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Curriculum Studies the Creative Student: A Winnicottian Literary Analysis

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CURRICULUM STUDIES THE CREATIVE STUDENT:

A WINNICOTTIAN LITERARY ANALYSIS

by

STEPHANIE LEIGH GRIMES PERRY

(Under the Direction of Marla Morris)

ABSTRACT

Generalizations are made regarding the importance of creativity because creativity is considered to be the hallmark that sets humans apart from other animals. Creativity is a highly coveted gift that allows people the outlet by which to achieve greater joy, fulfillment, and meaning in their lives. However, relatively little is known about the origins of creativity and how to achieve greater creativity. Hoping to improve the quality of life of individuals and society, this dissertation examines the creativity that first springs up between a child and parent.

In researching the relationship between children and parents, I draw heavily from the theories of Dr. Donald W. Winnicott, an English pediatrician and psychoanalyst who lived from 1896 to 1971. Winnicott's experience with children enabled him to develop many innovative and lasting contributions to psychoanalytic theory, including his transitional object and potential space theories, which explain the first creative act of a child using its imagination to create his or her reality.

In addition to Winnicott, I utilize the works of Sigmund Freud, Carl Jung, James Hillman, Marion Milner, Hanna Segal, Michael Parsons, Michael Eigen, Christopher Bollas, and Adam Phillips, who have theorized psychoanalytic principles of creativity and who comprise the first body of literature. The second body of literature that

addresses the curriculum aspects of creativity includes Maxine Greene, Madeleine

Grumet, Marla Morris, Mary Aswell Doll, Deborah Britzman, and Martha Nussbaum.

These authors are directly concerned with sparking creativity and imagination through

literature in students.

Witnessing firsthand transitional phenomena in my own children, I see the

offshoots of transitional phenomena in my language arts classroom. In the curriculum

studies field, much has been written about the relationships between students and

teachers, but much more needs to be explored as to the beginning relationship between

parent and child. Further, the connection between this first relationship between mother

and child and its affects on a child's remaining formal education needs to be examined

more completely. My contribution to the field of Curriculum Studies is to address the

earliest relationship between parents and children and theorize how this initial

relationship affects the continued education of children today. This work examines the

connection between the first transitional phenomena that occur between the child and

parents and the subsequent ability of the child to use transitional phenomena through

language arts to enhance the ability to live creatively.

INDEX WORDS: Adolescence, Alexander Calder, Autobiographical, Childhood,
Creativity, Cultural experience, Curriculum theory, Donald W. Winnicott, Education,
Fantasy, Good-enough mother, Holding environment, Illusion, Infancy, John Dewey,
Literary criticism, Literature, Mothering, New criticism, Parenting, Playfulness, Potential
space, Psychoanalysis, Psychology, Reader-response theory, Schooling, School violence,
Self-formation, Students, Subjectivity, Teaching, Transitional object, Transitional
phenomena.

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STEPHANIE LEIGH GRIMES PERRY

Major Professor: Marla Morris

Committee: John Weaver
                     Daniel Chapman
                     Mary Aswell Doll

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my husband—Greg—and to my children—Ali, Chad, Katie, and Kyle.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The person most responsible for allowing me the freedom to pursue my research and writing is my husband, Greg, who took over a major portion of the household responsibilities for the five and a half years it has taken me to complete my studies. He was also my principal encourager and sounding board off which to bounce ideas.

Next, I want to thank my children, Ali, Chad, Katie, and Kyle, all subjects whom I write about. I would not have the insights into education, creativity, and psychoanalysis if it were not for the continuous daily interaction that I have with these amazing people.

I am grateful to my parents who raised me in a good-enough environment that provided an emotional, physical and an intellectual atmosphere which instilled a desire to discover, to create, and to work hard.

I also acknowledge the unconditional love and support from my sisters, Shane Arther, Jennifer Hall, Rebecca King-Abrahamson, and Laura Jones. They encouraged me by questions and interests in my dissertation. Shane and Rebecca read several portions, offering editorial and literary advice, which I greatly appreciate. My sisters are wonderful examples of creative living discussed in this dissertation.

I thank my uncle, Ross, who had short notice and little time to edit most of my chapters. This was a huge task, and I could not have completed it on time without his assistance.

I am grateful to my good friend, Buffy Jobe, who encouraged me to complete my doctorate. I will always treasure the memories of our weekly drives to Savannah during the three years of course work. She is a shining example of the committed, creative, and caring teacher described throughout this work.

Finally, I wish to thank my students; they have taught me, the teacher.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Lines of Thought Between Education and Psychoanalysis

One of the most important theories of Winnicott's is his transitional object theory, which is based on the idea that the mother provides a substitute object (a pacifier, a blanket, a toy, or some soothing object) which the baby uses in place of the mother. Winnicott emphasizes that the question of who creates the object, the mother or the child, should not be asked or, at least, cannot be resolved. The important point being that the object both existed before the baby discovered it, and, to the baby's point of view, he or she created the object out of necessity. A spin-off of this philosophical dilemma is met every day as people create. The material from which any person creates already exists, but the various ways in which a person uses these materials is infinite. People of any age who use objects that already exist are using an existing object and creating a new object at the same time. The ideas in this work, for example, are ideas I have borrowed from many sources, but my "line" of education joins with Winnicott's theoretical line to arrive at something new—specifically that through careful study of literature and of self, using primarily Winnicott's psychoanalytic theories of transitional objects and potential space, a person can become more integrated with subject matter, self, and community. Werner Heisenberg (in Capra, 1983) reveals that

> it is probably true quite generally that in the history of human thinking the most
> fruitful developments frequently take place at those points where two different
> lines of thought meet. These lines may have their roots in quite different parts of
> human culture, in different times or different cultural environments or different

religious traditions: hence if they actually meet, that is, if they are at least so much

related to each other that a real interaction can take place, then one may hope that

new and interesting developments may follow. (p. 6)

Education, particularly curriculum theory, and psychoanalysis are different lines of

thought that, when joined together, share a common thread—attempting to understand

human beings, their thinking and activities, more thoughtfully and thoroughly. Winnicott

moves me to connect lines of thought between parenting, education, and psychoanalysis.

My committee chairperson, Dr. Morris, asked whether I felt the Curriculum

Studies Program has helped me professionally as a teacher. My answer is that any

exploration that brings one closer to oneself, one's beliefs, one's creative processes, and

one's environment—politically, socially, economically, or otherwise—will improve

one's ability to teach.

Examining education in a democracy, Winnicott (1999) asserts that, "Unless they

[citizens] are self-conscious they cannot know what to attack and what to defend, nor can

they recognize threats to democracy when these arise" (p. 167). Winnicott combined

three crucial elements: self-reflection, education, and democracy, to gauge what makes a

life more meaningful.

Progressive teachers have a "double duty" to perform in a democracy; as John

Dewey (1964) describes it:

The problem for the progressive educator is more difficult than for the teacher in

the traditional school. The latter had indeed to look ahead. But unless his

personality and enthusiasm took him beyond the limits that hedged in the

traditional school, he could content himself with thinking of the next examination

period or the promotion to the next class. (p. 376)

My personality and enthusiasm in finding relevant connections between Winnicott's

psychoanalytic theories and the literature I teach, urges me forward, "beyond the limits

that hedge[s] in the traditional school." I am an elementary and middle school literature

teacher in a curriculum labeled "language arts;" this includes instruction in reading,

writing, grammar, listening and verbal skills. I will use the terms "language arts" to

include skills associated with teaching language arts, and I will concentrate on literature

that is set as curriculum for these grades.

Madeleine Grumet (1988), who is a curriculum theorist, describes curriculum

theory as

a field both theoretical and practical. We study what goes on in schools and draw

on the interpretive disciplines to help us make sense of it. Our work diverges

from the studies of the sociologists, historians, and philosophers of education,

because we expect to use our understanding to influence what goes on in schools

either through teacher education or through curriculum criticism and innovation.

(xii)

The Curriculum Studies Program has propelled me to expand mentally. It has

encouraged me to combine my experiences as a mother and as a teacher with my interests

in psychoanalysis, education, and literature.

Psychoanalysis pertains to education on all levels, including the education of the

young, of adolescents, and of the elderly. It is applicable in the teaching of all subjects.

In this work, however, I concentrate on the insight psychoanalysis permits into the

language arts. Chapter 2, *Curriculum Theory and Literary Criticism*, discusses how psychoanalysis has greatly influenced the educational fields of curriculum theory and of literary criticism as they pertain to teaching language arts. When students write, they expose themselves to their readers. The inverse is also true; when students read some literature, they connect with the author and with the author's psychoanalytic presence. Some writers, whether consciously or not, have great insights into emotional human experiences; this makes their written works optimal to explore psychoanalytic principles. Norman Holland (1990) observes that "writers who could not possibly have read Freud would nevertheless demonstrate in their writings clusters of imagery that are described only in psychoanalysis" (p. 65). In addition to Norman Holland, I examine the literary criticism of Jacques Derrida, David Bleich, and Geoffrey Hartman. I compare curriculum theory and literary criticism by examining the psychoanalytic underpinnings that are present in both fields of reference.

Because I teach literature, it is important for me to examine the historical and present day effects literary criticism and curriculum theory have had on the teaching of literature. A teacher who is knowledgeable about relevant issues and who can derive personal insight—self awareness—is likely to generate more enthusiasm into the classroom, and Dewey (1964) offers further insight regarding self-reflective teachers:

> There is incumbent upon the teacher who links education and actual experience together a more serious and a harder business. He must be aware of the potentialities for leading students into new fields which belong to experiences already had, and must use this knowledge as his criterion for selection and arrangement of the conditions that influence their present experience. (p. 376)

John Dewey's ideas on progressivism and creativity in education are used throughout this work.

The reconceptualization of curriculum studies outlined by William Pinar and practiced by Georgia Southern University professors—Marla Morris, John Weaver, and Daniel Chapman—in many ways, follow John Dewey's challenge to instill subjectivity, relevance and creativity in education. In my particular case, Dr. Morris helped me link my psychotherapeutic experiences with valuable insights it uncovers and which it produces in educational settings.

I entered the Curriculum Studies Program because I can pursue my interests in language arts and psychology. Once in the program, I naturally gravitated to psychoanalytic readings. The significant insights psychoanalysis brings to education is evident in my personal circumstance. In Chapter 3, *The Power of Psychoanalysis*, I discuss the value of psychoanalysis to anyone interested in living a more effective and meaningful life. I also give a brief summary and history of psychoanalysis in order to illustrate how I arrived at my preference for Winnicott's theories with regard to literature.

This work infuses the major contributions of Winnicott throughout all the chapters; however, Chapter 4, *Winnicott and Education*, is dedicated to describing his major contributions that are applicable to the teaching of language arts, mainly his theories of transitional objects and potential space. For example, Holland (in Bleich, 1978) believes that a transitional object, as defined by Winnicott, is the same as a literary work:

> Reading provides us with a potential space in which the distinction between "in
> here" and "out there" blurs as we ingest the external world into our ongoing

psychological processes. The world of things and people presents itself to us as

transitional objects that are both found reality and created symbol. (pp. 112-13)

Language arts lends itself to a more personal response between the student and the

subject matter, and using Winnicott's insights will prompt what Bleich (1975) believes:

Once a person has seen his responses in action in a general way and how they are

constantly functioning [psychologically], literature becomes less a subject he

learns in school than a special opportunity to engage the emotions and thoughts

foremost in his mind. (p. 20)

This route to literature promotes emotional well-being and creative processes in the

individual; thus, the field of Curriculum Studies is illuminated by a Winnicottian

interpretation.

Chapter 5, *Life, Creativity, and the Pursuit of Happiness*, is dedicated to

explaining how creativity can be examined through a psychoanalytic examination of

literature and the relationship of self to literature. I maintain that creativity is analogous

with freedom and central to living a complete life. As Silvano Arieti (1976) espouses,

"*Creativity*, a prerogative of man, can be seen as the humble human counterpart of God's

creation" (p. 4). Some artists may believe in a higher power, feeling that their creativity

comes from a source outside their self, and some artists may reject the idea of God,

feeling that their knowledge of the process of creation gives them a certain freedom and

insight similar to that of a higher power. Marion Milner (1957) explored the interplay

between inner and outer, insisting on a certain amount of rigor and action coming from

within and a certain amount of being still and letting inspiration come from without.

Creativity is so vital to the human condition that Winnicott (2005) expresses that "it is

creative apperception more than anything else that makes the individual feel that life is worth living" (p. 87). Also in Chapter 5, I illustrate the transition from the influence of a well-examined and creative life of the individual to how creativity benefits communities and all humankind. Of this Arieti (1976) writes, "at the same time as it [creativity] enlarges the universe by adding or uncovering new dimensions, it also enriches and expands man, who will be able to experience these new dimensions inwardly" (p. 5).

In Chapter 6, *Teaching: No Greater Calling*, I join curriculum theory, psychoanalysis and literature to discuss their combined impact on education and why I value the teaching profession over all others. Nowhere in education is the conjoining of these three areas more evident than in the psychoanalytic educational theories present in the curriculum studies literature.

Psychoanalysis is a personal way to accomplish giving the utmost meaning to life. Such analysis involves deep reflection into one's own life. Being introspective, I naturally turn to the autobiographical method, an efficient and emotionally in-depth method of conveying my research and experiences and how they intertwine with educational issues.

Autobiographical Roots

My interest in self-examination lead me to psychoanalysis. In addition, my post-high school studies have developed my interest in literature, which lends itself to the psychoanalytic lens. As an undergraduate history major, I found the autobiographical (personal and self-reflective) accounts more illuminating than edited, highlighted historical accounts of events, places, and people. Reading personal historical accounts brings one closer to envisioning and vicariously living through others' experiences.

History is about understanding people and their thoughts, dreams, actions, and ways of life. My need to understand myself, others, and my world led me to studying the literary, historical and psychoanalytic nature of humans, events, and environments.

Many psychoanalytic writers and curriculum writers reveal how parenting brought a new dimension to their professional lives; psychoanalysts Michael Eigen (1999, 2004), Melanie Klein (1986), and Madelon Sprengnether (1993), connect their personal experiences in parenting with their professional experiences in psychoanalysis. Educators, such as Maxine Greene (1997) and Madeleine Grumet (1988), validate my opinions when relating their parenting experiences with how it influences their work in the classroom. Madelon Sprengnether (1993), after reading Winnicott's *Therapeutic Consultations in Child Psychiatry*, which describes the squiggle game that "engages the child's unconscious fantasies" became "struck by this description, in part because my daughter was at an age at which she voiced her fantasies as easily as her more ordinary perceptions about her world" (p. 91). I include these authors' experiences and others throughout this work.

I too rely upon and relate my experiences with my children and my students. Undeniably, raising children has made me a better teacher. It is also true that being trained as a teacher has made me a better parent. Psychoanalyst Michael Eigen (2001) reveals how having children in his mid-forties added depth and realness to his work; he writes that his wife and children "provide not only balance and nourishment, but challenges in daily living that keep me forthright and real" (xi).

Moreover, my participation in psychoanalysis has enriched my ability to understand children; raising my children also sheds brighter light on how my own

childhood has shaped who I am, as my children themselves help shape who I am. I choose to combine my experiences as a mother and as a teacher for personal, aesthetic, and practical reasons. Being a mother is the most fulfilling experience in my life; however, over the years I realize that it is fulfilling because it reflects the nurturing portion of me. Raising children is like a religious experience to me. Many persons experience nurturing and being nurtured without becoming actual parents, as in the case of Winnicott, who never had biological children of his own. I am certain that it is my calling to be a mother and consequently a teacher, with the utmost (human beings) at stake. I carry this calling into the classroom, as do others. In summary, I use autobiography—real knowledge—along with theoretical research to explain the importance of psychoanalysis, mainly Winnicott's theories, in the curriculum field of literature.

CHAPTER 2

CURRICULUM THEORY AND LITERARY CRITICISM

This chapter addresses how curriculum theorists and literary critics view the issue

of self-formation. One must be self-aware in order to relate to others and the world in a

healthful manner. Thus critics and curriculum theorists often employ psychoanalysis as a

framework for research and developing theories. Literary critic Jacques Lacan is known

for his French postmodern approach to literary and psychoanalytic studies. Less known,

but equally important for his humanist lens, is Winnicott, whose "neglect by literary

scholars is all the more surprising since Independent object relations theory can claim to

offer the first satisfactory psychoanalytic account of aesthetics" (Rudnytsky, 1993, xii).

Deriving from the ideas of curriculum theorists who were part of or are familiar with the

"reconceptualization" of curriculum, including James Macdonald, William Pinar, Mary

Aswell Doll, Marla Morris, and John Weaver, I compare how curriculum theorists and

literary critics view the subject of self-formation. It is not surprising that these scholars

conceptualize the subject of self-formation in similar ways since "much research

conducted in the contemporary curriculum field can be characterized as theoretical. At

times this scholarship resembles research done in allied fields, such as literary theory and

criticism . . ." (Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery, & Taubman, 2002, p. 62). James Macdonald (in

Pinar, 1975), to whom Pinar gives founding credit to the reconceptualist movement,

describes the goal of the curriculum reconceptualist movement as follows:

> The purpose of this [reconceptualist] work is not to guide practitioners, as it is
>
> with the traditionalists, and to some extent with the conceptual-empiricists. Nor is
>
> it to investigate phenomena with the methods and aims of behavioral and social

science. . . . The function of this work would appear to be understanding the humanities. The humanities fields that have been influential thus far are history, philosophy, and literary criticism. Hence the dominant modes of inquiry for this group have been historical, philosophical, and literary. (p. 213)

Curriculum theorists are comfortable immersing themselves in the humanities, including and especially, the literary disciplines.

The importance of language and its literary counterparts, including literary criticism, in education cannot be underestimated. According to Bleich (1978), "If we include foreign language and comparative literature departments and their counterparts in education, we discover that the language and literature discipline is the most widespread in all phases of pedagogy and scholarship" (p. 4). Bleich explains why literature and psychological criticism are necessary to pedagogy:

it is not so much that teachers are unaware that writing represents thoughts and feelings, but that the vast majority of teachers are unable to say what the connection is between having thoughts and feelings and writing them down. The personal and emotional connection we have to language and literature is just not consciously explored in our educational system and it works only as a silent justification for the wide professional enterprise of English. (p. 8)

Literary critics and curriculum theorists can apply a psychoanalytic lens to grasp the processes of self-formation. Holland (1990) states that "what the psychoanalysts recovered in adult analyses and what they claimed to have observed in children, I found in literature" (p. 66).

Literary criticism is defined differently depending on who does the defining. Bleich (1978) defines literary criticism as, "simply the organized discussion of literature" (p. 3). Bleich's definition is broad. Holland (1990) describes literary criticism as the use of "a formal psychology to analyze the writing or reading or content of literary texts" (p. 29). Literary criticism, for Holland, uses formal psychology to explain literary texts. Holland also offers that "in the largest sense, all criticism is psychological criticism, since all criticism and theory proceed from assumptions about the psychology of the humans who make or experience or are portrayed in literature" (p. 29). In other words, Holland points out, "when Plato speaks of poetry enfeebling the mind or of poetic creation as divine madness, when Aristotle writes of catharsis or Coleridge of imagination, they are making psychological statements" (p. 29). William Pinar (2004) adds that

> there is, perhaps, no tradition of systematic inquiry into the sphere of the subjective, into the processes of self-formation—and their complex and ever-changing relations to the social and historical—that offers us as many provocative conceptual tools as do the various strands of psychoanalytic theory. (p. 47)

Holland (1990) seems to concur with Pinar when Holland contends that "the psychology that literary critics most commonly use is psychoanalytic psychology" (p. 29). Analyzing literature through a psychoanalytic lens gives us a kaleidoscope view of our complex selves. How curriculum theorists and literary critics view the issue of self-formation supports my main thesis that self-reflection, through a psychoanalytic literary lens, is necessary for a more creatively complete life.

Being able to look at others and ourselves in different ways can lead to a more fulfilling life and is often achieved through the ability to play with different ideas. Jacque

Derrida advances new heights of freedom to play with language. He will toy with a word's origins, history, all present uses of the word, and all possible uses of the word. He also interprets, or critiques whole pieces of literature, such as Rousseau's *Emile*. Derrida writes in a verbose, frustrating, stream-of-conscience manner to demonstrate the many nuances of words, phrases, and whole literary pieces. His writing is difficult to comprehend – a circumstance that makes the very point he is emphasizing – that language *is* difficult and *acts* difficult because it is varied. Language is always changing in time, in place, in persons, and in circumstances. Language is alive and mutates or it dies. Latin is an example of this phenomenon. The message Derrida sends is enough to make even the most erudite person's head spin with confusion. This point about Derrida begs for an example. Derrida (1992) rattles out about literature,

> "What is literature?" or "Where does literature come from?" "What should we do with literature?" These texts operate a sort of turning back, they *are* themselves a sort of turning back on the literary institution. Not that they are only reflexive, specular or speculative, not that . . . (p. 41)

Any word you may pick brings with it a multitude of questions, possibilities, and histories. Thus, a question to answer is what tools to use to study language since the study of language is difficult for many of our students who come from a limited vantage point depending on their cultural, economic, gendered, racial, and personal points of view. Geoffrey Hartman (1981) writes that "in Derrida himself one feels a barely veiled disgust at a *Teufelsdrockhean* excess of words" (xx). While Derrida's writing can challenge and torment even the educated, he makes points that apply to and can be of service to *all*.

In one of his books—this one aptly titled *Acts of Literature*—Derrida demonstrates the fluidity of language. It is not a noun, but rather a verb, continuously moving, changing. Literature *does*, rather than *is*. The writer who writes the *object*, or *thing* called literature, *acts* by writing. The reader *acts* by reading the literature. And the critic *acts* by critiquing the literature. On every level, from the birth of the literature to every single person's *active* interpretation of the literature, it is living and moving in our minds.

Winnicott (1986), like Derrida, dissects and plays with words and brings to our attention the word "CURE" (p. 112). Winnicott explains that words have value, etymological roots, a history, a story, and "like human beings, they have a struggle sometimes to establish and maintain identity" (p. 112). Then Winnicott cautions that a superficial reading of "cure" leads us to understand, at a most superficial level, that the word "cure" points to religious practice or medical treatment where a spirit is exorcized or a disease is destroyed. At the heart of the matter, "I believe cure at its roots means care" (p. 112) writes Winnicott. Here, Winnicott expresses concern that the modern literal meaning of the word "cure" (a final restoration or destruction of a thing) may jeopardize the ongoing, living, *active* role of caring for an individual. Likewise, Martin Stanton (1997) conveys that "Ferenczi's exhortation of trust and honesty in the analyst is aimed at developing a certain mutual recognition of the limitations of any supposed 'cure'" (p. 121). Further, Masud Khan (in Stanton, 1997) reported Winnicott's conviction that "the most important lesson is that one must not try to cure a patient beyond his need and his psychic resources to sustain and live from that cure" (p. 121). Ralph Ellison (in Pinar, 2004) warns us—"For if the word has the potency to revive and

make us free, it has also the power to blind, imprison and destroy" (p. 185). Winnicott, Stanton, Kahn, and Ellison hold a common belief—that one must be careful which words one uses. The word "cure", for example, points to perfection, which is never achieved. Secondly, a cure indicates finality, which is a state of being that people both fight against and move toward most of their lives. Thirdly, attempting a cure can be dangerous if one is not able to accept repercussions from that cure. This word—"cure"—provides an example of the complexity and effects of language.

The term "language arts" used in elementary and middle school evokes feelings that literature is intertwined with writing and art; it is. There is a continuous fluidity between reading, writing, art, and emotions. As a language arts teacher, I must *actively* engage students in the acts of reading, writing, and processing literature. This requires accepting, encouraging, and understanding different perspectives. Derrida (1992) chooses not to define concepts in a concise manner for his readers' and listeners' benefit because of his mastery of language; however, he puts forth an answer to the seemingly simple question "What is literature?" in the following response:

> Literature as historical institution with its conventions, rules, etc., but also this institution of fiction which gives *in principle* the power to say everything, to break free of the rules, to displace them, and thereby to institute, to invent and even to suspect the traditional difference between nature and institution, nature and conventional law, nature and history. Here we should ask juridical and political questions. The institution of literature in the West, in its relatively modern form, is linked to an authorization to say everything, and doubtless too to the coming about of the modern idea of democracy. (p. 37)

Even though Derrida agrees with the freedom that is provided literature and that literature itself, in turn, can provide, he is also aware of the constraints that are put on literature. Derrida suggests the power language has both with individuals and with entire civilizations.

Because I teach traditional literature that includes fables, fairy tales, myths, and legends in the elementary and middle school grades, I am interested in what Derrida says of the consequence of classifying fables and other categories under specific genres. Of this, Derrida (1992) offers:

> Suppose we knew what literature is, and that in accord with the prevailing conventions we classified "Fable" as literature: we still could not be sure that it is integrally literary (it is hardly certain, for example, that this poem as soon as it speaks *of* the truth and expressly claims to state it, is nonphilosophical). Nor could we be sure that its deconstructive structure cannot be found in other texts that we would not dream of considering as literary. (p. 327)

Regarding fables, Derrida explains that one cannot be sure of the original purpose of this genre. The deconstructive structure of poetry may be found in other texts that are not considered literary, which Derrida explains:

> I am convinced that the same structure, however paradoxical it may seem, also turns up in scientific and especially juridical utterances, and indeed can be found in the most foundational or institutive of these utterances, thus in the most inventive ones. (p. 327)

The complexity, variety, and uncertainty of language makes categorizing literature difficult.

I agree that categorizing literature is limiting and imprecise. This is especially true as technology creates different genres at rapidly increasing speeds. For example, I remember hearing author Stephen King (2008) speak on National Public Radio about a new genre of literature called graphic novels. Graphic novels include types of comic strips that may first be published on a Web site and later published in book form. King remarked that he liked this form of literature because it is much easier for a person to publish work in a timely manner. Theoretically, through technological aid, a graphic novel can be published as soon as the idea moves from the author's head to his hands as he types the words on his keyboard to be instantly sent into cyberspace; it is immediate and its relevance is unvarnished. Derrida would enjoy playing with this literary idea!

A key question for educators to ask is how such literary insights might affect the teaching of an increasingly diverse group of students. Such multiplicity necessitates *listening* carefully and *observing* different uses of the students' languages. A thesaurus or a dictionary is an excellent source to test Derrida's method. For example, if one looks up "dingbat" in *The Concise Oxford English Dictionary* (2004), one will find three definitions. The meaning with which I am familiar, because of my cultural background, is the first definition, which is "a stupid or eccentric person." If I lived in Australia, I would be familiar with the second definition: "delusions or feelings of unease, particularly those induced by delirium tremens." Finally, if I had a printing occupation, I might be familiar with the third definition: "a typographical device other than a letter or numeral, used to signal divisions in text or to replace letters in a euphemistically presented vulgar word" (p. 403). So, the same word conveys different meanings to different persons and cultures.

Bleich (1988) in his book, *The Double Perspective*, points out that teachers are forced by federal and state mandated standards to teach in a way that does not allow the voice of the individual and his or her culture and class to come forth; this has the effect of "*fixing* the class roles of teachers and students, which means, *by not allowing the language use in the classroom to change the class*" (p. 15). When Bleich refers to changing the class, he is referring to the classroom, but this idea could be taken further to include changing the economic status, or class. The formulation of a concept (or word) is different in other languages; the process of thought takes a different path in different cultures, families, societies, and languages. Having studied abroad in Spain and having lived in Puerto Rico and St. Thomas, I have come to understand this concept. Teachers should be given the opportunity to allow all voices to issue forth.

The dynamics of the small, privileged, public elementary school where I work are changing rapidly; the Glynn County, Georgia school board has agreed to bus more Hispanic and African American children to St. Simons Elementary every year in an effort to meet the goal of increasing their standardized test scores. The influx of new students is exciting, yet challenging. I see teachers struggling to fit these cultures into our already existing mold—our island status quo—like pouring new wine into old bottles. As a language arts teacher, I try to help these students find their own unique voice. Bleich (1998) declares that "to teach through disclosure, genre, and membership is to recognize that the scenes of teaching are continuously changing in unpredictable ways" (p. 144). Bleich takes literary criticism to a different level by using it to help emancipate the disadvantaged student who possesses a weaker voice, a weaker voice simply by virtue of not speaking well the accepted language. This is also a goal of critical pedagogy.

Critical pedagogists believe there is a psychological rationale for the status quo keeping the disadvantaged learners on the educational periphery. For one reason, to teach marginal students means to teach in a different manner than teachers are used to teaching. It requires teachers to listen to these marginalized students. In our school district, the English Language Learners (ELLs), the students with individual educational plans (IEPs), and students receiving special education services are required and expected to pass the state standardized test by a margin of about 10% higher than expected in recent years. This higher test score expectation forces teachers to focus on teaching the test questions rather than teaching at a slower pace with varied techniques in a more individually based manner. To teach in this manner takes more thought and more time—two precious commodities rarely available in this high-stakes testing era. Instead of taking time to listen to and understand these students with varied backgrounds, I feel like I am attaching bullhorns to their ears into which I am shouting what they need to know, as though this will instill in them the necessary tools and knowledge they will need to succeed in life. At least in language arts, I have more opportunity to communicate with these students than do teachers in other subject areas.

Teaching language arts, I find it natural to combine curriculum theory, literary criticism, and psychoanalysis, which assists me in understanding my students. Using a psychoanalytic lens is useful when analyzing how a person develops, both within and without. According to Holland (1990), literary criticism is mainly derived from three psychologies: "psychoanalytic (Freudian), archetypal (or analytic or Jungian), and cognitive psychology" (p. 30). The most common psychology, though, for studying literature is Freudian psychology.

While there are numerous psychoanalytic position, I draw mostly from Winnicott's theories, which are derived from Freudian psychology. Winnicott's abundant writings and his focus on infants and children, help me relate to and teach young children and adolescents trusted to my charge. Winnicott's theories more directly relate to the familial and educational realities facing children as much today as they did when Winnicott first theorized them. Children enter the classroom with a complex array of issues, so it is not adequate to simply teach a child without understanding and appreciating how he became the individual he is. As Richard Tarnas (2006) reminds us, "Our world view is not simply the way we look at the world. It reaches inward to constitute our innermost being, and outward to constitute the world" (p. 16). One could argue that the world, especially here in the United States, has evolved to include more subjectivity; however, with high-stakes standardized testing driving the curriculum, one could also argue that the attempt at objectivity is winning out.

New Criticism, based on objectivity, became popular in the 1960s as the only means by which to judge literature. This judgment was without any consideration of the psychological underpinnings of the author, the times in which the literature was written, or the times in which the literature was being read and interpreted. This sounds similar to the teaching atmosphere at present, an atmosphere where there is one, clear objective—to score as high as possible on the standardized test—even if this means sacrificing good teaching and sacrificing the individual, subjectivity of each student. Subjective criticism, according to Bleich (1978) is "a way of reaching knowledge of language and literature, of bearing responsibility for it, and of assembling collective interests in the pursuit of such knowledge" (p. 294). Subjective criticism takes into account the individual and the

collective society; this signifies that it can arrive at an infinite number of constructs, not just one narrowly defined by an objective, overriding, outside force. Bleich argues that

> Kuhn's idea that paradigms govern science has led to the suspicion in many and the conviction in some that the notion of objectivity is itself *only* a paradigm, and that consensually validated perception is a more useful way of understanding what is real at this time. (p. 11)

Arguing in favor of subjective criticism, Bleich writes that "the general result of the subjective attitude makes knowledge seem more reliable because it is not conceived as a real object or 'thing' and because it allows each community to authorize its own knowledge with its own experiences" (p. 126). Subjectivity allows individuals to create and voice their individual beliefs. This perspective may seem natural according to the idealized American "maverick," "pioneer," and "cowboy" ideals, but it is in continuous competition with the American "melting pot," "tossed salad," and "democratic" ideals of equality for all. A balance between these two extreme ideals must be struck. At the time of this writing, the pendulum is all the way to one side in favor of objectivity in the form of testing standardization. It is an uphill struggle to prioritize creative subjectivity over objective standardized tests in teaching and assessing literature.

Competition between subjectivity and objectivity is not relegated to education alone. Scientific objectivity and individual subjectivity is an issue that concerns psychoanalysis as well. Winnicott (in Rodman, 2003) declares that

> what a psychotherapist needs is the co-operation of a *not too scientific* doctor. . . . When doing the analysis of a psycho-somatic case I would like my opposite number to be a *scientist on holiday from science*. What is needed is science-

fiction rather than a rigid and compulsive application of medical theory on the

basis of perception of objective reality. (p. 294)

Being a medical doctor, Winnicott was steeped in the tradition of objective science. He, no doubt, recognized the necessity of scientific objectivity and was, in fact, known for his meticulous note taking throughout his patients' analyses. What Winnicott emphasizes by "not too scientific" is that—bottom line—each case and each person is different. A doctor, a therapist, a teacher, a mother, or a social worker must consider each individual person's unique personality and circumstances with which he is dealing as well as his own instincts when deciding an action or treatment. Further, one must have an imagination, an ability to empathize, and an ability to see in a person what many cannot in order to take the best approach toward aiding individuals.

As with many disciplines, it helps to have objective criteria to use for analysis. These objective parameters provide the outline to judge a thing, but at the end of the day, it is the individual who must be judged, and this can only be done on a one-to-one basis. Discovering personal and relevant avenues of teaching literature so that each student discovers the most about himself and his subject is a main aim for curriculum theorists, educators, and literary critics. Consider Martha Nussbaum's (1997) idea that, "if education is understood in the Socratic way, as an eliciting of the soul's own activity, it is natural to conclude, as Socrates concludes, that education must be very personal" (p. 32).

Historical Background of Curriculum and Literary Theory

Pinpointing the specific beginning of literary criticism is difficult if not impossible; however, according to the *Johns Hopkins Guide to Literary Theory and Criticism* (2005), 405 B.C.E., the date that "Aristophanes won the first prize at the Lenaia

. . . for his comedy *The Frogs*, could be chosen as a plausible starting point for the strategies and critical analyses that literary critics use up to this date" (xiii). In order to win a prize, Aristophanes's play must have been judged by certain criteria, and judging is what literary critics do. Literary criticism has evolved in many ways since Aristophanes's *The Frogs*, but one thing has remained the same—judgment on what constitutes good and bad in literature.

One must note that literary criticism in recent years has encompassed anthropology, linguistics, philosophy, psychology, political science, and other disciplines. The aims of literary theory and criticism are many. These include appreciative, archaeological, cultural, descriptive, epistemological, historical, interpretive, metacritical, normative, ontological, performative, psychological, teleological. Hartman (1981) gives the following specific examples of the diversity of literary critics:

> the digressive essays of Coleridge, the freakish style of Carlyle and Nietzsche, Benjamin's packed prose, Bloom's and Burke's conquering chariot of tropical splendors, the outrageous verbalism of Derrida, or the "ridiculous terminology" (Artaud) of psychoanalysis, even the temperate taxonomic inventiveness of A Northrop Frye—these amount to an *extraordinary language* movement within modern criticism. (p. 85)

The above examples help illuminate the diversity of language and its accompanying literary criticism. When one realizes the many uses of literary criticism, one can see that its use can include more diverse peoples as well. Although the roots of literary criticism may be traced back to 405 B.C.E., depending on which source one consults, its popularity has become increasingly rampant since the 1960s.

Curriculum theory and literary theory are both relatively new areas of study. According to the *Johns Hopkins Guide to Literary Theory and Criticism* (2005), "Over the course of the past three or four decades, literary theory and criticism have come to play a central role in the academic study of the humanities and social sciences" (*xiii*). Literary theory, a broader term, includes literary criticism, which focuses on analyzing and judging literature. Literary criticism is a feature of the twentieth century and has become spotlighted especially since the 1960s. Literary criticism, originally used to critique other literary works, has itself become a body of disciplined literary work. Hartman (2007) offers that

> Literary criticism is now crossing over into literature. For in the period that may
> be said to begin with Arnold—a period characterized by increasing fears that the
> critical would jeopardize the creative spirit, and self-consciousness the energies of
> art-literary criticism is acknowledged at the price of being denied literary status
> and assigned a clearly subordinate, service function. There is no mysticism, only
> irony, in the fact that literary commentary today is creating texts—a literature—of
> its own. (p. 213)

Curriculum theory, which encompasses and uses the humanities, has itself become a course of study.

Curriculum theory and literary theory experienced their most significant growth periods in the 1960s and '70s. Much of current curriculum theory originated "out of the collapse of the traditional field, and out of the disputes which accompanied the struggles for influence and power that characterized the decade of the actual paradigm shift, the 1970s" (Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery & Taubman, 2002, p. 43). Curriculum theorists and

literary theorists are often experts focusing in one field of study while also being able to join conversations in varying fields of knowledge. Curriculum theory, with its roots in the humanities, has many disciplines to draw from. The variety that comes from literature, history, sociology, and other areas of the humanities, provides a breadth of freedom from which to work.

The 1960s was significant for its political and emancipation revolution. The simultaneous explosion of literary theory and curriculum theory, both of which were largely fueled by the psychoanalytic theory at that time, helped catalyze this emancipatory culture. In addition to curriculum theory and literary theory, came the widespread dissemination of psychoanalytic theories. In his book *Cosmos and Psyche: Intimations of a New World View*, Tarnas (2006) writes that

> the characteristic innovative modalities of the [psychoanalytic] era were bioenergetic release, emotionally intensive encounter groups and gestalt therapy, physically intensive Rolfing and other forms of somatic intervention, the primal scream . . . all distinctly reflective of the Promethean-Dionysian archetypal complex. (p. 446)

The atmosphere of the sixties lent itself to self-emancipation and self-understanding, as well as understanding and emancipation of and for others. As an educator, I find it important to understand the culture of the sixties and how it has promoted greater understanding and independence among groups and in individuals. Curriculum theory and literary criticism have gone through significant changes along with psychoanalytic theory; all are closely related. Tarnas (2006) explains:

In contrast to the more agonistic spirit of the 1960s, the psychological theories

and therapies that emerged prominently during the later 1980s and 1990s were of

a distinctly different tenor, having such key themes as the care of the soul, the

awakening of the significance of the spiritual dimension of life, the integration of

psychotherapy with meditation and spiritual practice, and the acknowledgment of

the healing potential of numinous and religious experiences. (p. 446)

In just a few decades, people found different uses for psychoanalysis, and this in turn,

affected curriculum and literary theory.

Hartman (1978) believes in the conjoining of literary criticism and

psychoanalysis; "though the physician cannot cure himself," he points out, "the

interpreter can define himself, and he can be asked to consider his own standards and

status in the light of the psychoanalytic precepts he is applying" (xvi). Madeleine

Grumet's (1999) support of literary criticism is evident.

If we consult a text by Harold Bloom or Barbara Johnson we find that its author is

less concerned with gauging the value of a literary work than in providing a

context to help us to make sense of it. Every work of art is a design drawn from

the lived world of its artist. What the critic does is return the work to the world.

(p. 237)

Reading, understanding, interpreting, and judging literature is a way of using

psychoanalysis to better understand ourselves. When literary criticism is combined with

psychoanalysis there are unlimited interpretations, and both literary and curriculum

theorists welcome this variance.

Criticism is a way to study and evaluate literature, which is important because of the growing diversity of literature and the growing number of people who have access to literature. Before literature, philosophy played a more central role in the cultural affairs of citizens. Professor Stanley Aronowitz (2000) suggests that "sometime in the nineteenth century, philosophy was replaced by literature in the quest for national identity" (p. 5), which may explain the need to examine and critique it so closely. In many respects, it is not enough to simply read; Gerald Graff (2003) identifies that

> *talk about* books and subjects is as important educationally as are the books and subjects themselves. For the way we talk about a subject becomes part of the subject, a fact that explains why we have book-discussion groups to supplement solitary reading. (p. 9)

There is a recent surge in the prominence of literature circles, book talks, and other discussion groups on the elementary level, beginning in the first grade. Teaching 4th grade, I periodically encourage literature circles because it causes students to think more carefully and more deeply about what they are reading. The students make connections between their lives and the characters' lives, they make connections between different books they have read, and they make connections between events in the story and events that occur in the world and that have occurred in history. Book groups, once reserved for adult readers, are becoming increasingly prevalent with the youngest of readers.

Interestingly, the United States, unlike Europe, does not have as strong, nor as embedded nationalistic ties, but instead relies on literary canon to support its educational beliefs. Hartman (1981) explains that "there is much less fuss over origins in our tradition, because, in literature at least, no doctrine of purity prevailed long enough to

cause an overestimation of excluded, hence 'lost,' tendencies" (p. 52). Some scholars

prefer a foundational systematic approach to studying literature; however, this is virtually

impossible given the variety of people, institutions, disciplines, and beliefs that are

available at this time. *The Johns Hopkins Guide to Literary Theory and Criticism* (2005)

points out that literary criticism "inevitably reflects the agonistic concerns and polemical

urgencies of its time, a millennial moment when the boundaries of critical theory and

practice are particularly permeable to influences from other disciplines and cultural

hegemonies" (viii). Regarding criticism, Hartman (1981) stresses the importance of

comprehending Derrida's attack on originary thinking by noting that Derrida

> shows that the more we penetrate a text the more its textual and intertextual
>
> weaving appears; and this is not a matter, simply, of coming to know through the
>
> chosen book more and more sources. That would be source study and *explication*
>
> *de texte* all over again. . . . To approach, tendentially, absolute knowledge is also,
>
> as in science, to approach a form of understanding that faces toward skepticism or
>
> unknowingness. . . . Reading should be an *errance joyeuse* rather than the
>
> capitalization of great books by interpretive safeguards. (p. 52)

In other words, according to Derrida, the goal is not to get to the bottom of a text but to

let the text buoy us up and float us along in a free way, rather than anchoring us down

with the goal of knowing a text completely. Derrida causes one to reflect on the danger

inherent with relying too heavily on literary criticism—that danger is losing sight of and

touch with the initial sense and feeling one gets from reading because of too much

analyzing of that reading. There is a similar concern in psychoanalysis when a patient

analyzes his actions to the point of not being able to take any action. This is referred to,

alliteratively, as paralysis by analysis. One must strike a balance between acting freely and reflecting deliberately on those actions.

Taking Winnicott's transitional object theory and applying it to literature contributes to the viewpoint that experiencing and understanding literature is an individualistic phenomenon. Winnicott asks us not to ask the question of whether the transitional object—the stuffed animal, blanket, or doll—existed before the child perceived it or whether the child created it. The same could be asked of literature—for us not to identify too closely from where literature and its meanings comes. To analyze literature too closely sometimes means getting further from the truth—further from subjective truth, which is the most important truth for individuals. To analyze literature too carefully can cause the most important reason for its existence—enjoyment—to vanish by the temptation of analyzing it to a fault. Taking all of the variables into account—the life and circumstances of the author, the times in which the literature is written, and the life and circumstances of the reader—one realizes that a large area of potential space is opened up for experiencing and interpreting literature. Potential spaces created by literature are so varied and individualistic that it is impossible to interpret or critique literature and its effects by any one means.

Analyzing literary theory through a psychoanalytic lens, it becomes a much more individualistic and personal mode of processing and evaluating literature. This is why Winnicott's theory of transitional phenomena, which has universal qualities but is unique for each person, is distinctive in its suitability for studying people's relationships with literature.

Winnicott and Curriculum and Literary Theory

In teaching language arts, I employ literature as a means to guide students to understand themselves, others and their world. Winnicott's theory of transitional phenomena is helpful in understanding how people become attached to an object or idea. Winnicott (2005) briefly describes transitional phenomena as:

> the intermediate area of experience, between the thumb and the teddy bear,
> between the oral erotism and the true object-relationship, between primary
> creative activity and projection of what has already been introjected, between
> primary unawareness of indebtedness and the acknowledgement of indebtedness.
> (pp. 2-3)

When a baby is born, there is only the baby and the mother—a dyad relationship. Then the mother introduces a transitional object, such as a blanket or pacifier which can take the place of the mother. Soon the transitional object (sometimes this is the mother herself) becomes part of a triad relationship, which consists of the baby, the object, and the *relationship* and *imagination* that transpires between the baby and the object.

I maintain a book itself and ideas in a book can become a transitional object or phenomenon for the reader and the stepping-stone to creative thinking. Delving deeper, words themselves are transitional objects. Hartman (2007), writing of literary criticism, asserts that

> Even should we succeed in purging from literary theory all genetic considerations,
> biological or psychological, we would be left with the ambivalence of construct
> forms: hyphenated or blended words or transitional objects or mixed nature

fantasies that, like "critic-scholar," "critic-artist," or "Wolfman" and Centaur, suggest something that cannot be resolved along the axis of equivalence. (p. 225) Getting to the root of things is a difficult, if not impossible task, yet it seems human nature to attempt to do so. It is much like Winnicott asking us not to answer the question of whether the infant finds the transitional object or whether it existed already. It is both.

When asked when a person begins thinking, Emmanuel Levinas (1985) intuitively replies that "it probably begins through traumatisms or gropings to which one does not even know how to give a verbal form: a separation, a violent scene, a sudden consciousness of the monotony of times" (p. 21). Traumatisms, such as neglect and indifference experienced as a child, can be lessened by transitional phenomena. A transitional object substitutes for the parent, and if the trauma is not too severe, then the transitional object works effectively to transition the infant or child from complete dependence to independence and especially to an imaginative life. When a parent reads to her child, she provides beginnings of a transitional object that can substitute for the parent when the child is able to enjoy the illustrations, words, and stories on his own. Sometimes, Levinas asserts, "it is from the reading of books—not necessarily philosophical—that these initial shocks become questions and problems giving one to think" (p. 21). Books can fill holes in our lives by providing the in-between place where our inner subjective imaginings meet our knowledge of outer objective realities. Levinas further explains:

> The role of national literatures is here perhaps very important. Not just that one
>
> learns words from it, but in it one lives "the true life which is absent" but which is
>
> precisely no longer utopian. I think that in the great fear of bookishness, one

underestimates the "ontological" reference of the human to the book that one

takes for a source of information, or for a "tool" of learning, a *textbook*, even

though it is a *modality* of our being. (pp. 21-22)

I take it that Levinas means that books comprise people as much as people are

responsible for making, or writing books. Levinas explains a difficult concept, one that

ties in with Winnicott's transitional phenomena and supports my assertion that books and

their accompanying literature are some of the most important transitional objects of our

lives, transitional phenomena that begin in infancy and continue throughout a lifetime.

When speaking of transitional phenomena it is helpful to identify the three areas

of living. The first fundamental area, according to Winnicott (1992), is that of *inner*

reality:

the individual psychic or inner reality, the unconscious if you like . . . The

personal psychic reality is that from which the individual 'hallucinates' or

'creates' or thinks up' or conceives of. From it dreams are made, though they are

clothed in the materials gathered in from external reality. (p. 57)

The material from which one creates already exists, but the individual creation is unique

to the person, times, and circumstances of the person doing the creating from within. The

second area of living that Winnicott writes of is *external reality*, "the world that is

gradually recognized as NOT-ME by the healthy developing infant who has established a

self, with a limiting membrane and an inside and an outside. The expanding universe

which man contracts out of, so to speak" (p. 57). As an infant or child grows and

matures, it becomes more aware of its surroundings and can relate to and reach out

toward outer reality.

