

Language and Learning Across the Disciplines

A forum for debates concerning interdisciplinarity, situated discourse communities, and writing across the curriculum programs.



SPECIAL ISSUE:
SERVICE LEARNING
Ellen Cushman, Guest Editor

Learning at the Edges:
Challenges to the Sustainability of Service Learning in Higher
Education

Composing an Institutional Identity:
The Terms of Community Service in Higher Education

Drawing on the Local:
Collaboration and Community Expertise

Ruptura:
Acknowledging the Lost Subjects of the Service Learning Story

Program Descriptions

Messages from Josefa:
Service Learning in Mexico

The EdLinks University-School Partnership:
Preservice Teachers Reading and Writing with Adolescents Labeled
"At Risk"

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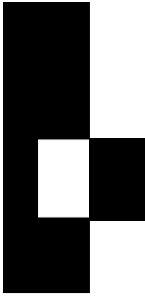
Language and Learning Across the Disciplines is a forum for issues concerning interdisciplinarity, situated discourse communities, and writing across the curriculum programs. The journal will publish articles dealing with issues in learning theory, discourse analysis, participation in disciplinary discourse, and the social, intellectual and political locations of WAC programs. We welcome articles seeking to make connections among several such areas of inquiry. All manuscripts will be carefully reviewed by members of the editorial board and appropriate outside readers. You may expect to hear from us in two months. When submitting a manuscript please follow the current MLA or APA style sheet; submit three copies (3,000 to 7,000 words); print your name, address, telephone number and affiliation on a cover sheet, not on the manuscripts; and enclose sufficient return postage clipped, not pasted, to a self-addressed envelope. Send manuscripts to Sharon Quiroz and Michael Pemberton, Editors, *Language and Learning Across the Disciplines*, Illinois Institute of Technology, 3301 S. Dearborn, Chicago, IL 60616. Major funding for *LLAD* is provided by the Academic Resource Center of the Illinois Institute of Technology.



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Letter from the Guest Editor

Ellen Cushman

University of Colorado, Denver

Service learning initiatives have taken seed in universities across the United States in light of different, yet overlapping, calls for change in the ways university professors and students go about their work. Administrators at the nation's top colleges and universities who collaborate in the Campus Compact issue one call for change (see their statement of principles at <http://www.compact.org/about/about-main.html>). They ask for improved social accountability of faculty and deeper university connection to the community. Founded in 1985, The Campus Compact's efforts were bolstered through the national funds set aside first by George Bush in 1990 via the National and Community Service Act, and then increased in 1993 when President Clinton signed the National Service Trust Act. Interestingly, these administrative efforts ran in tandem with a groundswell of change over the last decade as freshly minted PhDs encountered unforgiving job markets across the disciplines (Readings 1996). Academic job markets have moved away from offering tenure track jobs to ultra specialized professors, and have instead moved toward offering jobs for generalists. Those whose research, teaching, and service activities dovetail to form a unified set of institutional roles, and whose research interests are transdisciplinary, often have better employment prospects in academe. Bill Readings (1996) notes this change and sees the tendency of hiring generalists as not abating anytime soon:

The apparent horizon in arts and letters for the North American University can be roughly sketched as the development of an increasingly interdisciplinary general humanities department amid a cluster of vocational schools, which will themselves include devolved areas of expertise traditionally centered in the humanities. Such vocational schools will tend to increase the social science component in traditionally humanistic fields of inquiry. (pp. 174)

As an interdisciplinary, applied, and collaborative line of inquiry, service learning initiatives present viable, alternative roles for scholars, at the same time as they present administrators and decision makers with programs that enact their calls for greater community responsibility. With all its promise, though, service learning as a relatively new activity alters traditional institutional structures, shifts intellectual missions, and risks marginalization at every turn.

Because service learning initiatives are fairly recent, research remains to be done on the kinds of day-to-day interactions that lead to the institutionalization of long-term programs, a lacuna this special issue seeks to address. To begin with, the institutional standing of service learning initiatives remains difficult to legitimize—service learning is the fringe bordering the fabric of academic work. Some faculty and administrators do not value nor support their colleagues' efforts to start and sustain service learning programs because they perceive these programs as dispensable to the main work of the university, a point made well in the Underwood, Welsh, Gauvain, and Duffy study of UC Links. A branch of the University of California Office of the President, UC Links offers research and administrative support to all the UC campuses that have service related programs. "Learning at the Edges: Challenges to the Sustainability of Service Learning in Higher Education" presents an ethnographic example of the expert-novice roles emerging out of University of California-community collaborations. The authors find that researchers, cast in the position of learners when on site, and perceived as servants when in the university, are challenged to develop and maintain viable outreach initiatives. Even when the faculty members and their programs are as established as Michael Cole who developed UC San Diego's 5th Dimension model, their service learning projects encounter harsh judgments about what counts as rigorous academic work for scholars and students. Because so little is known about the precise roles faculty play in sustaining service learning programs, Underwood et al. ask for more self-reflexive ethnographies on the researchers' parts. With more self-reflexive ethnographies, "we can begin to discern the precise division of labor and the necessary resources needed to overcome the institutional fragility of these efforts" (23).

One important way in which we can better understand the institutional fragility of these efforts is to examine the terms by which they identify themselves within the institution. Brooke Hessler addresses this topic in her essay "Composing an Institutional Identity: the Terms of Community Service in Higher Education." In her review of college and university mission statements and other institutional literacies, she finds that service learning programs might better institutionalize themselves if they were thought of as "applied scholarship." This name invokes both "*inquiry and action*, rather than *service or experience*" (emphasis in origi-

nal 39). Such a “rhetorical emphasis redirects our attention from the cultivation of students-as-citizens to that of students-as-scholars” (39). Terminating service learning as a kind of applied scholarship not only shifts attention to students’ work as knowledge makers, but also indexes the notion that service learning is a problem-solving activity, one that demands collaboration with community residents in order to identify the problems to be explored and perhaps ameliorated through mutually rewarding inquiry.

The social problems that service learning as applied scholarship can research are found and understood only after researchers are invited into the community. Any kind of scholarly intervention in teaching or research that takes place without invitation and/or through a top-down application assumes an oppressive, and ultimately self-defeating, paternalistic superiority (Cushman 1998). The best kinds of research questions and problems for service learning programs are therefore located locally through careful, involved, inquiry with community members, through dialogue and risk-taking. In “Drawing on the Local: Collaboration and Community Expertise,” Linda Flower and Shirley Brice Heath open with an illuminating exchange drawn from a problem solving dialogue among Pittsburgh community members, civic leaders, and city officials. The dialogue presents a theory for intervention and collaborative learning and scholarship, offering a clear understanding of the roles every collaborator must assume when practicing community-based inquiry. This theory is then illustrated through two cases: the first from Shirley Brice Heath’s documentary *ArtShow*, and the second from Linda Flower’s research with the Carnegie Mellon University initiated Community Think Tank. In this Think Tank all of the stakeholders engage in problem solving dialogues with respect for the knowledge each participant brings to the table. These cases illustrate that in order to create sustainable service learning programs, all involved must enter into mutually rewarding, reciprocal relations. They “must recogniz[e] the history and contributions of community institutions, . . . commi[t] to a relationship not defined by a one-semester project,” and “respect . . . community expertise that is expressed in the active practice of dialogue” (47).

Reciprocity of the kind seen in the Flower and Heath essay is hard won and not easily accounted for in final research reports on service learning activities. If researchers open up for scrutiny their tension-filled reciprocal relations with other participants and collaborators, they will likely have to refocus their research agenda, making it more about the *process* of research as opposed to the *findings* (Barton, 2000). Researchers also encounter an invasion of personal privacy when disclosing in great detail the terms of their reciprocal relations, especially when these disclosures demand that the researcher bare all his/her personal history and subjective positions (Kirsch and Lu, 2000). Yes, we need to avoid

reifying reciprocity as a god-term (Hessler; and Carrick, Himley, and Jacobi, this issue), but we also need to consider the problems researchers face when disclosing the nitty-gritty details of their reciprocal relations.

Perhaps a more socially reflexive account of the collaborative relations that make up service learning could help assuage these concerns about reciprocity. “A socially responsible reflexivity is an everyday practice that demands we continually reposition ourselves in relation to others and in relation to our own literate activities as scholars....” (Cushman and Guinsatao Monberg, 1998, p. 167). Social reflexivity in service learning relies on reflections from students, teachers, and community members. These reflections reveal the difficulties and accomplishments of individuals who often have to socially reposition themselves in service learning collaboratives, reflections that offer one place for collaborators to begin writing, teaching, and knowledge making together.

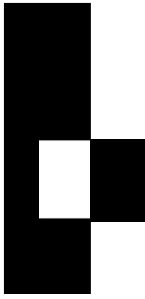
The Carrick, Himley, and Jacobi article, “Ruptura: Acknowledging the Lost Subjects of the Service Learning Story,” provides a compelling example of these three teacher-researchers enacting social reflexivity. Through classroom data, anecdote, and observation, they chronicle the teachable moments in their respective service learning classrooms. In these teachable moments, or moments of “ruptura,” relations between students and teachers, teachers and community members, and students and community members are objectified and critiqued. In this way, these collaborators in the Syracuse University service learning projects break from their routine ways of interacting together to reflect on, discuss, question, and challenge the terms of reciprocity. Doing so, they uncover the tensions and complexity of daily negotiating reciprocal relations. If reciprocity has become a god term for service learning, this socially reflexive account provides a model for the kind of writing, teaching, and scholarship that complicate this term. This paper reveals the situated, stressed-filled, and difficult relations that emerge in service learning programs, relations that sometimes are, and sometimes are not, mutually rewarding. “We are advocating for a method of narrative refraction—not treating stories as foundational, but as complex, meaningful, ongoing events that can be told and retold to keep learning and teaching in motion.” Thus, this article presents a kind of social reflexivity that is a methodology in itself—a method for knowledge making, pedagogy, and community collaboration that relies on narrative and critique of particular service learning relations.

In all, this special issue presents the difficulties and successes of service learning programs with the goal of offering readers well-qualified, situated, and modest conclusions.

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An Assistant Professor of English at the University of Colorado, Denver, **Ellen Cushman** has published essays in *College Composition and Communication*, *Research in the Teaching of English*, and *College English*. Her book, *The Struggle and the Tools: Oral and Literate Strategies in and Inner City Community*, is a multi-year ethnographic study of the literate practices in an inner city in upstate New York. As she studies community and institutional literacies, she attempts to redefine the public role of the scholar through activist research and service learning.



Learning at the Edges: Challenges to the Sustain- ability of Service Learning in Higher Education

Charles Underwood

University of California Office of the President

Mara Welsh

University of California, Berkeley

Mary Gauvain

University of California, Riverside

Sharon Duffy

University of California, Riverside

Service-learning in higher education has gained increasing attention in recent years, but at most universities it remains an activity that is largely peripheral to the dominant concerns of the institution. Service learning has generally been defined as coursework that places undergraduates in community-service activities and relates those activities to academic content. In principle, service-learning courses engage students in activities that involve service of some sort to the neighboring community and provide the occasion to reflect on their participation in those activities, thus connecting service to classroom instruction. In this way, service learning both extends learning beyond the classroom and brings the real world into the classroom. In practice, however, because of the manner in which service-learning programs have been established at many universities, primarily from higher administrative units, the tendency has been for service-learning programs to become marginalized. That is, they take place outside the academic mainstream of campus life — in many cases, outside traditional academic departments — and enjoy relatively little departmental or institutional commitment. This tendency represents a serious challenge to the long-term sustainability of universities' service-learning partnerships with schools and community organizations.

In this article, we attempt to make both practical and theoretical contributions to the literature on service learning. On one hand, we focus pragmatically on the sustainability of service learning efforts, given the institutional culture of the university. On the other hand, we also examine service learning through the lens of sociocultural theory, as a form of learning through apprenticeship. Our intent is to understand the multi-

layered expert-novice roles implicit in service learning as a sociocultural activity, and to interpret how the negotiation of those roles, especially the expert role assumed by participating faculty, directly impacts the sustainability of such programs in higher education. In the course of our discussion, we seek as well to contribute to the understanding of the expert's role in apprenticeship-like learning activities, a theoretical focus that has been largely neglected in previous literature.

More specifically, this chapter examines the institutional culture and practice of one University of California service-learning program, called UC Links. In its ideal form, UC Links exemplifies service learning. Based on the 5th Dimension model developed by Cole (1996, 1999) and his colleagues (Vasquez, Pease-Alvarez & Shannon, 1994; Blanton et al., 1997; Mayer, 1997; Mayer et al., 1997; Schustack, Strauss, and Worden, 1997; Mayer, Shustack & Blanton, in press), UC Links is a network of after-school programs established to address issues of educational equity and the digital divide by extending computer-based and other educational resources and activities to K-12 youth who would otherwise not have access in their homes and local schools. In program sites at all eight undergraduate campuses of the University of California, university students, to fulfill the requirements of an academically challenging practicum course, are placed in field settings at school sites or in community organizations, where they participate in after-school, computer-based educational activities with K-12 youth. While interacting closely with these younger youth in the field setting, the university students observe and experience first-hand the concepts that are taught in their course at the university; then they are required in email and face-to-face discussions, to interpret their field experiences in a critical manner. The courses vary in discipline, ranging from psychology to communications to archeology, among other fields, according to the participating faculty member's departmental affiliation, but they all share a heavy academic emphasis.

The UC Links program has demonstrated remarkable success in working in this way with culturally and linguistically diverse children from economically devastated communities throughout California. Yet although it explicitly attempts to avoid institutional marginalization by integrating the community-based site activities with course content within mainstream academic disciplines, the UC Links program, like other service-learning programs, continues to confront the difficult issue of sustainability. This chapter begins with a theoretical discussion of service learning as sociocultural activity, then examines some of the historical roots of service-learning in the United States. Within that context, the discussion then focuses on the UC Links example as a way of examining some of the challenges, as well as some of the advantages and successes, in the long-term developmental process of attempting to integrate and sustain ser-

vice-learning activities in the context of higher education. Finally, some implications for future research are suggested.

Service Learning as Sociocultural Activity: A Theoretical Approach

Examples of service-learning can be found as early as the 1920's when civic education was advanced as a key factor in developing a democratic society (Carver, 1997). Theoretically, service learning in the United States has its roots in Dewey's (1938) notion of experiential learning, especially the idea that the educational experiences of students and their lives outside educational institutions should be intricately linked. Dewey believed that it was the responsibility of the school to provide opportunities that would enable students both to apply their learning experiences to the world around them and to apply their experience with the world to the school learning process. Writing at almost the same time, Vygotsky (1978) emphasized that learning necessarily takes place in a social and cultural context, and that learning activities at their most meaningful acknowledge the larger social or community context in which they are embedded. Although Vygotsky was by no means focusing on the idea of learning through service, he nonetheless argued, like Dewey, that learning as a human activity is integrally tied to the individual's participation in the larger society. Human psychological functions, the development of these functions, and our understanding of them, are not located or situated inside the individual mind, but are grounded in the everyday sociocultural activities in which humans participate (Vygotsky, 1978; Cole, 1996; Rogoff, 1998). Within this perspective, learning is situated in the historical development of the individual and in the ongoing cultural development of the institutions and society in which the individual takes part.

From a similar perspective, Lave (1993) has discussed how learning in a variety of contexts entails changing participation in both the culturally designed settings of learning within a community and in the practices that people engage in both while they are in these settings and when they use the skills learned in these settings in other contexts. Lave's (1991) concept of "legitimate peripheral participation" emphasizes the ways in which the mastery of knowledge and skills necessitates the recognized passage of novices from relatively marginal to fuller participation in a community's sociocultural activities. Rogoff (1998), in reviewing the literature on cognition as a collaborative process embedded in sociocultural activity, similarly approaches learning as the transformation of participation in productive sociocultural activity – the movement of participants from relatively peripheral or novice roles to roles that are integral to the management and transformation of the activities in which they are involved. From this perspective, service learning may be viewed as a form of learning through apprenticeship (Rogoff, 1990), which involves a dy-

dynamic social relationship in which novices engage with more expert participants in productive activity that serves multiple goals and needs, including those of the more skilled participants. In short, the novice learns through active assistance with the intent of meaningful and useful production. The more skilled participants, or experts, receive support for the work they are trying to achieve, while the novices gain experience and knowledge that enable them to participate more competently with skilled partners. Increased understanding of the tools of the trade and increased skill in the use of those tools, allows the former novice to participate in the activity at a more expert level. This process relies on the establishment of intersubjectivity (Rogoff, 1998), the mutual understandings that people come to share during communication. Importantly, this system does not refer simply to a single dyadic novice-expert relationship. It “often involves a group of novices (peers) who serve as resources for one another in exploring the new domain and aiding and challenging one another” (Rogoff, 1990, p.39). It is, in other words, a collaborative process of distributed cognition involving a variety of asymmetrical and symmetrical roles among participants — not only experts’ support of novices’ participation, but also peers’ support for each other, and even novices’ socialization of more expert participants (Rogoff, 1998). From this perspective, UC Links represents an apprenticeship system with multiple novice-expert relationships — for example, the peer relationships among the K-12 students, the K-12 student/undergraduate relationship, and the relationship between the undergraduates and the university faculty. All of these relationships may be characterized as expert-novice, although the specifics may vary with the activity in which participants are engaged.

Viewing service-learning activities as similar to apprenticeship systems, what appears to occur in such settings is that knowledge is distributed among participants with varying levels of knowledge. However, we would suggest that the apprenticeship model has been somewhat narrowly defined. For instance, although Keller and Keller (1996) acknowledge that apprenticeship involves a socialization into context as well as content, and although Lave (1993) has emphasized that within this system, actors and actions are not simply embedded in context but are actively building context, many discussions of learning through apprenticeship focus primarily on the transfer of knowledge from expert to novice and on the novice’s process of learning or increasing participation in joint activity. They underplay the role of the expert and institutionalized conditions that make up the context where these activities occur. As Rogoff comments, much of this work

pays relatively little attention to the ongoing mutual process of understanding (focusing often on the expert’s treatment of

the novice, with the novice contributing correct or incorrect behavior). More importantly, this literature often overlooks the institutional and cultural aspects of the joint problem-solving activities that are observed (1998, p. 698).

