

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction: A Kaleidoscope of Conflict

Although the immediate focus of this book is learning to teach underprepared writers in college classes, it raises and explores two of the major questions facing public education as we begin the 21st century: Whose goals should schools pursue? Whose aspirations should they honor? These questions go back at least as far as Horace Mann's defense of the "common school" in the mid-19th century, but they have drawn increasing attention during the last 45 years as our pupil population has grown more diverse. The myriad answers that have historically been given to these questions are sortable into four general categories of goals: student career preparation, exploration of cultural knowledge, promotion of social reform, and student personal growth (see Bowles & Gintis, 1976; Dewey, 1916/1967; Kliebard, 1995; Spring, 1996).

This book narrates the struggles of a college philosophy teacher—Steve Fishman, one of the co-authors—to respond to our title questions as he encounters underprepared writers who challenge his normal teaching practices. As we will see, these questions about appropriate school aims do not lead Fishman to simple, either/or responses. Rather, Steve must decide to what extent he should support students' careerist aspirations and to what extent he should maintain his own differing goals. That is, Steve's pupils, by and large, see school as vocational preparation and their degrees as tools for professional advancement. By contrast, his own aims and aspirations as a philosophy teacher emphasize, first and foremost, exploration of the Western cultural heritage and then, in lesser degrees, promotion of social reform, student personal growth, and student career preparation. This disjunction between Fishman's and his students' educational goals frequently leads to clashes that impede pupil learning

and force Steve to consider ways he can modify his classroom objectives without surrendering what he considers his central mission as an instructor of philosophy.

The decisions Fishman makes, as we will show, are not always in line with what his students want. Nor do they always please his co-author, Lucille McCarthy, a composition researcher and longtime observer of his classroom. However, as we will also show, since answers to our basic questions are not either/or, Steve and his students sometimes discover that their complex aspirations overlap. On such occasions, they are able to sufficiently soften their differences to fashion some shared objectives and participate in a community of collaborative inquiry.

Because the perspectives of teacher, students, and outside researcher sometimes coincide but often clash, the report we present is indeterminate. That is, rather than privileging one point of view while silencing others, we make space for competing perspectives: for example, student's careerism as well as Fishman's disciplinary commitments, McCarthy's Freirian radicalism as well as Fishman's Deweyan gradualism. In trying to understand and position these diverse viewpoints, we are led to interrogate the ways that Steve Fishman's identity as a White, Euroamerican, middle-class teacher affects his classroom goals, featured literacies, and relations with students. Our study of a teacher and his novice writers, thus, brings us face to face with broader issues of multiculturalism, race cognizance, and social class.

THE AUDIENCE FOR THIS BOOK

This book is intended for all teachers who, like Fishman, find that because of changing student demographics they no longer can assume that their pupils think and speak just like they do. That is, they cannot assume their students' answers to the basic questions we have raised about the function of public schools match their own. Thus, we believe our account of Fishman's efforts to bridge the gap between himself and his pupils—a gap that Freire (1970/1997) famously calls the teacher-student contradiction—is potentially useful for teachers in a wide variety of settings.

An important subset of our teacher audience is composition specialists. A number of scholars in the composition field have called for studies like the present one of underprepared writers' experiences in courses across the curriculum (see Belcher & Braine, 1995; Gilyard, 1997; Guerra, 1997; Hirvela, 1999; Leki, 1992; Royster & Taylor, 1997; Spack, 1997; Sternglass, 1997; Zamel, 1995). They make this request for two reasons. First, writing teachers need information about what goes on in discipline-based courses if they are to prepare their composition students for subsequent academic writing.

Second, such studies help compositionists better advise, consult, and workshop with discipline-based teachers like Fishman. Compositionists' ability to help instructors in the disciplines is important because it is widely agreed that if underprepared students are to develop academic literacy, they must write across their college years. And, given recent proposals from both the political left and right for jettisoning remedial writing classes at the university—and some schools, like the City University of New York actually doing it—increased numbers of inexperienced writers are likely to appear in discipline-based classrooms (see Gleason, 2000; Greenberg, 1993, 1997; Shor, 1997; Soliday, 1996, 1999; Stygall, 1999; Wiener, 1998.)

