

DISSERTATION

TEACHING WHO I AM: FACULTY PERSPECTIVES
AND PRACTICES OF ACADEMIC SERVICE-LEARNING

Submitted by

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In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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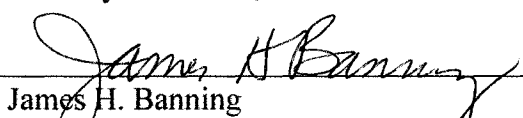
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WE HEREBY RECOMMEND THAT THE DISSERTATION PREPARED UNDER OUR SUPERVISION BY SHARON HALFORD ENTITLED TEACHING WHO I AM: FACULTY PERSPECTIVES AND PRACTICES OF ACADEMIC SERVICE-LEARNING BE ACCEPTED AS FULFILLING IN PART REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY.

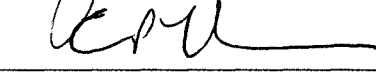
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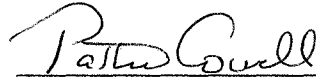
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ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

TEACHING WHO I AM: FACUTY PERSPECTIVES AND PRACTICES OF ACADEMIC SERVICE-LEARNING

Academic service-learning is an educational philosophy and pedagogy aimed at developing our capacities for deeper understanding of subject matter and for examining collaboratively difficult and controversial issues and questions in wide-ranging social contexts. Although the integration of academic service-learning practices continues to gain momentum among America's community colleges, it remains an enigma to many faculty members. Academic service-learning is transformative education that conflicts with conventional educational approaches. It focuses on learning for the collective, using analytical orientations and subjectivity to develop students' social and civic scholarship and to encourage community transformation.

Using a critical, feminist lens this narrative inquiry study explores the views, beliefs, and motivations of five community college faculty using academic service-learning in order to better understand how teachers come to know and make sense of service in education. Participants work in four communities colleges located in two states. Interpretations of participant stories provide an imperfect portrait of their quests to honor and share those values that shape and influence them and give purpose and meaning to their work.

Within participant stories I glimpse some common threads. Each appears to have shifted away from the traditional, masculine model of teaching and learning. Instead,

these teachers embrace the under girdings of more progressive pedagogies and philosophical frames and shape a teaching and learning practice that nurtures, challenges, and empowers students. Despite this, it seems participants have done little examination of their conceptual pictures of academic-service learning and express some unease with their understanding of this philosophy and pedagogy. In addition, participant efforts are directed at opening the eyes of their students so they see how difference, how marginalization occurs in their own lives and to empower them to move forward in developing their abilities to confront inequalities. These two factors can act as a potential impediment to the deep examination of the root causes of domination, struggle, and unfairness as faculty focus on technical rather than social transformation results.

Clear philosophical direction, at the personal, classroom, and institutional levels, can intensify the drive and direction essential to reshape the existing norms, roles, and outcomes found in our teaching. Tackling our apprehensions with and conflicts surrounding practical learning grounded in multiple realities; our awareness of our interpretations of power, voice, and detachment in the learning setting; and insight into the function of neutrality and objectivity in the classroom is essential so that we no longer mask issues, silence the marginalized, and perpetuate the status quo. Challenging ourselves, as well as our students, is a serious responsibility that can open the door to enhanced facilitative, student-centered teaching and learning.

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To my husband, Don, for the joy, passion, and love he brings to my life.

To my father, Robert, whose spirit stands by my side each day. And, to my mother,

Florence, whose unwavering belief in me is the wind beneath my wings.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Contemporary society is a kaleidoscopic culture, enriching our communities while also adding to the tensions and dilemmas we face in our social, economic, and political worlds. Our rapidly changing and globally interdependent public challenges higher education to move beyond nurturing students' intellectual and technical skills to embrace the notion of civic education, facilitating student dialogue and responsible engagement in both the public and political aspects of our democratic system (Colby, Ehrlich, Beaumont, & Stephens, 2003; Giroux & Giroux, 2004). Considerable concern for others' and their well-being is central "to the process of democracy and the struggle to build a more just and equitable society" (Rhoads, 1997, p. 95).

Communities are enhanced by fostering allegiance to egalitarian values such as accepting and valuing others, readiness to engage in reasoned dialogue, and appreciation of both individual rights and group welfare (Ehrlich, 2000). However, in a culture that encourages individualism, "personal advancement and gratification too often take precedence over social, moral, or spiritual meaning...promoting a worldview in which there is no basis for enduring commitment beyond the self" (Colby et. al., 2003, p. 7).

Crafting a public concerned about human rights and shared accountability for the common good necessitates innovative approaches in education in order to prepare students for community engagement. Heffernan (2000) notes our students may be unable

to examine societal connections and uniqueness in order to clarify their sense of civic self rooted in communal purpose. Thus, teaching must encompass not only students' knowledge attainment in a variety of disciplines, but also views of public responsibility. Faculty in their roles as public scholars help students explore the assorted voices that outline ethical, societal, cultural, and political issues and questions, bringing injustice to the forefront and opening the door to self-reflection.

Academic Service-Learning

Our colleges are not value neutral. They can act purposely to foster the ethical and social learning of their students (Colby, et al., 2003). As a consequence of the political disengagement and excessive individualism perceived in contemporary American culture, the vision and mission of some colleges is changing to incorporate increased attention to the development of students' civic self (Ehrlich, 2000). This change presents faculty with a challenge. Preparing students for responsible citizenship in a diverse democracy raises an array of questions linked to the philosophies and practices integral to infusing teaching pedagogy and curricula "with values and behaviors that encourage in our students self-assertion informed by a shared sense of community and the common good" (Butler, 2000, p. 52).

Academic service-learning is one initiative in response to the call for increased civic learning noted in the work of Colby, Ehrlich, and others interested in the role of higher education in democracy and public involvement. It is an intentional educational strategy designed to reaffirm community engagement as an essential value.

Through community engagement there is enhanced teaching and learning of relevant curriculum, sustainable responses to societal issues, contributions to the public good, and strengthened civic responsibility (Franco, 2005). Additionally, academic service-learning is an initiative that “introduces students to issues of personal and institutional power and oppression in order to foster the development of self-reflective, culturally aware, and responsive community participants” (Rice & Brown, 1998, p. 146). Advocates of academic service-learning see it as a philosophy and a compelling pedagogy of engagement that transforms perspectives and practices connected to learning (Bringle, Games & Malloy, 1999; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Eyler, Giles & Braxton, 1997; Osborne, Hammerich & Hensley, 1998).

From a philosophical standpoint academic service-learning reaches beyond a philanthropic image of service as unselfish giving to those considered “in need.” Instead academic service-learning reflects a belief that our colleges and universities must “[create] a special climate in which the academic and civic cultures communicate more continuously and more creatively with each other, helping to enlarge...the universe of human discourse and enriching the quality of life for all of us” (Boyer, 1996, p. 20). This is not a one-dimensional process where college resources are made available to the larger community. Indeed, the academy needs the community’s gifts to “challenge, deepen, and enhance the higher education world” (Pompa, 2002, p. 69). Mutuality in giving and receiving encourages connections that bridge difference and moves academic service-learning beyond activities that mimic charity (Rhoads, 1997).

Bickford and Reynolds (2002) in their examination of service-learning voice concern that it “is too often infused with the volunteer ethos, a philanthropic or charitable

viewpoint that ignores the structural reasons to help others” (p. 230). They see that much of academic service-learning work fails to enter into relationships with communities; rather it focuses on isolated individuals and rarely leads to structural social change. In the view of these researchers it is activism that moves us beyond satisfying a perceived individual need to address the underlying structures of inequity.

As a pedagogy, academic service-learning links the academic with the practical, allowing more abstract and theoretical material to take on new meaning through active participation in “real world experiences” that emphasize collaboration, participatory citizenship, and moral accountability (Vogelgesang & Astin, 2000). Academic service-learning opens the door to opportunities for both faculty and students to consider subject matter from a new context – that of those who operate in a world not only outside academic walls, but also outside what may be familiar and comfortable. As a teaching and learning method, service-learning represents a departure from conventional pedagogy because it stresses the interrelationships between the student, academic content, and the larger social environment in order to enhance academic learning and promote civic literacy (Battistoni, 1997).

The practice of academic service-learning causes discomfort among some faculty. Pompa (2002), in exploring the transformative value of service-learning in her teaching, notes that the possible issues of power that surface in the practice of service-learning may replicate unwittingly the “have-have not” paradigm underlying social issues. In Pompa’s view, service-learning is about relationships grounded in equality and collaboration. She cautions that unless service-learning is facilitated with care, it can become an exercise in patronization that labels perceived problems as a “liability” and clouds our abilities to see

the humanity of others. Service-learning as an ideology confronts the causes and results of social issues, but requires constant scrutiny to minimize the enforcement of “American norms” that are loaded with set ideas about gender, race, and class (Walker, 2000).

While the term academic service-learning is used here to describe the combination of service and learning in an intentional way to promote scholarship and community engagement, there exists diversity in the language that defines and the concepts that frame this learning facilitation model. Despite ranging terminology and thought, all point to an unenthusiastic appraisal of conventional education. Long-established teaching and learning methods that exclude or minimize notions of community and engagement are ineffective in empowering students to become aware of their civic responsibilities and active in solving social problems (Speck, 2001). Supporters of academic service-learning argue that rethinking higher education to sustain a more democratic learning process is critical. This type of process engages students in reaching beyond the classroom walls to explore the disparities, connections, and multiple realities that influence our perceptions about various academic issues and concerns (Ehrlich, 1997). Academic service-learning transforms the roles of student and instructor, broadens learning to include reflection on aspects of civic engagement, and emphasizes social as opposed to individual accountability (Howard, 2003).

Faculty Participation

Notwithstanding its potential to enhance academic learning and promote civic responsibility, significant numbers of community college faculty in their work give little attention to academic service-learning. The results of a survey administered by the

American Association of Community Colleges to gather data about service-learning use indicate that of the 773 community colleges that responded only 31% offered service-learning. Seventy-one percent of those institutions reported that five or fewer faculty incorporated service-learning into the curriculum (Robinson & Barnett, 1996). A follow-up study in 2003 involving 261 community colleges shows that these institutions each “have an average of 14 full-time and six part-time faculty teaching courses with service-learning components” (Prentice, Robinson, & McPhee, 2003, p. 1).

Kahne, Westheimer, and Rogers (2000) point to the possibility that faculty hesitancy to embrace academic service-learning occurs when it is viewed as a “soft” curriculum that lacks clear purpose or impact. Zlotkowski (1995) notes that service-learning will have a future only when faculty members see it as a practical, intellectual, and discipline-significant pedagogy.

Defining educational relevancy can be a thorny task for some professors. Confusion exists among faculty about the underlying conceptual frame of academic service-learning. Morton (1995) identifies service-learning as a concept linked to three distinct, but not mutually exclusive, paradigms: service as charity where deficits are identified and addressed; service as project where needs, problems, and solutions are emphasized; and service as social change where focus is on empowerment. Each paradigm has multiple versions, ranging from those Morton considers “thin” because these have limited longevity and potentially disempowering to those he views as “thick” because they are sustainable and confront the status quo.

As faculty investigate academic service-learning as a philosophical and pedagogical option, their boundaries between campus and community blur. For many this

investigation also inspects questions associated with power, position, and history (Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2000). Given its numerous dimensions, engaging in academic service-learning “represents a serious decision for faculty to change aspects of their work” (Bringle, Hatcher & Games, 1997).

Astin (2000) suggests that research on academic service-learning examine individual consciousness and actions as well as institutional culture and structures. In conceptualizing service-learning research using this framework, Astin points to the possibility that perhaps the greatest obstacles to faculty participation in academic service-learning may be their beliefs about their students and the ways they learn, their views of the didactic value of service, their perceptions of the relationship of community service to college mission, and their opinions about pedagogical quality.

Conversely, Hammond (1994) finds faculty support for service-learning is more rooted in pedagogical concerns than in personal interest in community service involvement. This conclusion is supported by Ward (2000) who interviewed forty community college instructors who use service-learning. Ward’s analysis of these interviews reveals that teachers believe students display more depth and understanding of course content and are more interested and enthusiastic in classroom participation as a result of the inclusion of service-learning experiences. In addition Ward concludes that these same faculty report seeing another outcome of service-learning as growth in their personal awareness of community problems.

Given the findings of these various researchers, examining the beliefs and views of faculty that surround the topic of academic service-learning potentially strengthens the possibility for creating social change through service-learning work as these faculty begin

to look at teaching, learning, and the self in new ways. This self-reflection can persuade other faculty members to view service as a legitimate and valued component of the scholar-activist role in public work. It is this type of examination that shapes new models of service-learning that better fit institutional, disciplinary, and individual teacher and student goals.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this narrative inquiry study is to explore the teaching, learning, and community service viewpoints of full-time community college faculty members who utilize academic service-learning as a pedagogical tool. Insight into these professors' principal teaching goals; their views of public life, activism and social justice, and civic engagement; and their thinking about students, educational practices, and community can influence future faculty recruitment and development processes, enhance sustainability of innovative practice, and enrich course design efforts. Additionally, these insights can inform discussions about the purpose of higher education, further describe the role of faculty in the community college setting, and clarify the relationship of these to community college service missions and goals.

Focus of the Inquiry

Research Questions

Rhoads (1997) remarks that a teacher's sense of self plays a vital role in shaping the nature of her work. His words are a call to delve into faculty standpoints in order to assemble an engaged pedagogy that "involves caring for students as whole persons and models for students the kind of moral and ethical attitudes we hope to see reflected back

to us throughout our society” (p. 214). Two specific questions are addressed through this study:

1. How do selected community college faculty members interpret and practice academic service-learning?
2. In what ways do participant faculty members’ see their conceptualizations of and experiences with public service influencing their teaching goals and pedagogical practices?

Significance of the Study

Achieving substantial faculty participation for academic service-learning is crucial to its institutionalization as accepted teaching philosophy and pedagogy, yet this remains a great challenge (Ward, 1998). As I review resources it appears that limited research has been conducted regarding faculty perceptions of academic service-learning and its embedded principle of civic responsibility, which includes prongs of community engagement and citizenship and activism and social justice. Similarly, I find little research exploring community college faculty members’ life experiences and how these may influence their acceptance and use of academic service-learning from a philosophical or pedagogical standpoint.

Using faculty voice to scrutinize the questions proposed for this study adds another dimension to current research concerning teacher perceptions and use of academic service-learning. Understanding faculty views of academic service-learning calls for exploration of a variety of areas, to include faculty perceptions of community engagement and social responsibility, moral constructs rooted in individual teaching

goals, perceptions of teacher and student roles, and incentives to become involved in or to remain distanced from public life.

Adopting academic service-learning calls for faculty to de-center themselves as the singular authority of knowledge and to engage students in a process of inquiry that allows them to “consistently reflect on their positions, reconcile their preconceptions with the lives experiences of others, and uphold an ethic of personal accountability and social responsibility” (Heffernan, 2000, p. 3). Academic service-learning holds promise for enriching education for both faculty and students as faculty work refocuses from imparting knowledge to facilitating learning, from working autonomously to greater collaboration, and from community disengagement to increased responsibility for public life.

When faculty question their assumptions around the nature of knowing, the marginalization of students and community members in the learning process, and their role in facilitating students’ academic and moral growth, the classroom becomes more than a mask reproducing current social structural inequalities. Academic service-learning provides opportunities to practice respect for diversity and to move beyond personal viewpoints to learn about the perspectives of others as we confront tensions and conflicts, reflect on questions and confusions pertaining to our selves and others, and seek commonalities. Chapter two provides a more complete description of the “mask” and its role in limiting the development of the social capital necessary to encourage commitment to freedom, justice, and other ideals of democratic living (Putnam, 2000).

CHAPTER TWO

Review of Literature

Introduction

Academic service-learning is a philosophy of education and a pedagogy that can strengthen learning and cultivate civic responsibility as students address social issues in an informed, constructive, caring way. It is defined by the National Commission on Service- Learning as “a teaching and learning approach that integrates community service with academic study to enrich learning, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities” (2000, p. 3). The intent of service-learning is to combine service and learning objectives in activities that change both the recipient and the provider of the service. Focus in academic service-learning is on critical, reflective thinking to foster self-reflection and self-discovery in order to enhance knowledge content as well as personal and civic responsibility (Robinson, 1999).

The purpose of this review of literature is threefold. First, it describes academic service-learning. Second, it explores social justice education as a tool to confront oppression and marginalization and advocate for social change. Third, it examines the role of faculty belief systems in defining their teaching and learning practices. This narrow focus provides the fundamental backdrop for investigating, through the process of narrative inquiry, the research questions posed in this study. These questions focus specifically on probing academic service-learning from a faculty standpoint. As such this

literature review does not recount the historical roots or evolution of service-learning, the implementation or institutionalization of service-learning programs, or the perspectives and effects of service-learning as these relate to students, institutions, or communities.

Most examples of academic service-learning avoid controversy and contestation, portrayed instead as apolitical notions of love, care, and unqualified good. Loeb (1999) offers some insight as to why academic service-learning postures itself this way. He notes that “[c]ivic withdrawal has become our norm” (p. 24) and goes on to state that we have lost sight of “...the democratic sphere in which citizens, acting in concert, determine the character and direction of their society” (p. 25). For Loeb (1999), shifting from detached spectator to active participant “requires us to make ourselves psychologically vulnerable. It impels us to overcome distracting habits and petty concerns, to challenge internal fears, and to face criticism from [others]” (p. 29). This is the value-laden reading of academic service-learning despite its being shrouded in “apolitical terms like responsibility, participation, and empowerment ...[to] make [it] more palatable” (Donahue, 2000, p. 433). Like the term academic service-learning itself, these descriptors have different connotations for different audiences. Thus, the meaning of service-learning remains somewhat perplexing (Donahue, 2000).

Professors adopting academic service-learning ground the learning experience in the community rather than the classroom. Peters (2004), in his case study involving landscape architecture faculty, finds that the teaching and learning process changes when using academic service-learning. He notes that the role of the teacher shifts to one of mentor, facilitator, and organizer while the process of learning becomes “messy” when it moves outside a linear syllabus that addresses concrete knowledge and skill development.

Pompa (2002) states these shifts are essential because they stimulate the intensity and depth of inquiry and analysis into the complex issues that students face in society.

According to Anderson (1998) service-learning “as a philosophy of education...reflects the belief that education should develop social responsibility and prepare students to be involved citizens in democratic life” (p. 1). In academic service-learning emphasis is on the common good rather than personal development (Giles, Honnet & Migliore, 1991). Incorporating academic service-learning into the curriculum requires faculty consideration of “how students can be educated to deal with a world made up of different, multiple, and fractured public cultures” (Giroux, 1998, p. 290). While this can pose challenges in guiding student learning, academic service-learning can inspire faculty, students, and community to confront the ever-changing aspects of oppression found in today’s society and promote social justice. Academic service-learning based on the civic standpoint identified in chapter one becomes a model of empowerment, fairness, and compassion aimed at ending differentials of power and privilege (Palmer, 1997).

As pedagogy, service-learning is linked to experiential learning theory. This is a theory that holds that students should experiment and apply skills outside the structured classroom environment. Anderson (1998) notes that service-learning as pedagogy “involves a blending of service activities with the academic curriculum in order to address real community needs while students learn through active engagement” (p. 1).

Experiential learning includes not only service-learning, but also volunteerism, community service, internships, and other forms of community-based learning. However, academic service-learning differs from each of these alternative forms of experiential

learning in at least two essential ways. First, academic service-learning emphasizes deliberately structured reflection activities designed to connect the service experience to course-based learning outcomes (Jacoby, 1996). Through guided, contextualized critical reflection components community experience is bound to classroom instruction and learning in an attempt to augment course relevance and enhance students' sense of civic responsibility while supporting community needs (Howard, 1998; Robinson, 2000; Zlotkowski, 1999). Second, academic service-learning promotes reciprocity in the relationship between the student and the community. This refers to "the exchange of both giving and receiving between the 'server' and the person or group 'being served'" (Kendall, 1990, p. 22).

Characterizing Academic Service-learning

While definitions and approaches to service-learning vary, the concept refers generally to a form of practical learning in which community or public service is done for the common good (Delve, Mintz & Stewart, 1990). Kendall (1990) uncovered 147 different terms related to and definitions used for service-learning. Holland (2002) observes that the lack of uniformity among service-learning definitions allow campuses to shape initiatives according to their own unique institutional histories and customs.

Overall the notion of academic service-learning seeks to join two complex concepts. These are community action, the service component, and efforts to connect the learning that results from action to existing knowledge, the learning component (Stanton, Giles & Cruz, 1999). The Wingspread Special Report, prepared in 1989 under the auspices of the Johnson Foundation, identifies a list of principles designed to ground

service-learning in good practices. These principles include: (1) ensuring that students are engaged in responsible and challenging actions directed at the common good, (2) allowing for the community to define its own needs, (3) clarifying the responsibilities of each person and organization involved, (4) expecting genuine, active, and sustained organizational commitment, and (5) committing to program participation by and with diverse populations. Considered collectively these principles establish the foundation for good practices in service-learning pedagogy. Among these practices are ensuring that academic credit is for learning, not for service; maintaining academic rigor; setting learning goals for students; and providing educationally sound mechanisms to reap the learning from the community service (Howard, 1993).

Several considerations central to designing and implementing academic service-learning experiences arise from these basic principles and practices. First, learning must be a collaborative rather than a competitive experience that addresses complex problems in complex settings rather than simplified problems in isolation. Second, values and ideas should be challenged as students become involved in real-world situations. And third, critical inquiry and deeper learning are to be encouraged as there are no “right answers: that can be used in performance assessment” (Eyler & Giles, 1999).

Weigert (1998) echoes the Wingspread principles in the six key elements she lists to frame academic service-learning. She identifies these elements as:

1. Service work is meaningful to both the student and the community,
2. Service work is related to a real need that students have the skills, attitudes, and preparation to address,
3. Need is identified by members of the community,
4. Service work flows from the course objectives,
5. Service is integrated into the course through assignments that use reflection on the service in light of the course objectives, and

6. Assignments are assessed and evaluated for the learning, not for the service (pp. 6-7).

These basic fundamentals provide the common threads running through the characterizations of academic service-learning despite variations in definition. An early description promulgated in the 1970s by the Southern Regional Education Board looks at service-learning as accomplishing tasks that meet genuine human needs while promoting conscious educational growth (Stanton, Giles, & Cruz, 1999). More recently, Gail Robinson, Director of Service-learning for the American Association of Community Colleges, defines service-learning as “an instructional method that combines community service with classroom instruction, focusing on critical, reflective thinking as well as personal and civic responsibility” (1999, p. 1).

Similarly, Ash and Clayton (2004) describe service-learning as “a collaborative teaching and learning strategy designed to promote academic enhancement, personal growth, and civic engagement” (p. 138). They propose organizing learning objectives in service-learning curricula into three primary categories: academic, personal, and civic. From their perspective, these three categories form the framework for learning analysis. Ash and Clayton perceive reflection on these three areas as follows:

When engaged in academic analysis, students examine their experiences in light of specific course concepts, exploring similarities and differences between theory and practice. In analysis from the personal perspective, students consider their feelings, assumptions, strengths, weaknesses, traits, skills and sense of identity as they are surfaced and sometimes challenged by service-learning experiences. And when examining their service-learning related activities from the civic perspective, students explore decisions made and actions taken in light of consequences for the common good, consider alternative approaches and interpretations, identify elements of power and privilege, and analyze options for short-term versus long-term and sustainable change agency (pp. 140-142).

Nagda, Gurin, and Lopez (2003) voice support for “educational practices that help students look at issues in broad social contexts, hone their abilities for deep and critical inquiry, [and] constructively consider multiple viewpoints and perspectives...” (p. 166). Maybach (1996) provides a note of caution and recommends scrutiny of existing academic service-learning practices. In her view most projects “teach students how to be responsible, how to provide services to the community, how to care for people, and how to address their symptoms of need” (p. 225). What may be overlooked is the potential for some current practices to encourage oppression and to nourish the false charity that constrains social transformation. Maybach points to a more equitable model of academic service-learning:

[This model] would stress how to responsibly investigate what the individuals in a community define their needs to be, how to be involved in service in a mutually empowering relationship with a diverse group of people, how to care with and about people, and how to address the root causes as well as the symptoms of need (Maybach, 1993). In addition, a focus on interactive reflection, engagement in continuing dialogue at the service site, accountability for growth of all individuals in the service relationship, an inclusive approach to the definition of terms, and the removal of the provider/recipient roles [are important] (p. 225).

Academic Service-learning Distinguished

Academic service-learning is not volunteerism. Volunteerism is a concept familiar to most individuals although not defined consistently. Kraft (1996) explains volunteerism as work without pay that is undertaken freely. His examples of volunteer activity include coaching, manning crisis lines, distributing items at food banks, and delivering meals to seniors. Thus, volunteerism is a way to provide help to others by contributing one’s time and talents to various causes, community organizations, or charitable entities.

This often solitary “giving of self” directed at “feeling good” can be viewed as a part of the “care work” individuals engage in within the framework of their public lives (Rotolo, 2004). Unlike academic service-learning, volunteerism involves no formal, structured learning component nor is it focused on creating social change. Instead, volunteerism is often cast as altruistic and apolitical work done for personal gain (Leighninger, 2004).

Academic service-learning is not community service although the concept of community service is an ingredient of academic service-learning (Morton, 1995). Weigert (1998) notes that learning is not limited to the classroom and its predetermined structure, uniform stimuli, and familiar routines. Instead, students decipher “new knowledge and insight through the service they provide in a community setting” (p. 6). However, Pritchard (2002) suggests that while community service is a more recognizable term and is sometimes used interchangeably with academic service-learning, it has not found favor with many service-learning advocates for several reasons: First, service-learning proponents argue that community service identifies “an elitist notion of social obligation that implies the moral superiority of those performing the service” (p. 7). Second, there is concern that the term may be associated negatively with the public service work that convicted criminals may perform as part of their sentences. Third, the association of community service with altruistic or charitable activities that emphasize individual benefits rather than significant learning fails to provide for the reflection and reciprocity of learning required in academic service-learning.

Academic service-learning is not an experiential learning activity such as outdoor education laboratory, field trips, work-based internships, or practica. Emphasis in these

activities is on individual growth in knowledge and skills through practical applications of course-based concepts in some sort of “real world” setting. These applications do not involve service and are designed to give students a broader perspective on issues and/or insight into career fields (Kraft, 1996).

Academic Service-learning as Pedagogy

Research on service-learning as viable pedagogy continues to expand as educational institutions throughout the nation look to service-learning as a means to enhance both community service and student learning. Existing literature points to enhanced teaching and learning when students engage in meaningful service experiences (Astin & Sax, 1998; Driscoll, Holland, Gelmon & Kerrigan, 1996; Eyler & Giles, 1999). The work of several researchers’ notes that service-learning augments students’ sense of personal efficacy, spiritual growth, and moral reasoning abilities and reduces stereotypes while facilitating cultural and racial understanding (Astin, Sax & Avalos, 1999; Boyle-Baise, 1998; Vogelgesang & Astin, 2000). Service-learning also has been found to improve problem analysis and critical thinking skills (Osborne, Hammerich & Hensley, 1998).

Service-learning, as a learning facilitation strategy, involves all three domains of learning: cognitive, affective, and psychomotor. As such it appeals to a wide variety of learning styles and types of intelligences (Wallace, 2000). A recent quantitative, longitudinal study examined affective and academic outcomes from the perspective of over 22,000 students attending diverse colleges and universities. Researchers concluded that service-learning experiences overall had a significant effect on commitment to

activism, racial understanding, critical thinking and writing skills, leadership and interpersonal skills, and career choice (Vogelgesang & Astin, 2000).

Eyler (2000) identifies several possible student outcomes for academic service-learning:

Service-learning, which at its best allows students to confront issues and problems in complex natural contexts, appears to be ideally suited to help students develop a deeper understanding of subject matter, a practical knowledge of how community decision-making processes work, and strategies for transferring knowledge and problem solving skills to new situations. There is also reason to believe that the ability to recognize ill-structured problems (Voss & Post, 1988) embedded in messy social contexts, to sort out conflicting information and views, and to resolve an issue while understanding that such resolutions are inherently tentative all rest on attaining advanced levels of cognitive development (p. 12).

Eyler and Giles (1999) surveyed over 1500 college students from 20 different colleges and universities. In addition they conducted problem-solving interviews with approximately 65 students representing six institutions and explored student perceptions about reflection in service-learning with another 65 students at six different institutions. Analysis results indicate that service-learning positively impacted learning and the application of learning, interpersonal skill development, and social responsibility. Similarly, a case study completed by Driscoll, Holland, Gelmon and Kerrigan (1996) at Portland State University notes that service-learning affects student academic achievement, their personal development, their community involvement, and their sensitivity to diversity.

