TEACHER EDUCATION AS A FORM OF DISCOURSE:

The Public and the Private in Conversations About Teaching

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One of the great contributions of postmodern thinkers like Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida to the human sciences generally, in which Education is situated, has been the concept of "discourse." To call a particular way of thinking and acting a discourse is to reference the way meaning is achieved amongst actors by a mutual agreement, direct or tacit, about key terms and actions. A discourse is a kind of self-enclosed semantic and practical universe within which people operate "as if" everyone knew what everyone else is talking about.

Teacher education is a form of discourse in this sense, namely it has, over time, developed its own in-house language and sets of procedures which define it, and within which the various stake holders feel at home. There are, for example, the easily identifiable roles of Teacher Associate, Faculty Supervisor, Student Teacher, School Administrator, the students in the classrooms, etc. These roles have certain variances depending on how the different actors characterize their work, but, as anyone who has tried changing and reformulating anything in Teacher Education quickly finds out, all the variances have definite limits to which they can be pushed, because otherwise a systemic crisis occurs, raising the prospect of a fundamental re-ordering of the whole system, or discourse universe, a prospect which, in the most literal sense of the word, is "unthinkable." The French educational philosopher Pierre Boudieu has suggested (1967) that the essential conservativism of education has to be addressed at this level, namely appreciating the unthinkability of things being otherwise. To think a different way, and to live it, requires an accessing of concepts and insights that are free of those kinds of dependencies upon which an institution or culture might depend for its self-survival.

The general homogeneity of the discourse of teacher education is what we wish to problematize in our formulation of the relationship between the public and the private. Each of us is involved in teacher education and we each engage in those practices typical of our profession such as teaching methods courses and supervising our students in their teaching practice. We know most of the jargon, the buzz words, and what it takes for actions to be judged successful. "Journaling," "collaborative teaching," "consulting" etc. are terms with which we are familiar, and we know how to use them publically, to make it seem "as if" we know what we're talking about, and certainly to satisfy our various constituents that we do. But each of us also knows, and we have confessed this to each other in private, that things are not as smooth as they seem. I, for example, as an instructor in an "Introduction to Teaching" seminar, experience increasing un-ease with the teacher-education lexicon and corpus of literature precisely for its smoothness. It operates so much "as if" everything was really quite understandable and "as if" all problems were simply problems of, say, implementation rather than events characteristic of a deep contradictedness inherent in human experience itself, a contradictedness that can't be easily dissolved by facile exhortations to "try this and/or that" as a way of remedy.

When I first vetted some of these ideas with a colleague not long ago, his response was to say that the kind of issues I was raising were "philosophical" in nature but that, in teacher education, there was "a whole other dimension" that was ignored in my remarks, especially in the realm of "helping students to become productive members of society." Well, maybe so, maybe not. What it means to be a creative productive member of society, as a teacher, is exactly what should define our

work. But how we might proceed in the context of our present situation still needs exploring. I mean, surely as North American teacher educators we have to recognize the abysmal failure of our schools with respect to native peoples, and take that failure as a deep comment on our procedures and assumptions about life and knowing. And then too there is all the important research that has been done concerning the relationship between school and work, reminding us that under the rhetoric of providing an equalization of opportunity for life prospects, the school actually functions as a giant sorting mechanism which operates precisely against equality by establishing cognitive and existential sieves that serve the values of the middle and upper classes of our culture (Karabel and Halsey; 1977).

Or, on a more mundane level, I realize that so much of my talk with students is focussed on their **performance**, such that whether things go badly or well is taken to be largely a **function** of that performance when in fact I know that very often this is not the case. So for example, a class that goes well is usually one in which good classroom routines and expectations have already been established by the cooperating teacher over a period of months, and the student looks good to me as a drop-in observer precisely because of his/her being able to operate with a minimum of fuss. Or, as sometimes happens, a general leadership core of students in a class comes from stable, literate families, so that they do not have inordinate emotional and material needs which have to be met before formal teaching can proceed.

