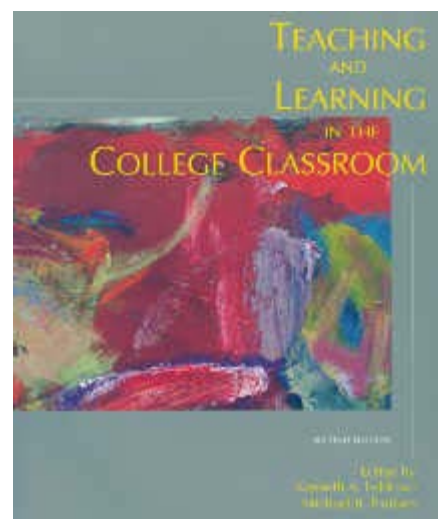


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A READER'S JOURNAL:
Teaching & Learning in the College Classroom
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I. Teaching & Learning — An Overview

In my statement of curriculum, teaching, and learning philosophy last semester, I shared with you the phrase: Thus A Teacher, So Also A Learner, which summarizes for me the dynamic flow of teaching and learning between the teacher and a student in any interaction. About five years ago I wrote a poem which elaborates on the theme and expresses the sense that the roles of teaching and learners flow back and forth between the assigned teacher and the assigned student:

Thus A Teacher, So Also A Learner

Teaching is forming a knot in a loosened mind;
Teaching is loosening a knot
in a formed mind.

Teaching is learning in the other direction —

When the teacher forms a knot
in the learner's mind,
one loosens in the teacher's;

When the teacher loosens a knot
in the learner's mind,
one forms in the teacher's.

It all happens at the same time:

Thus a Teacher, So Also A Learner.

Poem Copyright ©1995 by Bobby Matherne

The *knot* may be either a localized creation of meaning or an unreasonable expectation. When a student learns

something from a teacher, a new meaning is created in the student's mind. When a teacher encounters the unique personality of the student, some expectation about that student will be either exceeded or not met, and the teacher must untie that knot of expectation, must re-arrange their map of the student to correspond to the territory. Thus the student teaches the teacher about the student.

When the student holds an unreasonable expectation about the subject matter or the teacher, the teacher's job is to loosen that knot. By loosening the student's knot, the teacher learns from the experience about a way of loosening the knot that works again or for the first time: thus a teacher, so also a learner.

The Live Lecturer in the Classroom:

"Why have lectures survived since the invention of print?" asks McKeachie in his textbook, *Teaching Tips*, at the front of his Chapter 5, *Lecturing*. In the McKeachie, *et al*, article in the Feldman and Paulsen textbook, we read:

[page 115] Not only is the lecturer a model in terms of motivation and curiosity, the lecturer also models ways of approaching problems, portraying a scholar in action in ways that are difficult for other media or methods of instruction to achieve. In fact there is some evidence suggesting that one of the advantages of live professors is the tendency of people to model themselves after individuals whom they perceive as living, breathing, human beings with characteristics that can be admired and emulated.

The essay points us to two distinct advantages of a live professor in front of the students, but it neglects the bi-directional interaction back and forward through which the professors actually shape their presentation as they go along based on feedback from students. In addition, there is an invisible channel of communication which many people have access to, but few have any words with which to express what happened. Here's an example from my own experience:

A couple of weeks ago, as I was reading aloud to my wife, Del, something I'd just written, she interrupted me at the end of a sentence. In the middle of reading that sentence, I was suddenly taken by an idea of an alternate way to approach explaining something, but I did not vary the tempo or tone of my reading. Del had been receiving the communication streaming from me with no problems until the point when suddenly what was streaming from me no longer matched the words coming from my mouth. It occurred to me at that time that the importance of written words is the thought paths that they carry us and others along.

Here's another example from my personal experience, one that happened several years after I wrote this original paper for my college course:

My friend, Ed, bought a Mavica FD100 Digital Camera while I was visiting him. I owned a FD83 Mavica which had an adapter to charge one battery while you're using the camera with another battery. We couldn't find the charger adapter in the box when we unpacked the camera, so we went back to Circuit City where he bought the camera. The young clerk tried to sell us a multiple use charger and I said, "Forget it, I want to talk to the manager." It didn't seem possible that Sony would sell a camera that it was impossible to use without buying some external adapter. Something was wrong and I wanted to get to the bottom of the situation. The manager came over and explained about the power plug in the side of the camera and suddenly I got the picture directly from his mind. "Aha!" I thought, as the manager continued to talk, but I wasn't listening, "There's no separate adapter! You simply plug in the power to the camera and that charges the battery!" The young clerk didn't have that understanding and therefore didn't have that image.