The effect of academic service-learning on students is also explored in the work of Bringle and Hatcher (1996). They indicate that effective service-learning efforts not only strengthen academic learning but also promote civic responsibility. This view finds support in the quasi-experimental study conducted by Myers-Lipton (1998) to explore

whether students involved in service-learning activities show gains in their levels of civic responsibility. Three groups of college juniors and seniors participated in the study. One group performed over 200 hours of service work in concert with their course work. The second group completed service which was not linked to their classes. And, the third group had no involvement in service work. Results of data analysis indicate that those students who engage in service-learning connected to their course work gained significantly in their concern for civic responsibility.

It appears that service-learning provides a context for exploring issues and problems related to life and learning (Leeds, 1999). However, Howard (1993) cautions teachers to be prepared for uncertainty and variation in learning outcomes as students actively engage in testing theory and discovering new knowledge while striving to meet a community defined need.

Building Legitimacy for Academic Service-learning

Westheimer and Kahne (2003) suggest that most educators can agree on a rhetorical level with the goals of academic service-learning. Nonetheless, consensus falters when specific curricula changes are advocated. While faculty continue to see merit in service-learning pedagogy and integrate it into their courses, there are those advocates who suggest that for service-learning to gain the legitimacy and funding needed to survive as a respected and influential voice in education a more critical mass of faculty participants is necessary (Zlotkowski, 1996). Astin (2000) suggests that faculty beliefs, both individual and shared, may be the greatest impediment to their interest and participation in academic service-learning.

Faculty implementing academic service-learning initiatives construct shared, synergistic experiences where learning augments service and service enlightens learning. Academic service-learning transforms the roles of student and instructor, broadens learning to include reflection on aspects of civic engagement, and emphasizes social as opposed to individual accountability (Howard, 2003). For academic service-learning to be most effective, faculty need to de-center themselves as the singular authority of knowledge and empower students to engage in a process of inquiry that allows them to “consistently reflect on their positions, reconcile their preconceptions with the lived experiences of others, and uphold an ethic of personal accountability and social responsibility” (Heffernan, 2000, p. 3).

Achieving substantial faculty participation in service-learning is crucial to its institutionalization yet remains a great challenge (Ward, 1998). Little research is available regarding faculty perceptions of service-learning and its integral concepts of community work, civic education, and social responsibility or regarding the belief systems which may lead them to either adopt or dismiss academic service-learning as an educational philosophy and pedagogical practice. The following studies shed light on the question of faculty understanding of and motivations for using service-learning, yet fall short of the in-depth exploration and analysis of faculty perceptions and viewpoints that is necessary to bring from marginalization to the mainstream those civic competencies fundamental to students’ futures.

Astin (2000) sees faculty participation in academic service-learning thwarted by their beliefs about the ways students learn, their views of didactic value of service as a pedagogical practice, and their understanding of the relationship of community service to

college mission. Understanding these beliefs can shed light on the intrinsic motivations that lead faculty to embrace one innovative tool while rejecting another. Behar and George (1994) state that proposed innovations in teaching must be compatible with faculty ideas about curriculum and instruction. Bratt (1991) and Peterman (1991) affirm this perception and note that effective innovation depends on how closely faculty values, knowledge, and instructional expertise match curricular philosophy and demands.

The work of Hammond (1994) provides some insight into faculty motivators to adopt service-learning. She surveyed 250 faculty members at 23 Michigan colleges and universities who utilized service-learning in their teaching and found that the autonomy to direct the service assignment and a belief that the activity produced fruitful learning outcomes are key in faculty adoption of service-learning. Hammond also noted that institutional support for implementation and recognition of service work in the reward structure are critical components in faculty members' consideration of service-learning.

Consistent with the work of Hammond are the findings of Hesser (1995) who found that faculty members embrace service-learning because they value active, experiential learning. Similarly, the work of Bringle, Hatcher and Games (1997) suggests that current instructors are more focused on concrete outcomes and not risk-takers and experimenters. These faculty members are apt to reject teaching tools not perceived as useful in accomplishing course-based learning goals – a notion that signifies the importance of meaningful faculty professional development activities centered on service-learning philosophy and methodology.

Antonio, Astin, and Cress (2000) completed a national survey of 33,986 faculty from full-time undergraduate teaching institutions that provides some illumination into

faculty behaviors related to and beliefs about community service. End results indicate that female faculty scored higher than male faculty on measures of community service, engaging with social problems, and developing students' civic responsibility. Among ethnic groups, African American faculty responses signify higher levels of commitment and involvement in community service. Across institutions, higher-ranking faculty, older faculty, and faculty with a strong intellectual orientation were least likely to be involved in or committed to community service. While instructive about factors that lead to "low implementation" or "high implementation" potential among faculty considering service-learning, the results provide little insight into the influence of faculty members' belief and value systems on teaching goals.

A recent survey conducted by Abes, Jackson and Jones (2002) gathered responses from more than 500 surveys completed by faculty at 29 diverse institutions in Ohio. The purpose of their research was to depict factors that motivated and deterred faculty use of service-learning, both for faculty who do and do not integrate service-learning into their teaching. Lack of relevance to the discipline or curricular outcomes and insufficient logistical support were cited frequently as deterrents. Findings bolster the outcomes of previous works, but cast little light overall on the personal views of faculty about service-learning, community service, and teaching.

Academic Service-learning as Education for Social Justice

Reese (2001) holds that the roots of all social problems are found in "institutionalized systems of oppression and exploitation" (p. 152). She argues that eradication of these problems necessitates changing the basic structures and values in

society to eliminate social power and numerous forms of domination. To accomplish social justice Reese identifies six tasks for the academic community: (1) give voice to social movements, (2) criticize conservative ideas that justify the status quo in society, (3) rethink political ideas and theories for social change, (4) encourage student awareness and participation in political struggles, (5) preserve intellectual freedom, and (6) engage in civil disobedience. Noting that not all professors are able or willing to engage in each task, Reese advocates working together collectively to achieve social justice.

A social justice approach to academic service-learning engages the political process to promote the common good and stresses sensitivity to issues of equity, tolerance, and fairness; insight into the causes that under gird injustice and oppression; and receptiveness to multiple perspectives. It “requires that individuals work to create, evaluate, criticize, and change public institutions and programs” (Kahne & Westheimer, 1999, p. 34).

Academic service-learning grounded in social justice beliefs involves learning through interactions with others while at the same time urging individuals to inspect their perceptions and behaviors in terms of those connections (Rhoads, 1997). Schultz (1990) notes that education linked only to theory does little to encourage “values of the heart – concern for the common good, a sense of compassion, courage to seek justice, devotion to one’s community” (p. 214). Nurturing these values requires more than firsthand knowledge of a community. Students must gain a “deeper understanding of the social, economic and political dynamics that contribute to increasing levels of social inequality” (Reardon, 1994, p. 52). Social justice education critically examines differences in viewpoints and the role of oppression and social power in perpetuating societal inequities

while seeking to strengthen political sensitivity, accountability and action (O'Grady, 2000). The goal of social justice education is to work towards inclusive and equal participation of all groups in society. This is necessary in order to collaboratively shape a society that promotes the development of each individual's capacities while enhancing their capabilities to interact democratically with others (Bell, 1997).

Bell (1997) identifies three defining features of oppression: pervasive, restricting, and hierarchical. Oppression is pervasive when woven throughout our social institutions and embedded within our consciousness so that bias, bigotry, and social prejudice saturate most aspects of community life. Oppression is restrictive when constraints limit self-development and self-determination. Oppression is hierarchical when those who are privileged benefit from the disempowerment of others.

Westheimer and Kahne (2003) in their study of two programs designed to build civic understandings and commitments identify three groups of citizenship that shape academic service-learning practices depending on intended outcomes. The first cluster they label as the *personally responsible citizen*. Activities emphasize "honesty, integrity, self-discipline, and hard work" (p. 4) and may reinforce conservative, individualistic notions of civic engagement. The second image they identify as the *participatory citizen*. Activities focus on understanding "how government and other institutions (e.g. community based organizations, churches) work and about the importance of planning and participating in organized efforts to care for those in need or to guide policy" (p. 4). The goal is to prepare students to engage in cooperative, community-based action. The third illustration depicts the *justice-oriented citizen*. Practices embracing this model seek to "critically assess social, political, and economic structures and consider collective

strategies for change that challenge injustice and, when possible, address root causes of problems” (p. 5). To illustrate the distinctions between these three descriptions of citizens, the authors note that personally responsible citizens donate to a food drive, participatory citizens organize the drive, and justice-oriented citizens seek to discover why people are hungry and then act on what they uncover.

It cannot be assumed that students will recognize instances of injustice or have the inclination or abilities to take action. Greene (1998) argues that “to teach for social justice is to teach for enhanced perception and imaginative explorations, for the recognition of social wrongs, of sufferings, of pestilences wherever and whenever they arise” (p. xiv). This type of teaching Greene characterizes as “teaching for the sake of arousing the kinds of vivid, reflective, experiential responses that might move students to come together in serious efforts to understand what social justice actually means and what it might demand” (pp. xxix-xxx).

Social justice teaching requires a re-evaluation of classroom practices in order to expand students’ experiences with and understanding of the various dissimilar public cultures found within our communities (Giroux, 1998). This calls for learning strategies that foster student abilities to think critically about controversial issues and questions as they strive to uncover the intersections of curriculum with social justice concerns (Hutchinson & Romano, 1998). To succeed in this quest requires acknowledging the “problematic and conditional perspectives found in an uncertain world” (Seigle & Rockwood, 1993, p. 67).

Bell sees social justice education as a process and a goal. The goal is ensuring “full and equal participation of all groups in a society that is mutually shaped to meet

their needs” (1997, p. 3). The process needed to reach this goal must be “inclusive and affirming of human agency and human capacities for working collaboratively to create change” (Bell, 1997, p. 4). The practices and assumptions that perpetuate pervasive oppression lay unchallenged and invisible in textbooks, theories, and language, lending legitimacy to structures and rules of domination and marginalization. Classroom rhetoric standing alone has the potential to act as a distorted lens in the examination of privilege and power. The result can be the “normalization of oppression...when we internalize attitudes and roles that support and reinforce systems of domination without question or challenge” (Bell, 1997, p. 12).

Academic service-learning that supports the social justice perspective seeks to remove those barriers that keep individuals in the margins of society (Maybach, 1996). “[Providing] service to the community while examining issues related to multiculturalism and diversity, social power, privilege, and oppression” is a difficult task (Rice & Pollack, 2000, p. 116). As a consequence much of current academic service-learning practice continues to focus on charity and personal relevance rather than on change and common good (Kahne, Westheimer & Rogers, 2000).

Conceptions of Teaching and the Influence of Teacher Beliefs

Kember and Gow (1994) examine faculty conceptions of teaching and learning using 39 semi-structured interviews obtained from faculty at a polytechnic college in Hong Kong. The researchers consider these interviewees the equivalent of university faculty in Western countries. Results of the interviews led to a 46-item questionnaire completed by teachers in 15 different departments representing two polytechnic

universities in Hong Kong. As a result of their work, Kember and Gow identify two orientations to teaching: learning facilitation and knowledge transmission. The learning facilitation orientation reflects a two-way process which utilizes a guiding, interactive approach to motivate and encourage students in their learning. In the knowledge transmission orientation focus is on the clear and accurate transfer of information from teacher to student and teaching is a one-way process. Kember and Gow suggest that changing a faculty member's teaching style from knowledge transmission to learning facilitation requires a teacher's willingness to examine critically her existing conceptual frameworks in order to begin the process of reconstruction.

Using a phenomenographic approach to explore people's understanding of teaching, Pratt (1992) identifies five teaching conception classifications. These are delivering content, modeling ways of being, cultivating the intellect, facilitating personal agency, and seeking a better society. Pratt notes that these five conceptions are not mutually exclusive, but do represent beliefs that are "impregnated with values and assumptions which inform actions and guide judgments and decisions...[and] are quite often manifestations of political ideologies, social norms, and/or cultural ways of knowing..." (p. 217).

According to Banner and Cannon (1997) character and personality determine how one teaches. This may be so, yet no individual can truly and fully know or understand her character and personality. Johnston (1992) interviewed students in a teacher education program in Australia to examine how these individuals think about themselves and how that relates to their teaching practice. In comparing the images of teaching held by two

student teachers, Johnston concluded that professional and personal experiences contribute to the formation of their perceptions of teaching.

Nespor (1987) reports the results of a study of eight middle-school teachers who participated in approximately 20-hours of interviews each. This work examines the principles and beliefs of these teachers related to their role as teachers and their views of student, student behaviors and the school environment. In part, this study points to the importance of belief systems in determining “how individuals organize the world into task environments and define tasks and problems” (p. 322). Beliefs influence how memory is indexed, retrieved, and reconstructed.

Teaching practices are shaped by professors’ varying convictions, attitudes, and values surrounding the ways participation in the “lived text” of a community can or should stimulate students’ learning and enhance their preparation in civic life (McKay & Rozee, 2004). Using a qualitative approach to examine the attitudes, beliefs, and values of university faculty who adopt innovative pedagogy, specifically service-learning, McKay and Rozee found that overall these teachers value active and experiential learning methods that provide students with the opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning; believe students should be involved in “real world” issues that connect theory to practice while providing a forum for students to learn about self, community and diversity; and see the community as a resource for learning.

Donahue (2000) draws on case studies involving two female pre-service social studies teachers enrolled in a university course on curriculum and instruction. He concludes that an individual’s beliefs and life experiences considered within the political context of where one teaches plays a significant role in shaping if and how service-

learning will be used. Donahue views these three factors as the “filters” that influence teachers’ interpretations and applications of academic service-learning – a concept that presents values that are ambiguous and open to interpretation.

This review of literature portrays academic service-learning as a multifaceted philosophy and pedagogy that carries with it the potential to challenge and excite both faculty and students. But, as Donahue (2000) points out, academic service-learning can be interpreted as a value-laden concept, subject to controversy and contestation. Chapter three describes the plan for inquiry used to gather and explore, through a critical, feminist lens, descriptions and interpretations of faculty perceptions and practices of academic service-learning.

CHAPTER THREE

Plan for Inquiry

Introduction

Academic service-learning is a demanding pedagogy blending community service with classroom instruction. Implementation of academic service-learning involves professors' alteration of traditional pedagogical practices as they consider "how students can be educated to deal with a world made up of different, multiple, and fractured public cultures" (Giroux, 1998, p. 290). Despite the challenges using academic service-learning poses for guiding student learning, it is an approach that potentially can inspire faculty, students, and community to confront the ever-changing aspects of oppression found in today's society and to promote social justice. Academic service-learning grounded in the civic standpoint is a model of empowerment, fairness, and compassion aimed at ending differentials of power and privilege (Palmer, 1997).

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the methods to be used to collect and analyze descriptions of experience disclosed by selected faculty who have engaged in academic service-learning in a community college setting. A qualitative research approach is selected as this methodology attempts to explore meanings given to complex, lived phenomena (Marshall & Rossman, 1995). Specifically, this study will embrace a narrative inquiry design. Narrative is a "methodological approach [that] examines the informant's story and analyzes how it is put together, the linguistic and cultural resources

it draws on, and how it persuades a listener of authenticity” (Riessman, 1993, p. 2). As such, narrative analysis is the best tool for discovering how and why individuals envision and divulge scenes from their lives.

Conceptual Framework

The interplay of close involvement with community issues and distanced reflection on academic content, personal growth, and social problems found in academic service-learning makes little sense to the objectivist because it contaminates “knowledge” with subjective experience (Palmer, 1997). However, existing literature makes it clear that classroom teaching is enhanced when students engage in meaningful academically-based service experiences (Astin & Sax, 1998; Driscoll, Holland, Gelmon & Kerrigan, 1996; Eyler & Giles, 1999). Other research notes that academic service-learning augments students’ sense of personal efficacy, spiritual growth, and moral reasoning abilities and reduces stereotypes while facilitating cultural and racial understanding (Astin, Sax & Avalos, 1999; Vogelgesang & Astin, 2000). Academic service-learning also has been shown to improve problem analysis and critical thinking skills among students (Osborne, Hammerich & Hensley, 1998).

Academic service-learning as an educational philosophical and pedagogical strategy is described as embedded in two conceptual frames. One frame embraces experiential, constructivist epistemologies and is grounded in the idea of progressivism and its trinity of community, participation, and democracy. The second frame looks at service-learning using critical and feminist epistemologies. With its trinity of oppression, struggle, and justice faculty embracing this standpoint see democracy as under girded by

multiple and conflicting political interests which complicate understanding and resolution of social justice issues (Abowitz, 1999). The first frame holds the potential to prevent faculty from engaging the world in more critical and political ways; the second frame may cloud faculty abilities to see possibilities of consensus and hope (Abowitz, 1999).

Looking at service-learning through the progressive lens embodied in the first frame we see learning and knowledge construction expanding within the academic community through communal experiences and contextualized social interactions (Varlotta, 1996). Faculty comfortable with this possibility may implement academic service-learning from a philanthropic perspective. This type of service effort is rooted in the tradition of volunteerism and adopts the “charity paradigm” as work is done for those who are perceived as disadvantaged and performed to expose students to social problems and to encourage them to “give back” to their communities (Parker-Gwin & Mabry, 1998; Zlotkowski, 1999). This charitable approach is employed to counterbalance selfishness while providing opportunity for hands-on learning that offers new experiences and promotes self-esteem (Donahue, 2000).

There are faculty who view this frame and its volunteer ethic as an “additive approach” that allows students to help those in need while building individual self-confidence and gaining marketable skills (Battistoni, 1997). Faculty members rejecting this approach may see academic service-learning through the second frame. This frame uses a civic perspective lens and represents a more radical pedagogy. Embedded in this frame is the “epistemology of care [which] is tied to experience, deliberation, inquiry, and situatedness” (Varlotta, 1996, p. 24). As such it is not a “self-righteous moralizing attempt to illuminate and impose predetermined values on a community” (Varlotta, 1996,

p. 24). Social change or transformation models of service-learning focus more on empowerment of those marginalized and represent an approach that demands analysis of power and societal structural organization (Morton, 1995).

This civic frame assumes that society is characterized by a fragmented social order that lacks a sense of community, that this fragmentation has shaped injustices that are perpetuated, and that higher education has an obligation to produce citizens who can promote justice in a democratic society (Battistoni, 1997). Emphasis is on caring over giving. Students are encouraged to develop reciprocal relationships and to question the status quo found in today's social, political, and economic structures. Teachers who embrace this frame value service-learning as a step towards social transformation (Donahue, 2000).

Guiding learning to attain civic conscientiousness and social justice fosters growth of the abilities and attributes necessary for students to gain a "sense of their own agency as well as a sense of social responsibility toward and with others and the society as a whole" (Bell, 1997, p. 1). Hutchinson and Romano (1998) point out that students "need opportunities to learn how to be tolerant, handle conflict, trust one another, and build community" (p. 255). Giroux (1998) notes that social justice education requires challenging the way educators think about "ethics, agency, power, and identity" (p. 291).

Little is known about faculty members' individual civic orientations or the correlation of these orientations to pedagogical choice. Similarly, current research offers minimal insight into faculty members' motivations to develop communities that minimize the dualism and individualism that perpetuates inequality and inequity. Exploring what influences, if any, these orientations and motivators play in faculty use of academic

service-learning opens the door to serious dialogue about American society and the role of higher education in developing the spirit of community engagement.

Researcher Perspective and Theoretical Stance

I am a shy six year-old, walking quietly to the desk of my first grade teacher to deposit my cigar box and its treasured contents. Inside lay pencils, crayons, and other school supplies – all chosen carefully by me and packed with considerable deliberation. My small package is to aid “poor children” who live on a faraway “reservation,” yet I do not see my gift as a “charitable basket.” I have no reasoned understanding of “poor” or of “reservation” despite my mother’s efforts to explain these terms to me. In my tiny world, I see no difference between myself and these “others” who receive my box. I only know somehow that I have some bond, some connectivity, as intangible and elusive as it is for me at six, to children outside my limited world.

Some weeks later a parcel containing small, brightly colored decorations arrives in my class. It is sent from the school where our boxes were shipped. Carefully we place them around the room. They make me smile inside, bringing warmth to the drab winter day. I wish I could talk with these other children, get to know them, have them become my friends. Mutuality and reciprocity are not terms in my vocabulary. I simply appreciate a sense of connection to others who are children just as I am one. I want to understand their world and share mine. While a seemingly small and insignificant moment in the life of a young child, the impact is powerful and lasting. In retrospect, I am certain that the seeds of social justice, civic engagement, and caring were sown in me at this moment.

This naive beginning rooted my activism, my indignation at inequity, and my anguish over intolerance and unacceptance. Thus, while academic service-learning is an enigma to many faculty, my introduction to it many years later seemed an almost expected event in the scaffolding of my life experiences. Although unable to communicate fluently the emotions rumbling inside me surrounding issues such as equity, fairness, and marginalization and their connection to education, I intuitively knew that academic service-learning could provide a thought-provoking, imaginative dimension to teaching and learning.

As a long-time advocate for social responsibility and civic participation, I saw academic service-learning as a possible avenue to connect students' classroom learning to the "real work" they hoped to one day perform in a way that emphasized positive civic engagement. In exploring the components of academic service-learning Rhoads' (2000) discussion of democratic citizenship and the caring-self resonated with me. He observed that an educated citizenry is more than a collection of individuals with proficient technical talents, capable professional abilities, and firm economic goals. Rather, the process of education provides a critical pathway for developing the caring-self fundamental to the practice of public engagement and social concern.

Academic service-learning is a vehicle for promoting the caring-self necessary to accomplish active and thoughtful citizenship. Rhoads (2000) defines the caring-self as "a sense of self firmly rooted in the concern for the well-being of others" (p. 37). Students are given opportunities to practice respect for diversity and to move beyond personal perspectives to learn about others as they engage in academic service-learning and confront tensions and conflicts, reflect on questions and confusions, and seek

commonalities. Fostering a caring sense of self is vital if students are to assume active roles in society grounded in attitudes of care and concern for others.

In this study I seek to explore the views, beliefs and motivations of faculty who practice academic service-learning in their teaching in order to better understand how teachers come to know and make sense of service in education. This is of particular interest to me as I have grappled with my own beliefs and assumptions about teaching and learning and the role and value of academic service-learning. Not only does service-learning require a commitment of time and energy, but also it can push educators past their boundaries of comfort as they examine and possibly redefine beliefs, values, and goals. Past studies look primarily at the extrinsic motivators, barriers, and obstacles that block use of academic service-learning rather than at the intrinsic influences that lead individual faculty to explore and perhaps adopt academic service-learning as a viable strategy to use in teaching and learning within their social and political contexts.

Philosophically, I see service-learning from a civic perspective – a view that represents non-traditional educational philosophy and pedagogy because it endorses social change in order to build social capital. Putnam (2000) views social capital as the connections among individuals and the social networks and norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from these connections. Social capital is enhanced as students become more likely to construct the moral-cognitive knowledge, norms, and philosophies that shape commitment to freedom, justice, and other ideals of democratic living. Academic service-learning is a powerful generator of social capital. Through service-learning experiences students open themselves to exploring the ethics of care and of right. Reflection assists students in exploring these concepts, potentially moving them toward

tolerance and the abandonment of absolutes as they seek to build civic cooperation within and between communities (Gilligan, 1993).

It is my belief that if we want students to attain active roles in society based on an attitude of care and concern for others, we must create challenging learning contexts that move beyond the information-dissemination model that prevails in higher education to a curriculum that can bring together the essential components of civic education (Wade, 1997). The elements of civic education include collaboration, tolerance, respect, fairness, and active participation in community.

In part my personal stance is influenced by the views of critical and feminist theorists who highlight the importance of cultivating caring and concerned students. Giroux (1992) points out that a personal and social sense of responsibility to “other” should shape pedagogy. Similarly, Noddings (1984) sees a need for education to explore “otherness” in order to see possibilities, eliminate the intolerable, and actualize dreams. Implementing these concepts in academic service-learning requires students, faculty and community to be situated as equals in a reciprocal learning process, challenges students to explore “otherness” in their interactions, and forces students to think seriously about their service experience and its impact on their overall lives.

As a constructivist teacher my goal is to allow students to attach meaning to and make sense out of their multifaceted experiences and realities whose variety and texture are constantly changing. For me learners are active participants in their creation of what becomes labeled as “knowledge.” The established and emerging values of these learners shape a critical component of the inquiry process (Caffarella & Barnett, 1994).

To better understand my biases and assumptions about academic service-learning, I reflect on my own evolutionary journey. Through this self-examination I have come to appreciate the meaning of Howard's (1998) statement: "Academic service is not for the meek. Reforming classroom norms, roles, and outcomes so that both academics and experiential learning can join requires a very deliberate effort around a rather formidable challenge" (p. 28).

Self-exploration not only highlights the struggles and self-doubts I have encountered over time in my own teaching as I tackle aspects of academic service-learning, but also led me to this study. Exploring the complexity of my own conceptions, values, and motivations resulted in self-knowledge that has heightened my sensitivity to the difficulties others encounter as they follow their own paths in service-learning work. Narrative research allows participants to gain new perspective on their practice and to provide the opportunity to generate new understanding. Thus, my goal is not to impose my beliefs and opinions, but to kindle the minds of my participants and to support them as they take the next steps in their own growth.

Clandinin and Connelly (2000) note that "coming to research narratively...is a way of understanding experience...a collaboration between researcher and participant, over time, in a place or series of places, and in social interaction with milieus" (p. 21). Through narrative practice "[i]t is possible to examine gender inequalities, racial oppression, and other practices of power that may be taken for granted by individual speakers" (Riessman, 1993, p. 5).

As noted in Chapter One, academic service-learning is a mechanism for confronting the causes and results of social issues, but its use requires constant scrutiny in

order to minimize the marginalization that results from dominant cultural norms surrounding gender, race, and class. Commitment to academic service-learning in a way that supports social justice involves an “ethic of risk” that calls for one to act to transform inequities without guarantee of success (Rhoads, 1997). It is from this critical postmodern vantage point that I view academic service-learning. This is a view that rejects non-involvement and control, instead embracing the unpredictability of multiplicity in an effort to develop communities around our differences (Rhoads, 1997).

Transformative learning can occur when I come together with my participants in a sphere of caring and empowerment to reflect critically on the conditions that shape both my own and their philosophies about teaching and learning, inform pedagogical choices, constrain actions, and create difficulties and challenges in the practice of academic service-learning as a possibility for social justice (Richmond, 2002). Mezirow (1991) describes transformative learning as openness to alternative perspectives and the development of thought that is increasingly inclusive, discerning, and integrative. We must confront our silences and the systems, structures, and customs that reinforce the “hushed voice” if we are to embrace possibilities. Through introspection, one’s values, beliefs, attitudes, and understanding transform (Taylor, Marienau, & Fiddler, 2000).

In their writing on multicultural education, Rhoads and Valadez (1996) state that “traditionalist claims to a common culture or a canon of knowledge are merely efforts to reposition certain individuals and structures as the gatekeepers....” (p. 17). These two writers interpret commitment to principles of equality, justice, and freedom as requiring recognition and understanding of “the significance of border knowledge and its relationship to culture and identity” (p. 17). Mutuality, a sense of reciprocity, is a

mechanism to create shared responsibility and respect among and between individuals (Rhoads, 1997).

Academic service-learning gives access to learning experiences that critique knowledge and our cultural production of identities (Rhoads & Valadez, 1996). It is a practice that sees “truth exist[ing] in a temporary state suspended by the prevailing discourse of the day” (Rhoads, 1997, p. 1). Similarly, Flax (1993) notes that “[t]ruth claims are in principle ‘undecidable’ outside of or between discourses...truth is discourse dependent” (p. 138). Scott observes that discourse is “a historically, socially, and institutionally specific structure of statements, terms, categories, and beliefs” (1988, p. 35). New understandings are ever-emerging, constantly bringing the margin to the center – but the center is unable to hold. Much like kneading dough, edges fold inward while the center is pressed outward.

Using a Narrative Study Approach

Using academic service-learning as a vehicle to sponsor social change “requires a moral and ethical attitude toward equality and possibility and a belief in the capacity of people as agents who can act to transform their world” (Bell, 1997, p. 14). Grasping the essence of these attitudes and beliefs requires deep exploration of the lived experience of individuals as it is one’s perception of and reaction to these happenings that influence and shape values and actions.

Experience arises when we *attend* (recall) and *affirm* (accept and value) events that happen in our lives through whatever physical and psychosocial filters exist for each of us (Taylor, Marienau & Fiddler, 2000). Language framed within social and historical

context forms the extended text used in narrative analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Narrative is suited to the exploration of questions centered on people's experiences and the meaning they make of them within the framework of their social and interpersonal environment. Through observations, interviews, and reflexive practice the examiner engages in direct contact with the people, situations, and settings being studied in order to yield detailed, thick description unique to the individual (Josselson, Lieblich & McAdams, 2003; Merriam, 1998; Patton, 2002).