The point works the other way too. Student teachers who do badly are often in classrooms already full of troubles, and as we all know, even effective, seasoned teachers have miserable experiences with some classes. These remarks only reinforce the point that classrooms are crystallization centres for the broader tensions at work in the culture and it may well be beyond the power of one teacher or school to deal with them fully.

Naming teacher education as a form of discourse, then, opens the way for an examination of it as a language activity, or set of language practices. As such, we can explore our practices by accessing much of the philosophy of language work now available to us from the so-called postmodernist movement. This enables us to see the way in which what are so often referred to as personal difficulties students or we encounter are in fact symptomatic of much deeper, basically unresolvable, contradictions lying at human experience itself, framed and carried in the culture by linguistic practices. A key point to be made will be that it is one of our firmest assumptions about language itself that needs to be interrogated, namely our assumption that it is possible to name completely what is happening in any situation. Or, to put it another way, maybe we should begin with a problematizing of our desire for smoothness in teacher education, and open the possibility that an over-determination for certain things to happen in a certain way for, say, certification purposes, well, such an over-determination is itself a form of cultural prejudice which may in fact get in the way of genuine creativity in teaching and may, in the name of certainty actually exercise a kind of violence against children as well as against our students and ourselves. I often invite my students to respect the mystery that lies at the heart of teaching, a mystery carried through children, who embody that which is yet-to-be-revealed. Much of what constitutes good teaching simply cannot be known in advance of a genuine encounter with children. But this is to get ahead of ourselves.

THREE MOVEMENTS

Each of the three movements in contemporary language theory explored in what follows is oriented by questions that postmodernist formulations have opened up, although each is oriented to language and life in different ways.

Modernism/logocentrism/representationalism

Modernism, logocentrism and representationalism are key terms in the critique postmodernists have made against what is perceived to be the dominating motif of language and action in the Western tradition.[1] Driven by a preoccupation with essence, being and substance, Western thinking since the Greeks (Plato and Aristotle) has been underwritten by a desire for stability and security through the naming of things in the world and an anchoring of the terms as if they bore a fixed relation to something Real. Words are taken to **represent** the real world, and the real world is invoked by our very speaking about it. If there is doubt about this, the failure is understood to be one of incorrect interrogative procedure or bad science, with greater attention needed for the defining and clarification of terms, and an atomizing or analysing of experience into manageable order. Indeed, keeping one's house, one's papers in order is the chief mark of virtue. The basic gesture of logocentrism is the search for the meaning of something, some experience, then an anchoring, stabilizing and storing of it as the cultural sediment of personal and collective life. The **dictionary**, along with other disciplinary canons, i.e., classical foundational texts, is the noblest icon in the logocentric entourage, because in the presence of doubt it provides an orthodoxy to which to refer.

In teacher education it is not hard to see how this operates. We have checklists of essential student compe-

tencies, generic teaching skills, instruction modules, teaching styles inventories and so forth which provide a sense of security to both us as faculty and to our students by suggesting that what counts as good teaching can be somehow anchored "really." Real teachers are thought to be identifiable through these indexes, and if not, then the indexes are recommended for change to more accurately reflect what is known to be true. Or if a particular student's behaviors are not reflected in the indexes then the student is deemed clearly not suitable for teaching (Socrates beware).

Equally well known is the genuine practical difficulty of translating the indexes in concrete situations Our teacher associates are always complaining about "the forms" we use to evaluate practice teaching, and the complaints have not been assuaged even though we are on our third form revision in five years. Similarly, this last term we have spent hours and hours trying to establish a workable definition of "outstanding" for use in practicum evaluation. But the harder we try the more frustrating it gets as we realize that, not only are there zillions of different variables involved in any situation, but the variables are all related to each other and cannot simply be singled out for purposes of control. So we usually end up with some broad categories and bite the bullet in recognizing that "its all a matter of interpretation." That we should feel guilty about using our "subjective judgements" in matters like these is itself a topic worthy of serious historical examination, having to do with the rise of science, and the cultural schizophrenia inspired by Cartesian dualism, but that is another story.