This under-emphasis of the expert's role and of the larger institutional conditions is perhaps the outcome of two key concerns, one theoretical and the other methodological. First, we would argue that, among those working from this perspective, the theoretical preoccupation with how children learn has resulted in an overly narrow focus on children specifically and on novices more generally. This narrow focus has had the effect of neglecting examination of the expert's participation in the dynamic of learning (Rogoff, 1998). Second, the methodological concern for researchers and observers to remain as objective and unobtrusive as possible has the effect of establishing a research stance that poses the learner as an isolated subject. While both laudable, these concerns have the effect of masking the researcher's (or teacher's) agency, as well as novices' roles in socializing their more expert caregivers (Rogoff, 1998). They also obscure the fact that, even in the attempt to play a hidden role in a learning or research activity, that role nonetheless influences, and even shapes, the activity in significant ways, just as it is influenced by the larger institutional culture in which it takes place. How the transformation of intersubjectivity or mutual understanding (Rogoff, 1998) takes place among the various social partners, younger and older, novice and expert, is the question that calls for our attention (Rogoff, 1990; 1998).

Applying this question more generally to service-learning efforts sponsored and conducted by institutions of higher education, it could be argued that the ideal of what Lave (1991) has called legitimate peripheral participation is in that context institutionally problematized. That is, in the context of higher education, service learning is a dynamic collaborative process of cognition not only for university students, but also for university faculty. In the most optimal instances, faculty who become involved in service-learning activities are themselves entering the zone of proximal development, where they are engaged with their university and community colleagues in a collaborative process of confronting institutional resistance and opportunity, of testing the boundaries of their knowledge of the institution in which they work and its resilience or impenetrability. They are as well engaged in the process of transforming the very character of their own participation in the sociocultural domain in which they lead their professional lives. In this regard, we would argue that university faculty, involving themselves as relative novices in the service-learning enterprise (there may yet be no experts), often find themselves in the situation of relatively peripheral participation in the sociocul-

tural world of the university, a situation in which the legitimacy of their participation — the acknowledged and accredited path of their engagement — often appears to be in question.

In this context, service learning in higher education continues to be what we would call “learning at the edges.” For faculty as well as their students at this point in time, it is a form of learning that takes place always on the verge of the zone of proximal development; it is also learning that at this stage in its development often takes place at the margins of the university as social institution, as well as at the frontiers of institutional sustainability. It is within this context that we attempt below to offer a somewhat altered approach to the model of learning through apprenticeship as a way of shedding light both on the multi-layered social interactions and arrangements of skilled as well as unskilled partners in service-learning activities, and on the embeddedness of those activities within a larger sociocultural or institutional context that includes the expert’s often institutionally precarious yet nonetheless defining role.

UC Links and Service Learning: An Ethnographic Example

As a University of California model linking community service to academic content, UC Links has attempted to avoid institutional marginalization, or at least to accelerate the developmental process of institutional integration, by situating itself from the outset within the mainstream of academic life at the university. The University of California was established as a land-grant institution in 1868. In its charter, the University was charged with a three-fold mission of research, teaching, and public service; importantly, in fulfilling its primary mission, it was called upon to conduct and disseminate research on issues of crucial concern to the public at large, so that at least theoretically, its missions of research and community service were closely tied. There is little question, however, that the University of California places primacy on its research mission. Although in recent years the University has been challenged to take on an increasingly active role in relation to public education at the K-12 level, these efforts continue to be widely perceived as part of the University’s public service mission — separate and distinct from both its primary mission of research and its secondary mission of teaching.

The UC Links network of after-school programs emerged as a strategy for UC faculty to become involved in community-service efforts while fulfilling the research and teaching responsibilities for which faculty are primarily rewarded. Importantly, the primary goal of the UC Links effort was not to create service-learning opportunities for students, but to provide quality undergraduate education that brings together theory and practice. UC Links represents the collaborative framework by which the university is able to extend meaningful services to the community and in

turn gain access to a living laboratory for teaching and research that directly address educational issues of crucial concern to both the community and the university. In this way, UC Links takes seriously the generally unspoken and relatively unrewarded tertiary element of the University's three-fold mission and ties community service to the research and teaching missions. UC Links is in this sense an explicit attempt to bring "service learning" and "outreach" into the academic mainstream by embedding them in undergraduate courses sponsored by a variety of academic departments and professional schools at UC campuses. Based on a successful model of informal after-school learning activities originally developed at UC San Diego (Cole, 1996, 1999; Vasquez, Pease-Alvarez & Shannon, 1994), and drawing on the later experience of a core group of additional sites funded by the Mellon Foundation (Mayer, Shustack & Blanton, in press), UC Links is a multi-campus network of after-school programs operated by university faculty, staff and students working in collaboration with local schools and community organizations throughout California. Through enrollment in mainstream academic courses, depending on the respective disciplines of participating faculty, university undergraduates engage in interaction with K-12 youth in after-school informal learning activities that draw on technology-based and other educational resources.

Historically, the program was launched in response to the UC Regents' elimination of affirmative action at the University of California in 1996. At that time, a group of faculty from eight of the campuses of the University of California came together to formulate and propose a sustainable alternative that would help promote a diverse student population at the University. This cross-disciplinary, multi-campus effort was based on the recognition that the educational problems that many low-income children (from all backgrounds) face are symptomatic of much broader economic, social, and political inequities (Duster et al., 1990; Underwood, 1990). UC Links sought to address explicitly the issue of educational equity by focusing on the interrelated problems of access to quality after-school care and to technology-based educational resources for low-income youth and their families. To accomplish this objective, UC Links built on local university-community-school collaborations to create long-term, community-driven, information technology-based activities for low-income youth and their families in the after-school hours. To garner resources for this task, the participating faculty in 1996 drafted a multi-campus proposal to support after-school programs near each UC campus and submitted it to UC President Richard C. Atkinson, who agreed to provide initial funding to UC Links as a statewide faculty initiative for two years. In 1998, presumably due to the growth and success of the program, President Atkinson made the UC Links funding a permanent budget item in the University's budget.

In its first year, UC Links operated a network of 14 after-school sites, situated in a variety of school and community-based settings near the eight UC campuses. Presently there are more than 20 sites throughout the state of California. From the outset, these efforts drew on the local knowledge of the community and school partners, in order to adapt the program to the special interests and needs of local children and their families. Parents and other members of the community played a key role as equal partners in the collaboration, taking part in defining themes and activities that were culturally and linguistically appropriate for their children. University faculty, staff, and students brought to the equation extensive multidisciplinary knowledge and experience in building meaningful learning activities and in using technology and other educational resources to serve those themes and activities. The university's role was to be sustained in a relatively inexpensive manner by establishing undergraduate coursework that allowed university students to interact as older peers with K-12 youth in the community as one requirement of a substantive course in their academic program. As a practicum course that placed the university students in the community setting, the course also offered them firsthand opportunities to connect the academic theory that they were learning in class with practical observational and interactive experiences that benefited both their own learning and that of the K-12 children. In this way, for the UC Links program at each UC campus, the practicum course served to establish a variety of apprenticeship-like relationships between university students and faculty, between university and K-12 students, and among the K-12 youth themselves. As mentioned above, linking community service to coursework in this way enables faculty to integrate their community-service interests with their teaching responsibilities. It also provides an opportunity for faculty to pursue research interests, thus making it possible for them to be institutionally rewarded for their participation – that is, making it possible for their participation to complement their research programs, rather than taking away from the research efforts that represent the prime activities for which the institution rewards them. Ideally, faculty participation in UC Links fulfills the University's three-fold mission in an integrated way: it promotes quality learning experiences for university students, provides opportunities to conduct relevant research in UC Links field sites, and contributes to the goal of preparing K-12 youth from diverse backgrounds to pursue post-secondary education.

In practice, each UC Links site creates an engaging world of technology-mediated learning activities in which children interact closely with older peers, university students, and other adults in computer games and Internet-based problem-solving and literacy-building explorations. Working in collaborative groups, older and younger children learn together in

an informal, playful atmosphere. Participants choose among loosely structured tasks using educational software, computer games that promote problem-solving skills, web-based explorations, E-mail, as well as other non-computer activities that are rich in opportunities for the co-construction of knowledge. As noted above, this pedagogical approach is rooted in the concept of learning as a pre-eminently social activity. The basic idea is that although a child can on any particular day choose to take part in any one of a number of activities and could potentially choose the same activity again and again, incentives are provided to encourage children to try out a wide range of activities or tasks. Children usually work together in small groups or with a college student rather than each child sitting alone in front of a single computer terminal. Because they may in the course of time choose different activities, the result is that in one activity a child may be an expert while in another activity this same child may be a novice in comparison to his or her peers. This complex of expert-novice relationships fosters participants' mutual engagement in the learning process that Vygotsky (1978) has called the zone of proximal development. For the youth engaged at the site, problems, concepts, or functions that they could not solve on their own become accessible and solvable through their participation with youth (including university students, although at times the undergraduates themselves are novices and the younger children relative experts) who have mastered those functions — that is, as novices participating in the specific activities draw on the greater experience and skill of more expert participants.

In effect, then, the UC Links/Fifth Dimension model exemplifies the notion of learning through apprenticeship by creating meaningful activities for all participants at all levels of ability. Through their engagement in these activities, all of the participants in the after-school activities are benefiting: the local communities are provided with secure after-school care for their youth during the time when they are most vulnerable to neighborhood violence, child abuse, and other risk factors in their community; the children themselves have access to tools and pedagogical resources and activities and a secure place to learn through play while for the first time encountering a direct connection to the University; undergraduates are able to develop a deeper understanding of the theories that they are learning in their classrooms while directly experiencing their import in the real world; faculty members are at least theoretically able to participate in the community service interests they have, while being provided with a living laboratory to pursue their research interests and fulfill their teaching responsibilities; and the University at large gains recognition for its service to the community.

UC Links: System and Sustainability

The UC Links model has had many successes. It has also met with several challenges, the most difficult being sustainability itself. Although UC Links continues to be a viable, dynamic network of programs and activities that in theory provides all of the participants — the communities, the children, the undergraduates, the faculty, and the University — with meaningful activities, in practical terms there remain a number of obstacles to its sustainability. Specifically, if we view service learning efforts like UC Links as a master-apprenticeship system, it becomes apparent that the benefit or credit given to faculty members, when they take on the role of expert in this system, remains problematic. Although this may be changing and is, as we would argue, part of an ongoing process of historical development, it remains the case that at present the institutional culture of many universities simply does not lend itself to crediting community service activities or service-learning programs as primary professional activities.

In the first place, faculty receive little or no recognition or reward for their participation in community service, which is often viewed as a commendable but dispensable addition to the work of faculty. Second, even with respect to the university's secondary mission of teaching, some would argue that academic departments generally do not equally value courses with service learning components, even when those courses carry a well-articulated theoretical or research focus, for the explicit reason that they do have a service component (Gray et al., 1999). Third, research conducted in field sites connected to community programs and university courses is likely to encounter more complications than research conducted by faculty in other contexts. At the same time, if what Gray et al. (1996) suggest is true (and indeed, this may vary significantly from one institution to another, as well as from one academic department to another), and these courses are not valued as highly as other courses without a community service component, it may follow that faculty members find that they are not equally recognized for their work in teaching these courses. Certainly there is often a lack of resources to support, coordinate and maintain these courses. In the case of UC Links, this fact looms larger, because the UC Links courses are not simply one course per academic year, but two (in the semester system) or three courses (in the quarter system), in order to sustain site activities throughout the year. This represents a sizeable commitment on the part of any academic department. Moreover, most laboratory courses in the sciences receive more than the standard number of credits for a lecture course, while lab credit for the UC links course remains at issue; field practicum courses only receive extra credit in some departments at some campuses.

Even in those cases in which the number of undergraduates in the course are lower than departmental minimums for teaching assistant support, these courses generally require at least one teaching assistant to help with site activities and with undergraduate's weekly field notes. As a result, service-learning programs like UC Links often are considered too expensive; their existence as regular courses can be highly problematic. It may be that the benefits to university students and K-12 students who will be better prepared for university admission will become more obvious over time and the value of these courses will be more widely recognized. It can hardly be maintained, however, that such service-learning efforts have entered into the mainstream of the university's academic life, and the sustainability of such programs — and especially the sustainability of the university's role in collaborations with local schools and community organizations — remains highly tenuous. Gray et al. (1999) have identified factors that generally serve to promote the long-term sustainability of service-learning programs. These include “the presence of a tradition of service at an institution, the strong support of an institutional leader, faculty involvement, and the establishment of a service center offering centralized administrative support” (Gray et al., 1999, p.18). While these are generally dependable bases on which to build service-learning efforts in higher education, their presence at most universities is an empirical question.

For example, the complex role that faculty play in service-learning programs requires closer examination. For many faculty involved in UC Links programs, the coordination of the program represents a distinctively separate task from teaching the course. In some cases, faculty have found that the program operated more smoothly during those years when they arranged for someone else to teach the practicum course and they themselves were able to focus on site-based research activities. Again, the time, energy, and resources spent simply in running the program, especially at the early stages of site development, may preclude productive research and teaching activities. Support in the form of teaching assistants, research assistants (one or more of whom can serve as site coordinators), and additional faculty involvement is indispensable to the sustainability of the effort. Faculty involved in the UC Links program have often expressed a perceived lack of support. They acknowledge, however, that Chairs and Deans cannot be expected to appreciate how much more there is involved in a UC Links practicum course than there is in the usual university lecture class, because so much of the work that necessarily takes place happens off campus. Moreover, most academic departments simply do not see such activities as within the scope of their work. Although professional schools (such as Schools of Education) sometimes view these activities as indeed very much within the scope of

their work, the question remains as to how they will be weighed when participating faculty are reviewed for tenure or promotion. In fact, when other faculty observe the extraordinary commitment of time and energy necessary for participating faculty to sustain their programmatic efforts, it becomes more difficult to recruit additional faculty to the effort.

In the face of these challenges, faculty have both tested and in some cases transformed the institutional limits of their participation in UC Links as a service-learning activity. For instance, at UC Riverside the UC Links program is jointly run by two faculty members – one in the Psychology Department, which is in the College of the Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences, and another in the College of Education. At first, this cross-college effort presented challenges, due to the very different educational objectives of the two colleges. Over time, however, the course came to fit a distinctive niche within each program. In Psychology, it provides an opportunity for students to be involved in a field laboratory course tied to rigorous theory-based coursework in the discipline, a much needed feature of the curriculum that is recognized to be in short supply on the campus. In Education, it provides access for undergraduates to the Education faculty and to K-12 children in local schools; this direct access enables students to explore and develop their career aspirations and understandings in this area, again through intensive exposure to both theory-based content and experience in the field. Thus, although establishing and demonstrating these goals was effortful on the part of the faculty who run the program, in time the course has gained increasing administrative support from both colleges, because it was carefully constructed to serve different if complementary goals in these two colleges.

Perhaps because of their longer history and demonstrated success in promoting cognitive and social gains for both K-12 and university youth, the UC Links programs at UC San Diego are supported relatively well. The campus provides funds to match the systemwide funding that the programs receive. The sponsoring department pays for the course to be taught two out of three quarters, and makes it possible to hire an extra teaching assistant for the course. This support is perhaps due in part to the prestige of its being the campus where the UC Links model originated. Yet even with the support, the programs at UC San Diego are stretched for resources. As a strategy for institutionalizing the program more deeply on the campus, faculty proposed that all university undergraduates be required to take a UC Links course. This proposal was made on the grounds that (1) it would provide a high quality laboratory course for social science students, (2) it would provide participating faculty with a dynamic “laboratory” setting for conducting research on a variety of issues relevant to education, human development, language and culture, etc., and (3) it would provide the University with a demonstration model of how it is serving the

surrounding community. To date, the proposal has met with resistance from the academic senate, and from faculty at large, because of the continuing perception among them that service learning lacks rigorous academic content. As a result, even though these two UC Links programs have maintained the longest track record, have evidenced cognitive gains for participating youth, and have been supported from the highest levels of administration—they continue to operate as activities that are seen by many as relatively marginal to the academic mainstream, making their long-term sustainability questionable.

Learning Service: Understanding the Expert's Role

We would again argue optimistically that the problematics of sustainability for service-learning programs like UC Links are an aspect of a long-term process of historical development of such activities. Within the relatively traditional institutional culture of the university, service learning represents a new and perhaps rather intrusive new activity. As the role of experts in the collaborative process of cognition has thus far been inadequately addressed, similarly the role of faculty in this new sociocultural activity has yet to be fully examined. Discussions of service-learning activities have tended to focus on the learning that takes place among novices (whether undergraduates or school children). They tend to neglect the fact that faculty are themselves in some ways novices engaged in the process of transforming their participation from being relatively marginal participants to acting as more skilled participants in the negotiation and transformation of the institutional activities in which they are involved. That is, when faculty take part in the field setting of service-learning programs like UC Links, they are acting not only with regard to the immediate social environment, but also with regard to the advantages and limits available to them, given their roles within the university. Those advantages and limits have a significant effect on the activities at the site, and this is not entirely visible until, as participants in the activity, they come up against both the personal and the university-based challenges associated with considering ongoing, long-term involvement in a service program.