Here was another case of direct mind to mind transfer of information. The manager had barely said a couple of words, certainly not enough words to indicate the reality that I had just experienced directly, but here inside of me I suddenly knew exactly what the solution was. It came directly from

his mind. The words were superfluous! His talking only got in the way in the sense that we could leave immediately with our problem solved, but had to allow him to finish his sentence and his explanation so that he was convinced that it was solved. If he had only looked at me during my moment of revelation, he would have also realized that further talking was superfluous. All this understanding of the interior side of what happened in Circuit City came to me a week later as I was writing in my journal.

What this means to me, *vis-à-vis* teaching in person, is that when professors develop a lesson plan, they must assimilate the material so that their innate knowledge of the subject is conveyed to the student as they, live in the classroom, use the words to guide their thoughts into the various pathways, and those thoughts will be assimilated likewise by the students. The alternative to understanding the situation in this way is to suffer under the illusion that a Teaching Assistant reading the Professor's lecture in class would be equally effective as having the live Professor there conveying a body of assimilated knowledge while speaking the words of the lecture. There is *something more* in a live lecture that cannot be communicated in a recorded or otherwise simulated lecture. As I wrote in [Karmic Relationships, Vol. 4](#), "real teaching takes place not so much in the *content* of what the teacher says, but in *the living contact from soul to soul* by means of which the understanding is transmitted to the student." This living contact is the *process* through which concepts are directly and truly communicated from one person to another.

Tony Bennett Concert, December 7, 2016

During the show, the 90-year-old Tony Bennett sang a song which begins with this line, "Beautiful girls walk a little slower when you walk by me." This line had always puzzled me, up until now. It had remained an Unanswered Question (UAQ) each time I heard it sung, and try as I could, I never came up with an understanding of its meaning. Why, I thought, should beautiful girls walk slower when my girl is walking next to me? Didn't make any sense, but I couldn't create any other sense from the words which I interpreted as a statement of fact, something the singer observed.

As I listened to Tony sing these words, the meaning flew from soul to soul into me and I understood! He was asking, imploring, beautiful girls to walk slower as they walked past him so he could enjoy looking at them as they passed! Here was another confirmation of my thesis that a live lecturer is important. I had heard these line sung many times by Frank Sinatra, and probably by several other singers, but never got a true understanding until I heard Tony sing it and received the meaning directly, person-to-person, soul-to-soul, during this concert. For me this understanding was worth the price of the concert!

Reading: The Live Lecturer Within

Above I wrote about listening to a live lecture and how it's the thoughts of the lecturer that communicates directly to my mind while he uses the words that he says as a guide that takes him along the path of his lesson plan and helps him to think the thoughts in the right sequence so that those listening to him and receiving his thought patterns directly may make complete sense of what he's trying to communicate to them. What a sentence! Do you like it? I do. I doubt anyone could read and understand it except *in situ* as it requires one to have built a reader inside of oneself prior to having read it. Most summaries are that way — they make little sense until you have read the entire body of work they summarize.

Since writing my Teaching & Learning essay about live lecturers, it has always bothered me that, when listening to a lecturer, there is another person out there who is communicating, mind-to-mind, directly with you, but in reading there is no other person! That fact seemed to make my argument untenable about the nature of communication. Obviously communication from one mind to another happens in live lectures and in taped lectures and in the reading of books. But only in the live lecture is the thoughts of the lecturer available for direct communication, mind-to-mind. What's going on here?

While reading the classic book, [Seven Kinds of Ambiguity](#) by William Empson(1), I had an insight. What I wrote in the top margin of page 14 was this, "Who is the *other* when I'm reading but myself?" Suddenly I had the answer to this

unanswered question that I had been holding for some three years. Here is where my insight comes in. It's so simple, it's hard to explain. The other is my *self*. When I'm reading I am receiving direct mind-to-mind communication, not from the author to my self, but from my self to my self!

Said differently: when I read, I can only make sense of what I'm reading if my mind is receiving direct communication from the me that exists at the point right before I read the next word or phrase or sentence. For me to understand what I'm reading, a part of me must already understand most of what the next sentence is going to contain. The me that already knows communicates with the me that doesn't know as the words proceed into my thoughts, mind-to-mind. Thus, while one part of me was reading Empson's words, another part was doing the live lecture using Empson's lesson plan.