One specific way our study can help compositionists more fruitfully advise professors across the curriculum is that it informs them about the context in which discipline-based instructors encounter underprepared writers: a setting very different from remedial and first-year composition courses. For example, in Fishman's philosophy classes, like many in the disciplines, students must engage with difficult texts, a challenge that can be especially daunting for underprepared writers. In addition, students come to Fishman's class without label or pretesting. This makes it quite likely that when he approaches underprepared writers regarding the quality of their work, he brings unwanted, unpleasant, and highly charged news. Finally, novice writers are, in his philosophy classes, few in number. Sometimes there may be only one in a class of 25, at other times, three or four, but never more than a small percentage. This, plus the fact that he must teach his philosophy curriculum, makes it difficult to require the sort of helpful class-wide assignments—for example, comparison of oral and written discourse, study of students' different

home and community languages, instruction in writing mechanics—which can be major foci of composition instruction (see Campbell, 1997; Dean, 1986/1999; Kutz, Groden, & Zamel, 1993; Zamel, 1995). Therefore Fishman, like most teachers in the disciplines, must figure out how to bridge the gap between himself and underprepared writers while still offering a course that is faithful to his discipline's historic texts and literacy practices. As we will report, sometimes Fishman succeeds in bridging this gap in whole class activities, and at other times he and his students make progress in one-on-one tutorials.

In short, underprepared writers' progress depends upon their writing in courses beyond the composition classroom, and their success in subsequent courses in the academic disciplines depends upon content-area instructors providing appropriate support. With information of the sort our book presents, compositionists will be better able to recommend to these instructors potentially useful teaching techniques. Our fear is that in the absence of such advice, professors in the disciplines may find it all too easy to dismiss their novice writers as incompetent or unmotivated.

HOW THIS STUDY BEGAN

This study began with an arresting classroom event. Fishman's fall 1998 Introduction to Philosophy class presented him with several students whose writing was so far from what he saw as the norm that he found himself at a loss about how to respond to them. Given his longstanding commitment to employ writing as a tool for learning in his classes, his initial confusion about how to relate these students' literacies to the discourse of philosophy caused him to reflect upon his experiences in his university's writing across the curriculum (WAC) program.

When Fishman thought back on the dozen or more WAC workshops he had attended since 1983, he realized that there had been no discussion of underprepared writers. Further, when he asked people at conferences of English teachers (e.g., NCTE) and educational researchers (e.g., AERA), they were unable to point to research that

might help instructors in the disciplines deal with novice writers. Although the experts Fishman talked to had little advice for him, they were quick to admit that he was not alone. For example, the director of the writing lab at Fishman's own school—UNC Charlotte—told him that many teachers across the disciplines were “pulling their hair out” about the inexperienced writers in their classes. Unable to get help from colleagues, Fishman asked McCarthy to join him in studying his own classroom. This book is the result.

DEFINING “UNDERPREPARED WRITER”

In composition studies, underprepared writers are defined as those students who, as a result of their initial placement tests, are typically assigned to remedial and ESL composition classes. However, since students in Fishman's philosophy courses appear without designation, he uses the term in a different way: to single out, in his own mind, pupils whose lack of experience reading and writing in the so-called standard code puts them at a disadvantage in his classroom. Although he is the sole person making the judgment—one based on early-in-the-semester homework papers—he believes it is not an arbitrary one. He makes this judgment when, because of numerous rhetorical and mechanical mismanagements, he cannot figure out what students are trying to say. That is, he cannot understand their contentions or the ways they are attempting to support them.