No, the problem of trying to establish definitively the nature of the Real — the real teacher, the real teacher associate, the real student teacher — the very desire for such establish-ment itself is the problem. It's a deep cultural hoax, as Derrida and the post modernists might put it, although to call it **that**, to call it **anything**, is only an extension of the same difficulty. So the question is not how to put an end to an indeterminacy, which is only another logocentric form of determinism in a new guise — but rather how can we live with indeterminancy creatively. It is this project that the postmodernists have attempted to take up. If our practices and actions are not fixable in any final sense, then how can we proceed at all, how can we describe, evaluate and share our experiences? It is here that the languages of play, dance and aesthetics come to prominence, and we are lead to the second language modus for considering teacher education today, that of postmodernism/deconstructionism.

Post-modernism/deconstructionism

Whenever the terms postmodernism and deconstructionism are invoked in educational circles it is usually as a form of swearing. People see in the self-conscious deanchoring of tradition a powerful threat to many of the positions and ideas we have long held dear, especially perhaps the dearest tradition of all, that of Truth. Postmodernism is seen as an invitation to relativism, even nihilism, whereby, because the foundational Real cannot be secured, everything is reduced to flux. In the next section of the paper I will attempt to address these concerns through a consideration of what can be called "contemplative/hermeneutic" modes of inquiry but before doing so certain other aspects concerning postmodernism need to be discussed.

The first is to say that, in my view at least, the questions which postmodernism has articulated are not simply philosophical or intellectual challenges that some foreign university professors have dreamed up to disturb the unenlightened. Rather, the postmodern formulations only serve to articulate what, in a deep and subtle way, is already everywhere the case, namely that there is a crisis of epistemic authority at work in the Western tradition which cannot be denied or overcome simply by trying to go "back to the basics." As we have discovered, trying to establish what the "basics" are is exactly the problem. So when I go to visit one of my student teachers in his or her school placement setting, I do not ask myself the academic question of "what would postmodernism say about this or that" practice. Rather, I find the contemporary classroom **already** postmodern in character. Even though a school may have its "statement of philosophy" and teachers plans are underwritten by "clearly defined goals and objectives," the relationship between these documents and what transpires in actual practice is tenuous at best. This is because there is a cultural grammar at work which is much more powerful in its influence than any self-consiously derived good intentions of this or that school, teacher or classroom.

Perhaps the best analogue for postmodern consciousness in the common realm is remote-control television watching, whereby consciousness is shaped no longer by a linear textual imagination of authors and books, or by a shared sense of community but rather by flashing icons and storylines that last no longer than one hour. Not only that, the power to decide whether or not to meaningfully engage what is presented on television is radically concentrated in the hands of individual viewers through the remote control device which enables the viewer to shift attention to this or that "channel" at will and whim. The cultural consequence is a kind of rarefaction and radical atomization of the influence of the external world — the break-up of received tradition, we might call it — in favor or individual choice and action.[2]

Today's classrooms particularly at the elementary level are postmodern places in the sense that the dizzying

array of projects and activities that prevails everywhere constitutes a kind of cosmic dance which has its own justification and animus and does not ultimately depend on formal curricular mandates from the ministry of education. In other words, whether one is studying dinosaurs or math problems seems secondary to the more primary interest of being engaged in activity itself. Indeed, like "dead air" on the radio, the possibility of students having nothing to do is the inspiration for many teachers worst nightmares. Planning is taken to mean assuming full responsibility for filling up time and space to full capacity — giving taxpayers full value for the dollar.

The result is a certain air of distraction, and a rather compulsive quality in the actions of both teachers and students. Even more serious though, and this leads us to further insights from the postmodernists, especially J.F. Lyotard (1987) — even more serious is the consequence of a kind of cultural amnesia taking root in the midst of everything, a certain forgetfulness of purpose, or a deepening difficulty in identifying how or whether the activities fit together in any meaningful way. Discernable in some quarters is even a certain loss of care for the project of integration itself. In Lyotard's terms, this is precisely the character of the postmodern condition, namely the loss or the end of "grand narratives" which in former times united all human action in the Western tradition around great themes such as Redemption and Enlightenment.