Narrative study offers an avenue to pursue the interesting and interpretable. It is an inductive approach occurring in hermeneutic circles where new learning emerges as conceptualizations of experience expand (Josselson, Lieblich & McAdams, 2003). Josselson (1994) notes that narrative study "allows for discovery rather than seeks confirmation of hypotheses and [that] fosters more exhaustive quests for explanation rather than the illusion of finding preexisting truth (p. 30).

The study of others' stories seeks to grasp the experiences of participants through a discovery-oriented process where I, as the investigator, do not attempt to manipulate the phenomenon. A narrative approach attempts to respect the participants' ways of constructing meaning through their stories while allowing for interpretation of these multifaceted life experiences within the context of narrated events rather than through prefigured, narrowing lenses (Josselson, 1994; Marshall & Rossman, 1995; Riessman, 1993). Josselson (1994) writes that "[t]he truths inherent in personal narrative issue from real positions in the world-the passions, desires, ideas, and conceptual systems that underlie life as lived...narratives are efforts to grapple with the confusion and complexity of the human condition" (p. 32).

This study attempts to examine the structure and context of the story to interpret the meaning of principles and practices linked to academic service-learning. Riessman (1993) cautions that my texts “stand on moving ground” (p. 15). Thus, representations of experiences provide a limited portrait (p. 15). As interpreter and writer, I am mindful of the impact of my words in depicting meaning. Also, I continuously strive to understand how my analysis is influenced by values and impressions that may contour experiences in ways not envisioned or understood by the teller. Learning about me in this process is critical. My biases carry with them the potential to limit what I understand about the experiences of others (Phillion, 2002).

Academic service-learning, like other experiential teaching practices, raises questions about not only its value in teaching and learning, but also about its relationship to the varying personal stances of faculty. Responding to the questions about “self” requires clarification of faculty perspectives and experiences as they relate to academic service-learning and student scholarship. Insight into individual values and viewpoints and exploration of professors’ ideas surrounding teaching and learning processes emerges through exploration of the texts of personal experience. A qualitative approach is well-suited to the exploration of concepts such as compassion, personal capacity, and introspection embedded in the civic perspective of academic service-learning noted in chapter one.

As social justice education, academic service-learning wants faculty, students, and the community to be situated as equals in a reciprocal learning process, challenges all to explore “otherness” in their interactions and attitudes, and forces critical reflection on individual experiences and their impact on choice. The search for causality depicting

some universal, scientific, objective certainty or truth is not the intended outcome for this study. Rather, it is the journeying through my own and my participants' perceptions of lived experiences as they are revealed and interpreted that will add to the insights that strengthen our appreciation for the complex variety of intrinsic factors that influence faculty engagement in academic service-learning.

Applying a Narrative Approach to the Study of Academic Service-learning

Academic service-learning is not unlike other social phenomena in that it is a philosophy and pedagogy rooted not only in a multiplicity of theories and practices, but also in a myriad of perspectives about its value and application. What sets it apart from more traditional educational practices is its potential to instill "critical consciousness" into dialogue about objective, abstract concepts related to community, to call for unabashed questioning of "knowledge" of others, and to contribute to the continuously-emerging sense of self (Rhoads, 1997). Schultz (1990) supports this opportunity for education, noting that "values of the heart-concern for the common good, a sense of compassion, courage to seek justice, devotion to one's community-all require a sense of connection to others which a completely abstract education cannot provide" (p. 214).

At present academic service-learning is not the "de jour" teaching modality among community college faculty. Every faculty member, when considering or applying academic-service learning in the classroom setting, has personal reflections on community, service, connection, nurturing, and inequality and inequity that influence their stances on teaching and learning. Little attention has been given to the notion that

faculty commitment to academic service-learning is tied to one's "sense of self and vision of others" (Rhoads, 1997, p. 219).

Narrative inquiry is a method well matched to the investigation envisioned for this study. It provides access into the lived experience of faculty in order to explore the shifting meaning of self and "otherness" and its influence on their perceptions of the purpose of education and their role in teaching and learning. Narrative research makes the story the object of examination in order to contribute to understandings of teachers and classroom life (Riessman, 1993).

When using narrative inquiry we presume we live storied lives and that reality is found in the assignment of meaning to events in life as they are retold and considered at the moment. It is an approach that embraces the notion that the "truths" of personal narratives are not complete, static, or self-evident. "[S]tories do not mirror a world 'out there.' They are constructed, creatively authored, rhetorical, replete with assumptions, and interpretive" (Riessman, 1993, pp. 4-5).

A narrative inquiry approach allows me to inspect personal and social context in order to consider how the beliefs of some faculty may have been questioned, challenged, and changed; how the social world translates experience for the individual; and how academic service-learning "fits" into one's personal and professional picture. Narrative inquiry is "about people's lives, their interests, concerns, and passions" (Phillion, 2002, p. 15). Thus, narrative is a fitting approach to use when attempting to unearth new dimensions and meanings that potentially can add to understanding of faculty views of academic service-learning.

When engaging in narrative inquiry, meaning emerges through analysis of “the contexts [of experiences] that shape their creation and the world views that inform them” (Personal Narratives Group, 1989, p. 261 as quoted in Reissman, 1993, p. 22). Narratives are participant descriptions of experiences recalled and given value; interpretations of meaning are influenced by researcher beliefs and values coupled with her perceptions of socio-cultural norms (Taylor, Marienau, & Fiddler, 2000). Interpretive practice potentially creates tensions and discoveries that can be jarring for both participant and researcher (Phillion, 2002).

Phillion (2002) observes that narrative inquiry is similar to picture making in that a “close-up focus on something in the foreground means the background seemingly blurs. At the same time a focus on one particular thing can illuminate the surrounding landscape” (p. 108). Thus, individual stories can appear to scaffold in arbitrary, disconnected or disconcerting directions as they are told and re-experienced. For the listener expecting concrete, unchanging “reality”, confusion rather than meaning is the consequence.

By using narrative inquiry as the design for this study, “interactions among time, place, my participant, and myself” (Phillion, 2002, p. 108) shape and reshape the portrait of experience. Narrative is a “methodological approach [that] examines the informant’s story and analyzes how it is put together, the linguistic and cultural resources it draws on, and how it persuades a listener of its authenticity” (Reissman, 1993, p. 2). Accordingly, it is an approach that opens the door to possibilities so that what has not been seen before becomes apparent while what has been apparent may fade from significance or disappear totally.

Descriptive information using internal and external contexts of both the participant and the writer is captured through narrative inquiry (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Stories lived, considered, and evolved through a series of pictures painted by the teller are revisited within the landscape of the inquiry by the narrator. Phillion (2002) notes that “place is not a unidimensional ‘thing,’ it is not an ‘object’ [but rather] it is a multidimensional, living landscape, filled with diverse people, events, and interactions...constructed in different ways, depending on perspective, position, and purpose (p. 42). Thus, pictures of experience reframe as time and situation influence the meaning events hold for the past, present and future (Connelly & Clandinin, 2000). Alterations of perspective become the constant - much like the ebb and flow of color, light, and shape found in the lava lamps popular recently, as stories are shared, explored, and interpreted.

The stories to be gathered in this research function as a dialogue through which I learn by seeking to unearth the voice of the participant while honoring the histories and perspectives of participants (Phillion, 2002). Voice is the meaning of experience captured through the language that resides within the teller (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Voice is not a concept interchangeable with language. Language reflected in the story of the teller is not a “transparent medium, unambiguously reflecting stable, singular meanings” (Riessman, 1993, p. 4). Narratives do not “speak for themselves” – understanding them requires interpretation that moves beyond seeing only the face of words as a device to establish meaning. Surrounded by my perceptions, values, beliefs, and impressions, it is my work paste together experiences that uncover meaning that considers culture, history, setting, relationship and other factors as I perceive them. Dialogue and interpretation also

allow participants to gain new insights into their practices and provides them with the opportunity to generate new understanding.

Post-structural Interpretation

As previously stated, the charge for this study in a general sense is to discover the meaning and significance of faculty constructed representations of experience, looking for patterns, narrative threads, tensions and themes within or across the individual personal stories. Narrative moves beyond a singular “snapshot” of an event and to explore experiences as might be revealed through multiple photos arranged to capture the meaning as past is recreated to portray who we are in the present or who we want to become in the future. Because meaning is embedded in texts and in the forms by which they are constructed, narrative as a mode of inquiry provides a mechanism to explore issues of power and language and to describe the experiences of individual faculty participants, allowing these stories to be reaffirmed, modified, or created anew in the telling (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

In my role as listener and writer, influenced by my perceptions of who I am and the positions I have assumed throughout life, I construct myself as a voice of analysis. This stretches beyond the notion that I act simply a vehicle for transmission, with no voice of my own (Ropers-Huilman, 1999). Narrative inquiry from a poststructuralist perspective provides the avenue for me to explore socio-political contexts that create, yet confuse, the meanings and interpretations of knowledge and self. St. Pierre (2000) notes that a post-structural approach looks at meaning within the context of history and culture;

it is an approach that seeks to discover how meanings emerge, change, and sometimes disappear over time.

Zembylas, in studying emotions and teacher identity, writes that the self is constantly *becoming*. This “suggests the incompleteness of identity and a dynamic identity construction, one that involves a non-linear, unstable process...by which an individual confirms or problematizes who she/he is/becomes” (2003, p. 221). As we each struggle in the process of becoming, we may find that our lived experiences have antagonistic, multiple meanings constructed via the ethics and perceptions that define our centrality or marginality (Zembylas, 2003).

Traditionally, professors often work in an environment that promotes individualism, isolation, and autonomy. Teachers adopt expressions and roles appropriate to the institution’s environment despite the possibility that the self we bring to our teaching is disciplined, suppressed, or ignored. The post structural approach for this study provides a way to explore not only social and political meanings, but also to capture “forgotten” emotions and offer spaces for faculty to question and re-construct their selves, their responsibilities to others and to otherness (Zembylas, 2003).

Colby, Ehrlich, Beaumont, and Stephens (2003) suggest that faculty considering academic service-learning as a tool to engage students in moral and civic learning may want to know why others do it. They note that to understand faculty motivation it is

...important to recognize the centrality of their moral and civic understanding, goal and identities....[f]ew can afford to ignore considerations of tenure, promotion, compensation, and collegial respect. But this kind of external incentive is not the only thing driving their choices and directions. Perhaps even more important is how they think about their work, what they believe in, care about, and find meaningful and personally rewarding on a more human level. This sense of meaning is what sustains them when the work is hard (pp. 201-2).

As indicated previously, an important quality of narrative as a mode of inquiry is its inclusion of the cultural and social contexts imparted in the stories of faculty members as they recount past, present, and future considerations. “Past” experience gives significance to and shapes the creation of current experience. “Present” experience allows for the emergence of values assigned to events. The concept of “future” structures purpose or intention (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). These three dimensions coupled with notions of personal and social interaction and situation work in harmony to highlight the possibility that multiple “selves” speak in a setting in which the larger story unfolds as it intersects and overlaps in non-linear ways.

Dimensions of the Inquiry

Narrative inquiry into experience focuses in four directions: inward, outward, backwards, and forward. The *inward* scope examines feelings, hopes, moral values and the life of the participant. These strongly influence faculty perceptions of academic service-learning and their choice of teaching innovations and must be examined if service-learning is to become a practicable philosophical and pedagogical choice. Looking at the *outward* provides opportunity to explore social roles and the kinds of lives faculty live within the sociocultural contexts within which the tellers’ stories are embedded. *Backward* and *forward* explore the temporality of experience and acknowledge history and intentionality (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). In the process of inspecting these directions, a “co-investigation” between me and the participant will expose a broad range of explanations that inform emerging insights.

In narrative inquiry, researchers are “intimately involved in both the process and product of the research enterprise (Horsburgh, 2003, p. 400). As a result, outcomes of the research appear dependent upon the values of and interactions between participant and researcher within a particular context. Sword (1999) comments that the interpretive work integral to a narrative study is not without researcher bias, assumptions, and positionality. These act as filters, adding to and taking away from the information, as the final narrative is created (Gilbert, 2002).

Entry into the Field

In this instance, various service-learning program directors and/or academic affairs administrators within two predominately urban/suburban multi-community college districts were asked to identify those faculty members within their respective institutions who use academic service-learning in their work. This approach suggests a reputational selection method where study participants are identified based on recommendations of “experts” who are familiar with the teaching pedagogy and interests of faculty within their college (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Questions of practicality are an additional consideration for this study (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Limiting the geographic area from which participants are drawn to several colleges within two multi-college districts was done to lessen travel time and costs. This selectivity afforded me the opportunity to be more readily available for face-to-face interviews and follow-up sessions with participants.

I attempted to contact each service-learning program director and/or the appropriate instructional administrator at institutions within the college districts via

telephone. The purpose of my initial phone conversation with these organizational “gatekeepers” was to explain the study, identify any institutional approvals that may need to be completed before I can begin research, and to request permission to distribute information on the study to prospective participants (Devers & Frankel, 2000). I was prepared to do a site visit with the contact person and/or college leadership to review the study and to gather consent from each institution to approach potential faculty participants if necessary. My intent was to minimize demands on those who facilitate access so that they are more likely to cooperate (Shenton, 2004).

Once a college agreed to support my work on its campus and the service-learning program director and/or instructional administrator provided information on likely participants, preliminary information on the study was sent to these faculty members. Faculty members interested in knowing more about the study and/or in participating in the research were asked to contact me by telephone or email so I could explain the dimensions of my inquiry. Included in this discussion was dialogue about the need for open and frank conversation without concern for the “correctness” or “judging” of responses and the right to decline to answer questions which were uncomfortable (Fade, 2003). Each interested faculty member was given the opportunity to refuse to participate in the study. Further, each participant was told of his or her right to withdraw without explanation at any time during the study.

Selection of Participants

Purposive sampling facilitates exploration of theoretically varying faculty experiences with academic service-learning (Devers, & Frankel, 2000). The stories told

by each participant potentially were influenced by gender and other social roles embedded in the individual's culture (Gilbert, 2002). In addition, my use of purposive sampling was designed to give voice to those who have not spoken out about their work, "silenced through marginalization, oppression, or [the perception of] some kind of harm" (Hiller & DiLuzio, 2004).

For this study, potential faculty participants included residential teaching faculty who have implemented academic service-learning in one or more of their courses. Although community colleges traditionally utilize more adjunct (part-time) than residential (full-time) faculty, professional development and training activities and resources tend to be more focused on and accessible to those teachers who are on campus daily. Full-time faculty members sometimes are viewed as having a stronger commitment to and understanding of the community college, its students, and educational theories and practice. Further, it is often the full-time faculty who are better supported with time, money, and other resources in their exploration and use of multiple teaching and learning facilitation strategies (Garcia & Robinson, 2004). While this is the case at the multi-college districts selected for this study, the voices of residential faculty who use academic service-learning appear largely unheard.

Hiller and DiLuzio (2004) suggest individuals may consciously or unconsciously be predisposed to participate in a narrative study when:

1. the person has potential ego-involvement in the topic;
2. opportunities for reflection and articulation of experience are provided in the interview setting; and,
3. the participant has limited opportunities to express thoughts and feelings about the topic and/or to be involved in communities of interaction.

In chapter one I note that academic service-learning is not embraced by large numbers of faculty. In part, this is attributed to the need for faculty to abandon autonomy and a role that shapes them as the singular authority of objective knowledge in order to become facilitators of both academic and moral learning in ways that support social transformation. Academic service-learning gains legitimacy only as it develops a more considerable respected and influential voice (Zlotkowski, 1996).

As identified above, potential participants indicating willingness to consider involvement in this study were contacted by me and provided additional information about my investigation. This information outlined more fully the purpose and parameters of my proposed research, explained the inquiry process, and detailed consent and involvement obligations. At the time of this call I responded to questions, gathered basic demographic and experience information, and gauged awareness of the faculty members' academic service-learning principles and practices.

My selection process was intended to identify multiple voices that manifest similarities and dissimilarities so that relevant data yielding thick descriptions can be gathered (Popay, Rogers & Williams, 1998). This sort of description allows others to compare the instances portrayed in my work with those they have observed or experienced (Shenton, 2004).

For this study, each participant had experience in using academic service-learning and was willing to attempt to express his or her thoughts and beliefs. However, the writing of Josselson (1994) highlights the importance of selecting diverse participants even though they may have some features in common. She writes:

When we aggregate people, treating diversity as error variance, in search of what is common to all, we often learn about what is true of no one in

particular. Narrative approaches allow us to witness the individual in her or his complexity and recognize that although some phenomena will be common to all, some will remain unique (pp. 33-34).

Although maximum variation among participants was not possible because of the limited size of this study, investigating an array of differing individuals, with different experiences, and different uses of language opened the door to exploring and understanding the multifaceted nature of meaning-making among these few faculty members using academic service-learning (Horsburgh, 2003).

Specific selection criteria considered for this study include:

1. Gender: balanced numbers of men and women were sought as participants;
2. Age: participants representing age ranges were targeted in an attempt to gather data from different generational areas;
3. Race/Ethnicity: a mix of cultural backgrounds was sought in order to explore the influence of these differing backgrounds on perceptions and practices;
4. Past, present, or projected future utilization of academic service-learning was considered to collect stories from those with a wide-range of experiences with and reactions to academic service-learning as a learning facilitation tool.

From the pool of candidates, five to six dissimilar candidates who are “information rich” and can provide great insight into the questions posed in this study were to be selected to participate in the interview process (Devers & Frankel, 2000). In the arena of service-learning research, little attempt has been made to capture and interpret the voice of faculty. The inclusion of diverse participants allowed for the examination of varying historical, social, political contexts that may influence conceptualizations of teaching identity and practice (Hiller & DiLuzio, 2004).

Telling About Experience – The Interview Process

To encourage others “to attend and tell about important moments in their lives, it is necessary to provide a facilitating context in the research interview, which implicates the interview schedules we develop” (Riessman, 1993, p. 54). My interests as the researcher affect the timetable of interviews and the kinds of questions asked of the participant (Hiller & DiLuzio, 2004). Constructing the interview to open up topics and allow participants to construct meaningful responses in collaboration with the listener requires time to develop rapport and time to unfold and explore the story.

Narrative inquiry is intense; it is not only a time-consuming approach, but also a technique that can be emotionally draining and exhausting (Phillion, 2002). In this research individual participants were asked to engage in four to five separate interviews with me. Each interview did not exceed one and one-half hours. This time frame of four to seven and one-half total hours for interviews with each participant ensured adequate time to develop connections, to investigate the experiences of the participant, and to obtain some sense of closure.

An unstructured, rather than structured or semi-structured, interview was used to elicit narratives related to participant teaching experiences. Mischler (1986) points out that structured interviews can limit the scope of the narrative while unstructured interviews are more likely to result in stories. Reismann (1993) advocates developing an interview guide with five to seven broad questions that relate to the topic of study. She suggests also that these broad questions be supplemented with probe questions should a participant find it difficult to get started. These probes include statements such as “tell me some more about this” or “give me an example.” In this study, several broad questions

were created to launch conversation in the initial interview. For subsequent interviews with each participant, broad questions emerged based on information revealed by the participant.

Hiller and DiLuzio (2004) note that the interviewing process generally begins at superficial levels while the participant sorts out how much of her “back stage” of self to reveal. To build trust and encourage openness I use a “laddered question” technique so that participants do not feel as though they are being interrogated, yet I am able to probe more intensely into the attitudes, beliefs, values and feelings of participants (Price, 2002). This technique helps researchers “to arrange questions in an order that starts with the least invasive and proceeds to deeper matters if the other signals their readiness” (Price, 2002, p. 276).

Laddered questions operate at three levels: action descriptions that set the scene and collect contextual information; knowledge questions that explore reasoning; and philosophy questions that examine beliefs and values. Using a laddering framework provides an interview approach that selects questions based on observations of respondent readiness to engage in deeper levels of intrusion and revelation (Price, 2002).

The laddering approach does not imply that a rigid question-answer format is in place. Rather, it is an approach that allows for sensitivity to the dialogic process. Hiller and DiLuzio (2004) point out that meaning-making must move beyond seeing the participant as a container to be emptied. Instead, the participant should be viewed as a “real person who may not have quick and ready answers, who may shift responses depending on the perspective taken, and who may even make new discoveries as the result of participating...” (Hiller & DiLuzio, 2004, p. 3).

My acceptance of divergent questioning to accommodate the emergence of assorted views in the interview process lends itself to flexible probing and spontaneity in order to build on conversation and close gaps that surface in the data. Overall, I sought to build rapport and not constrain and limit the naturalness and relevance of emerging stories. Critical here was attention to my own implicit, unarticulated ethical values which can result in my discomfort in hearing about others impulses, yearnings, or motivations (Phillion, 2002; Rosenwald, 2003). Each interview session was closed by providing the participant an opportunity to add any additional information or to respond to questions that were not asked in order to limit the potential for omitting critical information (Patton, 2002). After the initial interview, each session opened with a question linked to comments made by the participant in the previous interview.

An “interview topic” guide identified areas to be explored with each participant. However, the sequence and wording of the open-ended questions asked were determined and adapted during the course of each interview based on interactions with the participant and myself (Riesmann, 1993). Patton (1990) notes that topics “in the outline need not be taken in any particular order and the actual working of questions to elicit responses about those [topics] is not determined in advance” (p. 280).

Interviewees were asked to share experiences and perspectives on a variety of topic areas related to the research questions posed in chapter one. These questions were directed at gathering insights into how faculty characterize, interpret, and practice academic service-learning and how their conceptualizations of public and private citizenship and views about community service and activism influence their teaching and

learning. It is the dialogue between me and participant that drove the inquiry rather than any prearranged list of questions.

My “topic guide” served only as a “focus area” check to ensure that I, as a novice researcher, did not neglect significant categories as I entered the investigation because of any nervousness, exhaustion, or experience I brought to the interview setting.

Specifically, the focus areas that are linked to the research questions posed in this study included the following:

1. Entry into the field of community college teaching;
2. Personal observations about and experiences with student learning, teaching roles and goals for scholarship, and designs for meaningful curriculum and learning experiences;
3. Experiences with academic service-learning;
4. Observations about challenges and benefits involved in the use of academic service-learning;
5. Personal conceptualizations of and experiences with civic engagement, democratic participation, and social justice;
6. Meaningful life experiences that have influenced teaching and learning philosophy and practice; and,
7. Personal motivations for practicing academic service-learning.

This list provided guidance in my quest to uncover and scrutinize the feelings, thoughts, and intentions of the interviewee that I might not capture through use of a structured interview and observation process (Patton, 2002). Explorations of each focus area used the ladder approach described earlier in this chapter. Thus, interviews began with questions directed at gathering images of actions and events that establish context (“who”, “what”, “when” questions, i.e. descriptions of initial classroom experiences.) Once these descriptions were in place, additional questions were asked to elicit information related to participant knowledge, (“how” questions, i.e. rationale for selecting a certain teaching method or approach.). These responses then were probed to

draw out stories about personal motivations, values, and viewpoints (“why” questions, i.e. reactions to experiences or cultural factors that influenced individual belief system).

I entered into the narrative process “with the assumption that the perspective of others is meaningful, knowable, and able to be made explicit” (Patton, 1990, p. 278). However, I was mindful of Josselson’s (1994) caution with narrative study: “[w]e take whatever observations we have made of the external world and, making them part of ourselves, interpret them and tell a story about what we believe we know” (p. 29). We cannot know the real. Rather, we can only create an image of it (Josselson, 1994).

Reflexivity – Discovering the Self

Reflexivity forces critical reflection on the self as investigator, calling us to examine how our endeavors are shaped and staged around the contradictions and inconsistencies we bring to the field and create in the field (Lincoln & Guba, 1994). It is a process that involves “a conscious experiencing of the self as both inquirer and respondent, as teacher and learner, as the one coming to know the self with the processes of research itself” (Lincoln & Guba, 1994, p. 183). Lincoln (1997) stresses the importance of self-knowledge, noting that we must learn “to accept our selves with all our fieldwork, collegial, and human frailties” (p. 51).

Throughout the investigative process, I will keep a reflexive journal to capture my thoughts, reactions, and questions in addition to my observations. “Observing activities, interactions, what people say, what they do, and the nature of the physical setting is important in a comprehensive approach to fieldwork” (Patton, 2002, p. 295). Marshall and Rossman (1999) indicate that observation is useful in uncovering “complex

interactions in natural social settings” (p. 107). Putting down what I see is imperative to the investigative practice, but is also essential is my self-discovery process. I too bring a multitude of attributes to the investigation. Gender, age, history, social class and other characteristics shape my worldview and influence my interpretation of experience – both mine and others. Bloom (2002) equates self-reflexivity with “coming clean” about the influences of gender, class, race, religion and other personal or social values on the dynamics of power in the study setting, the relationship of participant and investigator, and the experiences explored. Intense reflexivity was a vital resource to guide the collection, formation, and analysis of experiences.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical concerns must be considered before, during, and after research is conducted. Miles and Huberman (1994) identify several issues for consideration that apply to the broad, general category of qualitative research. These include ensuring that participants have full knowledge of what is involved, that they understand any potential harm and/or risks, that I present data as honestly and truthfully as possible, and that I provide confidentiality in order to respect the dignity of the individual participant and her institution. Each participant received a consent document and written information concerning their agreement to participate in the study. Signed consent documents were filed along with transcribed interviews. Both remain stored in a secure area.

What is outlined above is necessary, but does not stretch far enough to address the struggles inherent in narrative inquiry. Bakan (1996) cautions that narrative research converts the private to public, potentially resulting in social, emotional, or other personal

harms. Chase (1996) suggests that study participants be able to limit public disclosure of all or a part of their stories, particularly if the revelation could adversely impact the participant. Thus, I have a responsibility to do what I can to respect my study participants and their stories, balancing protection with the opportunity for personal growth and satisfaction. In the end it is I, as the researcher, who am responsible for the interpretive process and who must weigh potential costs and benefits as I determine how material is translated and presented.

It is imperative that I think through my research, my underlying professional and personal rationale for engaging in the study, and the potential emotional impacts of the work on both me and the participant before moving forward (Chase, 1996). Bar-On (1996) asks that before embarking on narrative study we consider whether we should interfere with someone's life, can live with the consequences of the encounter, and can justify the intrusion from the participant's perspective.

Faculty members involved in this research must be comfortable in expressing their thoughts and beliefs and must perceive that I as the researcher am listening well and understanding the essence and nuances of the message that is being shared. Bar-On's (1996) work provides insight into the struggle between researcher analysis and the importance of reflecting accurately the voice and understanding of the participant. Awareness of institutional culture and climate as well as aspects of cultural and social context applicable to the participant will facilitate individual voice and the accurate portrayal of the text and its meaning.

Creating Written Text

Taping with participant permission and transcribing are essential components of the interview process (Riessman, 1993). Tape recording with participants' permission was used in this study to amplify the accurateness of information compilation, both in word and tone of voice, and to permit me to be more attentive to my participant. Given the research approach for this study, it would be exceedingly difficult through the use of field notes alone to capture, organize, and manage the vast amounts of information that will be generated (Devers & Frankel, 2000).

The purpose of tape recording was explained to each participant. Each interviewee retained control of the recording process by being able to end recording at any point in the interview session. Transcripts of recorded sessions were provided to participants for correction, clarification, elaboration, and validation (Marshall & Rossman, 1995).

Each transcribed interview included my reflexive notes and any questions generated when re-listening to the tapes and re-reading the transcripts. This allowed me to weave my own experiences into the narrative construction and reconstruction. As the researcher my experience was a dual one – not only was I experiencing the experience, but I was also part of the experience itself. This dynamic provided tensions and dilemmas as I moved close to my participants, yet stepped back to observe the richness, nuance, and complexity of the landscape (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

Copies of the transcriptions and added comments were placed into files marked with the pseudonym to be used for the individual participant. Tapes were labeled in

appropriate containers. As identified above, both tapes and transcriptions are kept in a secure location to ensure continued confidentiality (Patton, 1990).

Analysis and Interpretation

Narratives are representations subject to change and reinterpretation (Gilbert, 2002). This research attempted to examine academic service-learning through the lens of five teachers' perceptions of their classroom practices, learning experiences, and belief systems. It was an endeavor to scrutinize personal and professional beliefs in order to better understand what connects teachers to academic service-learning and what motivates them to use it as a teaching and learning strategy. The goal of this work was to gather insights that can be considered by others as they scrutinize academic service-learning from both a philosophical and pedagogical viewpoint.

Examination of beliefs, attitudes, and goals around educational practices can influence change in approaches to teaching and learning. As noted previously, academic service-learning from a social justice standpoint provides students' an opportunity to integrate theory with practical concerns and needs within a community, to improve self-confidence and social skill development, to cultivate leadership potential, to confront issues of diversity, and to promote social concern as a lifelong consideration (Easterling & Rudell, 1997). Enabling faculty to cross borders in their teaching is facilitated by inspection of vulnerabilities, boundaries, and ideals as seen through multiple eyes (Mulholland & Wallace, 2003). Through scrutiny of others perceptions and acts, we can begin to question our own assumptions about knowledge, the marginalization or

oppression of students and community members in the learning process, and our own roles in facilitating both academic and ethical development of students.

