complex ethnographic evidence of the lives of children, and by facilitating voices not heard, I see this work as possibly improving dialogue between

adults and children and to adding in the facilitation of more complex understanding across cultures. Although I have yet to analyze the data the use of photographs in process clearly gave the children a platform from which to communicate without the hesitation that they normally exhibited when communicating “knowledge” to adults. As the burden of understanding was placed on the viewer, the children appeared less inhibited and more ready to engage in conversations than they were when they could “get things wrong” in the epistemological paradigms that they were accustomed to. Pictures allowed other conversations to start. As these children speak and point to their normal (non-violent, non-extreme) desires they are given the space to create counter-narratives to Islamophobia.

See Jane smoke: A critical examination of the visual construction of childhood

This research will be a multi-layered research project on the visual construction of childhood with a focus on adolescence in both historical and contemporary contexts. In this project I will draw from multiple discourses to examine historicize, interrogate and challenge dominant messages about youth. I intend this work to result in two levels of published research, one for students and the other for educators. In the work that is intended for youth I hope to create a visual literacy text that helps them unpack some of the stories about them and to delineate strategies that can empower them to fight back. For teachers I intend to publish material that helps them to explore the way that childhood in general and youth in particular are culturally constructed. It is my hope that through an analysis of images educators will question their own assumptions about youth and the objectivity of the knowledge on which these understandings are predicated.

This work will be thick visual text. It will begin with a brief overview of the visual history of adolescence in America. This will be followed by a glimpse at the work of authors who have offered critiques of where that history has led us. This work is predicated on the understanding that discourses (in this case the discourses about adolescents that have been normalized and naturalized) always have historical roots. These roots are seeped in ideological and axiological assumptions. To uncover these roots is to strip normalcy of its meaning. With this aim in mind, I will look to the past for clues about the evolution of the archetypes that have influenced current conceptions of urban teenagers. Through uncovering the archeology of adolescence I seek to challenge present understandings and assumptions. This work will also question the silence of children's voices in texts and scientific representations of them. In keeping with this theme, the second section of this paper will draw from research on adolescents envisioning themselves by using the multi-modal visual research method of photo elicitation methods. My focus is on creating research that might work toward possibilities for reconceptualizing youth.

Worlds awaiting

Paddling away: On broader horizons

She sailed away in a Sieve, she did,
In a Sieve she sailed so fast,
With only a beautiful pea-green veil
Tied with a riband, by way of a sail...

I have (in the words above) written myself into Edward Lear's (circa 1876) poem *The Jumblies*^{xlvii}. The Jumblies set to sea in a sieve. Despite the sieve's unseaworthiness, they had great adventures and returned safely, bringing with them new knowledge and wondrous tales. I am tempted to push this poem and squeeze it for empirical metaphors in the service of my dissertation. They look something like this, "the sieve lets in water, it is a vessel that in its very design acknowledges that we all are porous, and 'the waters' (assumptions, ideologies, normativities) of our cultural milieu are always flowing through us..." Perhaps I might continue with analysis of movement as a metaphor, I might also make reference to the persons and words that have guided me in the construction of my sails, and to those that have been winds that have carried me. I would certainly try to be clever. But there will be time yet to be clever.

Right now I simply 'tie my ribands' and set sail.

Endnotes

ⁱ For further details see BBC news (in the references).

ⁱⁱ As José had a common last name and gave me no identifying information on his exact whereabouts, I had no way of ever knowing what happened to him.

ⁱⁱⁱ I bring this up to avoid essentializing youth into these two tales. The reality of youth life and youth responses is a complex continuum.

^{iv} The idea of “speaking truth to power” originated in Quaker pacifism (Quaker.org, n.d.) But by the time I came of age it had come to be a phrase connected with what is in effect critical social justice and resistance to a variety of oppression.

^v Freire (1970) notes the difference between authority and authoritarianism, one liberatory the other oppressive. In part it is this that I wrestle with.

^{vi} Half-woman and half-wit? The Graduate Center’s in house magazine “The Advocate” reminded us on Valentines Day (2006) that excessive formal education makes women far less likely, and men far more likely, to find a mate.

^{vii} For exhaustive definitions of skating types, styles, benefits, history, market, laws, and lexicon visit the online sites of the International Inline Skaters Association (IISA), <http://www.iisa.org> and the National Museum of Rollerskating, <http://www.rollerskatingmuseum.com>

^{viii} This quote was referring to skateboarders, but the sentiment is equally true for roller and inline skaters.

^{ix} I use the term ‘street skater’ as it is both colloquially understood and formally defined by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, “Street skating, or skating for transportation; street skating is defined in the literal sense; i.e., getting about town on one’s skates.”

<http://www.aaafoundation.org/resources/index.cfm?button=emerge>

^x Central Park Skate Dancers Association (CPSDA) uses two outdoor ‘rinks’ in Central Park as stages for skate dancing and it’s members and fans can be seen practicing in other city parks. It is comprised mostly of people who are middle aged and do not fit the stereotypes of ‘dancer’ or ‘skater’. Their skating combines figure skating with a love of the outdoors. CPSDA has an informative web site, <http://www.cpdsa.org/>

The ‘kids’ skate dance too, showing off footwork is their specialty,

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wezrzg7fk_g

^{xi} For both men and women, “working-out” is and unfortunate term, as work in this society is much maligned.

^{xii} The criminalization of the bicyclist group Critical Mass has been the subject of much contention. Apparently bicycle riding is subversive and threatening of ‘orderly conduct’ hundreds of bicycle riders (and one selfsame skater) have been arrested in NYC while breaking no laws. For more information on Critical Mass see: <http://times-up.org/index.php?page=critical-mass-what>

^{xiii} For a list of the MTA rules see, <http://www.mta.info/nyct/rules/index.html>

^{xiv} By “school” here I refer to high school. Some schools for young children are admittedly much more ocular-centric.

^{xv} “Life is Elsewhere” was the title of his popular 1976 book.