At UC Riverside, for example, understanding and support of a faculty member's involvement in the UC Links program by other faculty members and administrators has met with different obstacles in the two colleges involved. This difference is not because the colleges hold different academic standards, but because there are different understandings of and value placed on such programs in the two colleges. For this reason, before faculty become involved in a program like UC Links, they need to consider carefully the broad range of perspectives and the varying receptivity to such efforts among academic departments and professional

schools on their campus. Because the criteria by which faculty are assessed and rewarded are unlikely to change soon, it is imperative that they be especially mindful to make sure that their own engagement in activities related to the program, to the greatest extent possible, coincides, or at least significantly overlaps, with the established expectations of their departments and colleges. In practice, as mentioned above, faculty become knowledgeable about the socio-cultural intricacies of the institutional context that challenge their own and others' engagement in service-learning efforts, and shape the community-based activities themselves. Through an ongoing process, faculty's own participation in the activity is transformed as they creatively negotiate and grapple with those challenges, thus demystifying the institutional context, making it more visible and tractable, and increasing their own agency within the institution.

This developmental process is apparent in successive discussions of the institutional context of UC Links/5th Dimension programs to be found in the literature. Cole, for instance, in writing about the Fifth Dimension in San Diego, has commented on the significance of the immediate institutional context of the program: "we know from analyzing 5th Dimension interactions in a variety of community institutions (libraries, schools, and churches, in addition to youth clubs) that the specific characteristics of interaction within a 5th Dimension depend on the nature of its institutional context" (Cole, 1999; p. 103). Here, Cole, although he has continued to maintain an extraordinarily active presence at the Solana Beach 5th Dimension site, underplayed the important role of himself and other faculty both for the interactional character and for the institutional sustainability of the program as a multi-institutional collaboration. Reflecting views which Cole and his colleagues held a number of years ago, this account views the institutional context as encompassing the community institutions that host the 5th Dimension "out there." While focusing on the affiliation between the children and the undergraduates at the site and what they both contribute to and receive from their mutual involvement, Cole thus formerly downplayed in his writing (although certainly not in his active engagement in the "cultivation" of the site) the role he and other faculty played: "Once the system was in place, we needed both to promote its growth and to analyze the dynamics of growth over time. Then, after a suitable period, we withdrew to a prearranged position as participants in, but no longer instigators of, the innovation..." (Cole, 1999, p.94).

Discussion with Cole and others who have been involved in 5th Dimension, UC Links, and other similar efforts, indicates that although they have indeed been active in carrying out the necessary role both within the institutions hosting the programs and within the institutional structure of their university campuses, they are only beginning to under-

stand and address that role explicitly as a theoretically crucial element in the dynamic process of multi-level participation which the programs entail. In this sense, the institutional context of service-learning programs like UC Links reaches far beyond the host setting; it as well includes the often unseen opportunities and constraints brought to bear on the site and its participants through the university's involvement at the site. That is, the institutional weight of the university has a bearing on what can happen at the site, depending on how it pushes or pulls, how it impedes or enables, how it sanctions or legitimates the faculty's full participation in the multi-layered collaborative process of learning that takes place at the school- or community-based site.

Conclusion

Service learning programs and activities represent a powerful tool for universities to provide genuine service to the communities in which they are situated. Few schools, community organizations, or non-governmental organizations (NGO's), however, have an interest in short-term projects that are here today and gone tomorrow. One-time service-learning courses that come and go, or classes offered only occasionally, poorly serve the ongoing needs or interests of these organizations. The sustainability of service-learning programs and activities sponsored by institutions of higher education are therefore of crucial significance. While Gray et al.(1999) have noted some of the factors that contribute to the longevity of these programs; there remains significant resistance at many universities to the institutionalization of those factors. The task ahead for those of us committed to service learning at most American universities is not how to benefit from the presence of those factors, but how in fact to begin fostering those elements at our respective institutions. However, we are only beginning to know what it takes to make it happen and keep it happening, even on campuses and in departments where there is a history of service-related activity. We do know, that to integrate service-learning efforts within the institutional mainstream, they must ultimately be established and perceived as central to the University's mission. At present, we would suggest that the mainstream view is that "success in achieving the mission of the University rests squarely on the faculty" (Pister, 1991, 14). Because this view and the system of faculty rewards is unlikely to change significantly in the near future, we do not believe that we can feasibly call for a shift in institutional values.¹ Instead, we approach the process of ensuring the sustainability of service-learning efforts from within the existing institutional culture.

In our view, the role of faculty in this process is crucial, because they are the agents for institutionalizing the university's ongoing presence in the community through their sponsorship of service-learning

courses. As apprenticeship-like activities, service-learning efforts like those in the UC Links network of after-school programs represent not only meaningful learning opportunities for local children and for university students, but also, at least potentially, opportunities for adults, including university faculty, to undertake and accomplish productive work related to their own professions. In research on learning through apprenticeship, as well as in our focus on service learning as apprenticeship, it is essential not to relinquish attention to the role of faculty, as masters in the master-apprenticeship relations established through such programs. Programs like UC Links necessarily have to continue addressing these issues explicitly, keeping in mind the side of the equation involving the role of the “expert” and of the institutional context in which the expert necessarily does productive work with novices. As suggested in the example from UC Riverside above, this in part implies that faculty engaged in service learning make sure that they do not fail to assess the institutional constraints under which they work and secure the support they need. Because service learning is relatively new to many institutions of higher education, this involves, as Rogoff (1998) and others have noted, an often arduous developmental process of transforming their own participation in service learning as an institutionally embedded sociocultural activity. In theoretical terms, it involves learning to manipulate the tools of their trade – their productive work in intellectual attainment and scholarship — to resituate themselves from relatively peripheral participation in their departments and in the institution at large, in order to establish the increased legitimacy of their engagement. In practical terms, as in the Riverside example, it involves taking care to situate the service-learning coursework strategically such that it serves not only the needs of local schools or community organizations, but as well the needs and interests of the academic departments in which they work.

Service learning, as a cognitive process, at its best is a collaborative venture. It is not a matter of the university “doing” service to the community out of the goodness of its institutional heart. In many cases, for that matter, as in the case of the University of California, it becomes actively engaged in service-learning efforts in part as a result of external political pressures or in the pursuit of its own institutional interests. This is not to say that these efforts are not laudable or that institutions like the University of California are not committed to these efforts. In the case of UC Links, it was commitment at the highest level of administration, as well as among a broad range of faculty at the University’s eight campuses with undergraduate programs, that made the statewide effort possible. It is important, however, to recognize that at their best, these efforts are multi-institutional collaborations. The history of UC Links indicates that individual programs in specific localities are generally not sustainable if de-

pendent on a single institution — whether the school, the community organization, or the university campus. These programs — and we would argue all service learning programs that do not patronize the local community — are necessarily joint efforts. In this light, the faculty play a significant mediating role both in ensuring the university's sustained commitment to the effort and in shaping the activity that frames any genuine opportunity for university students to learn through service. The integration of service learning activities within the mainstream of academic life may be the surest strategy for ensuring their sustainability in the context of institutions of higher education, and faculty involvement. This involvement makes it possible to link community service to the university's research and teaching missions. However, faculty themselves may not represent the ideal role for carrying out the full development and maintenance of such programmatic efforts. Those involved in UC Links in the last several years have found that structurally, at least at their own respective campuses, it works best to hire a post-doctoral or graduate student to teach the undergraduate course and coordinate site activities (in some cases, a member of the local community is hired for site coordination). This arrangement allows faculty members to be relatively unencumbered by the demanding details of day-to-day site logistics and to focus their involvement on the big picture of shaping both the academic content and the site-based research for which they are primarily held responsible and rewarded. This does not mean that they are not involved at the site; it simply means that their students, under their supervision, are responsible for the specifics and site maintenance.

The appropriate role of faculty in service learning is in some ways specific to particular programs and sites. At present, however, few engaged in these efforts have written about their own or each others' growing experience and knowledge in this area. As such, it remains a crucial area in which research can potentially inform service-learning efforts like UC Links, involving a reflexive ethnographic approach to the study of a key participant's role in the program. Such an approach does not presume to regard the others at the site as isolated research subjects but explicitly acknowledges and deliberately examines the participant observer's and others' agency in the activities taking place in a given social setting. From this perspective, by focusing more closely on the role of faculty and on the means by which their participation in service-learning activities can be more firmly institutionalized, we can begin to discern the precise division of labor and the necessary resources needed to overcome the institutional fragility of these efforts. At present, the division of labor in this distributed system of knowledge and responsibility remains a largely unspoken and unexamined, or at least undocumented, phenomenon. Exactly what it takes to run a program like UC Links, for example, with one or more per-

sons teaching the undergraduate course, another coordinating the site activities, while others are engaged in conducting research on program activities, necessarily involves an understanding of this activity as a collaborative learning process, in which the participation not only of children and university students, but also of faculty, is constantly shifting from peripheral roles as novices to more central, transformative roles that are both integral to the activity and in some ways shaped by the larger institutional context. To understand how this sociocultural activity actually works involves a kind of multi-layered institutional ethnography which, while formidable in time and expense, may be indispensable to sustaining the activity itself.

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Notes

¹ At the University of California, a University-Wide Task Force in 1991 recommended modest adaptations to the system of faculty rewards; its recommendations were soundly rejected by the Academic Senate.

Dr. Charles Underwood is Executive Director of University /K-12 Technology Initiatives at the University of California Office of the President, and Executive Director of the UC Links statewide office, which works with UC Links programs throughout the state of California.

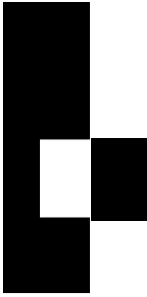
Dr. Mara Welsh, formerly Site Coordinator for a UC Links sites at UC Riverside, is presently the Director of Site Development and Evaluation Strategies for the UC Links statewide office and teaches a UC Links course in the Graduate School of Education at UC Berkeley.

Dr. Mary Gauvain is Professor of Psychology at the University of California, Riverside and is Co-Director of the UC Links programs at the UC Riverside.

Dr. Sharon Duffy is Professor of Education at the University of California, Riverside and is Co-Director of the UC Links programs at UC Riverside.

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Composing an Institutional Identity: The Terms of Community Service in Higher Education

H. Brooke Hessler

Texas Christian University

[W]e didn't use the words *service-learning* or *experiential learning* for several years, consciously, because at Stanford, words count. They can get you in trouble. We did not want our efforts to connect students' service with academics to appear to faculty as some sort of "touchy-feely" exercise, which is what those words would connote in their minds.

Timothy K. Stanton, Director
Haas Center for Public Service

"Touchy-feely" is a devil term in higher education stigmatizing work as unintellectual or unsubstantial. Faculty are often wary of what appear to be trendy programs that will divert students (and their professors) from rigorous scholarship to pursue such ideals as Citizenship or Service. Stanton's experience with service-learning programs at Cornell University and Stanford University has become a case study for service-learning scholars because it encapsulates the complex problem of creating a sustainable identity for this kind of endeavor in academe, a culture that recognizes community outreach as part of the educator's vocation but is still groping for a way to adequately define and reward its institutional role. The overarching importance of his account is that it highlights the problem of communication for curricular innovation. Designations such as *service-learning* or *experiential learning* are curricular metaphors: ways of imagining and inventing an academic experience in extra-academic terms, framing learning as something achievable through acts of service or hands-on collaborative problem-solving rather than traditional classroom methods. These terms set up expectations for our students, ourselves, our colleagues—all who participate in and scrutinize our work.

This essay examines how the rhetoric of community service can both hinder and help efforts to strengthen service-learning institutionally, professionally, and pedagogically. My research draws from an extensive

review of college and university mission statements and other institutional artifacts used to compose and communicate the modern *vocation* of American higher education—its idealized roles, responsibilities, and contributions to society. Service—whether as a sacred trust, a cultivation of civic leadership, a performance of *noblesse oblige*, or a mode of applied learning—has been a core commitment of colleges and universities since the founding of Harvard to train ministers in 1636 (Rudolph, 1977, pp. 27, 100). Exploring what service represents within institutions, in philosophical and practical terms, can enable us to acquire a more sensitive understanding of service-learning's reception and contribution in the disciplines.

Institutionalizing Service: Within and Without

At a time when many colleges and universities are vying to differentiate themselves from competing institutions, it is no coincidence that service-learning programs are gaining administrative attention. Service-learning represents a way to demonstrate institutional generosity and historical ties with the local community, presumably in contrast with the soul-less online and proprietary enterprises that will grant credentials without extending nourishing roots into the communities they enroll. Community-focused programs speak to a felt need in higher education: to make meaningful connections with a public that continues to express doubts about the conventions of traditional institutions, and to engage students in activities that enable them to experience the relevance of their disciplinary studies for understanding and addressing the everyday problems of civic life. Consequently, much is being written these days about “institutionalizing” service-learning, making it a formal part of the curriculum and infrastructure of American colleges and universities so that the programs themselves can be strengthened and sustained and so their pedagogical and social philosophy can making a lasting contribution to academic culture (Bringle & Hatcher, 2000; Deans, 2000; Flower, 1997; Holland, 1997; Stanton, Giles, Jr., & Cruz, 1999; Zlotkowski, 1998). This is a significant rhetorical shift for a pedagogy that typically calls itself a *movement*—something that, by definition, operates outside formal institutions (Stewart, Smith & Denton, 1994, p. 5). The implications of this shift are suggested by the premises and promises of an idealized institutional concept of community service.

The dominant paradigm for community service positions the college or university as a cultural benefactor. Institutions are understood to have superior knowledge, expertise, and resources—in sum, they have the ability to transform surrounding communities and, indeed, a moral obligation to do so. For example, during a 1998 convocation address, Northwood University's president tells students that, as future leaders, it

is important “to ‘pay rent’ back to the community and nation for your chance to make yourselves enterprise successes” (Fry, p. 4), and in a 1999 convocation address, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology president reminds the incoming class to fulfill “the ancient Talmudic principle of *tikun olam*—our obligation to repair our world for the sake of ourselves and our children” (Vest, p. 1). Linda Flower describes this perspective as a logic of *cultural mission* that assumes institutions are responsible for enlightening the public and correcting its apparent deficiencies (1997, p. 97). Because improving conditions near campus—economically, culturally, and aesthetically—is also good for the quality of life on campus, this paradigm has recently been dubbed “enlightened self-interest.” While this title and its underlying premises may trouble some service-learning practitioners (by, among other things, reinforcing attitudes that fail to recognize opportunities for mutual problem-solving), it remains a paradigm that is familiar within American culture, merging the ideals of charity and self-reliance, and it summarizes a public and institutional perspective on community service that will certainly continue to influence the character of newly institutionalized community outreach programs such as service-learning.

Colleges and universities, in documents ranging from convocation speeches to web pages, tend to define their social missions using two key terms: *citizenship* and *democracy*. As is typical with institutional rhetoric, these concepts are rarely defined; rather they function as god terms, rhetorical ideals that generally remain unchallenged or unqualified (Burke, 1969; Weaver, 1970). Interestingly, wherever the academy expresses these civic verities it is common to find contrasting terms of equal intensity such as *customer* and *efficiency*—the terms of the corporate university, the institutional identity many educators are struggling to avoid (Nelson, 1999). Negotiating the borders of democracy and corporatization is the term *accountability*, which conveys negative connotations of public scrutiny but may soon emerge as a rationale for evaluating and rewarding public work. While a thorough analysis of this rhetorical relationship is beyond the scope of this essay, it is important to recognize that community engagement research and teaching have symbolic value to our institutions and to those who want to retain or upset its traditions.

Representative of the interplay of nostalgia, civic mission, and institutional identity is a set of texts published by the college and university presidents of the public service alliance Campus Compact, the “Wingspread Declaration on Renewing the Civic Mission of the American Research University” (Boyte & Hollander, 1998) and the “Presidents’ Fourth of July Declaration on the Civic Responsibility of Higher Education” (Ehrlich & Hollander, 1999). As implied by the titles, these “declarations” appeal to our democratic mores and intend to revive the democratic spirit of Ameri-

can education. Neglecting civic responsibilities is assigned partial blame for higher education's current dilemma: "The beliefs and practices that universities have espoused, affecting research, teaching, and outreach, are under review, spurred by calls for accountability, efficiency, and utility as well as by questions about the theories of knowledge embedded in prevailing reward and evaluation systems" (Boyte and Hollander, 1998, p. 2). By practicing scholarly detachment rather than engagement educators have failed to demonstrate the relevance of this work and have fallen prey to "the same forces in the society that focus on 'efficiency of means' and neglect continuing discussion about civic purposes and public meanings of our individual and collective work" (p. 4). The urgency of this call to action reflects the concern that colleges and universities are becoming something less than they were—less influential, less respected, less helpful in the public eye.

Institutionalizing service-learning can be a critical strategy for mobilizing students as agents of social change who will also serve as positive representatives of higher education. A program with strong institutional support can sustain long-term reciprocal relationships with community members who share a stake in local problem-solving and continuing education. Within this framework, community outreach is more likely to shift from the social mission paradigm to one Flower calls *prophetic pragmatism and problem-solving*, through which "service" becomes passionate collaborative inquiry into the struggles of community life and how these problems may be better understood and addressed by all community stakeholders—not just the university activist or the client of a social services agency (1997, p. 104). A familiar model of successful institutionalization is the service-learning done through the Community Literacy Center (CLC), a collaborative Flower helped establish over ten years ago. The longevity of this collaborative attests to the institutional savvy of its organizers as well as its unique positioning as an endeavor within and without the formal structure of an academic program. I will discuss this model program in further detail later in this essay. In terms of institutionalized service what makes this model particularly interesting is its integration of scholarship and service into work that simultaneously extends the intellectual and civic missions of the institution. The CLC bridges the university (Carnegie Mellon) and the greater community (Pittsburgh) by operating physically and administratively apart from campus but within a community center (Pittsburgh's Community House) that provides educational and social services (Peck, Flower & Higgins, 1995, pp. 200-201). University students and instructors come to the CLC to engage in collaborative inquiry with community partners. The CLC has an identity that is distinct from its university, yet it also represents the university in important ways, building cooperative relationships beyond campus and gener-

ating academic visibility through scholarly publications and grant funding.