A multi-step analytic induction process that begins to work with data as shortly after it is gathered as possible was utilized in this investigation. Rogers (2003) points out that data analysis in narrative inquiry involves messiness and unpredictability coupled with the need to grapple with an array of analysis tools in order to unearth the richness and complexity of the text. Certainly it is a process that is labor- and time- intensive, requiring listening and relistening; reading and rereading in order to breathe life into sentence fragments and overlaying thoughts (Gilbert, 2002). Yet it is this intensiveness of critical reflection that allows for the emergence of revolutionary learning as conceptualizations of experience develop.

The analysis process began with each interview being reviewed prior to transcription in order to incorporate thoughts not yet recorded in the reflective log notations made immediately prior to and after each participant meeting. Once any supplementary notes were completed, each tape was transcribed. Audio tapes were reviewed along with a copy of the written text prior to further examination. This was done to ensure accuracy in the transcribing procedure and to add any additional thoughts that may have relevance in the interpretation process. This was an important step as tone of voice, emotional state or body language can be relevant in assigning meaning to words (Fade, 2003).

Once the initial transcription is complete, remarks from my reflexive journal were added to the transcribed interview to shape written text for further analysis. This procedure committed the interview to paper, but it is not a “final story” at this point.

Reismann (1993) highlights the importance of “close and repeated listening, coupled with methodic transcribing, [which] often leads to insights that in turn shape how we choose to represent an interview narrative in our text” (p. 60). Consequently, multiple readings were a necessary part of the interpretive process. Revisions became an indispensable element of the analytic process as new interpretations emerged (Gilbert, 2002).

Each transcription was scrutinized across the interview process to identify key words, phrases, or larger concepts to form “open codes” to begin framing analytic focus. This was done inductively, allowing themes to emerge and develop as open codes were revisited, refined, grouped from each story and compared with one another. This common cyclical coding process isolated concepts that recur in the stories and provided a sketch of the lived experience of each participant. With this foundation in place I then returned to the text again and again to identify segments that form narratives and to weave in my commentary on similarities and differences (Reissman, 1993).

Smith and Sparkes (2005) write that uncovering why a story is told in certain ways (the *hows*) and its relationship to plot and content (the *whats*) are equally important and point to the possibility of using the two approaches in tandem. Gubrium and Holstein (2000) advocate moving back and forth between the *hows* and the *whats* using a practice they term analytic bracketing to provide the critical scrutiny that allows for the examination of information from differing viewpoints. The bracketing process is described as:

...an orientating procedure for alternately focusing on the *whats* and then the *hows* of interpretive practice (or vice versa) in order to assemble both a contextually scenic and a contextually constructive picture of everyday language-in-use. The objective is to move back and forth between discursive practice and discourses-in-practice, documenting each in turn and making informative references to the other in the process (p. 500).

As a result of my bracketing within the profusion of language and constant comparative analysis, I crafted a story influenced by my priorities, values, and ideals. Scheurich (1997) notes that as researcher I bring interpretive baggage to the translation, possibly losing or corrupting participant voice in the process if I lose sight of my own dominant cultural constructions and attempt to position them over the stories collected. Larson (1997) highlights this potential when she writes “[t]he lives of both researchers and research subjects are defined within systems of gender, race and class and are lived out in particular temporal, social and cultural moments” (p. 459).

Trustworthiness

The object of narrative is not to comprehend a truth, but rather to realize the evident perspectives of those who relate their lived experiences (Mulholland & Wallace, 2003). Reissman (1993) writes that prevailing verification concepts and procedures rely on realist assumptions and are basically irrelevant in narrative studies where information appraisal is located within a particular discourse.

My intent was, and remains, to draw readers into the worlds of faculty participants through the creation of story structured through my retelling in an attempt to increase insight and broaden understanding (Eisner, 1991). Interpretations are strengthened by sharing the story of the study along with the stories of participants and by including sufficient raw narrative to portray a vivid picture that supports points made in analysis (Fade, 2003). This approach allows for text construction that intertwines the voice of participants into a context that grows understanding for the reader (Mulholland & Wallace, 2003).

Shenton, in writing about trustworthiness in qualitative research, states that “[d]etailed description in [the phenomenon under scrutiny] can be an important provision for promoting credibility as it helps to convey the actual situations that have been investigated and, to an extent, the contexts that surround them” (p. 69). However, this description should not be accepted as truth. Individuals construct events depending upon their values and interests that are not constant over time (Reismann, 1993).

Validity, or the “goodness” of this work, embraces the ingredients Ouellette (2003) suggests create a good work: inspiration, passion, and conviction. These characteristics surface in settings where the participant and I “are presented with an opportunity to think further about the issues and to probe for deeper levels of meaning” (Miller, 1996, p. 137). This occurred for participants at various times throughout the interview process as each reflected upon and then questioned her individual stance. It happened for me as I returned again and again to the data to peel away the layers of meaning. Our dialogue, coupled with an effort toward hermeneutic interpretation, was a central dynamic of this narrative research and expanded my capacity for mutual exploration and understanding as I looked at academic service-learning through the lens of another (Miller, 1996).

This process added persuasiveness to my work. Pervasiveness, along with correspondence and coherence, are elements that support validation in narrative studies. Reissman (1993) notes that [p]ersuasiveness is greatest when theoretical claims are supported with evidence from informants’ accounts and when alternative interpretations of the data are considered (p. 65). Thus, my writing is done not to provide stable

meaning, but rather to invite and stimulate my audience. Literary practice and reader response shape persuasiveness (Reissman, 1993).

Coherence is considered in this work as another indicator of validation. Global coherence is my attempt to develop an account to justify an action, in this case the use of academic service-learning as a tool to create social transformation and develop community responsibility. Local coherence was demonstrated through my use of linguistic devices to structure the narrative so as to illustrate those points related by participants. Thematic coherence unified important themes recurring in chunks of text (Reissman, 1993).

Correspondence resulted from the use of “member checking” techniques. In this study participants had opportunities to review transcripts for accuracy. In addition, I shared my interpretations with them prior to any publication. However, Reissman (1993) suggests that stories are not static and perspectives change with time. I take responsibility for the views of others as they are presented at this moment.

Integrity of this study was enhanced by employing tactics aimed at ensuring openness and truthfulness in participant contributions. Shenton (2004) notes that this process begins by giving each person approached the opportunity to refuse to take part so that only those genuinely willing to be involved and to offer information freely become participants. In addition, Shenton suggests that participants should understand there are no “right” answers to the questions posed and they have the right to withdraw at any point in the study without offering explanation. As indicated above, participants were given the opportunity to review data analysis specific to their input prior to final publication of this study to ensure that their responses are accurately reported and

represented. These tactics were built into the approach outlined in this chapter and guided the gathering and interpretation of the storied shared by each participant.

CHAPTER FOUR

Introduction

This narrative inquiry study exploring teaching, learning, and service views of community college faculty members who use academic service-learning as a pedagogical strategy grew out of my own quest for understanding the ever-evolving world that surrounds me. Roots of this quest are planted firmly in a noteworthy event occurring when I was two-years old. I vividly recall sitting on my mother's lap as prescription eye glasses are slipped onto my tiny face. In an instant, my world is transformed from blurred shapes with muted colors to crisp, clear forms painted brilliantly. My curiosity on my trip home about what I was seeing for the first time is insatiable. I point to object after object, wanting to know what it is and what it does. It is amazing how this seemingly minuscule, but intensely significant experience, opened doors to a world that eluded me previously – a world I continue to want desperately to understand.

In the weeks that follow another occasion adds to my quest for understanding. This brief encounter makes me conscious of dissimilarity and allows me my first glimpse into what I come to comprehend as differing perspectives. On this day my mother serves grapefruit to two small playmates and me for our midmorning snack. I watch as salt is gently sprinkled over the top of my fruit. Mother then asks my friends if they too would like salt. Both shake their heads and ask for sugar instead. I remember wrinkling my small nose and with toddler conviction vigorously telling my little playmates that sugar

was never to be used on grapefruit. At this point mother calmly explained that people are not all the same. She tells me that tastes differ and I must respect this divergence from my own practice. Here again, a small incident with a powerful impact on my life as I begin to wonder about how others experience life in ways I never imagine existed.

From these happenings in my early childhood years, there blossoms a passion for exploring and appreciating the variation, the imbalance I encounter daily. My ardor to understand the larger world from multiple standpoints is a value I take into the classroom; it figures largely in my almost immediate acceptance of service-learning as a tool to instill this same eagerness in my students. For me service-learning is both a philosophical and pedagogical scheme that offers alignment between my work and personal values. As I reflect on the stories of my participants, I begin to see they are each pursuing a quest also, weaving who they are into their teaching.

Participant Sketches: The Quest for Self in Teaching

*In avoiding all pain and seeking comfort at all costs,
we may be left without intimacy or compassion;
in rejecting change and risk we often cheat ourselves of the quest.
~ Rachel Naomi Remen, Clinical Professor,
University of California at San Francisco School of Medicine*

Conceptions of teaching and learning for many professors embrace conventional pedagogy grounded in the didactic lecture as the standard method of teaching (Lueddeke, 2003). This knowledge transmission focus results in what Senge (2002) terms “technical rationality” where theory is disconnected from practice and students enter the world with multiple answers but limited skill in constructing more effective action. It is possible that the pedagogy of service-learning fails its quest to penetrate mainstream educational

practice because of the tenacity with which teachers cling to the “lecture” technique and discount alternative practices.

Changing our ideas about teaching asks that we uncover and define, or perhaps redefine, ourselves within the teaching profession. It involves purposeful reflection and conscious self-scrutiny of our personal and professional being and the aspirations we fashion for ourselves and for our students. When mired in our comfortable teaching practices we risk losing a sense of connectedness to our students and our work; we risk losing the experience of joy in our efforts. When this occurs, teaching becomes mundane and passionless. In the ordinary, we move through our days while cheating ourselves of the quest to enhance our self-understanding and to influence social values.

McLean (1999) points out that “[i]mages of self-as-person and self-as-teacher are critical... because they constitute the personal context within which new information will be interpreted and are the stuff of which a teaching persona is created” (p. 58). According to McLean these complex and multifaceted images are not separated easily from the craft of teaching.

Fuller (1969) in exploring teacher development theorizes that positive perceptions of self impact a teacher’s willingness to foster a learning climate that supports students’ autonomy, differing interpretations of ideas, and applications of learning outside the classroom. Similarly, Samuelowicz and Bain (1992) note that:

In student-centered teaching, students’ existing conceptions are the starting point of an interactive teaching/learning process and students are helped by teachers’ activities to construct their own knowledge, to make their own sense of reality, and adopt the conceptual framework in line with that shared by experts in the field (p. 104)

Teaching philosophy and style is “socially constructed and acquired through experience, reflection, and discourse” (Cranton & Carusetta, 2002, p. 169). Faculty members arriving at the college classroom door bring rich and varied life experiences with them. They do not step into the learning environment value-neutral. Woven into their teaching ideals and practices are their character, beliefs, and principles. Calderhead (1996) points out that our teachers hold significant beliefs that impact how they approach teaching and align it with their own conceptions of teaching and learning, how they define goals for student learning, how they interact with students, and what their connections are to issues of personal relevance. Thus, important drivers for faculty choice and direction are their views about their work, their priorities concerning what they believe in and care about, and their perspectives about what is meaningful on a human level (Colby, Ehrlich, Beaumont & Stephens, 2003). Preferences contour instructional practices and provide cues about the goals held for our students and ourselves (Deemer, 2004).

Teaching philosophies for the participants in this study represent elements beyond the accumulation of knowledge about a particular subject or the internalization of a catalog of techniques, practices, and skills. These reflective descriptions of beliefs about teaching and learning identify not only why and how participants facilitate the learning process, but also explores the values imparted in their teaching. In this study participants portray their teaching as a quest – a quest to honor and share those values that shape and influence them and give purpose and meaning to their work. Their teaching images reflect those personal values central to the quest and capture elements of what is perceived as the “right way” to teach (Johnston, 1992). Narratives collected for this study

represent how participants view themselves within their teaching contexts and how fundamental values impact the way they teach.

Quest is a word derived from the Latin *quarere* which means to seek, ask, or inquire (Neufeldt & Guralnik, 1994). A quest entails a search or pursuit undertaken in an effort to find something. It is a term of action, implying change and risk in order to succeed. Acker and Armenti (2004), in discussing women academics, reference the term 'quest plot' which they see as "the search for accomplishment and achievement in the public world" (p. 4). Quest implies a resolute hunt to attain one's vision or purpose. It involves passion and determination.

Defined in this way, I see a quest as differing from a journey. To quest entails intentional examination directed at accomplishing one's goals. To journey implies that one travels a life course or passage, flowing from one stage or experience to another and then another and then yet another. It is a voyage, an excursion, a venture without obvious *raison d'être* or aim. It can be leisurely; it can be exciting but I see it as a sinking into the moment, a sinking into the experience then taking from that moment or experience the direction I need to sail ahead. A journey lacks the zeal, the conviction, the involvedness and the certainty I attach to a quest.

In looking back on conversations with my participants, I see that each is enthusiastically committed to teaching. Although they express it differently, all participants manifest a concern for students' interior lives and experience gratification through their work with students. Each has a quest that aligns teaching practice with important personal ideologies.

Rose's Teaching Philosophy – Her Quest for a Nurturing Family

Feelings of worth can flourish only in an atmosphere where individual differences are appreciated, mistakes are tolerated, communication is open, and rules are flexible – the kind of atmosphere that is found in a nurturing family.

~Virginia Satir

Rose is a tenured faculty member in the communications department of a small suburban community college located in a high growth area of the city. Although she did not envision a career as a college teacher when attending the university, she does not find it startling that she is now in this role. In addition to her teaching, Rose acts as the “coordinator” for service-learning on her campus, providing support to other faculty interested in integrating service work into their courses. She is reputed to be one of the “leaders” in service-learning in her college district.

For my first interview, I arrive several minutes before Rose. She rushes in and invites me into her office. It looks as welcoming and comfy as someone's living room, furnished with an assortment of plants, flowers, personal photos, and mementos. It is space that exudes warmth and respite – a place that invites one in to linger and relax. No particular item stands out, but as I look around the room I feel each object represents some aspect of Rose's experiences and are meaningful. All seem carefully selected and considerately placed in a mindful attempt to create a sense of sanctuary.

Immediately, I am at ease and our talk initially seems like the exchanges I have with friends I have seen for a while. Yet I also sense a slight tension, a bit of cautious hesitation. In retrospect I see this feeling of disquiet or hesitation is mine. I entered this interview awed by the reputed expertise with service-learning attributed to Rose and wondered how she would construe our conversations. Only as we moved ahead did I

begin to appreciate the value of the venue my questioning provided for her – here was an opportunity for Rose to explore her experiences with service-learning so that others might benefit from the lessons they hold.

I am struck by the passion Rose exudes. She comes across as someone who truly cares about her students, their learning, and the work she does. I find myself speculating about what teaching and learning would be like if every instructor drew from her ardor and authenticity in order to ground her teaching in a well-conceived rationale that moves beyond a narrow focus on content and skill and helps students see and shape their worlds.

Very Much a Mom

*For that's what a woman, a mother wants – to teach her
children to take an interest in life.
~Marguerite Duras*

It is “mothering” of “nurturing family” that defines the nucleus of Rose’s inherent beliefs about teaching. Rose desires to inspire constant development; to evidence care, concern and outreach to her students; and to support learners and expect them to do their best:

I would have to say that I am very much a mom teacher. That would be my number one identity in just about everything I do. It means loving your charges unconditionally and focusing on their strengths as opposed to harping on their weaknesses. It means caring for them as whole people, not just the scores they make on tests. It means being an open book with them so they know I am human and approachable. It means going the extra mile time wise and attention wise. It means always being available to them if I can be. At the same time, as any good mother does, it is having very, very high expectations for wanting your students to go even beyond what you have and did. I also do everything I can to control the conditions that will help my students face success to achieve the expectations.

Rose's reflection sketches the background for an emerging picture of the classroom as a place of cultivation, where the exploration of knowledge flourishes and the world becomes viewed in new ways. As mother-teacher Rose desires to foster and inspire continuous construction of meaning and knowledge; to evidence care, concern and outreach to students; and to support learners and expect them to do their best. Her orientation as mother-teacher situates Rose as the locus of control in the classroom although she does not appear to give the implications of this positioning conscious thought.

We Are All Not the Same

*By our affirmation of the person as he is, we give him
support and strength to take the next step in his own growth.
~Clark Moustakas*

Rose portrays the classroom as a place of nurturing responsibility, participation, and empowerment, where through open dialogue that respects and values the individual, discussion of knowledge and ideals can flourish and become looked at in new ways. It is an environment sensitive to both political and apolitical interpretations. This is consistent with Rose's view of herself as a teacher who values "humanness," tolerance for difference and respect for diversity. For Rose teaching and learning is a dynamic, collaborative experience that transports the student beyond the moment to seize greater awareness and deeper understanding of both contestable and uncontestable dimensions of issues, other realities of policy and principle that can then be incorporated into one's personal stance:

When I first started teaching I was ready to be a "my way or the highway" type of teacher. That didn't last very long. I realized the beauty of teaching

is in the students; it's in the people and not in the dictatorial process. It was a fun fantasy that you could go do your job and go home.

The classroom is like a family. You support one another, take some risks, learn from mistakes. Maybe they aren't mistakes, but experiences that take us in new directions, get us to think about something in a new way. I think it comes down to communication as the essential component- where we all listen and guide one another. I am very pragmatic. That is my philosophy. I am very careful with the course content to choose what will be practical in their lives. I like to provide a rationale for everything we do in the classroom.

I begin to build connections that first day. We start by introducing ourselves to one another – not just a name, but something about who we are. If we are strangers to one another then we are guarded in our communication. When we know each other, trust increases and we get comfortable in sharing more honestly about experiences, our thoughts. I think when there is a two-way street there is a trust that builds between the students and myself and between students and each other.

We eat. I think that breaking bread together is one of those things that bring people down to human level. We are all on the same level. It just encourages people to talk. Anything that encourages students to open up, to take risk and build trust – those are the things that I think I do well in the classroom. And myself being an equal participant in that, not being a mystery to them. I model what I expect from my students. I give my best self and encourage and support them to do the same. I let them know who I am and that I care. When issues arise in class where there are different perspectives, we talk about it in ways that respect difference.

I try to get students to really think about difference and how what people see you as may cause them to treat you differently. I think my classes build community and accept difference. It's something I want to happen in all my classes, not just the service learning. Students need to see we are not all the same, but that doesn't mean that otherness, that difference is a bad thing.

A consistent theme I uncover in Rose's story is the importance of giving of her talents, of contributing to the welfare of others, of making a difference and feeling valued. Teaching is central to Rose's "being" rather than something done to make a living. As I interpret Rose's story, her goal as a teacher is to listen, to

speak with care, and through jointly shared language, to launch students to the “otherness of the world” (Huebner, 1995). For Rose it is essential she be part of the welfare of the group. Her work is about giving of herself and savoring the magnificence she sees in each student.

Chickering (2003) notes that “our pedagogical practices must elicit behaviors that are consistent with our desired outcomes” (p. 41). For some faculty the goal is learning content. Hence an information dissemination model with its traditional orientation is consistent with the expectations of these teachers. On the other hand for those faculty, such as Rose, who want to excite and motivate students to learn, to open avenues of perceiving and making meaning, to promote scrutiny and development of values, the information dissemination model is woefully inadequate. Rose recognizes the need for tackling the larger issues of community and social responsibility and attempts to include this in her teaching in a way that allows her to assist students in finding their own voice.

Some Are Meant to Be Civically Engaged

*The good we secure for ourselves is precarious and uncertain
until it is secured for all of us and incorporated into our common life.*

~ Jane Addams

Volunteering implies a giving of the self – an important value for Rose. For Rose, public service nurtures giving and provides an avenue for her to impact larger societal issues through efforts that may be small but make a real difference. Service affords Rose the opportunity to learn, to advocate for public policy, and to volunteer for action efforts. Rose “grew into” performing service and shares her views on engagement:

My parents volunteered. So I grew up with that ethic instilled in me although I was not involved in service work myself. It wasn't until a few years ago that I started to be more engaged and to think more about volunteering and its benefits. My parents were very involved, especially around issues pertaining to poverty. My mother reinforced the fact that we had so much, were so fortunate. I remember my father getting the guys together to go buy food to give to others. I mean they were involved. They didn't just give money to something. They got out there and worked to do something about it. I wasn't so actively involved. My parents didn't push us to do things.

I saw [growing up] how important [poverty] is – how it is different when you have very little. This is an issue I continue to care about. There are others. I'm very concerned about civil rights, about equity for everyone no matter what your gender, or age, or race, or sexual orientation, or whatever. [And literacy] – being literate opens the doors to so many things. It's about access and opportunity. Literacy impacts quality of life. Talk about the American dream. It is more difficult, I think, to function well in a society that expects people to be literate.

I think some of us are meant to be civically engaged and some of us are not. For those who aspire to be involved politically, in government, in policy decision making, and things like that, then I think that's great. But not everybody's meant to be in government, not everybody's meant to be a politician. It doesn't all have to be about changing society in some large way. We all engage differently. What fits for me is not necessarily where someone else is or may ever be. That's okay. Do we sometimes [in our efforts] put band-aids on things, do we sometimes enable situations as service learners – we do. But you have to think of the human component and sometimes a person really needs that band-aid or the infection will kill them.

Volunteering implies a giving of the self – and important value for Rose. For Rose life for her students means more than test scores. It is about quality and dignity, about caring and sharing. Rose appreciates the uniqueness of the individual and evidences caring about the lives of all humans. As a result of this stance, Rose is able to embrace a wide-range of philosophical orientations for service-learning, from philanthropic giving, to singular, non-sustainable projects, to social transformation

experiences. This is consistent with her desire to nurture others and value their individuality.

We Are Better Together

*Some people weave burlap into the fabric of our lives,
and some weave gold thread. Both contribute to make
the whole picture beautiful and unique.*

~ Anonymous

Rose is eager, inquisitive, and motivated. For Rose learning is continuous and reciprocal. She takes great delight in discovering teaching strategies that allow her students to flower in new ways. Life for Rose is a dance and she enjoys every step:

I learn from everyone, from everything, all the time. I don't usually take my personal views into the classroom because it is just noise to students. When I come out about a topic in my classroom I think my students are listening to what I say.

I'm constantly seeking ways to do things better, do things differently so that I can improve the learning for my students. I try for a holistic approach in my teaching to reach more than the cognitive area. Students aren't just one dimensional. I really believe in the self-fulfilling prophecy and that Pygmalion effect. I think it is a fallacy for anyone to believe that our community college students are incapable of performing service learning, of being engaged in the community, of going above and beyond the needs in their life. Not many of us can be all things all the time. We're better together.

I am very student-centered, willing to try new things. I'm feeling that I know that I'm doing them right. And so it is my way of giving to them. Sometimes I really do feel like the odd duck. It's not about scores. It's life.

Rose's desire to build self-confidence and facilitate growth through a variety of mechanisms that foster success highlights an aspiration to guide students in a learning relationship that nurtures change. In my view Rose blends the traditional learning models with the service learning model. There appear to be some aspects of the classroom that

follow a predetermined structure with consistent learning stimuli for all students, a familiar routine for activities, and an established set of inquiry questions to guide discussion. This aspect of the learning environment vests control for the structure and direction of learning within the context of Rose's knowledge, experience, and perceived jurisdiction. On the other hand, Rose merges into this traditional approach teaching that is focused on the advancement of learning for the collective, using indicative orientations and subjectivity. This aspect of the learning environment puts students in charge of their learning and offers a low degree of structure and direction vis-à-vis learning in the community (Howard, 1998). Blending the traditional and service-learning models points to a "balancing" directed at engaging a diversity of students in the learning process and encouraging their individual growth.

Adam's Teaching Philosophy – His Quest for Happiness

Happiness is that state of consciousness which proceeds from the achievement of one's values.

~Ayn Rand

Adam has been teaching for approximately nine years at a small, but growing, community college located in an affluent suburban setting. Currently he chairs the Counseling Department and is considered a teacher of excellence at his college. Becoming a tenured faculty member is not what Adam's envisions initially as his career path. His journey into the classroom comes about as the result of an internship at a local community college to fulfill a requirement for his Master in Counseling degree. In addition to his counseling, Adam teaches a variety of leadership, conflict management, communication, and student success courses.

I find myself annoyed with Adam as I wait...and wait...and wait for him to arrive at his office for our first interview. He saunters in just as I become discouraged and am about to leave. Within moments my frustration at his tardiness dissolves as he apologizes, assures me he has time for me, and kindly guides me to his office. Soft-spoken, calm, and gentle, there is an aura of quiet peace and harmony that surrounds Adam. His office is furnished sparsely. My first impression as I enter is that it is a jumble of disorganization, with books, papers, and artifacts strewn about in seeming disarray. I have little time to peruse my surroundings before sitting, but notice the only light comes from two open windows. Some small items on a table near me lead me to wonder if Eastern Philosophy is important to Adam. Despite the clutter I sense a certain harmony as we begin our conversation. I do not know what to expect.

We're on This Earth to be Happy

*This life is yours. Take the power to control your own life.
No one else can do it for you. Take the power to make your life happy.
~Susan Polis Schutz*

The importance of happiness is a thread that runs through all of my conversations with Adam. Joyfulness in life is central to Adam and is something he finds in meaningful connections with and contributions to his world. It is a quality that manifests itself in Adam in a palpable inner serenity. Adam equates the purpose of life with happiness in several statements:

I think that is what all of our purposes in life are – it is in some ways to be happy. We can do that by contributing, by following our passions and things like that. I think we're here on this earth to be happy and also to help each other, to survive, perpetuate and enlighten and become enlightened. I think that happens through relating to other folks – the sort of oneness of things related to our environment as well, of course. I take

this into [teaching] by having students relate to each other, probably a lot more so than the other teachers do. [I do] more relationship building so that they are talking outside of class, so that they are meeting these people and they are excited to see [each other] because they have established a relationship, and then they learn from each other.

We spend a lot of time talking about what is the meaning of the “10,000 foot level” – like helping others, like having a purpose. We talk about internal locus of control if the world doesn’t make you happy. I think most of the time we are really disengaged from our body and feelings.... We are a very superficial society and that’s how we do it. We’re too worried about our fancy cars and upgrading our houses and building our portfolio and worrying about having a million dollars in our retirement. ...spirituality is much more than this physical, material world and all the money in the world doesn’t make you happy. In fact, most people I know are miserable.

I have an intense sensitivity to people’s emotions. And most people I feel are just really unhappy – that, and angry. You can’t really go to war and kill a hundred million people in the last century without a lot of anger, you know, in the world. So I see that, I see that everywhere. I was in a very sheltered, environment – an environment where everyone had a car, everyone was supported by their family. There was no one on welfare. ...the one-on-one is something that I found...as being easier for me because I have shyness and some fears about being in the world in the political arena or being an activist. Being able to help people, one-on-one, find out what makes them happy or how to change is very gratifying. The excitement is watching people grow. People change, their life is happier. They feel they have more purpose, more direction, less anxiety. They are sleeping better. Their relationships are improved. It is very rewarding.

Adam’s words speak to a spiritual dimension of teaching and learning that I interpret as consistent with his worldview. He sees a deeper meaning to life on the planet than just making money or owning things. At Adam’s core I see a sense of love for the larger world, a sense of openness for whatever is happening, a sense of strong connection with others and their humanness. As a spiritual teacher Adam reaches beyond himself, draws strength from others and learns from them, yet assumes responsibility for caring about community issues, world issues, and

social issues. Dillard, Abdur-Rashid and Tyson (2000) note that a relationship to community is characteristic of spiritually-centered teaching.

I see this attribute of Adam's personality as a contributor to his acceptance of academic-service learning in his teaching. Academic service-learning can advance students' sense of social responsibility and commitment to the broader good. It is a pedagogical tool that offers the opportunity to explore within our communities deep, compelling questions about injustice and truth in order to contribute to the quality of life for others.