Some postmodernists, particularly Lyotard, entertain an acceptance of this particular condition as not only inevitable but desirable. It speaks of the end of ideology and dogmatism in the human realm and a radical acceptance of human differences without the burden of moralism masquerading as certifiable interpretation. In a way I agree that this is desirable. The postmodern movement holds great promise for a surge of creative activity by affording new kinds of co-incidence between human beings. In the context of schools and classrooms, one positive effect of the freeing of students and teachers from the burden of dogmative authority (a dogmatism carried powerfully and subtly in, for example, the way Piagetian psychology is prescribed as a form of pedagogic truth without consideration for its Darwinian deterministic undertones)[3] — one positive possibility is a new kind of pedagogic relation, one based on genuine reciprocation between teacher and student rather than on the former logics of transmission and control. In many ways today's classrooms are friendlier, nicer places to be than they were fifty years ago because there is a deeper acceptance of the differences in children, for example, and a diminishing desire to banish all children under a rubric of the Same.



Laura Pettit, *pencil on paper,* 1991

In my view, however, it is premature to rest with a simple acceptance of the polyphony of curricular and pedagogic voices in teaching today, or within the culture generally. This is because pure acceptance of difference without a consideration of the meaning and implication of that difference for all concerned only intensifies the isolation of individuals in their difference. If I merely accept you in your difference without exploring **how** you are different and how **your** difference reflects **my** difference from you, that is, how knowing you invites self-reflection on my part — without such a conversation we merely exist as two solitudes. And that is what strikes me as the chief danger in the postmodern condition, namely the increasing isolation of persons within the cages of their own subjectivities without any historical, philosophical or linguistic means for establishing deep and meaningful connection with others. A loss of capacity for intimacy is one

way of putting it. In teaching it may even be characterized by teachers being enfolded in the mannerisms of generosity and care for students in the name, say, of good reinforcement psychology or the student teaching evaluation category of "Displays a positive attitude," but, because of an incapacity to be affected by the difference of the Other embodied in one's students, the positive manner often has more the air of an affectation and it contains its own pedagogic violence. It is in this relationship of "difference" to "same" that I wish to explore living creatively live with our differences **together**.

When Derrida says "there is nothing outside the text" (in Norris, 1982; p. 41) he locates his interests as a scholar primarily concerned with texts and problems of language, particularly the relationship speaking and writing. But if, as Paul Ricoeur (1985) has done, we extrapolate the notion of text to mean the text of life, life as it presents itself to us, then we are in a position to gain insight into the teaching relationship in new ways. To say "there is nothing outside" is to problematize the outside/inside public/private dualism of Cartesian self-enclosure which underwrites the myths of subjectivity and objectivity in our culture, and which renders our relation with the external world, the world which is object to my subjectivity, as essentially antagonistic.[4] The phenomenologies of control that dominate educational discourse seem to me to find their origin precisely in that relation.

...Everything I understand myself to be now must also include everything that I am not, everything that I have denied or neglected in order to be the present me.

"There is nothing outside" does not mean, however that we are now banished into an amorphous glue of collective subjectivity with everything now "inside." It simply means that everything that is required for a full expression of our situation is already, everywhere always present. There is no external Archimedean reference point from which we might objectively observe ourselves, or in relation to which we might register our virtue. Neither is the Derridean formulation simply an invitation to self-satisfaction, because full presence also implies full absence, that is to say, everything I understand myself to be now must also include everything that I am not, everything that I have denied or neglected in order to be the present me. This kind of sensitivity to a vibrant dialectic between presence and absence, self and non-self, visible and invisible is well understood in oriental wisdom traditions, not just postmodernism. In the West too the medieval mystics knew it well. Consider for example the words of John of the Cross (1578; p. 1):

To come to the pleasure you have not
You must go by a way you enjoy not
To come to the knowledge you have not
You must go by a way in which you know not
To come to the possession you have not
You must go by a way in which you possess not
To come to be what you are not
You must go by a way in which you are not.