^{xvi} As I present my readings of images in schools I do not suppose my answers or my questions to be definitive, my hope is to broadly problematize the issue. The way that images are read by different populations can, of course, vary widely. However, I believe that it is important to examine the possible readings and the intent of images circulating in schools.

^{xvii} That number is dated, to the 1990’s, it is reasonable to assume that currently it is higher.

^{xviii} Ironically and not surprisingly, I am unable to reproduce the images from these web pages because of copyright restrictions.

^{xix} It is worth noting that some classes and school curriculum (in particular English Literature classes) make attempts to incorporate visual knowledge into curriculum and instruction, however most high school instruction dismisses images.

^{xx} I acknowledge that it is far beyond the scope of this paper to engage in a comprehensive overview of all images in classroom materials, and such an undertaking would hardly be possible.

^{xxi} However a lengthy recent article (August 15 2009) by Pankaj Mishra in one of Britain's leading newspapers *The Guardian* critiques Western hysteria over Muslims. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2009/augand15/eurabia-islamophobia-europe-colonised-muslims>

^{xxii} Kincheloe & McLaren use the term cultural pedagogy to refer to the way cultural agents promote hegemony (2003, p. 442).

^{xxiii} The military places recruiting advertisements in the American Federation of Teachers union based magazine "helping" educators to encourage youth to enlist. The recruiting practices of the U.S military is addressed by NYCORE who offer an anti-recruitment package (NYCORE.org)

^{xxiv} The military enlists youth age 17 while the legal age of adulthood (to drink alcohol for example) is 21 in most states.

^{xxv} The number of Afghani deaths here has been calculated by using the UN estimates for the first half of 2009 and combining them with previous numbers

<http://www.cnn.com/2009/WORLD/asiapcf/09/26/afghanistan.deaths/>

Szabo, comments on the lack of information about this (July 20, 2007) *Civilian Casualties in Afghanistan, Fatal Neglect*. <http://www.counterpunch.org/szabo07202007.html>

^{xxvi} Although Pakistani newspapers issues daily reports on this the numbers do not seem to be compiled. The numbers I use here are estimates compiled from Kabul Press

(<http://kabulpress.org/my/spip.php?article2887>) and the longwarjournal

(http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2009/10/analysis_us_airstrik.php#ixzz0TeOEynDg)

they are intended to illustrate a situation rather than to exactly document the number of fatalities.

^{xxvii} Tellingly, the number of fatalities and casualties in Afghanistan^{vii} (and Pakistan) is so underreported as to be almost impossible access.

^{xxviii} U.S. President Obama is escalating the war and his request for \$128 billion for Iraq and Afghanistan is likely to be granted.

^{xxix} G.W. Bush called these wars "Crusades," a sentiment that is carried on in right wing media. Emran Qureshi and Michael A. Sells in *The New Crusades*, examine the popularity of this idea (2003) New York: Columbia University Press.

^{xxx} The Department of Defense request for funding FY 2010 (<http://www.defenselink.mil>) offers a disturbing detailed insight on the nuts and bolts of military expenditure and involvement around the world. In this document Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan are given detailed sections (everyone else is summed up as "and the rest of the world").

^{xxxi} Micheal Moore and Howard Zinn are two public intellectuals who have joined critics in the International press who have spoken out against this nomination. Binyon, in the British Times, exemplifies reactions in the foreign press (October 9, 2009) *Comment: absurd decision on Obama makes a mockery of the Nobel peace prize*.

http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/us_and_americas/article6867711.ece

^{xxxii} According to their website "past and ongoing participants include the New York and New Jersey State Police Departments, NYPD, New York City Parks Department, District Attorney's offices of the Bronx, Brooklyn, Queens and Staten Island, Grand Central Partnership and various other corporate and Jewish groups".

^{xxxiii} The use of the atomic bombs at Hiroshima and Nagasaki by the U.S. killed more than a quarter of a million people.

^{xxxiv} The phrase “Islamic bomb” was first used in 1979 by Time magazine (<http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,920461,00.html>), who used it again in 2002 (<http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1003581,00.html>) But the authors of these lessons were probably familiar with it from Armstrong and Trento’s recent book entitled, *America and the Islamic bomb: The deadly compromise* (Islamicbomb.org).

^{xxxv} Lesson 2, includes a worksheet entitled: “*What’s wrong with Pakistan?*” (This, I think requires no comment.) Lesson 2, page 5 says this, “*One bright spot?* -In July 2007, an elite force of the military commandos -stormed the Red Mosque in Islamabad. It was the center of Islamic radicalism in the capital city. But the military shut it down, killing 100 fundamentalists. Since then, suicide bombers have killed 800 people.” (I confess to being stumped as to how we could explain to students this designation of “bright spot”).

^{xxxvi} Lesson 10, includes a worksheet with the title, “*What do adults know about Pakistan?*” Here are the instructions for students: “Interview 5 adults: teachers, principal, the librarian, parents, relatives. Show the map to each adult. State: “Pakistan is the only Muslim country that has nuclear weapons. Ask: “Which country is Pakistan?” Encouraging students to active engagement with the adults around them and current events (as proposed in Lesson 10) could be sound pedagogy, yet it takes on a sinister hue when the point of the exercise is to reinforce specious “facts” about a nuclear armed dangerous Islamic “other.”

^{xxxvii} My experience of this scripting includes being guided to lesson plans that look something like this, “have-students-think-critically-for-7-minutes-use-2-graphic-organizers-have-students-work-in-differentiated-groups-for-8-minutes-use-3-Internet-links-on-your-Smartboard-incorporate-4-new-vocabulary-words-explicate-3-literary-strategies-and-2-state-standards, and remain engaging.”

^{xxxviii} Implied of course, is the corollary that “our” hands are squeaky-clean.

^{xxxix} This book on “Mesopotamia” is intended for readers who are most comfortable with small books and lots of language support. It is very compact, at under 30 pages, yet includes a large color picture of Jesus and two full pages on the Hebrews with a map of Israel.