Developmentally, first comes inner reality, then external reality. Now we come to the significance of transitional phenomena, which points to a third area, and Winnicott calls this third area *cultural life* – "But I think we really do find a third area, an area of living which corresponds to the infant's transitional phenomena and which actually derives from them" (p. 57). Inner reality and external reality join together to comprise a third area that Winnicott calls cultural life. Winnicott explains more thoroughly in the following:

> If it is true that the transitional object and the transitional phenomena are at the very basis of symbolism, then I think we may fairly claim that these phenomena mark the origin in the life of the infant and child of a sort of third area of existing, a third area which I think has been difficult to fit into psycho-analytic theory which has had to build up gradually according to the stone-by-stone method of a science. (p. 57)

If transitional objects and phenomena are the basis of symbolism, then one can surmise the importance of ensuring a good-enough environment for infants and children to be raised in. And if the beginning symbolism, derived from transitional phenomena, is the beginning of a rich cultural life (the third area), then one can depend upon the importance of a continuing good-enough environment for children, youth, and adults to develop cultural interests. The health of society depends on the success of developing this third area of cultural life.

One can see the implications this has on educational life. I am fearful that the lifeless standardization that is enveloping the schools nationally and locally will snuff out cultural interests. Much like Winnicott's third area is the balance of inner and external

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reality, schools must balance the inner longings of individual students with the external demands of a pluralistic, democratic society that prescribes a one-size-fits-all mold of objective standards that is the same for every child.

As a language arts teacher and a mother of four, I witness the continuation and the extension of the transitional object and phenomena into reading, writing, and verbal/listening skills. With each of my own children, Ali, Chad, Katie, and Kyle, I can identify the time when a book took the place of their first transitional object. This movement was in-between their dependence on an actual transitional object—suckee blanket, thumb, pacifier, and Nemo comforter—respectively, for each of my children and their developing cultural interests, respectively—art, music, dance, and the jury's still out on my five year-old. As a mother, I can respectively relate how their gradual interest in story books has permitted them to relinquish a need for their original transitional object. As my children have grown older, I have also seen them become more immersed in an interesting novel or subject. Presently this is their third tier cultural life. My oldest daughter is an architectural student at Georgia Institute of Technology. I recognize how this interest consumes her in a very positive manner. My 17 year old son plays in a rock band with friends. This is his sphere of cultural life. When I see him read, which admittedly is not often, he is reading about the life and the craft of musicians. I am fortunate this year to witness my 11 year-old daughter finally become enthralled with reading. She is a member of a school's reading club, and after she reads eight or more books, she may compete in a yearly contest that is sponsored by our school libraries.

Through my local school system, I received a children's book from Georgia's Governor, Sonny Perdue (2008), and on the inside cover he writes that "as parents and

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grandparents, we will always treasure the fond memories of reading books with our children and grandchildren. Language-rich experiences such as reading together at home help children begin the process of becoming successful, lifelong learners." Reading together is one of the predominant activities needed to enhance the relationship between parent and child. I was pleased to know that our community is raising money to provide at least 20 books to children in our county who do not have any books in their homes. With the birth of each of my last two children, I received a free children's book and along with it coupons to receive a book every month for the first year of the child's life. I suspect and hope that our society is recognizing that reading is vital to the well-being of its people.

I have noticed that McDonald's Happy Meal toys are sometimes replaced by soft-covered books. The last box of Cheerios I bought had a book as the prize inside. This indicates two points. First, companies recognize the value of books, and second, that many kids enjoy receiving these treats as a happy change from toys that will be quickly forgotten and discarded, as happens with my younger children.

The consequence of a poor or a non-existent transitional object is the child's limited ability to navigate the third area of existence – that of cultural life. Winnicott (1992) sets out that, "in so far as the infant has not achieved transitional phenomena I think the acceptance of symbols is deficient, and the cultural life is poverty-stricken" (p. 57). Melanie Klein (1986), from whom Winnicott derived much insight, declares that "in children, a severe inhibition of the capacity to form and use symbols, and so to develop phantasy life, is a sign of serious disturbance" (p. 52). There is a definite cause-and-effect relationship that occurs from infancy forward. I propose that is why Winnicott

emphasizes giving mothers the time, the space, and the means to raise their children well. When these elements do not occur, psychologists and social workers must necessarily intervene with hopes of promoting the best parental-child relationship possible.

In my school, I detect the absence of these elements with the consequence of students whose capability of dwelling in the third cultural area is very fragile. These students lag behind in reading, in writing, and in other disciplines. They struggle with academics, and they often struggle socially and emotionally. I asked my students to bring in their first favorite story book they remember cherishing. Those who brought in their books had touching stories to share about how their parents read these books to them and what these loving memories meant. Predictably, these were the students who enjoy reading; consequently, they read and write well. This experiment illustrates how crucial it is for teachers to get these "impoverished" students hooked on reading and hooked on enjoying a particular subject or genre.

In the following, Winnicott describes a personal experience of enjoying a cultural activity. Winnicott (1992) calls himself "high-brow" because he enjoys a Beethoven string quartet:

> This quartet is not just an external fact produced by Beethoven and played by the musicians; and it is not my dream, which as a matter of fact would not have been so good. The experience, coupled with my preparation of myself for it, enables me to create a glorious fact. I enjoy it because I say I created it, I hallucinated it, and it is real and would have been there even if I had been neither conceived of nor conceived. (pp. 57-58)

Certainly, it is this ability to create, to be creative, and to enjoy creativity that makes humans distinct from most animals. Any glitches along the way, especially in one's first relationship with the primary caretaker, usually the mother, can inhibit one's subsequent abilities to enjoy a fulfilling cultural life.

Even though Winnicott admits to being "high-brow" in his cultural taste for Beethoven, this does not preclude the enjoyment of other cultural arts tastes. Just because my son prefers rock over Beethoven this does not mean he possesses a weak ability to enjoy the high-brow cultural life. Interestingly, he has modernized Beethoven's 5th Symphony with distortion and whammy bar techniques—Beethoven a la Van Halen. Part of my nuclear family's tradition is to attend rock concerts where we enjoy the musicianship and the atmosphere of creativity. If one looks into different subcultures and into different individual family units, one will find an infinite variety of cultural enjoyments.

Hartman (1978) connects literature and literary criticism with Winnicott's transitional phenomena by explaining that

> the reference or aim of his [the interpreter's] work cannot be purely outward, directed exclusively toward the object of description; ever subtler notions of transference and countertransference, of hermeneutic complexity when it comes to discerning what is literal and what is figurative, as well as a better knowledge of the role of 'transitional objects,' put a new burden on the *interpreter's* language. The language of interpretation realizes it must share bed and board with the object language. (xvi-xvii)

With the advent of literary criticism comes the shared relationship between the creator of a literary work and those reading, interpreting, and critiquing the work. One could say that a third area of literary criticism is created that joins the outer literary work with the inner subjective interpretation of that work.

Winnicott's potential space is bound between the subjective and objective, between the inner and outer. The literary critic finds potential space between the literature being examined, the literary criticism directed toward that object (the literature), and the psychology of the persons who are engaged in the writing and in its interpretion. A brief explanation of transitional phenomena is provided in this chapter, and a more in-depth examination of transitional phenomena is contained in Chapter 4.

New Criticism Versus Rosenblatt's Reader-response Theory

New Criticism refers to the period of time in the 1970s when objective criticism dominated subjective interpretations of literature. New Critics believed in judging literature purely on its literary elements with no consideration to the writer's life, the period of authorship, or the reader's interpretations. With regard to literary theory, the New Critics do not condone connecting books or literature with the person reading, and they likely would not admit any connection with a transitional object. The New Critics, according to Lindy Holloway (2004), believed that "a reader could best understand a literary selection by carefully reading it without allowing the author's life, culture, philosophy, or political inclinations to influence the reading. They pushed for making literary criticism more scientific" (p. 70). Unfortunately, the more "scientific" one makes a concept, process, or idea, the more removed its importance to individuals becomes.

Louise Rosenblatt, developer of the reader-response theory, was instrumental in helping students derive optimum meaning from literature and applying their own interpretations in their personal and educative lives. Holloway notes that, "When Rosenblatt (1938/1995) wrote *Literature as Exploration* she was swimming upstream against the strong influential tide of the New Critics who staunchly defended one correct interpretation of a piece of literature" (p. 71). Rosenblatt encourages readers to bring their inner subjectivities to the outer objectivity of the written word, and in so doing, readers found an intermediate area in which to explore themselves and the literature. Jacques Derrida (1995) admits that "no text opens itself immediately to everyone. The 'everybody' our censors talk about is an interlocutor determined by social situation, often that of a minority, by academic training, by the state of culture, of the media, and of publishing" (p. 176). Derrida focuses on influences that come later in a child's life, such as education, media, and culture. Rosenblatt would likely understand how persons' interactions, or as she puts it, "transactions" with literature are forms of transitional phenomena. The first relationship between an infant and a parent determines the infant's interaction with a transitional object. Similarly, parents' attitudes about literature also help determine a child's relationship with literature.

The New Critics have attempted to place a moratorium of sorts on literature, limiting its use and meaning. Holloway (2004) further emphasizes that

> many students see education as the great equalizer, but once they begin to think
> critically they will realize that education will not level the playing field because
> education has not been provided equally to all students, an important point
> Jonathan Kozol (1991) pointed out in his book, *Savage Inequalities*. (p. 77)

This is especially true if one applies the New Critics' theory of one-size-fits-all interpretation of literature. With Rosenblatt's reader-response theory, which emphasizes readers' responses, involvement, and interpretations of pieces of literature, multiple meanings are available for more people thus allowing readers to transform in ways that education should and can transform. Holland (1990) describes the myriad of themes that reader-response encompasses:

> In short, reader-response criticism touches on a variety of themes in third-phase psychoanalysis: personal identity; the feminist critique of psychoanalysis; the unconscious use of linguistic codes (Lacan); the spectator or the "future" of cinema; cognitive science, notably personal styles of knowing and perceiving; and the Winnicottian blurring of boundaries between self and other, in there and out there. In many ways, reader-response criticism is, in the world of literary criticism, the most practical embodiment of the basic psychoanalytic insight that all knowledge is personal knowledge. (p. 58)

Holloway (2004) espouses that "teachers not only need a knowledge of literature but also an understanding of their students in order to select literary works to which students will be receptive" (p. 266). Teachers can gain greater insights into themselves and into their students through a psychoanalytic understanding of literature and human development through this fertile interconnectedness.

Holloway (2004) describes aptly the influence a teacher wields in the following passage:

> I have learned that as a teacher I have the power to plant seeds of thought, examination, and reflection in my students. Some of the seeds may fall on rocks,

some among the thorns, but some may fall in fertile soil and mature to grow

abundantly. Although I can plant the seeds and cultivate them over nine months, I

may never witness ways in which they are harvested. (p. 271)

Unlike the New Critics who put a strict code of interpretation on literature, Rosenblatt,

Holloway, and like-minded educators allow for many interpretations of literature that aid

in self-formation and self-reflection. Perceptive teachers see what tools students bring *to*

literature and see what students get *from* literature. This is the in-between space that is

unique to each person. Transitional phenomena allow a person to connect a part of his

inner imagination to an outside reality, and literature provides an optimum medium for

this growth and transformation to occur.

Understanding Self Through Others

The philosophical questions "Who am I?" and "Who are you?" can be discussed

for an entire lifetime and one may never learn all the answers; yet, these are still the most

important questions to periodically keep asking ourselves as we change, mature, and

move throughout our lives. It is difficult to grasp that every choice we make brings us

closer to one thing and further from another. Some choices are conscious choices and

some are not. What impels us to make certain choices? Michael Parsons (2000) believes

that "an important aspect of our identities lies in how we relate to the people we did not

become" (p. 3). Acknowledging this philosophy forces us to view ourselves—

subjectively and objectively—and to question the parts of our being that we do not

particularly like. Importantly, when we can take an honest look at ourselves and see

ourselves from a different paradigm, we have greater power to change what we do not

like in ourselves and to move toward the person we do want to be.

We cannot meaningfully ask ourselves who we are without asking who the other is; and this allows us to discover ourselves in relation to our environment. Conversely, if successful, it enables us to see others objectively-subjectively. That is, we can never perceive a person through that person's own eyes, but a true desire to know and to understand the other will get us as close to a bird's eye view than any other way. A bird can fly over a large territory and view many different terrains as well as hover close to a particular scene. Thus, a bird's eye view is advantageous to discovering terrain other than ourselves alone, but when we can view others in a deeper way, we can also discover more about ourselves.

Harper Lee's (1960) novel, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, is a mesmerizing example of two children, Scout and Gem who, with help from transitional objects, such as coins and a wood carving, provided by town recluse Boo Radley, transform to see life through the eyes of Boo. Boo and the children's father, Atticus Finch, are Scout and Gem's greatest teachers, providing them with opportunities to mature into self-understanding individuals capable of understanding others. Scout and Gem gain understanding that killing a mockingbird is a sin because all a mockingbird does is sing its heart out for one's enjoyment. They learn to respect all souls no matter what their differences, and this is an honorable goal for all people—to see others as closely and truthfully as possible. Jessica Benjamin (1998) describes the quality of being able to put ourselves in another's place as the "the intersubjective relationship in which one goes beyond identification to appreciate the other subject as a being outside the self" (xiii).

We can view ourselves from a different perspective when we contrast ourselves

from others. Dennis Sumara (1996) explains the cycle of needing others in order to see

ourselves in a brighter light:

Often when in the presence of another person we experience ourselves as viewed

from the perspective of the other. According to Sartre, this is the experience of

being judged, of being endowed with a meaning which is not of our own making.

We are no longer a being for ourselves but, instead, a being for the other. (p. 54)

Two advantages arise from observing others—we come to know the other and we

discover ourselves in a different light. Sumara continues:

As we watch others operating in the world we do not merely learn about them, but

about the way they perceive world. We see through others aspects of the world

that we are unable to experience ourselves. The relations among ourselves,

others, and the world that we share are of being and not knowing. The way we

are with each other is more fundamental than what we *know* about each other.

(p. 54)

Relationships are continuously moving and changing, thus, it is necessary to often revisit

and re-evaluate relationships. One can learn more about oneself and others if time is

taken to cultivate relationships.

Educators Martha Nussbaum and Maxine Greene emphasize that literature and its

readers have a duty to broaden their understanding of the other and to make a positive

difference in themselves and in their world. One of psychoanalyst Marion Milner's

(1981) main goals in life was "to be so harmonious in myself that I can think of others

and share their experiences" (p. 37). When I understand myself and when I accept

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myself, I like myself better; when I like myself better, I can reach out and relate to others with deeper empathy.

Empathy is a necessary quality to possess when living and working with others. This is especially true of teachers, health care workers, and social workers. Working with severely disturbed adolescents, Barbara Dockar-Drysdale (1990) utilized Winnicott's theory of primary experience. She admitted that "it is necessary to be able to feel that one is in the child's shoes, not merely to be able to understand what the child may be experiencing" (p. 1). Regarding writing, educator Celia Hunt (2009) draws attention to many writers whose "self-characters are flat or lifeless . . . In short, they haven't been able to bring their self-on-the-page to life" (p. 1). Hunt proposes that,

> for me, engaging in the creative process involves developing a reflexive or
> metaphorical relationship with oneself, and sometimes people don't have
> sufficient inner freedom for reflexivity to work properly, or they simply haven't
> learned how to do it. (p. 1)

This is what Marion Milner was constantly striving for in her professional psychoanalytic life, in her personal life, and in her attempts to paint. Hunt continues, "In order to do this work in an educational (as opposed to a therapeutic) context, it is crucial to create a safe-enough learning environment, with experienced facilitators, and to select the students carefully" (p. 3). My language arts classroom, especially in middle school, had an element of this personal therapeutic approach. When reading a particular novel, such as Jerry Spinelli's (1990) *Maniac Magee*, students can respond to the main character's predicaments—lacking parental figures, lacking self-confidence, and lacking physical necessities. All of us at some point lack some essential or some highly desired attribute.

Using techniques similar to Rosenblatt's reader-responses, students, through writing, make personal connections to the characters and situations in the story. Psychoanalyst Michael Eigen (2004) explains that

> A writer's work holds not only his own voice but also the voices of others he writes to and the voices of others (for example, other writers) he hears or senses as he writes. One writes to/with others who are not there. Writing is longing. One writes with a voice more intimate than one's own. Writing is fulfillment, plenitude: lack and overflow. In writing one is closer to the Other (as inner presence) than one ever will be in real life. (p. 183)

To think about one's predicament is passive compared to writing about one's predicament. Writing forces one to pinpoint one's needs and desires and makes it more likely that one will draft a plan of action to coping with deficiencies. The first step to overcoming our deficiencies is to first identify them. Once identified, they can be analyzed and dealt with. Highly therapeutic power comes from first identifying our deficits and then changing our circumstances.

Therefore, schools should aim for contact and communication in addition to standards. The enlightened teacher is to help students, particularly adolescents, find and create themselves. To achieve this, it is essential first for teachers to realize, as Peter McLaren (1995) argues, that "teachers have a mandate to understand their own process of identity formation as well as those of their students. And in order to do this they need to at least have a rudimentary understanding of how their subjectivities are produced" (p. 151). Educator Parker Palmer (1998), in his book *The Courage to Teach*, agrees when he says,

My ability to connect with my students, and to connect them with the subject,

depends less on the methods I use than on the degree to which I know and trust

my selfhood—and am willing to make it available and vulnerable in the service of

learning. (p. 10)

The field of education is so inundated with administrative demands on teachers, that it

becomes more essential for teachers to maintain a good sense of selfhood in order to

survive these demands. Stuart Hall (1996) offers good advice:

You have to be sure about a positioning order to teach a class, but you have to be

open-ended enough to know that you are going to change your mind by the time

you teach it next week. As a strategy, that means holding enough ground to be

able to think a position but always putting it in a way which has a horizon toward

open-ended theorization. (p. 150)

This means having a detailed-enough lesson plan but maintaining the ability to be

flexible and change a plan as greater learning opportunities arise during the course of

open-ended teaching. In geometry, a line segment is closed, but a line can continue in

either direction indefinitely thus opening up much potential space in which to maneuver.

Additionally, a line is solid and straight, but it allows freedom of movement in

any direction along the line. Kobena Mercer (in McLaren, 1995) uses the term

"solidarity," not to imply that everyone thinks alike, but "it begins when people have the

confidence to disagree over issues of fundamental importance precisely because they

'care' about constructing a common ground" (p. 223). Like dialogue between Palmer

and his students, McLaren recommends sharing a "knowing wink" with students that

"effectively says: 'We know there are multiple ways to make sense of the world and we

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know that you know, too. So let's knowingly enter this world of multiple interpretations together and take pleasure in rejecting the dominant codes'" (p. 139). It takes courage to show students who we inwardly are and to lower our facade because deep down we may prefer to be popular with the youth and we fear their judgment. However, if we follow the advice of Palmer (1998) to "learn more about who we are, we can learn techniques that reveal rather than conceal the personhood from which good teaching comes" (p. 24) and turn to our students and say,

> There are great gaps between us. But no matter how wide and perilous they may be, I am committed to bridging them—not only because you need me to help you on your way but also because I need your insight and energy to help renew my own life. (p. 49)

Clearly, McLaren and Palmer agree in concept that people use each other as stepping stones all their lives just as the infant uses the mother, other caretakers, and transitional objects in the beginning.

Also, David Abram's book, *The Spell of the Sensuous*, addresses humankind's loss of contact with things non-human. Abrams (1996) writes, "today we participate almost exclusively with other humans and with our own human-made technologies" (ix) and he warns that "it is a precarious situation, given our age-old reciprocity with the many-voiced landscape" (ix). In particular, "we still *need* that which is other than ourselves and our own creations" (ix), mainly other earthly animals, humans and non-humans, and landscapes. The Other that we must stay in touch with includes our natural environment and animals in addition to other people. David Jardine's (1998) book, *To Dwell With a Boundless Heart*, invokes a deeply contemplative and peaceful existence

and one in which I strive to give myself and those people close to me, including friends, family, students, and colleagues. Jardine, like Abrams, emphasizes the need to be aware of our natural environment and be as respectful to our environment as we are to ourselves and other people.

An inwardly twist to the outer is that in psychoanalysis, the Other can be our self if we have become disconnected with our self, and we cannot truly connect with anyone else or know others until we connect with and know ourselves. Much of our bodies is foreign to us. Freud (in Laplanche, 1999) maintains that "memories appear to bi-furcate: one part of them is put aside and replaced by fantasies; another accessible part seems to lead directly to impulses" (p. 64). We as teachers and individually can reach back to our earliest experiences and memories through literature. Literature can wake the sleeping soul and also put us in touch with our bodily remembrances.

Beginning with Descartes, there has been a tendency in Western cultures to separate body from mind. There is also temptation to negate the importance of the soul. Since no one can say for sure whether or not humans have a soul, some discount the existence of a soul. The other consideration is that, even if one believes in a soul, one is not sure from where a soul comes or in which places a soul resides. All these factors— disconnectedness or disbelief in our natural environment, in our fellow earthly animals, and in ourselves (including our souls)—amounts to less ability to know ourselves and others. Literature and psychoanalysis can help us find our way back to ourselves.

To me, one of the highest achievements of humankind is to know and to reasonably understand people's actions, and strive to create a safe environment for self-transformation. Winnicott was a rare individual who saw the motives behind his patients'

behaviors; he was sympathetic and empathetic—tools he used to analyze his patients. He believed that if psychoanalysis failed, it was the analyst's failure, not the patient's.

Winnicott once ashamedly admitted that he regretted that earlier in his career, he prematurely offered an interpretation of his patients' thoughts instead of waiting for his patients to discover the answer themselves. An effective psychoanalyst arranges a consistent time, setting, and behavior, which is similar to limited boundaries set for a child. Winnicott relates (1996) that this form is

> the same as form in art. Religious people of Christian persuasion use the phrase, w*hose service is perfect freedom*, which is the same as the sonnet form accepted by Shakespeare or Keats which allows of spontaneous impulse, and the unexpected creative gesture. (278)

It is appropriate, given Winnicott's spontaneous personality, that he should compare his every day, life's work to art. It is also appropriate that Winnicott, always understating his ability and encouraging his clients' abilities, should write the following:

> This is what we wait for and value highly in our work, and we even hold back our own bright ideas when they come, for fear of blocking the bright ideas that might come from the child or adult patient. (p. 278)

A good analyst, like a good teacher, allows the patient to discover for himself, and even when it is the analyst who has helped facilitate this discovery, it is wiser that the credit be given to the patient because it will empower the patient in the future.

When asked how their ideas come, artists sometimes explain an interesting contrast between hard work and then sitting still, doing nothing, and letting the ideas come. I believe this is also what Winnicott means when he suggests "holding back bright

ideas" and letting the idea come first to the patient himself. Sometimes when we force an idea on ourselves or on someone else we preclude the spontaneous ideas that may issue forth and that may be closer to the mark than an idea that comes by force.

Generally, people want to make their own decisions. When one tries to control another and dictate behavior, the focus of the control usually resists and if it continues, rebels vehemently. It is much wiser to give elbow room so that a person can make the decisions and perhaps experience the satisfaction and dignity of knowing that the decision was of his own volition. This approach is validated by Winnicott. He did not make decisions for his patients; he was confident in his patients' abilities to learn for themselves of themselves.

This wait-and-see approach, directing by suggestion, is a necessary quality for teachers to possess. Part of the problem of the standardized testing culture is that teachers must teach the standard that the students must know, and the standards may not be what the students *want* to know. Standards-based teaching allows little room, if any, for teachers to coax and to learn where the students' natural interests and talents lie. The spontaneity of teaching and learning is severely affected by focusing narrowly on standards education.

The question of "Who am I?" can be answered from different perspectives. We may have a basic inherent personality before we are born, as James Hillman (1996) sets forth in his acorn theory. The acorn theory suggests that we are born into this world with a predisposition to a certain personality. Our inherent personalities then may develop on the basis of our environment, or perhaps our personalities are a combination of innate traits, genetic predispositions, *and* environment. Psychoanalysis is effective in

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determining the bases of our personalities. Winnicott believes that the child-parent relationship, particularly the mother, is the most important determining factor of a child's personality and thus contributing to a child's health and ability to imagine and to create. The question of original personality is quite complicated. As the following explanation from Winnicott (in Maffei, 2001) suggests, while psychoanalysts

> try to reduce everything to instinct, the analytical psychologists reduce everything to this part of the primitive self which looks like environment but which arises out of instinct (archetypes). We ought to modify our view to embrace both ideas, and to see (if it is true) that in the earliest theoretical primitive state the self has its own environment, self-created, which is as much the self as the instincts that produce it. This is a theme which requires development. (p. 195)

Reflecting upon my four pregnancies, I knew and felt each of my child's personalities. I felt their personalities inside my womb. I find it interesting that most theories on personality come from men–who lack the experiences of carrying a child for nine months and then giving birth. Even though my children had definitive personalities at pre-birth, I accept that they have been subsequently shaped by external connections, including my post-birth mothering.

Because Winnicott's mother-object and transitional object dominates initially, and one needs to balance discovery of self, diversity is necessary. It makes sense to have more male teachers in the younger grades and more women teachers in the higher grades to spread the wealth of wisdom that comes from both genders. Bleich (1988) suggests that "the opposition between the classroom and the academy could, conceivably, be resolved by encouraging more men to become elementary schoolteachers and more

women to be administrators" (p. 26) which would assist in teaching literacy in varied, individual, and collective situations. This would allow more representation of different personalities.

A person is exposed to many other people, places, environments and situations throughout his or her lifetime. All of these contribute to who a person is. While our core personalities are formed at a very young age, our personalities change and evolve throughout our lives. We must, at some point, consider both the sociological and psychological factors that shape a person's personality or identity. Ann Haas Dyson (1997) uses Mikhail Bakhtin's sociological view by writing that "our texts are formed at the intersection of a social relationship between ourselves as composers and our addressees and an ideological one between our own psyches (or inner meanings) and the words, the cultural signs, available to us" (p. 4). The intersection between "Inner Meaning" and "Available Signs or Words," which draws on the "dialogic vision of language developed by Bakhtin" (p. 5) is similar to the intermediate area of the transitional object which stands between inner subjectivity and outer objectivity. Vygotsky's view, according to Dyson (1997), is that "child speakers appropriate words that name an experience physically shared with others, signs that later become a means for inner thought, for 'inner speech'" (p. 17). What Vygotsky puts forth is similar to Winnicott's transitional object theory.

In health there is little difference between personality and identity; persons identify themselves according to their personality. However, in illhealth persons might identify themselves according to how they *wish* to be identified, which may not be faithful to their personality. Society can be considered the structure that will help shape a

person while he or she retains his or her basic personality or agency. Lacanian terminology "attempts to grasp the paradoxical relationship between 'structure' and 'agency' rather than attempting to dissolve either one or both of them and in which the subject is 'the empty place in the structure'" (Davis, 2003, p. 81).

Always one must be aware of different paradigms, but one always comes from a particular paradigm. William F. Pinar (2004) writes that "subjectivity is cultural, and the cultural is subjective" (p. 129). Winnicott's paradigm derives from his experiences in pediatrics, psychoanalysis, and his own childhood. He emphasizes that he always looks at a person from the point of view of what the first relationship was like with that person and the parent. While Winnicott was an expert in pediatrics and psychoanalysis, he often began his talks by admitting limited knowledge compared with the audience he was addressing (e.g. mothers, nurses, social workers), and he enjoyed the opportunity that his talks gave him to learn more about different disciplines and for other disciplines to learn more from him.

Winnicott believed it beneficial to have a theoretical framework from which to operate, and that it is important that one know what theoretical framework is being employed to view the world. Central to Winnicott's (1990) framework is his admission: "I never think of the state of a person here and now except in relation to the environment and in relation to the growth of that individual from conception and certainly from the time around the birth date" (p. 144). In other words, the birth and childhood of a person is so important that Winnicott always got to know a patient through knowledge of his or her earliest experiences. This is a big part of self-identity. Winnicott remained straightforward about his paradigm throughout his career, and this was one reason why

professionals from many disciplines respected and sought his advice. Winnicott was sure

of himself and well grounded; this enabled him to open his mind to others and their ideas.

Understanding one's self first and understanding other people's basic personality

is the first step in understanding the world around us. This is a beginning point. First

look inward. Then look outward—toward our families, communities, society, the nation,

and the world. What we will find then is that the world around us has helped to shape

who we are. We must examine both ourselves and others and the society and world

outside ourselves. Grumet (1988) explains that "curriculum theorists have worked with a

dialectical model of the way that curriculum mediates between person and world" (xiii).

As Dietrich Bonhoeffer (in Palmer, 1998) declares, "Let [the person] who cannot be

alone beware of community. Let [the person] who is not in community beware of being

alone" (p. 65). Working in the field of social work, Jeffrey Applegate and Jennifer

Bonovitz (1995) address Winnicott's ability to navigate between the person and

environment.

> What Winnicott captures best are the developmental and clinical dynamics of the
>
> ongoing person-environment dialectic. . . .Winnicott focused his inquiry on the
>
> dialectic between people's experiences of psychological separateness from and
>
> merger with others. He wanted to understand how people were able to achieve a
>
> simultaneous separateness from and inextricable connectedness to the outside
>
> world. (p. 23)

There needs to be a balance between being alone and being a part of a community,

between knowing oneself and being comfortable with oneself and being a part of and

contributing to a community. Maxine Greene (1995) writes that "our very realization that

the individual does not precede community may summon up images of relation, of the networks of concern in which we teachers still do our work and, as we do so, create and recreate ourselves" (p. 197).

Imagine that the world is a balloon filled with water and that individuals are the hydrogen molecules in that water. When I identify myself and examine myself, I am squeezing the balloon in the middle, so part of me will flow to either end of the balloon. Now, if I take either end of the balloon and squeeze it, then I flow along with everyone and everything else to somewhere else in the balloon. I am a part of the balloon, the world, but at the same time, I am also separate, like the hydrogen molecule. This is a focus to which quantum physics points. The main idea is that the world is in us and we are in the world. This is both a physical scientific phenomenon as well as a spiritual phenomenon. As physicist Fritjof Capra's (1983) research reveals,

> The patterns scientists observe in nature are intimately connected with the patterns of their minds-with their concepts, thoughts and values. Hence the scientific results they obtain and the technological applications they investigate will be conditioned by their frame of mind. (p. 9)

Put another way, the world affects us, and we affect the world.

Additionally, quantum physics has also identified that most of space is empty. Until quantum physics, scientists concentrated on studying what they could observe first-hand and see with their own eyes. Quantum physics has changed the rules to include the science of what we cannot see. Quantum physicists have had to rely on results, whether we can see the cause of these results or not. Winnicott was ahead of his time when he theorized the importance of potential space. He sensed this enormous area that humans

were only just beginning to tap into. He also realized that this space has infinite

variations. Space belongs to ideas and energy, and as we are beginning to understand

with greater confidence, energy is matter.

This ability to understand and accept different people and different ways of doing

things has a far-reaching effect. Then one can understand that an entire classroom

operates on the basis of the particular personality of *that* teacher and *those* students. No

matter how careful a written plan is, the energy of the classroom will dictate how

effective that plan will be. Further, even with the same teacher and the same students, no

two days are alike. There are many factors affecting the dynamics of a classroom.

Our world is shrinking in the sense that technology brings us closer together.

George Lipsitz (2001) postulates that "within national boundaries and across them, we

now confront many dangerous crossroads—places of conflict and creativity where we,

the people of the world, find ourselves paradoxically both closer together and farther

apart than ever before" (p. 315). We have the ability and opportunity to come into

contact with many different people all over the world, but as Lipsitz points out, "we

should stop thinking solely in terms of physical spaces and landscapes, and instead

realize that our world is now cognitively mapped into ethnocscapes, mediascapes,

technoscapes, financescapes and ideoscapes" (p. 25). To be closer to one another would

ordinarily be a positive thing, but Greg Dimitriadis and Cameron McCarthy (2001) point

out that Friedrich Nietzsche warned the world that

> a new ethical framework had come into being in the industrial age in which all
>
> patterns of human exchange were informed by the bureaucratic arrangements of
>
> social institutions. He called this moral framework "ressentiment" (resentment),

or the practice by which one defines one's identity through the negation of the other. (p. 4)

Identifying *only* through others, means something vital is missing in a person's early inner personality formation or a person was overly influenced by his or her environment. Lois Weis's (2004) study of working-class men and working-class women showed that "white males assert their goodness in the face of the constructed black 'bad'" (p. 48). Most people do compare themselves with others, and this is normal. But when doing this, we reveal as much of who we *are* as who we are *not*. Defining ourselves by othering limits us as well as others; it creates an either-or existence instead of realizing that we are this, this, this, *and* this.

Expressing fully who a person is takes effort in self-reflection, and some people are not willing to analyze themselves. Many people are more comfortable knowing themselves only by superficially comparing themselves with others. Many people avoid psychoanalysis because it takes courage to open up and dig deep to find out more of who we are. Psychoanalysis is not an easy and quick route to self-knowing. It takes much time, honesty and desire to find out what makes us tick. It takes yet more courage to recharge our batteries so that we are functioning in the manner most healthful for us and others around us.

The movie *American History X* (1998) is an example of a family's unexamined life. In this blue-collar family, the father is a firefighter who seems moderate until he makes extremely racial comments to his younger son and warns him not to be brainwashed by his black teacher. The older son has already accepted resentment towards blacks and Hispanics in his community. But the younger son, who has creative-

writing talent (thus an inner place of imagination from which to draw), does not accept

his father's and his brother's prejudice so easily. The tragedy is that this boy is forced to

choose between his inner truth and the outer reality that his family and community force

upon him. People who have a rich inner life can draw pleasure from sole activities, are

more self-reflective and self-confident; these people are also more able to understand and

embrace others and their differences. Inner-rich people welcome the diversity and

challenges that differences bring to their lives.

Identifying Self Through Literature

When our class read Wilson Rawls's (1961) novel *Where the Red Fern Grows*,

the students were amazed at the hard work and patience the boy mustered up because of

his longing for a dog. Our students (and society in general) have difficulty in the idea of

working long and hard to achieve a goal. Our capitalistic and consumerist society has

weakened our ability to imagine the future and wait patiently for its fruition. Instead of

watching a fern slowly over days unfurl lacelike leaves to reveal a strong beautiful plant,

we want the time-lapse version where we can see the process occur before our eyes in a

matter of seconds. How ever wonderful technology may make our lives, to truly know

ourselves, Pinar (2004) says, requires us "to slow down, to remember even re-enter the

past, and to meditatively imagine the future" (p. 4). While this chapter concentrates on

aspects of self-formation and self-reflection, the importance of each individual's taking

on this responsibility for the health of society as a whole, cannot be underestimated.

Consequently, a tremendous responsibility is given to teachers who educate the children

of the future. While the seeds of individuation, integration, imagination, and reality

testing are planted in the first months of a person's life, we humans continue to grow and (hopefully) bloom throughout our lives.

Transitional phenomena can clearly be seen in children's literature. Children's literature often involves inanimate characters that literally—in the child's mind—come to life by virtue of the writer's ability to make a person, place, thing, or situation come to life along with the reader's ability to imagine these things alive. The space that a reader inhabits when connecting with literature is neither wholly within or without. It consists of a third area somewhere in between and is reminiscent of Winnicott's (2005) third part of a human being's life—"an intermediate area of *experiencing*, to which inner reality and external life both contribute" (p. 3). This third area of experiencing is the magic that occurs between a reader and literature.

Connecting with literature is a wonderful thing to encounter in oneself as well as in another. I experienced such delight when my son, who is verbally delayed because of epilepsy and autism, first connected to Eric Carle's (1987) children's book *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*. We read this book together every night for months, and one day my son took the book away from me and *owned* it that night for himself by pointing to and reciting all of the sequential pictures of the caterpillar eating food. When I was a child, the first books I remember *owning* for myself were Maurice Sendak's (1991) *Where the Wild Things Are* and Virginia Burton's (1969) *The Little House*–not because I could read them, but because I became connected with them by being tantalizingly scared of the monsters in Sendak's book and by being deeply saddened when the little house was abandoned in Burton's book.

The subjects may change as we get older, but the effect is similar—we connect

with the object, which is the subject, in the book. As an adolescent, I connected deeply

with S. E. Hinton's (1967, 1975) books *The Outsiders* and *Rumblefish*. The fact that

these book's characters faced hardships and the endings were not always happy gave me

solace that I was not alone in my teenage misery. These books allowed me to relate to

someone else's complicated life and relate it to what was going on inside my mind as

well as what was going on all around me with family, school, and society.

Effects of Technology on our Relationship with Literature

       Given our highly technological times, an important question to ask is whether

technology influences the relationship between reader and text. Does it make a

difference whether the writing is fiction or nonfiction? The answer to both questions is

"yes." When I need information, I will just as likely "Google" the desired information as

I would go to my reference books. But when I want to "get lost in myself with a book"

or "get lost in a book with myself" I curl up on the couch with a book and *do not* go to

the computer. If it were not for the computer, would I curl up with a book more often?

Probably. According to J. Hillis Miller (1992) theirs is "the first generation for whom the

book is not the primary source of cultural formation" (p. 43) and he goes on to say that,

"just as our students no longer read books but watch videos instead, so the scholars of

cultural criticism are as adept in films, television, advertising, popular music and mass

media generally as they are in the books" (p. 43). For my sister who has read about five

books from cover to cover in her 50 years, the computer has increased her desire to read

in order to extract information. Therefore, perhaps things are not as grim as Lyotard (in

Pinar, 2002) predicts when he says that

the nature of knowledge cannot survive unchanged. . . It can fit into new channels and become operational only if learning is translated into quantities of information. We can predict that anything…that is not translatable in this way will be abandoned. (p. 398)

If Lyotard is correct, this will be a very sad day for humankind. Learning will decrease. Why? Because *we learn best and more fully those things that we experience emotionally*. Educator Mary Aswell Doll (2000) emphasizes that "fiction—more than fact—teaches wisdoms about the human condition precisely because fiction connects readers with what courses within themselves" (xi). Otherwise, humans run the risk of becoming more like computers.

A threat to the individuality of students is the computer's ability to tally standardized test scores quickly; we now use test-score results to sum up a student sometimes before getting to know him or her. In the 1996 *Galatea 2.2*, by Richard Powers, a scientist is attempting to build a computer that possesses human qualities. It is interesting that the scientist hires a literary scholar to program information into the computer, believing that the literary realm is what makes a human or computer most human. Curriculum studies focuses on the humanities precisely because these disciplines delve deeper into what it means to be human.

Aesthetic Versus Efferent Literature

Dennis Sumara explains Louise Rosenblatt's distinction between reading to *identify* (efferent) and reading to *enjoy* (aesthetic) as depending on the individual needs at the time. Sumara (1996) admits that "Rosenblatt has been most influential in acknowledging the importance of the relationship developed between reader and literary

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text" (p. 26). Sumara describes this relationship as follows: "As the reader interacts with the literary text, he or she goes through a transactive process of re-symbolizing his or her own thoughts with those presented in the text" (p. 27). Therefore, when I ask my husband at night what he is reading, I don't expect him to say, "A book." I desire for him to describe to me the meeting place at which he is extracting what the author is revealing, or in Rosenblatt's terms, what is transacting between my husband and the author. If we use a geometrical grid to plot this point, I suspect that any given reader and writer will have their own special intersection; rarely, if ever, will the intersection for any two readers and two writers be the same. Each reader's relationship with a particular writer is unique, intersecting at a particular place at any given time.

The current trend in education is to promote an efferent reading of literature and texts in order to extract as much information from text. True, efferent reading will improve scores on standardized tests. But research and experience show that longer lasting and more relevant meaning is drawn *aesthetically* from text. It is worthwhile to know that Arthur Danto (in Greene, 1995) views literature as

> A kind of mirror; not simply in the sense of rendering up an external reality, but as giving me to myself for each self peering into it, showing each of us something inaccessible without mirrors, namely that each has an external aspect and what that external aspect is. Each work of literature shows in this sense an aspect we would not know were ours without benefit of that mirror: each discovers . . . an unguessed dimension of the self. It is a mirror less in passively returning an image than in transforming the self-consciousness of the reader who in virtue of

identifying with the image recognizes what he is. Literature is in this sense

transfigurative. (p. 100)

I am witnessing a trend moving away from this transfigurative literature. The elementary

school at which I teach is adopting a new literature book this year because it has more

nonfiction selections. Less time will be given to the students to read fiction or to choose

the genres that suit them. Thus, it will be less likely that these nonfiction selections will

have the ability to transform students.

Several words with the same prefix, "trans," are used to describe the creative acts

that take place between two different people, places, or things. Some of these words are

"transitional," as in "transitional object;" "transfigurative," as in "transfigurative

literature;" "transformational," as in a "transformational experience," by Christopher

Bollas; and, "transactional," as in "transactional literature" by Rosenblatt. The *Concise*

Oxford English Dictionary (2004) defines the prefix "trans" as follows: "1 across;

beyond: *transcontinental*. on or to the other side of: *transatlantic*. 2 through: *transonic*.

into another state or place: *translate*. transcending: *transfinite*" (p. 1530). The key words

in the definition are "across" and "through," which both denote a change in location.

Winnicott uses the word "location" in describing the potential space that is made possible

by transitional phenomena. Life's experiences transport us from place to place. If I

express that I am "in a good place," I am not talking about physical location; I am

referring to an emotional state that may include physicality, intellectuality, or spirituality.

However, changes in emotional states take much mental activity. This is what cultural

arts does for us. The transitional object is the first experience of this phenomena.

Fiction not only gives readers a way of looking at themselves, but as Jean-Paul Sartre

says (in Greene, 1995*)*, readers

> have to create what is disclosed when they read—they have to give it life (1949).
>
> Ishmael's [in Herman Melville's *Moby Dick*] deciding [to go to sea] is then our
>
> deciding after all; we lend him our life as we read. Cathy's passion for Heathcliff
>
> in *Wuthering Heights* is *our* passion; Joe's murderous love for Dorcas in Toni
>
> Morrison's *Jazz* is our own epiphany—we lend it its taste and flame. (p. 77)

So often we concentrate on how *we* are affected by literature and what *we* get from it. It

is refreshing and empowering to know we give something back to *it*; the maxim "Tis

better to give than to receive" is true for literature as well.

Kaustuv Roy (2003), in his book *Teachers in Nomadic Spaces: Deleuze and

Curriculum, points out that "Deleuze's work on Spinoza shows us the possibilities of

transforming passive affects into active ones, that is, entering a plane where we learn to

be producers rather than consumers of affect, thus reversing dependencies" (p. 35). What

I am doing right now writing this paper is taking works from others and producing

something new. The possibilities of quotes I could have used are immeasurable. This is

especially important to realize in a culture that is often only about *me*. Laura Marks

(2002) in her book, *Touch*, about multisensory media, says that:

> What Deleuze finds striking about Rouch's films is the ability of the character,
>
> and indeed the filmmaker as well, to be transformed, to become another, during
>
> the course of the film.22   Deleuze refers to the characters who enable this
>
> transformative encounter as *intercessors* who, rather than being the film's
>
> obedient subjects, multiply its points of view, taking part in the construction of

documentary as fiction. In the process of working together, filmmaker and intercessor dispute each other's memories and viewpoints. Each subject infringes on the subjectivity of the other, in a process that produces the other anew. (p. 52)

This is what complicated (and worthwhile) conversation is about. This is the epiphany of effective literary criticism in action. Seeing another's point of view, knowing one's own point of view, and either merging the two together or coming up with something altogether different. This is what makes life exciting, different, and worth living. Socrates said that the unexamined life is not worth living, and Winnicott went further to state that creative living makes life worth living. It takes creativity to be able to examine our present and past in order to forge a brighter future. Psychology blends with literature beautifully, as Kierkegaard (in Nordentoft, 1978) supports by saying that psychology is uplifted

> with learned quotations, that in Saxony there was a peasant girl, of whom a doctor observed, that in Rome there lived an emperor, of whom an historian relates, etc., as if it were so that such things occur only once every thousand years. What interest does psychology have, then? No, it is everything; it occurs every day, if only the observer is there. (pp. 14-15)

Kirkegaard, likely meant that psychology is sufficient on its own. Nordentoft (1978) stresses that "if Kierkegaard nevertheless does in fact illustrate his argument with the help of the emperor in Rome (Nero) or other historical, literary, or mythical figures, it is only because they are prototypes of the universe" (p. 15). Mythological prototypes memorialized in literature represent history and benefit psychoanalysis simultaneously.

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Literature that has remained popular was controversial during its debut (e.g. Shakespeare, Dostoyevky, and Tolstoy) because of its unusual creative aspects. Harold Bloom (1994) defends the Western canon by revealing that what makes these authors great and their works canonical "turn[s] out to be strangeness, a mode of originality that either cannot be assimilated, or that so assimilates us that we cease to see it as strange" (p. 3). As Richard Rorty (in Pinar, 2004) understands: "[Many] transfigurations of the tradition . . . begin in private fantasies. Think, for example, of Plato's or St. Paul's private fantasies—fantasies so original and utopian that they became the common sense of later times" (p. 129). Those who study psychoanalysis and mythology are not surprised by this. It stands to reason that if the creation of literature itself is limitless, then the uses and interpretations of literature are also unlimited.

Experiencing Self Through Fantasy

My preference for fantasy as a young and older adult reveals to me that I can relate to my inner fantasy life as much as my outer reality life. It is interesting that many characters, settings, and places in fantasies are mythological in nature. I believe that people retain the need to identify with themselves through others most of their lives, but this *need*, not the *desire*, becomes less as one matures emotionally. A person increasingly develops the desire and ability to enjoy literature aesthetically in order to try and reach the soul of the individual; we feel it, yet it often remains indescribable. This is the feeling one gains from experiencing a beautiful painting, opera, or concert. This is the freedom that comes from enjoying aesthetic and cultural beauty, which in turn, comes from the first ability to find the in between spaces that derive from transitional objects. Greene (1995) admits: "I would like us to discover how we can all discover together

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against the diversity of our backgrounds, write together, draw upon each other's existential realities to create Arendt's in-between" (p. 119). One knows what one is experiencing even if one cannot describe it accurately or say whence it came. Daniel Cavicchi (1998) interviewed a Bruce Springsteen fan who had difficulty describing a similar phenomenon:

> I learned a lot from Bruce! I think I probably—I don't know which came first: maybe I had this philosophy and I didn't know about it and that's why I liked Bruce. But it could be the other way, that my philosophy came from Bruce. Which is certainly possible. I don't want to give him too much credit for my entire existence. I'm sure my parents have something to do with it. (p. 132)

Winnicott would argue that it is the parents who gave this Springsteen fan the adequate potential space to explore similar phenomena with subsequent people and situations. We are transformed by our experiences at the same time we contribute our uniqueness to the experience. Our internal experiencing combines with outside influences to make a unique experience. This is another way of describing Winnicott's transitional object theory.

Bilbo, Frodo, and Me: My Identification with Literature

Pipesmoking, several meals a day eating, cautious, yet ultimately courageous is Bilbo Baggins. Sweet, mild mannered, innocent, yet brave in the face of all odds, is Frodo. Mysterious, nature loving, and all-knowing is Bombadil. Responsible, committed, wise, and magical is Gandalf. Curious, fun loving, and sincere are Merry and Pippin. Faithful, full of integrity, and fearless is Sam Gamgee. Luscious, green, rolling hills and fields covered with wildflowers describes the Shire. Bright, shimmering,

dancing, natural sunlight shining upon a wooded forest high in the mountains and the ornately carved white marble buildings and verandas describes Rivendell where the elves Legolas, Arwen, and their leader, Elrond, live. If you were to ask me which books I have read that opened my heart and eyes more to another world and its inhabitants, it would be *The Lord of the Rings* by J. R. R. Tolkien (1954).