In Derridean terms, absences play within me as a form of "trace," (1976; p. 66) residual in my present practices. This is true of cultures just as it is of individuals. The fact that Canada's classrooms are now made up of immigrants from all over the world is a reminder that the self-enclosed identity of the former imperial European powers was indeed permeable. The presence in our classrooms of refugee children from Africa, Asia and Latin America is a form of visitation of an absence in the sense that they represent a Derridean trace within the imperial white bosom, a reminder of the plundering consciousness of the logocentric imagination. Gregory Ulmer (1985) refers to the "imperial dispensation" of logocentrism.

The refugee example points to another feature of the trace, which is its agentic quality, its sense of agency. As Harold Coward (1990; p. 40) has described it: "The trace is not simply a passive past for it proclaims as much as it recalls — it has impulsive force, the force of articulation or differentiation." One's personal or collective past can never be cocooned, therefore, into sentimentalized history or nostalgia, but must constantly be "faced" within a dialectic of "protention and retention that one would install in the heart of the present" (Derrida, 1976; p. 66).

Nor is the trace simply an artifact in or from the past. It also has the character of that-which-is-yet-to-come. This is what Derrida (1976; p. 80) calls "the as-yet-unnameable which is constantly proclaiming itself," held for us in silences and spaces and in our senses of "lack" (another Derridean term) and desire. But again, what we think we lack, is not "outside," but always everywhere already present. To paraphrase David Loy (1990; p. 14): "What I have sought I have never lacked."

These formulations lead naturally to the third modus I wish to address, that of the contemplative/hermeneutic traditions, and it is within that discourse that I will attempt to ask for the shape of teaching and pedagogy responsible to our times.

The contemplative/hermeneutic imagination

David Loy again has put it well: "Perhaps this is what we have always sought: not to become real but to realize that we don't need to become real." Instead of lamenting the loss of the Real through the postmodern critique, we can begin with an acceptance that "Reality" itself is a cultural, categorical artifact that has left us chasing our tails. There is no purely distinct reality "out there" such as "out there in the schools" for education faculty members and for student teachers. We can begin by accepting that we do different kinds of work but to label one "real" the other not so is simply artifice. All of us and all of our constituents share the same deep reality although we find ourselves in it at different points and moments. The question is how to orient to that which we already are, together.

"The epitome of the human realm is to be struck in a huge traffic jam of discursive thought. You are so busy thinking that you cannot learn anything at all. The constant churning out of ideas, plans, hallucinations and dreams is quite a different mentality from that of the realm (of Wisdom)." So says the great contemplative teacher Chogyam Trungpa (1987; p. 31). The ability to attend to ourselves, to our students, to our collective lives depends first and foremost on a form of **stopping**, and the creation of a space in which we can truly listen and hear ourselves. In our own teacher education program — and it has a reputation for being a good one — the most appalling aspect of it to me is that it is so **full**, so busy, so noisy. This is usually taken as a sign that "real" things are happening, that there is no "wasted" time, that "standards of **performance** are maintained at a consistently high level." Again, this reflects the modernist three-fold impulse to **name, anchor** and **accrete**, so that fullness is understood only one way — as an absence of space. And it is precisely that mentality which gets transposed and reproduced in schools, just as it underwrites the rhetoric about success in the worlds of business and politics.

The problem is that such an approach simply unsustainable. It produces exhaustion, to borrow a term from industry. It is also unmindful of its lack, the awareness that fullness also includes emptiness. Whole language for example cannot just mean a full bag of words, constructs and grammars, or even "open approaches" to the question of language acquisition. I mean, in what way is language not always already everywhere whole? Of course, if we ask in what way is language broken such that it needs to be put back together, we can say quite clearly that it was broken by the self-consciousness of science, and the dominating language of technology which reduced language to object without attending to the matter of its own pre-existing language. No, language will be whole when we stop attending to language as such, instrumentally — when we stop being so self-conscious about it — and when we attend simply and directly how we use it in to the matter of our living.