^{xl} Jonathan Tobin of The Jerusalem Post claimed *Obsession*, “does no more than state the obvious about the rise of Islamism, its tactics and its purpose”

(<http://www.jpost.com/servlet/Satellite?apage=1&cid=1222017586476&pagename=JPostandJPArticle/ShowFull>). The Washington Times stated, “Viewing this documentary should hereafter be considered a prerequisite for participating in the debate about the national security challenges we face, and what must be done to address them.” (March 20, 2006, <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2006/mar/20/20060320093053-5818ra/>).

^{xli} Meanwhile The New York Times in a deeply disturbing article reported that, “When a Middle East discussion group organized a showing at NYU recently, it found that the distributors of “*Obsession*” were requiring those in attendance to register at IsraelActivism.com,” (Arenson, 2007). IsraelActivism is an organization of Hasbara Fellowships that is deeply pro-Zionist. This is disturbing as it reandconnects anti-Islamic sentiments to being a good Jew. Inherently the argument here is that *of course* if you are Jewish, patriotic or simply someone who does not support violence you must take a stance against Muslims.

^{xlii} This list of logic fallacies can be used as a guide, <http://onegoodmove.org/fallacy/toc.htm>.

^{xliii} Gail Sakurai’s *Japanese American Internment Camps* (Children’s Press, 2002) is a story told from child’s point of view this book tells of the fear and injustice of being taken to Japanese American Internment Camps.

^{xliv} I am expecting a charge that the Westernized English speaking “elite” in Pakistan are not the “real” face of the country. I would argue against this essentialism. Leaving aside the impact of a worldwide globalization, Pakistan’s colonial history of British Imperialism and connections to

England have rendered it a hybridized culture with strong longstanding Anglo influences. Muneeza Shamsie points out that Pakistan has always had a tradition of English language writers (2005). There is an abundance of English language bookstores, several widely read and circulated newspapers and magazines in English, several television channels in English, as well as number of magazines, theatres, etc. To ignore these as inauthentic is to artificially mute an integral part of Pakistani culture.

^{xlv} Although shocking to some, Eve Ensler's *The Vagina Monologues* were performed in Islamabad in 2003. Nighat Imran Rizvi, who staged the performance, commented on it "My mother-in-law came to see it wearing a hijab. While my mother wept after the readings. And my husband, along with the other men, considered it to be pathbreaking." <http://www.mid-day.com/entertainment/news/2004/march/78203.htm>

^{xlvi} A recent interview with Adil Omar can be found at the online site of the Pakistani magazine *Chup!— changing up Pakistan* at <http://changinguppakistan.wordpress.com/2009/01/07/a-rap-artists-perspective-aninterview-with-adil-omar/>

^{xlvii} They sailed away in a Sieve, they did,
 In a Sieve they sailed so fast,
 With only a beautiful pea-green veil
 Tied with a riband by way of a sail,
 To a small tobacco-pipe mast;
 And every one said, who saw them go,
 'O won't they be soon upset, you know!
 For the sky is dark, and the voyage is long,
 And happen what may, it's extremely wrong
 In a Sieve to sail so fast!
 Far and few, far and few,
 Are the lands where the Jumblies live;
 Their heads are green, and their hands are blue,
 And they went to sea in a Sieve.

References

- 2Pac. (1998). *Changes*. Retrieved on October 16, 2010 from
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PWJJl8osF7w&feature=related>
- Ackerman, D. (1999). *Deep play*. New York, NY: Vintage Books.
- Admongo.gov. (2010). Retrieved on April 1, 2010 from
<http://www.admongo.gov/admongo.html>.
- Adweek. (2010, April 27). *What kids want: A special issue*. Retrieved on April 29, 2010
 from http://www.adweek.com/aw/content_display/special-reports/kids-upfront/e3ieae2fa145a05b6f7978478c58b2d84f5.
- Afzal-Khan, F. (2005). *Shattering the stereotypes: Muslim women speak out*.
 Northampton, MA: Olive Branch Press.
- Ali, S. (1989). *The Blackman's guide to understanding the black woman*. Philadelphia,
 PA: Civilized Publications.
- Ali-Khan, C. (2009). Go play in traffic: Skating, gender and urban context. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 15, 1084-1102.
- Ali-Khan, C. (2009). On being us and them: A voice from the edge. In Ö. Sensoy and C.
 D. Stonebanks (Eds.), *Muslim voices in school: Narratives of identity and pluralism*. (pp. 153–168). Rotterdam, The Netherlands: Sense Publishers.
- Ali-Khan, C. (2010). Common sense, uncommon knowledge and fighting words. In C.D.
 Stonebanks, J. L. Kincheloe, and S. R. Steinberg (Eds.), *Teaching against Islamophobia*. (pp. 239–68). New York, NY: Peter Lang.
- Ali-Khan, C. (In press). Seeing what we mean: Visual knowledge and critical
 epistemology. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*.

- Ali-Khan, C. (In press). Shaken and stirred: On coming to critical praxis. In T. Kress (Ed.), *Critical Praxis Research (CPR): breathing new life into research methods for teachers*. Springer Publishers.
- Ali-Khan, C. (In progress). 'More things in heaven and earth Horatio' - Seeing and believing in Second Life. In C. Milne, K. Tobin, and D. Degenero (Eds.). *Sociocultural studies and implications for science education: The experiential and the virtual*. Springer Science + Business Media.
- Ali-Khan, C., & Siry, C. (In press). Writing we: Collaborative text in educational research. In C. Malott & B. Portfilio (Eds.), *Critical pedagogy in the 21st century: A new generation of scholars*. Connecticut: Information Age Publishing.
- Ali-Khan, C. & Siry, C. (In progress). Rambooboo at attention: Controlling Children's Bodies in the Service of Empire. In P. R. Carr and B. J. Porfilio (Eds.). *Educating for peace in a time of permanent war: Are schools part of the solution or problem?* New York: Taylor & Francis/Routledge.
- Alcoff, L. M. (2006). *Visible identities: Race, gender and the self*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Almonte, C. & Ali-Khan, C. (2010). Keep ya head up. In S. R. Steinberg, M. Kehler, and L. Cornish. (Eds.). *Boy culture: An encyclopedia*. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO and Greenwood Publishing Group.
- American Textbook Council, (2008). *Islam in the Classroom, what the textbooks tell us*. Retrieved September 10, 2009, from <http://www.historytextbooks.org/islam.htm>