Deeper and Deeper Into What We Are

*Only through our connectedness to others can we really know
and enhance the self. And only through working on the self can
we begin to enhance our connectedness to others.
~ Harriet Goldhor Lerner*

As noted in Adam's previous remarks, we tend to be a superficial society – one that shies away from critical reflection of the self and how our interactions and relationships affect others. This hesitancy to investigate at deeper levels what we are carries with it the potential to strand us on the surface of life, allowing us to become disengaged from our communities and to abdicate our social responsibility. A goal for Adam in his teaching is to assist students with not only exploring, but also articulating these emotions:

Most of my classes are process oriented. They allow for a lot of group discussion, a lot of introspection, a lot of homework that focuses on self. It's very rewarding to watch people personally grow and change. I think my role is to help clarify personal goals, help clarify academic goals, career goals, help them find tools to remove barriers to them succeeding. It's really neat to be able to sort of remove some of those layers that get in the way of who they really are and what they can really accomplish. I

really do concentrate on keeping them (students) really engaged. I know that it's difficult to maintain attention during a lecture for too long. ...my style is to engage them early, often and doing that by checking in and having them write "how do you feel today." I think the more they talk with other students the more engaged they will be because everybody is engaged...everybody is involved.

We spend a lot of time getting to know each other – progressively getting to know each other more and more. We get deeper and deeper into what they really are, not just superficial interests or things about themselves, but some more of the deeper passions and deeper values. I slowly build more and more of that sharing with each other, learning about each other, so it's progressive, developmental. And then, doing team building exercises and trust falls in different ways in which they take risks that are really managed by the instructor in the class so they have developed confidence and trust and then are ready to go out there a lot more prepared.

I'm really good at being uncomfortable – from my upbringing and just from being a counselor. I can really be uncomfortable and be OK and push it. It's sort of the Eastern Philosophy meditation thing – this is just discomfort; it's all it is. It doesn't mean the world is ending. It doesn't mean bad things are going to happen. Sometimes if it's really overwhelming, I might share it....[Students] like that honesty and disclosure and that really brings them in. It reels them in and they can be real and then we can move through it as opposed to trying to sort of stick with the messiness and no one is really being honest about it.

Adam brings to the learning environment his sense of responsibility for the fabric of our earth and the vitality of our communities. He contributes what he can through service to others to heal the suffering he sees around him. Adam encourages his students to articulate difference, to appreciate varying viewpoints, and to seek out areas of commonality and collaboration in order to move from the security of their current consciousness.

While I do not see that Adam has discarded completely traditional paternalistic authority roles, control is shared in the learning environments he shapes as students become partners in defining their learning agendas. Adam

evidences less concerns for “objective truth” while encouraging and supporting self-exploration, deep personal reflection, and involvement in the larger world. Of the five faculty interviewed for this study, Adam is perhaps the one who is most justice-oriented, a characteristic that spills over into his teaching and fuels his participation in academic service-learning activities.

It's About the Learning

*Never regard study as a duty, but as the enviable
opportunity to learn to know the liberating influence
of beauty in the realm of the spirit for your own personal joy
and to the profit of the community to which your later work belongs.
~ Albert Einstein*

Adam embraces the notion espoused by Brookfield (1990) that teachers are to “nurture in learners the strength and fortitude to confront what, to many, is a perilous and threatening journey” (p. 208). Adam demonstrates insight into learning style differences, noting that “it is not an equal playing field.” He sees experiential learning as an opportunity to enhance those situations in which students better mold their self-images as effective learners and view the world through new, or at least, changed eyes:

Everyone is capable of learning. Those that have had brain damage, those that have developmental disorders require non-traditional methods of how to teach and that, but everyone can learn. Some people require more time and effort than others in different ways. Not every way works for every student. It's an individual thing and it's important in learning. I think someone's background, support they got, the level of self-esteem and confidence, their exposure to skill building and experiences really influences to a strong degree how well they succeed in school. It's not an equal playing field.

I think most people are definitely super excited to learn. And if they're not excited to learn, my guess is it's because of either being told they are stupid or not being reinforced with what they have learning, or being

punished for not being able to learn a certain way. Just because someone doesn't like school doesn't mean they don't like learning.

I used to look at it [learning] as you just get by. You just want to get good grades so that you can get into a good school so you can get a good job. It wasn't about learning. When I got caught cheating I learned that it's about really doing good work and it's about honesty and integrity. This teacher really wanted us to succeed and it wasn't just busy work. It changed my attitude about it when I saw what he had taught me and he had held me accountable.

I like a lot more experiential activities. It definitely changes students' lives when they read about something and then see it for real. They've gone to shelters and they see what it's really like and they meet real folks and they meet real administrators and they hear some of the truth about it. I think they see the humanity and the beauty in every person. That's probably what I like about experiential learning best. It removes the "us versus them," including artificial differences we have imposed on each other. Hopefully students get some of the course competencies in the end. But also the discipline of finishing something, of seeing the world with broader perspectives, with broader perspectives of themselves, perhaps increasing their skill to learn something new.

Adam realizes that learning is idiosyncratic for each person. As such, he sees the value of academic service-learning as allowing students opportunities for self-directedness in their educational process. I sense that for Adam service-learning presents a venue to urge students to build connections and relationships while providing a context within which students can apply knowledge and integrate it with experience. As I interpret Adam's story, it appears that developing social imagination in students is an crucial aim as that makes it not only possible to question and scrutinize our world, but to imagine its transformation (Herzberg, 1994)..

Faith and Trust in Something Bigger

*Faith is taking the first step even when you don't see the whole staircase.
~ Martin Luther King, Jr.*

Adam is comfortable with who he is – during our conversations I detect no pretense or posturing. His authenticity is refreshing. I find that Adam’s hope and trust reflect a spirituality that spills over into his every word and action when we are together.

He is confident without arrogance, compassionate without expectation:

I’m passionate about compassion. I think that’s me, my passion for seeing that we can contribute and still achieve what we want comes through. Of course, this whole idea of holistic thinking, of helping [students] see the broader scope, constantly asking questions, spend more time on global than on micro things. I have so much faith and trust in something that’s bigger than me that I’m not really that fearful about things. I’m not fearful to take risks. You know, my job, I love it and would never want to lose it but my identity isn’t tied up with it. I have enough stability that if I lost this job because I did something that was right it wouldn’t affect who I am. And if things don’t work out, I don’t take it personally. I see the long term, the broad picture. I think that’s part of the spiritual development and I see that we are the oneness of things, which allows me to see the holistic picture and see the big picture pretty well. I have a lot of trust and faith and optimism. I don’t have very much stress about things in general the way some other people do. I just see everyone with sort of a lot of wounds and not a lot of joy. I have to contribute to the spirituality part, you know see beyond behaviors, see beyond what they say...sort of Rogerian unconditional positive regard.

I’m very intuitive and also very spontaneous. Whatever it seems like they need that day, I won’t go forward with my lesson if I feel like this isn’t going to work. I do that all the time based on what I am perceiving, or asking, or hearing from them. It’s a real lot of flexibility and interaction, hands-on as much as I can.

The picture of Adam that emerges for me is someone who is vulnerable and sensitive, yet open to and accepting of whatever life holds for him. Adam is comfortable with whom he is and his focal point is relationships. A centering of self permits Adam to be acutely aware of control and dominance when it arises around him. Sensitivity to these potential influences in teaching assists Adam in his abilities to craft opportunities for others to see their possibilities for transformation of themselves and the world around

them. As I see it, creating a meaningful learning environment for his students is grounded in Adam's enthusiasm for life and his faith and brings him joy.

We All Have Our Gifts

We do not see things as they are.

We see them as we are.

~ Anais Nin

Adam embraces life with passion. Connectedness, oneness appears to be a fundamental part of his spiritual core, yet there are times when Adam is a paradox. In one dialogue he says he is very independent and finds having to ask for help especially frustrating. On the other hand he wants to help his students experience the humanity and beauty of the world around them. Reaching out, supporting, giving are qualities I attribute to Adam. While open to sharing himself and to learning from others, I can only speculate as to what in Adam's history makes it difficult for him to appeal for support when it is needed. Although my interpretation of Adam's dialogue points to sensitivity to domination, his story reveals a deeper internal contradiction between his perceptive, caring side and his serious, controlling side:

I think one of the skills I have is being able to tie things together. I can tell you have everything relates.... I let them know up front, if you need a lot of structure and a lot of detail and if you are into everything being organized, I'm probably going to annoy you a little bit. But you know, I'll care, I'll care about them and tell them to tell me what they need. And I try to give them a lot of avenues to continually say "here's what I'm not getting" or "here's what I am getting." I'm constantly asking for feedback.

Most of our conversations focus in on how you change your own view on things. You know, where you are not aware of things about yourself or others, your own emotions, your own behaviors. What do you need to change? Where are you not congruent? It's mostly about their personal missions and how can they work with others to make change.

I'm concerned about how other people react to what I'm doing and saying and feeling. There's a lot of perceptiveness. I'm constantly on guard – some might call it Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome, hyper-vigilant, but I call it useful. [I am] really sensitive, being really mindful and neurotic, yeah – I am – and caring, disorganized sometimes, and tangential sometimes to help things relate and that's sometimes how I characterize myself at least a little bit. I think there is a serious side to me and then it's very controlling. And then there's the adaptive style and then there is the much more playful side that just kind of relates and stuff. I think they all come across in teaching.

I think the neurotic part is to continually adapt, adapt, adapt, adapt. I don't know, maybe that's too much. Maybe sometimes it's better to stick with the game plan even though the defense is perfectly set up. Maybe something will happen differently than how you think.

I also philosophically think that the more [students] think they are in control, the more engaged they will become because they have more power. I think if you look at almost every mode of adaptive behavior it's a symptom of powerlessness or so it seems. Perceived or real, it doesn't matter. ...the more power they have the more they will be engaged and they will learn. I trust that. It might not be exactly how I feel it should be, but they will get it. They will be more involved; therefore, they will be more motivated. We know the more motivated the more likely to feel good themselves or do things that will feel good for them and they also will take those risks to build skills.

I can only speculate about the impacts and influences on teaching that result from conflicts between Adam's serious, controlling side and his playful, adaptive side. What I do see is that Adam's present practice of experiential learning coupled with classroom discussion to enhance students' worldviews satisfies his expectations for opening the eyes of his students to power differences, to diverse points of view, and to other cultures. For now knowing he has somehow connected, somehow made a difference for one student at one moment is significant to Adam and appears to be "enough" – enough to promote student success, enough to encourage growth, enough to help students flourish. This sense of sufficiency melds with his personal worldview as it allows him to care, to

contribute, to make a difference. What will happen when it no is no longer “enough” is simply conjecture at this point on my part. The day may come when his disappointments and frustrations with the results achieved by education’s emphasis on individual success in attaining standard objectives may push Adam to move from adaptation to advocacy for educational reform.

Lyn’s Teaching Philosophy – Her Quest for Voice

And the day came when the risk it took to remain tight inside the bud was more painful than the risk it took to blossom.

~Anais Nin

Although Lyn has been teaching economics and health care full-time for several years at a suburban community college located in a rapidly growing area of the city, she does not consider herself a “professional teacher” as it has not been her “lifetime” profession. Instead, Lyn has pursued a number of career interests without consciously considering teaching until later in life.

Earning an undergraduate degree in communications, Lyn worked in public relations for a hospital clinic before returning to school to complete a Master’s degree in Nutrition and become a clinical registered dietician. Several years later Lyn pursued another Master’s degree - this time in Health Services Administration – which led her to follow a career in human resources prior to her entry into the teaching field.

I meet Lyn at her office, which is cramped but well-organized and rather devoid of personal items that could give me any insight into her makeup. We move to a small conference room adjacent to her faculty office. It is sterile space, sparsely furnished with a table, two chairs, and floor lamp. My early experience with this cold environment leads

me to wonder if Lyn will share openly and honestly. I did not need to worry long – Lyn was quite candid and thoughtful. Maybe it is our similarities in age and background, maybe my assurance of confidentiality, or maybe a need on our parts to seek out a “safe spot” to raise questions and examine ourselves and our teaching that makes conversation come easily.

Peel Back the Skin

*The mind has exactly the same power as the hands;
not merely to grasp the world, but to change it.
~ Colin Wilson*

Lyn is accomplished and capable; nonetheless she continues to push herself in new directions. She sets high standards and expectations for herself and her students. I characterize Lyn as someone tackles life head on. It is important to her that everyone stretch and strive to be all we are capable of becoming. While Lyn does not see herself as a seasoned veteran in the classroom, she is quick to point out her knack for making the complex simple so that learning is improved:

I have a very checkered past. I'm not a professional teacher. I never pursued teaching as a career. I was always involved in other things. I was getting a little less able to work 60 – 80 hours a week so started examining my life. I've been teaching pretty full-time now for roughly six years. It started out as a way of getting a reasonable 30 – 40 hour week and would allow me time for some of my other interests.

When growing up I was always the shy kid who didn't want to talk to anybody. That I can stand up in front of people and comfortably talk to them is not natural for me, but it is certainly something people can learn. I think it is to their benefit to do so. When I set my mind to something I usually figure out how to be successful. I like to solve problems with others. I like to mix it up. [F]rom a very early age I had the point of view that I could do anything that I set my mind to. And, I know that was not of my own doing. I think it was [my father's] strong repetition of what we were capable of. Not only did he have high expectations, but he honestly

felt that we were capable of doing these things. School was always something that I was successful at; I enjoyed it. School was an important part of my life. The family I was brought up in provided me that secure environment and the confidence level that I could do pretty much whatever I wanted to.

My particular philosophy is that what I want people to carry away are some foundational understandings of how processes and people work in markets. And, I want them to have an understanding of how decisions are made, what directs people in one way or another so they can understand their own behavior better and they can use their understanding of human behavior to help them make better decisions in the business environment. What I ultimately want to do is give them no fear. I want them to be able to realize that a good deal of what's going on in economics is fairly common sense. I want it to be easy to understand, but logical and rational. These are maybe big, complex issues but you can break them down into pieces that are possible for them to understand. So I want them to come away with some ability to look at what is happening in the world around them, either on an individual level or a larger national level, and understand how the pieces fit together a little bit better.

[Students] are more engaged in learning when they are active. And, being involved in intervening, it puts a human face or a personal face on it. I don't necessarily give them [an assignment] because I worked in the health field for awhile, but because it has relevance in their lives. I like them to be able to understand why they go in certain directions. One of the tools I spend a lot of time working on is the cost benefit analysis. I want them to understand, to get an appreciation for other's perspectives, to look at their own views of what is beneficial and how it might be different from someone else's. I pick something that allows [students] to peel the skin back and see the different principles actually play out. They can feel it. They can see it even if the outcome is different than what I value.

I am not particularly interested in training people to do particular kinds of skills, although I know they need to have those skills. I think we need to teach people instead how to be critical thinkers so whatever institution they are in, whatever the skills of this new time frame might be, they know how to learn. They know how to get what they need. They know how to problem solve. They know the basics on making good, quality decisions.

I think part of my role is to be a little bit of the cheerleader sometimes by talking to them about the things they can do or are capable of doing. I think my job is to help them focus on school, to recognize the importance of doing well, to recognize that they are capable of doing well and to recognize that if they have issues to get help. We spend a lot of time talking about things like uncertainty and how to control one's uncertainty

or how to get more complete information so that you are making quasi-informed choices or as good an informed choice as you can make.

Lyn comes to teaching as a content expert whose teaching philosophy and style were acquired within the intricacies of the varied and complicated context of her life experiences. While the culture of the college where she teaches influences her thinking about teaching, Lyn reveals in her story limited opportunity for the discourse and dialogue central to critical reflection on her teaching and the assumptions that are embedded in her practice. How Lyn sees herself and her role colors her perceptions of her students and her behaviors and attitudes in the learning environment.

Put Their Feet to the Fire

Self-expression must pass into communication for its fulfillment.
~ Pearl S. Buck

Lyn views communication and critical thinking as foundational skills that provide students with ability to examine issues and problems and the voice to articulate ideas and solutions no matter where their life path takes them. Promoting success in these areas is a priority for Lyn in her teaching as she sees them as valuable assets in the work world. Because of her business background, Lyn understands the need for students to reach beyond what they might believe they are capable of accomplishing so they are better prepared for the job market.

Many of my students don't come with good skills. One of my goals [is] to teach students to think critically. The other thing is to get them to communicate well. I make them write a lot. It's real important to me that they get better skills in terms of their abilities to communicate. What I discovered in the work force is your ability to communicate effectively has a lot to do with what gets done. You may not have even the best ideas or most important ideas, but if you can communicate them well you have a

far better chance of getting the things that you want done. [Students] need to know that while I could far more easily let them slide, I'm doing nobody a favor by allowing this to happen. The whole outside world is going to hold them to a higher standard....I'm very sympathetic to some of the problems students present, but the outside world, frankly, doesn't love them for who they are. It loves them for what they can do and they need to understand that and accept that and carry that forward. It's not unconditional love in the outside world. It's conditional based on performance and how you present yourself.

I think to be successful [students] have to differentiate themselves somehow from the great masses and be seen as someone who has not only basic knowledge, skills, and abilities, but something that makes them special. I think openness and kind of childlike joy in new experiences would be one of the things I'd like [students] to do. I would like them to recognize that doing things for personal benefit is fine, but people benefit as much from bringing others along with them then when they are just doing it for themselves. I would like them to step outside themselves.

I think it's my obligation to give feedback on what I see and hear and what I'm able to observe about them because sometimes they tend to dismiss what they do out of hand. With students I think I am responsible for giving them feedback and observation, timely and constructive. Sometimes the best thing to do is put their feet to the fire to get them to actually jump in. Once they get started I sometimes feel like I almost have to throw cold water on them. I think if we set high standards for students they will raise to them. There is some real value in that. I know my classes are required courses and students are there because they have to check it off on their list of things to do. I try to get them to see the real value of being in class is not checking it off the list but in carrying away something of value they can use later. They need to carry off not only knowledge but they need to be able to use that knowledge in ways that will end up bringing value to someone.

I like to think I treat each of [my students] as people of value. I like to try to evaluate everybody in the same way and respond to them in a way that suggests they all have something that is important about them and they all have something to bring to the table and they all deserve to be treated appropriately. I sometimes use the phrase that "if I didn't care about you I wouldn't be talking to you right now" just like I did with my kids. I hope I make everybody sense that they are getting a fair shake even if they end up hearing what they don't want to hear.

Clearly, for Lyn an important function of her work is to help students learn to think critically so they can analyze and solve problems they will face in the real world. To do this most successfully requires students to relate what is learned in college to practical applications in their lives outside college. As a result, Lyn holds herself accountable for creating a learning environment that allows her to guide, motivate and encourage her students. Lyn's approach also evidences a holistic focus as she strives to focus on the well-being of her students.

I'm Kind Of Stumbling Along

*I'm not afraid of storms, for I'm learning how
to sail my ship.
~ Louisa May Alcott*

It is about voice for Lyn. Throughout her conversations with me Lyn consistently notes the need to question, to explore, to dig down and frame your own opinions and ideas and then to share those as strongly and articulately as possible. For Lyn it is not about seeking out the singular "right" answer, but rather about wrestling with concepts and building confidence in your own abilities to judge:

I don't know that I necessarily think about using one technique or another because I was never particularly taught what to do. In some respects, I'm kind of stumbling along. I present material but I ask a lot of questions and my expectation is that the students will come up with their own answers or try to figure out examples. I do make people speak in class. I set up my classes so that 10% of their grade or a full grade level is attached to participation. You don't have to tell me the right answer, but you have to be engaged and you have to be thinking about what we're talking about and trying to wrestle with it.

The last thing I want to do is listen to my voice all the time. I want to see what they are doing and what they are thinking and all that. It's far more interesting for them to hear from each other what they are thinking than to hear my spin on things. When they get out into the work world they are

going to be expected to know how to speak for themselves and defend their positions. They might as well learn how to do it in a relatively low risk environment rather than waiting and finding out later that they are uncomfortable and they don't have the confidence.

I'm not terribly forgiving. [This] is not because it's not in my nature to be forgiving, but I want [students] to understand that when they get out into the real world it is a very conditional environment. People make judgment calls based on what they see and those judgment calls will in some cases close doors to them.

The "stumbling along" that Lyn describes results in a relegation of social responsibility to more of a discussion and dialogue within the classroom rather than something that takes place outside the classroom walls. What is evidenced here is a conflict between Lyn's need to structure and control the learning environment premised on her view that all students are not self-directed learners and her desire to enhance students' worldviews and prepare them for the realities of the workplace. Perceptions of students as other than self-directed, self-motivated learners carries with it the possibility of rejection of teaching methods that situate faculty outside the locus of control in the learning setting.

It is not clear if Lyn will embrace academic service-learning more widely in her practice. Her uncertainties with this teaching and learning strategy remain unresolved. What is apparent is that Lyn must become convinced that academic service-learning provides sufficient structure and enables reciprocal learning that will make a difference not only in the community, but also in the lives of her students.

Not Everyone Sees It the Same

*We have a hunger of the mind which asks for knowledge of all around us,
and the more we gain, the more we desire;
the more we see, the more we are capable of seeing.*

~ Maria Mitchell

Lyn sees herself as an objective, logical person who does not let her heart rule her head. Fair, balanced, and reflective are words that describe Lyn. She willingly stands up for what she believes is right and carefully defends her stance. A goal for Lyn in her teaching is to open the minds of her students to possibilities, to have them question ideologies, and to have them appreciate other perspectives. Again and again Lyn is amazed at the narrow perspectives and harsh judgments she hears expressed by her students:

I have accused myself of being Pollyanna. I don't think there is any problem with having an irrepressibly optimistic spirit, but I think sometimes I get bit because I assume people think and act the way I do and I'm surprised when they don't. It's my nature to try to present both sides of things or at least to attempt to do that even though I clearly have my own point of view. I try to be careful about letting my own political beliefs out there too much. I try to do it in a way that doesn't communicate that I think this is the only way, but I try to present why I think that makes sense. ...[S]ocial justice issues and things like that were a big deal in our house. [My parents] believed in standing up for what was right, doing the right thing, no matter the cost. I find now there are times when I have to be careful, to bite my tongue, to keep my politics...not everyone sees it the same.

I think what I identify with to some extent is problems of the powerless. I saw what my parents put up with and dealt with because of not being particularly educated, because of not having a resource other people had. I hope I'm sensitive enough to people who are somewhat powerless or disenfranchised or otherwise not able to fully benefit from their abilities and want to try and alter attitudes so that people understand better how to see the potential in people and circumstances regardless of the nature. What I find with students is that sometimes those you would expect to be more sympathetic because of their background, that sometimes they have some of the harshest and unattractive attitudes coming from people who themselves have been on the short end of the stick. It seems to me that if anybody ought to be aware of difficulties it should be people who are trying to make their way up the ladder and have not had opportunities presented to them. I think having [students] get used to looking for and seeing principles work in daily life gives them the sense of empowerment so they can understand why things may work this way and not another way and that gives them the ability to use that information to get things done that they might want to do.

What I hope I'm doing is getting [students] to widen their horizon a little bit and see not just what is on the surface but the other stuff that might lead them in a more sympathetic or compassionate direction. I try to point out when I teach that we have social responsibility to each other. If we are only operating based on what's in it for us we usually have a bad outcome and I want them to see that. I guess what I try to get people to see is a wide range of situations and the negative stereotypical images we get in our heads from time to time that aren't a significant percentage of the situations people are experiencing.

If I have a fault it's that I'm a very rational, reasonable person. I don't operate off of emotion too much. It's an odd thing because obviously when I teach the things that really get me excited can be things that are more social or have to do with public policy issues or issues of justice and equality kinds of things. I don't think there is anything wrong in having emotion attached to things as long as it's enthusiasm, commitment, and elements like that which are critical to getting things done even if they aren't always successful. I guess I see a difference between enthusiasm and emotion. When I think about people who get emotionally involved in issues, I think the picture in my head is sometimes irrational emotion and prejudice and being judgmental in a bad sense and things like that. Maybe that's a false differential in my head.

Working in an individualistic culture, Lyn has little opportunity for professional development that will allow her to share in courageous conversations about teaching and learning practice. As she grapples to work inside the constraints of a traditional system, Lyn finds neither adequate support nor a sense of belonging within the faculty environs. At this point, Lyn appears to prefer a lot of structure in her classroom. This allows her to have a "good feel" for what is going on in the learning setting and for what students are accomplishing. Her contentment with conventional practices carries with it the potential to hamper her contemplation of academic service-learning as useful pedagogy.

Carla's Teaching Philosophy – Her Quest for Success

Yesterday I dared to struggle. Today I dare to win.
~Bernadette Devlin

My life path has crossed with Carla's multiple times over the years. Our first encounter comes when she arrives at the office where I work to begin a stint as an intern when completing her degree. Silhouetted in the hallway in her prim, grey suit, Carla stands in sharp contrast to me with my colorful long, flowing skirt and tunic top. Despite the differences in our outward appearances, I quickly learn to appreciate the inquisitive mind, boundless energy, and passion to succeed that Carla brings to her work – qualities that Carla does not always welcome in herself.

Over time Carla's career evolved away from supporting victims of crime, as did my own. Ultimately, she becomes a community college teacher at a diverse, urban institution located in an area experiencing rapidly changing demographics. A small college with few full-time teachers, many of its faculty members assume multiple roles. At the urging of colleagues, Carla becomes the project director for a service-learning grant. Carla quickly sees the value of service-learning and grows from local advocate to national leader in the service-learning arena. It is at this point that our paths again cross. While I did not consider initially including Carla as a participant in this study, she hears about my work and asks if I might be interested in interviewing her.

Carla's office is a hodgepodge of documents, books, photos of service projects, and mementos gathered here and there. She is oblivious to her surroundings. As I enter the room, I become the center of attention. Carla greets me with a warm hug, leads me to the only chair not filled with stacks of paper, offers water and food, and asks how I am doing. Her bright smile, lilting voice, and eager attentiveness immediately put me at ease.

I ask about her national work. By Carla's own admission, being in the "limelight" is discomforting despite its acknowledgment of her accomplishment in the field. But,

success for Carla does not come from the numerous accolades she continues to receive for her work. Rather, success to Carla is balance in her life – a balance that manifests itself in an inner calmness that permeates her interactions with others. Non-judgmental and gentle, Carla gives the impression of being the voice of reason in the midst of confusion:

Success can be defined in so many different ways, but everybody needs to design it for themselves. So often it's defined as either making money or having a good education. I think that people need to figure out for themselves what makes them feel successful and they have to understand that it may not be what everyone else thinks is successful. To me, I think I have been a success, a huge success. I've been able to have a balanced life.

I am an introvert, professionally and personally, but with the ability to pretend like I'm not. It's tiring. When you go home, or at least when I go home, you just want to not deal with people. It's like I did that all day. I'm going to curl up with a book and have some alone time and recharge.

[To teach] it's like being the energizer bunny in some ways. You are giving of yourself in ways that really cause you to reach beyond your comfort zone and it's tiring, you wind down. Every time I step into that classroom it's like I have to be up, on stage, giving 110% - being on. The interaction is energizing and then once it's done and you're off the stage again, you're like, whew!

When teaching I'm "in character" so to speak. I think when I'm teaching I become someone else. It's almost like acting. I'm not dishonest about who I am, but I'm opening myself up, making myself vulnerable and that isn't always comfortable. The part of me that I bring into the classroom is a high expectation that the students will do well right from the get go and an understanding that they need to figure out how to do well.

I think you have to be a "think outside the box" sort to keep teaching exciting. You've got to be able to stretch those limits; it does nothing but help the students. In my view, becoming static means becoming dull and students don't benefit from that sort of teaching. Not too many of us are good at learning by being talked at. I don't like to lecture in front of the room. The fun part is having [students] involved in learning and having them understand their strengths, you know, building the relationships between each other. All of that is what is really exciting. Sometimes I think we stick with the lecture or lecture/discussion sort of format because

it's safe, it's comfortable, and we can control it. No surprises. Not only can we plan it from point A to point B but we can test it pretty easily.

Professionally, [I am] energetic and, I don't know how to say it, a partnership builder. I am good at building relationships, at connecting people so that things can happen. I'm approachable, open, and I'm really interested in other people, in learning about them and from them.

Carla enters teaching with a substantial body of personal experiences and it appears she makes some deeply private choices about who she is and how that conception of self weaves into who she is as a teacher. What I see in Carla is a sense that teaching is something she "does" – it is not who she "is." Implications of this separation of personal from professional self positions are increased stress on the technical aspects of teaching and learning coupled with the creation of traditional boundaries and role definition in the classroom setting. Discovering where she stands within the context of the teaching and learning environment is a challenge revealed in Carla's story.

You Don't Have to Know Everything

Continuous effort – not strength or intelligence – is the key to unlocking our potential
~Sir Winston Churchill

Sometimes tentative and uncertain, Carla continuously pushes herself to reach beyond her comfort sector, to try new ventures. When doing this, Carla engages in the sometimes challenging work of self-examination in order to confront preconceived notions so she can go forward. In our conversation, Carla notes that staying in her "rut" would often times be easier than moving beyond where she is - easier, yes, but satisfying, no. Carla's drive to succeed, to offer the best of herself while maintaining the life balance that is important to her, does not tolerate preserving the status quo.