I am amazed that moviegoers can now see by watching a few hours on the screen what took me months to "see" by reading it on paper. I know it sounds naïve but when I first read Tolkien's (1996) *The Hobbit*, I felt as if I were the only one in the world that really understood Bilbo and what all the creatures, deeds and places in Middle-earth *really* looked like. Before Peter Jackson's (2001) blockbuster movies came out, Bassham & Bronson (2003) point out that "Tolkien's fantasy epic . . . sold more than fifty million copies, and has been voted the greatest book of the twentieth century in several recent readers' polls" (p. 1). Therefore, even without the movies, I certainly am not alone in my reverence for and reverie in Tolkien's classics. To revere is "to regard with great respect and devotion" (*American Heritage Dictionary*, 1983, p. 589) Reverie here means, "a daydream" and "abstracted thought" (p. 589). A daydream and an abstracted thought are exactly what these two novels were and still are to me. Because I read the novels first, they first belonged to *me alone*. Gaston Bachelard (1988) gives the following example of feeling the words of a text deeply:

> For example, when Vivane, in Edgar Quinet's *Merlin the Magician* says, 'I cannot run into a doe without being tempted to bound as she does,' a reader who refuses sensitivity to texts will read this terribly banal expression without being moved by it. But how will such a reader understand landscapes that are

essentially dynamic and which make *Merlin the Magician* such a powerful work

from a psychological point of view? (pp. 61-62)

I know this because no one else can interpret words the same way my unique, complex

bundle of neurons can. For Bachelard, this quote shows the power of movement through

imagination, for Quinet (in Bachelard, 1988) had written, "Viviane is lighter than a goat,

she is as light as a bird. . . I reach the mountain-top, where hope carries me, before he

does" (p. 62). Bachelard ponders that "if Viviane is lighter than the doe, the goat, and the

deer, it is because she believes in the greater effectiveness of a kind of flight that partakes

of these images . . ." (p. 62). T. H. White (1958), author *The Once and Future King*,

spins tales of King Arthur and Merlyn using the imagination of the humans who become

animals, with all the physical capabilities of these animals. Reading is one of the best

and last truly solitary individual spaces left. True, individuals can perhaps see the image

of these movies different on the screen, but it is far less likely to be an individual

experience.

Before Peter Jackson's *The Lord of the Rings* movies were released on screen, I

managed to read all but the last bit of the third book with two of my children, Ali and

Chad. While I selfishly treasured my sole individual relationship with the novel, I was

happy to share that joy and insight with my children. I was grateful that they could

develop their own personal relationship with the novel before they saw the movies. I

know this made the movies more spectacular for them. (We were also fortunate enough

to experience the fantastic J. K. Rowling's (2007) *Harry Potter* series the same way).

I believe if Ali and Chad had not read the books first, they would not have had as

personal a relationship with the characters, events, and setting. When a person goes to

the movies, they are part of a crowd. This can make the experience more dynamic (as in when you group exercise at the gym as opposed to riding a stationary bike home alone) where everyone is experiencing much more of the same thing.

Contributions of Psychoanalysis to Literature

Bloom (1994) places Freud on his list of the top 26 canonical writers and defends this choice by saying that, "Freud called himself a scientist, but he will survive as a great essayist like Montaigne or Emerson, not as the founder of a therapy" (p. 2). Is this any more far fetched as Hartman (2007) reminding us that "Matthew Arnold predicted that what would remain of religion is its poetry" (p. 248)? Freud's, *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1965) and his other books, are extremely interesting reads. Freud describes his *Interpretation of Dreams* as inspiration that only comes once-in-a-lifetime. Works such as this come from a creative source, and that psychological source is often unidentifiable. Malcolm Bowie (2000) asserts that

> if psychoanalysis is to become an instrument for the analysis of literature, let it face up squarely to its own character as a sequence of literary works and textual effects. Let Freud and Lacan help us to read literature, but also and simultaneously let us call upon literature to help us read Freud and Lacan. (p. 11)

Bowie continues with specific examples:

> One has only to remember the uses to which Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and quotations from Goethe, Schiller, and Heine are put in *The Interpretations of Dreams* (Freud, 1900a), or the elaborate allegory of the psychoanalytic encounter that Lacan derives from his reading of Edgar Allan Poe's *The Purloined Letter*, to

see how deep the complicity lies between certain kinds of psychoanalytic theory and certain kinds of creative writing. (pp. 11-12)

It is the psychological aspects of canonical writings that make them great. Perhaps our society is not ready to take on the human psyche directly; it may be easier to explore the human psyche through literature as a comforting shock absorber. Being a doctor and scientist, Freud tried diligently to keep his work as scientific as possible, which resulted in his combining instinctive genius with rigorous academic and scientific methods that ended up appealing to and being recognized by a greater number of people. It is well known that good scientific experiments and research can be duplicated, and Freud (1965) said himself of *The Interpretation of Dreams*: "Insight such as this falls to one's lot but once in a lifetime" (xxxii). It is appropriate that Freud be included in Bloom's list; his genius was a one-of-a-kind occurrence.

Much of Freud's writing was influenced by other great writers, and Freud, in turn, has influenced subsequent writers. Psychoanalyst Hanna Segal (1991) interestingly points out that Freud derived great insights from *The Brothers Karamazov*. For example, Freud (in Segal, 1991) "describes the splitting of the personality into many characters in the book, maybe more clearly than he had done in any clinical studies or theoretical formulations" (p. 75). This tells me that Dostoevsky had great insight into the psychological, which he put forth with all his energy into his literature. This provides further proof of the psychological insights that writers possess.

Winnicott's Potential Space

Closely tied with transitional phenomena is the opening up of potential space, which Winnicott describes as three different areas. First is the cultural experience

location (potential space) between an individual and his environment (originally the object). This includes playing, which is the first creative living experience. Second, is the life experiences of individuals from their earliest existence. Winnicott (2005) describes the third area as the "*potential space between the subjective object and the object objectively perceived*, between me-extensions and the not-me. This potential space is at the interplay between there being nothing but me and there being objects and phenomena outside omnipotent control" (p. 135). Potential space is helped along by transitional phenomena. Eigen (2004) points out, "Martin Buber had developed his own 'between' in *I and Thou* (1958). His saying, 'All real living is meeting,' catches something of the tone Winnicott was searching for" (p. 71). In literature, potential space becomes a place of the meeting of the minds between the writer and the characters and between the reader and his or her experiences. From the time a child is very young to when he grows old, literature can be a transitional object that connects the inner subjectivity of the reader simultaneously with the outside world and the world that is contained in the book.

The dynamics that occur in the classroom are continuously changing. No two moments are ever the same, as Grumet (1999) captures by comparing curriculum with text:

> Curriculum is an event. It happens and passes. Though the classroom is distinct from the mundane world as is the text, the border that separates it from the world permits crossing, not without papers, of course. In this way schooling takes place in the cultural space that anthropologists call liminal, for it is transitional, neither fictive nor real, neither here nor there. The teacher who creates the world of

curriculum, situating its phenomenon in space and time, in the politics of

discourse, shaping its sense and its reference, is more closely bound to convention

than the writer because she invites other people's children to actually spend their

days within the pages of her book. Less free to establish a wildly fictive world

than the writer, that teacher is more legally and historically bound to an intricate

history of conventions. (p. 240)

Ideally I see curriculum as continuously running, like Pinar's *currere*. In this respect, it

is more transitional than text, which is typed indelibly in black ink. However, I agree

with Grumet that teachers are not as free to move within the constructs of federal, state,

and local mandates. Before the type is set, writers have the liberty to change anything at

will.

Peter Applebaum (2003) looks at the connection between space and time from an

alternative angle:

To gain control of the world of space is certainly one of our tasks. The danger

begins when in gaining power in the realm of space we forfeit all aspirations in

the realm of time. There is a realm of time where the goal is not to "have" but to

"be," not to own but to give, not to control but to share, not to subdue but to be in

accord. Life goes wrong when the control of space, the acquisition of things of

space, becomes our sole concern (Herschel 1951:3). (p. 30)

Yet, as Khan (1988) suggests, "to share and partake of another's predicament implies

time and space" (p. 260). A writer makes himself or herself available to the reader, just

as a reader makes himself or herself useful to the writer. A Winnicottian reading of

literature increases its wealth, and there is much literature that directly or indirectly contains elements of Winnicott's potential space and transitional object theory.

Potential space and transitional phenomena become the road to cultural experience. Winnicott (2005) states that, "Freud used the word 'sublimation' to point the way to a place where cultural experience is meaningful, but perhaps he did not get so far as to tell us where in the mind cultural experience is" (pp. 128-129). But Freud opened up the horizon for Winnicott to define cultural experience. Winnicott admits to the difficulty in defining culture, but he settles on the following:

> I am thinking of inherited tradition. I am thinking of something that is in the common pool of humanity, into which individuals and groups of people may contribute, and from which we may all draw *if we have somewhere to put what we find*. (p.133)

The area that provides "somewhere" is potential space. What parent's do when they provide a good-enough environment and what transitional objects do when they are used effectively, is to provide the potential space in which children can hang their ideas.

Good literature happens because of the writer's ability to invite a person into the mind of the author and the characters. Readers can recognize similar characteristics between people they know in real life and the characters in a story. Whether or not writers have formally studied psychology, they have first-hand knowledge of it and have a gift for writing about it. Marion Milner (1981) commented that she "had often thought that novelists and poets had a special advantage in learning how to live, their writings providing them with an instrument that most of us were denied" (pp. 30-31). It is common for people who are interested in literature to also be interested in psychology.

While writer Margaret Laurence did not claim to write autobiographically, Dennis Sumara and Brent Davis (1999) assert that "the writing out of characters in imagined situations could not, for Laurence, be considered apart from her involvement in her own psyche" (p. 55). Marla Morris (1999) states clearly that "We all have stories. Writing stories is writing life" (p. 11).

The Social Self in Literature

Mary Aswell Doll (2000), in her evaluation of the literary works of William Faulkner and Toni Morrison, suggests that, "The reading-demands these writers make on an audience are such that readers are forced to complicate their assumptions not only about people but about history and memory, knowledge and innocence, good and evil: about themselves" (pp. 24-25). Worthwhile literature causes people to re-evaluate their beliefs about themselves and others. "In no way, she [Morrison] shows, does the master's White canon reflect the life and soul of Black experience. Morrison's project is to tell what has been 'kept quiet' so as to redress the willful ignorance of American letters" (p. 25). Morrison's text is difficult for both Blacks and Whites to imagine because *neither* are used to speaking the truth. This is similar to Germans, Americans, and Jewish people themselves trying to open up dialogue about a subject, the Holocaust, that *everyone* has ignored or distorted. There is hope though, for as Nussbaum (1995) sees it, sometimes:

> concern for the disadvantaged is built into the structure of the literary experience. . . .The reader participates vicariously in numerous different lives, some more advantaged and some less. In realist social novels . . . these lives are self-consciously drawn from different social strata, and the extent to which these

varied circumstances allow for flourishing is made part of the reader's experience.

(p. 87)

Both real life experiences and vicarious experiences, through reading, allow us to appreciate our own circumstances as well as other persons' situations. However, as Levinas (1985) cautions, "to read is to keep oneself above the realism—or the politics— of our care for ourselves without coming however to the good intentions of beautiful souls, or to the normative idealism of what 'must be'" (p. 22). Reading *about* others may substitute for interacting *with* them. Getting closer to ourselves and to others through reading is a far cry from allowing knowledge derived from reading to physically helping ourselves and others.

In A. A. Cohen's (1992) movie, *MindWalk*, Sam Waterston, Liv Ullman, and John Heard, play a politician, scientist, and poet, respectively; all engage in a deep conversation, each showing how they care for and judge society based on their paradigm. They all make strong cases, but in the end it is the poet that has a greater understanding of what the individual *personally* feels and needs. The poet was able to reach deepest into inner-most feelings, perhaps the feelings that many of us do not know we feel, but the feelings that drive us. The poet's ability to uncover the most important motivating factors of human existence may not be fully appreciated by some, but archaeological probing and exploration into one's formative experiences is what caring thinkers do, and certainly this should and must include parents and teachers. Bloom (1980) asserts that

> Nietzsche does not mean that this will is itself the poetic or creative will, but the
>
> burden here must be taken on by the poet above all persons, since earlier in the
>
> the second part of *Zarathustra* Nietzsche twice attacks the poets, meaning Goethe

in particular.   In the rhapsody "Upon the Blessed Isles," we are warned that the poets lie too much, and yet the creative will is exalted. Out of the poets, if they cease to lie, will come "ascetics of the spirit," as Zarathustra will later prophesy. (p. 3)

Greene (in Pinar et al., 2002) argues that, "the humanities, and in particular the study of literature, might help students confront meaninglessness, especially that meaninglessness associated with the triumph of science and the decline of religion" (p. 183). Literature, along with psychoanalytic insight, provides a unique venue for excavating our selves, others, and the most important issues of the day.

CHAPTER 3

THE POWER OF PSYCHOANALYSIS

When I gave a presentation on the psychological originations of creativity, one graduate student raised his hand and asked, "Aren't you afraid that all this psychoanalytic stuff is passé?" I wondered how much truth was in his question and, more importantly, *if* psychology, including psychoanalysis *is* passé, why is this so? At least, I wanted to know why there is a perception of psychoanalysis being outdated and irrelevant. Eli Zaretsky (2004), author of *Secrets of the Soul: A Social and Cultural History of Psychoanalysis*, also had the same question. He describes the quandary that psychoanalysis is in as follows:

> Almost instantly recognized as a great force for human emancipation,
> [psychoanalysis] played a central role in the modernism of the 1920s, the English
> and American welfare states of the 1940s and 50s, the radical upheavals of the
> 1960s, and the feminist and gay-liberation movements of the 1970s. Yet it
> simultaneously became a fount of antipolitical, antifeminist, and homophobic
> prejudice, a degraded profession, a "pseudoscience" whose survival is now very
> much in doubt. (p. 3)

Zaretsky's book explores this paradox and aims "to identify and affirm the emancipatory dimension of analytic thought without denying the validity of the criticisms" (p. 3). A popular news magazine recently featured an article celebrating the 100th anniversary of Sigmund Freud's introduction of psychoanalysis. Freud, like all major thinkers had his discoveries expounded upon. Much of Freud's interpretations and instincts is right. Our unconscious drives much of what we do. Dreams are a part of our unconscious at

work. Much of our psyches are driven by outside forces. Psychoanalyst Adam Phillips (1994) maintains that "analysis may be more of a search for dreams than of a search for insight" (p. 5). Dreams include those while we sleep and those while we wake. Reconstructing dreams is just as possible as reconstructing personal histories. Both our dreams and our histories occur in the past, both can never be relived or regained, and both have a tendency to be distorted upon the retelling, depending on whose perspective is being voiced.

There are millions of psychiatrists and psychoanalysts who study Freud's techniques, use Freud's techniques, and alter Freud's techniques to suit the patient's situation. Freud laid the foundation that all psychoanalysts have subsequently built on or around. Many psychoanalysts have expounded upon external forces on the psyche, whereas others have focused on internal forces. For example, Otto Rank (1978) believes in a strong inner force, what he calls "willing ego" and "creative will" (p. 7). Rank believes that the average person manages his life (and his will) to an ample degree, living a well-adjusted, ordinary life. The creative person, however, is able to live his life and use his will to show exceptional creativity and elaborate individuality. Rank (in Parsons, 2000) uses the artist as an example: "When we intuitively admire some great work of art we say the whole artist is in it and expresses himself in it" (p. 15). My husband and I have experienced this personally while on vacation in Key West. We were window-shopping and saw a painting that reached out and grabbed us. We had never bought original artwork before, but we kept going back every day to stare at this painting. We finally acquiesced to the artist's speaking to us and plunked down a month's salary to purchase this painting. We have it in our living room, and each time we take the time to

stare and let it speak to us we find new meaning in it. This is a personal example of the psychic creative processes, so vital to fulfilling human need, at work.

Winnicott was known to consider the person from all aspects, inner and outer, but primarily he practiced psychoanalysis with the whole person in mind. The primary purpose of this work is to encourage greater creativity in students and teachers using Winnicott's psychoanalytic contributions. I believe that everyone can benefit from the inward, autobiographical reflection that psychoanalysis provides; at the same time, I acknowledge and discuss criticisms of psychoanalysis. After acknowledging criticisms of psychoanalysis, I discuss advantages to using psychoanalytic theory along with curriculum theory to promote greater creativity for *all* students and teachers, remembering that we are all students and teachers at different times in our lives.

In Denial

I first attempt to understand the reluctance that exists regarding the use of psychoanalysis in helping create greater emotional health in people's lives. One obvious reason is the increasing development of drugs by pharmaceutical companies, the increasing prescribing of drugs by doctors, and the patient's increasing desire to use drugs as a sole treatment of emotional problems. I have three members of my family who suffer from debilitating depression, and they probably would not be alive today without the aid of medication. In each case, though, they have also needed and benefited from psychotherapy. Perhaps because I am in my 40s, and my friends are also older, I am witnessing an increase in people seeking therapy and using medications. However, I am surprised at how often they choose to take medication only rather than simultaneously engaging in therapy. I believe that the offer and hope of a "quick fix" is irresistible to

turn down as an increasingly enticing alternative in our fast-paced, consumerist society. People may be experiencing greater complexities in life and are seeking help to stay connected.

Another reason people may choose to take drugs only is the time, energy, and expense of engaging in psychoanalysis; thus, it is easy to see why many people opt for a chemical fix to their anxiety, depression, and obsessions. Often these drugs do help, even if only temporarily. But sometimes they do not work, and a patient must decide whether the time, energy and expense of therapy is worth the reward that one gets by feeling more connected to oneself and to others and to the world. Henry David Thoreau (2003) wrote in 1846 what still holds true today, "We spend more on almost any article of bodily aliment or ailment than on our mental aliment" (p. 88). I believe that when a person is willing to dedicate time and effort to psychotherapy, he or she gains tremendous self-confidence and self-fulfillment.

Another valid point to be addressed concerning the limited appeal of psychoanalysis is its reputation of being a "bourgeois" activity. It is true that, at its inception, it benefited those who could afford it monetarily and time-wise. However, like many scientific inventions that are available to only a limited number of people at first and then eventually are available to a greater number of people, psychoanalysis proved to be beneficial for anyone willing to undergo it. The major barrier for a greater number of people participating in therapy is the insurance companies that are not willing to endorse it as readily as the insurance companies are willing to encourage taking medication doled out by pharmaceutical companies.

Another reason that people may not choose to explore their mind, soul, and

psyche (I use the terms "psyche" and "soul" often interchangeably) is because of the latest scientific discoveries that have placed doubts on the worth of the 3-pound wrinkled gray matter that lies in our head. Paul Churchland outlines the recent attempts by scientists to map the brain, including its chemical and physical makeup. This raises philosophical questions, and as Churchland (2000) points out, "it is now possible to bring testable artificial models and detailed neurobiological information to bear on what used to be purely philosophical questions" (p. 16). In other words, "The doctrine of an immaterial soul looks, to put it frankly, like just another myth, false not just at the edges, but to the core" (p. 17). Several popular magazines have included articles addressing explanations in support of a soul and arguments disputing that there is a soul. It seems to be a popular topic that is on people's minds and that sells magazines. In the end, scientists are far from proving there is no soul or psyche, and different research indicates the likelihood of a spirit, or soul.

People are proof that there is psyche, but it is likely not the proof that many are searching for. There is danger not only in trying to disprove the existence of soul but also in trying to define it or find its location. The psyche or soul is inextricably intertwined with personhood that it cannot be extracted, nor should attempts to do so be made. Hillman (1975) explains the diminution of positive effects of psyche or soul when people try to define it:

> Whenever we say "the soul is" this or that, we have entered upon a metaphysical venture and literalized an abstraction. These metaphysical assertions about the soul may produce psychology, but not psychologizing, and as avoidances of psychologizing they are an abstract acting-out. We act out not only by running

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away into concrete life; we act out equally in the flight upward into the

abstractions of metaphysics, higher philosophies, theologies, even mysticism.

The soul loses its psychological vision in the abstract literalisms of the spirit as

well as in the concrete literalisms of the body. (p. 137)

The psyche is neither concrete nor absent. It exists in the in-betweenness of thought and

action.

Despite the chemical bases of how the brain operates, these chemicals do produce

painful emotional feelings that are often relieved by careful self-examination of behaviors

through psychotherapy. What Freud (1969) wrote in 1940 still applies today:

Pscho-analysis makes a basic assumption, the discussion of which is reserved to

philosophical thought but the justification for which lies in its results. We know

two kinds of things about what we call our psyche (or mental life): firstly, its

bodily organ and scene of action, the brain (or nervous system) and, on the other

hand, our acts of consciousness, which are immediate data and cannot be further

explained by any sort of description. Everything that lies between is unknown to

us, and the data do not include any direct relation between these two terminal

points of our knowledge. (p. 1)

Science, including psychoanalysis, has not advanced much further in explaining psychic

phenomena than Freud did over 68 years ago.

Regarding scientific objectivity and technological forms of inquiry, Winnicott

(2005) argues that

a computer cannot be programmed to give motives that are unconscious in the

individuals who are the guinea pigs of an investigation. This is where those who

have spent their lives doing psychoanalysis must scream out for sanity against the

insane belief in surface phenomena that characterizes computerized investigations

of human beings. (pp. 192-3)

Clearly, Winnicott sensed the impingement of technology and science on the wellbeing

of our psyches and souls. Hillman (1975) also takes a stand against trivializing the

importance of soul; he explains that

> The modern vision of ourselves and the world has stultified our imaginations. It
>
> has fixed our view of personality (psychology), of insanity (psychopathology), of
>
> matter and objects (science), of the cosmos (metaphysics), and of the nature of the
>
> divine (theology). Moreover it has fixed the methods in all these fields so that
>
> they present a unified front against soul. (p. 3)

Descartes is often pointed to as the person who most influenced the separation of body

and soul. The "Cartesian" dichotomy between mind and body has made it difficult to use

our imagination to reunite our body and soul.

When a scientist postulates new ways of explaining the physical world, he

sometimes develops a greater faith in an intangible energy, or internal spark referred to as

what I call a soul, a power, or a spirit. For example, the more physicist Fritjof Capra

delves into the intricacies of the scientific laws of the universe, the more he believes in a

universal presence that is indescribable. As psychoanalyst Marie-Louise von Franz

(1980b) conveys, "the Chinese way of thinking . . . is a differentiation of primitive

thinking in which no difference has ever been made between psychological and physical

facts" (p. 9). Freud struggled with reconciling his instincts, whose origins were unknown

and quite spiritual, with his strict adherence to the scientific method. Von Franz
describes this intangible aspect, or spirit, in detail.

> Jung therefore defines spirit, from the psychological angle, as *the dynamic aspect
> of the unconscious*. One can think of the unconscious as being like still water, a
> lake which is passive. The things one forgets fall into that lake; if one remembers
> them one fishes them up but it itself does not move. The unconscious has that
> matrix, womb aspect, but it also has the aspect of containing dynamism and
> movement, it acts on its own accord—for instance, it composes dreams. One
> could say that composing dreams while one sleeps is an aspect of the spirit; some
> master spirit or mind composes a most ingenious series of pictures which, if one
> can decipher them, seem to convey a highly intelligent message. That is a
> dynamic manifestation of the unconscious, where the unconscious energetically
> does something on its own, it moves and creates on its own, and that is what Jung
> defines as spirit. There is naturally an unclear borderline between the subjective
> and the objective; but in practice if one feels that it belongs to one then it is one's
> own spirit, and if one does not feel it belongs to one, then one calls it *the* spirit, or
> *a* spirit. That depends on whether one feels akin or not akin to it, close to it or not
> close to it. (p. 9)

Von Franz's description explains the difficulty in defining soul, psyche, or spirit. Most
people have heard these terms. Many have personal experience and knowledge of these
terms. It is difficult to give a definition of what soul or spirit is because each person has a
different feeling about or relationship with the spirit, Spirit, or soul. This illustrates the
complexity of the psyche that I explore in this work.

The psyche is worthy of study, and there are many scientific and unscientific ways to study it. Carl Jung, in his 1973 book *Synchronicity: An Acausal Connecting Principle*, conducts research on the power of thought that has bearing on the power of mind over matter. Jung studied psychical phenomena methodically and found that events which occurred only once or rarely could be explained by an acausal principle. Research in quantum physics is showing that the power of thought changes the outcome of events on a consistent basis; therefore, indeed, the mind or soul, it appears, is not immaterial. An experiment in quantum physics proved that electrons isolated in an airtight container took a different path *only* when a person was in the room when the experiment took place. This indicates that a person's energy affects the flow of the electrons. These scientific studies indicate the power of the psyche. Despite his arduous scientific and methodical studies of the psyche, Freud was fraught with the fact that there were dimensions of the psyche that could not be tested scientifically. He had to rely on instinct and genius that comes to few people. We can approach the study of the psyche from diverse angles and from different perspectives to explore it, yet it can remain partially unknown.

Many are reluctant to study their psyches because there are no definite answers. We live in a society where quick, definitive yes/no, black and white solutions are preferred.

Scientists, pharmaceutical companies, and governments are relying more on physical and biological sciences for explanations as to our minds and behaviors; I conclude and strongly proffer that this approach makes psychology and psychiatry even *more* relevant and definitely more necessary than before, if only to deal with the shock

that we may be merely biological creatures. Even if Churchland is correct in his

hypothesis, and humans are just a jumble of nerves, those nerves are wiring our brain to

think of ourselves as moral, ethical, thinking creatures who possess a soul. Churchland

(2000) writes that

> this conceptual framework is the unquestioned possession of every normal human
>
> who wasn't raised from birth by wolves. It is the template of our normal
>
> socialization as children; it is the primary vehicle of our social and psychological
>
> commerce as adults, and it forms the background matrix for our current moral and
>
> legal discussions. (p. 18)

Whether we have a soul or not may be a question like the one Winnicott asks of whether

the infant created the transitional object or whether the object already existed. The

question cannot be answered definitively. However, it is a question that, at least, can be

considered even though no definitive answer exists. Churchland concedes that, despite

much scientific evidence negating a soul, the fact that we *believe* in a soul actually

outweighs evidence to the contrary.

In addition to the quandary of whether a soul or psyche exists, there may be a

deeper, psychological reason why people reject being psychoanalyzed. Even with the

need and desire to discover "self, there is a part of every one that does not wish to be

known. Winnicott (in Rodman, 1987) writes:

> At the centre of each person is an incommunicado element, and this is sacred and
>
> most worthy of preservation . . . We can understand the hatred people have of
>
> psycho-analysis which has penetrated a long way into the human personality, and

which provides a threat to the human individual in his need to be secretly isolated. The question is: how to be isolated without having to be insulated? (p. 4)

To this Jung (1958) adds the following explanation about the reluctance people have regarding the psyche and the complexity of psychology:

Our psyche, which is primarily responsible for all the historical changes wrought by the hand of man on the face of this planet, remains an insoluble puzzle and an incomprehensible wonder, an object of abiding perplexity—a feature it shares with all Nature's secrets. In regard to the latter we still have hope of making more discoveries and finding answers to the most difficult questions. But in regard to the psyche and psychology there seems to be a curious hesitancy. Not only is it the youngest of the empirical sciences, but it has great difficulty in getting anywhere near its proper object. (pp. 56-57)

This obvious complexity of the human mind humbles me into accepting that there are as many roads as there are people traveling and seeking direction into selfhood. This has great implications in education, which teachers need to remember because there are no quick fixes nor shortcuts in education any more than there are in individual lives and in society as a whole. I believe short cuts and quick fixes create and/or ignore holes in each.

Bloom (1980) explains in the book *The Literary Freud: Mechanisms of Defense and the Poetic Will* another reason why psychoanalysis proves difficult for most people:

Repression is the center of Freud's vision of man, and when a revised theory of defense broke open the white light of repression into the multicolored auras of the whole range of defenses, then Freud had perfected an instrument that even psychoanalysis scarcely has begun to exploit. The theory of defense is now

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essentially where Freud left it, and it seems to me startling that ego psychology

should have done so little to develop what might have been its main resource. Yet

it may be inevitable that so agonistic a concept as defense should make Freud's

followers wary of entering upon a struggle in which the founder is doomed

always to win. (p. 5)

Furthermore, as Parsons (2000) asserts, "We cannot bear loss unless there is enough hope

in the future; and exploring the unknown means being able to contemplate losing what

we do know" (pp. 139-140). "Better the devil one knows than an angel one does not" is a

phrase that explains this aversion to risking what one knows for something one does not

know, even if the enlightenment is better.

Recognizing these many reasons for avoiding psychoanalysis, including the time

and cost involved, the desire for a quick fix, the misunderstandings and unknowingness

of our minds, and the fear of the unknown, we can understand why exploring our psyches

does not have broader appeal. I stress, however, that the benefits far outweigh the

sacrifices necessary to know ourselves better. Little in life worthwhile comes without

sacrifice. Not only will we benefit from understanding of self and others from the

process of psychoanalysis, but it is necessary for the success of individuals and for the

peaceful continuation and ultimate survival of the human race.

The Need for Psychoanalysis

Freud, over 100 years ago, prompted us to look at ourselves, our motives, our

illnesses, our dreams, our unconscious, and our conscious like no one ever did before. As

people progress in scientific knowledge, they, like Churchland, (2000) should ask

themselves important questions such as: "Will a proper theory of brain function present a

significantly different or incompatible portrait of human nature? Should we prepare

ourselves, emotionally, for yet another conceptual revolution, one that will touch us more

closely than ever before" (p. 18)? If the answer to these questions is "yes," then we will

need to use psychology and psychoanalysis even more than before.

Currently, there exists no greater theoretical framework to study personalities,

human behavior, and creativity than psychoanalysis, which suppports the study of the

mind. Addressing a varied group of educators, social workers, and healthcare workers,

Winnicott (1996), expresses the importance of his foundational background in

psychoanalysis, the

> basic theory that belongs to what we have come to call dynamic psychology. Our
>
> work is always a meeting point between us and persons, not between us and an
>
> experiment, or a thesis or a planning committee that is arranging for *others* to
>
> meet the child, the parent, the nurse, the school teacher, the social worker, the
>
> university tutor. (pp. 277-8)

Psychoanalytic knowledge provides enlightenment for studying many different

disciplines. Comprehension of psychoanalytic processes assists in building more

effective relationships between people without allowing bureaucracies and committees to

interfere with the more important work of getting to know each other and ourselves.

Unfortunately, more and more bureaucracy is interfering with the way the teacher

and the student, the parent and student, and the student and the student relate.

Bureaucracy hindering the relationship between the teacher and the student comes by

putting the almighty test before anything else. This same bureaucracy—at the local,

state, and federal levels—is impacting the relationship between parents and the child

because over achieving parents, obsessed with kids' performance to get into college, feel more pressure to practice standardized programs on the computer at home with their children, instead of playing ball outside or engaging in a myriad of more meaningful and creative activities. Lastly, relationships between students are affected negatively when students are allowed only a 10-minute recess during a full-length school day. The school at which I teach recently considered getting rid of "brain break" in order to increase time in the classroom preparing them for the standardized test given at the end of the year. The fact that we no longer call recess "recess" but instead refer to it as a "brain break" further drives home the point that bureaucratic educators are "mercifully" allowing students to engage in an activity whose chief purpose is to give the brain a break rather than to allow children a time to engage the recesses of their creative minds and active bodies through play. Play, too, is a child's job.

In chapter 5, I examine creativity, an interest I developed when researching ways to relieve the emotional turmoil and misbehavior that widely exists in the adolescents that I teach. As I started reading literature about the psychological developments of adolescents, most of the literature focused on the infancy and early childhood periods of development. With a B.A. in history, I was undaunted by trying to discover the earliest possible reasons for certain behaviors. Investigating the psychoanalytic literature brought me to realize that when creative elements are present at an early age, a person is more likely to be happy and healthy emotionally for the rest of his life. I have come to a powerful realization—that emotional turmoil is greatly relieved or nonexistent when there is an abundance of creative outlets for children and teenagers to explore.

As I study many psychoanalytic writers, the one that calls out to me most is Winnicott, because he had access to many children and adolescents—over 60,000 patients during the course of his career in pediatrics and psychoanalysis. In particular, I am fascinated by Winnicott's transitional object theory, which explains the source of harmony between a child's inner subjectivity and outer objective world. Regarding psychology in general, Winnicott (1965) writes: "Psychology emerged from a hopeless muddle with the now accepted idea that there is a continuous process of emotional development, starting before birth, and continuing throughout life, till (with luck) death from old age" (p. 146). Winnicott helps me understand the original source of emotional health between an infant and his mother/caretaker and the branching out of that health between a child and objects in the environment. I have come to understand that emotional contentment comes from the ability of an infant, child, and later an adolescent and adult, to participate in creative acts with his or her environment. Knowing where our source of creativity is the biggest step toward knowing who we are and how to live a fulfilling life. Psychological health and creativity thus go hand in hand.

Childhood Need for Psychoanalysis

As a parent and a teacher, I find it helpful to know about sources of creativity. Winnicott's theories have shed much light on the beginnings of creativity. When one knows or witnesses the first creative experiences, one can help children identify and hone their talents and strengths by providing them necessary tools, encouragement, and opportunities. Creative endeavors and achievements lead to greater self-fulfillment and happiness.

If educators, parents, and psychoanalysts are to better help children and teenagers, they need to examine young people's lives more carefully. This means putting one's own pre-conceived ideas and, sometimes self-serving actions, second to the best interests of the children. The dominant role adult psychiatry plays over child psychiatry disturbs Winnicott (1966), who believes that "child psychiatry has much more to offer adult psychiatry than can ever be true the other way around" (p. 244). Child psychiatry has more to offer because the earliest moments in a person's life are the most valuable in predicting future health. This is why federal and state governments spend increasingly more money on the earliest years. If we can make the earliest years more positive, we can better ensure success throughout a person's life.

My fellow student, introduced at the beginning of this chapter, who believed that psychoanalysis is passé caused me to think about the reasons why this might be. But I am more interested in the reasons why this *must not* be. For one thing, "more children and adolescents in the United States die from suicide than from cancer, AIDS, birth defects, influenza, heart disease, and pneumonia *combined*" (Hillman, 1996, p. 84). Every day, "at least 1 million 'latchkey children' go home to where there is a gun" (p. 84). In addition, there are children and adolescents "from all economic classes in treatment for attention deficit disorders, hyperactivity, obesity, defiance, bulimia, depression, pregnancy, addiction . . ." (p. 84). Jonathan Kozol has spent a lifetime studying the plight of our youth in America and has haunting statistics. Lipsitz (2001) has gathered statistics that help put the reality of families around the world into better perspective:

A handful of multinational corporations now control more than one-third of the world's productive private-sector assets. Around the globe every day, more than thirty thousand children under the age of five die of starvation or completely curable diseases, some ten million every year—one every three seconds. More than a billion people subsist on incomes less than a dollar per day. The richest fifth of the world's population controls 85 percent of the globe's wealth, leaving little more than 1 percent for the poorest fifth. In Mexico, the twenty-four wealthiest families have more money than the twenty-four million poorest Mexicans. (p. 9)

When we look at the wide disparities that exist is in the world and how many people are affected by them, it is easy to see the problems as largely sociological. It is easy to see that governments, businesses, and other organizations actually have a vested interest in keeping this information—and thus people themselves—in the dark. If a large enough number of people got psychiatric help for the mental anguish they experience daily, often caused by their economic living conditions, there might easily be an outrage because people would realize how impoverished their psychic lives are as a result of their physical and fiscal impoverishment. However, as Winnicott (1996) points out,

It is not just slum children, neglected children, but our own children, who need treatment of a highly technical and complex kind, but treatment which, though it can be learned by anyone of average intelligence and stability of character, is not available. (p. 89)

This is why educators, parents, students, doctors, sociologists, psychologists, and policymakers must unite to do what is best for our children.

When one looks at the vital statistical information regarding children and adolescents, it is easy to see why psychoanalysis is necessary for bringing back a semblance of health and balance in a child's life. Sue Books (2002) has gathered pertinent information on the economic conditions of young people that includes in some depth the following:

Almost one in every five children (13.5 million) is now growing up in poverty, and one in every twelve children is growing up in extreme poverty—that is, in families with incomes of less than half the federal poverty line, or about $6,5000 for a family of three (Children's Defense Fund, 2000, pp. xi, xxviii). Poor children increasingly are suffering this level of desperation. More than 5 million children in the United States lived in families with incomes of less than half the federal poverty line in 1998, a 91 percent increase since 1976 (Children's Defense Fund, 2000, p. 2). If present trends continue, one in very three children born in 2000 will spend at least a year in poverty by his or her eighteenth birthday (Children's Defense Fund, 2000, p. 1).

Young children, especially young children of color, have been particularly abandoned in the rising economic tide that has not lifted all boats. Whereas just over 17 percent of all children and youth six to seventeen years old are living in poverty, more than 20 percent of all children younger than six are poor. The rate of poverty for children of color (Black and Hispanic) is almost double the rate for white children (Children's Defense Fund, 2000, p. 6). (p. 22)

The poverty that children experience contributes to their need for therapeutic treatment to help them understand their economic living conditions, where they fit into society, and how they can individually change their future.

Winnicott is clear that he always looks at the health or ill health of individuals in terms of their earliest experiences. Sylvia Payne (1958) explains that the importance of psychoanalysis is that "the ability to interpret these [unconscious mental processes] increases man's ability to communicate with his fellows. He learns a new language through the discovery of a capacity to read his own unconscious" (p. 12). Curriculum theorists are dedicated to improving the education of students, and in order to improve education, a connection between the first experiences and relationships of a child's life must be made to an individual's ability to create all his life.

Adolescent Needs for Psychoanalysis

Widespread need for psychotherapy became evident when I worked in administration and as a counselor at two psychiatric hospitals. This gave me the opportunity to see a wide variety of psychiatric problems faced by people from all walks of life. Depression and other psychiatric problems give no preference to whom they strike, be they young or old, rich or poor, educated or not. I saw many people that I knew personally from the community, and one thing I learned was to never judge a person by his appearance because people who seem content and well grounded are not always so. What struck me especially was the number of *teenagers* coming in for in-patient treatment, some as young as 11 or 12. Regarding teenagers, Winnicott (1986) notes that

at fourteen they are commonly suicidal, and theirs is the task of tolerating the interaction of several disparate phenomena—their own immaturity, their own

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puberty changes, their own idea of what life is about, and their own ideals and

aspirations; add to this their personal disillusionment about the world of grown-

ups—which for them seems to be essentially a world of compromise, of false

values, and of infinite distraction from the main theme. (p. 25)

Not being able to cope with home, school, and peer environments were, in my

experience, the main causes for depression, often with suicidal ideations. I felt

counseling would help teenagers more than adults because their minds are not yet closed

off to change and new ideas and ways of viewing the world.

One reason I enjoy teaching the middle school-age students is that they still have

a sense of hope, and they are trying desperately to figure out all of the contradictions and

compromises that exist in the adult world. Another reason why I was drawn to teaching

adolescents was a combination of recalling traumatic events that occurred in my teenage

years as well as my increased cognitive ability to remember and understand these events.

Jean Piaget's research shows that around the age of 11 a child develops greater cognitive

skills that help him or her make better distinctions between cause and effect. Piaget

(1976) writes that "it seems that it is not before the age of eleven or twelve . . . that the

subject [child] can free himself immediately of the pseudocontradictions that held back

his cognizance of the release points" (p. 34). While Piaget's research is extremely

technical, he discusses adolescent thought more generally. Ginsburg and Opper (1988)

summarize Piaget's research on adolescent thought as follows: "First, the adolescent

makes reality secondary to possibility. . . . The second distinctive feature of formal

operations is their 'combinatorial' property" (pp. 200-01). When given several factors

that may affect the outcome of an experiment, a young child will test each factor alone,

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but the "adolescent will combine them in an exhaustive way" (p. 201). Basically, "adolescent's cognitive structures have now developed to the point where they can effectively adapt to a great variety of problems" (p. 202), and what this means to psychoanalysts is that adolescents are at a point where they can creatively envision a multitude of different actions and outcomes for themselves.

The good news is that teenagers are at an optimum time in their life where they can cognitively envision new, different, and better ways to interact with the world. Unfortunately, this ability reaches its peak by the end of adolescence. Piaget's research supports this, and Piaget (in Ginsburg and Opper, 1988) maintains that by the end of adolescence "the individual's ways of thinking, that is, his cognitive structures are almost fully formed. . . .They have reached a high degree of equilibrium" (p. 202). What this means to educators and psychoanalysts is that it is best to actively engage adolescents in creative possibilities before they reach adulthood.

Burton, Obeidallah, and Allison (in Dimitriadis, 2003) generalize the adolescent year:

> Adolescence in contemporary American society is traditionally defined as a transition period, marking the change from childhood to adulthood. Occurring between the ages of eleven to twenty, normative adolescent development is characterized by qualitative biological, social, and cognitive changes for the individual. . . at the social level, adolescence is characterized as a life period when individuals develop increasing autonomy with respect to their relationships with their parents and family. (p. 6)

I am passionate in my belief that the adolescent years are *crucial* "make or break" years for successful mature adulthood. I am equally passionate about my belief that understanding of the earliest years of a child's life, such as the knowledge that Winnicott provides, is crucial in ensuring adolescent maturity into a creative adult life.

As a teenager I first experienced depression when I became aware of the dynamics going on in my family, in my classrooms, and in my social groups. At the age 12, my best friend died of leukemia and my parents got divorced. This led to my mother's raising five daughters by herself and putting us in the poverty statistics stated above. Fortunately, I was able to receive counseling, and a wise counselor helped me through this very difficult period. Ever since then, when I have gone through traumatic changes in my life, such as when my mother died, or when being married and raising children became too stressful, I have sought professional psychiatric help. So far, I have not needed to be on medication for my bouts of depression, but I would not hesitate to take drugs if my depressions did not go away with psychoanalytic discussions, or talk therapy.

The term "talk therapy" reminds me of a comment my 77 year-old father made when he realized I was writing a portion of my dissertation on psychoanalysis. He asked a simple question: "Wouldn't it be easier and less expensive if people just had conversations with each other?" This was one of those questions that sounded so simple that at first I disregarded it, but it stuck with me for weeks and caused me to recall Pinar's (2004) belief that curriculum theory is "complicated conversation" (p. 8). Societies, political arenas, schools, and communities, as well as individuals, are in need of what Pinar describes as "interdisciplinary intellectuality, erudition, and self-reflexivity. . . .

Information must be tempered with intellectual judgment, critical thinking, ethics, and self-reflexivity" (p. 8). Pinar is referring particularly to the complicated conversation that is curriculum theory, but it is sound advice for any discipline, especially psychoanalysis, of which Pinar said,

> There is, perhaps, no tradition of systematic inquiry into the sphere of the subjective, into the processes of self-formation—and their complex and ever-changing relations to the social and historical—that offers us as many provocative conceptual tools as do the various strands of psychoanalytic theory. (p. 57)

Pinar is on the right track, but there is an argument that puts the importance of psychology and psychoanalysis above all other disciplines. Referring to the many academic departments, Hillman (1975) writes that

> Our house has many mansions and even more windows; we perceive from a multiplicity of perspectives, ethical, political, poetic. But the psychological perspective is supreme and prior because the psyche is prior and must appear within every human undertaking. The psychological viewpoint does not encroach upon other fields, for it is there to begin with, even if most disciplines invent methods that pretend to keep it out. (p. 130)

As much as people may try to ignore the psyche it remains regardless. It is like the proverbial elephant in the living room. It behooves one to take notice and learn as much as one can about the psyche.

For most effective teachers, psychology and education go hand in hand. John Dewey (1964) expresses a similar opinion, which is worth quoting in its entirety:

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Only knowledge of the order and connection of the stages in the development of

the psychical functions can, negatively, guard against these evils, or, positively,

insure the full meaning and free, yet orderly or law-abiding, exercise of the

psychical powers. In a word, education itself is precisely the work of supplying

the conditions which will enable the psychical functions, as they successively

arise, to mature and pass into higher functions in the freest and fullest manner,

and this result can be secured only by knowledge of the process—that is, only by a

knowledge of psychology. (pp. 207-8)

Dewey's insight is just as pertinent today as it was when he first wrote these words over

fifty years ago.

Causes of School Violence

In the field of curriculum studies, Julie Webber's research of school violence

supports the need for a psychoanalytic study of increasing school violence. Webber

(2003) indicates that "the alienation and repression that students experience within the

physical spaces of the school contradict and exacerbate the parallel alienation and

repression coming at them from the rest of the society" (p. 19). One way that students

cope is through fantasy; specifically, Webber refers to Winnicott's "'secondary gains' . . .

[which] allows students to sublimate the desire for revenge (against their parents, the

school, and the society)" (p. 6). What is happening is that these objects (movies, video

games, the Internet, television, cell phones, etc.) are causing "interpassivity," which

briefly stated, "is when we gradually allow others and objects to do things in our place

because we no longer have the time or the inclination to make the time to experience

them for ourselves" (p. 6). Webber believes this interpassivity causes aggression "when

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the technology that they have used to 'believe' for them lets them down" (p. 7). This trend toward allowing electronic devices to communicate for us is just beginning. Look around. I see people everywhere wired to something electronic. Our principal sent out a notice reminding teachers to keep their cell phones turned off during the day because several were texting and phoning during class hours. My husband reports of a co-worker who was asked to limit the number of calls to a family member because it was interfering with her ability to do complete her duties. Besides cell phones, which consume much of modern society's attention, there are computers, TVs, cameras, appliances, and other electronics that are so much a part of our lives that we can scarcely believe we survived without them. Could it be that the fast-paced technological society that we are a part of is keeping us from that which we need to explore most – our psyches?

Like Webber, I agree that there are complex psychological reasons for the recent surge in school violence, but I believe it is necessary to explore the earliest relationships to get a clearer historical picture of what is causing this violence. It may sound simplistic to suggest that if families eat dinner at night together that the time spent together will bring a family closer together—but there is simple truth to this. One can argue that if family relationships are good to begin with, there is a likelihood for less violence or need for family interventions.

William Glasser's (1998) most significant finding in his research on adolescents was that "parent-family connectedness and perceived school connectedness were protective of every health risk behavior measure except history of pregnancy" (x). This is evidence that family-connectedness protects teens in many significant ways. While Webber identifies technology's role in violence, she is not naïvely claiming that

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technology itself is causing violence, but it is our *relationship* with technology that causes our own violent reactions and alienation. It behooves us to examine this relationship more closely, and Winnicott's transitional object theory offers an insightful strategy for doing so.

Webber gives examples of negative uses of objects in the Winnicottian sense. We need to give these students the intermediate or potential space between fantasy and reality that will be a positive aspect in their lives. For generations, sports, concerts, and other public events have had cathartic effects on our society, helping to keep society in order by providing citizens a means to blow off steam. In the same way, the Internet, videos, cell phones, and other technologies provide a holding place for our youth, even if temporary. Winnicott describes holding environment as the first environment in which a mother holds her infant, but he uses this term to indicate many holding environments that develop throughout the course of one's life.

Webber points out that "as long as the fantasy [technological devices] holds them, they will continue to do in line with the hidden curriculum, where relations between ideas and things have to stand in for relations between people" (p. 7). And when these objects no longer sustain adolescents, and with their not being mature enough to compromise, "they perceive their only option to be destruction" (pp. 7-8). "These objects believe in our place, and it is more comforting to know that others believe than it is to imagine what it might take to maintain our own beliefs while living amid nihilism" (p. 7). Technological devices could be said to be a kind of transitional object, but as Winnicott stresses, transitional objects should be naturally decathected and innate symbols of the creative type should take their place.