In the teacher education context this means attending to how we conduct ourselves, here and now, just as much as it means taking responsibility for specific knowledges we feel our students must have before they "go out." It means learning to be whole ourselves, attending to our wholeness, which means attending to our suppressions, our denials just as much as to what we already celebrate about ourselves.

In deconstructive terms, our suppressions, lacks and so on are made most transparent in the faces of those most different from us. Others always serve initially as a reminder of what we are not. So it is that the fullness of my person requires for its genuine maturity a full openness to others, rather than a strict self-enclosure within, say, a predefined identity as "Teacher." Genuine growth in self understanding is the consequence of an ongoing four fold action: an opening to others, an engagement with others; followed by a form of self-reflection implying self modification, followed in turn by re-engagement. It is this fourfold action within the dialectic of self and non-self that affirms the profoundly ethical character of the deconstructive project, providing the basis of a genuine meeting between people.[5] At once too it locates that project within the deep structure of the contemplative/meditative Wisdom traditions of the world, providing a means through which positive human integration is possible without the violence of the ego-logical self understanding of the modern West within which so much of our teacher education efforts are practiced.

The deconstructive dialectic of self and non-self also contains a hermeneutical/interpretive dynamic which acknowledges the way in which one's concept of self emerges constitutively within a storied horizon of past and present and future.[6] It is this hermeneutical dimension which is most profoundly lacking in the more exaggerated postmodern formulations, it seems to me, and which lack accounts, I suspect for the clear signs of evasion and irresponsibility that haunt much of that work. Human consciousness is constituted through the storied quality of its affairs much more powerfully than through, say, abstract ideas or intellections which are in any case a fairly modern invention. The opening of self to the non-self involves primarily an opening of our stories to each other, an acceptance of how we are always everywhere already living in the midst of stories and a surfacing and a sharing of that which constitutes us. This is difficult, but it provides the necessary means by which we can see one another in each other in a deep way — to get beyond pure difference to creative relation and the possibility of true care.

As a teacher it is impossible to reach and teach children effectively without knowing their stories, just as it is impossible to be available to another person's story unless one undertakes in an ongoing way the profoundly challenging, often fearsome task of deconstructing one's own. Not long ago in my Introduction to Teaching seminar, we were experimenting with this kind of exploration and I invited people to share family stories that might, say, be subjects of conversation around the dinner table. Stories concerned with school, business and work were ones most frequently shared — fruitful topics indeed by themselves. Then one person, whose parents were immigrants, said that in her house the story of how the family came to Canada from Latin America was often brought forward usually as a way of relishing the family's good fortune here. I then asked the class, quite innocently, if others could relate why, say, their grandparents came to this land. Only ten of the fifteen students could do so. The rest, as it turned out, came from Germany after the war, and the subject of their journey to Canada was strictly taboo even within immediate family circles.[8] For one older student in particular this was an extremely difficult topic to discuss because she had very painful memories of the poverty, destitution and shunning she had, as a child, witnessed her parents suffering on arrival in Canada in the late 1940's. But her revelation broke open in an extremely positive way a new kind understanding on behalf of the group of the shortsightedness of making superficial judgements of other people, and an appreciation of how identity reproduces itself and stagnates in a bad way precisely to the degree that it refuses to be opened. The entire episode also made possible for the class a new appreciation of the contradictedness of human experience, and an acceptance of how that contradictedness is not to be taken as a problem-to-be-solved but somehow lived creatively within.