Okay, dear Reader — is any of this useful? How did the "you" inside of you do with this communication? Obviously I need a better term to describe this process than the "you inside of you," even though that is descriptive of the process I refer to. How about the "live lecturer within"? Thus the heading of this section of the essay, and the heading would make a good title for a book on the subject of reading.

In order to read and comprehend, one must have created a live lecturer within oneself that is thinking the thoughts the way the author was, or as close to what the author was thinking as possible. As one reads a book, this *live lecturer within* or LLW communicates its thoughts, *mens-a-mens*, mind-to-mind. This explains the processes that Mortimer Adler in his famous [How To Read A Book](#) book calls "syntopical reading" and "coming to terms" with an author. Both of these processes are crucial to developing the LLW. The presence of an actual live lecturer is a huge boost to learning, because the lecturer will be thinking the thoughts already that need to be communicated mind-to-mind and the audience, if they listen attentively instead of distract themselves with spurious thoughts, will be able to absorb those thoughts.

I remember a 1975 lecture in geology in which I learned all about geology. The lecturer was an amazing young lady who had done some of the original work on plate tectonics in the middle of the 20th Century. She was lecturing at some college in Massachusetts where my wife was taking geology, and this was a suggested lecture for her to attend. I accompanied her and I'll never forget when the lecturer said there are three kinds of rocks: pink rocks, black rocks, and green rocks. The pink rock floats on the green rock and the black rock appears when the green rock seeps past the pink rock into the ocean. The pink rock is granite and formed the continental plates. The green rock is the athenosphere that the granite floats on. It is molten and heavier than granite, so the granite floats on it. The granite makes up the crust of the Earth. When the green rock seeps into the ocean bed, it is extremely hot and when it mixes with the cold ocean salt water, it makes basalt, which is the black rock.

Did I memorize this? Not in the sense of recording all the words she said. I didn't take any written notes. No, it came to me directly from her mind. I saw the green *athensphere*, the floating granite plates, the cataclysmic mixing of molten athenosphere with the ocean water to form basalt. Thus, writing about it is as simple as re-running what happened within me as I listened to her live lecture and reporting on it.

All this helps me enormously to understand why it is so hard to read Rudolf Steiner's books — one has to create a LLW that approximates Steiner himself, no mean task certainly.

In fact, Steiner undoubtedly understood this process himself quite well. As I noted in my [Background to the Gospel of St. Mark](#) review:

How did one person communicate a truth to another person before writing was invented? Steiner says it was by a "direct streaming of knowledge from soul to soul."

Edward R. Smith's work on the [Bible and Anthroposophy](#), such as [The Burning Bush](#) is written mostly for those who already understand the Bible so, while there is a stretch for his readers to understand Steiner's work on anthroposophy, Ed is able to apply a little Bible liniment to the thinking muscles to help his readers make the stretch without tearing any muscles.

When I write my reviews, I am sharing the thoughts of my LLW with my readers as well as the words from the author

of the book I'm reviewing that triggered those thoughts in my LLW.

II. Teaching & Learning — Habit Formation & Counseling

As I mentioned in my five-minute lesson plan that I didn't get to present in class, there are four steps to the process of habit formation according to Don Robinson in the memory course I took from him in Los Angeles in 1970. These four steps shown below are related to the Paulsen and Feldman textbook article, especially in Figure 1 entitled "The Process of Instructional Improvement" (page 629). To relate the four steps below to the three steps of Figure 1, Steps 1 and 2 represent the UNFREEZING phase, where the instructor first becomes aware of a new instructional skill and realize they don't know how to use it, up until now. Step 3 is the CHANGING Phase where the instructor becomes Consciously Competent with the new skill. And finally in Step 4, the REFREEZING Phase where they become Unconsciously Competent with the new skill.

Habit Formation [1, 2, 3, 4] Counseling [4, 3, 2, 1]:

1. Unconscious Incompetence

2. Conscious Incompetence

3. Conscious Competence

4. Unconscious Competence.

Think of riding a bicycle. The young girl does know she doesn't know how to ride a bicycle. She really never thought about it. **Step 1** is she didn't know she didn't know how. One day a friend comes riding by on a bicycle and she thinks, "Gee, I can't do that." **Step 2** is she now knows she doesn't know how. So she asks her friend for help. She falls down a couple of times, but soon she's able to ride the bike for about twenty feet without stopping. **Step 3** is she now knows how to do it if she concentrates very hard. She continues riding and riding and soon she is riding her bicycle all over town without a thought about the mechanics of riding. **Step 4** is she now knows and she doesn't even know how she knows.