It excites Carla to help people move ahead and to see the work and their opportunities in a different way. Carla views her role in teaching as facilitator and mentor, encouraging her students to recognize their unique abilities to learn and to succeed. She looks at her students from a holistic perspective, appreciating that education is far more than the transmission of information:

I felt that teachers knew everything and that they really were so confident in what they knew. That made them really good teachers – they were just brilliant. I was unsure and I think that was one of the biggest stumbling blocks [in my teaching]. My mentor...was there to be supportive and really show me that you didn't have to know everything to be a good teacher. It was really more about being a good communicator, being compassionate to your students, and being supportive.

Education is more than just mastery of content. We have an obligation, at least I think we do, to help [students] with what I call life skills – communication, interpersonal abilities, aesthetic awareness. I think it's a really important thing to learn how to be a team member, how to work with others collaboratively, how to express yourself and get heard. [This is] a much more holistic approach to teaching. These are the sorts of skills that can impact [student] success.

I know [my students] can progress. I realize that other people, [my] students, who might be uncomfortable [with scrutiny], can get to that level of putting on the armor and going out there and performing at a very high level even if that's not their normal mode [to put themselves out there]. I think it makes you want to help them build that armor and learn how to do that.

There isn't much responsibility or accountability attached to a passive [learning] process, at least that's how I see it. It's easy for students to slip through the cracks and disengage when they have little or no role in the classroom other than being a receptacle for information. We live in the moment without much conscious reflection on what it all means or what it could mean. We react without information. We make assumptions. We adopt a particular position or opinion without giving it much thought.

It's good to understand why you make the choices you make. [Students] need to be empowered to know that they can go beyond what is comfortable for them. We tend to gravitate toward what we're comfortable with. I think it's good to push [students] beyond their comfort zone so they understand they do have a comfort zone and there are things outside their

comfort zone. I think a lot of people everywhere don't realize that they tend to react, participate, live, within a certain comfort zone.

A successful careerist, entering the teaching profession was not a whimsical decision for Carla. Moving from an established career involved risk, but offered Carla the opportunity to continue her community involvement while participating in work that accommodated her changing ideals. Although Carla lacked confidence in her abilities to teach, she brought maturity and intuitive insight to her work. Carla's efforts in the classroom are firmly situated in her belief that learning is about more than competency in the various disciplines and courses listed in the college catalog. It is about learning to understand who you are and to develop your potential, whatever that might be.

Teaching from the Book

Knowing a great deal is not the same as being smart, intelligence is not information alone but also judgment, the manner in which information is collected and used.

~Dr. Carl Sagan

For Carla learning is more than rote memorization. Integrating opportunities to problem-solve and explore perceptions is an essential ingredient in her teaching. It is imperative to Carla that individuals be able to support what they think, feel, and believe. Carla also embraces the notion that relevancy in learning means connecting what takes place in the classroom setting to real life. Gleaning from her own difficult experiences as a student, Carla came to teaching with a heightened awareness of differences in learning styles and how these impact the learning process. By understanding that students learn in diverse ways, Carla appreciates the need to use an assortment of teaching strategies to accomplish her goals, which are student success, critical thinking and understanding of

self. Overall, Carla works to flex the learning environment to meet student needs so they are empowered:

I always had trouble in school myself and I knew I was bright. But, I had trouble in school because it was always read the book, do what the teacher tells you, and study to the test. It wasn't until I was older that I realized that isn't the kind of learner I am. I realized that people learn in different ways and I'm much more of a person who learns by doing. I always thought of the typical learner as someone who can read the material, memorize the names and dates, spit them back, and do well on the test. I need more than just cold information in a book. I do better if I know stories, examples, real life interaction.

I had to figure out how to do well. I think a lot of people, particularly at the community college level, come in and may not have been horribly successful in K-12 because there is only one learning style you get traditionally in K-12. If you don't connect with that learning style you are not going to succeed. That's what I faced – I mean I succeeded simply because I was smart enough to do so. I always tested well so I always did well, but I didn't learn.

I realized that the standard teaching from the book that I had grown up with was not necessarily the best way for people to learn and that was a real eye-opener to me. In general, I would say the majority of my students are very, very bright people who don't have the confidence to understand how smart they are. [They] are coming to the community college to progress in life and really need to understand how smart they are to make it happen. I expect [my students] to interact and learn, not to just be passive and accept what I say. I think everyone learns differently and I think service-learning gives students the ability to learn regardless of their learning style. If they are a concrete learner who needs to read, they can do that. If they are somebody who learns from experience, they can do that. They can play on their strong suit. Part of being a good teacher is teaching people to use their strong suit.

What I want from my class is...that they learn. I want them to understand why the answers are what they are. [A]s you ask more of them, if you use different techniques to teach, [the students] start to realize they are learning much better by doing some cooperative things, by doing small group work, interactive work. The first class nobody wants to talk; by the last class you can't shut them up. That's success to me.

[For students] having somebody, having a guide, having a mentor, to help you see and to help you make connections so you can change. I think that

is just an invaluable partnership. I think education needs to be more about partnerships in learning than about the transmission of knowledge.

Emphasis in Carla's teaching is on collaborative learning. Her efforts highlight the sharing of information and experience while nurturing relationships of equality that promote new growth in both student and instructor. It is apparent to me from Carla's story that she has redefined her role from that of "knowledge expert" to one of "learning partner and facilitator." In my reflection on Carla's words, I see that it is her desire for learners to be connected and supportive of each other's learning that initially led her to academic service-learning (Tomasello & Ratner, 1993).

It's Grappling with Ideas, with Issues

*The ability to think straight, some knowledge of the past,
some vision of the future, some skill to do useful service,
some urge to fit that service into the well-being of the community –
these are the most vital things education must try to produce.
~Virginia Crocheron Gildersleeve*

Carla questions everything and expects her students to do the same. She believes we often accept information as a set of truths set in stone without considering assumptions, misperceptions, and other factors that influences thinking on a particular idea or issue. She is concerned that labels students accept restrict how they define their lives and can be a detriment to their success. Carla also sees that students must understand themselves in order to examine the moral and ethical dimensions relevant to social justice topics:

It's one thing to think about something, to have ideas. But, it is quite another to take a stand especially when you don't have the confidence, don't necessarily really understand why you feel a certain way. You react based on emotion rather than examining things. [Students] need to think about [issues] logically and divorce emotion from facts. That's really hard

for students to do. I think that's how they learn to think. Even when they would come in with "facts from another class" I would challenge them to confirm those facts. Students don't think that way. They tend to think whatever their professor tells them is a truth.

I want [students] to make conscious decisions that are grounded in information that has integrity. They need to be able to sift through all the stuff that is out there and figure out when something is factual and trustworthy and when something isn't that way. They need to be able to make informed decisions and to explore options in making those decisions. They can only build confidence within themselves if they can verbalize why they feel and the way they feel. Doing that can be pretty risky sometimes.

As an instructor I see my role as making [students] be the ones to think about [issues] and if I offer my opinion or try to influence the discussion, they are going to know it's my opinion and that could make them make up their minds because they either respect me or they don't like me. I'm not there to tell them how to think. I'm there to help them learn how to think. Sometimes what you want to believe isn't what the truth is. It can be very difficult to get past that. Sometimes it's very hard to let go and change your mind about something when the facts are there staring at you. And, facts are one thing, interpretation another. Objectivity is key here, but not always easy to accomplish. It's possible to skew anything if you really want to.

Life is messy and when we would have a class on the criminal justice system students would go out and sit in a courtroom and watch the system work. They would always come back shaking their heads going "oh my gosh, it's not as clean and straight forward as it is in the book." It's much messier in real life and there are a lot of different issues that impact it. That's where the book learning and the street hit, connecting what seems "abstract" to the reality of life. I think students come to us in a whole spectrum of where they are with regard to their idea of what they owe and what society owes them. A lot of students I deal with come in with the real feeling they are owed. It is interesting to see that change with service-learning.

I would say that service learning is an opportunity to connect academic learning with real life experience. And, to actually make the connections and the transitions in the use of knowledge because I think that is one of the things that people have the hardest time doing. You tend to compartmentalize. I think service learning instead of being compartmentalized thinking broadens it so that the learning becomes part of the person and the person can take the learning and apply it in the community universally.

At first I really didn't get [service learning]. I just couldn't quite get it when people were explaining it to me. Once again, that's my learning style. The more we talked about it, the more I realized how different it was than doing an internship and how beneficial it could be, even in criminal justice, to have real life experience and be able to connect that to the criminal justice field. I got real excited. When I tried it with my first class and they came back so excited by the experience they had, I was just sold. It was great having them come back with these wonderful and exciting experiences and talking about how it relates to the criminal justice system and how it gave them a different view of their own future.

Carla seeks to help students organize their experiences around principles and abstractions. Her goal is to have learners make sense out of the constantly changing texture of their experiences. As Carla describes her teaching, I see that she aligns herself with a constructivist approach. Not only does Carla assume that students are active participants in their construction of knowledge, but also she recognizes that values are a critical part of the inquiry process and seeks to assist her students in understanding how these values influence and frame their learning experiences (Caffarella & Barnett, 1994). Carla's desire to build self-confidence and to facilitate individual growth and learning success point to nurturing personal change as a probable attribute found in teacher's supportive of academic service-learning.

Robert's Teaching Philosophy – His Quest for Involvement

*In every community there is work to be done.
In every heart there is the power to do it.
~Marianne Williamson*

Raised in a small farming community, Robert becomes interested in math and science in the 1950's after the first space launch. After working as a teaching assistant at the university where he is pursuing his graduate degrees, Robert teaches math at the

junior high and high school levels for several years before returning to the family farming operation. No longer able to teach full-time because of the demands of farming, Robert remains connected to the teaching profession that he dearly loves by taking on evening classes at the local community college.

After several years of farming and teaching, Robert has the opportunity to become a lobbyist for a farming organization. This leads to his work on a rural community development project focused on economic development and holistic management of resources. When this project ends Robert returns to the community college and full-time teaching once again. Aware of his service-learning work, we are introduced at a recognition event sponsored by Campus Compact. As I listen to him describe his teaching and service-learning projects, I hear passion in his voice. Robert is committed to doing what he can to encourage engaged citizenship among his students.

Throughout a somewhat varied career pathway, a constant quest in Robert's life has been community involvement:

We worked with six communities [on the grant project] and basically what we did was what I describe as the soft side of community development. We didn't build buildings or put in pipelines, we worked with the people. Basically, [I was working] within the community trying to make the community itself more effective and to build what is known as social capital. We were some of the first to use that terminology.

[When on the farm] I was involved in our community there. I did a lot of projects with the community and then worked with neighboring communities and at the county level to make things better. [Using service-learning] seems a natural consequence of things I've done before. I always found that [in] the rural communities I worked with things seemed to go a lot better when people got involved. And the more people you got involved, the more talents these people brought to the table, the better things seemed to go. It seemed to me the natural consequence for younger people when they are going to school and when they are involved in getting an education, they need to get that perspective of working in the community and working together and trying to better the common good. I

think it helps to get them out of their own little world and see there are other people and that they can actually help them. It gets them away from focusing on their own little problems, not that their problems are little, and they can help other people with their problems.

For Robert an educated citizenry is more than a collection of individuals with practical skills, occupational proclivities, and monetary ambitions. Instead, he endorses the notion that individuals must be knowledgeable of one another's lives and the ways in which decisions and actions of one influence the lives of others. Robert highlights the importance of entering into a practice of public engagement and social concern that uses collaborative and inclusive decision-making processes in order to service the well-being of society (Rhoads, 2000).

Midwife of the Mind

*The best teacher is one who suggests rather than dogmatizes,
and inspires his listener with the wish to teach himself.
~Edward Bulwer-Lytton*

Robert prefers to think of his work as a birthing of the mind. He sees his role as supporting and encouraging learning, sharing and explaining information about various theories and concepts, and challenging performance while boosting personal responsibility for the products that result in the learning process. He is tutor, mentor, facilitator and advocate. Robert is someone who listens closely, striving to hear the message from the perspective of the speaker rather than assuming he inherently knows the intended meaning:

I wouldn't describe my job as teacher. I almost want to say coach, but I don't carry a whistle. A lot of times we have these faculty meetings and they always go around the room and introduce everybody, what's your name and what do you teach, and I never like to answer that question

because I don't think I teach anything. I think I am, and I can't find a really good word for it, the closest I can come is facilitator, perhaps a Facilitator of Learning or maybe Midwife of the Mind – something like that.

As an example, [with my tutoring project] I'm trying to get [students to realize they have the capability to be of assistance to middle or high school students. I think that's a real esteem builder to find out that while they aren't taking the highest level math class here at the community college, when they go talk to those middle school students they are "math gods" and hopefully the middle school or high school students will look up to them. That builds their sense of worth, plus it engenders in them a dedication to help their fellow human beings to try to improve the situation for the entire community. I think it improves their interpersonal communication skills and makes them more "others oriented" and not focused completely on themselves and their problems.

Robert looks to education as a critical pathway to advance the caring-self needed to accomplish active and thoughtful citizenship. His desire is that students attain active roles in society based on an attitude of care and concern for others. Although Robert does not underline sweeping social change or transformation models of service-learning in his teaching, he is focused on producing citizens who can help promote justice in society (Battistoni, 1997).

Looking over the Elephant

*Learning is not so much an additive process,
with new learning simply piling up on top of existing knowledge,
as it is an active, dynamic process in which the connections are constantly changing
and the structure reformatted.
~K. Patricia Cross*

Lowman (1995) notes that exemplary college teaching engenders active learning of facts, theories, and methods and of the relationships that potentially can between these bits of information and other learning a person has assimilate. Robert is cognizant of the

importance of taking the abstract to the real, the practical so that it has meaning within the context of the students' lived experiences. In Robert's view, "real learning" comes not from simply receiving information, but from taking it on board and incorporating it into the tapestry of the mind:

I teach Math a little bit differently. I think the studies show that adult learners learn by verbally processing the information more so than – you know I make a distinction between pedagogy and androgogy. I think adults learn differently than children and I find that a lot of my colleagues tend to teach community college students as if they were fifth graders, which to my mind doesn't work all that well. So I tend to think, at least to my satisfaction, that adults tend to learn by verbally processing the skills they need. Adults learn by assimilating what they are getting into what they already know. If you give them a new piece of information the first thing is to find a hook to hang it on. They are mentally picturing hanging your coat on a coat rack. You know the first thing you do if someone hands you a coat is you walk up and down looking for a hook to hang it on. So one of the things adults need to do when they have information to process is they need to try to figure out where does that fit with what I know already and how do I associate that with something I already know so it fits and a lot of time, we as adults, in order to do that we have to verbalize that. We have to take the new information and verbally massage it, move it around and I think of it as looking over the elephant. We have to look at the back end of the elephant and the front end of the elephant and verbalizing what we see until we get to a point where we put it into verbal context and now we now recognize there is a hook we can hang this on.

I find it very helpful for my students to, once I present a new concept or new piece of information to them, to let them verbalize this with their partners and explain it to each other because I find they can usually find a way to verbalize and explain it to their peers better than I can. There is a certain amount of time I spend explaining the material myself so that core, that 20 to thirty percent can pick it up from me and they then can hopefully help the others to shoot up to an understanding.

Robert sees the need to create self-directed learners who can continue on with their learning once they leave his classroom. He guides students in developing their

abilities to analyze and use logical, rational thinking to solve problems. Robert is a resource, supporting students in their quest to understand why and how they approach subject matter and learn rather than someone who spoon feeds material and expects memorization. Robert's conception of teaching is a reflection of who he is as an individual. His orientation affects the teaching methods employed and the learning tasks emphasized.

It's About Being a Good Citizen

*No one is born a good citizen...the process continues to evolve
over a lifetime.
~Kofi Annan*

Moving students beyond their cocoon of self-involvement into the messiness of life and its responsibilities is something Robert values in his work. He articulates no vision for his students beyond their acceptance of responsibility for themselves, their actions, and the outcomes of these acts. Robert knows that each student will shape life as they choose, building the road as she travels. He understands that while we all live in an imperfect world, we must remain open to new perspectives and seek to avoid limiting ourselves:

I think the number one responsibility of public education is to build good citizens and help students ignore or inculcate the values that lead to good citizenship including the concern for the common good. [Students] always ask me when I give them an assignment "do you want our papers" and I say "only if you want credit for it." I try to build within my students a sense of personal responsibility through some regular classroom activities, but also try to teach them they are responsible for their own education. Its part of their responsibility to make sure their work gets turned in on time and it's not my job to go hound them about their work. It's their job to turn it in on time and it's their job to be sure they get the best education they can possibly get. That's one thing I think is missing from our perspective of today's educational process. Over the last thirty years I've taught it seems like [students have] been looking more to me to be responsible for their learning. They want us to tell them exactly what to

do, when to do it, how to do it, and they don't seem to get it that they are responsible for this – it's their responsibility to learn and get the most out of the courses they are taking. I try to bring that to their attention.

Sometimes I think we lose site of the perspective of [giving up our personal benefit for the common good] and we tend to get wrapped into the moment. So, one of the things that concern me in developing good citizens is to try to bring to the forefront the idea that you need to look beyond right now and consider tomorrow – and you need to think beyond yourself and think about the world in a bigger way. We are no longer isolated like we were a hundred years ago.

Robert's beliefs influence and shape his teaching style. His use of academic service-learning focuses on personal responsibility and positions students as both teacher and learner. While this approach opens the window to issues such as homelessness, poverty, and economic inequities, it does not necessarily foster mutuality or an ethic of care. It does offer an opportunity for students to move any isolationist tendencies and connect to diverse peoples and cultures. Such connections make dialogue across differences a possibility (Rhoads, 1997).

What's in it for Me

The language of citizenship suggests that self-interests are always embedded in communities of action and that in serving neighbors one also serves oneself.
~Benjamin R. Barber

Robert's quest for community is tempered with an understanding that balances between individual benefit and the common good is necessary in today's complex society. He seeks to construct possibilities that take us beyond our own survival to visions that decrease isolation and build connections. A slogan that would define Robert is "we can do better together" – and it is this sort of slogan that Loeb (1999) embraces when describing the Merton's ethic of care. Loeb states that we must willingly look

beyond our limited interests to embrace a world worthy of redemption even though it will never be without suffering or pain:

I think one of the things I see in our society is I see a decline in the willingness of individuals to sacrifice their own personal benefit for the common good. I see that in a variety of ways but I think our culture plays into this. We've always had this dual between the rugged individualist and our own good. We've had this sort of John Wayne, rugged individual image tossed into our minds. And I think this is one reason why the cowboy has been such an icon in our culture – it [symbolizes] what we really admire and seem to value highly – it's this rugged individualism. But, I think at some point it gets a little over blown and we tend to focus more on our individual situation than focusing on the common good. And things we do, ah, we do need collectively to promote the common good rather than being focused on ourselves individually and constantly looking out for number one. One of the things I'd say a good citizen is, is the person who has a sense of promise about balancing between looking into their individual needs and looking out for their individual welfare and sacrificing, at times, their individual best interest to promote the common good. I think in some cases there is an error on the other side in that you can be too concerned about the common good and not enough about your individual benefit. But I think in the United States at this time we hear the other side where we are rather being too individualistic and not doing enough for the common good. On the Community Development circuit we all listen to WIIFM, which stands for what's in it for me. Sometimes you have to take a very broad perspective of what's in it for me and think instead that it's going to be a long-term benefit not as much as for me as for my grandkids or great-grand kids. I think we lose site of that perspective and we tend to get wrapped into the moment. So, one of the things that concern me in developing good citizens is to try to bring to the forefront the idea that you need to look beyond right now and consider tomorrow – and you need to think beyond yourself and think about the world in a bigger way. We are no longer isolated like we were a hundred years ago.

Robert's views incorporate the ideas expressed by Loeb (1999) concerning the soul of a citizen. Loeb notes that "silence is more costly than speaking out, because it requires the ultimate sacrifice – the erosion of our spirit" (p. 23). Failure to make our voice heard allows the environment to be ravaged, greed to run rampant, and families to sleep in the streets. Robert seeks to incorporate in his teaching the importance of

connecting our lives to our values in order to speak on the outside the way we feel on the inside. Community involvement is a mechanism to allow lives to count for something (Loeb, 1999).

You Have to Communicate

*Deep listening is miraculous for both listener and speaker.
When someone receives us with open-hearted, non-judging,
intensely interested listening,
our spirits expand.
~Sue Patton Thoele*

Initially I thought of Robert as a person of quiet reserve. His words were sometimes few, although always well chosen. Over time I came to see that communication was not idle conversation to Robert. It was an integral part of his quest, focusing on consciousness listening in order to “hear” the voice of others. I learned in our time together that a chance remark could elicit a lengthy, and sometimes philosophical, response. Robert sees communication as a critical tool in life. As a result he pays attention to his students’ experiences and increases the level of interaction among them in order to enhance learning:

I don’t know if the number one objective is good citizenship [in what I do], but I try to build my students to be sort of advocates for their own education and I try to build citizens who work well together. They can work together in a group setting. By working with other students hopefully they can recognize that the other students have their own strengths and weaknesses and they may or may not be the same as my strengths and weaknesses you have, but together we can double our strengths and smarten our weaknesses. They do a lot more lab-type work than the average Math class. One of the things I try to do with group work is to help students recognize that some of the other students may not be as swift on the up-take as they are, but they may find the other students are harder workers than they are or they may find other students who make better partners or whatever. So, by working in a group each one of the members of the group can contribute something to the group. One of the things I emphasize each semester, through this same mechanism as well as other

mechanisms, is to emphasize communication skills. It's pretty hard to be a good citizen if you can't communicate. I try to do this in class and in their assignments and build their confidence in their ability to convey their thoughts to others.

I know that most of the certificates and degrees include interpersonal communication too. I know that there was a real hard time [to include] that into the program cores [for associate degrees] - one public speaking course. But, I think one of the skills which needs mastering is oral communication and not so much the talking end of oral communication, but the listening end of oral communication. We tend to do the talking pretty well most times, but it's the listening where people fall short. I get them to working in groups and often times I'll ask them, what did your partner say about this situation, what did your partner tell you about solving this problem, and so on. I don't spend a lot of time overtly connecting that but I do spend time having them work in groups of two with a variety of partners. I don't let them work with the same person every time. And so hopefully working in these groups of two with different partners they can develop their oral communication skills.

Loeb (1999) notes that eloquence is desirable but not as important as kindness and concern. What is critical for Robert is not perfection of expression, but the ability to listen with both mind and heart and then act authentically. Dramatic social change is not the goal for Robert; rather it is encouraging genuineness in dialogue and commonality in a sense of purpose for life.

Teaching Who I Am

Five faculty, five quests – each a reflection of self. These teachers come to their colleges from different paths; they bring different experiences to their work. Each is teaching in his or her own way. Each is using service learning somewhat differently. Yet among them there are some commonalities. They view their teaching roles as that of facilitator, mentor, guide – their work undertaken from a holistic perspective in an effort to enhance self-understanding and the development of personal values. They see a

common humanity that binds us together in community – their work influences social values and prepares students for responsible citizenship. They value communication. – their work fosters the exploration of issues and ideas, the willingness to make informed choices, and the importance of taking a stand. These are student-centered faculty who find joy in their work and bring a positive outlook to life. Service-learning is a key component of their work despite differences in application. They are accepting of a wide scope of practice despite the common label of “service learning.” For these faculty members it is simply a good fit as it allows them to be who they are in the teaching and learning environment.

Through the analysis and writing process involved in this study, I have become aware of how my own thinking has changed. My work in narrative inquiry pushed me outside my objective, deductive communication style to explore the subjective and emergent meaning. The risks I took in stepping outside my comfort zone have had a profound impact on interpretations of my own practice and perspective of academic service-learning. The intense change this work brought about for me is discussed in chapter 5.

CHAPTER FIVE

Reflection

The Quest for Self

*Choice has always been the power of feminism.
~Ali P. Crown, The Emory Report March 4, 1996*

We are beings in the process of becoming. We are unfinished. As I continue to look critically at how I perceive my identity and my world through dialogue with self and others, the threads of consciousness that weave my reality create an ever-changing tapestry. I grow into adulthood during the 1960s and 70s - an era marked by a number of movements creating a potent social and political cauldron. Issues of liberty and warfare, civil rights, and gender injustices clash with McCarthyism and the House Un-American Activities Committee, segregation, and the push to inculcate “proper” gender values in women who stray from home and hearth to the factories during World War II. My mother is among those who wander. Wanting to contribute to the war effort, she joins the Women’s Army Corp and becomes a flight instructor. At the end of the war, she reluctantly leaves behind this woman she has become to resume her predictable life. Her silent struggle with the contradiction in her selves is not lost on me. It is in this context that I stumble on the seed of my liberal feminist self. Reacting intuitively, I believed then, as I do now, that women should have the same social, economic, and political opportunities men enjoy. I believe in choice.

Uncharted Territory

My future looms large before me as I approach graduation from high school. A good student, college is within my grasp. At this point I see choices for my future as limited: marriage, work, or continued school. Lacking a steady date, much less a committed relationship, marriage does not seem a likely possibility. And work means one thing for young women like me – days at the local telephone company until a suitable marriage partner is found. Three minutes into my interview with the company, I know I cannot handle the tedious task of calling yellow page directory advertisers day after day. Despite my hesitancy, college appears to be my only viable option. No one in my family has been to college. Few of my close friends even consider college and none are willing to commit to more than a semester at the local business school. “First generation college student” is not a term of art at the time I prepare to enter the university, but this descriptor plainly portrays who I am. As I plan to venture alone into uncharted territory, I fear the unknown and begin to question my self and my purpose in life.

No Self-Made Woman

Born into poverty, the child of migrant workers, my father seldom speaks about the difficult struggles his mother and his sisters endure in order to care for their families in the aftermath of the Depression. When he does comment, his words make little sense to me. As a child, I delight in visits to the tiny, rustic community where my father’s family lives. Considered a “city kid” by my cousins, they laugh at my delight in gathering eggs from the hen house for breakfast, swimming afternoons in the irrigation canals, bathing in a wash tub filled with water hauled by hand from the well and heated on a coal

stove, and snuggling into an old, hand-made feather bed at night. These things frame something I see in my childhood as a great adventure rather than the result of limited entrée to such elemental commodities as indoor plumbing, sewer systems, and gas and electricity. Only as I grow older do I begin to see the sharp inequities between my life style and that of kin who reside in rural Colorado.

Although without formal education beyond the eighth grade, my father brings other admirable traits to the table. A man of few words and tremendous integrity, my father values hard work, his family, and fair-mindedness. With steadfast determination and perseverance he becomes a successful “self-made man.” Despite his own accomplishments my father accepts as true the notion that there is little, if any, room for a “self-made woman” in the world as he interprets it. In my father’s eyes it is education, and only education, that will provide the opportunity for life beyond poverty for a woman who finds she must support herself and her family. There are no questions from my father about my decision to enter college, only silent nods and a slight smile as I nervously share my pronouncement.

Because She Can

Resolute in his conviction that I should always be able to fend for myself, I am not surprised to hear my father discussing my impending departure to college with his older brother. *Because she can* – these words are spoken by my father as he and my uncle converse about my approaching journey. Even today when I think of my father, these are the first of his words that ring in my head. They are words that sustain me through difficult moments.

I recall my uncle shaking his head sadly, concerned about the “waste” involved in college for a woman. After all, my destiny is clearly articulated in my uncle’s eyes – marriage and motherhood. My father thinks differently. *She’s smart; she has something special; she’s going to make a difference – I know it* I hear my father say. I do not know what future my father is glimpsing for me at that moment or what potential he sees in me that I am blind to, but whatever he thinks my father is unwavering in his assurance that I must avail myself of this opportunity. Me, special – I do not expect that. Overhearing these few words of praise from my father, I feel a bit smug in my new found conviction that I am equal to my brothers and male cousins. I resolve to forge ahead in spite of my trepidation.

In the weeks that follow this exchange between my father and uncle, I am notified of acceptance to a large university in a nearby town. Only thirty miles from home, yet it seems like travel to a faraway country. Nervous about my choice and anxious to live up to my father’s hopes for me, I sit in the high school cafeteria and stare out at the park across the street as I wonder about the wisdom of my decision. A journalism student working for the school newspaper approaches and asks if I would like to comment on the question “why should women attend college?” Sure, I reply, as I wonder why I feel this little twinge in my stomach when I hear these words spoken. But, I do not dwell on the feeling. My mind flashes immediately to the whispers I hear among my classmates. Their hushed comments suggest college is simply another avenue to locate a husband. I bristle at the fallacy I see in their supposition. I react to the moment and blurt out “women should be able to reach their potential and contribute; their talents and abilities can make a difference in our world.” Prophetic words from the feminist stirring within me.

Standing Numb

Freedom marches, war protests, bra burning and abortion rights demonstrations are mixed into my studies at college – waves of experience wash over me but do little to erode the rock of my veneer. Internally I am a frightened young woman, beset with insecurity and timidity. I receive little enlightenment from my roommates as I enter this place of darkness. Seasoned and savvy in their understanding of college life, they chatter about sororities and diet to avoid the “freshman fifteen” and giggle about sexuality. Alone, I sit on my bed and cry.