But why bother characterizing pupils in a philosophy class as novice writers at all, especially since Fishman never mentions it to the students themselves? He answers that the designation is helpful because it places underprepared writers in the context of 35 years of research by compositionists into basic writing. Fishman has in mind, for example, Shaughnessy's (1977) finding that many underprepared students “resent and resist” their vulnerability as in-school writers (p. 10). He also has in mind Grego and Thompson's (1996) generalization: “Without language to express their struggles as part of the intellectual scene of the academy, students express these struggles often as isolated feelings and emotions: anger, frustration,

the desire for success” (p. 71). Using these sorts of generalizations to contextualize novice writers and their compositions makes them and their work seem less mysterious to Fishman and suggests a wider repertoire of teacherly strategies than would otherwise be available to him.

Although these observations about novice writers increase Fishman’s ability to bridge to these students, he quickly adds that he is conscious of the dangers of essentializing inexperienced writers, and he agrees with those researchers who point out that novice writers defy simple classification in terms of other characteristics (Cross, 1971; Delpit, 1995; Greenberg, 1997; Lazere, 1992; Royster & Williams, 1999; Stygall, 1999). That is, his experience confirms the heterogeneity of underprepared writers. He has found that they are returning students as well as typical college age, native speakers as well as non-native speakers of English, transfers from community college as well as straight from high school, and first generation college students as well as pupils whose parents have advanced degrees.

OUR RESEARCH APPROACH

Our research approach is rooted in the teacher-research tradition (Anderson & Herr, 1999; Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993; MacLean & Mohr, 1999; see also Fishman & McCarthy, 2000). More specifically, we collaborate to provide a detailed account of Fishman’s classroom, combining systematic data collection with teacher narrative in order to develop what Stenhouse (1985) calls an “illuminative” account (p. 26). That is, as readers step into the classroom and tutorial situations we describe, our intent is that they will determine what is transferable to their own pedagogical contexts and compare our judgments with theirs.

To this end, we try to collect enough sorts of data, over a long enough period, to convince our readers that our findings are trustworthy. We want them to believe that our accounts are not just our idiosyncratic constructions but are faithful to our informants’ interpretations. The present study, however, complexifies this quasi-positivist approach by assuming that researchers can never fully

transcend their situatedness and, furthermore, that they have a responsibility to focus on injustices in the classroom being explored. That is, we assume that researchers should use the information they collect to ameliorate the inequities they find and work on behalf of the oppressed (see Lincoln, 1990).

Although both of us accept this responsibility, there were times, as we relate in subsequent chapters, that we could not fully resolve our conflicting views about what constituted justice in Fishman's classroom. Put differently, we disagreed about how best to answer our title questions—Whose educational goals should be pursued, and whose aspirations honored? As a result, our research report is indeterminate, as we have noted, and reflects the mixed nature of our objectives: our desire, on the one hand, to be faithful to our informants' perspectives and, on the other, to acknowledge the particularity of our own standpoints, including our differing views about the proper function of public schooling. (See appendix A for a complete record of our data collection and analysis.)

Research Questions

This research was driven from the beginning by Fishman's sense that he was as underprepared to teach novice writers as they were underprepared to read and compose in his philosophy class. When the study began, in fall 1998, our primary question was, How can Fishman help his novice writers compose in Standard American English? But as we reviewed the data we were collecting, we saw repeated examples of novice writers misunderstanding the texts they were reading. That is, we started to realize that part of these students' problem was rhetorical: they did not have a clear idea of what they wanted to write because they did not have a satisfactory grasp of the reading they had been asked to discuss. Thus, we widened our inquiry to include scrutiny of novice writers' reading and its significance for their writing. In other words, the question was no longer just, How might Fishman help these students write about philosophy better? It became, How might he help them improve their reading of philosophy so as to write about it better?

Our concern with connecting underprepared students' reading and writing was further strengthened by our study of the education and composition literature. The consensus of researchers is that teachers of non-mainstream students should put more stress on the content and writing strategies of their students' papers and less on grammatical correctness (see Ball, 1999; Banks, 1968; Bartholomae & Petrosky, 1986; Benesch, 1991; Cummins, 1986; Elbow, 1999; Leki, 1990, 1992; Mutnick, 1996; Rose, 1989; Spack, 1997; Sternglass, 1997; Zamel, 1995). This led us to investigate the instructional supports that help students produce rhetorically successful work.