Now think of running the four steps backwards. This is the process of counseling or psychotherapy, i.e., the "loosening of knots" as I described above. A male student comes to class or into the teacher's office with a problem. He's not getting anywhere in class, even though he takes copious notes. The teacher realizes that the student is not learning because his compulsive note-taking prevents him from participating in class. The student is unconscious of what his problem is. **Step 4** is he doesn't even know he's doing it. The teacher calls his attention to the note-taking appropriately, perhaps suggesting that the student listen and speak more in class. **Step 3** begins when he initially becomes aware of his compulsive note-taking, he becomes conscious of how his previously unconscious note-taking competence was stifling his learning. **Step 2** begins when he knows how to do it if he thinks about it — he stops taking notes when he is conscious of doing it. As this phase continues, one day he notices near the end of class that his notebook is empty of notes for the entire class. At this point he has reached **Step 1**: he has become unconsciously incompetent at compulsive note-taking and spends the class participating in the discussions.

III. Teaching & Learning — Embracing Contraries

On page 575 at the rear of the Billson and Tiberius essay in the Feldman & Paulsen textbook was a reference to Peter Elbow's book, [Embracing Contraries — Explorations in Learning and Teaching](#), Oxford University Press, 1986. Elbow's view of pedagogy comes from his extensive teaching of writing courses which fits well with my primary career as a writer.

Chapter 11, "The Value of Dialectic," ends with this paragraph:

[page 252] Certain people are especially smart. They have a talent for having good hunches, nurturing them, and having a sense of which ones to follow. These people are right too often for it to be a matter of luck. . . . Affirming contradictions and not being in too much of a hurry to get rid of

them - Chaucer's dialectic — must be one of the patterns of thought that makes wise people wise.

"What is the power of an unanswered question?" is one of my basic rules. This question focuses my attention on the power that derives from not accepting easy answers to questions, especially questions that present opposing contraries. Only by extended pondering of the question, which cannot happen if one accepts some sham of an answer, can an answer arise that will hover over the contraries with its glowing resolution. The world would be much different if Columbus had accepted "Fall off the edge of the world." as the easy answer to the question, "What happens if I keep sailing westward?" Instead he held his unanswered question and sailed on into history. If we examine Figure 2.1 in Marlene Schommer's essay in the Feldman and Paulsen textbook on page 176, we find what I call, for mnemonic purposes, "Schommer's Pies" — two pie charts that reveal something to us about the power of unanswered questions. The top pie chart is her hypothesized belief distribution for a naive learner. If we add the *Certain* to the *Eventually Certain* categories, we get 95% — that is, naive learner tend to believe that 95% in certain knowledge with lots of absolutes and few uncertainties. Schommer's bottom pie chart shows that the sophisticated learners believe in few absolutes and many uncertainties. If we subtract their 5% *Certain* category from a hundred, we find they hold lots of unanswered questions. Here's how Schommer sums it up:

[page 176] Analyses revealed that the more students believed in certain knowledge, the more likely they were to write inappropriately absolute conclusions. there is also research evidence that suggests strong beliefs in quick learning, simple knowledge, and fixed ability hinder learning as well.

Before you can have a metaphor, Monroe Beardsley tells us, "there must be a *contradiction*, a piece of *non-sense*." (*Embracing Contraries*, page 250) Elbow cites as an example the phrase *leg of the table*, which unless you feel that *leg* is appropriate only to animate organisms, "you cannot feel *leg of the table* as a metaphor. For most people the phrase is literal." (ibid, page 250) Again a contrary confronts us if we recall that every word was once a metaphor when it was first used. The word *quiz* was painted on fences and walls all over Dublin one night by someone who won a bet that he could get a new word in general usage overnight. The nonsense word *quiz* brought *quizzical* looks to the faces of Dubliners the next morning as everyone went about *quizzing* each other as to what it meant.

If the contraries we're asked to embrace are logical opposites such as true and false, we might end up in the logical paralysis as we try to discern a meaning in the question, "Who shaves the barber who shaves every man in the village who doesn't shave himself?" If the barber doesn't shave himself, he does shave himself. Logically it's impossible, but a computer would have no problem with it as the computer operates in time. The answer will alternate from *shaves himself* to *doesn't shave himself* as the computer calculates each answer correctly in turn.