How we can overcome the fear of difference and learn to see ourselves in each other, how, in other words to become truly self-reflective persons, not just narcissistic "reflective practitioners"? Possibilities for this are well formulated by the metaphor of "Indra's Net" in the Huayen school of Mahayana Buddhism (in Cook, 1972; p. 2). According to the story, in the heavenly abode there is hung a net that stretches out infinitely in all directions. In each eye of the net is a single glittering jewel, and since the net itself is infinite in all dimensions, the jewels are infinite in number. If one arbitrarily selects one of the jewels and inspects it closely, one discovers that in its polished surface there are reflected all the other jewels in the net. Not only that but each of the jewels reflected in this one jewel is also reflecting all the other jewels so that there is an infinite reflecting process occurring. In the Mahayana school, the story of Indra's net is taken to symbolize a cosmos in which there is an infinitely repeated interrelationship among all the members of the cosmos. This relationship is said to be one of simultaneous mutual identity and mutual inter-causality (Cook, 1972; p. 2).

In teacher education terms, Indra's net suggests more than the obvious insights of mutual identity and mutual inter-causality taken in a vulgar way. Also, it seems to me there is a pointing to how a teacher must, in the most profound sense of the terms take up his or her identity as a form of ethically responsible **self-work**, working to **be** that which can reflect the light of others. Without this, teaching takes the form of a projection **on** to others of everything that has not obtained resolution in oneself. In deep cultural terms this is what accounts, I suspect, for what Stanley Aaronowitz (in Giroux, 1981) has called the excessive "hyperbole" of educational discourse, reflecting a hyperextended desire to turn the world into an image of one's own limited shape and character which in turn is also a way of trying to secure that identity even more intensely. Children, by virtue of both their malleability and the fact that they issue **from us** are the perfect targets for the multifarious machineries of self-reproduction available in a technological age. Unavailable or lacking in such a technological construction is a free availability to children and an acceptance of what they already are. There is a saying of Thich Nhat Hahn: "... if you do not see the children you will not see the Buddha" because, insofar as they are already unselfconscious, "children are living Buddhas" (in Ingram, 1990; p. 92). There are well known parallels of this understanding in the Judeo-Christian tradition.

How we can overcome the fear of difference and learn to see ourselves in each other, how, in other words to become truly self-reflective persons, not just narcissistic "reflective practitioners"?

The point is that education, including teacher education, is severely poverty-stricken if its momentum is only one-way, that is, projecting onto a self-defined externalized world of, say, children, or student teachers, a litany of plans and intentions, without an embracing of that agenda within a project of self-healing on our part as teachers. Teachers must understand the way in which

their work, insofar as it operates unselfreflectively in the manner of which we have been speaking, is heavily implicated in the rationalist distortions of pure technique. Understanding "simultaneous mutual identity and mutual inter-causality" contains within itself a call to assuming full responsibility for oneself in the presence of others, a willingness to take up the hard work of attending to the twin of one's own mirror. As the Buddhist doctrine of *karma* reminds us:[8] this is as true of cultures as it is of individuals. The rhetoric one often hears in staff-rooms and faculty lounges about "What I do in private is of no public concern" belies a cultural heritage that is its own worst enemy.

NOTES

1. A good readable introduction to the key postmodernism figures and issues is Sturrock (1979). Also see Madison (1988).

2. The manner in which television itself encourages people to think and act one way, with all of the political and cultural implications embedded in the influence of centralized television production, is a topic too broad to be addressed here. See Todd Gitlin (1987).

3. On the relation of Piaget to Darwin, see William Kessen, (1967). For a discussion of the politics of domination and exclusion in Darwin, and by implication Piaget, see William I. Thompson "The Cultural Implications of the New Biology" in Thompson (1987).

4. Full a full discussion of this point, see Jardine (1990).

5. This is discussed by Dirrida in "Deconstruction and the other." See Kearney (1984).

6. For a working through of the main themes of the interpretive/hermeneutic material see Smith (1991).

7. This phenomenon of historical suppression has been brilliantly and disturbingly portrayed in the recent German film *The nasty girl*, a story of a young girl who, in researching an essay on the topic "What people in my town did during the Third Reich," finds herself confronted with thick walls of community resistance.

8. See "Karma" in Chang, (1983), Pg. 477.

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