Our refocusing on the content and writing strategies of novice composers' texts rather than on their surface mechanics was, however, only one outcome of our reading of the literature. Because teaching the dominant code and the European intellectual tradition has become a lightning rod for discussions about the politics of schooling—in particular, the role of education in perpetuating unjust power structures—we were led to consider a number of other issues as well. We thus began to collect data about the ways in which Fishman's being White and middle-class affected his pedagogy and relations with students of different ethnic and class backgrounds. These data revealed the conflicting goals and aspirations we noted above. In subsequent chapters we report our findings about how Fishman and his students negotiated these differences and how, at least on occasion, they found enough common ground to work cooperatively toward both shared and individual goals.

Research Setting and Participants

Our two-year study took place on the Charlotte campus of the University of North Carolina, a branch serving some 14,000 students. In this report, we spotlight five participants: Fishman, the teacher-researcher, three of his pupils, and McCarthy, the outside observer. In addition, numerous other informants provided data that contextualize our study. These include eight classmates of our three focus students, Fishman's student assistant, and four other discipline-based UNCC professors who later taught our focus pupils.

Focus Students

The three pupils we spotlight in this study are Neha Shah, a 23-year-old recent immigrant from India, a non-native speaker of English and senior math major who enrolled in Fishman's Introduction to Philosophy course; Neha's classmate, Ellen Williams, a 36-year-old African American, a community college transfer and junior criminal justice major; and Andre Steadman, a 21-year-old African American transfer student and junior computer science major in Fishman's advanced Philosophy of Education class. Although Fishman judged each of these pupils to be underprepared for the reading and writing in his course, they all made what we considered significant progress, achieving both some of Fishman's objectives as well as some of their own. What makes their stories interesting, especially in juxtaposition, is that each of these students' achievements depended upon quite different instructional supports. Because they brought disparate histories and attitudes to Fishman's philosophy class—not only diverse goals and aspirations but also different cultural, academic, social, and economic “capital” (Bourdieu, 1982)—each drew upon different pedagogical techniques to take advantage of his or her particular competencies.

The Researchers: Teacher-Insider and Compositionist-Outsider

In an effort to give our readers a sense of our situatedness, the histories and points of view that we, as researchers, bring to this study, we outline something of our ethnic, family, and educational backgrounds. Steve Fishman, the teacher-researcher insider, is a long-tenured, full professor of philosophy who was 60 years old at the time this study began. The outside composition researcher, Lucille McCarthy, is a full professor of English who was 54. Both are Euroamerican and native speakers of English. At first glance, the two of us may seem to stand on the opposite side of the race, class, and school-success divide from many of the novice writers Fishman meets in his classroom. But this is too simple. It masks serious differences between the two of us as well as important sites of identification between us and the underprepared writers we studied.

In some obvious ways, the two of us both belong to the dominant culture. We are both White and middle-aged with roughly equal

academic, economic, and cultural capital. McCarthy did her undergraduate work at Stanford, her masters degree at the University of Chicago, and her Ph.D. at the University of Pennsylvania. Fishman did his three degrees at Columbia University in New York City. In addition, we are similar in that Fishman's mother and both of McCarthy's parents were secondary school teachers. Thus, the two of us were introduced at a very early age to the need to succeed in school, if for no other reason than to please our parents. Put differently, we both imbibed the cultural and academic capital required for school success—the language and values of the classroom—at our mothers' breasts.

However, despite these similarities, we are, in crucial aspects of our social capital, quite different. McCarthy's great-grandparents were Scandinavian and English immigrants who settled on farmlands in Iowa and South Dakota in the decades after the Civil War. As the descendent of Anglo-Scandinavian immigrants, she is located in a very different sector of the 19th century immigration tide than Fishman. Growing up in Sioux Falls and Des Moines, and, as a teenager, in a suburb of Los Angeles, McCarthy lived in homogeneous communities in which her Protestant Christianity and her blonde hair and fair skin registered in the very center of the American paradigm. When she opened her Dick and Jane reader, the characters' skin color and facial features were identical to those she saw when she looked in her own mirror. McCarthy's religion, appearance, and background—her social capital—gave her a high-level passport into the most powerful strata of America's dominant class.