My sociology professor, seeking to expand our consciousness of counter normative social structures and ideologies, requires us to attend campus events where a range of divisive activists speak. The messages conveyed in these sessions are delivered with passion and alarm me. They defy my unadventurous, protected upbringing. I do not know what to think or how to react. I am conflicted, divided.

Life spins wildly around me. I search frantically for something to anchor me. In my immaturity I adopt the label “feminist” without giving much, if any, conscious thought to what it means beyond my unspoken desire to take control of my life, to have choice, to be treated as an equal in the world. The rhetoric of oppression, marginalization, and exclusion churning about is largely invisible and unrecognizable to me. My Whiteness implies some privilege, my cultural encoding mists my mind. I struggle to articulate my feelings about who I am.

I do not question truth as I define it; in the wisdom of my nearly twenty years, I see no need to do so. I breathe in the moment bewildered and confused at the myriad of emotions and thoughts that swirl around me in disarray. Continuing to feel discomforted

by my intangible turmoil, I reach out for solace and grasp what seems safe, known, and rush into marriage. In the aftermath of this rash decision I find myself confused by the challenges I encounter in balancing the long-established role of conventional wife I so hastily assume with the rumblings of feminist thought that I begin to contemplate.

Discontented, confused, and uncertain of my essence, I walk away from the growing inner collisions that ensue in the following years. Aimless and feeling broken and cast aside, I reject all labels I attached to me in my past, including feminism, and struggle to recoup some rendering of self. Becoming is painful, so painful at times, that I elect to enshroud myself, hide my vulnerability, and silence my core. Banned from my consciousness, any feminist identity I might have sleeps.

In this state of internal numbness I walk into a healing profession. Subjected to daily doses of life's horror and the constant hammering of objectionable "professional humor" that seems to abound in the prosecutor's office, the protective shield I erect enables me to let the hurt of the victims of crime I work with bounce off my heart with ease. Although I champion what at the time are labeled "women's issues," such as domestic violence and child abuse, I remain detached, dispassionate, non-judgmental, and non-directive.

My early idealism begins to crumble and gives way to a rising sense that there is no truth, there is no justice. What I encounter are numerous unfolding value-laden stories devoid of precision and certainty. Wanting clarity and sameness, I only see flawed interpretations that dance around each life. Truth is illusive; justice is a deception. But, I offer up these accepted concepts to others, knowing they mask the unfairness, the aching.

Too often I see truth and justice fail to right perceived injustices. Too often these concepts do not mend the hurt.

In my work any evidence of caring, of gentleness is looked upon with disdain. Impartiality, aloofness, and skepticism are expected behaviors. I rationalize the rightness of this and stand numb. I delude myself into thinking my work is grounded in well-articulated law, thus fair, impartial, and righteous. Objectivity camouflages the potential for bonds to those I am to aid. In my quest for fairness, I turn away from others needs. By holding myself out as value-neutral in situations of injustice, I sustain the status quo. And, I continue to deny my feminism by shunning any sense of connection with those I view as “others” (Rhoads, 1997).

People enter my life; I engage them for whatever time is necessary; they leave my life. I am like a rather artificial mother bird, going through the motions of nurturing then pushing the chicks out of the nest as I fly away. Despite my attempts not to judge, I see the slap of my own principles as I go about my work.

I recall the moment I first see the influence of my preconceptions framed by my ethic of control. I talk with a mother and her young daughter, victimized in what I consider a run-down, crime-ridden mobile home park. I walk into my interview armed with the resources to move the mother from welfare to the good job which will allow her to raise her child in what I think is a “more proper” neighborhood with “better” schools. I remember the mother listening patiently as I sketch out my design.

When I finish laying out my plan, the mother politely, but purposefully, tells me that life comes with no guarantee of invulnerability. There is risk everywhere. The mobile park is home; it is where she is contented. It has been her neighborhood since

childhood. The occasional “bump” in the road of life she or her daughter encounter is simply part of living. You accept what happens and move on. I am staggered by her statement.

This incident stays with me. It takes tremendous reflection before I understand how I attempt to lace my own ideals into another’s life. I learn that just as I advocate for my own right to choose, I also must respect the choice of others.

Teaching Who I Am

*You have to leave the city of your comfort
and go into the wilderness of your intuition.
What you’ll discover will be wonderful.
What you’ll discover is yourself.
~Alan Alda*

Opening the Door

I leave my struggle to right perceived wrongs for crime victims and enter teaching. Removed from the continuous hammering of unspeakable tragedies and human suffering, I find my desensitization melting, my cynicism dissolving. It is an almost palpable sensation I describe as something akin to the crackling of a shell when peeling a hard boiled egg. No longer dulled by my exposure to the unpleasanties found in working in the criminal justice arena, I find myself becoming uncomfortable with notions of conventional teacher authority in the classroom.

I cannot voice the root of this discomfort. What I do discover is that lecturing becomes not only draining, but constraining. Influential in my professional field, now each day challenges the limits of my expertise. These students do not accept my truths as their truths. They pose questions and offer insights previously unknown to me. I begin to

reject what Marchbank and Letherby (2003) label the masculine model of teaching and learning where a student's success or failure hinges on her "ability to understand, interpret and work within the teacher's definition of reality" (p. 79). Under this model the teacher remains an aloof authority figure, empowered by her expertise. Teachers know; teachers talk; teachers teach (Crabtree & Sapp, 2002). I begin to question whether my sole voice informs or deforms learning. Barr and Tagg (1995) point out that many faculty members have so internalized this masculine or traditional way of teaching that they no longer see it as limiting. As I consider my own experience, I reflect on my participants and contemplate how each is positioned within the traditional, masculine model. I detect in their words a similar rebuffing of this long-established, masculine typology:

I am very intuitive and also very spontaneous, whatever it seems like they need that day. I do that all the time based on how I'm perceiving or hearing from them. It's a real lot of flexibility and interaction, hands-on as much as I can. I let [students] know upfront, if you need a lot of structure and a lot of detail and if you are into everything being organized, I'm probably going to annoy you a little bit. And, I tell them upfront, I'll care, I'll care about them. I tell them to tell me what they need. I try to give them a lot of avenues to continually say "here's what I'm not getting or here's what I am getting" (Adam 3:1-2).

I think I teach a little bit differently than some people do. My particular philosophy is that while I want [students] to carry away some foundational understandings of how processes and people work in markets, I want them to have an understanding of how decisions are made, what directs people in one way or another, so [students] can understand their own behavior better and can use their understanding of human behavior to help them make better decisions. I want to give them no fear. We spend a lot of time talking about things like uncertainty and how to control one's uncertainty. I think part of my role is to be a little bit of the cheerleader sometimes by talking to [students] about the things they can do or are capable of doing (Lyn 1:11-12).

There is a tremendous difference between learning about something and learning by doing something, experiencing something. Students are more profoundly impacted by something that becomes a part of their life. You read about Aids, you gather information. You talk to an Aids patient; you

gain a very different dimension (Rose 1:5). The beauty of teaching is in the students; it's in the people and not in the dictatorial process (Rose 2:6).

There are some basics they have to learn to know the class – basic knowledge they have to have but that to me can be boring. I don't like the lecture in the front of the room and the fun part is having them involved in learning and having them understand their strengths and building the relationships between each other (Carla 1:26).

I teach to promote civic responsibility, to help the next generation of leaders learn to think and act critically. I ground my definition of critical thinking in the work of Ira Shor who looked at it as something you do in the context of reflective action. It is thinking that is holistic, historically situated, and politically aware. Why else do it? In addition, I want to imbue students' hearts with an ethic of service to humankind, an ethic that is born of caring (Robert 2:1).

I detect in these participant words recognition of an affective aspect in their teaching and learning expectations. These teachers move past the edge of the transmission of knowledge in their classrooms to seize the richness of experience and incorporate student perspectives. They are open to different interpretations. There is no hint of an expectation that students be meek or silent or that there be passive acceptance of the status quo.

Participant voices, as I interpret them, tender no dazzling flash of insight for me. I am in rhythm with their movement toward a student-centered approach in which the abstract and experience become an integrated praxis and the student is considered from a holistic stance. Isolation, distancing and othering, and power in these classrooms give way to openness, listening, and sharing (Marchbank & Leatherby, 2003).

In reflecting on my own experiences, I recognize a shift that lifts the corner of my comfort quilt and allows the winds of feminism to waft gently next to me. This does not come about rapidly. In my first semesters of teaching my syllabus for each course states

“this is an educational forum not a therapeutic setting – as such, please refrain from sharing personal incidents.” With these few words, and without out intending to do so, I position myself as the center of the educational setting. My heart wants to connect with students; however, my words signal there is but one voice, my voice, to shape truth and inspire consciousness of social construction.

By means of just a few key strokes, I de-value students’ own understandings and endeavor to eradicate my own personal history from the learning environment. The language spewing from my head does not translate into the outcomes I visualize. There is a disconnect between the two. Transforming this divide takes place only after I am able to grasp the dichotomy between my teaching outlook and the constrictive practices I put into place.

I cannot say that a movement away from traditional, masculine pedagogy lives among the many faculty using academic service-learning. I only note that this appears to be so for the participants in this study. Nor can I conclude the strands of feminism I begin to experience weave themselves through the work of even a minority of service-learning practitioners. What I do glimpse are yet other questions arising for me. I see now a continuing need to contemplate, explore, and scrutinize masculine and progressive pedagogies and philosophical frames in varying ways in my quest to understand faculty perspectives and practices of academic-service learning.

Transforming the Classroom

Titus (2000) writes that feminist teachers are committed to creating education that empowers students and attempts to transform relations of power in the classroom through

shared, experiential, and non-hierarchical participatory pedagogies. Focus in the feminist classroom is on concepts of student voice, critical thinking, and dialogue in order to transform relations of oppression and dominance. Like Rhoads (1997) I come to see that “undertaking community service as an educational activity demands that we view intellectualism and nurturance as connected concerns and not as fragmented aspects of developing and clarifying identity” (p. 94).

As the portrait of myself as professor evolves, I seek to open doors previously unknown to me in order to help my students improve their critical consciousness, their questioning and reasoning abilities. I want their voices heard. I want them to embrace community rather than distance themselves from it. I want my students to take responsibility not only for their learning, but also for their living. I want them to be empowered and engaged in the creation and valuing of their knowledge.

I stand before my thirty or so freshman students, all sitting expectantly in neatly arranged rows. No one speaks. I breathe in deeply, knowing I cannot offer them the abstract education I sense they are anticipating. I suspect many know nothing other than theoretical learning. But I want more for these students determined to be tomorrow’s legal professionals. I want to connect their knowing to compassion and concern for the common good. I want to encourage mutuality in the learning process. I do not stand alone in this thinking as I hear my participants’ voice related goals:

I’m not particularly interested in training people to do particular kinds of skills, although I know they need to have those skills. But a particular set of skills now won’t necessarily give [students] what they need in another 15 or 20 years. I think we need to teach people instead how to be critical thinkers...to know how to learn. They [should] know how to get what they need. And they [should] know how to problem solve. They [should] know the basics on making good quality decisions. They [should] not be

narrowly prepared for the world, but educated so they can draw from all kinds of dispensers to put their lives together (Lyn 4:10).

[Students] read about something and then see it for real.... It's a huge advantage – that real world, here's what is happening, real life examples. [Students] get to see how some of the stuff they have been studying isn't all true and they get to see some stuff they didn't read about.... Sometimes [learning] means going into neighborhoods [students] would never expose themselves to and they develop some compassion for humans or for animals – that's a beautiful thing. I think they see the humanity and the beauty in every person. [Students] remove the us versus them, including artificial differences we have imposed on each other...it breaks down. All of a sudden you can't blame anybody and [understanding] things gets really complicated (Adam 2:6-7).

I do a lot with problem-based learning. I'm constantly seeking ways to do things better, do things differently so I can improve the learning for my students. I try for a holistic approach in my teaching to reach more than one cognitive area. Students' aren't just one dimensional. [Service-learning] is really pretty empowering for students and I have the opportunity to be involved as both a facilitator of their learning and as a participant in the work. If you look at our mission, its student learning, critical thinking and communication skill development that are key.... Groups give students a chance to use their strengths and to learn to rely on the strengths of others. Not many of us can be all things all the time. We're better together (Rose 3:10-11).

Education is more than just mastery of the content. We have an obligation, at least I think we do, to help [students] with what I think about as life skills – communication, interpersonal abilities, aesthetic awareness. It's a much more holistic approach to teaching (Carla 2:5). There isn't much responsibility or accountability attached to a passive process, at least that's how I see it. It's easy for students to slip through the cracks and disengage when they have little or no role in the classroom other than being a receptacle for information. [Students] need to be empowered to know they can go beyond what is comfortable for them....I think a lot of people don't realize that they tend to react, participant, live, within a certain comfort zone. We live in the moment without much conscious reflection on what it all means or what it could mean. We react without information. We make assumptions. We adopt a particular position or opinion without giving it much thought. We don't always do the self-examination we should (Carla 2:18-19).

I try to build my students to be sort of advocates for their own education and I try to build citizens who work well together. By working with other students hopefully they can recognize that the other students have their

own strengths and weaknesses and they may or may not be the same as my strengths and weaknesses, but together we can double our strengths and smarten our weaknesses (Robert 1:13).

For me learning is now a kaleidoscope, sprouting fresh collages with every twist and turn. This awareness colors my thinking as I reflect upon the words of my participants. I deduce from their stories that in some measure each rebuffs the view that knowledge is a commodity we transmit and students' bank in order to access power and privilege (Friere, 1972).

In my estimation, participants in this study seek to reframe their academic work to shape a model that nurtures, challenges, and empowers students. The various mechanisms each utilize varies, but the goal is to have components inform and enrich one another so they contour an integrated whole meant to boost students' self-discovery and engagement with public issues and to highlight the value of multiple ways of knowing and sources of knowledge.

The Feminist Tag

As I explore service-learning I draw closer and closer to the realization that I no longer view myself as the one who teaches. In the exchange of ideas with my students, I am also taught (Freire, 1972). Standing as the subject-matter authority ceases to be pleasurable for me. As the neophyte teacher I depict in this chapter, I want to fill students' minds with my experience, but I shortly learn I must work with the experiences they bring to the classroom.

I immerse myself in my efforts to supply students with the independence and occasion necessary for them to inquire, interrogate, and address issues in their lived lives,

and I come to appreciate that doors for my own self-exploration must open also (Hart, 2006). The canvas of my being is unfinished. I look for no broad, sweeping brush strokes to conclude this masterwork of self. Instead my ever-altering representation of self constructs and reconstructs constantly. Each day offers fresh insight, different understanding, and another perspective. Struggling to reduce the frustrations and contradictions I experience with my teaching, I embark on a process self-discovery. Who I am as a person cannot be isolated from who I am in the classroom. We are one. The tight bud of feminism I have tamped down for so long begins to stir, although my desire to repress its blossoming continues.

As I initiate my dissertation proposal work I am asked by my professor to read a series of articles that look at narrative inquiry through a critical, feminist lens. “Too radical for me” I say to myself after reviewing the first piece. I shut my mind and consider my reading an exercise in endurance, something to be tolerated. I do not understand feminist theory; I do not want to understand feminist theory. I shrug off any suggestion that I consider using a feminist approach in my work. Denial, defiance, denunciation – I try everything to bury that awakening sprout of feminism rousing within me. I hide from the label by telling myself feminism is too constraining, too out-dated, too heavy-handed; too drastic; too political; too filled with dissention – it is “too something” I am sure. While I anxiously search for an argument to forestall any critical discussion of feminism, I choose to deny it by simply stating it is not me.

But, the nudges, prods, and jolts persist and through dialogue I reflect, reform and grow. In this process I shake off the ground that has tempered my germination of feminism for so long and allow its bud to develop. As I let go of my tenaciously held

aversion to the feminist tag, my eyes open to new possibilities. I realize that in many ways I have immersed myself in theoretical rhetoric when discussing and practicing academic service-learning and have become mired in the technical standpoint, clinging steadfastly to a set of best practices while ignoring many cultural and political implications (Butin, 2003). Only now do I wonder if my labors are repressive instead of transformative - what voices do I inadvertently silence, what conflicts do I ignore in an effort to gain consensus, what decisions do I make that perpetuate the status quo (Butin, 2003).

Changing Perspective

*The doors we open and close each day
decide the lives we live.
~Flora Whittemore*

Seeing Service-learning Through a Different Lens

My entry into service-learning work is filled with naiveté. I accept without difficulty this alternative pedagogy filled with ambiguities. It appears the ideal tool to overcome my disappointment that students who profess to want to help their communities know very little about those areas . My engagement with touted principles of good practice to connect content knowledge with application, absent any characterization of, much less scrutiny of, my philosophical orientation, results in my adoption of a rigid, closed picture of what service-learning should be. Armed with unclear theoretical framework for service-learning and only perfunctory information about the central themes of practice – respect, reciprocity, relevance, and reflection, I step boldly into the classroom (Butin, 2003).

As is usual in the earlier stages of my teaching career I shirk from any messiness in learning. To avoid this in my use of service-learning I attempt to quantify and norm its “how” – and not only for me but also for other faculty I introduce to academic service-learning. I endeavor to leave nothing to chance. My service-learning projects are structured, my assignments crafted to keep students on task, and my reflection questions generated to provide commentary I can assess. I am satisfied with this work and hold it up as a model for others to replicate. Key terms and concepts are defined for my students. Expectations are clearly outlined, with as many contingencies as I can envision considered. My agency contacts are well-prepared with the specific competencies I expect students to address through their service work. I dictate acceptable alignment between identified course content and the community service. I “know” what my students need – after all, I tell myself, I have been the professional they now seek to become.

My idealism leaps forth once again. I visualize service-learning as more than the blanket intellectual critique of social, economic, or political situations. In my classroom its use will result in transformative action. Social change will flow from what I set in motion. I am confident my students can act as self-directed change agents. In my eagerness to alter the public and its people, I do not doubt that the collective “we” will change the world. In my ignorance, I launch utopian, and perhaps unreachable, goals for service-learning, all the while disregarding the influences of my connections to the mainstream, my Whiteness, my woman-ness, my bias and minimizing opportunities for students to construct and reconstruct notions of self, to question borders, or to examine the implications surrounding injustice.

I reveal my plan to my somewhat reticent students only to discover they are unprepared for the experience. They struggle with its implementation. They find it difficult to work collaboratively. They lack the confidence to view themselves as sources of knowledge. They come from places of marginalization and do not see themselves as esteemed members of a community. They resist opening their imaginations to possibilities. At the time, I assume my students can recognize instances of injustice and have the inclination and abilities to take action. They cannot. Disappointed that my students do not see through my lens, I regroup; I modify. I demand less time and depth of reflection and offer a wider variety of choice in service options.

Several of my students are fluent in Spanish. The police department asks if they might be able to assist in the development of some public information brochures. Not exactly the sort of project I had in mind, but one that appeals to a couple of the students in my class. As we are now at mid-semester and I am finding it more and more difficult to connect students to projects, I agree to this placement. I do not foresee that allowing these students the opportunity to complete their service hours in a law enforcement setting will trigger background checks before they can be admitted to department offices. Nor does it occur to me that any student in my class might “fail” such a check. After all, these are students who envision a career in the legal field. One student is arrested and jailed. When I learn what has occurred, I tell myself this service-learning “thing” certainly is not for the faint-hearted.

At first I am angered by what I view as personal irresponsibility on the part of my student, but this quickly fades into concern for his well-being. As a criminal justice practitioner, I have seen the inside of more than one jail. I know with certainty that I

never want to spend time in any of them. Early in my career in this field I minimize the presumption of innocence and replace it with the presumption of guilt. Clinging to my vision of a just and right world, I delude myself into thinking those “labeled” defendant must have committed some crime. It takes much time before I appreciate that the scales of justice imply a weighing and balancing of perceptions and perspectives. My reality is not necessarily that of others.

My student and I meet when he returns to school. He sits before me, looking undaunted by what I consider a harrowing experience, and unfolds his story. I learn that he spends his hours sitting in his cell listening to anecdotes shared by those around him about their lives and their troubles. I am awed to hear that my student looks at this incident as a positive – something that shifts his thinking. In reflecting on the tales of others, he opens his eyes to them and begins to see they are much like he is. His harsh judgment of those in jail lessens. He finds that these are individuals who care about their families, who want the best for their children. These men sit in jail, just as my student does, because of choice – a choice our culture classifies as unacceptable. My student tells me he has learned we all must be prepared to accept the consequences of our decisions. He believes this experience will help him become more open-minded. I am amazed – out of this unexpected event there appears the result I hope occurs for all my students.

In my judgment most of my students appear untouched by their service work. Their comments in class remain peppered with prejudice, intolerance, and disbelief. My attempts to challenge student thinking sound authoritarian. I feel as though I am scolding and being dogmatic rather than offering guidance and nurturance. My efforts to use academic service-learning fall far short of my conceptualization of it as a

transformational teaching strategy to enhance student learning and build social responsibility.

I am left wondering why I failed. I overlook the uniquenesses of my students, of their ways of knowing. My “cookie-cutter” approach is premised on sameness rather than difference. I am blind to the challenges my students experience in confronting the real problems within their own existence and in meeting head-on their own oppression. I do not face the potential for dissimilarities between me and my students based on authoritative positioning and repressive control relationships. Nor do I appreciate how the prejudgments I bring to encounters with students and community cloud the horizon and limit my perspective. No doubt I have allowed the power of my own voice to play a pivotal role in perpetuating the differences that exist among and between the students and me in the classroom. I see none of this. Relinquishing control is something I find difficult – the unsightly head of authority peaks out again and again as I sink into my own desires for structure, for cleanness, for excellence.

From Definition to Practice

*One isn't necessarily born with courage,
but one is born with potential.
Without courage, we cannot practice any thing
with consistency.
~Maya Angelou*

The Technical Perspective

Among my participants there are glimmers of what I brand today a palatable, if somewhat sterile, definition of academic service-learning reflected in their comments. It is a characterization of service-learning that serves many of us well as it limits controversy and aligns neatly with our college missions. In Chapter 1 I define academic

service-learning as pedagogy that links the academic with the practical, allowing more abstract and theoretical material to take on new meaning through active participation in experiences that emphasize teamwork and build citizenship skills. It is with this definition that I practice service-learning and enter this study. It is a definition that allows many of us to engage in service-learning without argument at our colleges. It is a technical description that balances service and learning by linking them in a significant way (Butin, 2003). It is a characterization devoid of any indicators of social justice, repression, or marginalization; of the potential for border crossing as students immerse themselves in contexts they may not experience otherwise, and of political implications. I see aspects of this technical definition in the descriptions of service-learning offered by my participants:

[Service-learning] is about applying in a real world setting concepts and principles learned in class. You are doing activities, experiential activities, which benefit the community. And there is the reflection piece afterwards (Adam 1:13).

My understanding of [service-learning] is that there is some sort of activity outside yourself that people are involved in, not only involved in but have an opportunity to think about after the fact. . . . What I am hoping is that when people get involved with these kinds of activities they see people that are essentially just like themselves, struggling, perhaps in a different way than they do, but nonetheless very much like themselves (Lyn 2: 9 -10).

Service-learning is a way to take the content of a course and make it more relevant, more meaningful through work that addresses needs within a community. I see it as problem-based learning that's done outside the classroom. And the students are learning from one another. It helps them see things from other perspectives (Rose 1:4).

I think [service-learning] gives [students] the perspective that they can look at the need and find ways to help other people. I think it builds their self-confidence. I think it builds their sense of responsibility (Robert 1:9).

I would say that service-learning is an opportunity to connect academic learning with real life experience and to actually make the connections and

the transitions in the use of knowledge... You tend to compartmentalize and I think service-learning, instead of compartmentalizing thinking, it broadens it so that the learning becomes part of the person and the person can take their learning and apply it in their community universally (Carla 1:10).

These words of participants' evidence to my mind a "clinging to" rather than "challenging of" definitions that potentially carry with them into the service work unscrutinized issues of power, privilege, and domination. I do not sense there has been much, if any, conscious consideration given by participants to their definition of service-learning. I know this is true for me. Absent examination of our conceptual picture of academic service-learning, I believe we risk impeding the critical analysis required to sift through complex and pressing questions that abound in a real-world context around our social, political, economic, and cultural practices. As Hart (2006) writes "neglecting to address the larger social, economic and political factors that contribute to the need for the service ends in a focus on *doing for*, thereby mutating service-learning into alignment with charity...rather than social change" (p. 22). From my critical, feminist position today I am clear that the ultimate aim for service-learning work must be social transformation.

As I become more confident in my teaching and engage in exploration of the scholarship of teaching and learning, I realize my efforts to investigate conceptions of learning and to use academic service-learning to promote the well-being of our communities merely are tolerated – and then only because I willingly take on these responsibilities quietly. Initially I ask for nothing other than the opportunity to risk. Later, I rail against what I categorize as organizational indifference. With a limited support structure, I hesitantly step off the edge into darkness, trusting I will fly. I flounder, I

flutter. Intuitively, I recognize that academic service-learning is a key to changing the face of education, but I thrash about in my efforts to realize its promise.

I marvel at some of my colleagues in other colleges, other places, who have the wind of support and encouragement beneath their wings as they learn to fly. I hear many stories and appreciate that those who step to the alternative forefront in their teaching will embrace a myriad of experiences. My participants express an assortment of responses to their own introductions to or practices of service-learning:

At first I simply watched others do it. I mean it's really exposure, exposure, exposure. And then we would have conversations. That's really how I learned about it. And then I worked with [our service learning coordinator] about eight or nine semesters before she left. So, I had a lot of time with her and I didn't have to organize anything. I just had to show up and teach it. Now we've started linking more elements of the class to hunger, homelessness. We've added all the problem-solving sections and decision-making that required a lot of research (Adam 2:4).

[The activities I use] seem appropriate from my perspective, but I don't know how they fit – and maybe that is part of the reason people have a discomfort with service-learning. Intuitively it seems like the right thing to be doing, but the mechanics of service-learning and doing it right so the experience fully qualifies as service-learning is complex, complicated (Lyn 1: 8-9). I have not really in the classroom done things that take the students outside. I have connected them somewhat tangentially to the outside, to have contact, but they have never really had the opportunity to go physically to that site (Lyn1:20).

Right now we are very project oriented. We need to get into the community on a broader scale. It is not service-learning if there is not the learning component and documentation of that learning. So, to take community service to the service-learning level means that while the students are engaging in their community service they are doing it with objectives in mind. I think there are different avenues of service learning. They all have good intentions. They all develop character in the service learners and, therefore, everyone learns in the process (Rose 2:11, 13).

Service-learning was an established program at the community college. I was asked to get involved...and really had no idea what they were talking about. I had sent students off to do internships and things...and thought what's different between doing an internship and doing service-learning.

At first I really didn't get it, I just couldn't quite get it when people were explaining it to me. The more we talked about it, the more I realized how different it was than doing an internship and how beneficial it could be, even in criminal justice, to have real life experience and be able to connect that to the field. When I tried it with my first class, and they came back so excited by the experiences they had, I was just sold (Carla 1:8-9). It seemed to me...that students need to get that perspective of working in the community and working together and trying to better the common good.... Not very many students are anxious to jump in. I have my students go over and tutor the middle school students...then, of course, I do the peer tutoring (Robert 1:6).

I see my participants speaking of service-learning from what I deem are places of comfort in their understanding of service-learning to places of discomfit. Some indicate they benefit from mentoring. Others appear to be "going it alone." What congeals in my thoughts as I consider participants words is to work within thin layers of support and inadequate resources are prospective critical limiters in faculty abilities to learn more about or to do more with service-learning in their teaching and on their campuses.

The Feminist Perspective

Crabtree and Sapp (2002) point out that some fundamental educational aims of feminist pedagogy are "to share in the intellectual and spiritual growth of students, to raise awareness about the world in which students live, to respect and encourage student voices, and to help student critically reflect on and analyze their place in society" (p. 132). Related to this approach is critical pedagogy, sometimes labeled social change education. It is an important tool for engaging in ideology critique and privilege analysis from both an emotional and intellectual perspective in an effort to confront belief systems and assumptions that support social and economic exclusion (Choules, 2007).

Service-learning holds the promise to purposefully engage learners in action and focused reflection in order to contour a framework for emerging understandings, hone skills, clarify values, enhance personal development, and promote a more socially just world. “Feminist practices create learning environments that incorporate student life experiences without negating teachers’ responsibilities for providing students with particular academic content, knowledge, and skills” (Crabtree & Sapp, 2002, p. 133).