How adults view these technologies, these chosen objects of youth, complicates matters. As Lynn Spigel (in Williams, 1992) suggests, "it isn't just that people [adults] resist new technologies on the grounds of the technologies themselves. Instead, this resistance has to do with the threat that new forms of communication pose to preexisting forms of cultural authority" (xvii). However,

> the worst thing about this kind of logic . . . is that it forecloses the possibility of imagining alternatives of any sort, because changes in cultural access and tastes through new technologies threaten the very cultural institutions through which intellectuals and other arbiters of minority culture themselves find power and prestige. (xvii)

This is why Spigel and Williams insist that we must be aware of our prejudices, even against our youth and their new technologies. The prophetic writings of Williams (1992) are even more evident today: "It is from this generation, raised on television, that we are continually getting examples and proposals of electronic creation and communication which are so different from orthodox television as to seem a quite new technology and cultural form" (p. 127). Adolescents are in a quandary because they see the hypocrisy in society, and they have to decide how much a part of that hypocrisy they want to take part in.

To play the game of life, they must give into the disillusionment to some degree. As Jung (1953) writes,

> Our world is so exceedingly rich in delusions that a truth is priceless, and no one will let it slip because of a few exceptions with which it cannot be brought into accord. Whoever doubts this truth is of course looked upon as a faithless

reprobate, while a note of fanaticism and intolerance creeps into the discussion on all sides. (p. 187)

One could argue that the high-achieving students have learned to play the game better, but they are no closer to their authentic selves than students who have not learned to play the game; in fact, the higher-achieving students may be further from their authentic selves than disadvantaged students because they are playing the game better. This could cause one to ask, "If learning is so good, why do I feel so bad?"

It seems that kids spend more time texting, YouTubing, and Facebooking than they are actually *doing*, and this coincides with what Webber believes—that they are using technology passively and as a form of rebellion. And according to Winnicott (2005), "rebellion belongs to the freedom you have given your child by bringing him or her up in such a way that he or she exists in his or her own right" (p. 196). If, in infancy, there is the idea of death, then in adolescence there is the idea of murder. Winnicott means that in order to grow up, teenagers must take the place of the parents, and in this, there is a sort of death/murder. As Winnicott states it, "in the unconscious fantasy, growing up is inherently an aggressive act" (p. 195).

This brings home the point Webber makes regarding Internet and videos, that teenagers are using these technologies as vicarious alternatives to actually performing themselves. Greg Dimitriadis (2001) asserts that "young people today are using contemporary media to define themselves and to map their daily lives in ways that often confound adults" (p. 35). In his assessment of the dynamics between adult authority and adolescent need to create their own identity, Winnicott (1995) sees both sides. His advice to adult parents is that "the best they can do is to *survive*, to survive intact, and without

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changing colour, without relinquishment of any important principle. This is not to say

they may not themselves grow" (p. 196). As a parent, I feel that I learn as much from my

children as they do from me. Similarly, I feel that as a teacher I learn as much, if not

more, from my students as they do from me.

Adolescents are looked upon with suspicion—because they dare look at the truth

and name it. Teenagers are looking for a lifestyle that answers the contradictions in life.

They need to find a balance of living in the world but not necessarily being a part of it all.

They need to find the balance of accepting some social obligations and keeping true to

themselves. However, they must go through a notorious period of unbalance before they

can reach the correct equilibrium. In Robert Sardello's (2002) book *The Power of Soul*,

he explains this searching for balance:

> In seeking balance we are not seeking normalcy. In many ways, normalcy is the
>
> bane of virtue. We think that being normal means being just like everyone else—
>
> adjusted, productive, middle-of-the-road, not too visible, accepting the collective
>
> values. Rather than a virtue, however, this notion is deadly to the soul. It leaves
>
> out all the soul wishes to express—imagination, fantasy, dream, feeling,
>
> innerness, darkness, fecundity, genuine warmth, a sense of destiny, and true
>
> individuality. (p. 40)

What caused Thoreau to retreat into wilderness is likely the same hurried pace and

contradictory values that cause young adults to shy away from grueling adult lifestyles.

Our generation is not the first to face unsettling contradictions, and we can learn from

literature that precedes our generation.

Thoreau (2003) offers excellent advice when he says that "no face which we can give to a matter will stead us so well at last as the truth" (p. 256). Of course, Thoreau had the luxury of living in the wilderness for a long while with the prospects of returning to civilization whenever he so chose. Adolescents are at a point in their life when they are choosing which path to take, and parents and teachers need to give them the tools (knowledge) they need and then listen to where their hearts lead them.

Psychoanalysis and Mythology in Life's Journey

Thoreau fits Joseph Campbell's (2004) description of a mythological hero in that he went out by himself to think and to slay dragons only to

> return and reintegrate with society, which is indispensable to the continuous
>
> circulation of spiritual energy into the world, and which, from the standpoint of
>
> the community, is the justification of the long retreat, the hero himself may find
>
> the most difficult requirement of all. (p. 34)

It is interesting how much mythology and psychoanalysis are tied with one another. Freud (1989) writes that "in point of fact I believe that a large part of the mythological view of the world, which extends a long way into the most modern religions, *is nothing but psychology projected into the external world*" (p. 330). I like to think of my retreating into my world of writing as a kind of journey that leads me back to my family with a better sense of who I am and somehow re-creating me, thus being more able to provide spiritual energy to my family upon my return. Myths are fictions we use to explain earthly and human phenomena, and as Hillman (1975) reveals, "Myths talk to psyche in its own language; they speak emotionally, dramatically, sensuously, fantastically" (p. 154). Myths take us on a journey deeper into our souls more than

rational science does. Psychoanalyst Michael Parsons (2000) points out that "analysts are understandably wary of being drawn down interesting pathways only to find that what they are talking about has ceased to be psychoanalysis" (p. 47) and something more along the lines of spirituality.

Psychoanalysis and mythology involve individual journeys to find our place in the world, but the journey is often overshadowed by the final destination, or the ends instead of the means. Dewey (1964) comments on humankind's obsession with finality by saying that

> ends are, in fact, literally endless, forever coming into existence as new activities occasion new consequences. 'Endless ends' is a way of saying that there are no ends—that is no fixed self-enclosed finalities. While however we cannot actually prevent change from occurring we can and do regard it as evil. (p. 76)

Merleau-Ponty (in Greene, 1995) cautions that

> the idea of going straight to the essence of things is an inconsistent idea if one thinks about it. What is given is a route, an experience which gradually clarifies itself, which gradually rectifies itself and proceeds by dialogue with itself and with others. . . . What saves us is the possibility of a new development. (p. 115)

Despite our attempts at getting to the root of things, or to the end, life throws us curves that save us the fate of a predestined life.

Additionally, fiction saves us from a life of certainty and ends. Fiction focuses on journeys, journeys into the imagination. Journeys are the in-between places of beginnings and ends. Movement keeps us from stagnating and dying. Fiction provides readers temporary mind-frames; nothing is set in stone. James Hillman (1975) explains

that "fictions are not supposed to have great explanatory power, so they do not settle things for a mind searching for fixity. But they do provide a resting place for a mind searching for ambiguity and depth" (p. 151). The realization that people must face if they want their lives to be richer and have more personal meaning is that there are no absolutes, no final resting places while blood is still flowing through their veins. A person who is able and willing to journey into the imagination will gain more insights than a person who needs solid, scientific answers, or, as Hillman puts it, "As truths are the fictions of the rational, so fictions are the truths of the imaginal" (p. 152).

Journey of Psyche and Soul

Despite the increasing preference to "cure" the psyche with only medication, the concept that the soul should be *actively cared for* persists today. One example is Thomas Moore's book *Care of the Soul* (1994). Another book, Hillman's (1996) *The Soul's Code*, tells of the personal task of identifying what one's soul needs. Many psychotherapists practice under the belief that their patients have a soul and need to listen to the soul more carefully. The soul or psyche manifests in our personalities. It explains why we make certain choices and are attracted to certain ideas, things, and people. Our psyche, if we let it, leads us to particular creative processes in ourselves and in our students. This is because the creative process is central to the caring and the nurturing of our souls, ourselves.

Nowhere in education is this more evident than in the psychoanalytic educational theories present in the curriculum studies literature. In education teachers must prioritize the emotional health of human beings. Nell Noddings is an example of an educator who has written elaborately on compassion in education. Compassion encompasses an

awareness of the emotional or psychic needs of students and teachers, and as the majority of psychoanalysts would agree, the emotional needs of a child are or should be met first in the home. For Winnicott, it is more important for a teacher to have deep intuitive understanding of basic human behavior than it is for her to be an expert in psychoanalysis or the unconscious. With a basic knowledge of human nature, teachers have a greater "capacity for happiness and the enjoyment of life without denial of its seriousness and difficulty" (Winnicott, 1996, p 85). Further insight can come to the teacher who "has chosen to deepen his understanding and develop his natural talents further by undergoing analysis himself" (p. 85). However, Winnicott warns that students should be treated only by those actively practicing psychoanalysis. A teacher ought to have psychological insight into herself as well as her students—this will promote healthy emotional responsiveness as well as creativity.

Responding during a lecture to a student's query about the importance of emotion in education, Dewey (in Pinar, et al., 2002) observed: "Knowledge is a small cup of water floating on a sea of emotion" (p. 152). The knowledge that we connect with emotionally is the knowledge that stays with us. In addition to feelings and emotions, education encompasses rigor and discipline. Awareness of early psychic events and of emotional needs is central to the rigor of learning. Educators agree that a child learns more by doing than by watching; the child learns more by utilizing all of the senses, including touching, smelling, hearing, seeing, tasting, and feeling, than by one sense alone. This idea resonates in William Blake's (in Singer, 1990) poetry, "How do you know but ev'ry Bird that cuts the airy way / Is an immense world of delight, clos'd by your senses five" (p. 5)? When in touch with our emotional selves, we are in touch with all of our senses.

Dewey (1964) said that no matter how important the subject matter is in the curriculum or "however judiciously selected, [it] is empty of conclusive moral content until it is made over into terms of the individual's own activities, habits, and desires" (p. 132). Learners must be personally invested if the subject is to matter to them.

Our emotional selves are also in touch with our abilities to remember, to feel, and to imagine. Martha Nussbaum sees the necessity of combining rigor and emotion in the form of compassion while practicing law. As professor of law and ethics at the University of Chicago, Nussbaum (1995) insists that "technical legal reasoning, knowledge of law, and the constraints of precedent play a central role in good judging, supplying the bounds within which the imagination must work," (p. 82) but Nussbaum sees the humane approach to law as based on individual circumstances, which is why she is drawn to literature and to poetry in order to balance out judicial obligations. In particular, she stresses a line from Walt Whitman's (in Nussbaum, 1995) poem, "[the poet] sees eternity in men and women, he does not see men and women / as dreams or dots" (p. 81). Whitman means that the dreaming and creating of each individual is important and has eternal value. While Nussbaum calls on attorneys and judges to combine rigor and compassion in judging, Pinar (2004) impresses on educators that "information must be tempered with intellectual judgment, critical thinking, ethics, and self-reflexivity" (p. 8). Balance between rigor, reason, and freedom is what is needed.

Just as important as a venue for finding or discovering ourselves, literature simply allows us the freedom to enjoy fantasy, which is the daydreams of the poets. Segal (1991) is interested in Freud's curiosity about "the wishes expressed in the work of art [being] repressed wishes, unacceptable to consciousness" and "what makes us accept

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their expression by the artist" (p. 77)? Segal explains Freud's threefold answer. First, the writer or other artists's phantasy loses its egocentric character and touches "on something universal. Second, the wish is partly disguised. It may be softened and it is disguised in ways similar to the disguises of the dream" (p. 77). Finally, the artist's aesthetic pleasure diverts our attention from the hidden thought, or disguised dream—"a pleasure which bribes us to accept the hidden thought" (p. 77). These are the characteristics that constitute good literature. If you have ever read an exceptionally well-written novel or viewed a beautiful piece of art work, then you can imagine how the artist might go through these three stages of creation, which necessitates slowing down.

   Our society is rapidly changing. At present, there seems to be little interest in exploring one's mind, one's soul, or one's creativity. Curriculum theorists respect the importance of exploring the self. Greene (1995) believes that "only when teachers can engage with learners as distinctive, questioning persons—persons in the process of defining themselves—can teachers develop what are called 'authentic assessment' measures" (p. 13). My school district is promoting formative assessments in addition to summative assessments in order to evaluate students in various stages of their learning and in various different assessments. I support this idea because it gives teachers a truer indication of the abilities and interests of students. Formative assessments involve a process that takes time and patience. Pinar (2004) notes that

> the complicated conversation that is the curriculum requires interdisciplinary
> intellectuality, erudition, and self-reflexivity. This is not a recipe for high test
> scores, but a common faith in the possibility of self-realization and
> democratization, twin projects of social and subjective reconstruction. (p. 8)

Pinar creatively employs "the concept of *currere*—the Latin infinitive of curriculum—to denote the running (or lived experience) of the course. . . ." (xiii). The running of the course implies for the long term, staying on track and completing the course. Many religions employ "enduring till the end," being disciplined, and having commitment to reach the finish line, the goal, the reward, after having experienced the adventure of the journey, not its destination.

Marion Milner (1988) writes of Winnicott's speaking of the transitional object "as the symbol of a journey" and how "it seems really to be a two-way journey: both to the finding of the objective reality of the object and to the finding of the objective reality of the subject—the I AM" (p. 41). Milner's courage to look at herself as completely and honestly as possible is evident in her first book, *A Life of One's Own*, written under the pseudonym Joanna Fields. As Eigen (2004) suggests, "By gazing at one's predicament, one might even become more open to a deeper, fuller flow of life" (p. 30). This, in fact, was Milner's goal—to feel more at home with herself and with herself and others. Thus, the most important use of the transitional object is finding out who we are and who we can become; this takes time and effort. It also takes a leap of faith because, as the name suggests, this is a continuously moving, ever evolving, temporary, in-and-out, ebb-and-flow process. Louise Rosenblatt (2005) chose the word "transaction" to describe reading "for the idea of a continuing to-and-fro, back and forth, give-and-take reciprocal or spiral relationship in which each conditions the other" (xviii), the book, the author, and the reader.

Those persons who relish a quick fix and final solutions do not value this perspective. Dewey (1964) warns that

love of certainty is a demand for guarantees in advance of action. Ignoring the

fact that truth can be bought only by adventure of experiment, dogmatism turns

truth into an insurance company. Fixed ends upon one side and fixed

'principles'—that is authoritative rules—on the other, are props for a feeling of

safety, the refuge of the timid and the means by which the bold prey upon the

timid. (p. 80)

Psychoanalysis requires that we be the author of our own lives. Dewey (1964) writes that

an aim not framed on the basis of a survey of those present conditions which are

to be employed as means of its realization simply throws us back upon past

habits. We then do not do what we intended to do but what we have got used to

doing, or else we thrash about in a blind ineffectual way. (p. 77)

When we find ourselves blindly thrashing about, Peter Applebaum (2003) advises that

"there is a realm of time where the goal is not to 'have' but to 'be,' not to own but to

give, not to control but to share, not to subdue but to be in accord" (p. 30). Quick, easy

answers are not what a life of introspection entails; a life worth living involves a journey

and an adventure into self-examination and creative effort, which sometimes requires that

we simply be still.

Winnicott (1986) acknowledges that Freud introduced psychoanalysis as a way to

treat psychiatrically ill patients without drugs or hypnotism. Freud began using

hypnotism in an attempt to "cure" his patients, but he became dissatisfied by the results

and by his inability to remove the negative symptoms. He then applied psychoanalysis

into regular therapy sessions where he worked *with* the patient. In no hurry to fix or

remove symptoms, Freud discovered a more effective process which enabled important

inspirations to be revealed to the patient himself as part of a journey. Even though Winnicott was trained in the medical sciences, he emphasizes that, "when I do an analysis, this is not science. But I depend on the science when I do work that could not have been done before Freud" (p. 15). Winnicott, like Freud, was a medical doctor whose background was in the biological sciences, and, like Freud, Winnicott quickly realized the limitations of the hard sciences in finding out the psychological conflicts that ail people. Freud founded psychoanalysis as we know it today, and Winnicott has used, adapted, and added to Freud's techniques in helping thousands of people during his pediatric and psychoanalytic practice.

Winnicott, in his pediatric treatment of children, realized how much children and their parents need a degree of psychological counseling, if only to reassure them that they were not isolated in their experiences. Winnicott (1986) believes that what psychoanalysis mainly tells us about people is their deep, hidden life, "which has roots in the real and imaginative life of earliest childhood" (p. 16).

When parents brought their children to Winnicott for medical treatment, they desired that he take time to explain medical and psychological concepts to assure them that they were doing right and to gently guide them to improve their ability to care for their children. Unlike many medical professionals who quickly evaluate a patient, prescribe a drug and leave, Winnicott possessed personal qualities that earned him a reputation of "the Dr. Spock of England." However, as James Grotstein (in Little, 1990) reveals,

> Long known largely for his concept of transitional objects, the holding
> environment, and primary maternal preoccupation, the analytic world has

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awakened slowly but surely to the fact that, despite his deceptively practical

language and despite the fact that so many of his contributions were delivered to

lay audiences, he was not a "British Dr. Spock" but rather a sophisticated and

sentient metaphsychologist whose contributions have plumbed the ontological

depths of our existence, have "transitionalized" psychoanalytic perspective from

the single subject to the indivisibility of the dyad, have introduced the "third

dimension" of dialectics, irony, and paradox into a psychoanalytic theoretic

structure that did not know that it was still trapped in the first dimension: of

"either/or," and helped to legitimize the therapeutic (and therefore positive)

aspects of countertransference. (p. 7)

The very quality that makes Winnicott hard to hold down and label—his theories being

open and fluid and subject to various interpretations—also makes him highly usable.

While Benjamin Spock was a very talented pediatrician able to write and teach

about behavior and its complexities, Spock's and Winnicott's contributions took different

turns. Winnicott decided to devote his career to child psychiatry (1987, p. 2). Introducing

Winnicott's book, Spock credits Winnicott with influencing him by giving Spock great

insights into the subtleties and dynamics of mother-child relationships. Because of his

special expertise, Winnicott "became one of the major theoreticians of the British

psychoanalytic movement, and most of his publications focused on this subject. For me

[Spock], he helped to bridge the gap between pediatrics and the dynamics of child

development" (ix). Unlike many psychiatrists, Winnicott (2005) chose "to look at society

in terms of its healthiness, that is, in its growth or perpetual rejuvenation naturally out of

the health of its psychiatrically healthy members" (p. 190). It was a viewpoint that earned him respect and one that I affirm in this work.

Hobbits and Orcs: Inner Versus Outer Power

The times in which we live where political, corporate, and technological powers reign supreme, it is a relief to know that some power still comes from individual human beings. Psychoanalysis, the study of the individual's mind, emotions, dreams, and feelings, has been a major force in bringing personal power to individuals. As globalization becomes an increasing part of life, it is more important for individuals to remain connected to themselves and remember how they fit into the big scheme of things. The United States provides many freedoms to its citizens that many other countries around the world do not, yet its citizens are still at the whim of government policies, political decisions, corporate control, and technological takeovers.

I use one of America's favorite fantasy novels, J. R. R. Tolkien's (1954) *The Lord of the Rings*, as an analogy for what constitutes real power. This novel provides an example of dual desires for outside and in-your-face power such as the evil Saruman and his gruesome Orcs provide, and also for the quiet power that comes from within, such as the underdogs Frodo and Sam Gamgee provide. Peter Jackson's (2001) blockbuster movies came out when my two older teenagers were reading the series. Like most teenagers and adults, Ali and Chad were mesmerized by the realness of Sauron, leader of the Black Riders and Gandalf, leader of the underground movement to keep power from the evil forces. Around the same time superhero movies such as *X-men, Spiderman, The Incredible Hulk,* and *Daredevil* were released. When I listened to people talk about the characters, they seemed more drawn to the quiet, understated ones, because they seem to

have a more powerful but peaceful force from within—characters such as tiny Yoda in *Star Wars*. This inner power is psychological, and if you examine the understated characters in all of these movies, you will find that they are self-reflective, being insightful about themselves as well as the people around them. Some may call it inner strength, insight, instinct, or self-confidence; it is all these things and more. Some people describe inner power using psychological and spiritual terms; often the two go hand in hand.

People with this special inner, self-reflective power are at an advantage because they are able to have greater self-control. Thus, they direct their destiny to a greater extent and with longer lasting effects than other individuals. Not only do these individuals have greater self-control, but it seems to follow that they also have greater influence over circumstances, things, and *other* people around them. In other words, their *inner* power trickles *outward*, normally with good and positive results for everyone and everything concerned. This individual and inner power is fascinating, because it is more fully effective. It is my belief that this self-control is ultimately longer lasting and more healthful—physically, emotionally, intellectually, and spiritually—than any other kind of power. If this inner power could be harnessed on a wider, even global scale, the results would give positive power to individuals from within. Instead, what we see on a wider scale, even global, scale is forced power from *up high* trickling *down to* individuals, often with negative consequences.

John Fiske (1993), in his book *Power Plays, Power Works*, describes two different kinds of power, which he proposes "to call strong, top-down power 'imperializing' and weak, bottom-up power 'localizing.'" (p. 11) Like Sauron and

Saruman, who want to control all Middle-earth and its inhabitants, "the aim of *imperializing power* is to extend its reach as far as possible—over physical reality, over human societies, over history, over consciousness" (p. 11) Even though government and corporate power is visibly more substantial, when we understand localizing power, "[its] significance is immense" (p. 5) While reading or watching *The Lord of the Rings,* it is easy to believe that Saruman and his vast number of well-disciplined and organized Orcs will win control of Middle-earth. Who would have thought that two humble hobbits would have the integrity and perseverance to save Middle-earth from destruction? Likewise, how many individuals believe in themselves enough to know that they have more power to control their destinies than do outside forces?

One reason why these superhero, larger-than-life movies and TV shows are so popular is that they depict the evil villain, who may represent governments, corporations, and political leaders, and who is exerting unnecessary, unwanted force on individuals. As Americans, many of us are glad to see our government use powerful tactics to gain influence in other parts of the world. The government is also using its power to govern its own country. As an educator, I am particularly concerned about the federal government's increasing power in local education. This power is coming in the form of set standards for everyone. One of my child's teachers recently quit teaching, telling me that she does not think public schools want teachers like her anymore. All they want is for teachers to teach the test now. She asked me what I thought would have happened if she had not been able to teach my son differently than solely teaching what would be on the end-of-year test. If she had had to stick to the test in order to teach my son, he would not have flourished as much. That is the problem with standardization. It attempts to

bring equality to education, but it leaves out the most important factor, the individual child and his or her circumstances. We should have some set standards, but not at the cost of a child's individuality.

Students get the message that employees get—that the bottom line is that the dollar and the grade is more important than the individual. Fiske (1993) writes that "control, like discourse, is productive as well as repressive" and "control and discourse are similarly linked: control is to power as discourse is to knowledge" (p. 17). C. S. Lewis's (1978) *The Chronicles of Narnia* is a literary example of false versus real power. Near the beginning of the series the White Witch is obviously the being with the most power. She rules Narnia. She even controls the weather to the point of making it always winter but never allowing Christmas to arrive. This reminds me of the advice that many new teachers are given by older veteran teachers—"don't smile till Christmas"—in order to keep in total control. The White Witch rules all the animals in Narnia. She *thinks* she has complete power and control, but as evidenced by the Beavers' subversive activities (e.g. the underground), we see that individuals have more control than she thinks. Even with very powerful magic and strict use of force, total power evades the White Witch. The power that she does wield, in reality, makes her lonely, hard, and miserable. One could thus argue about what her power is worth, or whether she possesses it at all.

This sounds familiar to many teachers, who take false control of a classroom, thus hardening themselves and barricading themselves against the warmth that comes from establishing a positive personal rapport with the students, that is, giving *students* power. Palmer (1998) realizes that "the discerning innocence of young children deepens my conviction that at every level of education, the selfhood of the teacher is key" (p. 7); it is

the key (or ring of power) that brings lasting, positive power to both teachers and students. Palmer also reveals two things he has learned from K-12 teachers: that "teachers at all levels of education have more in common than we think, and we should not be so glib about which level we call 'higher'" (p. 6). I have often thought it would be a most enlightening and humbling experience for teachers at higher levels and teachers at lower levels to switch places with one another long enough to understand and appreciate the differences and similarities in each grade.

Technology: The 'Ring of Power' That Rules the Earth

One of the main tools that leaders, governments, and corporations use to gain power and control is technology. "The Rings of Power forged by Sauron and the elves are the most powerful technology in Middle-earth," according to Theodore Schick (2003, p. 21). Even in a fantasy published in 1950, the reader is exposed to the dilemma of technology and its uses. Science-fiction writer Isaac Asimov takes the Rings to be a symbol of technology, and he expresses this in his account of a drive that he and his wife, Janet, took along the New Jersey Turnpike. As Asimov and Janet passed a section of oil refineries filled with "ugly, pipelike structures, . . . [w]aste oil was leaking at the top of tall chimneys and the smell of petroleum products filled the air," Janet turned with troubled eyes and said, "There's Mordor" (p. 21). And within the walls of Mordor, where Saruman resides, lies the thousands of orcs, originally genetically engineered by Morgoth using captured elves, then later made stronger and resistant to sunlight (called Uruk-hai) by Sauron and Saruman purposely for evil. Unlike Sauron and Saruman, Schick (2003) writes, the elves who originally "made [the Rings] did not desire strength or domination or hoarded wealth, but understanding, making, and healing, to preserve all

things unstained" (p. 23). I am hopeful when I talk to people who honor the earth, themselves, and others by recognizing the delicate balance among us all.

Educator Karen Ferneding (2003), in her book *Questioning Technology*, focuses on electronic technologies and their effect on society, especially teachers and students. One of my professors, William Reynolds (2005), has asked frequently in class—whose knowledge is of most value, and to what purpose is that knowledge being used? In no other way does the knowledge of the power elite affect the most number of people than with electronic technology. Ferneding quotes Fox (in Ferneding, 2003) regarding his theory that the proliferation of electronic technology is "replacing the agency of human speculation with a kind of impersonal, disembodied, free-floating, public dissemination of information" (p. 57). This reminds me of the free-floating eye that Sauron uses to see and control everyone everywhere. Sauron himself has no physical body; therefore, he uses his technology of the all-seeing eye (Palantir) quite effectively. This is doubly crippling to the well-being of Middle-earth because not only do the inhabitants not have access to this technology, but they are being controlled by it.

Gorz (in Ferneding, 2003) expresses his fear when he writes that "Technical culture is lack of culture in all things non-technical" (p. 254). Ferneding continues explaining that

> the danger is that as the lifeworld becomes subsumed by *technique*, we will have lost the capacity to notice. At this point we become engaged within an unfortunate paradox: Technology expressed as *technique* surpasses its function of reflexivity and thus engenders the absolute power to control *because* technology reflects the abdication of our responsibility toward it. (pp. 254-55)

When we rely too much on technology we cease to be self-reflective, or to notice many things nontechnical. Even though PDP computers have displayed fascinating cognitive properties, they still do not compare, according to Churchland (2000) with the "marvelous alternative technology humming happily away inside the nervous system of any living creature," (p. 14) proving that "an army of fumbling tortoises, [the brain] by an artful strategy, manages to outrun the hare [PDP computer]" (pp. 14-15). Another aspect of relying too much on technology, as Webber reminds us, is manifesting itself in the violence in schools and among teenagers.

We can learn a lot from Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*. First and foremost, we can learn to appreciate exceptionally well written literature. Why are these novels so popular? The genre of fantasy is becoming more and more sought after as the world becomes more and more mechanized and technological. There is irony that our lives were supposed to become easier after the industrial and technological revolutions, yet those lives, have become more hectic and complex. Fantasy offers people an escape from both the humdrum doldrums of everyday life and from the complexities of the modern/postmodern conditions. Considered to be the leading authority on Tolkien, Tom Shippey (2000) goes so far as to say that "the dominant literary mode of the twentieth century has been the fantastic" (vii). The cause, Shippey believes, is the disease commonly known as "'escapism': readers and writers of fantasy are fleeing from reality" (viii). Our lives are more harried and complicated than ever before, thus giving rise to the sought-after fantasy novels. This is also one of the reasons many are looking for answers to their overcrowded, complex lives and why psychoanalysis provides relief.

I relish fantasy because it takes me *back* in time. Life is so fast paced now, that I want a novel that can take me to a different world, in many ways, much simpler than the one I'm living in. I can lose myself in that world. I can revel in the simple choices between good and evil. These choices seem easy, and they are relatively black and white compared with real-life choices. Or are they? Don't we as a society tend to complicate things?

What has happened to reverie that Bachelard (1988) speaks of? Reverie is a rare and priceless commodity in our capitalistic, 24-hour news day, always-on-the-go culture. Reading Gaston Bachelard's (1988) book, *Air and Dreams*, was like breathing in the fresh mountain air while hiking the Appalachian Trail, something I used to take time to do as a teenager. Bachelard (1988) describes the need for silence as following:

> In order to hear things that belong to infinite space, we must reduce to silence all the noises on earth. We must also—do I even need to mention it?—forget all that we have learned from mythology and school books. Then we can understand that contemplation is essentially a creative power. (p. 49)

Sadly, many of us do not take the time to be—be still—one of my ways to heal. I used to lie in my bed and listen to Led Zeppelin's (Plant, 1971) famous "Stairway to Heaven" song; now I am reminded of the lyrics that spoke to me then touched me, "Dear lady can you hear the wind blow, and did you know, you're stairway lies on the whispering wind." The lyrics call to us to be quiet and still in order to hear what our hearts and minds have to tell us about the pathway to self-discovery. I first read and research, but only after I am still and contemplative do my best ideas come.

I find myself in a continuous struggle to balance between overanalyzing and oversimplifying. Sometimes I daydream about moving into an Amish community and growing all my own vegetables and preparing them from scratch. I know this is a physically demanding way of life, but I would take physical strain over emotional strain any day. To me, emotional strain drains my body *physically* as well as emotionally. Andrew Light (2003) in his essay titled "Tolkien's Green Time: Environmental Themes in *The Lord of the Rings*" discusses what he means by "green time." The characters most in tune with nature, according to Light, are Tom Bombadil, Goldberry, and the ents, all of whom "either implicitly or explicitly acknowledge a different time scale . . . [that is] more attuned to the rhythms of the natural world" (p. 155). These unworldly characters do not seem to be affected by the War of the Rings, just as the Amish and others who are less worldly are less affected by America's technological warfare on Earth.

Perhaps if more women and marginalized minorities had access to and became involved in science and technology, our societies would have a better balance of the natural and the technical. We are on a roller coaster ride, and we cannot get off, as far as technology is concerned. Technology was supposed to free us up to have more leisure time and to relax more, but just the opposite has occurred. Saltman and Gabbard (2003), referring to Juliet Schor's work, *The Overworked American*, suggest that "even in our age of laborsaving technologies, members of market societies are working longer hours than ever before, much to the neglect of familial and communal ties" (p. 62). Thus, technological power proves to be a barrier to our creative journey of searching our psyche and soul.

Jean-Francois Lyotard published his 1984 book, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, on the changes that science, technology, and the arts have undergone since the nineteenth century. Amazingly, he predicted then, 30 years ago, many of the events that authors currently write about. For example, Lyotard (1984) predicted that it would be "conceivable that the nation-states will one day fight for control of information, just as they battled in the past for control over territory, and afterwards for control of access to and exploitation of raw materials and cheap labor" (p. 5). This will result in the few in power having access to information and knowledge, leaving the less powerful, poor, and those who want knowledge simply for its aesthetic and intrinsic value, out of the loop. What Lyotard does is

> visualize learning circulating along the same lines as money, instead of for its 'educational' value or political (administrative, diplomatic, military) importance; the pertinent distinction would no longer be between knowledge and ignorance, but rather, as is the case with money, between 'payment knowledge' and 'investment knowledge. . . .' (p. 6)

Derrida (2002) also believes that with the world as it is, access to knowledge is imperative:

> What happens today in Bosnia, in Israel, and in so many places, compels the states and the nations to transform their own assumptions. And this is not simply a continuous progress, but sometimes a break . . . in the concept of state, in the concept of internationality, in the concept of 'citizen of the world,' and so

on and so forth. To do this, we need philosophy. That's why the question of

teaching philosophy is not simply a question for teachers and pupils. It's a

worldwide political question. If the citizens of all the countries are not learned,

some of them, in philosophy, they won't understand anything [of] what's

happening, not only in the newspaper, but in the decisions of the state, the

decisions of the [UN] Security Council. . . . Even if we think that we have to

deconstruct some tradition, at the same time we have to insist that these traditions

be taught, and taught more than ever. (pp. 26-27)

I was distraught when my school considered not teaching social studies and science in

order to give students more exposure to what would be on the standardized test. I

thought about George Orwell's novel *1984* and how this is the first step in relinquishing

freedom—when we stop knowing and learning about our past.

I consider myself extremely fortunate to participate in a doctoral program because

it demands that I take the time to read and understand things that I would not have access

to nor the self-discipline to understand by myself. Georgia Southern University's

Curriculum Studies Program has enlightened me and, in turn, my family, my friends, my

neighbors, my colleagues, my students, and other people I come in contact with. Thus, I

have been given inner power that has emanated outward with positive results. What

relatively little knowledge I have acquired so far has em*power*ed me, and I feel it is my

duty to pass that knowledge and empowerment to others.

Lyotard is significant because he paved the way for many modern-day

intellectuals. He wrote not only about the effects of technology but also about how

postmodernism is affecting civilization through its governments and corporations. Many

have been influenced by his foresight, including McLaren, who sometimes writes with the well-meaning passion of a revolutionary but who is almost impossible to comprehend (certainly by those he wishes to liberate). However, in his book *Critical Pedagogy and Predatory Culture*, McLaren (1995) is capable of cutting to the chase with razor-sharp images:

> The reality and promise of democracy in the United States has been
> invalidated by the ascendancy of new postmodern institutionalizations of brutality
> and the proliferation of new and sinister structures of domination. This has been
> followed by an ever fainter chorus of discontent as the voices of the powerless
> and the marginalized grow increasingly despondent or else are clubbed into
> oblivion by the crackling swiftness of police batons. (p. 1)

The above quote helps define the predatory culture that McLaren writes about, and it sounds almost as violent as the war of Middle-earth. After giving many examples of predatory culture, McLaren also guides the reader in using critical pedagogy to expose power in order to weaken it.

Curriculum theorist John Weaver (2004) reminds his students in class that things are less powerful when they are revealed. It makes sense that one cannot fight what one cannot see or does not know exists. Knowledge is power. While the upper elite have access to most knowledge because they have access to government, technology, education, and wealth, it *is* possible for the underdog to obtain knowledge if they know it exists and where to find that knowledge. It is the responsibility of each one of us, no matter what our circumstances, to search out and find truths, both as individuals and as a society, for ourselves and on behalf of those not in a position to do so for themselves.

Power in the Schools

As an educator, I am intensely committed to gaining knowledge myself in order to pass that knowledge and the ability to obtain further knowledge for oneself to my students. Power has everything to do with schooling. I use the noun "schooling" instead of education because power in the negative sense has more to do with schooling than it does with education. A student can be schooled without being educated. Schooling in America uses coercive power to effect results. David Gabbard (2003) writes that "the state uses compulsory schooling as a ritual for enforcing a market society" (p. 64). Power by force in education results in limited, temporary, and even unwanted results.

I find it ironic, sad, and predictable that the federal government's programs of No Child Left Behind and Zero Tolerance have resulted in what teachers and administrators across Glynn County are considering to be one of the worst years teaching in their careers. Why has this year been so bad? The federal government is using its power to force all schools everywhere to adhere to its dictates. These dictates come in the form of mandating that all children, regardless of their capabilities and desires, be in the regular classroom for a majority of the day. Zero Tolerance is aimed at limiting violence in schools, yet in recent years teachers have noted an *increase* in violence. All this goes to show that power cannot be exerted or obtained by force to gain the desired results.

One day I bumped into my oldest daughter's second-grade teacher outside a public elementary school where she taught for 20 years and where my youngest daughter now attends. This teacher stopped to tell me the dilemma she is having about which school to send her only son. She told me she is debating between this public school and a private school. She confided in me that never in her wildest dreams would she have

considered sending her son anywhere but at the beloved public school at which she gave her mind, body, heart and soul to for 20 years. But she is deeply worried about the pressures being placed on the teachers at the same time creativity and power is being taken away from the teachers. I do not know which school she will choose, but I do understand her dilemma.

Much of this authority is being taken away from the teachers because of the federal mandates that are driving the curriculum now. A Nation at Risk, No Child Left Behind, and Zero Tolerance are all cliche terms used by the government to scare Americans into believing that our schools are failing miserably. The most enlightening information schools are gaining from all the pre- and post-testing is that poorer children are failing. What the government *fails* to understand, or at least reveal, is that the students who are failing, for the most part, are those in poverty, and these students are failing *because of* their poverty. The government wants to hold the teachers responsible for their academic performance rather than the government welfare policies and the families themselves.

If you walk into any school or educational office, you will see a wall near the administrative offices lined with bar graphs. These bar graphs show where each school ranks in comparison with other schools, where each teacher ranks in comparison with other teachers, and where each student ranks in comparison with other students. When I look at these graphs, I get the message (as do many parents) that these schools, these teachers, and, worst, these students, are a statistic, a mere number. I also get the message that, like our country and our corporations, we all are in competition with one another.

What this means in my corner of the world and, no doubt, similarly all over the United States, is that one year (2003-04) alone brought six initiatives to our local school district. That means six new programs were initiated in the same year to help improve teaching and learning. These initiatives, some federal and some local, comprise the following: 1) the federally mandated inclusion policies that require special education students to be placed in regular classrooms for the major portion of the day; 2) the Terry Alderman disciplinarian plan to help eliminate discipline problems; 3) the Learning-Focused strategies that require teachers to change any existing lesson plans to fit Learning Focused's mold; 4) the new Every Day Math learning; 5) the Bridges reading program; and 6) instructional coaches at each school site. Any one of these plans might be helpful if carried out properly *by themselves*, but it is inconceivable to me that a school system would try to incorporate so many changes in one year.

What all these changes translate to is extreme stress and frustration among administrators and teachers. The middle school where I taught for two years before taking a year's leave to stay home with my newborn son and where my two teenagers attended reeks with a tension that I seldom felt while I was there. Many of the teachers there have told me that I chose the best year to stay home. New teachers and veteran teachers alike are stressed to the hilt. Many are choosing or are tempted to choose to take early retirement, to change schools, or to change professions. I have never seen anything like this before. It is ironic that the "year from hell" that brought forth all these stressful changes from on high was the same the year I began graduate studies, studies that shed light on the sources and effects of these federal and local mandates.

While teachers everywhere are being pigeon-holed deeper and deeper into a highly regularized, paperwork-driven, creativity-lacking abyss, I have thankfully and gratefully been reading Roy's interpretation of Deleuze. Roy (2003) refreshingly believes that "teacher preparation deserve[s] a different kind of theoretical attention that would not merely seek regularities and order, but be able to see learning opportunities in irregular spaces and moments. . . ." (p. 5). Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari (1987) share in their own words, "finite networks of automata in which communication runs from any neighbor to any other, the stems or channels do not preexist, and all individuals are interchangeable, defined only by their *state* at any given moment" (p. 17). I am starting to see more and more possibilities in my pedagogy. There is a kind of release, relief and excitement at the myriad prospects using this frame of reference and mind. I also see why psychoanalysis is so invaluable to me as a teacher. It allows me to recognize my many states of emotional being, so that I can function more effectively as a human being in the school and otherwise.

The saddest part of all is that when the teachers are stressed out, it affects the students. The students are affected negatively by the very plans that are supposed to help them. As important as any tips, techniques, or methods may be in teaching, Palmer (1998) reveals that the most practical insight is to know what is happening inside us as we try any methods or techniques—"The more familiar we are with our inner terrain, the more surefooted our teaching—and—living becomes" (p. 4). This comes only through serious self-reflection.

A good friend who teaches at a middle school told me of her experience with the Learning-Focused (2008) program. In this program, teachers are required to develop

two-day lesson plans that basically grab the student's attention to begin with and summarize appropriately at the end of the lesson. An "instructional coach" at each site visits the classroom to evaluate how the Learning Focus program is being implemented. My friend has been teaching for 10 years and is considered one of the most vibrant, caring, and effective teachers at this school. Each of her Learning Focus evaluations pointed out her areas of weakness; one day she was so upset with the result of her evaluation that she started to cry in front of her students. She finally did get a good evaluation toward the end of the year, but at what cost and for whose purpose? She may or may not be teaching any better than she already was, but her students have definitely been affected by the strain and restraint placed upon her. This teacher would benefit by taking McLaren's (1995) advice to demystify the government's attempt to control: "Critical pedagogy attempts to analyze and unsettle extant power configurations, to defamiliarize and make remarkable what is often passed off as the ordinary, the mundane, the routine, the banal" (p. 231). Instead of accepting these initiatives as ordinary and "just another government requirement" teachers should understand why the government feels the need to pin the students, teachers, and administration down. If teachers realized how liberating critical pedagogy could be, they would be furious. If directed appropriately, anger can be an impetus for positive change and growth. Perhaps teachers and other citizens just accept these terribly restrictive conditions because they are afraid of possible negative consequences of speaking up against them or they hope they will magically disappear.

I was recently in a predicament when our principal presented to us the idea of an intersession where students who score below 70 percent on the final benchmark test will

have to attend the intersession to better prepare them for the final Criterion-Referenced Competency Test (CRCT). Our assistant superintendent apparently decided that this would send a message home how important it is and how serious the schools are about students doing well on these tests. He apparently wants to cover his bases when the time comes and their scores keep these students from graduating to the next grade. The worst part of this, for me, is that the intersession will likely take place during the period of the day when the students would be in physical education, art, music, or Spanish. We have to ask ourselves, really, what is more important—that these students pass a test with a 70 percent or higher or that they engage in activities that will expand their minds. Truthfully, we should ask ourselves if it is possible to do both, and if so, how can we most appropriately do both.

Having the luxury of taking a year off from teaching, I had opportunities and time to visit different schools and talk to many teachers and parents about how all of these mandatory programs are affecting the schools. The consensus is that it is *way too much* for the administrators, the teachers, and the students to handle. Teachers are able to see positive things in all of these approaches and are glad for *these* pluses, but too much information is being pushed at them in too small a time frame with too much responsibility being placed on their shoulders. They are not free to teach in the way that they love to teach and the way that they know is most effective in the long run.

Tolkien is a prime example of a teacher teaching what he loves and teaching the way he loves. Joe Kraus (2003) quotes Tolkien and how he expresses his enthusiasm for learning and teaching in a letter to his son Michael:

I was never obliged to teach anything except what I loved (and do) with an

inextinguishable enthusiasm . . . The devotion to 'learning', as such and without

reference to one's own repute, is a high and even in a sense spiritual vocation.

(pp. 138-139)

In addition to being one of this century's most influential writer, Tolkien was also a

sought-after professor at Oxford because "on some subjects Tolkien simply knew more,

and had thought more deeply, than anyone else in the world" (Shippey 2000, ix). In

particular, Tolkien was a philologist: he studied historical forms of languages, including

Old English (Anglo-Saxon), Old Norse, Finnish, and Welsh. He also invented his own

language. In a letter in *The New York Times*, Tolkien wrote,

The remark about 'philology' [in the excerpted letter, 'I am a philologist, and all

my work is philological'] was intended to allude to what is I think a primary 'fact'

about my work, that it is all of a piece, and *fundamentally linguistic* in inspiration

. . . The invention of languages is the foundation.

The 'stories' were made rather to provide a world for the languages than

the reverse. To me a name comes first and the story follows. (xiii)

That Tolkien was a philologist may account for the complexity in his novels.   Once you

read Tolkien's works, other authors' works seem easier. It is kind of like taking a cycling

class at the gym. The instructor tells you to put 80 percent tension on the wheels and

pretend you're *sprinting up* a hill. This is very difficult. Then she tells you to take off

some tension and pretend you're on a straight road. This then becomes much easier after

having sprinted up a hill at 80 percent. Another example would be the reading in this

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doctorate program. Once you read some of those books, you can pick up just about any other book and have an easier go of it.

Power Through Literature

Because of my interest in literature, and in particular, the genre of fantasy, I believe in the importance of empowering students through their interpretations, connections, and feelings *through* fantasy. Shippey (2000) writes that

> the dominant literary mode of the twentieth century has been the fantastic. This
> may appear a surprising claim . . . However, when the time comes to look back at
> the century, it seems very likely that future literary historians . . . will see as its
> most representative and distinctive books like J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the*
> *Rings*, and also George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four . . .*, William Golding's
> *Lord of the Flies . . .* , Kurt Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse-Five . . .*, Ursula Le
> Guin's *The Left Hand of Darkness*, Thomas Pynchon's *The Crying of Lot-49. . . .*
> (vii)

 The most powerful thing about fantasies is that they require only one's imagination and feelings to connect one to the fantasy. Consequently, when one's emotions, imagination, and intellect are so intertwined and enthralled with the fantasy, a person might not realize how much the fantasy is affecting him. Literature has the capability of taking readers in a myriad of directions. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) write that "American literature, and already English literature, manifest this rhizomatic direction to an even greater extent; they know how to move between things, establish a logic of the AND, overthrow ontology, do away with foundations, nullify endings and beginnings" (p. 25). This is the

potential space of which Winnicott speaks—there is no limit to the combinations of relationships between people, things, and ideas.

Connections, learning, and knowledge come from *within* the student on the basis of his experiences from *outside*. Because the reader is not being preached to or even spoken to allegorically, he is free to drink in the words without having to give anything in return. Doll (2000) agrees:

> I insist that the engagement with fiction (prose, drama, poetry, myth, fairy
>
> tale, dream) can be a learning experience of the first order—not because students
>
> hunt down symbols or identify themes. . . . Rather, out of the very chimney corner
>
> from which the humanities huddle, fiction disturbs the status quo. Feelings
>
> thought to be central get routed. Peripheral imaginings begin to take root. . . .
>
> One learns about one's self. One learns about living. But the learning is subtle.
>
> (xi)

Doll believes that "fiction—more than fact—teaches wisdoms about the human condition precisely because fiction connects readers with what courses within themselves" (xi). One of Winnicott's biographers, F. Robert Rodman (2003), writes that "during his military service Donald [Winnicott] read the novels of Henry James and George Meredith—not medical books to sharpen his thinking about patients, but works of fiction" (pp. 36-37).

Tolkien vehemently denied any intentional allegory in *The Lord of the Rings*; instead, he profusely emphasized the entertainment aspect of his novel. They began as bedtime stories for the pure enjoyment of his children. This being true, my point about fantasy being, at heart, vitally important in teaching a point is true also. That Tolkien did

not deliberately make *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* an important lesson, makes them that much more so. They came from his mind, heart, and soul—which touches people more deeply and thoroughly. Though Tolkien may not have so intended his novels have taught us that we are all tempted by power at some point in our lives. Because of the freedom and power given to the reader of fantasy, the reader actually is more likely to learn more from fantasies, more about himself, others, and the world in general.

Optimist and idealist that I am, I believe that my power comes from within. However, I have noticed an evolution in myself over my relatively short 44 years on this earth. When I was a child I was at the mercy of adults and had little power. When I was a teenager I became rebellious and exerted more power over my parents and became more independent. As a young adult I *felt* as if I had much more power than I actually did owing to corporate employers and government controls. As an older adult, I sometimes feel that my knowledge and wisdom alone give me power.