By contrast, Fishman's inherited social capital is far less impressive. Although America often prides itself on being a nation of immigrants, it has actually not been hospitable to most of them (Higham, 1963). Whereas McCarthy's great-grandparents got free land in the West, Fishman's Jewish grandparents, when they arrived from Eastern Europe in the 1880s, got living space in the basements of New York tenements and jobs in garment-district sweatshops to pay for them. And, unlike McCarthy, when Fishman looked in the mirror, he saw a foreign face, one whose swarthy complexion and Semitic features bore no resemblance to Dick or Jane. In contrast to the characters in his basal reader, none of Fishman's friends had

paper routes, porches, or leaves to rake. His feelings of being an outsider were exacerbated by growing up during World War II and hearing stories of the holocaust. In fact, he developed the kind of self-loathing which often accompanies the identity formation of American minorities (see Baldwin, 1963/1988; Mura, 1988; Tatum, 1992). And he carries evidence of this self-consciousness, like pockmarks on his skin, to this day. Even casual comments about his Semitic features or about Jewish cleverness at business remind him that, although he is a second-generation American, he is here by the suffrance of the dominant class and will never fully belong. In sum, Fishman belongs to an ethnic group that has, at times, been characterized by Whites as racially other for the purposes of exclusion and/or extermination (See Dyer, 1997; Miles, 1993).

This history suggests why Fishman is someone who has often been forced to question his own identity, someone whose self-reflections have frequently uncovered feelings of alienation from the dominant culture, the academic world, and, at times, even from his own ethnic group. This is not to say that his minority experiences as a Jew are the same as those of all other minorities. In fact, his status as the grandson of voluntary immigrants to America is very different, as Ogbu (1988) points out, from the situation of descendents of involuntary immigrants. Neither do we want to claim that Fishman's sense of not belonging makes him an especially good teacher of inexperienced writers whose identities may also have been shaped by feelings of discomfort in mainstream culture. What we do claim, however, is that Fishman's own history as an ethnic minority accounts in part for his desire to overcome the contradictions between himself and his novice writers and increase their chances for academic success.

McCarthy shares Fishman's desire to help novice writers succeed in college, but her conviction has a different source. Rather than originating in a sense of being an outsider to the dominant culture, McCarthy's commitment grows out of her experiences as a teacher and researcher. Across twenty years of classroom studies her data collection has involved many conversations with novice writers, and she has seen close up the negative effects of teachers' failure to draw upon the linguistic and cultural knowledge of other-literate students.

Watching these pupils' struggles and frequent defeats in such settings, she has found herself increasingly taking their part. Thus, she has, over time, come to support more radical approaches in the classroom, ones like those proposed by critical and borderland pedagogists (eg. Freire, 1970/1997; Giroux, 1992; Horner & Lu, 1999; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Shor, 1992).

Theorizing Our Data

To help us analyze the data we collected about competing ethnic discourses and perspectives in Fishman's classroom, we drew upon the work of Critical Race Theorists (eg. Bell, 1992; Delgado, 1995b; Williams, 1991) and Whiteness studies scholars (eg. Dyer, 1999; Frankenberg, 1993; Roediger, 1991, 2002). To make further sense of the politics and pedagogy in Fishman's class, we employed the theories of three 20th century educational philosophers—Dewey, Gramsci, and Freire—ultimately relying most heavily on Dewey and Freire. Since these latter two theorists wrote a great deal during long careers, and since the positions both adopt are richly complicated, we offer a preliminary word about our reading of their work.