- Appadurai, A. (2008). Here and now. In N. Mirzoeff (Ed.), *The visual culture reader* (2nd ed.), (pp. 173–80). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Apple, M. W. (2001). Series editor's introduction. In N. Lesko (Ed.), *Act your age!: A cultural construction of adolescence*, (pp. xi–xii). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Ausch, R., Doane, R., & Perez, L. (2005). *Interview with Elizabeth Grosz*. Retrieved on June 16, 2007 from http://web.gc.cuny.edu/csctw/found_object/text/grosz.htm
- Bakalian, A., & Bozorgmehr, M. (2009). *Backlash 9/11: Middle Eastern and Muslim Americans respond*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Bakhtin, M. M. (1981). *The dialogic imagination: Four essays* (M. Holquist, Trans.). Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.
- Bakhtin, M. M. (1984). *Rabelais and his world*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- BBC News. (n.d.). *On this day, November 21*. Retrieved on September 16, 2010 from http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/november/21/newsid_4187000/4187184.stm
- Berger, J. (1972). *Ways of seeing*. London, UK: Penguin books.
- Berger, J. (1991). *And our faces, my heart, brief as photos*. New York, NY: Vintage Books.
- Berger, J. (1991a). *Keeping a rendezvous*. New York, NY: Vintage.
- Berquist, J. L. (2002). *Critical spatiality and the uses of theory*. Paper presented at the AAR/SBL Constructions of Ancient Space Seminar, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

- Berry, K. (2006). Research as bricolage: Embracing relationality, multiplicity and complexity. In K. Tobin and J. L. Kincheloe (Eds.), *Doing educational research: A handbook*, (pp. 87-116). Rotterdam, The Netherlands: Sense Publishing.
- Bourdieu, P. (2009). (i) Introduction. In M.G. Durham and D. Kellner (Eds.), *Media and cultural studies: Keywords*, (pp. 322–8). Malden, MA: Blackwell.
- Bhutto, B. (n.d.). *I would take the pain away*. Retrieved July 10th 2009 from You-Tube <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5RxgiLARd5I>
- Campaign for a Commercial Free Childhood. (n.d.). *Marketing to children overview*. Retrieved on April 1, 2010 from <http://www.commercialfreechildhood.org/>
- Carris, J. M. (2008). *Understanding curriculum as political text: Designing empowering pedagogy for non-reading adolescents*. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from Proquest.umi.com. (AAT 3325401)
- Carter, R. A. (2004). Visual literacy: Critical thinking with the visual image. In J. L. Kincheloe and D. Weil (Eds.), *Critical thinking and learning: An encyclopedia for parents and teachers*, (pp. 291–6). Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.
- Casper, M. J., & Moore, J. M. (2009). *Missing bodies: The politics of visibility*. New York, NY: New York University Press.
- Cass, J. (2010) "*Held captive.*" *Child poverty in America. A children's defense fund report*. Retrieved Feb 1, 2010 from <http://www.childrensdefense.org/child-research-data-publications/data/held-captive-child-poverty.html>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2006). *Summary health statistics for U.S. adults: National health interview survey, 2005*. Retrieved June 17, 2007 from http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/series/sr_10/sr10_232.pdf

- Chaplin, E. (2006). The convention of captioning: W.G. Sebald and the release of the captive image. *Visual Studies* 21(1), 42–53.
- Chow, J. (2003). Lusus Naturae: We're the freaks of nature! *Taboo: The Journal of Culture and Education*, 7(2), 109–19.
- Clarian Health. Healthy living: Exercise and fitness. Your guide to inline skating (n.d.) Retrieved February 25, 2009 from http://www.clarian.org/portal/patients/healthyliving;jsessionid=XR0MGZOWLF EZDLAQA5MSFEQ?paf_gear_id=200001&paf_dm=full&pafgm=content&task_name=articleDetail&articleId=1012§ionId=7
- Channel One Help. (n.d.). Retrieved April 3, 2010 from <http://help.channelone.com>
- Classmatesmarketing. (n.d.). Retrieved April 3, 2010 from <http://www.classmatesmarketing.com/>
- Cloud, D. L. (2008). “To veil the threat of terror”: Afghan women and the <Clash of Civilizations> in the imagery of the U.S. war on terrorism. In L. C. Olson, C. A. Finnegan, and D. S. Hope, (Eds.), *Visual rhetoric: A reader in communication and American culture*, (pp. 393–412). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- CNN. (October, 30, 2009). Taliban radio wars. Retrieved November 1, 2009, from <http://www.cnn.com/video/#/video/world/2009/10/30/ctw.sayah.swat.radio.wars.cnn>
- Coke Studio (n.d.). Retrieved September 21, 2009 from <http://www.cokestudio.com.pk/about/>
- Collins, P. (1990). *That's just the way it is*. Retrieved on October 16, 2010 from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gEbAom1C5ok>

Consumer Union. (n.d.). *Selling America's kids: Commercial pressures on kids of the 90's*. Retrieved on April 1, 2010 from

<http://www.consumersunion.org/other/sellingkids/inschoolpromo.htm>

Coontz, S. (2000). *The way we never were: American families and the nostalgia trap*. New York, NY: Perseus.