The CLC offers a glimpse at what can be achieved through sustained institutional support. However, the growth of institutionalized community service through, for example, federally sponsored programs such as AmeriCorps and state-wide initiatives such as Governor Gray Davis's call for all of California's public colleges and universities to mandate community service, is prompting concerns that institutions are attempting too much, too fast. The rhetoric pervading these large-scale missions to connect higher education with the community is consistent with that used by the leadership of individual institutions, adopting a moral tone to invoke a service heritage essential to good citizenship. In his formal statement, Governor Davis argues that requiring community service for graduation will instill a "service ethic" that leads students "to understand, as generations before them did, the importance of contributing to their community" (Weiss, 1999). He also frames service as a duty for students whose education is, after all, subsidized by California taxpayers. California's service-learning community is taking advantage of the momentum behind this impending mandate to expand their programs—as has been the case in other large-scale service initiatives around the country. But service-learning advocates also recognize the pitfalls inherent in institutionalized service, not the least of which is the fact that "forced volunteering" is not only ironic but has the potential to induce negative attitudes toward the communities it means to serve.

Educators interviewed for *Service-Learning: A Movement's Pioneers Reflect on Its Origins, Practice, and Future*, report that the most advantageous institutionalization generally occurs not from without (as from public policy windfalls) but rather from within the institution, through the commitment of individual faculty earned over time (Stanton et al., 1999). This grassroots approach is consistent with the "movement" metaphor used to describe service-learning as a phenomenon within education that garners advocates philosophically as well as pedagogically. In an essay comparing service-learning to a kindred interdisciplinary movement, *Writing Across the Curriculum*, Thomas Deans notes that the strategy of gaining adherents one by one, from department to department, enables WAC to seed itself as useful pedagogy. Deans recommends a "service-learning in the disciplines" approach to institutionalization that builds upon the enthusiasm and successes of early adopters (1997, p. 35). Demonstrating the disciplinary value of service-learning has been a clear strategy for its supporters within the last three years, through intensive publication efforts (such as the American Association of Higher Education's eighteen-volume interdisciplinary series) and leadership roles within disciplinary organizations (for example, the Conference on College Composi-

tion and Communication's National Service-Learning Committee). Institutionalizing within the disciplines could enable service-learning to retain its vital network and movement ethos, thereby defining its own academic role.

Professionalizing Service: A Scholarly Priority

Faculty involvement is essential to any institution's service mission. Yet the term *service* itself has become problematic for many considering whether to deepen their professional service through such opportunities as service-learning. The most vaguely defined of faculty expectations, service may encompass everything from committee work to walk-a-thons. So perhaps it should come as no surprise that service is rarely given priority in hiring, tenure, or promotion decisions. Within the academic curriculum, the *service course* is a departmental contribution to general education, an obligation frequently delegated to low-status instructors. At many institutions, service-learning pedagogies are being used to enliven these required courses (particularly composition and writing-intensive courses in the disciplines), yet while the resultant learning experiences are often quite successful, some faculty are reluctant to participate in what amounts to the ultimate service course—a general education class associated with soft yet labor-intensive learning. While it is true that service-learning can be comparatively “messy” work—inasmuch as instructors and students must adapt to logistical and cultural factors beyond the classroom, rolling up their sleeves (literally or metaphorically) to engage in community problem-solving—the real service stigma derives from the concept of service as an unscholarly or *subscholarly* task.

Elevating the status of service-learning is inseparable from the project of re-framing professional service in all segments of higher education. Successfully defining and rewarding the work of “the service-learning specialist” within individual departments is most likely to segregate this research and teaching from traditionally valued scholarship rather than invite faculty to imagine the disciplinary and interdisciplinary possibilities for activist and experiential inquiry. Furthermore, distinguishing service-learning achievements as separate but equal scholarly contributions reinforces the sense that this field is an educational fad rather than an evolutionary (or revolutionary) development. In his call for a reconfiguration of research, pedagogy, and civic life Ernest Boyer identifies a core problem with the academic concept of service:

[A]ll too frequently, service means not doing scholarship but doing good. To be considered *scholarship*, service activities must be tied directly to one's special field of knowledge and relate to, and flow directly out of, this professional activity.

Such service is serious, demanding work, requiring the rigor—and the accountability—traditionally associated with research activities. (1990, p. 22)

The academy's dissociation of service from the field of serious intellectual endeavor can make the term *service-learning* seem oxymoronic. Nonetheless, the professionalized service-as-scholarship Boyer describes is precisely the work of a successful service-learning instructor. He calls this kind of service the *scholarship of application*, a rigorous form of applied scholarship that engages consequential social problems and advances human knowledge through an interactive process of meaning-making, such as occurs when "serving clients in psychotherapy, shaping public policy, creating an architectural design, or working with the public schools" (p. 23).

Whereas academe has, in the recent past, underestimated much service and applied scholarship as work wherein knowledge is merely bestowed or utilized rather than generated, Boyer's scholarship of application integrates both as essential for intellectual and social progress. This redefinition must not be viewed as simply a rhetorical maneuver. On the contrary, his assessment of higher education's ability to contribute significantly to the modern world rests squarely on institutional willingness to recognize and reward a broad range of scholarship in which theoretical and applied inquiry are interconnected, not hierarchically or conceptually separate projects. The key term enabling this reconfiguration is *scholarly rigor*, which is upheld through the establishment of standards that make it possible for different kinds of scholarship to identify the intellectual contributions of their work. The completion of the study, published as *Scholarship Assessed* (Glassick, Huber, Maeroff, 1997), outlines a cross-disciplinary approach for documenting and evaluating applied scholarship within a dynamic cycle of discovery, integration of knowledge, teaching, and service—all of which are enacted as forms of socially responsible inquiry. The Boyer study presents an exciting opportunity for service-learning to craft an institutional identity as an intellectual and pedagogical infrastructure for this professional work.

Other professional groups doing intra-disciplinary and cross-disciplinary service, such as the Council of Writing Program Administrators (WPA) and the sixteen professional associations represented in *The Disciplines Speak: Rewarding the Scholarly, Professional, and Creative Work of Faculty*, have already drawn upon the Boyer study to help institutions assess and reward their scholarship (Diamond & Adam, 1995; Council of Writing Program Administrators, 1998). WPA's "Evaluating the Intellectual Work of Writing Administration" is a noteworthy argument for two reasons. First, in calling for a clear division between "administrivia"

and applied scholarship, it demonstrates how service to the local institution (through, for example, the development of an assessment tool for freshman composition) can contribute to the advancement of knowledge in a professional field of study. Second, the document presents examples of intellectual work that are cross-disciplinary and therefore relevant to faculty doing applied scholarship that ventures outside the conventional scope of professional activity, such as curriculum development and outcomes assessment (familiar work for the service-learning organizer).

While the WPA document accomplishes a redefinition of professional service-as-scholarship, it is only partially useful for the service-learning educator because its intention is to assess service done primarily within the institution rather than service extending off campus. In a recent essay, Ellen Cushman proposes an *activist research* methodology for intellectual work anchored in the community beyond campus and *reaching into* the institution through student learning and the advancement of disciplinary knowledge informed by community research (an inversion of the conventional community outreach concept that has disciplinary knowledge emanating from the institution) (1999, pp. 332-335). In her model, service-learning scholars collaborate with local community members to identify and engage immediate concerns (for example, literacy practices among children) that could be better understood through research (p. 334). The instructor tailors her service-learning curriculum as well as her disciplinary research to advance understanding in a way that is significant as scholarship and meaningful as community-based collaborative inquiry. Cushman explains that such an approach enables research, teaching, and service to be jointly recognized and rewarded, as follows:

The research contributes

- to teaching by informing a curriculum that responds to both students' and community members' needs, and
- to service by indicating emerging problems in the community which the students and curriculum address.

The teaching contributes

- to research by generating fieldnotes, papers, taped interactions and other materials, and
- to service by facilitating the community organization's programmatic goals with the volunteer work.

The service contributes

- to research by addressing political and social issues salient in everyday lived struggles, and
- to teaching by offering students and professors avenues for testing the utility of previous scholarship in light of community members' daily lives and cultural values. (p. 331)

Cushman's model is consistent with the prophetic pragmatism and problem-solving logic used at the Community Literacy Center, but may prove even more useful to individual educators wanting to channel their research and teaching into a civic project apart from an institutionalized program.

Cushman casts these activist researchers as the new "public intellectuals"—scholars for whom "the public" is not merely an audience for popularized scholarship, but rather a local community of people who share an interest in the work and in the outcomes of a social research project. Redefining this role is important because it bears on a conventional notion of professional service in academe. Generally speaking, disciplinary outreach is either the work of under-rewarded groups (such as a department's service course cadre or service-learning team) or the work of celebrated individuals who are attaining visibility outside their scholarly field through coverage in the mainstream media. The latter is the customary figure of the public intellectual, someone such as Stanley Fish or Henry Louis Gates, Jr. who, Cushman notes, has the "implied goal of affecting policy and decision making" through his writing, but typically addresses an exclusive public of educated readers and does so as an expert bestowing knowledge rather than as a partner in inquiry (1999, p. 330). This image of the public intellectual overshadows the socially significant work of scholars operating within the public at large, and unfortunately reinforces the institutional practice of recognizing primarily individual, rather than collaborative, scholarship that speaks *to* or *about* social exigencies without engaging them directly, much less locally.

Because the intellectual work of service-learning has only recently begun to gain attention within the disciplines, faculty venturing into service-learning expect mainly to enrich their teaching while continuing to conceive of their scholarly activity in very different terms. Although not all scholars will be attracted to Cushman's portrait of the public intellectual, it does raise important considerations for the way academic ideals frame and constrain our disciplinary work, and it invites us to seek out civic applications that were previously overlooked. Service-learning provides an opportunity for faculty to become familiar with community concerns pedagogically, and through this experience begin to recognize opportunities for community research in their disciplines. For example, the Management instructor whose students are engaged in developing project planning documents with a local non-profit agency may begin collaborative inquiry into the way such documents affect interpersonal communication between full-time staff and part-time volunteers. Service-learning can help the academy refine its understanding of the reciprocal nature of community-engagement, including an awareness that Boyerian applied scholarship will require not just community interaction but *community*

interdependence—an interdependence that is as intellectual as it is material (Cushman, 1996; Eyler & Giles, 1999).

Teaching Service: To Hell with Good Intentions?

A central concern for service-learning pedagogy is the way students and their teachers should position themselves in relation to the community being “served.” Institutional rhetoric and policy that configure service as a social mission or moral duty encourage students to view their work as *charity*—even when their work is called *learning*. Charity has become a dubious term in the service-learning literature because it points to civic action that reinforces customary beliefs and power relationships between privileged institutions (and their representatives) and the general public. Colleges and universities have programs of community *outreach*, community *leadership*, and community *service*—all of which connote that the institution is the primary agent of change while the community beyond campus is the passive, lucky recipient of that change. While these programs often do good work and have good intentions, they can give students an incomplete understanding of complex social problems by, for example, defining community needs in terms of what students have to offer (Eby, 2000, p. 4) and replicating social inequities (Herzberg, 1997, 58-59; Flower, 1997, 96).

In his infamous statement opposing the paternalism and presumptuousness of America’s educational outreach organizations operating in “underdeveloped” areas, Ivan Illich describes the summer service of college students in Mexico as a “benevolent invasion” (1977, p. 315). Reminding educators that “the road to hell is paved with good intentions” he explains that such missions are typically far more beneficial for the student than the community, and operate through arrogance and naivete. “The idea that every American has something to give, and at all times may, can, and should give it, explains why it occurred to students that they could help Mexican peasants ‘develop’ by spending a few months in their villages” (p. 316). The fact that service experiences are more likely to transform and enlighten the student than the community is not a reason for abandoning this work; however, it is a justification for critically examining and revising institutional expectations for service-learning pedagogies (Eby, 2000).

In his study of the three basic models of service-learning pedagogy (writing *for* the community, writing *about* the community, and writing *with* the community), Deans explains how the aims and outcomes of each model are shaped by the institutional relationships that sustain them (1998, p. 23). When a student’s service centers on producing documents on behalf of the community, her work is generally structured by the instructor’s relationship with a contact person at a non-profit agency, and her texts are

produced to help the agency address a community need defined by the community agency. Experiencing local concerns from the agency's point of view and generating documents in the agency's discourse can broaden the student's perspective as it trains her in workplace writing practices (1998, p. 103). Yet one risk of this approach is that although students are encouraged to reflect on their community experience they may not have an adequate opportunity to examine the wider range of factors contributing to the conditions they observe. In contrast, the "writing about" approach focuses student research and writing on the social context itself. The primary institutional relationship in this model is between the instructor and the community site contact person, who makes it possible for students to undertake a community service experience that fits within their academic schedules (1998, pp. 135-136). Social inquiry is conducted mainly in the classroom, where students are encouraged to use academic discourse and reflective essays to critically examine the community concerns engaged at a service site. While the writing, research, and service varies greatly among the institutions using this model, a common goal of this approach is "critical thinking"—a buzzword in general education curricula describing something as ambitious as sustained social critique or as modest as the assignment of an analytical report or journal entry. The service experience is constructed as both an extension of the classroom and a text for critical writing and thinking.

As discussed earlier in this essay, the Community Literacy Center is a well known example of Deans's third service-learning model, writing *with* the community. The institutional relationship typical of this approach pairs an academic department or disciplinary program with a community service organization. The coordinated efforts of the two organizations enable academic and community participants to join collaborative problem-solving projects such as Community Problem-Solving Dialogues (CPSDs) that require a new kind of discourse (called a *hybrid discourse*) to effectively communicate the diverse perspectives at the table. Student work is centered at the community organization, where they perform not service but *inquiry*, developing texts alongside others mutually invested in the outcome of the work (Deans, 1998, p. 180; Flower, 1997, pp. 104-112). In terms of service-learning pedagogy, the distinctive feature of this kind of program is its more thorough replacement of the charity paradigm with that of *reciprocity*, wherein knowledge and expertise are continually exchanged, and every participant is encouraged to be conscious of her roles as teacher and learner, giver and receiver (Cushman, 1996, p. 16; Stanton et al., pp. 3-4). As a guiding pedagogical and social principle, reciprocity is the current god term of service-learning rhetoric, presiding over descriptions of an ideal civic pedagogy.

Of course, once any pedagogical concept or model attains such status it must also attract greater scrutiny. In this case, the main disadvantage of a reciprocal “writing with” pedagogy is that it may not be a feasible approach for institutions whose service component is poorly organized or under-supported (in terms of faculty, site contacts, and other resources), or for solo instructors unable to shoulder the logistical and administrative burdens of this approach. Also, a rhetorical pitfall worth considering is that by casting *charity* as something to be avoided in service-learning pedagogy, service-learning advocates risk detaching their mission from a rich tradition of institutional outreach that is in many respects nurturing the development of service-learning programs.

The challenge to the would-be service-learning instructor is not to find a way to make the “writing with” model fit within her pedagogy, community, or institution, but to develop an approach that makes sense within those environments. Successful models abound, and tend to be those that cultivate rich disciplinary and community experiences suited to their particular environment (Deans, 1998; Morton, 1995; Zlotkowski, 1998). Keith Morton notes that service-learning pedagogies often fail to achieve their academic and civic goals when instructors allow a gap to widen “between the content and outcomes of our teaching, on the one hand, and the type of service in which we engage on the other” (1995, p. 31). Because one clearly desirable outcome for service-learning is academic scholarship, it is worthwhile to consider how the discovery and application of disciplinary knowledge may be achieved within any model. This reflection is a preliminary step in cultivating service-learning as applied scholarship—aligning pedagogical and professional work with its disciplinary reward system. The following examples briefly illustrate this *service-learning-as-applied-scholarship-in-the-disciplines*:

- English scholars at Carnegie Mellon University team teach a seminar in Community Literacy and Intercultural Interpretation in which students join faculty and inner-city teenagers for collaborative inquiry into multicultural discourse and community problem-solving.
- Students and faculty in the Nursing Program at the University of Pennsylvania work with other local citizens to research and develop health improvement curricula and peer education activities.
- Educators in such fields as Agriculture, Community Development, and Organizational Management engage in *participatory action research*, another form of applied scholarship that involves students and instructors in (often writing-intensive) projects that address local community needs and

generate research and artifacts usable by both town and gown.

It is significant that such approaches are often named *inquiry* and *action research* rather than service or experience even though social change and collaborative problem-solving are hallmarks of this work. This rhetorical emphasis redirects our attention from the cultivation of students-as-citizens to that of students-as-scholars. While a danger of student exploitation clearly exists, service-learning principles and practices can enable students to experience and reflect upon the interconnectedness of the academy and the community—and their contributions to both (Connor-Linton, 1995, p. 110).

Conclusion: Redefining the Institution

In this essay I've attempted to trace some of the key terms and ideas emerging from the pursuit of civic-engagement in higher education, explaining how this rhetoric is sometimes at odds with itself as educators work to realize their own ideals of community cooperation. As Lillian Bridwell-Bowles points out, the pupil most transformed by service-learning is likely to be the institution itself which, through collaboration with its neighbors and stakeholders, may at last realize a clearer purpose and audience for its work (1997, p. 27).

What other outcomes might we expect for an institution schooled by a radical democratic or experiential pedagogy? One worth cultivating is *democratic deliberation*, collaborative problem-solving through rhetoric that is not merely persuasive but “*dialogical* (to encourage the give and take among deliberators), *inquisitive and informative* (to bring about mutual understanding), *accommodative* (to assure that those understandings are incorporated into public debate), and *critical* (to promote critical awareness of the deliberative process)” (Burns, 1999, p. 129; emphasis added). By blurring the boundaries between campus and community, service-learning alters the identity of the institution, which is no longer self-contained and selectively “reaching out” to community audiences, but is hearing and engaging community voices and perspectives that were within the institution all along—and some that were not. This discourse is an important step in developing *deliberative institutions*, environments that help people engage in democratic deliberation by “allow[ing] for the equalities of access, standing, and opportunity, and for the freedoms of expression, conscience, and association” (p. 134).

The Community Problem-Solving Dialogue at Pittsburgh's Community Literacy Center is such a deliberative institution: concerned citizens cross conventional social boundaries such as age and race to exchange stories and expertise, generate understanding, and collaborate for change.