The paradox of thinking or believing that my power comes from within is that it is so fragile. This leads me to question where true power comes from. Just when I'm cruising along proudly thinking my life is going OK, something or someone comes along and kicks my feet out from under me. So, to me, power is, at best, precarious and temporary. As Heraclitus wrote over 2,500 years ago, "Nothing is permanent except change" (in Bassham & Bronson (Eds.), 2003, p. 219), and that includes power. We need to be continuously aware of these power shifts.

If power is so elusive, why then does humankind strive so hard to obtain it and keep it? I don't know how it happens, but the more power and control I try to retain and

gain in my life, the more elusive it becomes. It almost takes on a human form of its own and it tells me, "You *think* you're in control, but you're not. I'll let you fool yourself into thinking that for a while, but then I'll put you back in your place." Conversely, I have learned that the *less* I try to control myself, other people, or a situation and simply engage in the moment.

There is a paradox that when we try to control someone, that person rebels and becomes even more uncontrollable (unless the person acquiesces through fear). I believe it is human nature to want to make our own decisions. It is much wiser to give people elbow room so that not only do they usually end up making the wisest decisions for themselves, but that they also have the satisfaction and dignity of knowing that they arrived at that decision of their own volition.

If you stop to ponder, the same dynamics that go on in one-on-one relationships (e.g. friendships and marriages) flourish on much larger scales, such as local communities and even between nations. Just as individuals open up and make themselves vulnerable, so can local entities such as businesses and neighborhoods, and even countries. People, by nature, are protective of their space, their rights, and their freedoms. The irony, or catch, is that it is people who make up entities such as companies, neighborhoods, towns, countries. In his book *The Corporation: The Pathological Pursuit of Profit and Power*, Joel Bakan (2004) reminds us that "most important, we must remember the most subversive truth of all: that corporations are our creations. They have no lives, no powers, and no capacities beyond what we, through our government, give them" (p. 164). As simple and obvious as this is, people tend to forget this crucial fact. And when we forget this fact, then we cease to be able to change or

improve things because we see these bigger-than-human-life entities as ruling and overpowering. Therefore, we feel we cannot change things, that we cannot make a difference. Palmer (1998, p. 36) reminds us that our inner capabilities are far more powerful than the outer world, the powers-that-be. It is only fear that causes us to succumb to the outer world.

The issue of power is an interesting one. There are many ways to look at it. It does seem to be the one thing, at least one of the main things that humans desire and strive to obtain. I am particularly intrigued with the irony that when power is attained through force it is false power, yet that seems to be the main manner in which people try to gain power. I am even more interested in how to obtain true power. True power is obtained only if it is willingly given. "Strength, according to Tolkien, manifests itself most clearly not in the exercise of power but rather in the willingness to give it up," according to Douglas Blount (2003, p. 98). Some people are content to stay within their own realm of power. Frodo and Sam are examples of such people. They prefer to live alone in peace, reading, eating, and occasionally visiting with friends and family. Frodo and Sam were in control of their lives . . . until that fateful day when Frodo came in possession of the Ring, and his life changed forever.

It is vital that we know ourselves, both our weaknesses and strengths. In his essay "The Rings of Tolkien and Plato: Lessons in Power, Choice, and Morality," Eric Katz (2003) points out that Galadriel, Bombadil, and Sam are the three characters that most clearly remain uncorrupted by the seduction of the unlimited power of the Ring; "their strength comes from their awareness of their own being, who they are and what they can accomplish" (pp. 19-20). It is my belief that if people were more self-aware they would

have less need to take or borrow power from other sources, be they objects or people. And so I ask, if given the choice, what kind of life would you choose? Katz answers, "A life that is in accord with my abilities. If you need a Ring of Power to live your life, you have chosen the wrong life" (p. 20). Psychoanalysis gives us the opportunity to gain knowledge in order to make informed decisions about what powers we want to keep and which ones to relinquish. Psychoanalysis and literature are a powerful combination. For Phillips (1994) "psychoanalysis has always been of a piece with the various languages of literature—a kind of practical poetry—taking its life, as theory and practice, from a larger world of words" (xi).

One hopes that educators will choose to relinquish defense mechanisms in favor of a more enlightened course. Ilse Hellman (1971) advises a teacher who comes into contact with students who play the "victim" that

> he cannot fundamentally alter the internal conditions which compel these children to act as they do; for this he will have to seek expert help. But the importance of his role lies in the fact that he can, by his knowledge of these mechanisms and his insight, prevent himself from responding to the child's provocation and thus join the line of those who confirm his phantasy. (p. 71)

Each student comes to school with his or her own set of strengths and weaknesses, and it is a challenge to meet the needs of each student. One teacher (in Hellman, 1971) expresses her opinion: "It's hard work, but you see the fun of it is that each of them wants something from me, that each one needs something quite different, and that I know I can supply it" (p. 74). It is the teacher who has psychoanalytic knowledge who will best meet the needs of each child.

Psychoanalysis and Sociology Working Together

A psychoanalytic perspective is admittedly not the only one by which to study individual emotional health and creative potential. Besides biological and chemical perspectives already mentioned, there are sociological, anthropological, historical, and other disciplinarian perspectives by which to look at individuals and societies. It is a philosophical question of how much a person is influenced by society and how much society is influenced by individuals whose personalities were shaped before they were born, and a question that cannot be, nor perhaps should be resolved easily. However, it is a question that should be addressed. Erik Erikson (1993) explains that

> one may scan work after work on history, society, and morality and find little reference to the fact that all people start as children and that all peoples begin in their nurseries. It is human to have a long childhood; it is civilized to have an even longer childhood. Long childhood makes technical and mental virtuosos out of man, but it also leaves a lifelong residue of emotional immaturity in him.
>
> (p. 17)

It is a challenge for us to evaluate how much of who we are is innate and how much has been shaped by our environment. Christopher Bollas (1987) writes that "with the word, the infant has found a new transformational object, which facilitates the transition from deep enigmatic privacy towards the culture of the human village" (p. 35). We must, as McLaren (1995) reminds us, always think of "the self as someone who is both narrator and who has been narrated" (p. 95). This means that we impact the world as the world impacts us.

Curriculum theorist John Weaver is interested in the historical reasons why

educational institutions are not more democratic, whereby honoring each person individually and collectively. Weaver (2001) observes that, "we are . . . underskilled in the art of persuasion" (p. 5) and recommends engaging in dialogue:

> Such a dialogue challenges academics to enter into a more democratic exchange in which ideas are not placed in an artificially constructed hierarchy imposed by someone with self-delegated authority, but rather ideas are thrust into a debate where individuals speak for themselves while avoiding the temptation of "Othering" those who advocate a different perspective. (p. 5)

Does Weaver understand that this sort of behavior begins in the earliest relationships in a person's life? Winnicott's (1987) question might seriously be considered: "Could we not say that mothers must be expected to see more than is there, and scientists must be expected to see nothing unless it is first proved" (p. 36)? Mothers must speak up and have their say regarding their intuitions in carrying and raising children. The same phenomenon of blaming others, or making one's case purely by pointing out what someone else is doing is something that family members do, friends do, co-workers do, and neighbors do. Occasionally you will see a family growing up together in a very democratic home environment. When this occurs, it is highly likely that this upbringing and parenting style will produce children who grow up into adults who will be able to speak their mind and not succumb to the dominant, popular view, unless that is first what he or she believes. Psychoanalysis is the profession that uncovers these tendencies and allows individuals to break out of this mold and find their unique voice.

Erikson saw the dynamics of both the family and society working on each other and, like Weaver, took a historical approach to studying the psychodynamics of the

nonviolent movement of Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther. When Erikson (1980) said

that "psychoanalytic ego psychology has not matched this concreteness [of historical

evidence] with sufficient theoretical specificity," he also pointed out that

> on the other hand, students of history continue to ignore the simple facts that all
>
> individuals are borne by mothers; that everybody was once a child; that people
>
> and peoples begin in their nurseries, and that society consists of individuals in the
>
> process of developing from children into parents. (p. 17)

Parents have the most potential to influence the development of healthy children and

adults. As a parent of a 19-year-old girl, 17-year-old boy, 11-year-old girl and 5- year-

old boy, I know that I have influenced my children, for better or worse, more than any

other person, group of people, or organization. However, I am aware that the schools my

children have attended have influenced them tremendously, for better or worse. Now that

my two oldest teenagers are seldom home and are always with friends, I realize that

friends are influencing them more than ever. As an active participant in my local, state,

and national governments, I am aware of how these governments influence the

community, the schools, and individual lives. I consider my role as a mother the most

important role of my life; that is why I choose to look at the field of education through a

bottom-up approach, looking at the first relationships in one's life as the greatest

determining factors of the rest of one's life.

My role as a mother does not occur in a vacuum; I am aware of how my parenting

experiences have affected my teaching, my friendships, my community involvement, my

spiritual involvement. I am also aware of how much my relationships with my

community, my friends, my church, my teaching, and my learning in the doctoral

program have influenced my role as a parent. Erikson recommends that "only psychoanalysis and social science together can eventually chart the life cycle interwoven throughout with the history of the community" (p. 17). Winnicott (1986) insists that he should study the "concept of health of the *individual*, because social health is dependent on individual health, society being but a massive reduplication of persons" (p. 21). Jung (1958) writes this regarding the individual and society:

> Just as man, as a social being, cannot in the long run exist without a tie to the community, so the individual will never find the real justification for his existence, and his own spiritual and moral autonomy, anywhere except in an extramundane principle capable of relativizing the overpowering influence of external factors. (p. 34)

Into the Wild, written and directed by Sean Penn (2007) is a movie based on a true story about a young college student who is fed up with the contradictions of the adult world, especially his parents, whom he judges to be hypocritical. He gives his college fund to a charity and hitchhikes from Atlanta, Georgia to Alaska, with his ultimate goal to live in Alaska's wildnerness, believing that he needs no one but himself. Tragically, he dies out in the wilderness, but not before he writes a note that says that the peace he found meant nothing without having anyone with whom to share it.

I remember being disgruntled with my parents because they were always arguing. I remember one day asking them why they were not happy and suggesting that they get a divorce. From a very young age, I was aware of the dynamics in my family. I studied it and thought about what I would do differently when I got married and became a parent. This particular interest has stuck with me to this very day. Family life, to me is the tiger,

and I have had my eye on the tiger all my life. Psychotherapy has been the means of understanding my original family dynamics better, and consequently this has improved the relationships I have with my own husband and children.

As a curriculum theorist, I have as my main concern the happiness and self-fulfillment of my students. I believe the best way to make a positive difference in the world is one person at a time, a grass-roots approach—the roots being making the connection with the student's first and earliest innermost needs and desires. This has been and can be done through literature. Keller (in Doll, 2000) asserts that "the goal of teaching is to be clear, that of literature . . . [is] to reveal clarity as a pipe dream" (x). A person must make connections with what courses within himself before he can influence others and the world positively.

Finding Kyle: A Village Saves a Child

One afternoon I was in the kitchen while my children were listening to a DVD commentary on the making of the movie, *Finding Nemo*. Writer and director, Andrew Stanton (2003) was asked what inspired him to give the main character, Nemo, the physical defect of a small fin. He said the idea came naturally to him because, as parents, we want the best for our offspring. We want them to be safe and to have the best life possible. We worry about everything, small or big, whether it is their physical appearance, emotional health, intelligence, speech, quirks, or habits. They are a part of us, and we take every imperfection, no matter how insignificant, personally. At one point, the writers wanted to make Nemo's increased swimming proficiency a central and climaxing part of the movie. However, as the movie script progressed, this did not

materialize because it did not seem important in the end. It became more significant that Nemo beat the odds *despite* his handicap.

I actually started to cry when I heard this because I could relate so well. I remember being concerned during my pregnancies that my children would turn out "normal." I was grateful when they seemed so perfect. Even though my sons were born 12 years apart, each was diagnosed with significant neurological problems—my oldest, Chad (now 17), with cerebral palsy and my youngest, Kyle (now 5), with epilepsy and austism. My experience with Chad has brought me closer to him. I believe that I have been much more in tune with him than I would have been if everything had gone *all* right. I would even go so far as to say that this imperfection has made him more perfect in my eyes. He is more compassionate with others who are different or who have disabilities. I think it ironic that, from the time Kyle was born, that Chad was worried that Kyle, who was diagnosed with epilepsy and autism, might have something wrong with him—Kyle did. I have this tangible sense that the epilepsy and autism spectrum disorder and cerebral palsy somehow make my children more divine; they are closer to God, and they have a special role in life. As in the case of Nemo's father searching for him, I have had to search near and far for help for Kyle.

Perhaps it is my humanity that reaches out to them more because they need me more. Perhaps this is God's way of making me take notice and thus help in my way to make them what I saw in the first place: divine sons of God. Perhaps this is close to what von Franz (1980a) realizes when she says,

> The fire ball will not provide the same experience, though in a way it is even
>
> more marvelous, for the person will be much more affected emotionally—he will

be overwhelmed, gripped by the mystery, by the complete otherness of the

Divine. (p. 31)

I consider these disabilities as gifts that have brought our family closer together and will help us to reach out to those around us with greater understanding and compassion. Jung and von Franz focus on archetypes, and it is interesting that many people who recollect anything about their seizures seem to think there is divine meaning in them. It is also interesting that more seizures occur at night, the same time that people dream.

One of the most valuable realities I have learned from these two experiences with my sons is that life is *extremely* unpredictable. There are no guarantees. This is a good thing, for too often, "we police ourselves with purposes. Our ambitions—our ideals and success stories that lure us into the future—can too easily become ways of not living in the present" (Phillips, 1994, p. 58). Realizing this has caused me to appreciate life more, in all its uncertainties. It has caused me to be more aware of the *differences* in life. Sometimes I think it was synchronistic that two of my children have serious conditions, because I believe that from my own childhood growing up differently, I naturally gravitated toward those people who are different and things that are different. As a child, teachers chose me to help the new kid in class. Now that I am a teacher, I get to know all of the students and their uniqueness. This entails that I continue the search without expecting certain answers and remember that the Pinar's (2004) method of *currere* promises no quick processes. Indeed, with every challenging opportunity that comes my way, I am becoming better equipped to participate more fully and genuinely in the complicated conversation that is curriculum studies.

Like Winnicott, I choose to look at the health of individuals and our society, and fortunately, my son Kyle provides an appropriate example of the kind of united effort that is often needed on children's behalf. First, my pediatrician did not hesitate to refer Kyle, at 18 months of age to the federally funded program Babies Can't Wait, for speech-delayed problems. The problem is that many doctors do not refer needy children to this program, and most parents do not know it exists.

Once Kyle qualified and was accepted into the program, he was tested for developmental delays, and he was found to be a year behind in his speech. He then received speech therapy two times a week, and the therapist came to our home for over a year and a half. In addition, Kyle received play therapy which enhanced his ability to verbalize during play. His vision and hearing were checked. I enrolled him in a preschool so he could be around other verbal children his age.

After turning 3, Kyle transitioned from the Babies Can't Wait program to the local public school system. I took him two days a week to a local public school for speech therapy. He has improved tremendously, and he still has improving to do. However, if my husband and I had not been diligent in getting Kyle the proper help, he might have been the boy whom Winnicott (1996) describes as the "boy who will be a genius in his own line or else simply a person who is boring because of having a one-track mind " (p. 204).

My experience with Kyle has given me personal hope and faith in the goodness of humankind and the ability of many people coming together to optimize the future of a child. This example is given to reinforce the importance of the first most formative years

in a child's life; however, my experience teaching adolescents shows me that children need our assistance throughout their lives.

Jung's book *Synchronicity* caused me to look at the coincidences that both of my sons were diagnosed with serious neurological disorders at exactly the same age. Jung did extensive research both historically and statistically to try to prove the importance of two separate events, either occurring simultaneously or not. He gives many examples of these incidences, and of one example Jung (1973) says, "My sole object in relating these two incidences is simply to give some indication of how meaningful coincidences usually present themselves in practical life" (pp. 25-26). Jung also emphasizes that coincidences bring different meanings to different people. For example, if someone *else* had two children with neurological diagnoses, he or she might not make any connection. Perhaps another person would have no desire or any need to make such connections, for "it may not be that all accidents are meaningful, but that meaning is made out of accidents" (Phillips, 1994, p. 11). I choose to make meaning of accidents or coincidences.

In my case, I know that his diagnosis has brought me closer to Chad. I grew up with four sisters and a mother. Rarely were there any men around, and I was honestly wary about raising and bonding with a son. However, because of his unique situation we have had more impetus to strengthen our relationship. Moreover, Chad's condition has given him the understanding and easygoing personality that has brought him closer to everyone in his life. For one who looks for, indeed needs, coincidences in my life, I view this occurrence as a blessing and a purposeful thing, and as Phillips suggests, "Coincidences belong to those who can use them" (p. 16). I can see further reason (coincidence) for my youngest son's being diagnosed with epilepsy at the same age.

Because my family has had the experience of living with Chad and his condition, we are all better able to accept and deal with Kyle's epilepsy and autism. I think this is especially true for Chad, who keeps a watchful eye on Kyle. There is a special affinity between Chad and Kyle because of their similar situations, and the reasons for this will continue to reveal themselves in the future.

In analyzing my need to see connections in life, I also need to analyze my affect. This is something that Jung also studied. His research showed that outcomes are affected by people's affects. In an example, he showed that when people were choosing corresponding cards that matched the data on other cards, and their interest waned, so did their ability to choose the corresponding matches or make correct predictions. Albertus Magnus (in Jung, 1973) writes:

I discovered an instructive account [of magic] in Avicenna's *Liber sextus naturalium*, which says that a certain power to alter things indwells in the human soul and subordinates the other things to her, particularly when she is swept into a great excess of love or hate or the like. When therefore the soul of a man falls into a great excess of any passion, it can be proved by experiment that it [the excess] binds things [magically] and alters them in the way it wants. . . . I found that the emotionality of the human soul is the chief cause of all these things, whether because, on account of her great emotion, she alters her bodily substance and the other things towards which she strives, or because, on account of her dignity, the other, lower things are subject to her, or because the appropriate hour or astrological situation or another power coincides with so inordinate an emotion,

and we [in consequence] believe that what this power does is then done by the

soul. (p. 32)

With this in mind, I ask myself whether certain coincidences in my life occur *for* me or

because of me. In my family, we often talk about our pre-earth life. We all feel like we

chose each other in a previous life to spend this lifetime with each other. We believe this

to be true, but of course, we have no proof, other than noticed coincidences. This belief

affects the way we relate to each other. When our relationships with one another are

going smoothly, we believe that this is because it was meant to be. When our

relationships with each other are strained, we stop and ask ourselves what problems

existed in our pre-earth life together that we need to work out during this lifetime. This

puts things in a certain, more positive and meaningful perspective for us. Do we have

any more insight than other people, or do we use our emotional affect to effect positive

changes in our lives? Do the two go hand in hand?

      People, like Churchland, who attempt to look for the soul in the physical body

have come up empty-handed. In the conclusion to *Synchronicity*, Jung (1973) claims that

> we must completely give up the idea of the psyche's being somehow connected
>
> with the brain, and remember instead the 'meaningful' or 'intelligent' behavior of
>
> the lower organisms, which are without a brain. Here we find ourselves much
>
> closer to the formal factor which, as I have said, has nothing to do with brain
>
> activity.
>
>   If that is so, then we must ask ourselves whether the relation of soul and

body can be considered from this angle, that is to say whether the co-ordination of

psychic and physical processes in a living organism can be understood as a

synchronistic phenomenon rather than as a causal relation. (p. 89)

Perhaps the spiritual is closer to physical reality than previously thought. *The Secret*, by

R. Byrnes (2006) is a currently popular book that explains how thinking, imagining, and

projecting positive thoughts can change circumstances. It draws from astrology, physics,

and psychology to help explain how our thoughts are much more powerful and more

material than previously believed. Some science experiments support these observations,

yet much remains a mystery.

The scientific profession has been studying the brain in order to glean more

insights into human behavior, but even if scientists could map the brain cell by cell, this

would not answer many questions on how humans think and behave. Even so, this is

exactly what scientists are attempting to do. Churchland (2000) explains that

if we can be so evidently and so wildly wrong about the structure of the universe,

about the significance of disease, about the age of the Earth, and about the origin

of humans, we should in all modesty be prepared to contemplate the possibility

that we remain deeply misled or confused about the nature of human cognition

and consciousness. (p. 17)

Churchland has spent his career mapping out the brain, and his theory is that if we

continue on this course diligently, we will eventually arrive at answers to questions that

concern mental cognition, the psyche, and the soul. In this respect, he differs greatly

from Jung who believes the answers to cognition, psyche, and soul lie *outside* the human

body.

However, both Jung and Churchland share Albert Einstein's (2009a) view about arriving at answers when Einstein says that "if at first the idea is not absurd, then there is no hope for it." Von Franz (1980a) notes the differences in style of arriving at a theory, truth, or knowledge when she compares Max Planck and Einstein. Planck believed more in the scientific method of conceiving a model and checking the model by experimentation, then revising the model and again checking it in a kind of "dialectic friction between experiment and model by which we slowly arrive at an explanatory fact" (p. 36). Einstein, on the other hand, "conceived his theories more or less completely on paper" (p. 36), and modern physics has proved how accurate he was. In von Franz's words, Einstein felt "that the fact that a model constructed by the human mind in an introverted situation fits with outer facts is just a miracle and must be taken as such" (p. 36). Winnicott suggests, similarly, that when a baby conceives of something from inner resources that already exist in the world, that we should accept this as something extraordinary along the lines of philosophy.

At the beginning of my sons' medical diagnoses, I spent a lot of time asking "why" and needing to find out answers; perhaps I should have more faith in the synchronicity of things. Sardello's (2002) insight comforts me: "When we attempt to have the truth, to know it completely, we are actually trying to seize not truth but the power that lies within truth" (p. 18). In other words, perhaps the real truth is in the searching and not the seizing! So much of life is subjective and dependent on heredity, environmental factors, and the unconscious. The individual subjective practice of psychoanalysis can give us many answers to individual events and individuals' behaviors, but we must be open to other unknown factors as well.

My experiences with Kyle's epilepsy and autism and Chad's cerebral palsy has given me insight into the vagaries and difficulties of studying the brain and, hence, the mind. I have an appreciation for the groundwork that Freud, Jung, Winnicott and others who devoted their whole lives to the study of the psyche have laid. Psychoanalysis is not only for figuring out who we are but, first, for realizing how complicated we are. "A chronic, disrupting condition such as epilepsy forces us to wrestle with the deepest issues of meaning in our lives. Our individual experiences illuminate these issues" (Richards in Schachter, 1993, xiii). I did not choose for my sons to have these disorders, but I choose to trust that this particular part of my journey in life will bring enlightenment to me and my family. I will remember what Phillips (1993) writes—that, "without obstacles the notion of development, at least in its progressivist sense, is inconceivable. There would be nothing to master" (p. 92). Both Freud and Jung believed that we are all the characters in our dreams. Jacques Lacan went further to state that the more unreadable our text/autobiography is, the more real it is (from lecture given by Morris, March 2005). I choose to believe that we all will learn necessary lessons in life and be all the better and stronger for them.

CHAPTER 4

WINNICOTT AND EDUCATION

D. W. Winnicott dedicated his life to learning about the creative inner life of children and laid the foundation on which many others have built solid and practical ideas. Such is the way with truly inspirational ideas, for it was Freud who paved the way for Winnicott and other psychoanalysts. "As the foremost representative of the British Independent tradition of object relations theory, Winnicott (1896-1971) is increasingly acknowledged to be one of the most important figures in psychoanalysis since Freud" (Rudnytsky, 1993, xi). After studying Freud, Klein and other leading psychoanalysts and their theories, and after spending many years as a practicing pediatrician and psychiatrist, and after observing over 60,000 children and their parents, Winnicott developed many theories, including the transitional object theory. According to one of Winnicott's biographers, F. Robert Rodman (2003),

> Within psychoanalysis and related disciplines, the profusion of new titles kept
> adding to the growing interest in his work. While the Freud-bashing industry
> advanced and Kleinian contempt continued, Winnicott's papers were more often
> cited in bibliographies than those of any other author except Freud. (p. 379)

Winnicott found himself in the right place at the right time. At the time he was practicing in England, a split existed between Freudians and Kleinians. Winnicott chose not to align with either; instead he followed his own road, which he was determined would remain open and flexible.

The transitional object theory is one of Winnicott's most valuable contributions to psychoanalysis and education and has been discussed in Chapter 2 as it relates to

curriculum theory and literary criticism and in Chapter 3 as it relates to psychoanalysis in general. This chapter will discuss the ideas and theories of Winnicott, which have direct or indirect bearing on good parenting and good teaching. These ideas are discussed in the approximate order that they manifest themselves in a person's life, beginning with good-enough conditions. First, I examine early influences on and feminist criticism of Winnicott.

As a psychiatrist, Winnicott was trained at observing patients and making detailed notes while engaged in psychotherapy. According to Rodman (1987)

> in 1923, he became physician to the Paddington Green Children's Hospital, a post he held until 1963. His Wednesday clinics, which gradually evolved from traditional pediatrics to child psychiatry, were part of the continuity of his medical experience, which amounted eventually to about 60,000 cases. (p. 2)

Winnicott's skill of identifying serious psychological problems in a child and helping the child and parent cope with the problems *without* making either of them self-conscious or guilt-ridden created the relationship needed for successful psychoanalysis. He possessed the ability to identify serious issues and find the earliest source of them while projecting a positive outlook and giving credit to the mother who was doing her best under the circumstances. The well-known American pediatrician, T. Berry Brazelton, saluted Winnicott in the introduction to Winnicott's (1993) book *Talking to Parents*:

> I have been an admirer and a student of Donald Winnicott all my professional life. The way he combined a normative pediatric approach with the insights of child psychiatry and psychoanalysis made him my model long ago. His own brilliant insights are based on a deep understanding of the parent-infant processes coupled

with firm conviction that most parents want desperately to do well by their

children. (ix-x)

Winnicott influenced other pediatricians as well as psychoanalysts world-wide.

He not only was a prolific writer, successful analyst, and dedicated pediatrician, he also delighted audiences with his warm, humorous, and practical talks to parents, schools, associations and peers. He gave some 50 radio talks for the BBC between 1939 and 1962 (Winnicott, 1993, xiii). In these talks there is a strong sense that even though parenting is one of the hardest endeavors in life, most humans have a natural instinct for what to do, when to do it, and how to do it. Winnicott's (1993) gift of complimenting parents for what they do right and giving them confidence to keep improving is evident in the following quote:

> What people do like is to be given an understanding of the problems that they are tackling, and they like to be made aware of the things that they do intuitively. . . .
>
> Education can catch on to all these things that people do and indeed have done, and in a good way, ever since the world started to have human beings in it who were human. If one can really show people what they are doing they become less frightened, they feel more secure about themselves, so that when they are genuinely in doubt or genuinely know that they are ignorant they seek not advice but information. . . .They begin to see that it is possible to adopt an objective approach towards matters of the mind and of feeling and of behaviour. (p. 3)

Winnicott's manner reminds me of warmhearted and open-minded teachers I have had in the past.

Winnicott's theories are complicated, yet he is gifted in conveying them in a manner that is comprehensible. As Rodman (1987) describes it, "Striving to do without received jargon, he was forced to describe what he meant in ordinary language, as clearly as he could" (p. 17). His theories contain far-reaching implications and applications. Rodman (2003) describes Winnicott's wide appeal as follows:

> He could not help but invest his writing with his own personal existence, unlike the usual scientific writing which seeks to establish the anonymity of the author in order to maintain the objectivity of science. Winnicott, like, in a vastly different field, the physicist Werner Heisenberg, taught that the observer cannot be separated ultimately from the observed. (p. 378)

Curriculum theorists understand this tendency to connect to the subject being taught or learned, which also includes the autobiographical stance towards the subjects in which we are interested.

Psychoanalyst Margaret Little, who went through an analysis with Winnicott, has given the world a rare and precious gift of a comprehensive account of her analysis with Winnicott in her book *Psychotic Anxieties and Containment: A Personal Record of an Analysis with Winnicott*. In this book, Little (1990) relates where the bulk of Winnicott's emphases lie:

> Winnicott's work is based clearly and definitely on certain principles. Its hallmarks are: recognition of the importance not only of the individual human being himself, but also of his earliest environment; empathy (understanding nonverbal communication and body language, far beyond the recognition of the unconscious movement, posture, etc.) and experience of mutuality; consistency

without rigidity; allowing "regression to dependence" (Winnicott 1954a, b);

"holding" (Winnicott 1962b, 1963f) and play (Winnicott 1971b). (p. 19)

Little wrote this account at great risk of her own reputation as an analyst. Both Little and Winnicott gained valuable experience from each other during Winnicott's analysis of Little. What Little gained from this experience was this:

I could now know something of mental illness from inside, and the strengthening effect of it was immeasurable. I could find my own personal way of meeting some of the needs of my patients. I could face failures without being destroyed by them, and successes without becoming omnipotent. (p. 102)

According to Little, what Winnicott gained from this experience was that

his own self-knowledge was increased through his continual self-analysis; his already developed understanding of psychosis was widened and supported. He found material on which to test out existing ideas and to base new ones (learning from me [Winnicott 1971b, Dedication]), and later he used it extensively in writing and speaking, both in England and elsewhere, to many different audiences to whom also it was worth a very great deal. (p. 103)

Being a psychoanalyst herself, Little was in the unique position of being able to give an accurate account of Winnicott's analysis, and when the analysis was over, this is what Little wrote of Winnicott:

Yes—he *was* a genius—not of the same order of magnitude as Newton, Einstein, Shakespeare, Beethoven, etc., but he did the same thing that each of them did—he *shed light*, on the importance of the early environment in particular, treatment of

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psychosis, origins of creativity, value of destructiveness, etc., and opened the way

for others to develop these themes further. (p. 118)

Through Little's account we are able to gain more insight into Winnicott, insight that supports the consensus that he was an amazing human being who continues to influence our society.

In addition to Little's analytic experience with Winnicott, Parsons (2000) compares Harry Guntrip's analyses with Ronald Fairbairn and Donald Winnicott. Fairbairn adopted a formal analytic stance and "it was only in talking with Fairbairn after the session that he could 'find the natural warm-hearted human being behind the exact interpreting analyst,'" whereas with Winnicott, Guntrip "experienced a kind of harmony between Winnicott's gentleness and incisiveness" (p. 12) because Winnicott had a naturalness as a person as well as an analyst in session. The result was the "fact that, for Winnicott, analyzing had come to be a natural, organic function of his personality, [which] allowed something to happen for Guntrip in that analysis that had not been possible with Fairbairn" (p. 12). The same could be said of teachers. Those who may be personable at home, but take a formal, or strict stance at school that is not comparable to their true personality, will not reach the students as much as someone who teaches through her authentic self.

Winnicott was gifted at making the best of difficult situations. Even during wartime in 1916 as a medical student, one senses Winnicott's (in Rodman, 2003) good humor as he describes how people peruse his bookcases

because of the variety of the books therein. Greek Testament, German Dict.,

"Plant Animals" Sainte bible. "Rocks" Chaucer. Darwin, or again, "Fishes," Holy

bible, Wild animals I have Known, & Pathology—etc. All sorts you know. I like

mixtures. HA! . . . Life is sweet. Who would think of war to hear me talking.

And yet I may as well enjoy myself, even in war time. (p. 36)

One can see why Winnicott was endeared to so many people with whom he came in

contact.

As positive as this is, Winnicott experienced great sorrow by losing many friends

in the war. Rodman (2003) explains that his second wife, Clare, felt that Winnicott

always felt guilty that many of his friends died in battle:

He felt that his own spared life should stand in for theirs. Here we can speculate

that the sense of being a substitute, as with so many memories and ideas, may

well have served a "screen" function. It was his task to carry the burden of living

for those who . . . could not. (p. 36)

Moreover, Winnicott never had any children of his own. It seems he willingly and

joyfully dedicated his life to bettering the lives and memories of others. He became a

father figure to more people than he would have if he had had children of his own.

Early Influences on Winnicott

One of the outstanding characteristics of Winnicott is his connection with the

feminine side of living, which was how he was able to theorize remarkably well the roles

of the mother and child. Although Winnicott did consider the father's role in early

development (see Davis & Wallbridge 1981, pp. 133-5), he focused the spotlight of his

theoretical inquiry into the deepest recesses of the child's relationship to the mother.

Indeed, Winnicott's writing about this first relationship reflects an unusually intimate

familiarity with the dynamics of maternal care. Five of Winnicott's biographers

(Goldman 1993; Jacobs 1995; Phillips 1988; Rodman 2003; Rudnytsky 1991) suggest

that Winnicott's family situation contributed to this capacity to identify with women.

Social scientists Jeffrey Applegate and Jennifer Bonovitz (1995) also surmise the origins

of Winnicott's unusual connectedness with females:

> His two sisters were 5 and 6 years old when he was born, and there were, in
>
> addition to his mother, a cook, a nanny, and a governess in the household. As a
>
> boy, Winnicott spent a great deal of time in the kitchen, causing his mother to
>
> complain that he spent more time with the cook than with the rest of the family.
>
> He seemed drawn to the maternal, nurturant core of the house. In
>
> autobiographical notes, Winnicott referred to himself as "in a sense . . . an only
>
> child with multiple mothers." (p. 14)

Winnicott's ability to get into the skin of his patients has helped children, parents,

psychoanalysts, social workers, and various other people and other disciplines.

Freud and Klein's work has already been mentioned as one of the primary sources

of inspiration to Winnicott. The works of Charles Darwin, especially his *Origin of*

Species, also had a profound affect on Winnicott's theories. Biographer Michael Jacobs

(1995) notes that in a letter to his mother, Winnicott wrote that he "could not leave off

reading it" (p. 7). Winnicott (in Jacobs, 1995) further explained that "the main thing was

that it showed that living things could be examined scientifically with the corollary that

gaps in knowledge and understanding need not scare me" (p. 7). Jacobs correlates

Winnicott's discovery of Darwin to Winnicott's own work in two ways:

> Firstly, the importance of the environment and of adaptation to it. But unlike
>
> Larmarckian theory that sees species as capable of adapting themselves to

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changes in the environment, Darwin's theory of natural selection means that it is

not easy to survive in a hostile environment. If it is only by chance that mutants

of a species may find themselves more suited for the changing environment, it is

also true that the stability of the environment is essential for normal survival and

growth. Babies cannot adapt: they need a facilitating environment. This was to

provide a counter to the over-concentration upon internal experience that tended

to dominate British psychoanalytic thought once Melanie Klein's theories held

sway during the 1930s. (p. 7)

Freud, Klein, and Darwin, along with the females of his upbringing, seemed to have

enormous influence on Winnicott's work.

Feminist Criticism of Winnicott

Despite the abundance of female influence in Winnicott's life, feminists point out

that, after all, Winnicott was a male. Janice Doane and Devon Hodges (1992) write that

Winnicott and other psychoanalysts who study object relations have not contributed to

transforming the "forms of agency and subjectivity available to women" (p. 1). Doane

and Hodges believe that "much [psychoanalytic] writing . . . defines femininity in relation

to mothering and then establishes women's agency as a set of approved behaviors toward

infants" (p. 1). This adds to my point about working mothers walking a tightrope

between their roles as mothers and their roles in the workplace. This is especially true of

teachers who teach their own children and other women's children. In their

acknowledgments, Doane and Hodges give thanks to their husbands "for being 'good-

enough moms.'" This evidences that, while these women were absent from their children

writing and researching, their husbands filled in "good-enough." I tease my husband that

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he is a better "mom" than I am since I began my doctoral studies. Do I feel guilty about spending so much time on my studies rather than with my children? The answer is, yes, a little. However, I see the benefit of their seeing me accomplish a dream of mine and being fulfilled and happy.

Winnicott's theories gained popularity after World War II when the negative effects of evacuations, in which mothers were separated from their children, were witnessed in the field of social work. World War II was also a time in history when women gained more independence and freedom because they needed to join the work force. Winnicott and his second wife, Clare Britton, worked with child evacuees and witnessed devastating emotional tolls of being separated from their mothers and fathers. Lennon's (1970) lyrics, again, are appropriate: "As soon as you're born they make you feel small, by giving you no time instead of it all. Till the pain is so big you feel nothing at all." Winnicott brought a form of reverence to the mother's role. While the responsibility of parenting is more squarely on the shoulders of the mother, it is not without Winnicott's insistence that fathers, relatives, social agencies, and schools be there to help support the mother.

While Doane and Hodges believe that Winnicott's theories prescribe too rigidly the mother's roll, it is interesting that Winnicott (in Applegate and Bonovitz, 1995) expresses that "people with no children can and do find all sorts of other ways of in fact having a family; they may be found sometimes to have the largest families of all" (pp. 15-16). Winnicott may be referring to the thousands of patients he treated during his practice, or he may be referring to several children who lived with him for extended

periods of time, including two godchildren. Winnicott's manner of "mothering" indicates his belief that it takes a village to raise a child.

Good-enough Conditions

"Good-enough" refers to the conditions that must be present in order for children to develop independence. For the infant or child, good-enough conditions begin with the parental caregivers. Usually this is the mother, but it can be anyone who primarily cares for the baby or child. Winnicott was limited by the times in which he lived because mothers were the primary caregivers. Today, more fathers are taking active roles in caring for children, yet it is still primarily the role of the mother to care for young babies. Talking to parents, Winnicott (2002) says that he likes "to use the word 'good-enough'" (p. 179) as opposed to Melanie Klein's concept of "the good mother" because it is not the *ideal* but rather the *adequate* that describes most parents.

Psychoanalyst Bruno Bettelheim (1987) titled his book, *A Good-enough Parent*, which he adapted to "both parents, since both are important for their child's development" (xi). Fathers are becoming increasingly more important in the upbringing of children.

At the mental health hospital at which I worked, therapists introduced patients to Winnicott's parenting. "Good-enough" was an important concept for patients to grasp in order to safely regress into their childhood, enabling them to see and accept that they may, at times, not have received good-enough parenting. In many cases, they were neglected or abused, but the important point was that they could come to understand that their parents were doing the best they knew how under the circumstances, and, at least,

understanding this gave them the opportunity to nourish and parent themselves the way their parents could not or did not.

Winnicott believes that most parents have the capacity to provide good-enough conditions, but he acknowledges that some do not. In Abram (1997), Winnicott describes the experience of not having adequate care in the following two paragraphs:

It is perhaps worth while trying to formulate this in a way that gives the time factor due weight. The feeling of the mother's existence lasts x minutes, then the imago fades, and along with this the baby's capacity to use the symbol of the union ceases. The baby is distressed, but this distress is soon *mended* because the mother returns in $x+y$ minutes the baby has not become altered. But in $x+y+z$ minutes the baby has become *traumatized*. In $x+y+z$ minutes the mother's return does not mend the baby's altered state. Trauma implies that the baby has experienced a break in life's continuity, so that primitive defences now become organized to defend against a repetition of "unthinkable anxiety". (p. 108)

My experience as a counselor in a psychiatric hospital and a teacher in the public school system leads me to believe that many children experience trauma from being left or neglected too long, and as a result, they have built up compensatory behaviors, or defenses. In the psychiatric hospital, children expressed feelings of not feeling important, of being deprived, or of being abused, and they act out with self-inflicting behaviors, violent tendencies, or even suicidal ideations. At school children are less inclined to speak openly and succinctly of their feelings, but more often than one might imagine, a child who usually has acted out with negative behaviors will reveal personal information, such as a parent is in jail or parents are fighting at home. Based on my experiences at

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school and at a psychiatric hospital, I feel there are far more children who have experienced too many and too lengthy periods of deprivation and abuse.

When a child has experienced intolerable deprivation, it manifests in the classroom by the student not being able to incite correct reactions to their disappointment. Harry Potter provides a literary example of a child being able to incite strength from good-enough parents. Harry Potter's parents died when he was young but not before they were able to provide him adequate love. Through their love, Harry gathers strength to fight against the Dementors who attempt to "kiss" him thereby sucking out his soul. Steven Tuber (2008) explains that

> Despite his father's early demise, Harry internalized him deeply enough that at the crucial moment he can conjure up his Patronus (symbolic father) and stop the soul killer from stealing away his soul. What a beautiful way to depict the notion of a transitional object! (p. 159)

How is it that some children gain strength despite hardships and traumas in their life? The answer may lie in their good fortune of having had good-enough parenting at some point, most likely early, in their life. Alice Miller's (1990) research found that the one thing all historical figures who committed violent atrocities had in common was not having at least one adult who they could depend on to give adequate love and instruction.

Klein tended toward thinking that it was mostly inevitable that children would manifest aggressive love/hate behaviors, whether or not the parent was a good-enough parent. Winnicott agreed with much of Klein's point of view; however, he disagreed with much of the destructive tendencies that Klein felt were inevitable. Winnicott chose to focus on the creative processes that often arise out of a need to replace certain

behaviors with more positive, life affirming behaviors. Winnicott (in Rodman, 1987) outlines the differences in his and Klein's viewpoints in a letter to Roger Morris written in 1952:

> I always talk about "the good-enough mother" or "the not good-enough mother" because in point of fact we are talking about the actual woman, we know that the best she can do is to be good-enough, and the word "enough" gradually (in favourable circumstances) widens in scope according to the infant's growing ability to deal with failure by understanding toleration of frustration, etc. the "good mother" and "the bad mother" of the Kleinian jargon are internal objects and are nothing to do with real women. The best a real woman can do with an infant is to be sensitively good-enough at the beginning so that illusion is made possible to the infant *at the start* that this good-enough mother is "the good breast." (p. 194)

Winnicott (2002) is optimistic regarding most parent's ability to provide a good-enough environment. He says that "good-enough parents can be used by babies and young children, and good-enough means you and me" (p. 179). "Ordinary devoted mother" (1987, p. 3) is another term Winnicott uses along with good-enough mother. While Klein distinguishes between two extremes, good and bad, Winnicott takes the middle road by acknowledging that most parents fall in the median range of being good-enough, and good-enough is all a parent needs to be in order to ensure their child has the capacity to have a successful life.

The role of the parents, and mother in particular, cannot be underestimated. The offering of the breast to the infant at just the right moment so as to have the infant believe

she created it herself is an amazing natural instinct that mothers have. Think of the

consequences of shoving a nipple in a baby's mouth when she is not hungry or does not

want it, or contrary, think of the consequences of keeping the breast too long from the

baby when she is hungry. A mother knows instinctively when and how much the baby

needs. This instinct transfers to every other area of childrearing, including introducing

the child to little doses of reality at a time. The child needs just the right dose of reality

and imagination, as Winnicott (1987b) conveys:

> In all sorts of ways [the mother's] clear knowledge of what is real and what is not
>
> real helps the child, because the child is only gradually getting to the
>
> understanding that the world is not as imagined, and that imagination is not
>
> exactly like the world. Each needs the other. (p. 73)

This coexistence of real and fantasy continues throughout life both individually and

through outside influences, the environment. The transitional object is vital to a child's

emotional growth; it provides that space between reality and illusion.

Winnicott (2002) is also interested in the practicality and predictability of

parenting; he says that "in order to be consistent, and so to be predictable for our

children, we must be *ourselves*" (p. 179). What is our "True Self?" Winnicott (in

Rodman, 2003) writes that "it is an essential part of my theory that the True Self does not

become a living reality except as a result of the mother's repeated success in meeting the

infant's spontaneous gesture or sensory hallucination" (p. 265). He continues, "Only the

True Self can be creative and only the True Self can feel real" (p. 265). It is better to be

ourselves with our flaws than to pretend to be something we are not, even if that ideal is

more perfect. Before a person becomes a parent, it is helpful to know how to be

ourselves, for, as Winnicott (2002) suggests, "If we are ourselves our children can get to know us. Certainly if we are acting a part we shall be found out when we get caught without our make-up" (p. 179).

The same goes for teachers. Teachers must know who they are and how to be who they are; otherwise, students will know they are faking it. The importance of the ordinary devoted mother cannot be overstated. Writing about the minority of pathological parenting, Winnicott (1965) asks, "Can society see that the orientation toward these pathological features must not be allowed to affect society's orientation towards the ordinary healthy homes" (p. 161)? Winnicott was aware of the relatively few cases of mentally ill mothers, but he chose to focus on the majority of cases who are good-enough mothers. When babies are born, they are at the mercy and whim of parents, so fortunately, most of those parents are good-enough. If they are good-enough, the child becomes increasingly more autonomous.

In the following paragraph, Winnicott (1965) describes the natural progression toward independence:

> Just as a baby usually sits at about five or six months, and walks somewhere near
> the first birthday, and perhaps uses two or three words at that time, so there is a
> process of evolution in emotional development. However, we do not witness this
> natural growth unless conditions are good-enough, and part of our difficulty is our
> description of the good-enough conditions. (p. 4)

Winnicott emphasizes the importance of good-enough conditions for children, but he takes comfort in knowing that the majority of parents are well-enough equipped for this responsibility.

Before there was dependence on a body part such as the thumb (the "me" object) or an external object such as the blanket (the "not-me" object), there was a bonding with and dependence on the mother—which is crucial for the development of an effective transitional object. Winnicott (1986) believes in the "tremendous capacity that mothers ordinarily have to give themselves over to identification with the baby" (p. 144), and to know what the baby feels, and this begins with pregnancy.

This initial relationship with the mother sets the tone for the child's ability to relate to objects and to the world. Goethe's (in Roheim, 1992) poem tells about the power mothers have and how we try and retrace our steps back toward mother.

> *Ye Mothers, in your name, who set your throne*
>
> *In boundless space, eternally alone*, (p. 100)

These first two lines give credence to Winnicott's belief in the boundless potential space given to a child by a good-enough mother, and the poem continues by reminding us of how intertwined are mother and child.

> *And yet companioned! All the forms of Being,*
>
> *In movement, lifeless, ye are round you seeing.* (p. 100)

Much of what we do, we do because of our mothers, we do for our mothers, and we do to regain our mothers. In Geza Roheim's (1992) words, "It is the fond hope of man that the universe itself is subject to his own memory and to the omnipotent mothers of his childhood" (p. 100). Mythology is full of examples of the power women possess. Women alone possess the power to grow a child from within. With this power comes great responsibility to honor and nurture the child that has been entrusted to us.

Mothers in poverty or abuse often lack necessary parenting tools because of conditions beyond their control. Mothers who, themselves, did not receive good-enough parenting have a greater challenge to be a good-enough parent. Beatle, John Lennon (1970), was raised by his aunt and writes these lyrics about his mother, who was not around much when he was younger: "Mother, you had me, but I never had you. I wanted you, but you didn't want me." Lennon sings these lyrics with such sorrow in his voice that it is easy to believe that this experience was very painful for him. Not to let his father off the hook for abandoning the family, Lennon sings, "Father, you left me, but I never left. I needed you, but you didn't need me." One of the most influential musicians of our time, Lennon gave up touring to stay home and raise his son, Sean.

These are examples of the sorrows that accompany motherhood. I have met several mothers who did not rejoice in the birth of their babies. Either they were not prepared for their child's birth or circumstances kept them from the joy that most people assume comes with having a child. On the other hand, I have never met a mother who did not experience sorrow, sooner or later, in the raising of her child(ren). Among the many paradoxes in this paradox-filled world, is the great joy *and* the great sorrow that accompanies motherhood.

It seems that if Winnicott did not choose to look at society as a whole, being generally healthy, he could have become depressed and not been as effective as a pediatrician and psychoanalyst. He gained experience of moving forward and not looking at the bad during his wartime service. One reason why I may identify with Winnicott, is that I have a similar determination to make the best of a bad situation. But even with being blessed with optimism, I have had my share of travails. It is through the

dark periods, that I have grown the most; thus, I have learned to accept disappointment and difficulties more gracefully, realizing that there are many who are less fortunate than I am.