Council on American-Islamic relations, CAIR (n.d.). *American public opinion about Islam and Muslims, 2006*. Retrieved on June 6, 2008, from

http://www.cair.com/Portals/0/pdf/american_public_opinion_on_muslims_islam_2006.pdf

Darder, A. (2002). *Reinventing Paulo Freire: A pedagogy of love*. Boulder: Westview Press.

DeGennaro, D., and T. Brown. (2009). Youth voices: Connections between history, enacted culture and identity in a digital divide initiative. *Cultural Studies of Science Education*, 4, 13–39.

Denzin, N. & Lincoln Y. S. (2003). Introduction. In N. Denzin and Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The landscape of qualitative research: theories and issues* (2nd ed.), (pp. 1-47). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Dire Straits. (1980). *Skateaway*. Retrieved on February 15, 2009, from www.mp3lyrics.organddanddire-straitsandskateawayandv1.html

Disney.com. (n.d.). Disney's wide world of sports. Retrieved on June 21, 2007, from <http://disneyworldsports.disney.go.com>

Eagleton, T. (2002). *Sweet Violence: The idea of the tragic*. Malden, UK: Blackwell Publishers.

- Eichberg, H. (2002). *Three dimensions of pull and tug: Towards a philosophy of popular games*. Retrieved on June 12, 2007, from <http://www.taiiku.tsukuba.ac.jp/~sshimizu/research3.htm>
- Ewald, W. & Lightfoot, A. (2001). *I wanna take me a picture: teaching photography and writing to children*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Fairbanks, C. M. (1989). Research in the classroom: Reading, writing, and "real" research. *The English Journal*, 78, 93-94.
- Feder, A. M. (1995). A radiant smile from the lovely lady: Overdetermined femininity in "ladies" figure skating. In C. Baughman (Ed.), *Women on ice: Feminist essays on the Tonya Harding/Nancy Kerrigan spectacle*, (pp. 22-46). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Finley, S. (2008). Arts-based inquiry: Performative revolutionary pedagogy. In N. K. Denzin and Y. S. Lincoln. (Eds.), *Collecting and interpreting qualitative materials* (3rd ed.), (pp. 95-114). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Fletcher, G. F., Balady, G., Blair, S. N., Blumenthal, J., et al. (1996). Statement on exercise: Benefits and recommendations for physical activity programs for all Americans. A statement for health professionals by the committee on exercise and cardiac rehabilitation of the council on clinical cardiology, American Heart Association. *Circulation*, 94, 857-862.
- Flower, L. (2003). Talking across difference: Intercultural rhetoric and the search for situated knowledge. *College Composition and Communication*, 55, 38-68.
- Freire, P. (1998). *Pedagogy of the heart*. New York: Continuum International Publishing Group.

- Friere, P. (2000/1973). *Education for critical consciousness*. New York: Continuum.
- Freire, P. (2005/1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. 30th anniversary ed. New York, NY: Continuum International.
- Freireproject. (n.d.). *Joe Kincheloe interviewed*. Retrieved on April 1, 2010 from <http://www.freireproject.org/content/joe-kincheloe-interviewed>
- Giroux, H. A. (1994). *Disturbing pleasures*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Giroux, H. A. (2003). *The abandoned generation: Democracy beyond the culture of fear*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Gordon, (2004). The United States and Israel: Double standards, favoritism, and unconditional support. In J. L. Kincheloe and S. R. Steinberg (Eds.), *The miseducation of the west: How schools and the media distort our understanding of the Islamic world* (pp. 103–116). Westport, CT: Prager Publishers.
- Greene, M. (1995). *Releasing the imagination: Essays on education, the arts, and social change*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Grosvenor, I. (2007). From the ‘eye of history’ to ‘a second gaze’: The visual archive and the marginalized in the history of education. *History of Education*, 36, 607–22.
- Hammer, R., & Kellner, D. (2009). From communications and media studies through cultural studies: An introduction and an overview. In R. Hammer and D. Kellner (Eds.), *Media/cultural studies: critical approaches*, (pp. ix–xvii). New York, NY: Peter Lang.
- Hanif, M. (2008). *A case of exploding mangos*. London, UK: Random House Ltd.
- Harding, S. (1998). *Is science multicultural? Postcolonialism, feminism, and epistemologies*. Bloomington, IA: Indiana University Press.

- Harris J. (1994). Toward a working definition of collaborative writing. In J. S. Leonard, et. al (Eds.), *Author-ity and textuality: Current views of collaborative writing*, (pp. 77-84). West Cornwall, CT: Locust Hill Press.
- Harvey, D. (2006). *The spaces of global capitalism: Towards a theory of uneven geographical development*. London, England: Verso.
- Higonnet, A. (1998). *Picture of innocence: The history and crisis of ideal childhood*. New York, NY: Thames & Hudson.
- hooks, b. (1994). *Teaching to transgress: Education as the practice of freedom*. Boston, MA: South End Press.
- hooks, b. (2000). *Where we stand: Class matters*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Hornecker, E. (n.d.). *Space and place: Setting the stage for social interaction*. Retrieved June 18, 2007, from <http://www.informatics.sussex.ac.uk/research/groups/interact/previousSite/papers/pdfs/Hornecker.pdf>
- Hornsby, B. (2006). *That's just the way it is*. Retrieved on October 16, 2010 from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c57NnbBgxaU&feature=related>
- Horton, M., & Freire, P. (1990). *We make the road by walking: Conversations on education and social change*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Humpel, N., Owen, N., & Leslie, E. (2002). Environmental factors associated with adults' participation in physical activity: A review. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 22, 188-99.