This public space is fostered by a university-community collaborative committed to intercultural inquiry and problem-solving that fulfills the educational and civic missions of both organizations. As we consider the proper *institutional* identity for service-learning, a shift in terminology may be in order, defining not only its location within an academic organizational chart but also its position as a catalyst for virtual deliberative institutions constructed by public interaction: sites of real community engagement composed wherever people bridge differences and deliberate to achieve understanding.

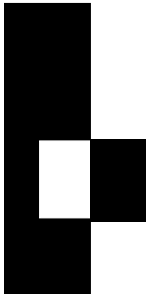
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H. Brooke Hessler teaches community-engagement writing and researches institutional rhetoric at Texas Christian University. She is Co-founder and President of Write to Succeed, a non-profit corporation that supports and develops collaborative communication programs in local and virtual communities.



Drawing On the Local: Collaboration and Community Expertise

Linda Flower

Carnegie Mellon University

Shirley Brice Heath

Stanford University

A short history of community/university collaboration is buried in the phrase “service learning.” In the grammar of its implied narrative, the agent, actor, and source of expertise—the server—is the academy not the community. And the act of learning is more often a personal reflection by students on a broadening experience than it is a public act of shared knowledge making. But what if we attempted to turn the tables: to transform service into a collaboration with communities and learning into a problem-driven practice of mutual inquiry and literate action? And what would it take to do so?

Our reflection on this issue comes in part from watching these questions come to life in an unusual forum—a community problem-solving dialogue with 180 stakeholders, including leaders in the urban community, leaders and staff from city youth organizations, and university faculty and students. This event, *Drawing on the Local: Carnegie Mellon and Community Expertise*, framed the problem in this way: How do we first acknowledge, then draw on and at the same time nurture and give voice to community expertise (where “we” refers to universities, faculty and students engaged in service learning)?¹

The structure of a community problem-solving dialogue invites participants to explore open questions by mounting an active search for rival hypotheses grounded in multiple and alternative ways of knowing. Consider, as this group did, some of the more general answers posed by the traditions of philanthropy, the settlement house movement, and progressive education.

Supporting Urban Communities

One answer the philanthropic tradition offers us is, “If you want to help, give money and stay home.” The traditional model of philanthropy has those with wealth giving their money and remaining distant from the context in which it is spent. However, many foundations, particularly

family foundations, increasingly want to be involved with the organizations they support and to share benefits of their expertise in management, finance, and marketing. The newly wealthy who have made their fortunes in knowledge industries have come to know their greatest assets rest in people and not in buildings or equipment. Therefore, they often tap quickly into the idea of viewing community expertise as a valued resource.

This resonates with the answer traditionally offered by the settlement house movement, which has been, “Move in.” In Jane Addams’ early nineteenth-century Hull House, university-based social activists literally settled in inner city settlement houses and became part of the life of the community. In contemporary versions of “moving in,” actors, artists, and dancers, writers, researchers and entrepreneurs locate their work in the community, supporting its sense of its own identity (cf. Ball and Heath, 1993). College faculty and students can indeed enter the life of the community through participation in these enterprises, through music and athletics, through community churches. However, this level of metaphorical “moving in” is most likely to occur if one has first had an experience of genuine mutuality—an experience which service learning could potentially provide (cf. Deans, in press).

The tradition of progressive education and inquiry, articulated by John Dewey (1916), extended by the prophetic pragmatism of Cornel West (1993) offers yet another answer which is, “Take action and inquire—together.” The problem-posing, problem-solving temper of this stance emphasizes the agency and expertise of the community—especially the marginalized knowledge of the young and the struggling. It argues that without jointly set goals and an expanded definition of expertise, both service and learning will miss the mark (Cushman, 1998; Flower, 1997). The challenge this poses for students and faculty is not simply how to hear this local expertise, that may come to us in a language, argument style, or discourse we find unfamiliar or even discomforting. The problem is also how to construct a transformative understanding, that has some power to change both learners and the world they find.

The Problem—As Community/University Partners May See It

If any clear consensus emerged during the Drawing On the Local dialogue, it was that such collaboration is not the norm. Moreover, when genuine knowledge-making becomes a goal of service learning, it demands some changes in attitude and standard university MOs to produce it. From this starting point, the dialogue became an inquiry into just what it does take to build this relationship to community expertise. The panel and the audience were invited, as partners in a community problem-solving dialogue, to pose “rival hypotheses” from their distinctive points of view.

The University's Vice Provost for Education, Indira Nair began by locating the conflict close to home: drawing on local expertise means stepping outside our disciplinary discourses.

At Carnegie Mellon—we call ourselves the problem solving university—the interdisciplinarity comes because no problem comes in little chunks. But one discipline we sometimes forget is the discipline of understanding knowledge that is packaged differently from the kind of packaging we do for class.² In the community you can find that local knowledge—in my country we call it indigenous knowledge—that is embedded perhaps in a different language, a different kind of consciousness, a different kind of environment.

If a “change in consciousness” weren't enough, inquiry also demands a capacity for risk-taking. We had launched this dialogue with a dramatic documentary of entrepreneurial and artistic success by urban youth. In Shirley Brice Heath's *ArtShow*, young people in “at-risk” neighborhoods and rural communities are initiating arts projects and learning to sustain their own organizations. But in the discussion she quickly pointed out:

The community involvement you saw in *ArtShow* involves considerable risk. What the young man talking about the bagel factory didn't tell you on camera was that he used to come down and steal equipment and supplies at night, until he found out that these people were really committed. So one hypothesis is that you must be prepared to take risks and take chances and have expectations of something that's going to come at the end, for a very diverse community.

While educators and scholars in this dialogue were directing our attention outward and down the road, voices from the community were also gently reminding us that new relationships are always built within an existing social history. If we do not consciously flip the script of that history, we may unconsciously reenact it. Pennsylvania Supreme Court Judge Justin Johnson saw the issue from a perspective of unusual balance as distinguished Judge, a Life Trustee of the University, and one of the city's most deeply respected African-American leaders. He was clearly familiar with the narrative in which college students are there to “impart their skills and knowledge:”

For me, it's sort of like going back to integration, where you regularly heard people say, "Oh, what a great thing that Black children now can go to school with White children." And no one wanted to admit the fact that White children were getting an awful lot of important stuff by being in school with Black children.

The director of a large, dynamic inner city YMCA, Paul Stoney, seemed to be speaking from experience as well:

You can't come in with a very "look down your nose" attitude, or as if institutions don't have a history. Because our institutions, like the YMCA which has been on the same corner for 80 years, are very adept at smelling out an opportunity that is a one-way situation. . . . Those children can tell whether or not someone is sincere and whether or not there's going to be any continuity.

According to this rival hypothesis, collaboration depends not just on an attitude but the more demanding action of continuity—it's the staying power that builds trust. Ironically, it was the dynamic leader of the city's Urban League, Esther Bush, who pointed out the often overlooked consequence continuity could have for university partners: Building connections without collaborative engagement may create unreliable knowledge.

I have been contracted by several universities saying can you identify some clients to participate in this or that research project Before I came to Pittsburgh I worked in Harlem. And in Harlem I would park my car and the drug dealers would watch it for me. My car never got touched, cause I earned their trust. You go into a community and you build trust. You give them something they need, and they watch you in terms of consistency.

That's totally different from going in, doing a research project that's gonna benefit you and what is it doing for them? Typically nothing. Maybe five or ten dollars when they sit down and have a conversation with you. But they're not really committed; they're getting the five or ten dollars. So how good is your study really?

Bush's comment speaks to the university's identity as a knowledge maker. The Director of Pittsburgh's Community House, Wayne Peck, spoke to its heart when he asked:

Where does the university weigh in and make common cause for suffering? . . . No one would question the competence of Carnegie Mellon in making new knowledge, but how does it weigh with its knowledge to get things done in urban neighborhoods as well?

Judge/Trustee/Community Leader Justin Johnson replies:

Maybe I shouldn't get into what he's asking, because it could be embarrassing. He's really not asking about whether the university is going to teach young people about being good citizens, but to what degree will the university be a good citizen. . . . I've seen situations where . . . the answer is, "well, you know Pittsburgh's a conservative city," which is not an acceptable answer.

Community problem-solving dialogues of this size are more likely to open questions and pose problems than resolve them. But the groundedness and specificity of the rival hypotheses emerging in the room suggested that people had indeed been wrestling with these questions on their own. The diverse (if complementary) rivals as to what was at stake, on the other hand, revealed the roots of problems service-learning initiatives can encounter if they aren't attuned to the rival readings the "served" may bring to this relationship. Such rivals call us to imagine solutions that are accountable to an expanded and intercultural vision of the problem. For instance, this dialogue suggests that sustainability is not bought with the coin of good intentions. It demands risk taking that goes beyond stepping off campus to deliberately stepping outside one's own discourse and conceptual frameworks. And it calls for reciprocity in multiple forms: in recognizing the history and contributions of community institutions, in commitment to a relationship not defined by a one semester project, and in a respect for community expertise that is expressed in the active practice of dialogue.

In the next section we sketch two case studies of project-based collaboration that demonstrate different ways of trying to address these issues and to build relationships that respect, nurture and draw on local expertise. One case foregrounds the kinds of literacy learning that go on when youth themselves direct a research/performance project. In the other, college students enter an intercultural inquiry in which their analyti-

cal, literate, and technological skills are used in the service of community expertise.

The ArtShow Case

By the early 1990s, community organizations based largely in the energy, imagination, and knowledge of local youth began to realize their future depended on finding ways to add capital to their financial base. A pattern of nonprofit organizations with for-profit arms began to develop as various kinds of community groups worked to develop services and products they could market.

Illustrated here is one such group from within a Boys and Girls Club. The drama team of the Club decided to shift their emphasis away from merely providing theatre for entertainment to developing interactive theatre that could work for educational and counseling purposes within a range of organizations of their region. This shift of format called for building a strong base of new knowledge and skills and working collaboratively with the public and private sectors of their area. The youth argued that the kind of project they wanted to develop would tie them closely to the “real world” of professions and would enable them to foster the idea among adults that young people could and would work with authority in a wide range of roles and topic areas.

The process they followed placed responsibility on the drama team to determine three issues of peak concern in their communities and to study in every way possible the domains of expertise and knowledge related to these concerns. For example, if the introduction of new types of illegal drugs was a growing concern, the study sessions of the young people included neurobiologists, chemists, law enforcement personnel, social workers, and physicians of psychiatry. If a growing problem within the region was parental neglect and sexual abuse of young children, different professionals would be called in to work with the drama team to introduce them to psychological theories, penalties imposed in various states, links between parental abuse and socioeconomic level, etc.

The drama team began a new season at the beginning of each summer. Over several weeks of the summer, the drama team worked with these experts to understand their three issues from every conceivable angle and then began to develop a drama through which they could bring audiences to a tense edge of understanding. The young people developed the script collaboratively as well as the descriptions and promotional materials about their work. They began by the end of the summer to visit service organizations, such as juvenile detention centers, parent support groups, drug and alcohol rehabilitation programs, schools, and the city’s convention planning center. They promoted their program as one for which these

groups would pay a fee for three hours of production and interactive involvement with the audiences.

Local groups began to see the value not simply in the dramatic productions of the drama team, but in the two segments of activity that followed each drama. Once the original drama reached a high point of tension, the group broke the action, turned their backs to the audience, waited a moment, and then turned to address in character audience members as individuals. Young people left the stage or platform to move in and among audience members as they talked and asked questions about the bases of their character's actions and beliefs. When tension rose to a peak, they snapped their fingers again, turned their backs on the audience for a moment, and then turned to address the audience as individual members around the question of "what did it feel like to play that part?" "What in my experience enabled me to get inside the skin of an abusive parent, a mom who denies that her boyfriend is sexually abusing her nine-year-old daughter?"

The openings for service learning show up when we look at the kinds of collaborative partners these groups work with, the dialogue sessions they create, and the range of forms of writing, reading, planning, and strategy-building they do.³

The first point to notice here is a twist on idea of service. These groups are working to provide service, yes, but it is also education and counseling on a contractual basis for groups that typically pay adult-only consulting firms for similar services. It is important to recognize that service is a hot commodity and that it makes more sense to pay young people for the services they offer in education and counseling than it does to pay adults. Moreover, such pay amounts to a community organization investment, for the fees go back into the nonprofit organization to enable them to sustain their work over several years without being donor dependent.

As more and more community youth organizations develop for-profit arms of their nonprofit organizations, the young members find themselves involved in what it takes to run a business, keep track of accounts and alterations in specific contracts, maintain files on who is and who is not licensed, and schedule performances. Computer science students or business students from local colleges often work side-by-side with the young people who have a familiarity with the task that has to be done, but do not have sufficient calculating skills or familiarity with the legalese of official documents. Often young college students come into these organizations to work on a single set of technical skills with particular individuals who can develop a level of proficiency sufficient to enable them to become the organization's inside expert.

The second twist on the idea of service here is that enabling young people both to know and to transmit knowledge about such matters increases the possibility that information will be put into action. Critical in the program just described is the fact that universities and other forms of higher education helped the drama group find the experts necessary to ensure the young actors had substantive information to back their performances. Experts across a variety of fields came several days during the summer before each fall season to introduce their field and prepare the young people to take tests covering this material. Physicians, mental health clinicians, pathologists, and members of crime investigation units, religious leaders, as well as juvenile judges and probation officers, came to teach and discuss with the students. These experts gave of their knowledge, but they expected the young actors to give as well: to pass on this information to others in dramatic form and to lead sensitive insightful discussions with the groups for whom they performed. For many audiences, university experts could not have gotten either information or persuasive arguments across. Young actors could—for many groups that would never listen to adult experts.

These young people became conveyors of technical knowledge through their dramatic productions, and they gained in each performance information that made their interpretations and their audience interactions more life-like. The youth looked to university personnel for technical information that enabled the actors to gain respect from groups, such as youth offenders, with whom they could win no respect without a full knowledge, from medical and neurobiological terminology to slang terms for processing or using drugs, for example.

Other youth groups found similar ways to ensure that technical and background knowledge surrounded the work of their art. A visual arts group might strike up a trade between their studio and a graduate program in business. Young artists would sell their tee shirts at the business school, and business school students would volunteer a few hours each week to help young artists learn marketing and finance skills.

Reciprocity was the key in these university-community youth group interactions. Uniformly, youth groups rejected the idea that outsiders, such as university students or professors, came to their community organization to “service” them as needy youth. Instead, when a partnership of give-and-take worked out, both sides benefited. Getting people together to have discussions about what each group could contribute began to uncover these expectations and the diverse “stories behind the story” each group brought to the collaboration. It also led to marked changes in attitude on the part of both parties. University personnel invariably wanted to “reach out to help” community youth organizations, while the latter yearned for ways to show their expertise, energy, and value in meaningful

ways to audiences they did not normally reach. Reciprocity ensured sustained interest and involvement on the part of youth and sometimes worked wonders in changing the views that university students had about “at-risk” communities and their residents—especially their young people.

The Community Think Tank Case

In this case we see the knowledge-producing power of intercultural problem-solving. The scene is an 80-year-old, inner city community house known for its focus on learning, writing and technology (Peck, Flower, & Higgins, 1995). A majority of the folks seated at the five round tables come from the urban community. Some have known first-hand the experience of being a youth “on the street” with little direction, or a woman in the uncertain transition from welfare. Others work in social agencies, community development groups, churches, community-based organizations, or service institutions—places where they have become part of a professional and/or personal network of support for people moving from the culture of struggling urban schools and neighborhoods to a changing culture of work. And still others at the table speak for the business world as human resource staff, managers, and executives.

Everyone here is part of a university-initiated “Community Think Tank” designed to bring a wider knowledge base into the discussion of workforce development—into policy talk as well as the daily decisions that shape the practice of education, social support, or human resource management. Participants are sharing interpretations of the conflicts they see within a scenario built on the stories of inexperienced workers. The scenario shows new employees (and managers) confronting paradigmatic problems, from dealing with customers and technology, to reading tacit expectations and conquering fears. The scenarios go beyond the familiar issues of transportation and childcare to raise problems of intercultural understanding, often coded as showing *respect*, having (or lacking) *a work ethic*, understanding *teamwork*, seeing *opportunities* to progress. Working through scene by scene, these community-based participants help articulate the “story-behind-the-story” from multiple points of view: how does this new employee, her manager, or her co-worker actually interpret this event? What sorts of socially or culturally based assumptions, what bodies of situated knowledge do each bring to making sense and making decisions? The table works as a group of strategic planning partners, helping each other generate and elaborate a set of significant rival hypotheses (Flower, Long, Higgins, 2000).

Later, when each table shares its rival readings with the room, the difference stimulates more possibilities and a deeper analysis of the problem itself—what is the problem, according to whom? Are managers and

employees, for instance, living in the same narrative, making sense in the same ways?

The Community Think Tank holds a series of these Story-Behind-the-Story sessions, building a realistically complex knowledge base around recurring situations (that the literature in workforce development and human resources often defines as problems in the attitudes, preparation, or basic skills of *the employee alone*). However, unlike most accounts found in management policy, statistical analysis, training manuals, or management lore, this problem analysis includes the logic of the underprepared employee and the rival readings available from the employee and his or her network of community support.

These Story-Behind-the-Story sessions are, however, not the first step in the work of the Community Think Tank, because the process actually begins with the legwork and listening of college students. Students in a community outreach course laid the groundwork for dialogue by holding what are called “critical incident interviews” with waitresses, busboys, managers, food service workers, cleaning staff, nursing aides. Using these stories in tandem with the academic literature, the academic team developed the scenarios around sets of frequently mentioned and strongly felt issues, such as competing notions of “teamwork,” and what constitutes “respect,” or how one should deal with mistakes or failures.