Holding Environment

Familiarity with Winnicott's transitional phenomena becomes indispensable in education. Grolnick & Barkin (1988) note that Winnicott's "concepts and processes involved in the developmental line of transitional objects and phenomena are basic and can be seen to interlace with all the important ideas in the body of Winnicott's work" (ix). One realizes that a secure holding environment, preferably from the first of life, is critical to the individual's ability to relate to an object and to create as a result of the relationship with that object of necessity. "Holding" is a term Winnicott (1987) originally used to describe the literal physical holding of a baby by its mother, but the "meaning of the term expand[s] as the baby grows older and the baby's world grows more complex" (p. 62) to include how *any* person or environment holds a child. D. Smith (in Jardine, 1998) reminds us that "children are 'part of us but also apart from us'" (p. 61). As a parent I am continuously weighing how much I need to reach out and provide assistance to my children and how much to stand back and let them do things on their own. Likewise, as a teacher I must instinctively know when to provide emotional and academic scaffolding to a student and when to stand back and watch him or her show *me* a thing or two.

The first object is the first teacher, and the first teacher is the mother or other parent. Then comes the transitional object which is transitional from the standpoint that it is not permanent; it is transient but necessary for making the giant step from

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dependency to autonomy. Rodman (2003) notes that holding also applies "to the psychoanalyst treating a regressed, dependent patient" (p. 267). Holding can also apply to the way a teacher cares for her students. The ultimate outcome of successful transitioning to autonomy is the ability to live creatively, which is the greatest gift that individuals give to themselves, others, and to the world. The importance of creativity and its expansion to cultural experiences is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 5. It is evident that transitional phenomena affect us our entire life, and only in exploring our *selves* can we use transitional phenomena, along with other psychoanalytic theories, to our best ability and advantage. Holding environment is tied closely to transitional phenomena because it is the transitional object or phenomenon that allows the space and means for a child to hold himself for a while.

Holding environment transitions from the home to the classroom. As a teacher, I can identify students who need extra holding, or scaffolding and those who are more independent. Bleich (1998) asks

How should teachers view students in order to make it appealing to share and explore motivations? How shall teachers find out what students want to know; and how will teachers learn to coordinate their own motivation with the students' interest and with the curriculum? (p. 230)

Similarly, Phillips (1994) states that "it is one of the most oppressive demands of adults that the child should be interested, rather than take time to find what interests him" (p. 69). This oppression presents a special frustration to teachers: When they give students opportunities to be assertive as to where they want education to take them, all too often they are so used to being spoon-fed and taught the test that they have no idea

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what learning experiences to ask for or how to engage in subjective but more meaningful conversations.

Teachers have this overwhelming responsibility of bridging the gap from care at home to care at school. Teachers have to read their students and know their students in order to advance the next move. We also have to do it in a manner that gives most autonomy and self-reliance to the student. In many cases, we have to create an illusion so that the students think they accomplished the learning on their own, just as a parent provides the illusion to her children that they are more omnipotent than they really are. We do this all their lives, but to increasingly lesser extents. Bleich (1998) makes the connection that

> "mothers" (caregivers) know what children or other cared-for people may need.
> Parents do not "just know" what children need. They learn by interacting with
> them from early in the children's lives. Most parents do learn how to nurture,
> serve, get along with, and cultivate their children. Similarly, teachers can learn
> about students' motivation from tradition, from local factors, from early exercise
> in which information is exchanged and discussed. The issue is that teachers need
> to *know* to learn about students' motivation, and then they need to decide to orient
> themselves as teachers around the needs of the students. This is one reason I see
> the term *mothering* to describe potential teaching postures. (p. 230)

Bleich then conveys the traditional system of telling the students what to know as the fathering method, as opposed to the mothering method, which takes into account the needs of the child and is more fluid.

The fathering way of doing things is leftover from the patriarchal system. The

school system in which I work is presently trying to cram the test down the students'

throats. Our assistant superintendent is strong-arming the students into making a 55-70

(or better) on the final benchmark test *or else* they have to go to intersession (tutoring)

classes, miss their related arts classes, miss learning science or social studies, and/or go to

summer school. Parents and teachers at our school are sad and depressed about the

emphasis on the test score rather than the whole child. Looking back, I was not a great

student growing up, but because my parents gave me artistic freedom and room to

imagine, I have done relatively well in life. I am more worried that the students will be

turned off to learning than I am about their making a lower than desired test score. This

business-like manner of conducting education is counter-intuitive to the majority of

teachers who happen to be female.

Mothers are usually intuitive about the needs of their children. Marie-Louise von

Franz (1980a) writes this about intuition:

> So intuition is a 50-50 business; it is a function, and like all functions is only
>
> sometimes right. But the instinctive truth is a manifestation of the Self and has
>
> nothing to do with a function. It is something which operates in every human
>
> being, a discreetly quick word which the Self whispers in your ear and which
>
> generally you are too slow to catch or you, yourself, talk too much and then "it"
>
> cannot be heard. (p. 176)

From this quote, we know that fathers are able to tap intuition as well as mothers. Why

mothers are more intuitive than fathers may be explained by Nietche's (in Derrida, 1985)

Thus Spake Zarathustra:

The tremendous ear was attached to a small, thin stalk—but this stalk was a human being! If one used a magnifying glass one could even recognize a tiny envious face; also, that a bloated little soul was dangling from the stalk. The people, however, told me that this great ear was not only a human being, but a great one, a genius.   But I never believed the people when they spoke of great men; and I maintained my belief that it was an inverse cripple who had too little of everything and too much of one thing. (p. 3)

Men's ability to compartmentalize may make them very big in some ways but keep them small in more important ways. The demands on women to be everywhere at once and many things to many people may be the cause of our needing to rely on our intuition more than men, who have greater opportunities for the luxury of secluding themselves and keeping closed a room, a compartment of their own.

An advantage to being under the radar, as women often are, is that it gives us the opportunity to observe others, their surroundings and their actions. Michel Foucault (1977) calls this "surveillance," and John Fiske (1993) calls it "monitoring" explaining that

the imagination to understand how *we* look to *others* has always been better developed in subordinate social formations than in dominant ones, because it has proved necessary to their tactics of survival. For the power-bloc, however, seeing itself through the eyes of the subordinate often appears to be unnecessary and even to weaken its resolve to advance its own interest. Consequently, women understand men and how they appear to men much more accurately than vice versa, slaves understood their owners better than the owners understood their

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slaves, and workers know how they appear to the bosses much more clearly than

bosses know how they appear from below. (p. 46)

When women do possess power, it is considered negative. Robin Roberts (1993) writes

that women are depicted in science fiction to have "powers that can threaten male

dominance: the first is their ability to reproduce; the second, to use magic, an alternative

to hard science" (p. 9). In other words, "looking is an exercise of power, and to be

looked at is therefore to become the object of power" (Fiske, 1993, p. 46). Interestingly,

Fiske argues that

the US is one of the most monoglossic cultures in the world: because the nation is

such a powerful exporter of culture, it imports very little, and consequently, US

citizens are comparatively deprived of hearing other voices, of seeing the world

(and themselves) from other points of view. (p. 169)

At the time of this writing, the United States had just elected its first black president. A

female ran for president and is now the secretary of state. From the people I have spoken

to, there is a feeling that, hopefully, the power-blocs will spread the wealth and power

more evenly across the nation. This has a direct bearing on education. It will be

interesting to see what changes come down to local schools. Will students, parents and

teachers, who have the biggest stake in education, have a say in how our children learn

and what they learn?

With the tide turned toward standardization in testing, even though the majority of

teachers are women, the method of teaching leans more towards fathering, more

authoritarian management. Teachers are teaching out of fear that their students will not

achieve a proper score on the standardized tests. It is difficult to properly hold a child or

student when one is fearful. Palmer (1998) stresses that "the eternal structures of education would not have the power to divide us as deeply as they do if they were not rooted in one of the most compelling features of our inner landscape—fear" (p. 36). Educator Wendy Atwell-Vasey (1998) also offers a pertinent perspective: "If academia operates under the assumption that structure and knowledge can only be achieved in the 'Symbolic' realm, we discount the tonal, rhythmic, sensual, fluid, provisional, affiliative realm of the maternal" (p. 51). In her study of three teachers, Atwell-Vasey "found the narratives to present the story of a gap between how teachers are inspired by language and literature in 'private life' and what they do in school" (p. 16). I know that I have had to change my instinctual way of teaching, which is to allow the students more freedom to explore their individual areas of interest in order to assure they learn everything that will be on the next standardized test. However, I am determined to find ways to teach excellently while also meeting testing goals.

To achieve the proper holding environment for her writing class, Dyson (1997) suggests providing "open-ended composing activities; regular classroom sharing of children's texts; and class discussions of those shared texts" (p. 180), and she warns that "if official curricula make no space for this agency, then schools risk reinforcing societal divisions in children's orientations to each other, to cultural art forms, and, to school itself" (p. 181). The teachers conveyed in Dyson's book are adept at mothering at school and they provide solutions to the increasingly myopic form of teaching the test.

This feeling that students and teachers are in a straightjacket is occurring in too many classrooms, especially in high schools. The English rock band Pink Floyd, with lyrics written by Roger Waters (1979), sings lyrics that reflect Winnicott's ideas:

"Mama's gonna put all of her fears into you" and "We don't need no education; we don't need no thought control." In the first quote, "Mama" did not provide an adequate holding environment; in the second quote, the school continues to fail to "hold" children properly. Those women who would prefer to teach with a proper holding environment, giving students a safe place in which to explore their unique creativities, are often teaching out of fear—fear that their students will not perform adequately according to set standards.

When children become teenagers, they need a different kind of holding. It is helpful to know, as Winnicott (2002) writes "how to be there waiting when the adolescent becomes infantile and dependent, and takes everything for granted, and at the same time be able to meet the adolescent's need to strike out defiantly to establish a personal independence" (p. 209). Winnicott realizes the art of knowing how to hold, when to hold, and when not to hold. Schools, in many instances, are not giving teenagers the space to exert their independence, and this is based on fear that they will not only rebel, but also that they will not meet testing requirements. If these students are not given the independence that they have earned, then they will act out in negative ways.

I argue that language arts provide a transitional space, even a holding place for students. What is it about the art, music, literature and other creative arts that causes students to want more? Perhaps because these are closer to their creative selves that started at the very beginning of their lives. Because of the limited resources in the arts (music, visual, performing, drama, etc.) available to the majority of students, literature is the most viable way to reach out and hold these students. I understand J. Hillis Miller (1992) when he writes, "The word evokes. The illustration presents" (p. 67). In a dynamic language arts class, teachers combine the visual with the written.

Along with Winnicott's holding environment, Segal (1991, p. 51) explains Bion's concept of the container. If the first contact between mother and infant is good, then the infant "not only reintrojects its own projections made the more bearable, but he also introjects the container-breast and its capacity to perform the alpha function" (p. 51). If this is done successfully enough times, then the infant "introjects the breast as a container that can perform what Bion calls the alpha function of converting the beta elements into alpha ones" (p. 51). By experiencing enough alpha functions, the infant is able to contain the beta ones, or turn them into alpha ones. Bion's explanation of the container is similar to Winnicott's holding environment, combined with his potential space theory. The ability of the mother to accept the infant, under any conditions, is crucial to successful holding, or containing. Segal relates an example of a patient who became pregnant when her daughter was only 4 months old. Consequently, this child perceived the mother as "already full with the next infant" (p. 52) and was unable to communicate with the mother.

I recently revealed to my oldest daughter, Ali, who is now in college, that I have guilty feelings that I was not able to contain some of her negative thoughts, feelings and outbursts when she was younger. My plate was so full at the time dealing with three additional children, a family member with depression, and being in graduate school, that I just could not handle any serious depressive thoughts she may have had. It is my belief that I gave this message to her verbally by saying, "Please don't cry. I just can't handle it," as well as physically by not allowing her to cry. When I conveyed this to her, she said it made her feel bad, but not because it was true; on the contrary, she feels that I love her very much and have been open to her. If this is true, having said this to her will cause

no real harm, but if there is some truth in my feelings, then I have at least opened the lines of communication for her to be able to talk to me about it. I actually said, "I am now ready to hear anything that you need to tell me," referring to any depressive thoughts she may have or any resentment she may have toward me.

On the flip side I would like to say that I contained Ali's early childhood very well. Even her colicky crying did not upset me much. This I attribute to having three younger sisters whom I helped raise. Jennifer was the first younger sister to be born after my mother remarried, and we were all so excited with the new baby and the hope that she brought with her. Rebecca was the second younger sister born, and despite her crying and serious childhood illnesses, she was a fighter and such a ray of sunshine with her outgoing, bubbly personality that the whole family accepted this well. Laura was the third younger sister born, and I pretended she was my very own baby, which was not difficult as my mother had her hands full with Jennifer and Rebecca who were only two years and one year older than Laura, respectively.

Ali is very much like Rebecca, with a strong personality and susceptibility to pneumonia that has put her in the hospital several times. I relished my stay-at-home time with Ali. I remember this complete feeling of wholeness and contentedness with her. It was almost as if when she was crying, instead of feeling exasperated, I felt we were more real together, more alive as one. The crying and her strong personality made the reality of our mother-daughterhood more outstanding.

My daughter Katie is very similar in that she had and still has an extremely strong will. I remember taking Katie places and her strong will was so apparent to others that they commented on several occasions, "Boy, she's a handful, isn't she?" I took a little

offense to this, but it made me realize how strong-willed she really was for others to recognize this and comment on it. What they did not seem to realize was that from this strong will came the amazing energy to brighten up our whole family, to say truthfully what she did and did not like about her "nana," teachers, and others whom she came in contact with. Now Katie is 11 and she still has a strong personality, but it is tempered with compassion for others and a drive to excel in her areas of interest—dance and drama.

Mothering came naturally to me for several reasons. One reason was that I enjoyed helping raise my younger sisters. It was like I could be their best friend and play with them, but I could also "play" at being a mother, which is a natural activity for little girls to want to engage in. I had three live babies of my own to play with. A second reason I account for my comfortableness in mothering is that, from all accounts, I had a safe environment as a young child. Both my parents were in a fairly good time in their lives. I was a good-natured baby, making parenthood rather easy and a joy for them. Both my parents have told me this. The third reason is that I think I was simply blessed with grace from God in this area. I can try to explain all the reasons why motherhood has been a joy and has been relatively easy for me, but I think a lot comes down to luck in having the kind of personality that enjoys children.

While my two daughters have been strong-willed, this being the source of the most difficulty in raising them, my two sons have been challenging for different reasons. Chad was born with a minor form of cerebral palsy that proved to be a physical challenge for me and for him. I remember Chad screaming, kicking, and later whining almost every day for eight years because he did not want to wear his orthotic device. Kyle

started having seizures at age 6 months, both grand mal febrile seizures and slighter

seizures, which has proved to be physically and emotionally demanding. Kyle is hard to

manage physically because he is very active, impulsive and unpredictable, which results

in him being somewhere on the autism spectrum disorder (ASD) continuum. Kyle is

emotionally draining because we are continuously scared of him having another seizure

and scared of what the future holds for him should his ASD not improve. Despite these

challenges in all my children, I was able to provide a good-enough holding environment.

In other words, I was a good-enough container.

Segal points out differences in Winnicott's potential space and Bion's use

of mental space. Winnicott's potential space is between the child and mother, which, if

everything goes well enough, is the place where transitional phenomena takes place.

Transitional phenomena develops later into cultural space. Bion's container, on the other

hand, explains Segal, results in the "interaction of projective and introjective

identifications. . . .Bion's concept of the container and the contained is strictly a two-

body relationship" (p. 57). Winnicott's transitional phenomena consists of the infant, the

object, and whatever imaginative activity transpires between the first two, the infant and

the object. For Winnicott, the third object is the transitional object. Therefore, I think

there are more similarities between Bion's container and Winnicott's potential space,

which later develops into transitional phenomena and cultural space.

The relationship between mother and child is the result of communication

between the two. Jessica Benjamin (1998) writes that "this third position is founded in

the communicative relationship, which creates a dialogue that is an entity in itself, a

potential space outside the web of identifications" (xv). Benjamin has found her unique

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third area that she believes is founded on the communication, or dialogue between two or more people or things. To Benjamin, the communication is a position unto itself. Segal points out something that may be obvious: "when there is a good relationship between container and contained it gives rise to a third object in a way that two objects share a third to the advantage of all three"; alternatively, a "bad relationship between container and contained gives rise to a third which is destructive to all three" (p. 58). Winnicott spends little time on the negative aspects of holding environment or transitional phenomena. He admits that there are cases of this, but he prefers to focus on the positive, the good-enough cases, and on the person as a whole person.

Illusion

Winnicott emphasizes that the first moments of a child's life, moments that involve feeding, can shape the child forever; that is how important the relationship between the infant and the mother is. Of the first actual and theoretical feeding, Winnicott affirms that a mother is biologically equipped and orientated to do the job. He also explains that it is not just the first feed that is important but also a building up of many feedings and memories that allow the baby to develop a relationship with himself and his environment. Winnicott (1988) explains the importance of the mother adapting to the baby, and the baby reacting appropriately to the mother:

> At the (theoretical) first feed the baby is ready to create, and the mother makes it possible for the baby to have the illusion that the breast, and what the breast means, has been created by impulse out of need. Of course we as sophisticated philosophers know that what the baby created was not that which the mother

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presented, but the mother by her extremely delicate adaptation to the (emotional) needs of the infant is able to allow the baby this illusion. . . .

At first, then, there is almost exact adaptation to need, affording the infant the illusion of having created external objects. The mother gradually decreases in her capacity for adaptation to (emotional) need, but the infant has ways and means of dealing with this change. (p. 101)

The means the child has of dealing with the mother's literal and figurative weaning is through the transitional object that serves as an intermediate area where the child can, through a well-provided illusion, integrate into a more complete individual. Successful use of a transitional object depends on the child's earliest relationships, especially with the mother.

Winnicott (in Abram, 1997) elaborates on the link between good-enough and illusion in his 1960 paper "Ego Distortion in Terms of True and False Self":

The good-enough mother meets the omnipotence of the infant and to some extent makes sense of it. She does this repeatedly. A True Self begins to have life, through the strength given to the infant's weak ego by the mother's implementation of the infant's omnipotent expressions.

The mother who is not good-enough is not able to implement the infant's omnipotence, and so she repeatedly fails to meet the infant gesture; instead she substitutes her own gesture which is to be given sense by the compliance of the infant. This compliance on the part of the infant is the earliest stage of the False Self, and belongs to the mother's inability to sense her infant's needs.

It is an essential part of my theory that the True Self does not become a

living reality except as a result of the mother's repeated success in meeting the

infant's spontaneous gesture of sensory hallucination. (pp. 194-95)

It is easy to see that the parents, to start with, must have a True Self before they can

impart this same quality to their children. My son who has been diagnosed with ASD

(autism spectrum disorder) is now 5 years old. I sometimes wonder whether my

beginning my doctoral studies at the same time my son was born affected my ability to

respond adequately to his gestures.

The True Self is someone who is emotionally healthy, someone who feels a bond

with the world, and one who easily engages in creative endeavors, including at work. In

the schools teachers see instances of parents not being emotionally healthy and available

to their children. They have not been able to provide proper illusions for their child.

Remember that illusion is tied closely to proper holding and being a good-enough parent.

It becomes the responsibility of the social workers, psychologists, and teachers to work

together to help these parents and their children. Social workers, expresses Winnicott

(1996), have carried "the burden of the practice of child psychiatry all these years, and it

is to social work that we must look for an extension of psychiatric practice to cover all

types of case and to engage in preventive work" (p. 281). Efforts are made from within

the school system to provide or at least disseminate information about outreach programs

to parents. The school is in a delicate intermediary position of providing an emotional

venue, a holding place, for imparting knowledge.

Regarding illusion, when my daughter Katie turned 11, she doubted the existence

of Santa Claus. With my two older children, I was able to tell them the truth when they

started to question or doubt. With Katie, I sensed that she was not ready to know the truth about Santa Claus and that if I told her she would be angry and disappointed that I had shattered her illusion.

I had already disappointed her when she was eight and we went to Disney World's Animal Kingdom. Her fascination with a talking and moving trash can caused us to stay with it for over an hour. I was more fascinated with the reality behind the trash can, which was a man in regular tourist clothes talking discreetly into a microphone and holding a remote-control device. When I pointed out the microphone and remote-control device, and even though Katie could see the synchronistic movements of the man and the trash can, she refused to believe that the man was controlling the trash can. Later, when she accepted that it was the man making the trash can move and talk, she shouted to me, "You ruined it, Mom!" I had pangs of guilt because I knew I had taken something powerful away from her. I had forced her to see something she was either not ready or willing to see. I realized, like Alice Miller (1990), that "the absolute power a mother has over her little child knows no limits, and yet no qualifications are required of her" (p. 149). These personal examples reveal the importance of parents providing illusion for their children as long as their children emotionally need it.

The Christmas tree is a perfect example of Winnicott's potential space between reality and fantasy, which provides a necessary illusion. As Bettelheim (1987) writes, "it is obviously a tree, yet it is so clearly what no real tree can ever be. The parents have transformed its everyday reality for their child into a children's wonderland" (p. 365). This act on the part of the parents is an example of their continuous ability to provide

their children with just enough of an illusion and reality to make their lives meaningful and worth living. Bettelheim further explains that

> this goodwill cannot be guaranteed by a certain number of presents or by their elaborate nature, but is indicated by the parents' readiness to create for their child, once a year, a world that is in accord with his wishful and magical thinking.
>
> (p. 365)

I have provided two examples of the negative consequences of not providing a necessary fantasy, or illusion. Bettelheim recounts another quite devastating effect of revealing too soon an illusion:

> One ten-year-old said when Santa Claus was discussed: "I know there is no Santa, and no Tooth Fairy who puts a dime under my pillow." And then she broke down, sobbing, "I hate reality." Her hatred of reality was the consequence of being forced too early to give up her wish-fulfilling fantasies. Far from bringing her closer to a healthy understanding of reality, as her parents intended, their rational explanations had alienated her from it, because without some fantasy relief, some specially satisfying events or rituals, unrelieved reality becomes just too unbearable for the young—and for quite a few of the not so young. Belief in magic and the use of magical thinking to bind anxiety (such as belief in a guardian angel or in good fairies) and also to rekindle and sustain hope for good things to come (belief in Santa and the Easter Bunny) are needed by the young child to help him master the rest of reality. (p. 366)

Christmas even provides an illusion for the parents who continue its tradition. It is also a way for adults to relive and recapture our childhoods and perhaps improve on it for our

own benefit as well as our children's benefit. As adults, we have the capability of relinquishing our illusions or keeping them. My children did not want to accept that the illusion of Santa Claus was not reality, but they matured to be able to look at it more objectively. Adults need to do be able to do the same.

People, including philosophers, debate over what constitutes reality over illusion. Winnicott (1987b) writes that "one person says that real means what we can all touch, see, and hear, while another says that it is only what feels real that counts, like a nightmare, or hating the man who jumps the bus queue" (p. 69). A person brought up with sufficient emotional health is fortunate to find reality in both of the above examples. Winnicott asks, "Why is it that the ordinary healthy person has at one and the same time a feeling of the realness of the world, and of the realness of what is imaginative and personal" (p. 69)? It is the successful bonding with parents and transitional objects that allows for this best-of-both-worlds scenario. "It is a great advantage to be like that," Winnicott adds, "because if we are we can use our imagination to make the world more exciting, and we can use the things of the real world to be imaginative about" (p. 69). The transitional object or phenomenon is the beginning of taking the fruits of this world and blending them with what is inside of us to create our unique exotic concoctions, which as we shall see is a form of playing.

From Play to Cultural Experience

For Winnicott, the great precursor to creativity is the ability to play. Winnicott (2005) states that "it is in playing and only in playing that the individual child or adult is able to be creative and to use the whole personality, and it is only in being creative that the individual discovers the self" (pp. 72-73). He believes it wise for adults to maintain

acts of playfulness all their lives and that this ability to play is the beginnings of creative living, which includes cultural experiences—and cultural experience is the individual's way of reaching out to the community and society.

Having a reputation of being playful with both children and adults, Winnicott believes that play is the necessary start to a creative and fulfilling life. To Winnicott (2005), "*It is play that is the universal*, and that belongs to health" (p. 56). Playing leads to forming relationship. I used to spy on my children when they were playing. I loved hearing their imaginary conversations with their toys. They were mimicking conversations they had heard with other children and adults. Sometimes they would make up elaborate conversations that I would hear later when they were speaking with people rather than their toys. They were combining outer conversations they had heard with their inner imagination.

How original is Winnicott's view that the psychoanalytic process is an extension of play! Play is precursory to creativity. Psychoanalysis is a highly specialized form of play involving communication with a therapist that helps individuals. Winnicott looked at psychoanalyses as a form of playing. This may include playing with ideas, playing between the analyst and the analysand of these ideas. This is similar to the playfulness between a mother and infant, a parent and child. One could also envision the play between students and teachers, subject and student/teacher.

Winnicott prioritizes people's ability to remain playful *all their life*. For his part, Freud (in Bettelheim, 1987) agrees when he compares child's play to adult's poetic activity in the following quote:

Should we not seek the first traces of poetic activities already in the child?

Perhaps we may say: Every child in his play behaves like a poet, as he creates his own world, or to put it more correctly, as he transposes the elements forming his world into a new order, more pleasing and suitable to him. (p. 184)

This supports Winnicott's notion that play evolves into cultural and artistic activities.

Winnicott has influenced and continues to influence people in many professions. Susan Linn uses her puppetry as a form of play therapy with children. She founded the Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood (CCFC) on the belief that the media were negatively affecting children's ability to play spontaneously. After reading Winnicott's *Playing and Reality*, Linn (2008) realized that play is "a manifestation of health. Play is healing. Play as a means of honest self-expression. Play as creativity. Play as . . . and as I'm writing this I find myself imagining a dialogue with my puppet Audrey Duck" (p. 63). Linn has devoted her life to living Winnicott's theories on play, transitional phenomena, spontaneous gesture, and potential space.

Play begins in childhood, and Dewey (1973) defines play as, "the name we give those activities in which a child freely and spontaneously takes part because he likes them and derives enjoyment from them" (pp. 199-200). Dewey reminds us that, "there is, then, nothing mysterious or mystical in the discovery made by Plato and remade by Froebel that play is the chief, almost the only, mode of education for the child in the years of later infancy" (p. 162). Dewey also writes that, "*Playfulness* is a more important consideration than play. The former is an attitude of mind; the latter is a passing outward manifestation of this attitude" (p. 162). Dewey's belief that playfulness is as important as playing is

similar to Winnicott's belief that creative living is as important as creativity. Dewey writes in detail of play:

> Play is not to be identified with anything which the child externally does. It rather designates his mental attitude in its entirety and in its unity. It is the free play, the interplay, of all the child's powers, thoughts, and physical movements, in embodying, in a satisfying form, his own images and interests. Negatively, it is freedom from economic pressure—the necessities of getting a living and supporting others—and from the fixed responsibilities attaching to the special callings of the adult. Positively, it means that the supreme end of the child is fullness of growth—fullness of realization of his budding powers, a realization which continually carries him from one plane to another. (pp. 118-9)

Notice that Dewey refers to responsibilities that can deter adults from playing or remaining playful. If adults are working at what they enjoy, they are participating in a form of play reserved solely for adults.

Winnicott also cautions adults against allowing negativity to set in. It is possible and favorable for adults to remember the importance of play and to actively engage in forms of play throughout their lives. Parsons (2000) asserts that "the idea of play as a serious and important element in human civilization is an ancient one" (p. 129). Plato (2009) held that "life must be lived as play" (p. 1). Winnicott (in Aite, 2001) writes that

> Whatever I say about children playing really applies to adults as well, only the matter is more difficult to describe when the patient's material appears mainly in terms of verbal communication. I suggest that we must expect to find playing just as evident in the analysis of adults as it is in the case of our work with children. It

manifests itself, for instance, in the choice of words, in the inflections of the

voice, and indeed in the sense of humour. (p. 243)

It should be a relief to adults that it is expected that they retain their ability to play all

their lives, unless one considers it from the standpoint that playing can be hard work.

If a person can retain the ability to play and be playful, this will transfer to his or

her ability to both create and be creative. Winnicott makes a careful distinction between

a creation and creative *living*, and he is more concerned with creative living. Winnicott

acknowledges creativity in master works of arts, in the design of a house, garden,

costume, or a home-cooked meal, but the creativity that concerns Winnicott (2005) most

is the creativity that is "universal. It belongs to being alive" (p. 91). So, to Winnicott,

the everyday moving, living, and being is also significantly creative.

Dewey's viewpoint is similar to Winnicott's belief that creative living is more

important than creating a work of art. Regarding play, Jung (in Aite, 2001) writes that

in the normal course of things, phantasy does not easily go astray; it is too deep

for that, and too closely bound up with the tap-root of human and animal instinct.

It has a surprising way of always coming out right in the end. The creative

activity of imagination frees man from his bondage to the "nothing but" and raises

him to the status of one who plays. (p. 242)

Think how important it is for teachers to retain their ability to play. Wouldn't you much

rather have a teacher who remembers what it was like to play as a child? Unfortunately,

the growing demands from state and federal governments are forcing teachers to push

aside memories of what it is like to be young and playful.

Winnicott (2005) points out a major pitfall of many adults: "In a tantalizing way many individuals have experienced just enough creative living to recognize that for most of their time they are living uncreatively" (p. 87). Dewey (1997) echoes similar beliefs when he writes,

> To the child the homely activities going on about him are not utilitarian devices for accomplishing physical ends; they exemplify a wonderful world the depths of which he has not sounded, a world full of the mystery and promise that attend all the doings of the grown-ups whom he admires. (p. 166)

If we allow our bodies and imaginations to take part fully in the experience, creativity resides in the most mundane of activities. But imagination has greater importance than just giving us creative ability; it is what makes us, our soul on a fundamental basis because our first thoughts or ideas come from images that we see. These images then become ideas, and, if carried further, they become full-fledged creations. These creations become objects that we see, thus images in our mind, and the process begins all over again. This is a process that can take place one's entire life. As Winnicott and Dewey suggest, we can keep our playful creative instincts while we are adults doing adult tasks.

Dennis Carlson (2002), in *Leaving Safe Harbors*, reminds us that in Nietzsche's *Zarathustra*

> The child represents a capacity to play again, to engage the imagination in creative flights, to begin new projects that go beyond where we have been—and it is precisely this capacity that Nietzsche suggests leads people in the direction of freedom. (p. 111)

One need only say the word "imagination" and it conjures up a feeling of freedom, excitement, and playfulness. In his book, *On Flirtation*, Adam Phillips (1994) tells us that

> flirtation keeps things in play, and by doing so lets us get to know [people] in
> different ways. It allows us the fascination of what is unconvincing. By making a
> game of uncertainty, of the need to be convinced, it always plays with, or rather
> flirts with, the idea of surprise. (xii)

Phillips provides flirting as one example of interplay between imagining and play, and this reinforces Winnicott's ideas of play and how adults need to remain playful all their lives.

Winnicott's transitional object theory originated from his keen observance of play "at work" with babies and children. In the introduction to Winnicott's (1992) book *Psychoanalytic Explorations*, his wife, Clare, reveals that

> the essential clue to D.W.W.'s work on transitional objects and phenomena is to
> be found in his own personality, in his way of relating and being related to, and in
> his whole style of life. What I mean is that it was his *capacity to play*, which
> never deserted him, that led him inevitably into the area of research that he
> conceptualized in terms of the transitional objects and phenomena. (pp. 2-3)

Marion Milner (1988) remarks that Winnicott reminded her somewhat of a clown she once observed, the way he quickly moved from one thing or one subject to another in seeming chaos, but always seizing what was most essential for the moment or situation. Milner (in Rodman, 2003) uses the metaphor "sparks flying off a Catherine wheel" (p. 265) to describe Winnicott. She regarded him as a genius.

Psychotherapist Barbara Dockar-Drysdale (1990), who worked with Winnicott for 17 years recalls first meeting the man:

> We had dinner and then, quite suddenly, he asked if I would like to come for a walk with him. It was dark but warm and clear; this was when we came to know each other. We must have walked for an hour or more and we discussed ourselves and our work. Donald had just been very ill – the first time – and his doctor had told him to go slow and be careful. He asked me what I would do in these circumstances and I replied that I would rather be quite dead if I could not be quite alive. He had come to the same conclusion and we went on to talk about all sorts of ideas. (p. 1)

Dockar-Drysdale had spent enough time to "realize that this was a very remarkable person" (p. 1). Winnicott brings to mind Maxine Greene's (2001) belief in wide-awakeness, tending to life fully, and being fully present. Winnicott's wish at his death was to be fully alive. Fully alive was how he lived.

For Winnicott, playing is at once fun and about the serious business of finding, discovering, and creating oneself. Winnicott does not believe that one can be wholly alive or be truly creative (in every day acts) if one does not have the ability to play. Winnicott believes it wise for an adult to maintain acts of playfulness all their lives. This ability to play, he asserts, is the beginning of creative living, which includes cultural experiences, and cultural experience is the individual's way of reaching out to the community and society.

In his book *How We Think,* Dewey (1997) describes "The Significance of Play and of Playfulness":

When things become signs, when they gain a representative capacity as standing

for other things, play is transformed from mere physical exuberance into an

activity involving a mental factor. A little girl who had broken her doll was seen

to perform with the leg of the doll all the operations of washing, putting to bed,

and fondling, that she had been accustomed to perform with the entire doll. The

part stood for the whole; she reacted, not to the stimulus sensible present, but to

the meaning suggested by the sense object. (p. 161)

This example shows the symbolism that is involved with play. Children have such vivid

imaginations that a substitute object can stand in for the real thing. It makes no

difference to them.

Winnicott played the spatula game with his child patients to get a sense of the

health of the infant. He would present a spatula to infants and use it to play with the

infants, sometimes taking it away at opportune moments. In health he would see a

regular sequence in the infant's responses, but the normal sequence of responses was

disrupted if pathological anxieties of one form or another were present. As Parsons

(2000) observes, "the playing is important to the infant, but it is spoiled if the grown-ups

take it too seriously; or, to be more accurate, if they take it seriously in the wrong way"

(p. 131). My daughter Ali could play for hours on end by herself, and I remember times

when I would come into her room to play dolls or Legos only to be told that I was not

playing right. She preferred to play by herself so that an adult would not disrupt the

important imaginings going on in her mind. My son Kyle often did not want us to play

with him because his mind could not switch to a different tactic or way of seeing playing.

My other children, Katie and Chad, were more amenable to disruptions. These are my

children who, from a very early age, preferred— even needed—to be around people most of the time. Interestingly, they are my middle children, never knowing what it was like not to always have someone around.

The first experiences of transitional phenomena lead to play. Winnicott (1987b) says that "in health there is an evolution from the transitional phenomenon, and the use of objects, to the whole play capacity of the child" (p. 171), and play, according to Winnicott, is one of the first acts of creativity. Winnicott devoted much of his writing to play, and it is his belief that play should continue to be an integral part of human existence all throughout life. Unfortunately, with schools focusing heavily on teachers and students being strictly accountable for primarily improving test scores, little space is left for students' dreaming, playing, creating, and just being. In his speeches and writings there is an easiness (and playfulness) in Winnicott that was important in the rapport he developed with practically everyone with whom he had contact. He stresses the seriousness of play, going as far to say that if an individual does not have the capacity to play, that person does not have the capacity to *be*, or the capacity to create or *be* creative. Play leads to creativity and creativity leads back to play.

When one understands the precariousness of the beginning environment on an individual's ability to *be*, to create, and to play, one can begin to better appreciate people's creative processes. This includes the ability to combine reality with fantasy, inner with outer, and subjective with objective. In the case of creativity, there is a balance between the id and the ego, between subjective instincts and objective observations, and between being and doing. Einstein maintains that genius is 1 percent inspiration and 99 percent perspiration. Perhaps he said this to quiet those who felt that

ideas and solutions *simply* came to him. Certainly he was gifted in being able to receive ideas, but his hard work and diligence brought his ideas to fruition. Transitional object theory is noted for its paradoxical ease with which the object comes forth (sometimes appearing from nowhere, but the baby believes he or she created it), yet hard work on the parent's part allowed it to come into existence. Hard work on the part of the infant and child through creative endeavors keeps the object, or the creativity that comes from the object, alive.

There is a natural progression that stems from healthful parental bonding and optimum use of transitional phenomena, and this is the child's realm of play. Winnicott (1987b) emphasizes that playing is a sign of healthy emotional development, and children especially should be allowed a wider area for imagination and play to dominate "so that playing which makes use of the world, and yet retains all the intensity of the dream, is considered characteristic of the life of children" (p. 171). Winnicott gives the example of a little girl asking to fly. A parent would not tell her she could not fly; "Instead of that we pick her up and carry her around above our heads and put her on top of the cupboard, so that she feels she has flown like a bird to her nest" (p. 70).

Winnicott urges us to continue this playful process our whole time on earth. Otherwise, the results will be that

> At ten years or so the child will be practicing long-jump and high-jump, trying to jump farther and higher than the others. That will be all that remains, except dreams, of the tremendously acute sensations associated with the idea of flying that came naturally at the age of three. (p. 71)

There is never a time when children should no longer play. We must refrain from forcing reality on the little child, not even when "the child is five or six years old, because, if all goes well, by that age the child will have started a scientific interest in this thing that grown-ups call the real world" (p. 71). Hopefully, the child will direct her interest in play, her imagination, and her creative interests toward an equally fun and rewarding hobby or career. Hopefully, teachers can foster potential hobby and career interests by being given more opportunities to encourage imagination through meaningful play in the class.

Children who are given the space and freedom to engage in play when they are younger are more likely to engage in meaningful cultural activities, hobbies and careers when they become adults. As a contrast to the often violent concept of vocation—as in "Thank God It's Friday (TGIF)"—Frederick Buechner (in Palmer, 1998) offers a more generous picture of vocation as 'the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet" (p. 30). I suspect that when people say they love their job that it is more like play than work, these are people who were given the liberty of play as a child, and this has transferred over to a fulfilling imaginative adult life. These people know that "this real world has much to offer, as long as its acceptance does not mean a loss of the reality of the personal imaginative or inner world" (Winnicott, 1987b, p. 71).

The transitional object is the first plaything providing the first step the child takes toward integrating his subjective world with the objective world, of combining fantasy with reality, and of becoming separated from the parents and more at home with the rest of the world. If all goes well enough, the child is ready for the next step which is expanding her play toward cultural appreciation, and Winnicott (1986) believes that

cultural experience starts as play, and leads on to the whole area of man's

inheritance, including the arts, the myths of history, the slow march of

philosophical thought and the mysteries of mathematics, and of group

management and of religion. (p. 36)

Appreciating cultural experiences remains in the intermediate area, somewhere between

self and the world, between imagination and reality, between subjectivity and objectivity.

Joseph Campbell (1988) relates that myths are "stories about the wisdom of life"

and "what we're learning in our schools is not the wisdom of life. We're learning

technologies, we're getting information" (p. 11). Appreciating cultural experiences is, or

should be, a large part of children's educational experiences. Greene (1995) exhorts

adults to "learn how to enable the diverse young to join the continually emergent

culture's ongoing conversation" (p. 56). When speaking of *The Three Lives*, Winnicott

(1986, p. 35) classifies them as: first, living in the world having interpersonal

relationships, which also includes relating to the non-human environment; second, having

a rich, personal, inner psychical reality, which is being able to be and relate with one's

self (including dreams and dream material); and, third, having cultural experiences.

Winnicott sees the natural progression from the first relationship between a baby and

mother to a child's ability to play and later, when an adult, to pursue cultural endeavors.

Even though Winnicott observed the beginnings of cultural experience because of

his experiences with his young patients and their mothers, he formulated many

hypotheses about how these first relationships affected a person's ability to cultivate

creative experiences. He believes that the third area of cultural experience is the most

variable, affecting each person differently. For some people who are anxious and restless

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"it has practically no representation, whereas in others this is the important part of human existence, where animals do not even start" (p. 36). A sense of humor and playfulness are a part of cultural experience. Winnicott seems to agree with Joseph Campbell that these cultural experiences are a result of the common cultural myths of the past ten thousand years.

Art, creativity, and cultural experience come from the ability to play. Segal (1991) writes that

> the artist has this in common with the day-dreamer—that he creates a world of phantasy in which he can fulfill his unconscious wishes. In one important way, however, he differs from the day-dreamer in that he finds a way back to reality in his artistic creation. (p. 77)

Winnicott's belief in children's play is important because it is the starting point of creative thought, living, work, and art. Dewey, Freud, Winnicott and others have emphasized the serious business of play—it is a child's work. In play, a child makes up a world she knows is imaginary, not real. Likewise, an artist creates a fantasy that she also knows is imaginary, but as Segal points out, "it is real only in a certain sense. It does have a reality of its own, different from what we commonly call 'real'" (p. 77).

Michael Parson's 2000 book contains two chapters, one that discusses the psychology of Shakespeare's play and one that relates the playing that one does in childhood. He says this is not a coincidence, for "play and plays both depend on a particular area of the imagination where things can be real and not real at the same time" (p. 128). Similarly, Winnicott discusses the overlapping of a play area between a patient

and a therapist, and when play is not possible for the patient, it is the job of the therapist to get the patient in a position to be able to play again.

Cultural phenomena have their roots in transitional phenomena, which proceed from the first moments of a baby's life and continues all throughout one's life, even up until death.

One can observe instances of transitional phenomena in all areas of life. I see them when my husband is distraught and automatically picks up his guitar and plays music. I see them with my own instantaneous reaching for my writing journal when I am angry or sad. My sister eats comforting foods when she becomes upset. A good friend heads straight for the gym for an intensive workout when life gets overwhelming. There are examples of extremely negative transitional phenomena that continue throughout life as well—for example, people who become addicted to things or to people.

Winnicott invented the Squiggle Game, a free-association activity in which he drew something on paper and invited a young patient to add to it. This game evolved out of Winnicott's desire to communicate more effectively with young children during consultations. Winnicott called the game a psychotherapeutic consultation to distinguish it from psychoanalysis or psychotherapy. The Squiggle Game is succinctly described by Abram (1997) in the following paragraph:

Winnicott initiated the Squiggle Game in first assessment interviews with children. He started off by drawing a squiggle on a piece of paper; he then asked the child to add to it. Over the course of the initial interview, Winnicott and the child took it in turns to draw something in response to the other's squiggle. In

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this way, the squiggles sometimes turned into pictures. For each interview, there

were usually about thirty drawings produced. (p. 303)

Art therapists use a similar technique to extract feelings from introverted patients.

Winnicott had the ability to get to the level of his patients and do whatever was necessary

to break through and communicate with them, and the Squiggle Game was a free-

associative way of doing this.

Teachers often go through the same experimental activities to see what ways they

can connect the subject matter and make it relevant to students. I do several activities

that remind me of the Squiggle Game. One of the first techniques I learned during my

student teaching was Peter Elbow's (2009) "freewriting" (p. 1). In freewriting, a person

jots down anything (free-associates) that comes to mind, often given a verbal prompt.

Freud would say a word, and his patients would say the first thing that came to mind.

Winnicott drew a squiggle, and his patients would add to his squiggles whatever came to

mind or hand. The freewriting exercises are effective because thoughts flow freely, many

ideas are generated, ideas come fast and easy, and there are no limits or worries of

technical mistakes. Rosenblatt (2005) writes of the parallelisms between reader and

writer where "both reader and writer engage in constituting symbolic structures of

meaning in a to-and-fro, spiral transaction with the text" (p. 25).

I take Elbow's idea of freewriting and apply it to books and literature. In trying to

get to know my students and their interests in order to recommend a book, I ask them

several questions, like what books they remember reading or having read to them when

they were very young. Which ones were your favorites? How did you feel when you

read it? Do you still have it? Why do you think you liked it so much? Studies indicate

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that children are read to less and less the older they get; this reading drops sharply by the fourth or fifth grade. I regularly read aloud to my students for several reasons. First, they need to hear articulate and emphatic reading. Second, they need to hear vocabulary pronounced correctly, and I can stop and quickly explain what certain words mean without interfering with the story. Third, there is something special about being read to; it takes us back to an earlier time when there are pleasant memories of being read to. Even students who do not have many pleasant childhood memories remember reading time as one of the few times a close emotional connection was being made between parent and child.

The first part of this chapter addressed Winnicott's foremost ideas through the ideal progression from being nurtured by a parent, having an adequate holding environment, maintaining the capacity for illusion, and engaging the imagination through play which ultimately leads to cultural experience. These areas of parenting, holding environment, providing illusion, and engaging in play and cultural activities are all closely tied to the transitional object and phenomena. Transitional phenomena is the string that ties all these human experiences together.

The second half of this chapter examines transitional phenomena and their many aspects. First, an explanation of the first signs of transitional phenomena and their natural evolution into the cultural realm are discussed. Next, many aspects of transitional phenomena are given consideration including its ties to birth and death. Finally, I devote a section to the connection between transitional phenomena and literature.

Transitional Phenomena

Well-trained psychologists know that children who have healthy bonds with their parents are more likely to be emotionally well grounded and capable of sustaining an imaginative inner life. An inner fantasy life capable of nourishing boys and girls throughout their lives is a precious gift. This ability to engage in a personal fantasy life is the concentration of this section which discusses transitional phenomena.

Winnicott theorizes two main concepts of child development. First, he details the importance of the earliest relationship between a baby/child and the mother/parent. Second, he outlines the importance of a transitional object for the child's emotional well-being and creative processing, both necessitating proper holding environments throughout childhood. Transitional object theory is Winnicott's object-relational approach to "explain the relation between individuals and their cultures" (Zaretsky, 2004, p. 274) because Winnicott feels that we know much "about what goes on *inside* individuals (through psychoanalysis) and *outside* individuals (through the social and behavioral sciences) but almost nothing about what goes on *between* them" (p. 274).

The irony is that the child needs people and objects *outside* herself to find emotional health and creative processes chiefly *within* herself; beginning in infancy this is often achieved through the transitional object. The infant needs the creative instincts of a parent to grow emotionally healthy. Through what Winnicott describes as instincts, a parent, and mother in particular, knows what her baby needs and just when he needs it, and she fulfills the baby's needs. When a mother's devotion is successfully accomplished through the mother herself, the infant learns to take what she needs, at first through a transitional object, then conceptual ideas themselves can take the place of an

actual object. In turn, if the child learns to receive and take what she needs, eventually the child is able to give to self, to family, to loved ones, and to society. Critics who claim that psychiatry is too narrowly focused on individuals need to remember the worth of each person and how one person can contribute to the world, sometimes even changing the course of history.

Muensterberger (1988) prioritizes Winnicott's transitional object theory by asserting that "the recognition of transitional phenomena and transitional objects has provided us one of the few critical, elucidating, and comprehensive concepts to have been elaborated in the course of psychoanalytic studies since Freud" (p. 5). Winnicott emphasizes the importance of the first not-me object, which can be a child's teddy bear, a blanket, a toy, or any object that the child recognizes comes from outside. No two cases are ever exactly the same. And in some cases, a baby may not develop any dependency on an object. Transitional objects and phenomena are universal, but never exactly the same in any two babies.