- Inge, M. T. (1994). The art of collaboration. In J. S. Leonard et. al., (Eds.), *Authority and textuality: Current views of collaborative writing*, (pp. 3-15). West Cornwall, CT: Locust Hill Press.
- Johnson, B. C., & Blanchard, S. C. (2008). *Reel diversity: a teacher's sourcebook*. New York, NY: Peter Lang.
- Kahlenberg, R. (October 6, 2010). Social class on the American campus, but not in the Ads? *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Retrieved on October 7, 2010 from <http://chronicle.com/blogs/innovations/social-class-on-the-american-campus-but-not-in-the-ads/27473>
- Kealy, W. A. (2004). Media literacy. In J. L. Kincheloe and D. Weil, (Eds.), *Critical thinking and learning: An encyclopedia for parents and teachers*, (pp. 287–90). Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.
- Kellner, D., & Durham, M. G. (2009). Adventures in media and cultural studies: Introducing the keywords. In M. G. Durham and D. Kellner, (Eds.), *Media and cultural studies: Keywords*, (pp. ix–xxxviii). Malden, MA: Blackwell.
- Kellner, D., & Share, J. (2007). Critical media literacy, democracy and the reconstruction of education. In D. Macedo and S. R. Steinberg (Eds.), *Media literacy*, (pp. 3-22). New York, NY: Peter Lang.
- Kenny, K. (2009). *Visual communication research designs*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Kilbourne, J. (1999). *Can't buy my love*. New York, NY: Touchstone.
- Killingsworth, J. M. (1993). The product and process, literacy and orality: An essay on composition and culture. *College Composition and Communication*, 44(1), 26-39.
- Killoran, J., Zimmer, S., Jarrett, M. (2007) *A Key to Understanding Global Studies*.

NY: Jarrett.

- Kincheloe, J. L. (1999). Trouble ahead, trouble behind: Grounding the post-formal critique of educational psychology. In J. L. Kincheloe, S. R. Steinberg and P. H. Hinchey (Eds.), *The post formal reader: Cognition and education*, (pp. 4-54). New York, NY: Falmer.
- Kincheloe, J. L. (2000). *Toil and trouble: Good work, smart workers and the integration of academic and vocational education*. New York, NY: Peter Lang.
- Kincheloe, J. L. (2001). *Getting beyond the facts: Teaching social studies and social sciences in the twenty-first century* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Peter Lang.
- Kincheloe, J. L. (2001a). Describing the bricolage: conceptualizing a new rigor in qualitative inquiry. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 7, 679-92.
- Kincheloe, J. L. (2003). Critical ontology: Visions of selfhood and curriculum. *JCT: Journal of Curriculum Theorizing*, 19(1), 47-64.
- Kincheloe, J. L. (2004). Home alone and bad to the bone: The advent of a postmodern childhood. In S. R. Steinberg and J. L. Kincheloe, *Kinderculture: The corporate construction of childhood*, (2nd ed.), (pp. 228–53). Boulder, CO: Westview.
- Kincheloe, J. L. (2004a). Introduction. In J. L. Kincheloe and S. R. Steinberg (Eds.), *The miseducation of the West: How schools and the media distort our understanding of the Islamic world*, (pp. 1–24). Westport, CT: Prager Publishers.
- Kincheloe, J. L. (2007). Critical pedagogy in the 21st century: Evolution for survival. In P. McLaren and J. L. Kincheloe, (Eds.), *Critical pedagogy: Where are we now?* (pp. 9–42). New York, NY: Peter Lang.
- Kincheloe, J. L. (2009). Capital, Ray Kroc and McDonald's: The world's lovin it. In R.

- Hammer and D. Kenner, (Eds.), *Media/cultural studies: Critical approaches*, (pp. 251–69). New York, NY: Peter Lang.
- Kincheloe, J. L. & McLaren, P. (2003). Rethinking critical theory and qualitative research. In N. K. Denzin and Y. S. Lincoln, (Eds) *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research* (3rd edition), (pp. 433-488). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Kincheloe, J. L., & Tobin, K. (2009). The much exaggerated death of positivism. *Cultural Studies of Science Education*, 4, 513–528.
- Kincheloe, J. L. (2011). Critical pedagogy and the knowledge wars. In K. Hayes, S. R. Steinberg, and K. Tobin (Eds.), *Key works in critical pedagogy* (pp. 385-405). Boston: Sense.
- Kress, T. (n.d.). Tilting the machine: A critique of one teacher's attempts at using art form to create postformal, democratic learning environments. *Journal of Educational Controversy*. Retrieved on April 2, 2010 from <http://www.wce.wvu.edu/Resources/CEP/eJournal/v005n001/a008.shtml>
- Kress, T. (2009). In the shadow of whiteness: (Re)exploring connections between history, enacted culture, and identity in a digital divide initiative. *Cultural Studies of Science Education*, 4, 41–9.
- Krueger, P. (2009). *Navigating the gaze: Young people's intimate knowledge with surveilled spaces at school*. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from Proquest.umi.com. (AAT 3378666)
- Kundera, M. (1976). *Life is elsewhere*. New York, NY: Knopf.
- Lander, D. A., & English, L.M. (2000). Doing research 'with': Reading and writing our difference. *Reflective Practice*, 1, 343-356.

- Lear, E. (n.d.) *Edward Lear homepage: The Jumblies*. Retrieved on February 10, 2011 from <http://www.nonsenselit.org/Lear/ns/jumblies.html>
- Le Suer, M. (1927and1982). *Ripening: Selected work, 1927-1980*. New York, NY: The Feminist Press.
- Leonard, J. S., & Wharton, E. (1994). Breaking the silence: Collaboration and the isolationist paradigm. In J. S. Leonard et al (Eds.), *Authority and textuality: Current views of collaborative writing*, (pp. 25-40). West Cornwall, CT: Locust Hill Press.
- Lesko, N. (2001). *Act your age!: A cultural construction of adolescence*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Linn, S. (2005). *Consuming kids: Protecting our children from the onslaught of marketing and advertising*. New York, NY: Anchor Books.
- Luitel, B. C., & Taylor P. C. (2011). Kincheloe's bricolage: A view from within transformative educational research. In K. Hayes, S. R. Steinberg, and K. Tobin (Eds.), *Key works in critical pedagogy* (pp. 191-200). Boston: Sense.
- Mac Ginty, R. (2001). Ethno-national conflict and hate crime. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 45, 639. Retrieved September 20, 2009, from Academic Search Complete database.
- Mackey, R. (September 11, 2009). An American accent to Pakistani rock. *The New York Times Blog*. Retrieved September 11, 2009 from, <http://thelede.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/09/11/an-american-accent-to-pakistani-rock/?scp=2&sq=pakistan%20music&st=cse>