Background research creates the blueprints for scenarios. Story-Behind-the-Story sessions interpret those barebones, building an expanded, diverse knowledge base of significant rivals. To prepare for the final stage in the process, the Decision Point sessions, the academic team then translates this rich discussion into a Decision Point Briefing Book. The challenge here is to treat cultural difference as a resource, not a problem, to name and analyze the emerging issues, and to explore ways to represent this knowledge in print and multi-media so that it informs the upcoming series of sessions.

When the Decision Point sessions convene, the participants include a greater proportion of people in workforce policy, human resources, training and management. Their job is to envision better action plans in light of the expanded knowledge base of the Briefing Book. However, as Swan (1999) discovered in her study with a public policy class, the revealing rivals students do indeed “hear” may still drop out of the public story written to policy makers, if writers can not figure out how to “translate” or integrate that knowledge into the discourse of decision makers.

So in these Decision Point sessions the participants once again turn to a literate strategy for naming key decision points and generating “options and outcomes.” In this atmosphere of collaborative rivaling, community expertise plays a critical role in testing options, by projecting pos-

sible and probable outcomes from a vantage point decision makers rarely possess.

The academic teams face a new literate challenge as well: How do you translate this dynamic event into action plans and texts that can speak with good standing within the discourses of education, social service, and management decision making? And how do you create hand-held and on-line texts that invite readers to experience in some way the *process* of a community problem-solving dialogue and embrace the ways situated, local knowledge challenges, contextualizes, and radically conditionalizes familiar, establishment practices?

The premise of this Community Think Tank is that the university serves the community by becoming a working partner in a project that not only acknowledges and nurtures community expertise but commits us to an extended, strategic effort to draw on that expertise in the pursuit of transformative understanding. The educational premise is that service learning can prepare students to enter a diverse society and workplace with a respect for knowledge and discourses not their own, with intellectual and literate tools for listening, and with a commitment to building transformative knowledges out of that diversity.⁴

We see these two cases as ways to challenge some traditional assumptions about where expertise “naturally” resides in a community/university relationship and how knowledge is constructed (and by whom) in these collaborative projects. Projects like these open the door to a research-based look at the sophisticated literate learning and negotiated meaning making that can emerge in youth-scripted performance and problem-posing projects. They suggest ways college students from across the disciplines can use the methods of intercultural inquiry to build working partnerships and to create service learning projects that draw on and nurture community expertise.

But perhaps more importantly, our dialogue with the community asserts that a sustainable relationship with learning at its core must be built on a thoroughgoing respect for the knowledge of others—embodied in the social and literate practices that actively seek alternative ways of reading the world.

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Notes

¹ The event featured the Pittsburgh premier of *ArtShow*, a documentary of youth performance and entrepreneurship, directed by Shirley Heath. Heath then joined a community/university panel and the audience in a dialogue moderated by Linda Flower from the Center for University Outreach. The edited transcript is available on www.cmu.edu/outreach.

² For instance, talking about his course (Computer Science in the Community) Joe Mertz later described how he had had to restructure the course to make collaborative planning with community partners an explicitly supported activity in the course, that is, a strategically taught practice, that figured in scheduling and evaluation. (A paper on this course can be found on www.cmu.edu/outreach/csinc)

³ Readers interested in a research report on more than a decade of anthropological fieldwork in community youth organizations can contact www.PublicEducation.org for a copy of Community Counts by Milbrey W. McLaughlin or Partners@livable.com for the resource guide and docu-

mentary video **ArtShow**. For a full bibliography of the research, contact sbheath@leland.stanford.edu.

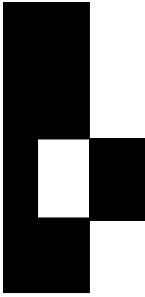
⁴ Readers interested in the developing findings of the Carnegie Mellon Community Think can visit it on the Intercultural Inquiry web site (<http://english.cmu.edu/inquiry>) or contact Linda Flower (lf54@andrew.cmu.edu). The site also invites readers using intercultural inquiry in their own work to post research briefs on work in progress. And it offers a place for students conducting such inquiry in service learning classes or outreach projects to post abstracts and URLs of work published on their local web sites. For a student introduction to writing in community-based service learning and guidance in how to structure an intercultural inquiry, see *Problem-Solving Strategies for Writing in College and Community*, L. Flower (Harcourt College Publishers, 1998).

Research on the learning of college students and teachers and urban teenagers engaged in the process of collaborative intercultural inquiry can be found in *Learning to Rival: A Literate Practice for Intercultural Inquiry*, L. Flower, (1996).

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Linda Flower is Co-Director for the Center for University Outreach and Professor of English and Rhetoric at Carnegie Mellon University. Author of numerous books and articles, two of her recent works include: *The Construction of Negotiated Meaning: A Social Cognitive Theory of Writing* (Southern Illinois, 1994) and *Learning to Rival: A Literate Practice for Intercultural Inquiry*. (co authored with E. Long and L. Higgins, Erlbaum, 2000).

Shirley Brice Heath is Professor of Linguistics and English at Stanford University. Known for her ethnographic research on the language and literacy of adolescents and adults, her recent books include *ArtShow: Youth and Community Development* (co-authored with Laura Smyth, Washington, DC: Partners for Livable Communities 1999).



Ruptura: Acknowledging the Lost Subjects of the Service Learning Story

Tracy Hamler Carrick

Syracuse University

Margaret Himley

Syracuse University

Tobi Jacobi

Syracuse University

I am sure that one of the most tragic illnesses in our society is the bureaucratization of the mind. If you go beyond the previously established patterns, considered as inevitable ones, you lose credibility. In fact, however, there is no creativity without *ruptura*, without a break from the old, without conflict in which you have to make a decision. I would say there is no human existence without *ruptura* (38, emphasis added).

—Paulo Freire, *We Make the Road by Walking*

As members of the Service Learning collective in the Writing Program at Syracuse University, we have been actively designing and teaching a sequence of undergraduate writing courses that integrate community service in various ways — by asking students to write *about* the non-profit agencies where they participate, to write *for* those sites by producing brochures and websites, and to write *with* people as tutors in adult literacy programs or in local urban high schools.¹

Along with the successes, we have encountered recurring challenges: In what ways do we intellectually and politically frame the service learning requirement? How do we write course rationales? How do we encourage students to talk in the classroom about their experiences? How do we theorize the ethical and rhetorical complexities of student volunteers as they represent people at the sites, many of whom may differ from the students in significant ways? Is reciprocity a main goal of service learning?² What sorts of reciprocities can and do (and do not) emerge? What disjunctures and crises, or *ruptura*, occur when the ideals of service

learning are put into practice? How can we as teachers, students, and community participants acknowledge them?

After several semesters of teaching community-based classes, we notice our students (and selves) challenging the comfortable narratives (e.g., accounts of reciprocal learning, tallies of student service hours or monies raised) in service learning discourses and recognizing moments when neatly planned activities fall away, rupture. It is in moments such as these that we (teachers and students) experience what Paulo Freire named *ruptura*, a conflict that forces us to make a decision, to act, to break away from the old and familiar. Rather than finding tidy answers to our questions in existing service learning theories of reciprocity and representation, we advocate a rhetoric of acknowledgement across community service learning relationships, an articulation of the tensions that occur when we require that students leave the classroom and go into various neighborhoods and non-profit agencies.

As students meet people and enter places that put pressure on their sense of who they are and how the world is, we set in motion processes of identification and disidentification, moments of comfort and discomfort. Risky encounters such as these mark not only service learning but also the project of education more generally. As teacher-scholars, we need always to attend to the ways narratives of progress structure our understanding of what we do and of what students learn, narratives that make it difficult to recognize the anxieties, fears, and conflicts that are also so much a part of the story. In acknowledging the tensions that arise out of these service learning pedagogies, a method of collaborative inquiry emerges. We not only attend to traditional structures of representing ‘others,’ but also call them in question by refracting one story with another.

As writing teachers, we notice that these struggles often emerge at the point when students have to write about their service learning site and experiences – that is, when they face the very real responsibility of representing for academic consumption events and people they are just beginning to get to know. In the following reflective class writing, Kaye, a first-year student, discusses her struggle to compose a descriptive and analytical profile of the afterschool program she worked with:³

Here I am trying to fulfill the requirements of this portfolio and my mind draws a blank. This is not to say that I have nothing to write about; I just don't know what I feel good writing about and what I think should not be brought across on paper. I know that some experiences are ones that I want to tell about and at the same time I don't feel right telling them . . . [I realize that] I am not someone who feels comfortable

writing about other people. . . . I do not like the idea of creating an image or situation for [others] to picture in their mind. If this were to be fictional, I could create enough work to keep you reading for hours but I cannot find a way to honestly show you who these people are because they are just that, people. . . . I [have] tried not to just define these people as characters but show them to you as they are, real people that made me think (Kaye Berube).⁴

This student self-consciously and responsibly grapples with the temptation to merely textualize the people at her site, to see them as characters. Moments like this interrupt the safety of a printed syllabus, skew the trajectory of a carefully crafted assignment, and make all kinds of problems visible. Fundamental to the process of learning, because they put in motion – and keep in motion — the situated, complex, and difficult (re)learning that educators locate at the center of all pedagogy, rupturas like these become a method of acknowledging the project of critical education in the world.⁵

In this essay we turn to the crisis of representation in ethnography and to stories of rupturas from our own experiences as service learning teachers to explore the discursive, institutional, and psychological reasons why these breaks may be difficult to analyze, easy to suture over, and necessary for understanding the intellectual project of service learning theory and pedagogy.

Representing (and Being Represented by) Others

Ethnographers have been confronted for years with the awesome responsibility of representing others; of making sense of what they have seen, were told, or read in their sites; and then of making it available for distant readers. One telling account of this struggle is Margery Wolf's *A Thrice Told Tale: Feminism, Postmodernism & Ethnographic Responsibility* (1992). In this book Wolf describes how she stumbled upon a short story she had written about events in the spring of 1960, which had occurred while she was living with her anthropologist husband in a small village in northern Taiwan. Having forgotten the story, she then searched through old files for her original field notes and personal journals from that period of time, and discovered they told different stories. In her book, she acknowledges how the telling of these stories has changed for several reasons: she is now an anthropologist herself; questions of reflexivity now preoccupy the discipline; problems of appropriation and representation now undermine the very project of the discipline. Indeed some postmodern critics have challenged the very possibility of ethically representing others, while other critics have claimed that the ethnographic

process itself “is an exercise in colonialism” (p. 5). In order to further explore this complex problem and to argue that these criticisms should make feminist ethnographers more aware and careful but should not stop them altogether, Wolf presents three texts she wrote about this one event (the short story, her unanalyzed field notes, and an essay she published in *American Ethnologist*), with commentaries that illustrate and argue with the problems and promises “this new period of reflexivity [have] brought to the fore” (p. 7).

The differences and conflicts and problems of representation and responsibility that haunt ethnographic encounters also trouble community activism and service learning.

Robert Coles (1993), for example, recounts how Ruth Ann, a nine-year old girl in a 4th grade composition class he was teaching, challenged his assumptions about himself, when she asked questions like, “We were wondering why you come over here to us. We thought, he must be busy with his regular life, so why does he take time out to come visit here, when he could be someplace else that’s more important Did you hear something bad about us?” (Coles, p. xvii.). Her questions unsettled his “well-intentioned, earnest affirmation of good intent,” forcing him to construct in his mind “a devastating critique of myself and my kind – confirming her uncompromising appraisal of me as yet another slummer, eager to wet his feet in a fashionably different terrain, all the more to inflate his sense of himself and the view others had of him” (p. xvii). Linda Flower (1996) demonstrates too the hard work of negotiating differences through her analysis of the community/university collaboration between Pittsburgh’s Community House and The Center for the Study of Writing and Literacy at Carnegie Mellon. She discusses how incommensurate discourses across lines of difference may make a shared social reality impossible, a deeper reciprocity unlikely (p. 66). Participants have to be willing to persist with conflict, with a sustained engagement with multiple voices and perspectives, where there will be no “master narrative that resolves the complexity into a unified, thematic story” (p. 88).

Both ethnography and community activism depend upon moving into intersubjective relationships with others across lines of difference, relationships fraught with anxiety, frustration, partial communication, rough spots and tough times.

We have to remain alert to the power asymmetries and different discursive and material realities of the people involved in community-based projects. We risk confusing our ethical and political desires for reciprocal and mutually beneficial relations with the much messier realities that those relations often (re)enact. We risk masking rather than unmasking power dynamics. We risk mis-recognizing our own desires and needs. If we move too quickly toward discursive constructions such as the reci-

procacity narrative, which then suture over these difficulties, we risk *fixing* complexities rather than *acknowledging* them as central to and part of learning.

In Wolf's tradition of thrice told tales, we seek ways to structure methods into our service learning courses that offer ample opportunity to tell *and retell* the many diverse stories of service learning – by giving voice to the visceral and frightening, by holding off easy answers, by acknowledging the unhappy as well as happy endings, by questioning our selves and own positionality, by developing self-reflexive ways of receiving stories — that is, by excavating the lost subjects.⁶

Margaret's story: 'Requiring' Transformation

“... to excavate the lost subjects in a story until what is uncanny can be engaged” (p. 15)

— Britzman, *Lost Subjects, Contested Objects*

There are several familiar versions of the service learning story. In one, “students will come to recognize their privilege and in the sad, troubled lives of others find that they, by contrast, are still living in the land of the free, the home of the brave. Armed with a point of light, they will lead just one person, often a very cute child, out of the darkness their parents willfully cast her into They will feel compassion and wish life were better for those they serve” (Stanley, p. 60). This caricature of what some call ‘volunteerism lite’ points to the concern that students will enact charity as a kinder and gentler form of imperialism rather than as a starting point for a systemic analysis of the social. Nothing changes structurally: the poor stay poor, the privileged stay privileged. Or, in another version of the story, students come to recognize the value of conflict and difference, enter the contact zone, and come to embrace the different meanings of an apparently shared experience, as they may “move from the academic armchair of liberal goodwill or radical critique to an intercultural collaboration” (Flower, p. 45).

These stories focus on endings, and may say more about teachers' expectations than about all that happens to student volunteers. We fore-close important possibilities when we tell the service learning story teleologically, especially in terms of final or failed transformations.

I propose that we look instead at other moments in the service learning experience: when the volunteers or community members do not like each other, when volunteers resent the time they are forced to give up, when participants develop antipathies that don't make their way to consciousness, when students have visceral reactions to their sites, and so on. The student volunteer may hate being the only white person in the

room, or community participants may resent the superior attitude of the kids who come ‘off the hill’ to ‘help’ them as ‘role models.’ Lots of scenarios come to mind. But it would be ‘uncivil’ or ‘ungrateful’ for service learning participants to admit to any of these things. Thus the public discourse of service itself – “giving back to the community” or “helping others” or “forming partnerships” – may make the problem worse. One way to avoid these discomfiting feelings is to cover them over with the language of altruism, which provides a defense against the depth and complexity of feelings and responses evoked by the service learning experience.

How do we get students to talk about these difficult subjects in the classroom? How do we get ourselves to? How might we have conversations with community participants about the complexities of these encounters?

As I reflect back on the syllabus for my service learning course last fall (WRT 105: Citizenship, the Narrative Imagination, and Good Writing), I’m struck by the problematic way I too cast the service learning story. The syllabus was eight pages long. To set up the course rationale, I first pulled seven quotations from the local paper that illustrate discord along lines of difference (e.g., the controversy over the Boy Scouts and homosexuality, federal hate crime legislation, the skirmishes between India and Pakistan). I raised questions about how we come to know others in an increasingly media-saturated world where figures such as “the welfare mother” or “the Islamic militant” or “violent teen superpredator” serve as our only reference points. Then I proposed three hypotheses for us to test through the service experience and through our discussion of course readings such as Benjamin Barber’s “Teaching Democracy through Community Service” and “Bowling Alone” by Robert D. Putnam: [1] fundamental to questions of citizenship and to good writing is respecting others as capable and contributing members of a multicultural society, [2] the act of narration is a basic way that we understand ourselves and others, and [3] service learning is one way to accomplish the civic learning necessary for a multicultural democracy. It took me four pages to lay out these hypotheses. I defined students as citizens and rhetors, who must recognize “others . . . without denigrating . . . differences or reducing [them] to caricature.” I argued for cultural narratives that do not “perpetuate hegemonic power relations, social injustice, and material inequity.” I relied on discourses of abstract values like “good citizenship” and “good rhetors” — and so on and so on.

In retrospect, I read my own syllabus as defensive, addressed not only to my students, but also to other audiences – teachers in the Writing Program who openly question the value/s of service learning (which they see as unpaid labor, as irrelevant to the teaching of writing, etc.), parents

who might not think service could be a serious part of academic study, other service learning practitioners whom I had been reading and among whom I wanted to locate myself. I see too the high handed moralism of the discourse, which explains how students did come to read the course as about becoming “better” people – with “better” coming to mean not self-ish, not lazy, not morally indifferent, not immature (if class debates are any indication).

Students resisted the terms by which the syllabus interpellated them. They were right.

The discourse of my syllabus addressed the superego: it just wasn't okay to be ‘good enough’ students and volunteers.⁷ We had to be spectacular. I was calling for the heroic, the utopic, the patriotic in a way, out of my own anxiety about justifying service learning in a first year writing course for the first time. I locked us into a very particular discourse of service learning, which addressed students in moralistic ways, which they could either accept or reject, but not easily or openly negotiate. On the first day of class I expected students to challenge the 20 hour service requirement. Instead, they sat there, silent, passive, obedient. A very serious student who fretted, “But what if nothing happens to us at our sites” initially raised the only concern. He recognized that transformation and moral improvement – not just 20 hours of service – was being required.

Ironically, of course, it is this very discourse of moralism that keeps everyone in their socio-economic place and that perpetuates the status quo – and that undermines the very project I tried to initiate. The privileged continue to enjoy their privilege because they have now taken time out of their busy lives to help those less fortunate than themselves, and the less privileged feel, or ought to feel, gratitude.