Psychoanalyst Michael Eigen (2004) benefits from Winnicott's theories and asks why Winnicott's paper "'Transitional Objects and Transitional Phenomena' (1953), bec[a]me his most popular work?" (p. 69). Eigen answers the question with the following observations:

> One reason is that the transitional object paper gave practitioners some thing to hold on to. Discussion of processes could be anchored to observation of behavior, e.g., attachment to a doll or blanket. For many practitioners, Winnicott's paper became a kind of transitional object itself, a me-yet-not-me possession, a vehicle

to aid expression and orientation. It offered something more or less concrete to dig into and rally around. (p. 69)

Transitional phenomena are universal yet individual. They sometimes involve an actual object but often they do not. The object is not as important as the service the object provides for the baby and child. Winnicott's theory is helpful in that it does often involve a physical object that one can directly witness the phenomena through, but what opens up this theory to a wider usability is the fact that transitional phenomena are as vast as there are people to participate in and witness them.

Winnicott (1987) recounts that the beginning acts of needing a transitional object come when the child starts sucking what is most convenient, which is usually some part of the hand. Soon they develop a pattern of needing to suck on something, whether it is a hand, part of the hand, or a substitute object, such as a pacifier. Winnicott (1987b) explains that first the hand is introduced to the mouth, which mimics the exciting feeding. To the initial excitement and purpose of feeding is added another sensation— that which is "more nearly affectionate" (pp. 167-188). A result of such affectionate fondling is a bonding relationship to whatever object happens to be close by. Usually the child comes to prefer one object over another, and this object becomes important to the baby. This object thus comes to belong to the infant and is his first possession that is not a thumb, finger, other part of the hand, or the mother. And this is important because it "is evidence of the beginning of a relationship to the world" (pp. 167-68). The transitional object serves the purpose of both helping the baby to identify himself as a separate person and also to become aware of his ability to manipulate the outer world.

Winnicott spent his lifetime observing that babies and children use these objects for many reasons including comfort, enjoyment, and play. Winnicott's transitional object theory came at an opportune time when, as Eigen (2004) writes, there was a "new 'Age of the Mother' in psychoanalysis. Early mother-infant interactions came to center stage" (p. 69). In addition, "Winnicott's speculations were refreshing because they were not couched in dogmatic language. Practitioners from any school could use them" (p. 69). The inner imagination of a child depends on his or her early use of a transitional object which effects the rest of a child's life. Winnicott believes that transitional phenomena is important in every child's development. Transitional phenomena, as Winnicott (2002) explains, is difficult to tie down to one clear-cut idea.

> In playing, the child enters this intermediate area of what I am calling cheating, although I want to make it clear that just in this particular aspect of cheating there is health. The child uses a position in between himself or herself and the mother or father, whoever it is, and there whatever happens is symbolic of the union or the non-separation of these two separate things. The concept is really quite a difficult one and I think it would make a difference to philosophy if this could be grasped. It would also perhaps put religion once more into the experience of those who in fact have grown up out of the concept of miracles. (p. 226)

Thus, a transitional object is the in-between object that takes the child from oneness with and dependency on a parent to separateness and independence from a parent.

Language, including literature, is a symbol that provides an intermediate space for students to derive from inner and outer resources. Winnicott (2002) explains how the symbol becomes more important than the union the symbol represents:

For our purpose here, the point is that the child requires a length of time in which steady experiences in relationships can be used for the development of intermediate areas in which transitional or play phenomena can become established for that particular child, established so that henceforward the child may enjoy all that is to be derived from the use of the symbol. For the symbol of union gives wider scope for human experience than union itself. (p. 226)

The symbol, or transitional object is given or created to take up the slack in the original union between mother and child. As the child matures and becomes more independent, he relies on the symbol more and the union, or relationship with the parent less and less. This proves satisfactory because the symbol is proof that the union took place first.

Using a transitional object, a child can participate in the world and take from the world as well as give something to the world. Marion Milner (1993) relates a case study where "in the [child's] play with the toys there was something halfway between day-dreaming and purposeful instinctive or expedient action" (p. 22). The transitional object provides the in-between place between reality coming from the world and imagination coming from inside to create something new and welcoming to the individual and the world simultaneously.

Winnicott (1988) emphasizes the philosophical question of whether the object exists before the child creates it, or whether the object exists only because the child creates it. It is the basic philosophical question founded

On the belief that

this stone and this tree

discontinue to be

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when there's no one about in the quad (p. 114)

with the alternative:

this stone and this tree

do continue to be

as observed by yours faithfully . . . (p. 114)

To this, I add my own verse: This stone and tree evolve to be; something else to enjoy by you and me. The object was created out of the baby's own imagination. The infant is not aware of the whole wide world that surrounds him, so to the infant, the creation of the object is the same as creating his world. Each infant creates the world anew in his own unique way. Thus, to Winnicott (1987), "The world as it presents itself is of no meaning to the newly-developing human being unless it is created as well as discovered" (p. 169). The baby gains the ability to feel as if he creates his own world through the good-enough actions of the parents.

What we have here is this amazing ability on the part of the mother and the child to use each other and to adapt to each other. The baby believes he creates the breast or other object because the mother presents it at just the right moment, and in giving the baby what he needs at the exact time he needs it the mother is, in essence, saying, "'Come at the world creatively, create the world; it is only what you create that has meaning for you'" (Winnicott, 2002, p. 78). The baby goes from one extreme of realizing the omnipotent power he has to realizing he is just a small part of a much bigger picture, "a mere speck in a universe, in a universe that was there before the baby was conceived of. . . . Is it not from *being God* that human beings arrive at the humility proper

to human individuality" (p. 78)? A stark contrast exists between being God and being a mere speck. People contend with this fluctuating paradox all their lives.

This paradox is one that Winnicott (in Rudnytsky, 1993) asserts must be left alone.

> when we witness an infant's employment of a transitional object, the first not-me possession, we are witnessing both the child's first use of symbol and the first experience of play. An essential part of my formulation of transitional phenomena is that we agree never to make the challenge to the baby: did you create this object, or did you find it conveniently lying around? (p. 4)

This is an essential part of illusion. A parent of a baby provides an illusion by producing the necessary and desired object (bottle, blanket, or pacifier) as soon as the child desires it. A parent provides an illusion to an older child when he or she allows the child to win at a game thus putting the needs of the child before all else. Lucky is the child whose parents instinctively and generously give them this allowance.

Transitional Phenomena - Birth and Death

Transitional phenomena and their effects continue throughout people's lives; they can most concretely be seen at early stages in life, yet still remain an important part of the person throughout life. "Although certain functions of intermediate space may belong to particular epochs in a person's life, it is a single, lifelong area of experience and activity" (Parsons, 2000, p. 159). Just as infants instinctively use a transitional object at birth, as one matures, one finds special use of transitional objects and phenomena. Hildebrand (in Parsons, 2000) holds that "there are grounds for suggesting that as well as there being primal fantasies concerning birth and the primal scene there are also primal fantasies

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concerning one's own death" (p. 159). Simon Grolnick and Alfonz Lengyel (1988) suggest that the transitional object functions in "straddling and stabilizing the self-object, waking-sleeping, and concrete-abstract polarities" and that this is "analogous and developmentally related to man's persistent attempt to bridge, with his burial art and symbols, the interface between life and death" (p. 381). Referring to the Etruscan bodies buried with objects that were indispensable in life, Grolnick and Lengyel compare the Etruscan burial practices with all of its art and rituals to the bedtime rituals of babies and children. It is a paradox that "we often fear sleep as if it were death and reassure ourselves that death is only sleep" (p. 383). Infants need their transitional object mostly at nighttime to allay their fears of going to sleep (and of perhaps never waking). Adults need their transitional objects in their final sleep (in case they wake up). Egyptians often were buried with items of great personal and monetary value and it is common in many cultures to put items of sentimental value into the coffins of loved ones, even spouses and servants.

People tend to create great works as they age, as though they know they will soon be gone from this earth, but they want something to remain of themselves. Hildebrand (in Parsons, 2000) relates notions "of different types of creativity at different times of life, i.e. hot from the fire creativity in youth versus sculptured creativity in later life" (p. 159). Hildebrand believes there are primal fantasies concerning death just as there are primal fantasies concerning birth, and the creativity that comes later in life is an attempt to capture something that is slipping away (life). The fact that transitional phenomena take place from birth to death justifies their continued study in psychoanalysis, social work, anthropology, education and many other areas.

Transitional Phenomena: Many Uses

People use Winnicott's theory of transitional objects in many unique ways. Winnicott's transitional object theory has influenced psychoanalysts, such as Jessica Benjamin (1998), Christopher Bollas (1987, 1999), Michael Eigen (2004), Hanna Segal (1991), Michael Stanton (1997), and Marion Milner (1988, 1993). Christopher Bollas (1987) expounds on Winnicott's transitional object theory by describing the "transformational" (p. 27) process that object-relating brings. Educators such as Marla Morris (in lectures) and Deborah Britzman (2003) credit Winnicott with some of their psychological and educational insights. Britzman (2003) sees Winnicott's transitional phenomena as a

> warn[ing] against pedagogical instructions: "*Of the transitional object it can be said that it is a matter of agreement between us and the baby that we will never ask the question 'Did you conceive of this or was it presented to you from without?' the important point is that no decision on this point is expected. The question is not to be formulated.*" (p. 24)

Peter Rudnytsky (1993) in his book *Transitional objects and Potential Spaces: Literary Uses of D. W. Winnicott*, attests that "like the clinic, then, the classroom can be a holding environment and 'a new testing ground' for Winnicott's principles" (xxi). Basic knowledge of Winnicott's theories has improved my teaching by the manner in which I relate to students. In addition, I have used his theories directly in my language arts lessons, which I discuss in Chapter 6.

Rudnytsky points out the irony that "there must be ten literary critics conversant with Lacan's *Ecrits* for every one who has read Winnicott's *Playing and Reality*" (xi).

Adding to this irony, Zain Davis (2003) explains Lacan's attempt to "grasp the paradoxical relationship between 'structure' and 'agency' rather than attempting to dissolve either one or both of them and in which the subject is 'the empty place in the structure'" (p. 81). This is similar to the paradoxical relationship and the potential space in Winnicott's transitional object theory. Winnicott's merging of the subjective and objective to an intermediary process or relationship does not stand alone, whereas, "what Lacan produces, then, is a third way in which contradiction is the very index of theoretical truth" (p. 81). Katherine Cameron (1996) compares Lacan with Winnicott:

> That this "coming-into-being" of the Lacanian subject brings to mind the "going-on-being" of Winnicott's infant is perhaps fortuitous, because, like the latter, the former seems to maintain itself in this state in perpetuity That is to say, it is for ever becoming, and never becomes. It expresses a kind of antithesis of take-off to the Winnicottian staying-at-home. It would also be true to add that, at the stage in Lacan with which we are dealing, the individual, mired in the Imaginary, has not yet attained access to the Symbolic. What is being portrayed is a spectral world, a staging post on the way to subjecthood. (p. 39)

This hard-to-nail-down aspect of Winnicott's transitional object theory allows it to be more useful to more people.

In their edited book, *Between Reality and Fantasy: Winnicott's Concepts of Transitional Objects and Phenomena*, Simon Grolnick and Leonard Barkin, in collaboration with Werner Muensterberger (1988), collect examples of different applications of Winnicott's transitional object theory. They write that "we hope the extensions of his [Winnicott's] concepts . . . will interest many in the related fields of

philosophy, esthetics, semiology, linguistics, literature, and anthropology as well as . . . the psychoanalytic situation" (p. 538). I use Winnicott's concepts to improve the emotional health and creative processes of teachers and students, especially in language arts courses. To do this, I step outside the limiting boundary of recent government legislation such as No Child Left Behind and look to Winnicott and others who think outside the box.

Clearly, psychoanalysis is not the only discipline to use transitional object theory and phenomena; many disciplines use Winnicott's theory as a sparkplug to ignite their own mental engine. Transitional phenomena assist educatively, enhancing emotional wellbeing, creativity, enjoyment of literature. Archeologists use transitional object theory to explain why Etruscans carried transitional objects with them into the next life (Grolnick & Lengyel, 1988, pp. 379-408). Linguists examine how children use sounds and speech as transitional phenomena; the baby makes repetitive sounds that serve to sooth and entertain her (Weich, 1988, pp. 411-421). Scientists relate transsensus phenomena to Winnicott's "intermediate zone" (Kestenberg, 1988, pp. 61-71). Patrick Casement (1993) examines Samuel Beckett's writings and their abounding allusions to mothers by applying transitional object theory (pp. 229-45).

With such widespread use of transitional object theory, it is important not to oversimplify or misunderstand it. For example, a child care worker was overheard saying that she was on her way to the store to pick up a transitional object (toy) for the children. An object does not become transitional until a baby *makes* it so. Understanding transitional object theory requires long and careful observation of how a transitional object or phenomenon is being used; "almost anyone caring for children can supply

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examples, each one of which is fascinating to study, provided one first of all realizes that every detail is important and significant" (Winnicott, 1987b, p. 170). Winnicott (p. 168) also points out that there is not necessarily anything wrong if a baby does not develop an interest in a transitional object. Sometimes the mother herself is used by the infant. There is a broad spectrum on which transitional phenomena can be placed.

In addition to being careful not to misunderstand transitional object theory, it is also important to realize that a transitional "object" may not be an object at all. Sometimes the senses are used in place of an object, such as humming, singing, watching lights, or studying patterns on the ceiling, curtains, or bedspread. Any of these activities is using an object of sorts, just not a toy as is often the case. In all of these examples, it is clear that the child is studying things out in his mind, which is the desired result of transitional phenomena (Winnicott, 1987, p. 170).

Thus, an object may or may not be used.   It is difficult for people accustomed to concreteness to grasp the abstract meaning of the word *object*. It is not the physical object that is as important as the feelings *derived from* and *directed toward* the object. For instance, when I say that "you are the object of my desire," I do not mean that I desire you as an object. I am referring to the feelings that a person invokes in me and how I respond to those feelings. It is true that I may desire someone's body physically, but it is more complicated than merely wanting a body, or an object; it has more to do with feelings and reactions surrounding an object—or no object.

Transitional phenomena can include an actual object, especially during infancy and early childhood. As a child becomes older, the objects are needed less and less; they

become symbols of the connection with the parent. Joyce McDougall (1989) explains this gradual process well:

> As close bodily contact and gestural forms of communication with the mother diminish, these are gradually replaced, through the use of language, by symbolic communication. The infant becomes a verbal child. From this point on the contradictory wish to be an individual while remaining an indissoluble part of the "other" is repressed; this longing is subsequently compensated by the acquisition of an unwavering sense of individual identity. (p. 35)

However, the unconscious desire to access the original mother-child unity remains with the individual. McDougall writes that "it must be emphasized that the wish to rid oneself of one's essential otherness, of both body and mind, in order to fuse with the primitive mother universe, persists in the heart of every human being" (p. 35). There is this continual paradox of wanting to be independent yet be a part of something bigger than our self alone.

While this section examines on efficacious examples of Winnicott's transitional object theory, there are instances where it is absent or is used negatively. For some people, the best a parent, teacher, or psychiatrist can do is to sympathize and make that person's experience less painful. These are people who, despite their parent's efforts and their own efforts, did not receive adequate parenting. Winnicott chooses to focus on successful uses of transitional phenomena; however, McDougall (1989) relates that an odd use of transitional phenomena transpired when a person's

> suffering body performed the function of a *transitional object* (Winnicott, 191) of strange kind. Her burning skin gave her a feeling of being alive, of being held

together, while at the same time recalling the memory of an outer object (the

analyst and their "shared skin") that was reassuring to her. (p. 152)

Winnicott was adept at describing what a good-enough mother does, but he also was

keenly aware of what happens when a mother, or parent, is not good-enough.

When artist Alexander Calder created his art objects, he gave many of them away,

indicating that it was the process that was more important than the object itself. Calder's

parents were devoted parents and they encouraged Calder to be creative at a very young

age. Perhaps because they were both artists, they provided Calder with a space in which

to be creative and to create objects. This early access to creativity gave Calder exposure

to the process of art, and this likely gave him the freedom to part with his creations. He

enjoyed the process of creation as much as he did the final creation. When my 6th-grade

class sighed over my taking their art work off the wall, I realized they were mourning the

actual process of creating them, not the objects (art work) themselves, for I gave these to

them to take home. When Marion Milner (1957) drew the outline of two jugs standing

side by side, she realized that she could not portray the jugs accurately until she looked at

the play or the relationship between the jugs. Only then could she draw a more realistic

rendering of the two jugs together. In addition, her viewpoint and relationship with the

jugs was important in producing a meaningful drawing. This is an example of

transitional phenomena as it relates to the creation of art work.

Transitional phenomena do not take any particular form or space, they are

fleeting, here one minute gone the next, but the feelings that transitional phenomena

stamp on us last a lifetime. Bachelard (1988), when writing of imagination, hits on the

fluidity of transitional phenomena:

We always think of the imagination as the faculty that *forms* images. On the

contrary it *deforms* what we perceive; it is above all, the faculty that frees us from

immediate images and *changes* them. If there is no change, or unexpected fusion

of images, there is no imagination; there is no *imaginative* act. (p. 1)

In a scientific technological era where demands are made to prove and see results, it is

difficult to imagine the myriad possibilities when unexpected images and changes are

allowed to take place. Deleuze and Guattari explain the unlimited possibilities that arise

when systems are not limited to their root bases, but instead are allowed to branch off in

unlimited rhizomatic fashion. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) describe the opposite of root-

trees or centeredness:

To these centered systems the authors contrast acentered systems, finite networks

of automata in which communication runs from any neighbor to any other, the

stems or channels do not preexist, and all individuals are interchangeable, defined

only by their *state* at a given moment. (p. 17)

Compare their offshoots, lines of flight, or rhizomes with Winnicott's potential space.

The centered roots compare to the good-enough parents, and with a well-grounded

beginning, a person is later free to explore any area of life. Phillips (1994) writes that

"we talk, in the bizarre language of property relations, of owning our instincts as personal

intentions, but we talk rarely, if at all, of the more paradoxical idea of owning the

contingency of our lives" (p. 9). We want to pin things, events, and people down. What

fun, play, or flirtatiousness is there in this? Isn't it more fun and meaningful to enjoy the

free-floating moments?—there are so many more of those. There is no limit to the

potential space, rhizomatic tendrils, and flirting; all depend on one's state of mind at any given time, which is never the same. You can depend on that.

Phillips (1994) makes a noteworthy observation that "Winnicott's description development begins with instincts experienced as contingent events, and their gratification as a coincidence (like the 'overlapping of two lines')" (p. 17). Much—no everything—is left to chance. Recognizing coincidences and how one uses them "can be linked with Winnicott's description of the process of illusionment" (p. 17). In the beginning of a person's life, much is left up to, is contingent upon how well a parent provides for these contingencies. Phillips takes Winnicott's idea of transitional phenomena and advances by describing it as coincidence. It is a coincidence that the infant found just the right object for his needs. This object will aid in bedtime rituals, soothing rituals, and imaginative rituals. This object has a practical purpose rooted in reality but it is also something about which the child can have illusions. Adults see the finding and use of the object as coincidence, but the infant and child see it as necessary.

Because of their immature needs, some people never outgrow their infantile beliefs that they are not the cause of life's events. A mother instinctively knows when to be there for her baby and when to let go and for how long to let go. When a mother has just the right balance of being there and not being there, the child is able to transition to independence, mainly by the use of transitional phenomena. The place "between belief in omnipotence and the abrogation of that belief," according to Phillips, "is acknowledgment of contingency," which he describes as "luck, fortune, accident, coincidence, and is sometimes experienced and described as a kind of nonintentional or random agency" (p. 20). Phillips does not believe there is any one force making

coincidence happen, and this should not diminish nor enlarge its importance. We must accept this paradox as Winnicott accepts the paradox inherent in transitional phenomena. It is also helpful to recognize the wonderful adaptations coincidence allows us to make in bringing together reality and fantasy.

With the same notion of Winnicott, Deleuze, and Guattari, of fluidity, flight, and flexibility, Phillips cautions readers about the absurdity of talking about "a stage of contingency, or a Contingency Position, because what I am referring to is the enemy of fixity (of reification) but is always there" (p. 20). Jung and von Franz wrote much about similar events, which they called synchronistic events.

As widely used as transitional phenomena are, psychoanalyst Antony Flew (1988, pp. 486-501) asks why a third area of conscious experience is needed. Responding to Flew's criticism of needing a third area of experience, Flarsheim (1988) answers "that it is the area of illusion, consisting of the *integration* of the two worlds—external perception on the one hand and dream and hallucination on the other—that enriches life experience" (p. 509). This intermediary space causes me to think about quantum physics and the realization that there is more empty space in the universe than previous believed. The empty space between atomic particles plays a significant role in how the particles themselves react to each other. The potential space opened up by transitional phenomena is larger than any certainties one can pinpoint.

The transitional object is a symbol of the union between mother and child. As the mother increasingly relinquishes control to the infant and child, the transitional object becomes a comforting thing, internally and externally, that completes a circle of continuity. One can see such symbols throughout history. The sun in many cultures

symbolizes the life-giving force of the sun's radiation energy (like the nourishment from a mother), which reminds humankind of its allegiance to the sun but also the power the sun gives man to do how he sees fit. It is interesting that when the sun goes down and it is dark, this is the time that children and adults need their comforting transitional objects to assuage any fears of the sun (mother) not returning.

Von Franz and Jung write of the mandala symbol, which represents wholeness. Jung (1964) explains that "the circle (or sphere) as a symbol of the Self. It expresses the totality of the psyche in all its aspects, including the relationship between man and the whole of nature" (p. 240). Jung continues:

> Whether the symbol of the circle appears in primitive sun worship or modern religion, in myths or dreams, in the mandalas drawn by Tibetan monks, in the ground plans of cities, or in the spherical concepts of early astronomers, it always points to the single most vital aspect of life—its ultimate wholeness. (p. 240)

Moreover, Jung reveals that mandalas "represent the wholeness of the psyche or Self, of which consciousness is just as much a part as the unconscious" (p. 241). According to Palo Aite (2001), Winnicott and Jung's interests converge in the following ways:

> First, in their investigations into the origins and development of the personality, rather than resort to a drive model both researchers tended to emphasize the relational context in which the phenomenon takes place. A second fundamental point is the importance both men gave to phantasy and play in the general theory of development. (p. 242)

Winnicott captures the earliest drive to complete the circle of wholeness, and this is accomplished with the first symbol, the transitional object.

Author and playwrite Arthur Miller (1963) wrote a book, *Jane's Blanket*, about his daughter's attachment to her blanket. Winnicott read Miller's book and wrote to Miller asking him if he had been influenced by Winnicott's transitional object theory. Miller replied that he had no knowledge of Winnicott's theory of transitional objects; he merely witnessed first-hand this phenomenon occur between his own daughter and her blanket. In the book, Miller (1963) describes his daughter's needing her blanket: "She always said 'bata' when she called for her blanket. And then her mother brought the blanket and laid it on her. And when she felt her pink blanket on her she was happy. And she went to sleep" (p. 18). The book follows Jane from infancy to pre-teen. At one point, her blanket was only "as big as a washcloth. And there were threads sticking out all around it. She couldn't put it on top of her. . . . So she put it on the window sill and left it there . . . (p. 50). Miller continues, "In the morning she opened her eyes, and she saw . . . a bluebird was on her window sill, and it was pulling a thread out of her old blanket" (p. 52). Once the last thread was gone, "she lay down on her pillow and pulled her big yellow blanket over her and looked out at the dark. And she knew that somewhere in the bushes and in the trees there were baby birds sleeping on her old pink blanket" (p. 63). This example shows the natural decathecting, or gradual disappearance of a transitional object. Jane no longer needed her blanket, although she sometimes thought about it. This is also a good example of the healthful consequences that come from transitional objects. Jane was able to relinquish her need of the blanket for the benefit of the baby birds much like many children are able move on to acts for the greater good because they, at one time, felt safe, secure and loved.

The act of reading can be regarded as transitional phenomena; any literature can be transitional. The integration of two worlds transpires when one is absorbed in a book. One uses previous physical shared life experiences and combines those with one's unique internal psychic experiences when enjoying a good read. When reading, we combine our inner life and imaginings with our experience with the world and the literature. Sometimes it is hard to know where the fiction and mind of the writer leaves off and our own fiction and imaginings start. Sumara (1996) explains that "the line between fact and fiction cannot be neatly drawn. Without references to elements of the real world, a literary fiction would be totally meaningless, and a daily life without imaginings would be at best dull—likely intolerable" (p. 18). Using personal examples, Sumara asks, "Does having read and heard about *Hamlet* change what he *sees*, or does it only change the *significance* of what is seen" (p. 7)? This is that constant-flux back-and-forth phenomenon. As I write this now, I am wondering how much of what I read contributes to my writing and how much of my writing allows me to interpret, or see what I read in a different, more luminous light. It is the play of the two back and forth that influences each the other.

In her book *Nourishing Words: Bridging Private Reading and Public Teaching*, Wendy Atwell-Vasey (1998) examines the phenomena that transpire in a college literature classroom. As the title alludes to, Atwell-Vasey discusses the difficulty college students have in identifying with literature and with opening up about their lives as it connects with the literature. She also discusses the precarious place literature teachers find themselves in trying to teach literature so that it is meaningful to students. Atwell-Vasey (1998) makes an adept connection between reading and transitional phenomena:

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"Reading and writing education take on new meaning when three positions are acknowledged: student, addressee, and the world beyond, the third calling to the first two to be named and transformed" (p. 63). This may sound familiar because in literature a triad is formed that is similar to the infant, the mother (or other object), and the imaginings of the baby.

There are psychoanalytic therapeutic uses for transitional phenomena. Flarsheim explains that the therapeutic alliance that occurs between a patient and an analyst is rather like transitional phenomena in that the relationship is an in-between relationship. The patient is using the analyst as a sounding board (transference) for his own real-life relationships. The patient/analyst relationship is not one that functions outside of the analyst's office; however, the effects of that relationship allow the patient's relationships outside the office to function more healthily. Flarsheim (1988) provides an example of this area of psychoanalytic integration:

> In the center of the continuum is the most satisfactory type of treatment situation, in which the patient finds himself feeling and reacting toward the therapist as though the therapist were some figure out of the patient's past, while remaining all the time aware of the present reality of his own identity, the identify of the therapist, and the realities of the treatment situation. (p. 509)

This is an example of intermediate area (of transitional phenomena) used in psychoanalysis and is similar to what transpires between a reader and the characters, events, and atmosphere from a novel. Like the psychiatric patient, the reader finds himself feeling and reacting toward the characters while remaining aware of his own identity and the fact that he is in a transitional time and space connecting his inner mind

with the writer and characters from the book. Reading and creating a world from words

is a highly creative process that owes its powerful fruits to the planting of the first

transitional object seed in the first months of life. A child similarly is aware that the

object is outside but perhaps not that the shared reality comes from the center of the

continuum.

Transitional object theory and phenomena have exigent implications in the

classroom. One makes these connections with any subject area that comes from outside,

so that the philosophical question again remains—did your idea come from within or

without. The answer is "both," but it is a question that need not be answered. One

understands that the seeds of creativity, individuality, and independence were planted by,

first, a mother, and second, proper use of a transitional object or phenomena, and

hopefully, through continued nurturing of educators. Marshall Klaus (in Winnicott,

1987) emphasizes that

> in attempting to train [children], to teach them about the "real world" or to mold
>
> them into little scientists, there exists a real danger that we might destroy their
>
> early imaginative world. Education must provide an environment for the mind of
>
> the child to unfold, while not snuffing out fantasy or "the capacity for enjoying
>
> intense sensations." (p. 5)

I listen carefully to parents when they describe their child's exceptional qualities, whether

they are gifted or in need of additional educational services. I ask them, "What is your

goal for your child?" At first, it may be "to make good grades" or "to make friends," but

inevitably they admit they want "happiness" and "personal success" for their children.

We cannot achieve this by reducing kids to numbers and comparing them to everyone

else, like an animal in a herd. That children have achieved a good-enough bond with parents and their transitional object is precarious enough; educators must take extra precautions to sustain the positive derivations of such successes.

Last year my 5th grade class was challenged to read as many Dr. Seuss books as they could during the month of February, which is designated as a special month honoring this historical children's author. While reading these stories, the students recalled favorite books that were read to them as very young children. They discussed the emotional feelings they had when their parents read these books to them.

Talk of the significance these books had in their lives opened up discussion of other objects that were significant to them as babies and very young children. These students tied in books with their favorite blanket, toy, or other memento from their earliest childhood. I encouraged these students to bring in their favorite books and other transitional objects. It was touching to see how they caressed their books and items. Many of them carried their treasures with them to the playground and huddled around in circles reminiscing about their childhoods. The impact these objects had on these children was made clear to me that day.

Winnicott was gifted in leading parents to water, and also giving them the confidence to drink the knowledge he offered them. A teacher's twist on the common phrase, "You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him drink" is "You can lead a student to knowledge, but you can't make him think." I believe, if you can lead a horse to water, you've already got him there; he just needs a little nudge to drink. The trick is discovering what kind of nudge to give. Winnicott gave a nudge in the form of the Squiggle Game when he drew a random line and invited the child to add to it. This is

how he opened up a line of communication and often children responded to drawing squiggles more readily than just talking. As a language arts teacher, I invite my students to express themselves through journaling and freewriting. In addition, relevant literature can be the nudge that a student is moved by and can identify with both realistically and creatively. Even if this cannot be accomplished, at least a perceptive and psychologically knowledgeable teacher will understand the reasons behind the student's inability to connect with his or her creativeness.

A teacher once asked a child what she saw (imagined) in her mind after she read a portion of a book. The girl looked blankly at the teacher and replied that she never sees any pictures in her mind when she reads. After further questioning, the teacher realized that even though the child read on grade level, the words carried no meaning, created no pictures for the child.   Clearly, this child did not have the creative ability that is provided by good-enough parenting and an effective transitional object. For this child, no symbol existed in the written language that could become more important than experience itself.

What causes some of our students to not see, think, or feel when they read and participate in other potentially creative activities? Greene (1995) writes that "some say that participatory encounters with paintings, dances, stories, and all other art forms enable us to recapture a lost spontaneity" (p. 130). Spontaneous gesture, to Winnicott, means the ability to act uninhibited, to play, and to experience spontaneity. People who feel little connection with themselves, others, or the world in which they live have experienced early on a lack of bonding with a parent or with a transitional object. Winnicott (2002) emphasizes that "it is the child's family pattern more than anything else that supplies the child with these relics of the past, so that when the child discovers the

world there is always the return journey that makes sense" (p. 227). A transitional object allows a child to make the journey from parents and self to a broader world. The transitional object is the space between the individual child and his or her parents, family and environment. If a child does not have an adequate family to rely on, to return to, then the transitional object can not serve its proper purpose.

As a language arts teacher, I see students who never go anywhere without a book to read. These are students who do not hear you when you say that reading time is up because they are lost in an imaginary world. What an ideal way to escape the hectic or dull life of school. Novels and other literature provide an excellent "stomping ground" for Winnicott's transitional object theory. "The solidity of stories is also the quality that allows them to transport you" (Spufford, 2002, p. 47). Books are objects, and if it were the physical book that brought comfort, there would be no need to open it. I have students who carry books around even though they do not nor can not read. This is probably because they instinctively know that there is something magical inside.

Just as a mother instinctively understands that the question of whether a child created her transitional object or whether it already existed (it is both) should be forever deferred, an instinctive adult realizes that an adult who is reading is in another place and time – not merely reading. Francis Spufford (2002) admits that the books he loves best are ones that "started in this world and took you to another. You traveled . . . [to Earth-sea and Middle-earth] as you read Le Guin and Tolkien, but they had no location in relation to this world" (p. 85). This is the intermediate space to which transitional phenomena take us. That some students do not have an adequate transitional object raises the stakes of providing literature as such an object—albeit a late one—for many of

our students. Even though Winnicott describes clearly what a transitional object is, he purposely allows room for others to make something different of it.

Readers become involved in the illusion that good literature provides an intermediate area created out of the book and from our imagination. The physical book itself is meaningless unless a reader intuitively knows the words inside carry value or until a reader makes meaning out of it; thus, we participate in transitional phenomena throughout our lives. Flarsheim (1988) explains Winnicott's moment of illusion as:

> one in which the infant, child, or adult feels an identity between that which he is capable of hallucinating and that which exists in the outside world. Illusion, in this sense, is necessary for emotionally meaningful contact with the outside world, and therefore becomes a precondition for ego development, integration, and maturation. (p. 508)

There exists a whole continuum of illusions from hallucinations to not being able to imagine much at all. Most people have the ability to use illusion somewhere in-between on the continuum in a healthful manner. Reading and imagining while reading, is one activity that is in-between on this continuum.

My relationship with books took on greater meaning on a shopping trip at the mall with my stepfather when I was 12 years old. He and my mother had just been divorced, and not seeing him very often, I doubted if he still loved me. We were in a book store, and I spotted a huge book on the complete works of William Shakespeare. Our 7th-grade class had just performed *Macbeth*, and even though I did not understand the play well nor had I ever read anything else by Shakespeare, I just *had to have that book*. When my father bought that book for me, I no longer doubted that he loved me—he unknowingly

opened up a potential space for me. I treasured that book for many years before I read

any of its content. Looking back, though, it is interesting that of all the things in the mall

that I could have chosen to signify my father's love for me, it was a book. It was the

beginning of my love affair with books. Perhaps I sensed even back then that my

interests throughout life would revolve around books.

Walter Benajmin's (1968) book, *Illuminations*, contains a chapter on collecting

books, in which he writes, "I am not exaggerating when I say that to a true collector the

acquisition of an old book is its rebirth" (p. 61). I am moved to make the connection that

each time I acquire a new book, I am gaining a valuable childhood experience of feeling

loved by my father and of discovering an inner place that has brought me much pleasure

most of my life. Benjamin explains further that

> to renew the old world—that is the collector's deepest desire when he is driven to
>
> acquire new things, and that is why a collector of older books is closer to the
>
> wellsprings of collecting than the acquirer of luxury editions. (p. 61)

Thus it seems there is a many-faceted relationship that people have with books, and the

literature that is contained therein, which leads me to believe that the content of literature

matters less than the effect that it has on us, the readers.

In college I chose history as my major and spent a lot of time reading novels

about other cultures. I particularly enjoyed Herman Hesse's *Siddhartha*, Pearl S. Buck's

The Good Earth, Erik Erikson's *Gandhi's Truth*, and any historical fiction that gave me

an idea of what it was like to live in a different country and culture. I found that these

books connected me with other people and parts of the world that I was not a part of. I

sometimes believe that I am drawn to these novels as a way of getting back the childhood

that I never had, or lost, or grew out of. Growing up in the Virgin Islands, I was surrounded by different cultures, including black natives speaking Calypso, white "Frenchies" with French backgrounds, Puerto Ricans speaking Spanish, and mixed-raced families—all were a part of a very different lifestyle than we have here in the southeastern United States. It was where I felt comfortable. Suddenly at the age of 11, I was uprooted to an all-white suburb of Atlanta, Georgia. Even though I was the same color as everyone else (there was only one black person in our entire high school), I was not like them. So books allow me to visit other worlds that have been lost to or not yet found by me. I hope to accomplish this goal for my students as well—to help them retrieve or gain a lost or yet-undiscovered world. I know no better way to accomplish this than by allowing them to experience different worlds through literature. Perhaps this is one reason why *Harry Potter* books are so popular; not only are the readers experiencing a different environment, but also, through J. K. Rowling's (2007) inspired genius, they are transported to another culture in another *dimension*. The role of a transitional object is to be placed between oneself and the world, between fantasy and reality. Thus, literature works brilliantly as a transitional object.

Writers have a special ability to delve into the inner workings of the mind *and* to express these beliefs in words, bridging the gulf between reality and illusion. Any good writer is able to take readers from their everyday *real* lives and transport them to an equally vital *imaginary* world. A person cannot teach well what he or she does not first love. My passion for literature and writing provides me a gift I can give to my students. I also believe that one cannot meaningfully relate to literature without having a natural or studious interest in the human psyche. All great works of literature come from their

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originator's psyche. Literature allows us to connect with another human being, with another life, with another world, and at the same time, connect with what courses deep within ourselves. Doll (2000) asserts that "the story, if it is a real story, takes us into a vertical dimension of ourselves where perhaps we have not journeyed before. . . . Story provides a place to react violently or sublimely, for it touches another world" (p. 29). Literature gives us a simultaneous look at what similarly connects us with others and the world and also what makes us uniquely us.

The intellectual and emotional experiencing of a fantasy world, an intermediate space between the inner psyche of the reader and his or her outside world, creates a very real physical feeling that aids in a healing process that these *creative* experiences have on the psyche of their readers. This is similar to what Erik Erikson (in Deri, 1988) says about peace coming from inner space (p. 59) which can be advanced, as Susan Deri (1988) does, by saying that "peace comes from the *creative* inner space that is the base for the symbolic function that bridges over the gaps of time and space, thus uniting what has been separated" (p. 59).

Our youth need to latch on to something that will paradoxically keep them emotionally grounded while at the same time lift them off the ground to explore other worlds, other people, and themselves. In this era of multiculturalism, diversity, and globalization, it is comforting to ponder how students can fill Winnicott's potential space with an infinite variety of artistic creativity and cultural heritages. Literature is the venue through which people of all ages can play with ideas that will connect them to other cultures and their own personal cultural heritages.

Writers have an unusual connection with their inner world and the outer world, plus the gift of conveying this inner and outer world to their readers. One such writer, A. A. Milne (1994), is the author of one of the most popular and beloved books in America and Europe, the Winnie-the-Pooh series. Milne brings to life in his books Winnicott's concept of the transitional object. Christopher Robin is a boy with a healthy imagination who brings to imaginary life his stuffed animals, not only for himself to enjoy but all of Winnie-the-Pooh readers. One reason for the huge popularity of this series is the innate ability of the readers to relate to the need for becoming attached to a childhood toy and giving them "life." Like many other children's authors, Milne's imagery resonates with children all over the world, and as Flarsheim (1988) points out, "Winnicott merely gives Milne priority for having recognized and written about transitional phenomena" (p. 507). Much classic children's literature began as stories told to young children; then they evolved into writings and, eventually, classics. Far fetched stories of fantastic creatures, far-off places, and unusual characters are part of the ordinary upbringing of many children.

Margery Williams's (1986) *The Velveteen Rabbit* provides another example of a transitional object in a young child's life. In this classic story, the velveteen rabbit becomes real not only to the boy, but also to itself; the story is written from the rabbit's point of view, a technique that gives added weight to the realness of the rabbit. The rabbit does not feel real until it experiences repeated love and care from the boy. Winnicott (1987) emphasizes the need for this same repetition with infants: "All this is highly tenuous, but repeated and repeated adds up to the foundation of the capacity in the

baby to feel real" (p. 7). Winnicott is writing of the mother's amazing capacity to be

devoted to her child, much as the child, in turn, is devoted to a toy.

There are many other literary examples of the use of transitional objects.

Winnicott relates that

> when the relationship between the baby and the mother is satisfactory, objects
>
> begin to turn up which the baby can use symbolically; not only the thumb for
>
> sucking but also something to catch hold of which eventually may become a doll
>
> or a toy. (p. 13)

Or a book. In Hans Christian Andersen's (2005) *The Tin Soldier* a ballerina and tin

soldier come alive when people are not in the nursery. The reader feels privileged having

knowledge of the secret life of the toys, much as the child is solely privy to her imaginary

world accessed by the transitional object. David and Noelle Carter (2000) produced a

beautiful pop-up version of E. T. A. Hoffmann's original classic story, *The Nutcracker*, in

which an uncle makes a nutcracker and gives it to his niece on Christmas Eve. The

nutcracker comes to life and takes the little girl, Marie, who loved and cared for it off to a

fairyland. Heir Drosselmeyer (the uncle) is unique because he is the only adult who

understands and believes in the magic that a toy can provide its owner. Winnicott

(1987b), perhaps with this story in mind, wrote that

> a toy that an uncle gave your little boy is a bit of the real world, and yet if it is
>
> given in the right way at the right time and by the right person it has a meaning
>
> for the child which we ought to be able to understand and allow for. (p. 70)

In all these examples, a toy object is given at the right time, in the right manner, to the right child, who in turn, uses the toy to elaborate a magical world. This magical world serves to bridge the space from childhood to adulthood.

A popular modern-day version of transitional phenomenon where an object, in this case, a toy comes alive through imagination is the Disney/Pixar movie *Toy Story*, directed by John Lasseter (2001); Woody, a cowboy pull-toy, questions his own importance (and reality) when the boy who has loved him so relegates him to be stuffed under the bed when the boy is given a new and improved *space* cowboy, Buzz Lightyear.

Television shows, as well as movies, have characters that become real and serve an imaginary purpose. "Barney," produced by Kathy Parker (1987) is a hugely popular children's television series. The show always begins with the theme song, "Barney is a dinosaur from our imagination. . . . Barney can be your friend too, if you just make-believe him." At the beginning of each episode, Barney is shown as an inanimate, plain, and lifeless stuffed toy. He comes alive when the children come on the scene and *wish* him alive. While each episode covers different topics from keeping your teeth clean to being polite to others, all of the episodes emphasize that "nothing is impossible when you use your imagination." Whether or not Barney's creators know of transitional object theory, they are fully aware of each child's need to explore the world through imaginative and creative processes.

The television show, *Sesame Street*, created by Joan Ganz Cooney (1969), gained its popularity on the belief that children need and desire imaginary characters. There is never a question as to the reality of Big Bird, Ernie, Snuffelupagus, Oscar, Elmo and the other characters. They simply *are* a part of the Sesame Street community. Other shows,

such as "The Big Comfy Couch" created by Cheryl Wagner (1995) and "The Puzzle Place" created by Rob Stork (1994) make it a point of having certain puppets come alive *only* when none of the other human characters, or at least adults, are on the set. This gives the television viewer the feeling that only he or she knows that these animals can come alive.

Shows like "Sesame Street," movies like *Toy Story*, and books like *Winnie-the-Pooh* appeal also to adults. Whether consciously or unconsciously, adults recognize the importance that transitional objects have played and continue to play in their lives. The creative processes of child development commence with transitional objects and phenomena. Muensterberger (in Barkin, 1988) compares the process to a "drowsy infant holding on to substitute representatives of his immediate environment, imaginary companions be they his thumb, blanket, a pacifier or teddy bear" (p. 530). Increasingly, parents give their children access to some form of media entertainment (television, DVDs, Videos, computers, etc.) as a way of occupying them, calming them down, or entertaining them. I believe that media often is combined with a transitional object, such as a blanket, stuffed animal, or juice to serve as transitional objects. For some children, the media may become the sole transitional object.

Fantasy is found in young adult and adult novels as well. Animals are often given human characteristics (personification) and humans are given superhuman powers. Some examples include T. H. White's (1958) *The Once and Future King*, Richard Adams's (1996) *Watership Down*, and Brian Jacques's (1990) *Redwall* series. Many of these stories were influenced by Lloyd Alexander, C. S. Lewis, J. R. R. Tolkien, and Charles

Williams to name a few. The power and imagination of these classics stem from the author's ability to create imaginary illusions—which stems from transitional phenomena.

Young children have a natural urge to breathe life into inanimate objects and to give special human qualities to animals. They take part in their own form of *animation*: "Of or relating to animal life, to give life to" (*American Heritage Dictionary*, 1983, p. 27). With more mature thinking, animation progresses into *animism*: "Belief that natural phenomena and inanimate things have souls" (p. 27). Joseph Campbell describes the widespread use of fantasies, which result in cultural myths. Myths serve a practical purpose—explaining phenomena for which there is no other explanation. Barkin (1988) refers to Muensterberger's explanation that both primitive man and modern man, "with the development of shared fantasies and myths, has created objects with the aim of mastering reality through fantasy" (p. 530). Some would argue that this widespread use of and higher symbolic use approaches the area of religion. It is quite fascinating how transitional phenomena serve individual purposes as well as societal needs.

The transitional object is a human being's first attempt at creating and being a part of something greater than himself. Winnicott believed that the transitional object was something derived from a healthy mother-child relationship. A healthy parent-child relationship, ironically, brings knowledge to the child that the mother will not, cannot always be there, but by being there *enough*, the child does not always need the mother. Hence, the child creates his or her own personal myth surrounding an object or phenomena. This myth, illusion, or imagination consoles the child that something will exist after the perceived death of the mother much as belief in life after death consoles adults.

Joseph Campbell (1988) maintains that "what we're seeking is an experience of being alive, so that our life experiences on the purely physical plane will have resonances within our own innermost being and reality, so that we actually feel the rapture of being alive" (p.1). Adults cling to their myths just as tightly as children cling to their personal imagination in order to feel a part of creation; this idea is poignantly penned in Mary Oliver's poem (in Palmer, 1998), "Wild Geese":

> *Whoever you are, no matter how lonely,*
>
> *The world offers itself to your imagination,*
>
> *Calls to you like the wild geese, harsh and exciting*—(p. 89)

From this poem we catch the excitement of our imaginations making us feel alive, and also, as the last two lines relate, that using our imaginations helps make us feel we are a part of something more significant than our self alone.

> *Over and over announcing your place*
>
> *In the family of things* (p. 89)

Transitional phenomena constitute the intermediate space connecting the inner being to the outer world giving us knowledge that we are a part of something much greater than our selves.

CHAPTER 5

LIFE, CREATIVITY, AND THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS

Sweeping generalizations are often made about the importance of creativity—creativity in education, in business, in society, and in personal lives. This is because creativity is considered to be the hallmark that sets humans apart from other inhabitants of the Earth. Among humans, creativity is a highly coveted gift that allows men and women the outlet to achieve greater joy, fulfillment, and meaning in life. Despite the importance and abundant studies of creativity, much in education hampers creativity.

As a mother of four children, ages 19, 17, 11, and 5 at the time of this writing, I have an acute interest in the fulfillment my children bring to and get out of life. I am also a teacher of language arts, science, social studies, and math; I consider it my obligation to assist students in discovering and developing their individual creativity. This is one of my main objectives despite all the state and federal mandates that threaten to strip schools, teachers, and students of their innate creativity, which is, in Silvano Arieti's (1976) words, "a prerogative of man [that] can be seen as the humble human counterpart of God's creation" (p. 4). I realize that most of the federal mandates were put in place to increase the test scores of students, especially lower achieving students. But I am afraid that we are reducing the value of these students to mere statistics. Reconceptualizing the curriculum field, James Macdonald (1995) writes that

> the basic propositions underlying the approach are, then, that man has a personal,
> self-actualizing and creative capability not limited solely by biology or
> conditioning; that personal response is the avenue through which individuals
> stretch and may reach their potentialities; and that a view of human development

which wishes to focus upon human potentialities must center upon the

developmental aspects of personal responsiveness. (p. 17)

We must find ways of improving student academic success *and* encouraging them to

explore their individual creativity. This chapter discusses the importance of creativity

and in the section entitled, "Threats to Creativity," explores reasons creativity is not

being promoted in education throughout the United States.

How Creativity Leads to Genuine Learning

When people reflect upon creative persons, they often think of the finite group of

painters, musicians, and poets. Understanding the bond between artists and creativity

naturally brings to mind the questions of - why are not more people *more* creative and

how can a person's creativity be optimally tapped? These are questions pertinent to

educators, businesses, individuals, and society.

To start, it is vital to realize that all humans have the potential for creativity.