J. L. Austin directs our attention away from the logical utterance to the details of the speech situation, i.e., to what is, "a right and proper thing to say as opposed to a wrong thing, in these circumstances, to this audience, for these purposes and with these intentions." (ibid, page 246) Austin's suggestions mirror those of Alfred Korzybski's [general semantics](#) in which we must constantly remind ourselves to attend to the *what*, *when* and *where* index as we talk. Audience(1) is not equal to Audience(2); Kiss(first date) is not the same as Kiss(honeymoon); Walk(beach) is the same as Walk(North Pole). See this fine book, [How to Develop Your Thinking Ability](#) by Ken Keyes.

As I write this, it occurs to me that my writing as a process is necessarily an "embracing of contraries." Do I write of what I learned from reading the book or do I write my judgments of how well the book was written? Peter Elbow was my first writing teacher. I encountered him in his book, [Writing Without Teachers](#), some twenty years ago. Now I'm reading him as part of a course in college teaching because his book is referenced by Clinchy on page 171 of the Feldman/Paulsen textbook. So I've returned to the man who said I didn't need a teacher, in order to learn how to become one. In the first page of his Introduction to *Embracing Contraries*, these words leaped off the page at me:

[page ix] All along in my writing I've been trying to do justice to the rich messiness of learning and teaching — to avoid the limitations of neat theories and pat positions.

Clearly Elbow loved to hold "unanswered questions" and coined the wonderful term "rich messiness" to describe the process of learning and teaching. Does that mean that Elbow wanted to avoid the coherence of a pedagogical theory? He intimates on page x that he felt, "A hunger for coherence; yet a hunger also to be true to the natural incoherence of experience." That others in his field didn't feel this hunger bothered him.

[page ix] I've always been irritated at the prejudice among so many people in higher education (particularly in institutions of higher repute) that pedagogy doesn't bear thinking about: that there's something useless and *infra-dig* about studying the processes of learning and teaching themselves (as opposed to the contents of the disciplines); and that whether someone learns or teaches well is mostly a matter of inborn talent, temperament, and character.

Elbow likens his experience of learning and teaching to that of doing a rain dance. He says he never had any idea of what a good rain dance looked like, but if he got the steps right, rain came, "but I never knew till I was wet whether I was close. I never seemed to have any sense of what a good rain dance looked like."

He lists a bunch of things in the Introduction that struck home to me. Like not being able to memorize or find certain material, and later finding that same material comes out at delightfully unexpected times and places. Like the assumption that input should precede output: Elbow finds that he "could get things to *go in* better" if he had been first asked to have them come out. It seems that in the implicit goal of organizing learning and teaching, some have created a neat emptiness where a "rich messiness" would be more fruitful. And like those students who "cannot remember well till they think, but are asked not to think till they can remember well." These are examples of the contraries that Elbow asks us to embrace as we work our way through this book of collected essays on learning and teaching.

In this passage, Elbow delineates the basic of flaw of the banking model of teaching where students are treated as boxes in which information is deposited to be retrieved later on demand.

[page 11] The implication for learning is that you don't teach anyone by feeding him information. It's processed and "filed," but whether it can ever be found again is a function of his filing and processing system which is precisely what you have left unchanged and probably very bad: brute (short-term) memory is high in the competition for man's feeblest capacity (Miller). You only teach someone if you affect the way he files his data, processes his information, or makes his inferences.

Human beings are not computers, all similarities to the contrary. Computers use compilers to process statements in a language. Human beings are compiler designers and are always changing the specifications of their compilers to process statements in new languages that are too rich and messy to ever be found in a compiler designer's handbook. When our internal compilers have been restructured by some course we took, we know that we learned something that will stay with us because it affects the very way that we see and understand the world every day.

[page 13] But real learning, in contrast, is the phenomenon of so abundantly "understanding" the concept in the book or lecture that it becomes part of us and determines the way we see, feel, and act — the way we process the widest range of data.