I might now tell the story of the service learning rebellion, which happened slowly and quietly over the course of the semester, as students couldn't find time to get to their sites, as they argued that required service was “forced volunteerism” and so not volunteerism at all, as they crabbled about the transportation problems, etc. Yet when I encouraged a class debate, students withdrew from any invested discussion or alternative projects. Some students completed the service requirement (some very ‘successfully’), while most barely squeezed in enough hours to have something to write about and to not flunk the course.

But what I want to consider here is how to write my next syllabus. What discourses will I draw on – and why?⁸ What if I say something like, “Students will donate 20 hours of their time to overworked and understaffed not-for-profits, which will give us in return more to talk about and more to write about, as we study the many arguments for and against service learning.” Would that be a way to avoid demanding ‘a learning’ or

‘a service learning narrative’? Or would it be possible to start the course by asking students to workshop the syllabus and develop and debate ‘our’ course rationale – and then return to it across the semester for discussion, analysis, critique, qualification? Or would it be productive to provide many rationales – mine, service learning theorists, the community non-profits? That is, how can I get the course started without trying to ‘fix’ the meaning of the service learning ahead of time?

More importantly, how can I resist my own teacherly impulses to write ‘the’ narrative of the course? How can I resist the rescue fantasy “that education can be made from the proper teacher, the proper curriculum, or the proper pedagogy so that learning will be no problem to the actors involved”? (Britzman, p. 5). How can I open up space, for myself and for students, to recognize the anxieties, fears, contradictions, and conflicts that are always already a part of the education narrative?

Tracy’s story: If Children are Homework, What am I?⁹

“If you have come to help me, you are wasting your time. But if your liberation is bound with mine, then let us work together.”

— Sadie Brower Neakok

One afternoon, about six weeks into the semester, as my freshman writing course, Literacy and Community¹⁰, was ending, a student reluctantly lingered behind. Bright and creative, she was typically outspoken, so I was quite surprised when she hesitated to speak. Her words, which appear in a paper she eventually wrote, capture the essence of our discussion:

“The first time I saw this place I was taken aback. My naïveté had me envisioning brightly colored walls, toys and everything else I had while I was growing up. I was out of my element from the very beginning. Even before viewing the facility, I had been uneasy with the knowledge of what I must do to complete my Writing 105 course. It was disconcerting to my sensibilities that I would be working here for 20 hours over the next few months, and then I inevitably would be leaving, never to see these kids again. How could this possibly be fair to them? What exactly were they to me? A homework assignment? I began to wonder if it affected the kids to see so many volunteers come through the organization about the same time each year, and then to watch as the workers dwindled

back down to permanent employees as the holiday season neared.”

As her words carefully and tentatively rolled off of her tongue, I sensed how difficult this conversation was for her. Margaret Dana Singsen¹¹ knew she was revealing something that would make her vulnerable – as a student, as a community participant, as a human being. But despite the risks involved in confronting her teacher, an authority who had both put her in this position and would eventually assign her a grade, Dana was committed deeply to expressing the discomfort, the conflict she felt with the community project she was charged with. Her bold critique implicated nearly every institutional structure she was working within – the course, the Center for Public and Community Service, the community agency itself.

During the private moments of our conversation, I listened. I admired. I heard.

How could I invite and sanction such a troubled practice? What right did I have to push students into such anxiety-ridden moral dilemmas? To encourage such a potentially careless mis-use of others? How does this affect the children?

How could I not invite and sanction such active participation in the community? What right did I have to refuse precious resources to community agencies that depend in part upon the university? To deny students and children in the community opportunities to cross the often sharply drawn lines between communities of difference, to forge human relationships, to become active learners both inside and outside of the classroom?

She was surprised, I think, when I not only admitted that I shared her concerns, but also invited her to bring them into the classroom, to make them public, and to allow others to consider them. As far as she knew, her peers had bought into the celebratory discourse of community service. No one else had spoken out against the ways that it had been framed in our course syllabus, the university’s mission statement, any of the agency mission statements, the public media, or political propaganda. In these documents, service was good. Dana believed that if she spoke up, she might stand alone.

Students did not necessarily disagree with Dana’s concerns. Many were also frustrated, confused, or shocked by their experiences in the community. They did not, however, take up her request to consider the ethical implications of the community work that was required of them. Instead they saw the space she opened up as an invitation to share their own rupturas – the moments of anxiety, conflict, or discomfort they were experiencing.

One student, for example, who was working at the same agency as Dana, told us of a young child who had endearingly latched herself onto her leg, refusing to let go. While the student was a little surprised by the child's behavior, she was even more stunned by the agency director's response – punishment. Other students at the agency corroborated this story by sharing others that illustrated the director's strict policy about any physical contact.

How could a child be punished for seeking out affection?

Amidst a clamor of horrified voices, a single voice emerged. It suggested that maybe the director was worried about the children getting too attached to people who would soon leave the agency and them. The voice was Dana's.

“Say more about that,” I urged.

Reiterating her concern with the inevitable reality that she would be leaving the agency at the end of the semester – *if children are homework, what am I?* – she explained that her ideological resistance to the project itself would not permit her to initiate or accept any human contact. Though she desperately felt the need to reach out and hug a child, it was because of her concerns for the children that she resisted her human urges.

The class was silent.

A student working at a different agency whispered, “I hug the children,” and like water being released from a dam, others joined her. Louder now, she added, “They need love. They need to know we care.”

Dana's brow wrinkled. I asked the class, “Why?”

Students retorted with predictable and troubling claims about disadvantaged children, unfortunate home lives, broken homes, and poor people. The pervasive belief seemed to be that the kids they were working with — because they wore the same clothes every day, ate food voraciously, and/or smelled like they weren't bathed often — needed their love and affection because they “don't get it at home.”

This time my brow wrinkled. *What assumptions are embedded in those claims?* I raised a litany of questions: “Why are you assuming that the kids you are working with are not getting love and affection at home? What do you mean by love and affection? What makes you claim that children need it? Need it the way you give it? Need it from transient volunteers?”

As students recalled stories of their own early childhoods – the small private daycare programs staffed with doting, trained professionals, the loving relationships they developed with live-in nannies, the comfort of knowing a parent would be waiting after-school – a theme emerged: students were making assumptions about the non-profit agencies they worked with based upon their own personal experiences. As one student proclaimed, “This is how I grew up and look where I am now!”

This was a difficult discussion.

As the next few weeks passed, students wrote journals and a series of mini-essays, one-two page papers that described different aspects of their community agencies.¹² The culminating assignment asked them to compose an agency profile, a five-seven page paper, which synthesized and expanded upon the writing they had already done. They were asked not to just describe the agency, but also to discuss why and how it functioned as it did.

I brought an agency profile written by a former student for the class to consider and discuss. They were appalled. One student exclaimed, “She’s not telling it like it is. She’s evaluating it based upon her own middle-class upbringing.” He went on, joined by others, to observe that while she described the agency, its members, and what happened during her visits, she did not explore deeply enough why the agency needed to respond to the community and function the way that it did based upon what the community itself valued and needed. They felt that the essay was more about the student writer than the agency and people she worked with.

Things were getting complicated; they were getting more interesting. *Did Dana set this important discussion into motion?* I looked forward to reading their profiles. I looked forward especially to Dana’s.

Like many of her classmates, Dana did not really write an agency profile. Her paper started by describing the ways she reacted to and interacted with the agency and proceeded to narrate her process of coming to know and understand the community she was working with. And while she did reveal many details about the agency and its members in this section, the ‘profile’ itself really began several pages later when she wrote:

And then it dawned on me that [the agency director] shared many of the same feelings about volunteers as I did. She too knew that this was a class obligation, and that we would be leaving just as abruptly as we had come.

As the rest of her paper unfolded, she identified and illustrated unwritten policies which forbade physical contact between children and volunteers; which intentionally rotated volunteers through different activities and age-grouped rooms; and which encouraged older children to become mentors and university volunteers to become facilitators who ran activities, but did not necessarily participate in them. Dana, like many of her classmates, needed to look inside of herself, to talk about and write about what she saw on the inside, before she could profile what she saw and experienced on the outside.

I have a lot to learn from this class and from Dana. Why did this group of students critique their peers for writing themselves into the communities they worked with, yet, in the end, in at least some ways, produce that kind of writing themselves? What am I asking of students when I assign an agency profile? What are they telling me they need instead? As I consider these questions in the context of the narrative I have just shared, I realize the need to reframe the writing assignments I impose upon students, assignments which require them to achieve scholarly distance from their communities just as they are imagining ways to locate themselves within them.

As I plan my revisions, I am compelled to flip through pages of student writing; Dana's writing in particular has influenced me deeply. Over the course of the semester she told many stories: stories about herself, stories about herself in the community, stories about others in the community, stories about how she read her community, stories about reading herself. None of her narratives, however, tell 'the real story'; none of them are complete. My students join Wolf in teaching me that all stories can only ever be partial narratives, and remind me that I cannot, and should not, expect or even desire 'the real, complete story' from students.

Tobi's story: Into the Community¹³

Ruptura #1

"She came once, was afraid to touch the children and got on her cell phone to get a ride home."

—Community evaluation form, fall 1999

This assessment came from the daycare center director at the end of the semester. I've gone over again and again how I could have recognized this student's experience earlier. None of her papers reflected this lack of engagement; in fact, they pointed to investment. She wrote passionately about the lack of screening and safety precautions required for volunteers. I knew that she hadn't spent as much time in the community as her peers, but it wasn't until the last day of the class that I realized something was really wrong.

This student taught me a valuable lesson. If I were to continue teaching service learning courses, a shift had to occur. I hadn't realized clearly enough what students might be going through even though I'd been a volunteer at one organization or another for much of my life. I needed to understand the frustration and excitement my students were writing about in their journals, what it felt like to carve twenty hours out of a semester in a new and uncomfortable setting, and, most importantly,

why this student had identified and argued an agency issue, fulfilling all of my assignments, without spending more than one hour at ‘her’ site. The only contact I had with agency placements came in the form of a brief evaluation at the end of the course. It was not enough. As I struggle to find ways to understand the experience of students like this one, I am reminded of the lake at my childhood home.

I grew up in rural Wisconsin, in a place, as my father says, where most people come to vacation. There is a lake and acres of land. The seasons marked our activities, and, as autumn turned to winter, the lake changed, the water freezing in interestingly layered configurations. And while wind or snow robbed us of a see-through clarity most years, windows into these depths did appear. Sunburst shapes ranging from the size of a quarter to a bowling ball offered dark openings through which to examine a silent lily pad, the dappled sand bottom. Inevitably, our breath would steam the holes, blur our vision.

Like those frosted icy windows, my experience in the service learning classroom became clouded with questions of representation, authority, and inexperience as students began raising ethical questions in journals and essays and as the evaluations from agencies came in. I decided if I was to understand the complexities of the task I was engaging my students in, the coded language in their writing, I needed to occupy a place in the community along with them. If we were going to talk about and study the community in class, I too had to be in the community. It wasn’t enough to rely on the university placement office and their writing; I had to redefine boundaries with students.

I began working with an adult and family literacy center about a year ago.

Ruptura #2

Since, like many of the Syracuse students, time dictated the hours I could spend at the center, the volunteer coordinator paired me with another tutor. She worked with our student Ann¹⁴ on GED-level reading skills, and I was to follow with a half-hour of writing tutoring each Tuesday. The volunteer coordinator suggested I meet the reading tutor to discuss how we might support each other, and I agreed, certain that tutor collaboration could maximize Ann’s chances of passing the GED. I was also interested in meeting a long-time volunteer tutor, in looking for

mentoring, as I imagined my students might as they encountered established site volunteers and staff members.

Except the reading tutor didn't want to meet me. She wouldn't shake my hand or even look at me directly. Eyeing the tape recorder in my hand, she would have nothing to do with what she saw as a university researcher coming down from the hill to study this student, this center, and her.

I was stunned. Why wouldn't she meet me? Was it because of the difference in our education? She was being tutored in math while she tutored Ann in reading. Was it because I looked young, like a college student? She was in her forties. Was it because I looked too white? She was an African American. Was it somehow class-based? I had dressed in my casual teaching clothes. She wore jewelry and painted nails. What had I done? This had never happened before.

Was this the kind of experience my students were having? What had I done in the classroom to prepare them for this? I went home and journaled, writing through my anxieties of rejection. My students were required to maintain one journal page per community hour, but these were collected only three times over the semester. This hardly seemed the most effective way to bring these issues into the classroom. How could I use these moments to teach?

Ruptura #3

Journal entry: Can we please just work on writing?

I went to the center today a little late, around 5:40 by the time I got there. I find myself very cognizant of the time I'm occupying with Ann. I know that she expects to be able to leave by 6pm. I know that her daughter needs to go home, to get away from school. The curious thing is that this time I didn't want her stories of child suicide and the emergency room. I didn't need them the way I did the last few times. I had been willing, even eager, to take on some of her emotional weight before, but today I was tired. I had my own problems. I really just wanted to think about how adult literacy could work, about writing. What am I saying? I already feel guilty for sort of experimenting with different strategies 'on' her, and now I'm rejecting her stories? Her need to share her life with me? How can I even write this? How would Ann feel about this representation?

As I drafted my story for this essay, this particular telling elicited lots of response. “Explore what you mean when you say you didn’t *need* her stories.” “Yes, the courting ritual of coming to know someone demands this sort of engagement.” “Say more about Ann — where does she enter this conversation?” In many ways, their retelling of my story—a retelling itself—has had a paralyzing effect. Which one should I tell?

The one about a teacher-scholar needing affirmation outside the university? Like students who long for ‘real world’ experience, I needed Ann’s stories because I needed to get off campus, to ground a world of literacy theory in a world of place and practice. Ann’s stories offered me a way to renew my faith in myself as a teacher, to legitimize my place at the university in the world.

The moment when I couldn’t hear any more of Ann’s stories because I couldn’t stop dreaming them at night? I couldn’t stop retelling myself her stories. I lived them again and again as I struggled to come to terms with middle-class guilt and resist trying to find solutions. I couldn’t sleep for weeks.

The one about using story to teach writing and then switching gears when that didn’t work? Ann and I listened to her stories. We tape recorded them and wrote them down. I wanted her to feel the same investment in writing that I wished for my students. I thought the stories might be a way in. They certainly shocked and ‘invested’ me. My own distance from the material reality of her life was undeniable. She talked of slum landlords and lost security deposits; I listened, talked to her about how learning to write might help her fight the system. Then it stopped working. The stories became our time together. As much as she needed a listener, she also needed a reading and writing teacher. Soon thereafter, we devoted the first few minutes of each encounter to talk and then turned to her books and writing assignments.

The moment of fascination turned to boredom? In many ways my journal reveals a fascination, a rapture, with the stories the site had to tell, a collection of lives so different that voyeuristic participation was almost too much to bear. I couldn’t help but desire membership. But eventually those feelings subsided. What happens when comfort/discomfort is brought back into equilibrium? Like the ice holes that are inevitably abandoned after a couple of days for the thrill of another winter activity, our experiences in the community risk

becoming ‘average,’ burden instead of novelty. This introduces a new crisis: boredom. Is this the point at which students turn in blank entries? How can I help them understand that comfort doesn’t mean that there is nothing left to write about?

The story of false stability? As I came to know Ann and her stories, as we developed our own rituals and methods of interaction, I recognized a sense of stability in my place at the center. And yet stability is the last label that comes to mind as I characterize how service learning relationships exist in my classroom. It is difficult for students, teachers and community participants to escape the reality of our transient roles, the physical migration between the community and classroom in a short fifteen-week season.

How can I/we tell these stories? How do I encourage students to choose? What do I do with the journals my students turn in? As I redesign curriculum, which story do I ask for next? Like Margaret and Tracy, I need to ask this question again and again.

Ruptura #4

As I grapple with this cacophony of voices, I’m realizing that Ruptura #3 is really just a small part of Ruptura #4, a questioning. Where do I locate ruptura? Was it in the act of journaling — is that where I allowed myself to pause between my knowing and the unknown? Was it in the questions of my essay-writing peers? Is it caught somewhere between my retellings? How can I help students get hold of these things, name them? How can we learn from them? Amid the choice and trauma of retelling, we can come to understand the complexities of the relationships — student-student, student-community, student-writing — service learning pedagogies and practices develop. In the chaos, a method begins to emerge.

And so ruptura becomes a constant rebirth of the telling, and I’m back to ice. Conditions affect what was once clarity all season long, but, in the end, there is movement. Pools of water form along the surface. Sharp cracks ripple into fracture as the sun dapples in physics, challenges a solid into flux, reintroducing the chaos of motion. I’m wrong about the windows. Rupturas aren’t about clearing the frost away. Rupturas melt ice, shift the shape of what we know into what we can know. That, then, is my goal as a service learning teacher of writing, to help students engage in the act of ruptura without reaching for a cell phone.

Toward a Conclusion: Acknowledging Ruptura

The method we are developing for recognizing the value/s of ruptura in our service learning writing classes follows from Wolf's trope of thrice told tales: we are using representation to understand representation.

We are arguing that service learning courses should not be measured by one narrative, one paper alone, one final account. Rather, multiple narratives, together with journals and other notes, should be set side by side, seen as partial pieces of an unfolding inquiry and reflected upon not as finished products, but as layers of coming to know and understand. By varying the genre and the audience, by analyzing stories collectively, by excavating the less visible or even hidden dimensions of the story (like the unacknowledged audiences), we understand texts as polyvocal, contextual, always meaning more and always meaning less than writers intend.

We are advocating for a method of narrative refraction – not treating stories as foundational, but as complex, meaningful, ongoing events that can be told and retold to keep learning and teaching in motion.

Recognizing ruptura allows us to resist the master narratives of service learning, reciprocity, happy endings, and the public discourse of activism. Representing ruptura through telling and retelling makes visible the ways service learning is a contested terrain, a complex social, economic, and political field, in which all participants face challenging interpersonal interactions and representational responsibilities. In acknowledging ruptura, we locate these struggles – the ways course rationales interpellate students, the ways students negotiate service learning assignments, the ways we have to choose which stories to tell – at the heart of the intellectual project of service learning and critical experiential education.