Viewed through the critical, feminist frame, service-learning attempts to address root causes of domination, struggle, and unfairness. As a practitioner of service-learning, I find little interest in discussion of this frame among my colleagues. It appears they deem such conversations as the purview of those who teach women’s studies and similar courses. It remains a philosophy akin to an abyss for some. Recently, I share with an associate an observation about her teaching. I see the influences of critical, feminist theory in her work. She is astonished. “Oh no,” she cries out, “never. Feminism is just a political term and one fraught with negative connotations. I do not see myself that way at all.” I explain that I see her as someone who understands that knowledge is socially constructed, value-laden, and tied to power issues; who addresses issues of human suffering and exploitation in her teaching; who encourages honest confrontation, dialogue, and reflection around issues of gender, race, culture, and politics; and who practices active, applied learning to empower students to develop and use their voices and to improve their assessment and decision-making skills (Crabtree & Sapp, 2002). “Yes,” states my colleague, “that is who I am, but I’m no feminist.” She turns and walks away. I understand. A year or two ago, my reaction would be the same. At one time I too spurned

the feminist label in my efforts to achieve recognition for my talents from among my male contemporaries.

There is a point in my educational career where I stand as the singular female faculty member in a justice studies program. I often feel devalued and marginalized. Gaining audience with my dean and other faculty members requires I march down the hall and onto the usually crowded deck brimming with a smoky blue haze. This is the gathering spot where business is conducted by many of the men on campus. It is here that I must attempt to sandwich my words in between the “war stories” and the tasteless chatting and complaining that is a constant. Laughingly, several women around the college refer to this cadre of faculty and administrators as the “good ol’ boys club” but it is no laughing matter to me. This continuous diminishing of who I am in order to be accepted and heard stirs within and annoys me. Any hint of talk from me that smacks of the feminist perspective is swiftly demeaned and dismissed. My voice often goes unheard.

Notwithstanding the negative connotations the word “feminism” holds for my colleague and others among faculty and administration, its influences do appear in stories shared by participants in this study. Glimpses of the feminist frame are sprinkled throughout our conversations:

[W]e had our students reflect on [the service] after class, how they felt they applied what they had learned, how they felt like they had changed after it. They came back and told stories...they reflected on how their perception of the poor had totally changed. They saw them as real people. It made them be less prejudiced (Adam 1:14).

[B]eing involved in intervening, it puts a human face or a personal face on it. What I want to do is give [students] a project or something to work with that has some depth to it, has meaning – it is not just a class exercise (Lyn 1:19). [We talk} about something called asymmetric information, one

party in the transaction with more information than the other, and that kind of information is power and that power imbalance leads to difficulties sometimes (Lyn 2:4). I try to point out when I teach...that money is only one of the resources on the table, that when we talk about benefits, we have social responsibility to each other (Lyn 2:5).

Students need to see that we are not all the same, but that doesn't mean that otherness, that difference is a bad thing. [I want students] to be respectful, to value each other. I want them to be persons of integrity. I want them to be tolerant and accepting. I want them to communicate well and be able to problem-solve. I want them to be part of a community. Service-learning can help [students] grow, help them see things from other perspectives (Rose 3:4, 10).

The outcome I hope to achieve with service-learning is to move the student involved toward a more holistic and more humanitarian view of the world, while strengthening his or her ability to use critical thinking. My didactic purpose is to bring those participants to a state where they recognize that the knowledge, skills and abilities they possess and are honing are on a continuum, and that everyone they meet, work with and interact with is both a teacher and a student to them (Robert 2:2).

In a lot of cases you find students have very unrealistic mindsets as to what can and can't happen. [They] don't think about privacy issues, funding issues, a lot of different things come up that they hadn't thought of. I'm trying to get them to discuss why they feel the way they do and what does the real world look like to them and to get them to see that social justice is more than just racial justice (Carla 2:15).

Would each participant place herself or himself in the feminist frame? I think not.

I say this because I see no widespread embracing among faculty I know of a commitment to social action or to public scrutiny of the controversial understandings entwined in each of our social, political, economic, and cultural standpoints. Over time I have observed teaching and learning at over 100 of our community college campuses across the country. Walking down hallways, I detect much use of traditional approaches – approaches that more readily encourage and support dominant modes of thought.

In my conversations with faculty across the country, I find many who come to the classroom as I do – we are considered content experts, but we know little about the complexities of teaching and learning. Some faculty members work to remedy this; others remain mired in the conventional practices that permeate our educational hallways. Among those faculty I know, exposure to counter-normative pedagogies and varying philosophical frames of practice is limited. In the crush of meeting teaching and institutional expectations, sinking into the comfort of the known is an easier path to follow. We must challenge ourselves to probe multiple pedagogical theories and strategies.

I believe as faculty we should engage more often and more deeply in the inspection of our service vision and mission and of ourselves as educators within these institutions. Where in our strategic directions and priorities do we highlight service? Is a commitment to service centered at the classroom, department, or institutional level? The continuous quality improvement we talk about requires constant introspection.

Social Change Perspective

In the late 1990s several faculty on the campus where I work at the time come together to form a reading group. I am asked to join in discussing Paolo Freire's book, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. I pick up a copy and flip through it. I think to myself "won't the 'good ol' boys club' love this." Unschooled in progressive ideologies such as postmodernism, critical theory, or feminist theory, my reading, though diligent, is a struggle. At this point, I do not see myself as an oppressor nor do I comprehend the fullness of my students' oppression. On some level I grasp the notion of "banking" but

experience difficulty aligning it to my role. I am an educator. I am to teach. My attempts to allow my students to accept responsibility for their own learning are unsatisfactory. I am only beginning to use dialogic processes and academic service-learning in my classroom. I wonder at the time if perhaps my own critical consciousness sleeps. The reading, the conversation is too much for me to absorb. However, I come away from this experience steeped in a desire to kindle social justice.

I work with a handful of faculty from my campus and from a local university to create a joint service-learning experience focused on issues related to public housing. It is exciting and stimulating work – work that is opening my mind to how service-learning can be what I envision. Students working on this project speak out in city council meetings that are broadcast on the public information channel. They voice clear, well-reasoned opposition to proposed policies. This project also results in an editorial letter published in the local newspaper critiquing law enforcement response failure to address community safety and criminal activity in the housing complex. My pleasure in rousing action to enhance community justice is short-lived. Summoned to answer for this public voice exercised by our students, the message is clear – keep your community work dispassionate and middle-of-the road.

In my study, participants' point to their concerns for social justice but all shy from stating they are seeking social change intentionally. These teachers do not necessarily see themselves as social change educators challenging the social, economic, and political injustices existing both locally and globally. What they voice is a concern for personal growth is the focus of their work with service-learning. Their efforts are aimed at opening the eyes of their students so they see how difference, how marginalization occurs in their

own lives and to empower them to move confront inequalities. Participants' thoughts about social justice are captured in the following comments:

We don't spend a lot of time talking about [justice] really. We talk more about individual responsibilities. Most of our conversations focus in on how do you change your own view on things, you know, where are you not aware of things about yourself or others, your own emotions, your own behaviors, what do you need to change, where are you not congruent. It's mostly about their own personal mission and how can you work with others to make change (Adam 3:13).

What I am hoping is when people get involved with [service] activities they see people that are essentially just like themselves, struggling, perhaps in a different way than they do, but nonetheless very much like themselves. And I think it puts a personal face on it. Problems are easier to dismiss if we don't have the humanity piece attached to it. I would like people to learn how to be more empathetic because it has an impact on what kind of decisions you make (Lyn 2:10). The most attractive aspects of [service-learning] would certainly be the reflective piece, getting people to think about what they saw, what they did, and try to put it in a bigger context (Lyn 4:16).

Ideally service-learning would lead to true change. However, that is an ideal and that doesn't happen with a semester service-learning project. So, do we sometimes put Band-Aids on things, do we sometimes enable situations as service learners – we do. But you have to think of the human component and sometimes a person really needs that band-aid or the infection will kill them. I'm thinking metaphorically (Rose 2:14).

I don't know that you can accomplish social change in that kind of time frame [a semester]. Certainly some students step into established programs where social change may be occurring so they might have some of that experience. Some of them are ready for that, but that isn't always the case. And other students may stay with a project well-beyond the semester. So again, they may see or experience some of the social change or social justice. What's important is what students take from the experience. Whether the work is labeled charitable or social change really isn't significant to me (Rose 3:9-10).

I think [social justice] means the whole concept of equal justice and not just from a criminal system standpoint, but justice in society [so] that everyone is treated with respect and equally. I'm not talking equal employment opportunities and things like that, but that people be treated with equal respect, that they be given the same opportunities, that they receive the services they need, the support they need, that somehow we

treat people like human beings (Carla 1:19-20). [Social justice] is a big issue and one I don't think students are ready to take on until they understand themselves and their place in the community – that they owe something back (Carla 1:7).

[Service-learning] is the only way, of those I know, to inculcate that ethic of service and caring and civic responsibility. There must be an action component – talking about it, writing about it, reading about it, all these things help. But the student never internalizes the action until they are given the opportunity to service another. I hope service-learning moves the student toward a more holistic and more humanitarian view of the world, while strengthening his or her ability to use critical thinking (Robert 2:2).

Coming into this study, I hoped to find examples of service-learning practice that intensely scrutinize social, economic, and political dynamics in order to expose and tackle social inequality while at the same time creating justice-oriented citizens. I focused on the outcome of social change to the exclusion of other possibilities. As a result, I did not consider the need to increase students' critical thinking skills as a means to create a more socially just world. In my hunt for the unflawed product of community transformation, I overlooked the importance of developing the special lens through which students see their work and shape their notions of reality.

Choules (2007) notes that “[f]or social change to occur, an analysis of privilege, as with ideology critique, is just a starting point...[analysis] needs to be followed by action to transform the unjust situation” (p. 167). She suggests that while ideology critique can expose belief systems and assumptions that support social and economic exclusion, it must include an analysis of privilege, particularly when working with those comfortable with the status quo. Additionally, Choules cautions against an all encompassing tolerance of diverse views. For her this holds the potential to legitimize an unjust and inequitable status quo. This stance asks that faculty offer students accurate

information in order to refute misperceptions and misinformation tossed out to support domination and border keeping.

Reconstructing the Self

*Change is the essence of life.
Be willing to surrender what you are
for what you could become.*

Our Torn Ears

Building on themes of critical pedagogy, participants minimize the authoritative production of knowledge and engage students actively in the learning process. They offer students space to explore emotions and to question and recreate themselves, their possibilities, and their otherness. Participants' view the self as something always in a process of transformation, although they accomplish this in the classroom in differing ways.

We spend a lot of time talking about what is the meaning of the "10,000 foot level" – like helping others, like having a purpose. We talk about internal locus of control if the world doesn't make you happy. If you can control happiness by your thoughts, by how disciplined your mind is, by how disciplined your time is in terms of concentration building, then if it isn't making you happy try eliminating those things that cause you problems (Adam 1:4). I think most of the time we are really disengaged from our body and feelings. [With service-learning] there is a chance for [students] to be real and intimate...it just changes their life. That is what [students] say – it changed my life. I really got in touch with what my purpose is or how I can give back (Adam 1:7).

We spend a lot of time on getting to know each other, progressively getting to know each other more and more. And [we] get deeper and deeper into what they really are, not just superficial interests or things about themselves, but some of the deeper passions and deeper values. Slowly [we] build more and more of that sharing with each other, learning about each other. So it's progressive, developmental (Adam 4:17). I present material, but I ask a lot of questions and my expectation is that the students will come up with their own answers, or try to figure out

examples, or try to make the material more real or approachable to them. I do make people speak in class. You don't have to tell me the right answer, but you have to be engaged and you have to be thinking about what we're talking about and trying to wrestle with. It's far more interesting for them to hear from each other what they are thinking than to hear my spin on things (Lyn 2:14).

I try to get people to recognize what is happening to them and to think about why they are having the reaction that they are. In some cases the emotion they feel may be a sign of empathy or recognizing that somebody they assumed was different or troublesome in some way is at odds with the way they thought things ought to be or was really closer to them than they ever thought. Some of the emotional responses to things sometimes have a harder edge to them. I guess I'm always a little surprised that people who I think ought to, because of their own circumstances, be more understanding of struggles people have would come up with some of these really hard edged and rather unattractive points of view. I try to get people to see that there is a wide range of situations and the negative stereotypical images we get in our heads from time to time aren't necessarily even a significant percentage of the situations that people are experiencing. I really do push [students] to think of situations that maybe give them a little wider picture of what they are dealing with (Lyn 3:5-6).

I try to get [students] to really think about difference and how what people see you as may cause them to treat you differently. And, I think my classes build community and accept difference. It's something I want to happen in all my classes, not just the service-learning. Students need to see that we are not all the same, but that doesn't mean that otherness, that difference is a bad thing. Respect, caring for those who aren't like you [is important] (Rose 3:4).

The classroom is like family. You support one another, take some risks, and learn from mistakes. I think it comes down to communication as the essential component, where we all listen and guide one another. When we know each other, trust increases and we get comfortable in sharing more honestly about our experiences, our thoughts. When issues arise in class where there are different perspectives, we talk about it in ways that respect difference (Rose 3:5).

I think [its] important for students to start thinking about [social issues] and to understand that you don't always have to know the answer but you do need to think about the questions. I'm not there to give [students] an answer; they are going to have to figure it out for themselves. I just try to guide their conversation – to challenge them to think, not to lay out what I think. When discussions would become heated and people would start to become polarized, I would often stop the discussion, divide up the group between where they were on an issue, and then I'd make them argue the

opposite point. That would sometimes make some people very angry, but I always felt it was a good way to make them have to think about what the other perspectives were because they would stop hearing because they would become cemented to their viewpoint. So, by making them take the opposite point and argue it they would have to shake loose and think about what the other person had been saying in order to form their arguments. Lots of time people argue and they are not sensible arguments; they become very emotionally laden (Carla 1:22).

[Teaching and learning] is grappling with ideas, with issues. It's helping students really see the world maybe a little differently. It's having them get to know what "drives" them and how to change things they maybe don't like. I don't like the lecture in front of the room and the fun part is having [students] involved in learning and having them understand their strengths, having them build relationships between each other (Carla 1:26).

I think a lot of the students are totally focused on themselves and they are at an age where they tend to be not so interested in what is outside their world. A lot of them are lacking in a lot of confidence about what they can do, at least that's sort of been my experience. I try to build within my students a sense of personal responsibility through some regular classroom activities, but also try to teach them they are responsible for their own education. I try to build my students to be sort of advocates for their own education and I try to build citizens who work well together. By working with other students, hopefully, they can recognize that the other students have their own strengths and weaknesses...and by working together they can double their strengths and smarten their weaknesses. I think one of the skills which needs mastering is oral communication and not so much the talking end of oral communication, but the listening end of oral communication. We tend to do the talking pretty well most times, but it's the listening where people fall short (Robert 1: 11-15).

I reflect on my own life path. This idea of wrestling with issues and assessing my strengths and opportunities for growth is something I seldom experience throughout much of my secondary or undergraduate education. I enter college adept at performing in the traditional model of learning. I read and listen; I memorize and spit it back. There exists no classroom talk about life possibilities, about our perceptions of self, or about our role as a citizen of the world.

For me during these years learning is about the grade because it is the grade that marks me as successful. As I pursue my bachelor degree, I remain largely unchallenged to examine critically theoretical constructs and ideologies. As you can see in my words this chapter, those few attempts to confront my entrenched views do not usher into my being any far-reaching changes. I unwaveringly accept that my textbooks, my professors offer fact. Facts are objective; facts are true. I am not asked to connect the information broadcast from these sources to the world outside the classroom door. I do not appreciate connection between the intellectual and the practical.

I return now to the snapshot I offer of me in the beginning of this chapter. It reveals a signpost, although at the time I fail to capture its significance. It is here where I stand at the cusp of separation from the security of my articulated reality, college completed, marriage accomplished. A young wife and mother, I am an active participant in our community women's group. And, I become involved in a number of legislative issues effecting schools and the quality of life in our neighborhood. As a result, I meet head-on my feminist self. It is this "she" who frantically chinks away at the armor of my comfort, who pushes me to think about my world in different ways, who opens me up for self-inspection. I attempt to ignore her, to deny her, to challenge her. However, ultimately I roar the phrase that crosses many lips as the feminist movement progresses -*I am woman*. I begin to question and then reject the unspoken boundaries I assume for myself.

My acts propel me to turn away from a career in elementary education. As a "good" wife, primary teaching and nursing are the "natural" and accepted professional choices laid before me. Presumably, these pathways are strongly bonded to sacred maternal qualities genetically ingrained in every woman. But, motherhood for me is

fraught with externally imposed expectations and constrictions. My soul cries out for something more.

Unable, or perhaps unwilling, to reconcile the “who” others expect me to be with the “who” I struggle to discover, I defy convention and enter a legal studies program. It throws wide a window previously shuttered tight to my world. I am fascinated by law. Learning about it soothes my insatiable quest to know, to understand. I revel in its intricacies; I marvel at its malleability. Using language to craft arguments captivates me.

As I shed the trappings of my life and change the direction, I move further and further from the center of the core that is toward something not defined. In my metamorphosis, I let go of many of the threads of my life. I do not know how to weave them into what I am becoming. I drift, I journey. My roar becomes a barely inaudible whisper. Always there is emptiness. The feminist me goes silent.

Recently a colleague shared the story of the Torn Ear Theory with me. It immediately resonated. In this tale, Max is the perfect cat. He is handsome; he has an admirable personality; he is witty, cunning, and bright. Of course, everyone loves Max. Then one day, Max is involved in a street fight. His ear is torn badly. Although this mangled ear heals, the scar of the tear remains a visible flaw. Now that Max is imperfect, the question is whether he will continue to be loved by all. The answer is yes. The message contained in this story is that we all have torn ears as we all have scars on our spirit. At some point in time, we each experience moments when our self-esteem may have been tattered, our achievements limited, and our future dark. We each have imperfections. As we explore our own wounds and become acquainted with the wounds of others, we discover how to nurture, cherish, and respond.

Denial of my critical, feminist self and its possibilities for my being serves to disguise my own wounds for many years. In my eagerness to achieve perfection, my quest for self is stifled. It is through the work of this study that I have uncovered this facet of who I am – I nurture, I cherish this bud so this critical, feminist self can mature and flourish. It is this emerging self that I bring to my interpretation of academic service-learning today.

Changing Perceptions of Service-learning

Although the words of my participants flow through this study, it is I who create the narrative. The depiction I offer reflects who I am. What I see is that acts of service vary from classroom to classroom, teach to teacher, student to student, context to context. Expectations and outcomes are interpretive with multiple realities coexisting. My attempts to strip service-learning of its alternative description by quantifying and norming it reflect my own discomfort at the time with “messy” learning. As Rhoads (1997) remarks, my challenge is not to ignore my voice, my life, but to embrace my sense of self and the ways in which it shapes what I see, what I question, what I write. With service-learning, one size does not fit all. To be successful we must be comfortable with our self within this work and we must celebrate students’ willingness to take responsibility for their own learning.

With the awakening of my critical, feminist standpoint, I have come to look at service-learning in a different light. Previously, I am attentive to the “product” of service-learning, which in my narrow view I restrict to social change. I overlook the importance of the process and the value of personal growth for my students. In my quest for the ideal

I nudge my students to the periphery. In my own way, I marginalize, I silence. As I learn to loosen my grip of control and relish the messiness of learning involved in service-learning, I come to value its potential to positively influence how students look at their worlds and what they do. Through reflection on action students recognize how society positions them and how others are also positioned within the same social context (Hart, 2006). Until we take an introspective stance in viewing perceptions of the self within the world, we remain unfocused in our critique and questioning of issues that perpetuate the status quo; we have no clear lens through which to analyze the promise of choice.

Service-learning may not make huge, nor immediate, impacts within the community. I appreciate now that sweeping social change most probably does not result from the service-learning completed by my students in my courses. But, their service does plant seeds that can ultimately thrive. What I do perceive more clearly now is that the increasing drive for quantifiable assessment of learning and measures of accountability for outcomes in education poses challenges for practitioners of service-learning. It remains to be seen how social, political, and economic influences will shape the future of service-learning.

I also unmistakably know there is no magic wand I want to wave to transform injustice, as I determine it, nor can any want bring immediacy to change. To do this would reject reciprocity and mutuality in the change process and power would reside within my singular vision rather than within the collective. What I value now is voice. We each, in our own way, have within us the ability to make a difference. I believe it is our obligation to engage and give of ourselves.

As a practitioner of service-learning, I walk into the classroom lacking understanding of multiple pedagogical strategies. My own experience as a student serves as role model for my actions in the classroom. Although I glean tidbits of information here and there, I have little insight into adult development and learning theories. I do not explore who I am as a teacher; thus, I have nothing more than the fragments of lenses through which to inspect my work. It is difficult for me to guide my students in developing their own personal perspectives when I struggle to articulate my own. I urge the implementation of professional growth programs that emphasize theory and practice grounded in progressive pedagogies and education for the silenced and marginalized.

We live in a changing world. It is vital that we sharpen our abilities for deep and critical inquiry and constructively consider multiple perspectives. I stress the importance of gaining a deeper understanding of the social, economic, and political dynamics of our worlds so we become more sensitive to issues of inequity, inequality, intolerance, and injustice. The process of education we offer our students provides a vital pathway for building the caring self essential to affect social concern and practice public engagement.

CHAPTER 6

Postlude

Service-learning is a strategy to engage students in a dynamic learning process that promotes their abilities to see themselves, to scrutinize social problems, and to perceive the potential for their world. It proffers a philosophy and a compelling pedagogy of engagement to transform our teaching and learning outlooks and practices. It involves the conscientious critique of our social systems and motivates participants to analyze their experience so they will take action and inspire change (Pompa, 2002).

Just as there is not one “right” path to describe or accomplish socioeconomic, cultural, and political transformation, there is no singular “right” approach to service-learning to enhance social critique and a social justice vision. What is important is that with service-learning students come to recognize their potential as change agents and take the steps necessary to struggle with issues of injustice.

The issues facing our communities today can no longer be addressed through implanting traditional and professional knowledge in our students. While in the past we marginalized competency to engage actively in public problem solving, our future requires that we now cross this perceptible limit. Although the integration of academic service-learning practices continues to gain momentum among America’s community colleges, I propose further considerations to heighten the exploration of transformative

education that develops students' social and civic learning and to encourage public change.

Exploring Standpoints

Oppression and inequity are embedded in our daily situations and practices. Some embrace dominant ideologies without question; others are keenly aware of privilege and injustice. As educators, how we are positioned to experience, understand and respond to social change pedagogy significantly influences our perceptions of service-learning.

The traditional teaching and learning model conflicts with the service-learning model. In my view, with the traditional pedagogical model a course follows a predetermined structure with relatively uniform learning stimuli for all students, a familiar routine for classroom activities, and an established set of inquiry questions to be used in discussion. Control for the structure and direction of learning rests within the faculty member's knowledge, experience and perceived jurisdiction. It is a model grounded in individual accomplishment, deductive orientations, and objectivity. On the other hand, service-learning provides a model focused on the advancement of learning for the collective, using inductive orientations and subjectivity. Students are in charge of their learning, thus there is a small amount of structure and direction vis-à-vis learning in the public arena (Howard, 1998).

I observe among faculty a number who struggle to resolve tensions between structuring and controlling the teaching and learning situation while wanting to unlock the gate to fresh understandings and interpretations of concepts, issues, and ideas. No doubt, loosening the leash of control in our classrooms and trusting that students can

learn through getting “messy” with life, just as teachers can learn by getting “messy” with their teaching, is not an effortless approach.

Many of these teachers are unsure how to step beyond what I identified earlier in this work as the guiding principles tied to the “traditional teaching and learning model” in an endeavor to embrace something outside the conventional. In addition, these teachers find little support to consider where, how, or why service-learning or other counter-normative pedagogies “fit” within their work. Perhaps the most significant principle I see is emphasis on an outcome based curricula that prescribes what students should be able to know and do upon completion of a specific course. A second principle encourages the direct observation of student behavior and performance that can then be quantified. This type of assessment is directed at maximizing objectivity and simplifying the grading process. Considered together these principles promote the notion of “standard-based education.”

In this sort of “standards-based education” student learning objectives related to course content are explicitly outlined. Curricula and resources are then shaped around and aligned with these standards. This approach is intended to promote the articulation of standardized practices that lead to success for all students all the time. Such an “educational effectiveness” approach holds enormous appeal as it hints at the possibility of clear, simple rules of practice for teachers. But in reality success in teaching and learning must be understood contextually. What is viewed as valuable in one setting may be criticized as worthless in another depending upon participants’ standpoints and what they deem the goals and purposes are for their work. Considerations of effectiveness are also value-laden, pointing to influence struggles between faculty and others to define the

concept. It is possible that the language of ends and objectives which guides our educational practice biases our view of teaching and learning, either shifting it to or reinforcing a more traditional standpoint.

Academic service-learning can advance students' sense of social responsibility and commitment to the broader good. However, it is a pedagogical tool that broadens the learning environment beyond the teacher's purview and gives students the responsibility to discern the "important" rather than having relevant knowledge deciphered for them. This poses pedagogical challenges obviated in the traditional pedagogical model. Dispensing presumed facts and information and determining relevance at the expense of meaning and wisdom minimizes risk-taking but carries with it the potential to mire us in technical triviality and cultural banality. Our hesitancy to explore within our community the deep, compelling questions about injustice and truth strands us on the surface of life.

Often as faculty and administrators responsible for teaching and learning we simply step into the existing landscape within our institutions. We accept the dominant culture, the prevailing voice without questioning our own or our college's philosophical or theoretical constructs. In attempting fit ourselves into the backdrop before us, we hazard perpetuating the status quo and limiting our selves, our students, our colleges, and our communities.

We must recognize and inspect our values and our existing beliefs and conceptions about education and learning in order to explore the possible. In my experience, it is not uncommon among community college educators to unearth individuals who find it difficult to articulate their own positionality. We may hear snippets about various "isms" such as constructivism, post-structuralism, behaviorism, or

feminism, but are at a loss to delineate our stance within these. We must inspect our theoretical stance and factors that support our contentment with conventional practices as these influence the integration of academic service-learning within our courses, our programs, and our colleges. Service-learning moves us beyond esoteric discussions of human suffering and society's accountability to allow for critical engagement.

Clear philosophical direction, at the personal, classroom, and institutional levels, can intensify the drive and direction essential to reformat classroom norms, roles and outcomes by tackling our apprehensions with and conflicts surrounding useful learning grounded in multiple realities; power, voice and detachment in the learning setting; and the function of neutrality and objectivity. Perceptions of students as other than self-directed, self-motivated learners carries with it the potential to hamper acceptance of teaching methods that situate faculty outside the locus of control in a learning environment where the unexpected emerges. Through introspection, those charged with responsibility for teaching and learning can resolve uncertainties about participatory methodology and change thinking about solely didactic educational practices.

Hiring and Developing Educators

If we desire to build civic literacy and promote an equitable and just society, we must support and encourage public participation and debate; principles of equality, community and independence; and a sense of individuality balanced with concern for the common good. This suggests a need to re-examine our practices to retain those administrators and faculty committed to social critique and transformation of social, political and organizational structures and to develop the theoretical lens through which

service-learning pedagogy is viewed and interpreted so that it does not mask issues, silence the marginalized, and perpetuate the status quo (Hart, 2006). And, as Choules (2002) notes: [g]iven the myths and misinformation that support oppressive discourse, it is vital that when these are voiced, the educator has accurate information with which to respond” in order to unmask the reproduction of oppression and marginalization and reduce alienation (p. 172). Educators must be prepared to address varying sides of diverse ideologies.

Teachers must be educated not only in the content of the curriculum, but also in multiple pedagogical strategies in the teaching and learning process, including a range of theoretical constructs and philosophical lenses. As educators we must seek out creative opportunities to support different ways of knowing, to tackle community inequities, and to merge social justice and accountability into the learning process. To accomplish this, we must encourage bringing marginalized voices into the mainstream of dialogue

Service-learning is a faculty driven initiative; however, practitioners cannot develop their applications of this demanding pedagogy in isolation. It is important to assist faculty in shaping conceptualizations of practice that fit with who they are, their teaching beliefs and goals, and the institutional vision and strategic directions; in translating service-learning theoretical assumptions and implications into practice, and in examining and reframing experiences to work toward meaningful outcomes and authentic assessment of these outcomes.

Conclusion

Our conceptions of inequity, social justice and education are linked to classroom practice. Many of us answerable for teaching and learning at our colleges do not enter the profession with the expectation that we are to transform the social order. It is my hope that as we examine our own standpoints and that of our institutions that we begin to develop a better understanding of the potential for academic service-learning to find solutions to community problems, to develop our students holistically, and to take our teaching in directions we might otherwise not have thought possible. Academic service-learning cannot cure all that ails our society, but it can assist us in lifting the veil of oppressive structures and to scrutinize how our own values, ideologies, and positions of power influence the teaching process. Challenging ourselves, as well as our students, is a serious responsibility that can open the door to enhanced facilitative, student-centered teaching and learning.

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