We become changed when we encounter ideas and concepts that extend beyond our own. There's a contrary — it's the bootstrap metaphor — we can only learn when we learn something that we are not capable of learning, up until now. How does a program get into a computer? Another program loads it. How does that program get into the computer? It is a program and there must be a program to load it! In

1969 on early minicomputers we had to key in this program with our fingers at the front console. That initial code was called the *bootstrap*. It would read a piece of paper tape. The piece of tape was a primitive loader which could then load a more detailed loader. Since that time computer designers have created a simpler process for the user, who now only pushes the RESET button, but all the functions I mentioned above occur. The fat-fingered bootstrap is in ROM, the primitive loader on the first sector of the hard-disk, and the more detailed loader is loaded with the operating system. Each time we take a new course, we do not learn if we only input data; we must come to understand concepts and ideas and bootstrap changes to the way we process data from now on. We must follow the steps of the rain dance until we "get wet."

Elbow gives us Bruner's three steps to learning by induction: 1) input a lot of data, 2) the "aha" emerges, 3) be able to express what the "aha" means. The "aha" refers to the unexpressible insight that comes from inductive learning. According to Rudolf Steiner, this is a *percept*, the most basic element of thinking, a non-verbal spiritual activity that precedes the forming of a concept. A concept requires words. Elbow recognizes this pre-verbal aspect of thinking:

[page 17] For induction produces the experience — the "feel" — of a concept *before* there are any words for it. It is the *nonverbal experience* of a concept which enables one to recognize a huge range of instances of the concept: one doesn't need verbal cues as mediation.

We are so inured to the evaluation process that we have a large vocabulary for negative things to say as we judge about others' work, but not much except "good" or "fine" to say on the positive side. To counter this imbalance, Elbow evolved something he calls "movies in the readers minds", which, while he designed it for the learning and teaching of writing, seems to work as well for other fields. Noticing how little a student learns from a grade or from a short comment on a piece of writing, Elbow decided "to provide my students with an account of what was going on in my mind as I was reading — trying to give as honest and accurate a picture as possible of the effects of their words in my head." (Page 162) These personal accounts of subjective experience had a sense of truth that the student accepted because it was not verbalized judgment from some external standards, but authentic experience of one person.

[page 229] There is enormous pedagogical power that comes from telling the truth — what happened to us; and avoiding lies — or at least shaky guesses about what is right or wrong in a performance. Students often fight us in our more impersonal verdicts . . . But when we simply tell what happened to us as we read their writing . . . what we say has a higher chance of being actually listened to.

Peter Elbow innovated the "doubting and believing game" and says that, "I've been pestering people for more than ten years with versions of my doubting/believing essay in an effort to think my way through it." (Page xv) In this "game" we encounter the two contraries of "doubting" and "believing". Given some position one is studying, one may either believe it or doubt it at first glance. Unless one makes the conscious effort to believe in something one doubts, one will never come to see the sense of it. Unless one makes the conscious effort to doubt something that one believes in, one will never come to see the lack of sense of one's position as others see it.

I first encountered the "believing/doubting" game in the Appendix of Elbow's *Writing Without Teachers* twenty years ago. I even made notes on the pages where it appears, so I know that I read those pages. But last year when you used the doubting/believing game in your course on College Curriculum, it seemed new and fresh to me, because I had not used it consciously before. There in your class, I found an actual application! There was the believing/doubting game integrated into pedagogy and it worked! You suggested that we suspend our belief by *doubting*, and spend some time *believing* in something we have never believed in before, so that we may examine the implications of a new area with fresh eyes, from the *inside* of the belief structure. Only after we have applied the believing/doubting game, will we be ready for the application of our judgment. That's what you told us, and you modeled with your own behavior how

one's does it. Here's how Elbow in *Embracing Contraries* explains the final judgment phase:

[page 269, 270] Judgment involves looking over the results of systematic believing and systematic doubting and making up one's mind.

In the believing/doubting game, we must learn to enjoy "embracing contraries" in our "explorations in learning and teaching" as the book's title and subtitle tell us. Is the "rich messiness" of the believing/doubting game mere foolishness or a worthwhile pedagogy? Is it perhaps all promise and no substance? Is it like the all-purpose potion metaphor that Elbow uses on page 296: it is good for all that ails you and is "even good for polishing the family silver." What does the family silver represent? "Epistemology," Elbow says. The enthusiastic embracing of contraries in the believing/doubting game helps us "to figure things out." It provides us a way of changing ourselves in the process of learning and teaching so that we come to see the world differently, and in a way that lets us know we have learned something.