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Notes

¹ We recognize here the work of Tom Deans (*Writing Partnerships: Service-Learning in Composition*, NCTE, in press) and Linda Adler-Kassner ("Inner Landscapes, Outer Worlds: Mapping the Territory of Service-Learning and Composition." Keynote, Spring Conference, Writing Program, Syracuse University, Feb. 1999), and the support we have received for these courses from the Center for Public and Community Service and from the University Vision Fund for improving teaching and learning at Syracuse University. For more information and to read our course syllabi, see our website at (<http://wrt.syr.edu/service.html>).

² Barbara Jacoby, in her well-known book, *Service Learning in Higher Education: Concepts and Practices*, for example, defines service learning as "a form of experiential education in which students engage in activities that address human and community need together with the structured opportunities intentionally designed to promote student learning and development. Reflection and *reciprocity* are key concepts of service-learning" (1996, p. 5, emphasis ours). As we explored the presence of service learning in higher education through institutional websites, this last line was cited again and again. Reciprocity, in some incarnation, is almost always present in the rhetoric of service.

³ At Syracuse University, we have an on-campus office, the Center for Public and Community Service (CPCS), which negotiates, manages,

and maintains links with community non-profit agencies. Each semester CPCS distributes an extensive list of 150 possible community placements. Students send a wish list of 3 selections and CPCS coordinates placements for them. Students are required by CPCS to work for at least 20 hours over the course of the semester at the agencies.

⁴ Data for this article was collected during the service learning writing courses taught in fall 1999. All student work has been used with the permission of the writers. Student writers were consulted and elected to use their real names.

⁵ In their doctoral work, Tracy and Tobi are researching and developing ethical practices of service learning curriculum, sustained community partnerships, and critical pedagogy. We look forward to additional research which will continue to enlarge the dialogue to include student learners and community collaborators.

⁶ If space permitted, we would extend Britzman's discussion of self-subversive narratives of education: "to explore those other dimensions, that other story, the story of one's own otherness" (p. 16). She describes the three versions or retellings of a story as the ethnographic, the reflective, and the uncanny. We also draw attention to *Political Moments in the Classroom*, (Himley, et. al.), an account of a group of teachers in the Syracuse University Writing Program who used collaborative story-telling as a method for refracting and understanding the many aspects of challenging classroom events, or ruptura, that roughly fell under the rubric of 'the political.'

⁷ See Britzman for a discussion of Bruno Bettelheim's notion of the good enough teacher, who transfers not a learning, but a demand that students learn to make their own demands in learning (p. 41).

⁸ There are many structural changes too: the service learning course I designed is focused specifically on having Syracuse students tutor in the public high schools in the city. With advice from faculty in the School of Education, I have met and talked with high school teachers interested in having these tutors. The project is much more narrowed and focused in its relationship with the community, in its goals, in its tasks.

⁹ I acknowledge the academic and ethical work of Margaret Dana Singsen, Kaye Berube, and the rest of my Fall 1999 WRT 105 class that I have represented in this article.

¹⁰ This course was designed by two of this article's authors, Tobi and Tracy. It was taught during the Fall 1999 semester and was populated with students who had been enrolled in a section which required them to spend at least twenty hours outside of class working with a local non-profit agency of their choice, preferably on literacy-related projects. By the fifth week of the course, students were assigned to after-school tutoring programs like the Boys and Girls Club and public school classrooms

where they assisted teachers with music education, drama, and art. All students worked directly with children.

¹¹ For clarity and with her permission, we use Margaret's middle name in this story.

¹² The mini-essay prompts asked students to: analyze agency mission statements; describe physical locations; identify, categorize, and describe agency members; capture and explain some dialogue and agency-specific language.

¹³ This is a story of corners, of shape-shifting and breaks, one teacher's sequence of motion, representation, and reformulation. Like all rupturas, the beginning is one of many and, while this text must stop, it does not conclude.

¹⁴ A pseudonym

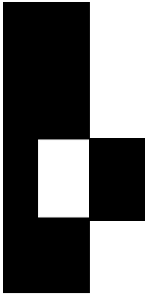
Tracy Hamler Carrick is a doctoral student in Composition and Cultural Rhetoric and a Teaching Associate in the Writing Program at Syracuse University. Her research and teaching interests include multiple literacies, community-based learning as composition pedagogy, basic writing, teacher-research, and writing program administration.

Margaret Himley is Associate Professor of Writing and English and Director of Undergraduate Studies in the Writing Program at Syracuse University. Her most recent work includes editing and writing for *From Another Angle: Children's Strengths and School Standards* (Teachers College Press) and teaching an introduction to Women's Studies at the county prison. Her research and teaching interests include literacy, composition pedagogy, collaborative inquiry, and lesbian & transgender studies.

Tobi Jacobi is a doctoral student in Composition and Cultural Rhetoric and a Teaching Associate in the Writing Program at Syracuse University. Her research and teaching interests include community-based literacies, feminist theory and pedagogy, and service learning as composition pedagogy.

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Messages from Josefa: Service Learning in Mexico

Gloria Clark

Penn State Capital College

Andy was afraid to go to Mexico. He needed the credits badly in order to graduate on schedule. To be truthful, his expectations were low: Mexico was far away from home and very different. Finally, he put his fears aside and signed up. What he earned, along with four credits, was a new understanding of both himself and his place in a new and different culture. This was the pivotal experience for him: one day, Andy was walking through a very poor section of Cuernavaca on his way to his community service site. He was feeling homesick and alienated; the poverty bothered him a lot. As he walked across the hillside full of, at least to his eyes, shacks, he imagined the misery of such a life. Suddenly, in the distance he caught a flash of red. As he got nearer, he saw that the red color came from a bunch of red balloons strung on a tree. In a moment, he saw that the red balloons were announcing a party, and that people on the patio of that home were laughing and singing and having a great time. Andy told me that at that moment he realized that happiness does not necessarily depend on material possessions, or on where you live, but on human interaction.

The importance of human interaction. What better phrase to describe my goals as a facilitator for student trips to Spanish-speaking countries. As a Spanish professor, I recognize that study abroad is an essential experience for language students. However, they often travel to a country and participate in the culture on the level of tourists, or observers. I want my students to participate in the culture on a deeper level. With this in mind, I have taken students to Mexico five times to study the language and culture through a combination of academic study and service-learning.

I have designed the course in several different forms, according to different academic schedules, including an interim period, May Term and the traditional summer course. For example, in the summer term of 2000 (which runs for six weeks) at Penn State Capital College, students can register for six credits of intensive Spanish I or II and up to three credits of

service-learning. The course meets on campus for three weeks during which students will learn about the culture and history of Mexico as well as practice Spanish survival vocabulary. The final three weeks will be spent in Cuernavaca. The language component of the course includes four hours of required instruction five days a week at the Cemanahuac Educational Community in Cuernavaca, Morelos, a total of sixty hours of classroom instruction in the language by native speakers. Students participate in classes at their own level of study, so course can accommodate students at many different levels, from beginner to advanced. In addition to their classwork, students may participate in optional grammar clinics, conversation opportunities and lectures. All students go on three required field trips of a historical, anthropological or cultural nature. Each student lives with a Mexican family which speaks only Spanish.

Outside formal study at the Cemanahuac Educational Community, students generally participate in several community programs, often directed by Bill and Patty Coleman through their non-profit organization, VAMOS. VAMOS supports a large number of projects in and around Cuernavaca including literacy projects, health projects; sheltered workshops and child-care. (The Coleman's philosophy is that any community intervention projects must be community generated and community staffed.) The students meet with the Colemans and discuss conditions in Mexico, and the unique nature of VAMOS projects, in order to understand their role as volunteers within a Mexican framework. The students contribute a minimum of ten hours of service in addition to their study of cultural, economic, social, and political conditions as a part of the course preparation in order to complete the service-learning component of the course.

Each year I have had a different emphasis for the service-learning component. For example, one year the emphasis was on teaching oral hygiene. During the semester prior to the trip, students met with a local dentist who gave them training in oral care. This same dentist arranged for a company to donate a quantity of toothbrushes and dental floss for distribution in Mexico. The students then met several times in order to review Spanish vocabulary of the teeth and gums, as well as to role-play a teaching situation and to prepare themselves for immersion into a different culture.

Service opportunities vary, such as participation in a nursery school program for the children of street market vendors. Most of these children spend their days playing in the limited space around the marketplace. Volunteers come to the market about four o'clock daily to pick up all of the children whose parents will allow them to come to the school. The children walk about three blocks to the building where they spend several hours, playing with toys or practicing their letters or numbers. Before the

children return to their parents, they are given a nutritious meal, including a vitamin tablet to help forestall the borderline malnutrition suffered in Mexico. My students generally donate bottles of vitamins and other supplies that they have collected on campus. This center is administered and staffed by native Mexicans. Students interact with the children only after being thoroughly prepared to participate in non-intrusive ways, such as playing quietly with the children, reading a story, or helping with school-work.

Another example of service-learning is a visit to a women's natural health clinic. This clinic is located in one of the most impoverished *colonias* in the area, Josefa Domínguez, a settlement of *paracaidistas* or parachutists, people who gravitate to a certain area and settle or squat on the land without permission. This settlement houses about eight hundred families without running water or dependable electricity. The people are very poor and without adequate medical care. For a resident of this community to visit a doctor, it is necessary to take a forty-five minute ride on a *ruta*, a small bus, to reach the center of Cuernavaca. The students experience the long, difficult and sometimes crowded ride themselves. Obviously, some residents cannot afford to see a doctor. It is for this reason that VAMOS has sponsored a project in natural medicine. Women from the community come to the clinic to learn the skills of massage, reflexology, accupressure and herbal medicine, among others. At this time, they use their knowledge to allay some of the suffering of their own families and friends. One of the women told me that their hope for the future is to establish clinic hours when members of the community could come for treatment. The students listen to a description of the activities of the clinic by the *curandera*, or natural healer, and then meet one on one with the women in order to learn more about the clinic. One year, the students shared their knowledge of oral hygiene, and the Mexican women shared a tangible example of their art, through natural herbs, a foot massage or accupressure treatment.

On another visit to the same clinic, students visited one of the homes in order to meet with the mother of a small child who had been hit by a water truck. Because there is no running water in the *colonia*, water is stored in barrels by each home, which are filled regularly by large tank trucks. One little boy, Fernando, suffered a crushed hand and a missing finger on the other hand when he was hit by one of the trucks. After meeting the family, several students (nursing majors) proposed that they save the mother a trip to the hospital to have the dressing changed by changing the dressing on the boy's hands during our next visit. The students went to a drugstore later in the week and used their Spanish to purchase the necessary supplies. When they returned, the students talked with the mother and son and changed the dressing.

During the visit with the Fernando,s mother, these nursing students had to listen to and understand her story as well as ask the right questions to find out what supplies they would need to purchase. In addition, they had to use their language skills to calm a frightened child who did not quite understand who they were or why they were there. A real situation.

In addition to community service and classroom assignments, students complete other work, such as reading selected articles from a collection placed on reserve. These articles explore the areas of economics, health, art, ecology, history and politics as they relate to contemporary Mexico. As the students read articles which outline conditions and problems they themselves are experiencing, the learning process takes on an added dimension. For example, one of the articles details the problems of borderline malnutrition in Mexico. In addition, the students keep a daily journal which helps them process the new culture that is all around them.

The following examples will show some of their thoughts about their experiences (translated from Spanish):

A sophomore Spanish major wrote:

When we were traveling through the city of Mexico, I was surprised at the people on the street with nothing to do. The people of the city opened my eyes to the problems of the country. I saw an old and poor man with only one shoe. I saw many poor people and workers without employment. I will never take for granted what I have. Sometimes I am jealous of my friends because they have a lot of money and two parents. Now I realize that my mother has given me so many things. I appreciate them a lot and realize how egocentric I have been. . . The natural medicine clinic interested me a lot. The massage was marvelous. The women were very nice. I feel that we took more from them than we gave, I hope they know we appreciated it a lot.

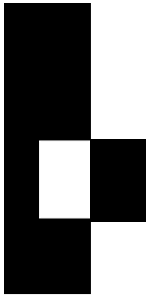
A senior nursing major, who helped to bandage Fernando's hand, comments on one of the trips:

What an experience today was. . . I only wish we could have done something even more productive today. I guess the next time I want to complain about something going wrong I should thank my lucky stars that I have what I have. No matter how bad things get for me it could never compare to how the people in Josefa live. I would love someday to do what Bill and Patty do. I think that it would be a fulfilling way to live my life.

A graduate student reflected that:

When I read “The Golf War” before we left, I thought the story of Tepoztlán was interesting, but it didn’t really mean much to me personally. What the sterile, journalistic article missed was what I saw the day I took the bus to Tepoztlán. The main entrance to the town was barricaded and inside, the town leaders swung in effigy from the town hall. I realized from what I observed and talking with the townspeople, that this struggle between the rich and the poor was the same story echoing all over Mexico from Chiapas to Tepoztlán to Josefa—the need for equitable access to land for basic human survival—much more of a story than a misplaced golf course.

For me, the messages from Josefa are clear. Our students can benefit in deep and lasting ways from such a service-learning experience. Performing community service is a unique method of providing an opportunity for students to benefit someone else while advancing in communication and understanding. In a service situation the exchanges are not formulaic, as students have to express their thoughts and experiences to a native speaker in a community setting. Language students find that they go beyond simply perfecting grammar and pronunciation, to a connection with the human spirit.



The EdLinks University - School Partnership: Preservice Teachers Reading and Writing with Adolescents Labeled “At Risk”

Jennifer A. Vadeboncoeur

Montana State University

David Swingle

Montana State University

In a recent article, Anderson, Blumenfeld, Pintrich, Clark, Marx, and Peterson (1995) called for reform in Educational Psychology courses as a challenge to the paradigm of “instrumental cognitive rationality.” This phrase, coined by Habermas (1984), identifies traditional professional “training” programs as sites where students, like preservice teachers, learn knowledge and skills in a decontextualized setting early in their program. Later, following intensive concept oriented study, they are asked to apply what they’ve learned to real life settings. Students, including preservice teachers, have a very difficult time with this process for several reasons. For example, epistemologically speaking, in many ways knowledge is context bound and applying knowledge to new contexts is extremely difficult. In addition, and further compounding the situation, without the relevancy provided by context, many preservice teachers struggle through their foundational courses, using memorization to survive their tests. However, lacking the links to authentic applications, they are unable to make the appropriate transfer when asked to later in the program.

In response, EdLinks: A University-School Partnership was created by the first author of this paper and the assistant principal of a branch of the local high school (second author) as a mechanism for reform in both teacher education and K-12 schooling. For the EdLinks Partnership, secondary preservice teachers enrolled in the teacher education program at Montana State University tutor and mentor high school students labeled “at risk.” In exchange, the high school students provide the teacher education students with information about their lives which may support, challenge, or contradict the university course content. Through this experience, teacher education students are able to apply, test, and evaluate

theory in practice; they use their experiences working with the high school students as sites to transfer their knowledge of course content and apply it within classrooms and tutoring sessions. At the same time they learn, from the high school students, the current concerns and issues of adolescents. These two components are linked through course assignments which require that the teacher education students reflect upon and merge their experiences with adolescents with theories of adolescent development, teaching, and learning.

The Primacy of Reading and Writing

While the importance of reading and writing is emphasized in the primary grades, by the time students reach high school teachers often assume they've mastered the remarkable art of linking letters and sounds and decoding words. And indeed, for most students, this benchmark has been reached and far surpassed by high school. However there are always some students who learn to read and write later than others, and indeed, a large percentage of the students who apply and are accepted into this high school program have difficulties with reading and writing: From connecting sounds with letters and combinations of letters to the comprehension of text. As a contributing factor, young adults with difficulties deciphering text often feel like they are not smart enough to succeed in school and may also have constructed identities as school "failures."

How the Partnership Works

Preservice educators enrolled in the Educational Psychology and Adolescent Development course at Montana State University are involved in 15 hours of service learning: A balanced approach to engaging in service in the community (in this case, tutoring and mentoring high school students) as a method for better learning the content of their university course (in this case, the psychology of teaching, learning, and adolescent development). The preservice educators tour the program facilities, meet with the administrator, faculty, and students, observe classes in and out of their content areas, and work with teachers and students in a high school program designed to meet the needs of adolescents labeled "at risk." The high schoolers are in a high school program that serves seventy-five secondary students, grades 9-12, who have been labeled "at risk" for reasons such as, homelessness, parental substance abuse, and disengagement from the main high school program. High school students volunteer and apply to the program and are selected from a pool of applicants each quarter. They complete the same graduation requirements and adhere to the same attendance policy as local high school students.

The high school students are tutored in reading and writing across their content areas by preservice educators, each of whom are majoring in a particular content area. Though the focus is on academic tutoring, it is not unusual for the conversation to shift to life outside of school and issues other than mathematics and science. The preservice educators, as university students and adult role models who have survived adolescence, provide encouragement and act as “listeners” as high school students reflect on their experiences. The positive impact of caring adults who are interested in both the education of young people and the young people themselves can not be over stated.

And, as mentioned earlier, this “education and support” shifts reciprocally between the preservice educators and the high school students. Learning the issues at the forefront of the lives of today’s adolescents, and about lives which may be very different from their own, the preservice teachers learn much from the high school students with whom they work. The importance of the lessons taught and advice given by the high school students has a profound influence on preservice educators who may have never known some of the difficulties facing today’s youths.

Since its beginning, the EdLinks Partnership has paired over 230 future educators with high school students in “tutoring / mentoring” relationships focused on reading and writing in the content areas. For the vast majority of the university students, the partnership is “the best” and / or “the most important” aspect of their university course. For the high schoolers, the partnership provides academic support coupled with a caring adult and the chance to share their advice to the next generation of teachers. For the authors of this article, the partnership represents a commitment to the future of education as a whole and a method for eliminating the decontextualization of university coursework.

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