- McLaren, P. (1999). *Schooling as ritual performance*. Lanham, MD: Rowan and Littlefield.
- Margolis, E., & Fram. S. (2007). Caught napping: Images of surveillance, discipline and punishment on the body of the schoolchild. *History of Education*, 36(2), 191–211.
- Mayfield, C. & Quinn, K. M. (2007). *Mesopotamia*. Huntington Beach, CA: Teacher Created Materials Publishing.
- McWilliam, E. (1996). Introduction. In E. McWilliam and P. G. Taylor (Eds.), *Pedagogy, technology, and the body*, (pp. 1-22). New York, NY: Counterpoints.
- McWilliam, E., & Palmer, P. (1996). Tech(no)bods. In E. McWilliam and P. G. Taylor (Eds.), *Pedagogy, technology, and the body*, (pp. 163-170). New York, NY: Counterpoints.
- Miller, T. (2009). Children and the media: Alternative histories. In R. Hammer, and D. Kenner, (Eds.), *Media/cultural studies: Critical approaches*, (pp. 238–50). New York, NY: Peter Lang.
- Mirzoeff, N. (2008). The subject of visual culture. In N. Mirzoeff, (Ed.), *The visual culture reader*. (2nd ed.), (pp. 3–23). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Morgan, W. (1996). (Self) fashioning. In E. McWilliam and P. G. Taylor (Eds.), *Pedagogy, technology, and the body*, (pp. 23-47). New York, NY: Counterpoints.
- National Center for Health Statistics. (n.d.). *Faststats A to Z: Exercise/physical activity*. Retrieved June 17, 2007, from <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/exercise.htm>
- New York Tolerance Center*, homepage (n.d.). Retrieved September 1, 2009, from <http://www.wiesenthal.com/site/pp.asp?c=lsKWLbPJLnF&b=4441265>
- Obsession in the Media*. (n.d). Retrieved September 3, 2009, from

http://www.obsessionthemovie.com/media_TV.php

Ohanian, S. (1999). *One size fits few: The folly of educational standards*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

O'Hara, K. (2010). *Critical connections: Technology that empowers*. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from Proquest.umi.com. (AAT 3396453)

Olson, L. C., C. A. Finnegan, and D. S. Hope. (2008). Visual rhetoric in communication: Continuing questions and contemporary issues. In L. C. Olson, C. A. Finnegan and D. S. Hope, (Eds.), *Visual rhetoric: A reader in communication and American culture*, (pp. 1–14). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Palmer, P. (1996). Infecting pedagogy. In E. McWilliam & P. G. Taylor (Eds.), *Pedagogy, technology, and the body*, (pp. 79-87). New York: Counterpoints.

Pedersen, C. H. (2008). Anchors of meaning – helpers of dialogue: The use of images in production of relations and meaning. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 21, 35-47.

Performance Education (n.d.). *Pakistan on the brink*. Retrieved April 1, 2008, from https://www.performance-education.com/lessons.php?prod_set=BZ-4137

Pillow, W. S. (1997). Exposed methodology: The body as deconstructive practice. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 10, 349-363

Porfilio, P. J., & Carr, P. R. (2010). The neo-liberal social order, youth and resistance. In P. J. Porfilio and P. R. Carr (Eds.), *Youth culture, education and resistance: Subverting the commercial ordering of life*, (pp. 1-21). Boston: Sense Publishers.

Postman, N., & Weingartner, C. (2010). So what do you do now? In A. Canestrari and B. A. Marlowe, (Eds.), *Educational foundations: An anthology of critical readings*, (pp. 118-131). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

P. T. Quigley. (n.d.). *Company history*. Retrieved March 21, 2010 from <http://www.ptquigley.com/company.html>

Radical Islam. (n.d.). *A new film exposes radical Islam in America*. Retrieved May 11, 2009 from <http://www.radicalislam.org/news/new-film-exposes-radical-islam-us>

Rose, G. (2007). *Visual methodologies: An introduction to the interpretation of visual materials*. (2nd ed). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Rudd, A., & Stoll, S. (2004). What type of character do athletes possess? An empirical examination of college athletes versus college non-athletes with the RSBH value judgment inventory. *Sport Journal*, 7:2, unpaginated, United States Sports Academy. Retrieved February 25, 2009, from <http://www.thesportjournal.organdarticleandwhat-type-character-do-athletes-possess>

Scary, E. (2004). *Resisting representation*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Schmitt, E., & Shanker, T. (September, 20, 2009). General Calls for More U.S. Troops to Avoid Afghan Failure. *The New York Times*. Retrieved October 1, 2009 from <http://www.nytimes.comand2009and09and21andworldandasiaand21afghan.html>