Interpreting Dewey and Freire

In the chapters that follow, we characterize Dewey as a gradualist reformer of society, a philosopher who places primary emphasis on expanding the democratic tendencies within capitalism. By contrast, we characterize Freire as a radical transformer of society, a theorist who stresses the proletarian struggle to unmask and unseat the oppressor class. However, once we identify them this way, we recognize that our labeling may be oversimple since there are aspects of Dewey's approach that are radical and there are times when Freire sounds gradualist. For example, Dewey's (1935/1991) radicalism can be heard in his deep unhappiness with certain aspects of American capitalism (p. 45), his (1934/1986a) warnings about the power of "capitalist psychology" to "sabotage" workers' interests (p. 104), and his repeated focus on the inequities between what he calls the "leisure" and "labor" classes (1916/1967, pp. 136, 252, 323). Displaying similar complexity, Freire (Shor and Freire, 1987),

despite frequent references to himself as a “revolutionary” (pp. 69, 71, 89, 167), often engaged in activities that suggest a more gradualist stance. We have in mind his work between 1989 and 1991 as Secretary of Education for Sao Paulo’s public schools and his role as one of the founders, in 1979, of the Brazilian Workers’ Party, a group that sponsors candidates in popular elections (see Torres, 1993, p. 136). Freire also suggests a gradualist rather than radical stance when he cautions liberatory teachers about engaging in resistance that might result in professional “suicide,” urging them instead to proceed prudently by developing an “ideological map” of friends and foes in their particular educational situations (Shor and Freire, 1987, p. 61. For further comparison of Dewey’s and Freire’s ideology, see Shor, 1999).

Despite the complexities of Dewey’s and Freire’s politics, there are three reasons we hold to our characterizations of Dewey as gradualist reformer and Freire as radical transformer. First, we believe that our readings are true to the fundamental ideological roots of their seminal and most widely read works on education: *Democracy and Education* (1916/1967) in the case of Dewey and *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970/1997) in the case of Freire. Second, our emphasis on the political differences between Dewey and Freire, rather than on their similarities, helps us make clear the range of political orientations available to teachers of underprepared writers. Finally, our interpretations of Dewey and Freire help the two of us explore our own differences about the politics Fishman brings to his courses. Specifically, McCarthy seizes upon the more radical aspects of Freire’s position to reveal what she sees as shortcomings in Fishman’s classroom. Conversely, to defend his approach, Steve often appeals to the gradualist aspects of Dewey’s work, ones that promote collaborative inquiry and social reconciliation over class conflict. (For more on Dewey’s gradualism, see Demetrion, 1997, 2001.)

In line with our reading of Dewey and Freire as occupying different places on the political spectrum, we see them as promoting different pedagogies. That is, we view Dewey, the political gradualist, as trying to balance assimilation with critique and, as a result, emphasizing exploration of cultural knowledge and the development in students of a spirit of social service alongside personal growth. By contrast, we characterize Freire, the radical social transformer, as working

to make explicit the political nature of education, and, as a result, promoting a social change pedagogy that focuses on unveiling the myths foisted on proletarian students by the dominant elite.

Once again, however, as in their approaches to politics, Dewey's and Freire's pedagogies are richly complicated. As we explain in chapters 2 and 4, there are times when Dewey and Freire recommend classroom practices that seem much the same. In fact, people who knew Freire tell us that he felt very much indebted to Dewey's work and wished he had studied it more extensively (Shor, personal communication, 2000; Torres, personal communication, 2001; see also Feinberg & Torres, 2001, p. 28; Freire, 1967/1973, p. 57; Mackie, 1980/1981, pp. 95–96).

Of course, using the theories of Dewey and Freire to analyze a North American college teacher's work with underprepared writers involves considerable extrapolation. Dewey rarely says anything about college instruction, and, although Freire taught at the college level for many years (beginning in 1980), he was probably not thinking of a first-world, university classroom or tutoring situation when he analyzed teacher-student relations in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. In other words, neither Freire nor Dewey offers "recipes" or specific instructional techniques for situations like Fishman's. In fact, Freire, in conversation with Macedo, says that he could not tell first-world teachers what to do even if he wanted to because he does not "know the contexts and material conditions" in which they work (Freire & Macedo, 1987, p. 134). Similarly, Dewey (1904/1964b, 1929/1988b) declines to provide pedagogical "tool kits" for teachers at any level, arguing instead that instructors need to develop judgment so they can evaluate and reshape their own teaching practices.