IV. Teaching & Learning — Pedagogy

While reading what Rudolf Steiner, the founder of Waldorf Schools, had to say about education, I found this quote from a lecture he gave eighty years ago. From his book *Education as a Force for Social Good* [See ARJ]:

[page 204, 205] We differentiate today between elementary grades, high schools, and colleges. Teaching methodology is also taught in the colleges. Now people want to improve the status of pedagogy, but it is still taught as a secondary subject. Until now, someone would be appointed professor of philosophy and then had to teach pedagogy, also. Mostly, it was a burden and not done very willingly. But this must change. In the future, all of culture must connect with human life in general. If we are to fulfill the ideal I described, teachers will also have to be psychologists. Teachers will have to educate the growing child through a deep understanding of the human being and , therefore, know best what is pedagogically correct. In the future, universities will appoint school teachers to teach pedagogy. And after teachers have done that for awhile, they will return to their schools to teach children and to gain new experiences in order to teach pedagogy once again. That will be a genuine "academic republic" as Klopstock dreamed of it. We will not be able to progress until we view matters as thoroughly and deeply. It is the destiny of our time to inform practical life about such things.

I hadn't given much thought to the teaching of pedagogy before taking your two courses, but I have an entirely different perspective now. I see clearly the necessity for teaching pedagogy as a subject, as an essential component of the curriculum for education majors and for those whose future vocation involves the teaching of college students, no matter what the subject of their expertise. The meta-task of teaching teachers is one of the most challenging tasks that I can imagine.

IV. Teaching & Learning — Techniques

Bluma Zeigarnik found out that unfinished actions or situations are better memorized than finished ones on the background of the inner psychic tension system (known as the Zeigarnik effect). I found the information at: <http://www.gestalt.org/wulf.htm>. I interpret "better memorized" as meaning that they go into long-term memory quicker and easier, something that makes the teacher's and learner's jobs easier.

I read somewhere [in Elbow's *Embracing Contraries*] that erasing words from a blackboard can assist students in remembering the material because they attempt to fill in the blank spaces. This insight would seem to recommend that one erase only the details and leave some of the headings on the board just barely visible to encourage this long-term memory making process. When you were doing the "Fun with D&S" presentation, you used this very effectively. Drawing out the synonyms for P's & Q's from everyone, you then erased the board and put only the P & Q back up, encouraging the class unconsciously to try to

remember what the P's & Q's were and thus storing them into long term memory.

From the motivation view in the textbook McKeachie, *et al*, article (page 98) I have evolved a plan for teaching the sitting meditation called zazen in my next weekend group. The last time I did it, some 15 years ago, I didn't address the motivation aspect. Just basically said, "We'll do some zazen." and one of the participants refused, and refused to leave the room where we were to do it. I was stumped and didn't react very well with the result that we never got to zazen. Next time I will put the word "Silence" on the agenda and when the time comes for me to do it, I'll write Silence and have folks talk about various ways they have of being silent and list them on the board. This will build the expectancy some activity involving silence will be unveiled. Then I will ask the group to close their eyes and be silent for 15 seconds — then ask them for what happened inside. This will lead up to the exercise of zazen where the sitting-up allows one to stay awake while remaining silent, to dampen the internal thought-dialogue, and thus to meditate successfully.

V. Teaching& Learning — Summary

This course has moved me far in the direction of becoming aware of many techniques of college teaching that I have appreciated as a student over the years, but never had appreciated as a teacher, up until now. Even last semester as I enjoyed so much your course in College Curriculum, I wondered how you could teach others to do what it was you did so well. The readings in the first part of this semester, concentrated as they were, plowed open the ground for the planting of seeds, for my becoming conscious of all the things I didn't know were techniques that pervaded your teaching process. Then to be able to relate what you did to various teaching skills helped to realize that I could become consciously competent in new areas of teaching in which I had never attempted to apply myself or haphazardly at best. Particularly valuable to me were the two "stand-up comedian" lessons you gave, such as when you modeled how to appropriately use a five second delay while lecturing. The combination of process and content in those two lessons was masterful — you talked about a subject while using in *process* the techniques you were describing in *content*. And I learned from those two routines lessons that I hope one day will become as unconsciously competent in me as they are already in you.

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1. I must credit Margaret Atwood for helping me to understand this process as well. She got my mind moving along these tracks as I read and reviewed her insightful book on writing, [Negotiating with the Dead – A Writer on Writing](#). In fact, I ordered Empson's book based on her crediting him in several places in her book. [Return to text above footnote \(1\)](#).