- Sensoy, Ö. (2010). Where the heck is the 'Muslim world' anyways? In Ö. Sensoy and C. D. Stonebanks (Eds.), *Muslim voices in schools: Narratives of identity and pluralism*, (pp. 71–85). Rotterdam, The Netherlands: Sense Publishers.
- Sensoy, Ö. (2010a). Ickity-ackity open sesame. In S. Binaya (Ed.), *Critical global perspectives: Rethinking knowledge about global societies*, (pp. 39–56). Charlotte, NC: Information Age.
- Sensoy, O. & Diangelo, R. (2009, January). Developing social justice literacy: An open letter to our faculty colleagues. *Phi Delta Kappan International*. 90, 345-352. Retrieved March 20, 2009, from Academic Search Complete database.
- Shor, J. B. (2004). *Born to buy*. New York, NY: Scribner.
- Siry, C. & Martin, S., with Baker, S., Lowell, N., and Wilson, Y. (in press). Coteaching in science education courses: Transforming teacher preparation through shared responsibility. In C. Murphy and K. Scantlebury (Eds.), *Coteaching in International Contexts: An examination of ten years' of research and practice*. The Netherlands: Springer Press.
- Steinberg, S. R. (2004). Desert minstrels: Hollywood's curriculum of Arabs and Muslims. In J. L. Kincheloe and S. R. Steinberg, (Eds.), *The miseducation of the west: How schools and the media distort our understanding of the Islamic world*, (pp.1–24). Westport, CT: Prager.
- Steinberg, S. R. (2004). The bitch who has everything. In S. R. Steinberg and J. K. Kincheloe (Eds.), *Kinderculture: The corporate construction of childhood*, (pp. 150-163). Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

- Steinberg, S. R., (2007). Preface: Reading media critically. In S. R. Steinberg, and D. Maceado (Eds.), *Media literacy: A reader*, (pp. 1–24). New York: Peter Lang.
- Steinberg, S. R. & Kincheloe, J. L., (2004). Introduction. In S. R. Steinberg and J. L. Kincheloe (Eds.), *Kinderculture: The corporate construction of childhood*. (2nd ed.), (pp. 1-49). Bolder, CO: Westview
- Steuter, E., & Wills, D. (2009). *At war with metaphor: Media, propaganda and racism in the war on terror*. Lanham, MD: Roman and Littlefield.
- Stonebanks, C. D. (2004). Consequences of perceived ethnic identities. In J. L. Kincheloe and S. R. Steinberg (Eds.), *The miseducation of the West: How schools and the media distort our understanding of the Islamic world*, (pp. 87–102). Westport, CT: Prager Publishers.
- Sturken, M., & L. Cartwright. (2001). *Practices of looking: An introduction to visual culture*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Sullivan, P. A. (1994). Revising the myth of the independent scholar. In S.B. Reagan, T. Fox, and D. Bleich. (Eds.), *Writing with: New directions in collaborative teaching, learning and research*, (pp. 1-30). Albany, NY: SUNY Press.
- Tavin, K. M. (2003). Wrestling with angels, searching for ghosts: Toward a critical pedagogy of visual culture. *Studies in Art Education*, 44, 197–213.
- Tierney, W. G. (2002). Get real: Representing reality. *Qualitative Studies in Education*, 15, 385-398.
- Time. (2003). *Magazine cover. November 3*. Retrieved March 23, 2010 from <http://www.time.com/timecovers/0,16641,20031103,00.html>

- Time. (2007). *Magazine cover. August 27*. Retrieved March 23, 2010 from <http://www.time.com/time/covers/0,16641,20070827,00.html>
- Time. (2007). *Magazine cover. March 27*. Retrieved March 23, 2010 from <http://www.time.com/time/covers/0,16641,20060327,00.html>
- Title IX, info. (2007). *Celebrate the 23rd national girls & women in sports day*. Retrieved February 15, 2009, from <http://www.titleix.info/Resources/News-Articles/National-Girls- Women-in-Sports-Day.aspx>
- Tobin, K. (2006). Aligning the cultures of teaching and learning science in urban high schools. *Cultural Studies of Science Education*. (2006) 1: 219–252 DOI: 10.1007/s11422-005-9008-3
- Tobin, K. (2007). Tobin, K. (2007). Issues of class in urban science education. In J. L. Kincheloe and S. R. Steinberg (Eds.), *Cutting class: Socioeconomic status and education*. (pp. 171-198). New York: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Tobin, K. (2008). Collaborating during turbulent times. *Cultural Studies of Science Education*, 3, 793-798.
- Tobin, K. (2009). *Global reproduction and transformation of science education*. Retrieved October 1, 2009, from www.cdesign.com.au/and...andkeynote_tobin_global_reproduction.pdf
- Tobin, K. (2009a). Acknowledging and building on the work of others. *Cultural Studies of Science Education*. 4, 255-258
- Tobin, K. (2011). Learning from a good mate. In K. Hayes, S. R. Steinberg, and K. Tobin (Eds.), *Key works in critical pedagogy* (pp. xv-xxiv). Boston: Sense.
- Using primary sources* (2004). Lebanon, IN: Globe Fearon.

- Van Maanen, J. V. (1988). *Tales of the field: On writing ethnography*. Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press.
- van Manen, M. (1990). *Researching lived experience*. New York, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Villaverde, L. A., Heylar, F., & Kincheloe, J. L. (2006). Historical research in education
In K. Tobin and J. L. Kincheloe (Eds.), *Doing educational research—A handbook*, (pp. 311-345). Rotterdam, The Netherlands: Sense Publishers.
- Walravenco (n.d.). Retrieved March 23, 2010 from
<http://www.walravenco.comandbookcoversandaboutus.asp>
- Webster's unabridged dictionary. (1998). New York, NY: Random House.
- Wilson, E. (1995). *The rhetoric of urban space*. Retrieved June 15, 2007, from
<http://www.newleftreview.organd?view1794>
- Wright, J. (2000). Bodies, meanings and movement: A comparison of the language of a physical education lesson and a Feldenkrais movement class. *Sport, Education and Society*, 5(1), 35-49.
- Zaal, M. (2009). *Neglected in their transitions: Second generation Muslim youth search for support in a context of Islamaphobia*. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from Proquest.umi.com. (AAT 3397073)
- Zizek, S. (2009). *First as tragedy, Then as farce*. London, UK: Verso.
- Zoominfo. (n.d.). *P.T. Quigley Co*. Retrieved April 3, 2010 from
<http://www.zoominfo.comandSearchandCompanyDetail.aspx?CompanyID=86885910&cs=QGFLcYWuU&pc=indeed>

Zuss, M. (1999). *Subject present: Life-writings and strategies of representation*. New York, NY: Peter Lang.