However, despite Dewey's and Freire's unwillingness to spell out particular applications of their educational principles, both believe their theories are widely useful. For example, Freire, in his "Letter to North American Teachers," gives his readers what he views as a universal classroom axiom. He argues that instruction is *always* a political practice, and, therefore, teachers will always "either serve whoever is in power or present options to those in power" (Freire, 1987, p. 212). Dewey (1902/1990c) enunciates a principal he considers equally universal when he suggests that teachers in *all* situations

need to connect school curriculum with their students' interests. Thus, as we employ Dewey's and Freire's educational theories to analyze Fishman's teaching, we believe we are doing what both would likely expect and approve.

ORGANIZATION OF THIS BOOK

Following this introductory chapter, Fishman, in chapter 2, offers his own answers to our title questions—Whose goals? Whose aspirations?—responses he roots in the educational theories of Dewey, Gramsci, and Freire. We then focus on his student, Neha Shah, the 23-year-old, recent arrival from India who enrolled in Fishman's Introduction to Philosophy class in fall 1998 to fulfill a graduation requirement. Neha came to Steve's course reluctantly, having been forced to take it to fulfill a "writing intensive" requirement for graduation. After describing the clash between Neha's aims and Fishman's, we outline what Steve viewed as Neha's progress in philosophy and the instructional supports she said helped her. At the end of the chapter, in a coda, we reveal a second set of conflicts about goals and aspirations, those that existed between Fishman and McCarthy. These involved McCarthy's claim that Fishman was hegemonic in refusing to expand his notion of what counts as appropriate reading and writing in his discipline and insensitive to the literacies that Neha brought to his classroom.

In chapter 3, our focus student is a classmate of Neha Shah: 36-year-old Ellen Williams who, like Neha, came to Intro to Philosophy reluctantly, solely to fulfill a graduation requirement. Although Ellen's resistance to Fishman's goals, as well as her underpreparedness for his course, were rooted in a very different personal and educational history, she, like Neha, managed to make progress in philosophy. We describe the instructional supports that helped Ellen Williams, ones that differed from those upon which Neha Shah drew. In this chapter, we use Critical Race Theory and Whiteness studies as lenses through which to view the gaps that separated Fishman and Ellen Williams as well as to understand their efforts to overcome them. We close chapter 3, like chapter 2, with a coda in

which we offer an account of our own disagreements regarding Fishman's teaching of this underprepared writer. These revolved around McCarthy's claim that when Fishman evaluated Ellen's work, both his focus and method were inappropriate.

In our fourth chapter, we tell the story of our final featured student, 21-year-old Andre Steadman, an African American computer science major who took Fishman's advanced philosophy course the semester after Steve taught Neha and Ellen. This time, the critical lenses we apply to Fishman's pedagogy are Freirian and neo-Marxian. Specifically, we analyze the effectiveness of Fishman's Deweyan orientation in overcoming Freire's "teacher-student contradiction" between working-class pupils and their middle-class teachers. Although Andre Steadman resembled Neha Shah and Ellen Williams in being, in Fishman's estimate, an underprepared writer, Andre differed from them by coming to philosophy voluntarily, encouraged by a friend who had taken Fishman's course the previous semester. Andre's positive attitude toward the class, combined with Fishman's growing understanding of novice writers, made a dramatic difference in the relationship that Steve and Andre could establish, and they quickly developed what we call a cooperative Deweyan community. This success notwithstanding, McCarthy argues in the coda at the end of this chapter that Fishman could have done more to help Andre become a political change agent, an activist in the service of a less hierarchical, exploitive, and class-stratified culture.

In our concluding chapter, we look back on our contrasting answers to our title questions: Whose goals? Whose aspirations? After reviewing the instructional supports we agree helped our three focus students, we summarize our pedagogical conflicts and the ideological differences that fueled them. Steve then offers his final reflections on his successes and failures with underprepared students and concludes the book by giving advice to discipline-based teachers about how they might help such students in their courses. He recommends particular teaching techniques as well as what he sees as desirable sorts of teacher-student and student-student relations.