Creativity comes in the form of being able to "free play." This is something that many

adults have lost the ability to do. Literature, especially in the form of fiction, provides

many adults the ability to play freely with words, ideas, and feelings while they are in the

creative act of reading. Arieti (1976) affirms that "whether it is considered from the

viewpoint of its effects on society, or as one of the expressions of the human spirit,

creativity stands out as an activity to be studied, cherished, cultivated" (ix). He further

states:

Thus any creative product has to be considered from two points of view: that is, as

a unity, in itself; and as part of a culture, either a specific culture or the general

cultural patrimony of mankind. . . .Creative work thus may be seen to have a dual

role: at the same time as it enlarges the universe by adding or uncovering new dimensions, it also enriches and expands man, who will be able to experience these new dimensions inwardly. . . .to understand the nature of this desirable experience and how large its scope is, ranging from the physiological to the spiritual, from the most practical to the most theoretical. (p. 5)

It must be emphasized that creativity can be achieved by virtually anybody and for the benefit of everybody.

One must willingly study and suspend prejudices and preconceptions as to creativity being limited to the artists, the rich, the desperate, the talented, or any one particular type of person. Even though artists have something, some sort of object to show for their creativity, I believe there is also an element of living a creative life such that someone shows in every day activities his creativity. Consider setting a beautiful dinner table for a delicious homemade meal. The cooking of the meal itself can be a creative activity. In the movie based on Johannes Vermeer's masterpiece "Girl With a Pearl Earring," the famous painter is drawn to the manner in which his hired help lays out a beautiful table setting, making sure that the vegetables are arranged according to shape, size, and color. There are everyday acts of creativity that people do without much notice.

Teachers show their artistic tendencies by the way they arrange and decorate their rooms. One of the first thing new teachers learn is the importance of making the class a safe, organized, and visually inviting place to be. Teachers' actions also show artistic proclivity by the way they dress, by the way they address students, by the way they arrange desks and chairs, by the way they speak, by the way they stand, by the way they listen, and by the way they are. Eisner (2002), in his book *The Arts and the Creation of*

Mind, describes an art teacher's first day teaching art. To help students recognize that there are different ways of experiencing the world even in ordinary activities:

> he first selects a Styrofoam cup and pours a little coffee into the cup, adds a little cream, tastes it, and then points out that the primary function of pouring the cream into the coffee is practical. He then uses a transparent plastic cup and carefully pours a little coffee into it and then a little cream while observing the way in which the white cream seems to explode in the cup for a brief few seconds after it is poured. He delights in the beautiful burst of cloudlike formations that the cream in the dark coffee creates. *That* kind of an activity, he tells the class, is an activity experienced for its own satisfaction; it is an aesthetic activity, not simply a practical one. (p. 58)

As educators, we must remember that each student has the capability to create, be creative, and enjoy creativity in one form or another.

A creative teacher can see the aesthetic beauty in every act. Eisner relates the inspiring results of dye swirling in water, which adds a creative dimension to a student's writing about Native Americans:

> The clear crystal water looks to me like the landscape the native Indians love to live in. The land that was given to them from the Great Spirit. As the dye drops, Columbus lands. The Europeans not only destroy it, but pollute their beautiful land with diseases. The red dye spreads throughout the pure souls of innocent Native Americans. The red dye destroys their people, their tribes, their culture, their beliefs. In good hearts, these beliefs will never die. (p. 60)

This is an excellent example of providing a visual prompt to encourage imagery and feeling in writing. Good writing begins with a vision and ends with words. This is what I envision my language arts class to be like. Eisner asserts that "in a sense, work in the arts enables us to stop looking over our shoulder and to direct our attention inward to what we believe or feel" (p. 10). The goal of teachers could be to give this gift to their students.

Dewey (2005) asks the following, which makes us think about art in everyday activities:

> How is it that the everyday making of things grows into that form of making which is genuinely artistic? How is it that our everyday enjoyment of scenes and situations develops into the peculiar satisfaction that attends the experience which is emphatically aesthetic? The beneficial offshoot of creating things is that we are also creating and re-creating ourselves in the process. (p. 11)

There is a connection between living creatively and being able to create things of beauty. Both lend themselves to living in the moment, rather than having one foot in the past and one in the future, which leaves one paralyzed and unable to walk in the moment. Dewey (2005) asserts that "only when the past ceases to trouble and anticipations of the future are not perturbing is a being wholly united with his environment and therefore fully alive" (p. 17). Daniel Cavicchi (1998) echoes a similar phenomenon with Bruce Springsteen fans; these fans "lose themselves in Springsteen's performances, that feeling of unity is paradoxically accompanied by intense self-awareness" (p. 137).

For Greene (1995), the ability to be creative comes from living in wide-awakeness, and she suggests that encounters with the arts alone will not bring about any

worthwhile creativity or social transformation. It is in the process of *effecting*

transformations that the human self is created and recreated. Dewey, like the

existentialist thinkers, did not believe that the self was ready-made or pre-existent. It was

Dewey (1991) who said that creativity is "something in continuous formation through

choice of action" (p. 408). The richness, the complexity of the selves people create are

functions of their commitment to projects of action they recognize as their own. Sartre

believed that human beings create themselves by going beyond what exists and by trying

to bring something into being (p. 118). Creative living has the advantage of benefiting

the individual as well as society.

Weighing Emotional and Physical Well-being

When Winnicott began practicing pediatric medicine, it was clear to him

early on that parents were just as concerned, if not more concerned, about their children's

psychological wellbeing as they were about their children's physical health. This

prompted Winnicott to become a child psychoanalyst. I remember experiencing a similar

epiphany when I started practicing education. Early in my teaching career I realized that

parents were just as concerned with the emotional well-being of their children in

schooling as they were about the academics of their children. The truth is that emotional

well-being and academic success go hand-in-hand, just as physical and psychological

health go together. One depends upon the other for a fully functioning individual.

Furthermore, I found out that when parents spoke about the "success" of their

children, they meant something more than "making the grade." When a teacher stops and

listens carefully to a parent or student, the teacher knows that the parent or student wants

a fully integrated and creative existence. This means taking the *whole* child into account.

It means taking notice of the child's physical, psychological, economic, and spiritual needs. It means not making a standardized test more important than the creative experiences of a child.

My journey into psychoanalysis, as both a patient and a scholar, gave me the greatest gift a human being can possess—a knowledge of who I am and how I fit into the world. A vital element of personal peace and self-fulfillment is the ability to express oneself creatively. Before I began psychoanalysis, I was sad, depressed, angry, unfulfilled, and stagnant. After I began therapy, I got in touch with what courses within me. I went back to school, earned my M.Ed. I began painting again. I started reading and writing more. I started communicating more fully with my husband and my children. Five years ago, I began working on my Ed.D. This meant more reading, more writing, more thinking, more reverie, and more just-me time. The more time I spent with myself, the better my relationships developed. Because I had inner fulfillment, I was able to receive others more fully and openly. Helping myself emotionally and intellectually helps me feel better physically.

Psychoanalytic Roots of Creativity

Fields such as education, literature, philosophy, psychology, and science have made commendable strides in attempting to explain from where humankind's creativity stems. Philosophy is widely known as the precursor to many other branches of study such as science, literature and psychoanalysis. Psychoanalysis is over a hundred years old, but like many other fields, it too has its roots in science and philosophy. However, unlike other fields, psychoanalysis is more exclusively dedicated to examining the mind, or psyche, than any other field, and this is why, with my penchant for searching for roots

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of phenomena, I turn to psychoanalysis to find deeper answers to where humankind's creativity derives from.

It has been said that artists are uniquely in touch with their inner selves and with the "divine." The student of psychoanalysis comes close to comprehending the connection between artists and creativity. Pinar (2004) goes so far as to say,

> There is, perhaps, no tradition of systematic inquiry into the sphere of the subjective, into the processes of self-formation—and their complex and ever-changing relations to the social and historical—that offers us as many provocative conceptual tools as do the various strands of psychoanalytic theory. (p. 57)

The purpose of my inquiry is to understand the origins of creativity. I believe that the better we understand creative origins the greater likelihood that we can tap into the creativity of all people. As an educator, my main objective is to increase the creativity of my students. As an educator of language arts, I have a unique opportunity to expose students to great artists in literature and, in turn, start them or further them on their way to becoming greater artists themselves. I have always felt that, besides my education, my knowledge of psychoanalysis has aided my teaching abilities more than any other source because of my deeper understanding of how the mind works and what inspires people.

Psychoanalytic studies regarding creativity abound, but I focus on those studies and theories that concentrate on the earliest origins of creativity. During my research I found that many literary artists have an innate concept of the origins of creativity, and many write about the early stirrings of imagination in their works of art. Of all the psychoanalytic theories of creativity I have read, I am especially drawn to Winnicott's transitional object theory. This is because Winnicott makes a distinct connection

between creativity and the relationship between parents and their children, and as a parent, I have experienced these connections firsthand.

Beginnings of Creativity

It is impossible to say exactly from where creativity comes. Creativity comes from the mind, and philosophically and scientifically, we are nowhere near explaining this complex psychological process. Furthermore, there exist many definitions of creativity. Winnicott (1986) said that "whatever definition we arrive at, it must include the idea that life is worth living or not, according to whether creativity is or is not a part of an individual person's living experience" (p. 39). The word *create*, according to *Webster's* (1996) comes from the Latin word "creare" which means "to make." Other definitions include: "to cause to come into being, as something unique that would not naturally evolve or that is not made by ordinary processes" and "to evolve from one's own thought or imagination, as a work of art of an invention" (p. 472). The first definition is paramount to this issue; it implies something coming into being that would not have ordinarily come into being on its own *naturally*. There are rare instances in the animal kingdom that a nonhuman makes something, such as a chimpanzee "making" a stick to dip in an ant pile to extract ants to ingest—a delicacy for chimpanzee. Even in this amazing instance, the chimpanzee does not actually make a stick. The stick is already there, and the chimpanzee merely picks off the protruding growths to get a smooth stick. This example illustrates a philosophical question, one that Winnicott (1988) attempts to explain with regard to the baby's first experience outside the womb:

> At the (theoretical) first feed the baby is ready to create, and the mother makes it
> possible for the baby to have the illusion that the breast, and what the breast

means, has been created by impulse out of need. Of course we as sophisticated

philosophers know that what the baby created was not that which the mother

presented, but the mother by her extremely delicate adaptation to the emotional

needs of the infant is able to allow the baby this illusion. (p. 101)

Thus the breast is the first object the baby "creates." The object already existed *and* the

baby, out of need, also created it. Unlike the chimpanzee, which will not develop further

creative capacities, the human baby will go on to ever-more sophisticated creative acts.

Arieti (1976), who is an M.D. and a psychoanalyst, believes that "human

creativity uses what is already existing and available and changes it in unpredictable

ways" (p. 4). Recent chaos theories give better understanding to this phenomenon.

There are already ideas and objects in existence for humans to shape and mold in

unpredictable ways. The movie, *Flash of Genius*, directed by M. Abram (2009),

chronicles the legal battle that inventor, Robert Kearns (played by Greg Kinnear) went

through to get credit for his intermittent windshield wipers. Ford Motor Company took

his work and claimed in court that Kearns did not invent anything new, that all the

materials he used for his design already existed. In a poignant part of the film, Kearns

asks the court if Charles Dickens invented the words, "it, was, the, best, worst . . ." The

answer was no, and Kearns continued to point out that even though Dickens (2009) did

not invent these words, he did invent a new order in which to use these words in his

novel, *A Tale of Two Cities*—"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times" (p. 1).

Kearns made the point that humans create out of what is already in existence. According

to Winnicott (1986), it is "the individual's genetically determined tendency to be alive

and to stay alive and to relate to objects that get in the way when the moments come for

reaching out, even for the moon" (p. 42). What Winnicott means is that a baby exists and is before he acts, but it is in the action (of crying, say) that promotes a reaction of the mother (giving nourishment to the child) that gives the child proof that he exists. In this way, it is the action or doing that comes before and causes the realization that one exists. And during the course of life, a person can continue to reach out and create new things out of what already exists.

Winnicott's transitional object theory involves a similar dilemma. The object exists (out there) before the baby finds it, but it does not exist for the baby until action on the baby's part causes it to exist (in here) for the baby. Winnicott's transitional object theory is appealing because it is one's ability to understand the concrete object around which the theory is formulated. It is appealing, but it is also complex. One of the earliest memories I have is of a thing (object), a Raggedy Ann and Andy pillowcase. It was not until I read Winnicott that I realized this pillowcase was my transitional object. I needed it every night when I went to sleep. I could not sleep without it. I had a nightly ritual of folding the edge of the pillowcase in a triangle, then placing it with my right index finger in my mouth, and only then falling asleep. This was the comforting part of my transitional object, but there was another equally important aspect of my pillowcase. After the comforting part worked, I would watch Raggedy Ann and Andy, and they would play together and have conversations together. Eventually the *imagining* of conversations and play between Raggedy Ann and Andy and myself became the aspect (object) that lulled me to sleep. Did I create the pillowcase? No. Did I create Raggedy Ann and Andy? No. Did I create the play between myself and Raggedy Ann and Andy? Yes. What allowed me to create this play? It was the fact that I felt safe and

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comfortable; therefore, my imagination was able to run free and to create. Parents may not realize the impact they have on their children's ability to explore creatively. Teachers also can benefit from knowledge of where some of our creative abilities originate.

Winnicott's Contributions to Creativity

Creativity not only serves its creator, but it possesses ultimate potential to benefit all humankind. Winnicott (1986, p. 35) outlined three main areas of existence where a person is first interested in reaching out to people and objects; second, interested in turning inward and using one's own imagination, and; third, interested in wider cultural experiences. The third area of cultural experience was what Winnicott was intensely interested in even though he had more experience with children experiencing the first two areas.

Winnicott's transitional object theory explains the beginnings of infants' using an object to navigate their inner life and outer reality in the first acts of creativity. Thus the first acts of life and of living are creative acts, and this follows throughout one's life. Bowie (2000) summarizes Winnicott's contributions to creativity:

With his emphasis on potentiality, and on destructiveness and creativity in perpetual dialogue, Winnicott is in a sense telling artists, and enthusiasts for art, what they already know. But alone among the great psychoanalysts, he does seem to understand the working conditions of excitement, uncertainty, and fear in which artists labour and into which their works may precipitate us. One of the nicest paradoxes in this paradox-filled world is that an analyst who had so little to say about art explicitly, who was so modest in the comments he did make, so reluctant to employ rhetorical finery of his own, should open up a whole new

world of dialogue in which artists, critics, art-lovers, and analysts can come

together to use objects, and to play. (pp. 28-29)

Madeleine Davis and David Wallbridge (1981) believe that "perhaps the most important

temperamental influence on Donald Winnicott's work was simply his belief that life is

worth living" (p. 3) and that "his immense sense of pleasure and profit in his own life

must at least in part have been responsible for his conviction that, for each individual, life

can be creative and valuable" (p. 3). In many of the written accounts of people who were

close to him, Winnicott was described as energetic, always on the move, playful, creative,

insightful, kind, empathetic, childlike, prolific in his work and writing—in short—all the

qualities that he valued so highly and that he encouraged in his family, friends, and

patients.

Marion Milner's (1957) book *On Not Being Able to Paint* studies the need to both

act and be still in the process of creating. Milner examines the relationship between

being aware of her surroundings as well as her inner self, which helps her ability to paint

as well as to live more aesthetically. Nina Farhi (2001) writes that

Donald Winnicott, together with Marion Milner, holds a unique place in the

evolving history of ideas that form today's psychoanalytic discourse. Both, more

perhaps than any others, freed us from the inhibitions of dogma. And yet,

equally, no two theorists laid such emphasis on the dialogic interplay between

holding and form. This interplay acts as the core for personal creativity to

become potent and meaningful to the individual lived life. (p. 65)

Winnicott makes it clear that cultural experience, which is the culmination of creativity, has no boundaries and is not reserved for any particular group of people. But this creativity begins with the potential space between mother and child.

This reminds me of the common saying that "behind every great man is a great woman." It could also be said that behind every happy, creative, and well-adjusted child is a great parent. Thus a child, when given the necessary resources early in life, has the potential to influence the world, even if it is only within herself.

Sigmund Freud and Hanna Segal's theories on creativity place it secondary to the developmental function that it serves. Parsons (2000) points out that Winnicott, by contrast, allows a "view of creativity that is primarily to do with the nature of the creative process itself" (p. 157). Parsons writes that

> although his observations about creativity are mentioned from time to time in the literature, it is striking how little systematic use has been made of them to articulate a theory of creativity, although the makings of one are plainly there in his writings. (p. 157)

People from many different traditions and disciplines use Winnicott's theories. There are literary uses, psychoanalytic uses, historical uses, sociological uses, and various therapeutic uses of Winnicott's ideas. One of the advantages of Winnicott's not adhering to, succumbing to, or creating any one rigid psychoanalytic framework is that his open flexible theories have been used and continue to be used by many fields of inquiry. As a curriculum theorist, I find Winnicott's ideas valuable in educational settings. Curriculum theory is flexible like Winnicott's theories. Curriculum theory is like water in that it flows through many sources and does not harden in any one place.

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In his transitional object theory, Winnicott outlines the first signs of creativity, which is expounded upon as the person matures in health. Rudnytsky (1993) writes that "uniquely among psychoanalytic approaches to art, Winnicott respects art's integrity as an autonomous human activity, while continuing to insist on its infantile origins" (xiii). Not only has my experience as a daughter, sister, and mother helped me understand Winnicott's theories of creativity, but also my experience teaching literature has given me glimpses of authors' knowledge (consciously or not) of creative phenomena. The combination of psychoanalytic theory on creativity and literature that alludes to this creativity can inspire greater creativity among all learners. Some important questions to ask are the following: What are the psychoanalytic origins of individual creativity and imagination? How can knowing the origins of creativity and imagination improve the learning of students? How can we use this knowledge of creative origins to inspire increased creativity and imagination in the teaching of literature? How can we bridge the gap between students who already use creativity and imagination in their individual and school lives and those to whom this ability does not come to as naturally? And how can we create a curriculum that addresses creativity over standardized testing?

The Subjectivity and Objectivity

Of Curriculum Theorists and Psychoanalysts

In Exploring Creativity

Curriculum theorists are adept in combining in-depth scholarly objective observations and research with broader instinctive sensory feelings and the belief that there are as many ways to see the world as there are people in it. Freud aided in

transforming Western epistemology with his practice of free association. Psychoanalyst Christopher Bollas (2000) writes that

> in order to know what we think we are requested to relinquish the understandable demand to be scrupulous and objective–in contemporary terms to be scientific– and abandon ourselves to the apparently loose enterprise of speaking whatever crosses our mind. (p. 1)

Free association is preferable to acute self-scrutiny. A caution must be given with regards to psychoanalysis. There is a possibility that a person can analyze oneself to the point where he is unable to take action. This is known by some as "paralysis by analysis." This occurs when one is so caught up in examining one's thoughts and previous actions that one is afraid to take any further action. The purpose of psychoanalysis is not to set out to find ultimate and categorical rationales for behavior, but, instead, to free up our minds for spontaneous creativity.

Education brings with it attempts to carve curriculum in stone. It is difficult to resist the temptation of trying to find a once-and-for-all cure for curriculum. It is easy to overlook the fact that time changes us. Each generation brings with it a different set of circumstances by which to create curriculum. Doll prefers the element of water, as opposed to rock or sand, because as Lao Tzu (in Doll, 2000) describes, "Highest good is like water. Because water excels in benefiting the myriad creatures without contending with them and settles where none would like to be, it comes close to the way" (vii). Instead of carving curriculum in stone, where it is sure to be smashed to pieces, it would suit students better to allow curriculum more movement to flow in myriad directions like water. Having recently read Helen Keller's (1995) autobiography, *The Story of My Life*, I

am struck by Keller's description of her teacher, Annie Sullivan, using water as a metaphor.

> It was my teacher's genius, her quick sympathy, her loving tact which made the first years of my education so beautiful. It was because she seized the right moment to impart knowledge that made it so pleasant and acceptable to me. She realized that a child's mind is like a shallow brook which ripples and dances merrily over the stony course of its education and reflects here a flower, there a bush, yonder a fleecy cloud; and she attempted to guide my mind on its way, knowing that like a brook it should be fed by mountain streams and hidden springs, until broadened out into a deep river, capable of reflecting in its placid surface, billowy hills, the luminous shadows of trees and the blue heavens, as well as the sweet face of a little flower. (p. 39)

This passage causes me to reflect on the myriad of children in our public schools with special needs (they all have special needs). I wish all teachers, like Annie Sullivan, could be given the freedom to teach in the ways they know are best for each child.

William Reynolds (2003, p. 45) also uses water as metaphor in his book *A River Runs Through It* when he describes the story of a father's Marine, Presbyterian-style way of teaching his two sons fly fishing. The oldest son learns the father's method without asking questions, while the youngest son develops his own method, seeing things from a different paradigm—a paradigm not felt or seen by his father or older brother. The younger son fishes from within. Part of the job of a teacher or a psychoanalyst is to provide an environment for each person to perform from truth that comes from within.

When Winnicott gets on the level of his patients, he is attempting (often successfully) to see what they see, see who they are, and in special cases *be who they are*. There is an actual case where a patient recounts the different psychoanalyses between Winnicott and another psychoanalyst, Ronald Fairbairn. Winnicott's style was more natural, and he was able to get into the skin of his patients, or at least provide a welcoming holding place for them. The difference between Fairbairn and Winnicott was like having a reading teacher who teaches reading with the stark and dry *Fun With Dick and Jane* and a teacher who allows the students to choose between hilarious *Junie B. Jones* by Barbara Park (1999) and *Captain Underpants* by Dav Pilkey (1997)—two series of books that three of my own children and their classmates devoured and laughed hysterically over. Winnicott had a dynamic rapport with his patients that other psychoanalysts have said is a gift few analysts possess.

Winnicott's transitional object theory is the first theory to explain where the first creative impulses come from. Knowing about this theory can improve our relationships with our children, our students, and all people, so that we can identify wherein lies the children's creative instinct, as the father and oldest son identified in the youngest son— that he fishes from within. This fishing from within is an art, which is hard to explain. While the father and brother look at fishing from the standpoint of how many fish are caught, the younger brother focuses on the process and the art of fishing. Winnicott's theory explains the *process* of creative living and how our inner selves uses the outside (objects) to transition and transform. There is a specific intersection where the outside reality meets the inside fantasy, but these changes and transformations never take the

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same shape, sort of like water—it is always there, but it is always flowing, and always taking different shape using various objects and spaces.

Mythology, whence literature comes, portrays heroes proving themselves. It is not so much that they find themselves as they re-create themselves. Perhaps if we see the goal of psychoanalysis as re-creating ourselves, we might be more apt to participate in the journey.

Play: The First Creative Act

Where does creativity come into "play"? Winnicott (2005) believes that "in playing, and perhaps only in playing, the child or adult is free to be creative" (p. 71). Winnicott was famous for his play techniques that opened up an imaginative situation for him and his young patients to open up and explore what was going on in their minds. Creativity is what makes people feel alive to themselves and to others. Creative people are exciting and enjoyable to be around.

Those who are not creative or are not able to create are what Winnicott describes as "boring" (1986, p. 3) patients. He did mean boring in that the patients were not fun to listen to. It was that their problems seemed, and sometimes were, unfixable because the patient possessed little or no ability to play, imagine, or create. When an Anglican priest asked Winnicott how to tell the difference between a parishioner whom he could talk to and help versus a parishioner who needed professional psychiatric treatment, Winnicott answered that the way you could tell if someone could be helped, is if he sustains your interest. If he does not sustain your interest, but instead, bores you, then he needs professional help.

Boring people include people who have a vested interest in remaining sick. A person can be boring in many ways, either by not making any sense, trying to make too much sense, frustrating the listener, demanding too much of the listener, or refusing advice; these situations are caused by a number of defenses and regressions in individuals. In any case, Winnicott (1986) writes, "that which is boring is inherently inauthentic, both for the patient and the analyst" (p. 3). In such cases, the patient creates a situation where he is paralyzed and bored by the therapeutic discourse, which the patient makes monotonous by the repetition and by not getting anywhere. No matter how much such patients talk about their problem or how much good advice you give them, they cannot or do not want to get better.

I sometimes feel that in teaching I cannot reach some students. No matter what kind of motivational tactic I may try, these students either cannot or refuse to be reached. Their problems at home seem insurmountable, and this reminds me of some of the patients that Winnicott had who were boring in a psychologically unhealthy way. The problems we see at school usually stem from home, and even though these students are few, the challenge is to try and reach these students educationally by stimulating a creative spark that can overpower their inner turmoil.

Most of my students are typical adolescents whose problems fluctuate daily from the mild to, from their viewpoint, catastrophic. I enjoy these students' company. They are usually very bright, capable, and creative. Their sensitivity, while causing them teenage angst, can also be a valuable attribute for creativity. They are very emotional and absorbed in outside stimuli, especially conflicts, more deeply than most people. Adolescents have their highs and lows; this is normal. The students to watch for are the

ones who internalize everything and become depressed. They are not usually interruptions or problems in the class, so they are easy to overlook, but they often need help of some sort. Some students are quiet, but they are comfortable in their own reverie and need little outside attention. Knowing something of psychoanalysis helps in identifying personalities and situations among students.

Frequently I hear adults say they wish they had pursued their childhood interests, usually saying something like, "I wish my parents had made me keep playing the guitar or the piano." People I know who did pursue their interests often give credit to a parent, teacher, or some caring adult that encouraged and fostered their interests, but few people pursue their creative interests to their personal satisfaction. Why is it that so many people do not pursue their natural talents and interests? There are many possible reasons. First, perhaps they did not grow up in an environment that fostered their creativity. Second, if creative interests began to emerge maybe they were ignored or squelched. Lucky for my kids, I do not mind a messy house. That is why there is always Play-Doh, paints, markers and all sorts of art supplies around, and two of my children have developed a love for visual arts. However, I have known some parents who refuse to give their children paint and markers because it might mess up their kitchen table. Third, if the child's interests survive pre-school, they risk being extinguished in school, especially when the focus is mainly on "making the grade." Fourth, technology has trapped many into spending too much time with technological devices rather than freeing people to relax and enjoy creative pursuits. It was predicted that ours would be the era of leisure—with time to reflect and pursue individual interests. However, it seems that the opposite is

occurring—we have less time to enjoy ourselves, others and our interests. In some cases, we are becoming alienated from ourselves.

A personal example is that, at a very young age, I showed giftedness in art. I remember my family and friends commenting on my ability. I also remember people asking my mother where I got this talent from, and she said she did not know. It turned out that my mother divorced my biological father when I was 3 years old, and he was an artist by profession, in contrast with my stepfather who was a computer analyst. Was I born with this gift merely by genetics? How much of my mother's encouragement, conscious or unconscious, caused me to excel in this area? I pursued my interest in art until late high school, when my parents began to discourage it because I "couldn't make a living at it." In college I majored in computer science for two years mostly to please my stepfather. After taking a history class with a caring and dynamic professor, I changed my major to history. There I pursued my next best talent—writing.

In addition to writing numerous papers, I was able to explore the origins of cultures. I have always been fascinated with origins, always wondering why people are the way they are, why cultures developed differently–and similarly to one another. This eventually led to my interest in understanding individuals and why they are the way they are. To me, the study of individuals and of cultures and societies as a whole is inextricably intertwined, and this has led me to my present passion for psychoanalysis and the creativity that comes from an understanding of psychoanalysis and its processes. It has been said that we are able to re-invent ourselves over and over again. The philosophical comparison of finding oneself versus creating oneself is pertinent here. In my doctoral program, I was able to re-invent myself by combining my creative interests

of writing, history, psychoanalysis, teaching and literature. It is beneficial to be able to look through the eyes of a historian, a psychoanalyst *and* an author.

The humanities, including psychology, history, and literature, are an integral part of curriculum theory. The humanities do not fit neatly into the *either or* strict stance of the hard sciences. The open-endedness of humanities lends itself to many in-between spaces of interpretation. Curriculum theorists excel in their ability to combine many disciplines and accept paradoxes. Roy (2003) reminds us that the "meaning of educational encounter lies not in the capacity to produce a unified sensibility, but in its paradoxical capacity to *deal with nonrelation*, or in placing itself in the 'inbetween' of content and expression" (p. 68). This is like the in-betweenness that Winnicott says is a paradox that should not necessarily be explained but that should be accepted because of the rich variety of experiences it brings to people. Roy continues, "This in-betweenness or the gap or nonrelation is neither vague nor confusing, but is an access to the myriad forces and intensities that constantly cross our path but that are ignored as we adhere to narrow ideas about curriculum" (p. 68). Looking at the same event or phenomena through different perspectives enables us to get a clearer picture.

Arts and humanities rely on personal perspective and individual feeling. Regarding curriculum theory, Marla Morris (2001) describes her in-between place as follows:

> One possibility might be that one does curriculum theory to offer hope to students and colleagues in the academy; another reason is more despairing. One might do curriculum work to offer warnings. These warnings concern the dangers and worries of living in the world, the troubles of lived experience. I want to offer

warnings about hope. In order to do this, though, I choose an inbetween place

from which to speak. Distance from hope and despair allows the curriculum

worker to examine the danger of each. Being mired in hope blinds; being mired

in despair causes deafness. I despair about hope. To understand this, I stand in

the middle; I take the middle way between both. This is the way of the Buddha

the place situated between extremes. However, unlike the Buddha, I am not

offering enlightenment; I am merely attempting to get distance from the extremes

of hope and despair in order to better despair about hope. When I recall why I do

curriculum work, it turns on this paradox. (p. 198)

Morris chooses the in-between gray area—not the white or black opposite ends of the

spectrum. John Caputo (1987) seems to agree with Morris about the dangers of truth and

hope. "True style means to believe nothing" or be a skeptic like Morris, and to

accustom oneself not to too few truths but to too many. Indeed, there is not even

"style" but only many styles, each suited to the cause it must serve. We create as

many truths as we require. Having style means to change with the changed, to

invent what is required, to make nothing irreformable. It is to be liberated from

the illusion of a single truth, a single meaning. It is to be liberated from both

dogmatism and hermeneutics and to adopt a strategy of writing (*Spurs* 95), which

means to write with the stylus, the stiletto which punctures the sails of

metaphysics as it tries to keep a steady course over stormy seas. (p. 156)

When one is open to many truths, he can operate in more areas of potential space. In

trying to obtain truth and know it completely, according to Robert Sardello (2002), "we

are actually trying not to seize truth but the power that lies within truth" (p. 18).

Language arts lends itself to this many-lensed kaleidoscope of truths. Caputo (1987) writes that "interpretation proceeds by reversing the drift, by swimming against the stream. It is always working against the dead weight of a fall" (p. 63). Richard Bach (1977) writes in his book *Illusions: The Adventures of a Reluctant Messiah*, of a fanciful tale of a sea creature that, out of habit, clings to the rocks to keep from going with the current. When he is tempted to break free and join the fish and sea creatures that pass him by, others warn him that he will get hurt from the force of the current. The sea creature bravely lets go, and after being bumped and bruised by the fast-rushing current, he finds he is able to drift along and experience the beautiful various sights along the way. In this story, the sea creature stops fighting against the current and is able to experience things differently. Palmer (1998) writes that

> when a thing ceases to be an object and becomes a vital, interactive part of our
>
> lives—whether it is a work of art, an indigenous people, or an ecosystem—it
>
> might get a grip on use, biasing us toward it, thus threatening the purity of our
>
> knowledge once again. (p. 51)

Charles Sanders Peirce (in Marks, 2002) articulates that "viewing a thing from the outside, considering its relations of action and reaction with other things, it appears as matter. Viewing it from the inside, looking at its immediate character as feeling, it appears as consciousness" (p. 161). What is the difference, and do we need to ask this question? Isn't it enough that it *is*? Can humans be satisfied with experiencing without putting a name, a reason, a time, or place to it? As Laura Marks (2002) says about the art of filming, a remark that also applies to everyday life, that it is "a dream of interactive narrative that is endlessly complex and satisfying because you can never know the whole,

only the stream you happen to dip into" (p. 215). Transitional object theory is similar in that it takes the inner psyche of an individual and the outer object and combines the two to create something in between, something altogether different from total subjectivity and total objectivity and that only comes for a fleeting moment, although the effects may last a lifetime.

It is understandable to regard play as a simple act whose only purpose is to provide entertainment, but as Winnicott spells out, play is a necessary, complex step that sets babies and children up to later explore the complex world around them. Play may be the very act that saves a person. The ability to play and manipulate one's environment may enable a person to later recognize injustices and inconsistencies in the adult world. Friedrich Nietzsche spoke of the camel that carries the burden of becoming educated about the world around it, then transforming into a lion that is wise enough to say "no" to the dominant culture, but there is one more metamorphosis, and that is of the child who

> represents a capacity to play again, to engage the imagination in creative flights, to begin new projects that go beyond where we have been—and it is precisely this capacity that Nietzsche suggests leads people in the direction of freedom.
> (Carlson, 2002, p. 111)

Freedom is becoming who we are. The child brings us back to where Winnicott begins– the infant, the child–who has the capacity to play, imagine and create. Winnicott speaks of the necessity for adults to retain the ability to play, and thus create anew. The child uses an object to transition from internal play to external reality. Books, learning, and knowledge become transitional and transformational objects that allow humans to

balance their internal lives with outside influences all of their lives. Bollas (1987) describes the progression from transitional to transformational:

> With the infant's creation of the transitional object, the transformational process is displaced from the mother-environment (where it originated) into countless subjective-objects, so that the transitional phase is heir to the transformational period, as the infant evolves from experience of the process to articulation of the experience. (p. 15)

Being able to use transitional objects and dwell uninhibitedly in in-between potential spaces allows one to transform not only oneself but those all around.

The language arts class is a perfect venue for helping students articulate their experiences and to help them graduate from dependency on parents and teachers to independently and confidently voicing their true inner beliefs and desires. Bollas (1987) believes that "society cannot possibly meet the requirements of the subject, as the mother met the needs of the infant, but in the arts we have a location for such occasional recollections: intense memories of the process of self-transformation" (p. 29). I argue that literature, in particular, is knowledge that induces a greater connection between one's own mind and the outside world, because literature has greater psychic impact, appealing to one's emotions.

The Art of Being and Doing:

John Dewey, Alexander Calder and D. W. Winnicott

Of the 6.7 billion souls who inhabit this Earth, there are 6.7 billion different personalities. For convenience, psychologists group similar personalities into categories and give these categories names. For example, much research has resulted in grouping

people into two categories—right-brained or left-brained. Some people, to the point of

being obsessive-compulsive about it, prefer to live under more rigid, uniform,

predictable, consistent, and disciplined conditions. They are often the "doers" of society

because they are always busy doing things. These people can become uncomfortable

with anything that is out of their ordinary realm of performance or influence. Then there

are people who—by nature, it would seem—are more able to exist with uncertainty, even

chaos, adventure, unpredictability, and creativity. These people might be termed "*be-

ers*," and they are happy being still, alone, free, and contemplative. Of course, there is a

various mixture of people in the middle continuum of these polarities. Marion Milner

(1957, 1981) learned that balancing between doing and being, form and content is key.

Winnicott's transitional phenomena explain similar dynamics of using the inner

imagination already in existence with outside objects. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (in

Bachelard, 1988) writes verse about the unlimited lightness and airiness a person can

achieve if he or she can envision and feel it: "*Now let me leap Skyward and higher / Now

let me skip, Buoyant desire*" (p. 63). Bachelard points out, "How much better we can

understand these passages when we know the ecstasy of oneiric flight and when we have

lived dynamically the image of wings on the heels!" (p. 63). It is interesting to consider

the different tendencies of people. When we recognize these tendencies we stand a better

chance of being understood and of understanding others, thus improving our

relationships.

     I participated in a teaching seminar for two weeks, where our class participated in

all sorts of group—or center—activities, such that students participate in school,

especially elementary school. We all took personality inventories, an exercise that

opened our eyes to our unique ways of being that predicted our teaching styles. Once each of us got a handle on his or her individual teaching style, we started to see how all types of personalities and teaching styles working together makes for a well-rounded and balanced teaching curriculum. I realized that I desire to be more organized, and this has been something I have worked on ever since. I also realized that I am a "big picture" person with creative tendencies that sometimes cause me to appear less practical than others. I have learned to embrace my strengths and gently coax myself into improving on my weaknesses. This class helped me celebrate all the differences in people and see that no way is worse or better. These are just different kinds of people with different approaches to accomplishing the task of teaching.

The same standards for knowing *anything* can be applied to knowing people as well. It is a philosophical dilemma to try to claim what is subjective and objective. What feels subjective to a person has roots in the objective outer world. Remember that the transitional object comes objectively from the outside, but the infant internalizes that object and makes it subjective. Likewise, what feels objective to a person may come from outside, but it is the person's own unique subjective reference to that object that can make something objective that comes from the outside subjective to a particular person. Since it is personal to only one person, it is objective to that one person. Atwell-Vasey (1998) asserts that

> One of the most powerful critiques of epistemology to come from feminist theory
> is that what we might call private life, experiential life, or personal life, is *not* a
> retreat from public life; rather, it is objectivity that is a retreat from the richness of
> experiential life. (p. 39)

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One can flip things around and say that personal knowledge is individually objective and universally subjective. Respect must be given for each individual's learning style as well as knowing that there are many other ways to view the world.

Much great literature is based on individual differences and innate qualities of humankind. A. A. Milne created a whole community that existed harmoniously, despite these differences, in his Winnie the Pooh series. As Benjamin Hoff (1982) points out in his entertaining book *The Tao of Pooh*, "While Eeyore frets . . . and Piglet hesitates . . . and Rabbit calculates . . . and Owl pontificates . . . Pooh just *is*" (back jacket cover). Pooh is the character that is most at peace with himself living in the moment because he most closely follows the *Wu Wei;* Pooh "doesn't force or interfere with things, but lets them work in their own way, to produce results naturally" (p. 70).

Alexander Calder, artist and inventor of the mobile, was one such person who learned by doing. Calder and Dewey lived around the same time. While Dewey spent the 1930's in America learning about modern European ideas, Calder lived in France hearing the latest thoughts, participating in the conversation, and living the life. Winnicott wrote much about the differences between being and doing. As Werner Heisenberg (in Capra, 1983) writes,

> The most fruitful developments frequently take place at those points where two different lines of thought meet. . . hence if they actually meet, that is, if they are at least so much related to each other that a real interaction can take place, then one may hope that new and interesting developments may follow. (p. 6)

As Dewey drew from different lines of thought to create a philosophy uniquely individualistic, I draw on the lives of three very different but equally great men to give a living example of how Dewey's philosophy of education comes to fruition.

Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr., on the back of Dewey's 2005 book *Art As Experience*, writes of Dewey, "His insights into the movement of the universe as it shows itself to men goes to as high a point as has ever been reached by articulate speech." Calder also had an insight into the workings of the universe. While working on a ship, Calder witnessed an unusual sunrise, in which the sun and the moon were both above the horizon, and it was at this point that Calder had the epiphany that he would work in a medium that related the constant movement of the universe. As pointed out before, Dewey chose an academic approach to understanding the universe. Calder, on the other hand, chose a hands-on approach to understanding the universe. Calder, one of the greatest artists of the modern era, was said to have never talked about art. He preferred simply to create art. Even though Dewey wrote a book on art experience, he did not engage in artistic activities. While Dewey's life followed a more sedentary gradual and philosophic procession, Calder was rarely still, always moving. This epiphany, ironically reached while in one of Calder's rare moments of stillness, launched his idea of creating moving universes of his own that eventually came to be known as "mobiles."

It is not hard to believe that a man who created over 16,000 works of art in his lifetime was hardly ever still. Even when Calder was not working on a commissioned or museum piece, he always carried a rolled coil of metal, so that he could make miniature sculptures for pure pleasure or to give to friends on the spur of the moment. Unlike

Dewey who was contemplative and deliberate, Calder was jovial and spontaneous. One may get to know Calder by the following description:

> Calder was indeed gregarious, he loved to laugh and tell jokes. He was never solitary, but radiant and exuberant, exuding great warmth. His imagination was dazzling, and his creations full of gaiety, humor and poetry. He was called the "Mozart of space" and gave pleasure to people, radiating a joyous zest for life beyond rigid art dogmatism and cryptic symbolism. Above all he was a deeply compassionate man–a good citizen, always concerned with world problems. In his work–a triumph of human spirit over technology–he combined his international and European experience with American ingenuity. He was admired and beloved the world over, and recognized as one of the few real leaders whose ideas revitalised the art of the 20th Century. (Baal-Teshuva, 2002, p. 40)

In fact, Calder epitomizes what Dewey (2005) believes about art:

> Only when the past ceases to trouble and anticipations of the future are not perturbing is a being wholly united with his environment and therefore fully alive. Art celebrates with peculiar intensity the movements in which the past reinforces the present and in which the future is a quickening of what now is. (p. 17)

While Dewey seemed forever forged in thought, Calder seemed eternally creating and fully alive. Calder was a bit like the savage that Dewey (1995) writes of as well: "When the savage is most alive, he is most observant of the world about him and most taut with energy. As he watches what stirs about him, he, too, is stirred" (p. 18).

What mattered most to Calder was this—you either did art, or you did not. Calder was so busy doing art that he rarely talked about it. Calder appears to have been

caught in his own personal time machine. He was influenced by things, people, and events around him, yet he managed to create his own world. He had a natural gift of letting in the good and keeping out the bad. He never called his work "art"; instead, he called his art "objects." This way he avoided any criticism people might have of his art work, for many critics then found it much more difficult to criticize an object.

In addition, Calder had been creating objects since he was a young child. One of his first drawings was a duck, and he was not satisfied with it until he cut it out and folded it so that it looked more 3-dimensional. Objects may have affected Calder more because of their multi-dimensional aspects rather than the 2-dimensional aspects of a drawing or painting. Additionally, Calder's 3-dimensional sculptures evolved into movement—mobiles. Calling his art "objects" may have a deeper subconscious significance as well. Calder was described as being playful and innocent. Even though he ran in elite social circles, he preferred to keep busy making fun portraits and toys for his friends and guests. His decision to call his art "objects" may also subconsciously refer back to history's first discovered art *objects*. Perhaps objects, rather than art, brought Calder closer to earth and its earliest inhabitants. This is an idea that Joseph Campbell would relish because of his belief that we cling to our ancestral mythologies and histories.

Calder married, Louisa James, the grand-niece of philosopher William James and novelist Henry James. They were said to have had a successful marriage. Even in his personal life, Calder managed to create a successfully balanced inner space. Like the curriculum theorist's penchant for combining endless variations instead of opting for a "this *or* that" attitude, Calder opted to use science *and* technology *and* art *and* movement

and abstraction *and* emotion in creating a rewarding public and personal inner space. Calder's first model and inspiration was the cosmos, and he created his own world of mobiles.

Thus, we come full circle. People will search the world over to find meaning—only to find it in their own back yard. T. S. Eliot (in Doll, 1995) writes, "We shall not cease from exploration, and the end of all our exploring / Will be to arrive where we started / And know the place for the first time" (p. 7). Campbell (2004), regarding the heroic journey in mythology, writes that

> where we had thought to find an abomination, we shall find a god; where we had
>
> thought to slay another, we shall slay ourselves; where we had thought to travel
>
> outward, we shall come to the center of our own existence; where we had thought
>
> to be alone, we shall be with all the world. (p. 23)

Freud (in Payne, 1958) writes of his own experience with this circuitous human situation:

> I became a doctor through being compelled to deviate from my original purpose,
>
> and the triumph of my life lies in my having, after a long and roundabout journey,
>
> found my way back to my earliest path. . . . In my youth I felt an overpowering
>
> need to understand something of the riddles of the world in which we live and
>
> perhaps even to contribute something to their solution. The most hopeful means
>
> of achieving this end seemed to be to enroll myself in the medical faculty. (p. 13)

Freud discovering the soft science of psychoanalysis while studying the hard science of medicine should not be a surprise, for as Herbert Read (in Milner, 1987) explains, "The first perceptions of what is novel in any science tend to assume the form of metaphors—the first stages of science are poetic" (p. 85). Freud believed his most unscientific book,

The Interpretation of Dreams, was his greatest contribution to humankind. Humankind's fascination with the huge outer space, paradoxically, serves the need to find that small, vital, and *ful*filling inner space. James Hillman (1983) provocatively asks,

> Why did Freud get himself into this tangle between the medical and the literary when trying to write psychological case reports? Was he not struggling with a form of writing for which there were no existing models? His mind moved back and forth between the two great traditions, science and humanities. . . . Freud was in the process of inventing a genre, the very vehicle that was to carry his new vision into the world. (p 5)

Freud's new genre was psychoanalysis, including free-association which is the main driving force behind allowing us to know and remember our dreams and our past.

Phillips (1994) writes that Freud's free association was like a "free-floating attention that Freud prescribed for the analyst. What the analyst does from outside, the dreamer and the artist do from inside: a sustained, forgetful self-listening" (p. 32). It is as though

> Freud is saying that the dreamer and the artist (and the ordinary rememberer) already have something like an analyst inside them, 'simply listening'; and that a person comes for analysis when this inner analyst can no longer sustain evenly suspended attention. (p. 32)

This is similar to what Marion Milner experienced when she was no longer able to paint and what Marla Morris experienced when she was no longer able to play piano. When my life is out of balance to the point that I cannot function effectively, I seek analysis to get me back on track again.

As Dewey (1964) instinctively knew, "An activity or project must, of course, be within the range of the experience of pupils and connected with their needs—which is very far from being identical with any likes or desires which they can consciously express" (p. 177). Teachers must have the whole spectrum in mind—the child's past experiences and desires, the current abilities of the child, and the future needs in mind when creating a curriculum. Michael Balint (1992) tries to explain this no man's land of the process of creativity, an explanation that is very difficult because of the lack of language and direct knowledge:

> We know that there are no "objects" in the area of creation, but we know also that for most—or some—of the time the subject is not entirely alone there. The trouble is that our language has no words to describe, or even to indicate, the "somethings" that are there when the subject is not completely alone; in order to be able to talk about them at all, I propose to use the term "pre-object". . . .
>
> All this indicates that the "pre-objects" existing in the area of creation must be so primitive that they cannot be considered as "organized" or "whole". Only after the work of creation has succeeded in making them "organized", or "whole", can a proper, "verbal", or "Oedipal", interaction between them and external objects take place. (p. 25)

This concept is difficult to wrap one's brain around. But this is okay because even though words make the concept awkward to articulate, one can understand instinctively, nonverbally if one has had any experience with creativity, including thinking creatively. The very thing that makes Dewey hard to envisage is the thing that makes him transcendent. Like Calder's hands, Dewey's mind was never still. This is why no

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official movement can claim Dewey for its own and duplicate his ideas. Similarly, regarding Calder, I went into the museum shop at the Museum of Art, in Washington, D.C., and asked for a mobile to purchase. The sales person informed me that it was against Calder's wishes to *ever* reproduce any of his mobiles. Given the nature of the mobile itself—never the same, always changing with the touch of a hand or a puff of the wind—it is indeed fitting that none be reproduced. Even though Calder was not a scholar, and rarely had time to sit and read, he seemed to know instinctively of both the transcendent *and* ephemeral qualities of life. Conversely, being such a dedicated and avid reader and thinker, Dewey instinctively knew of the importance of action and living and doing. Both men found their unique balance between doing, thinking, and being. It is fitting that the one term Dewey found that explained his philosophy of education was instrumentalism. Dewey believed in using what was on hand to solve various individual and social problems. He also believed that these instruments change as people and situations evolve. Winnicott, likewise, believed that babies and children use what is available to play, imagine, and create. Both Winnicott and Dewey supported investigations into the creative nature of people. Dewey was a proponent of giving everyone the opportunity to investigate if they so choose. It was also Dewey's belief that a good teacher will not only lead the child to the drinking waters, the fountain of knowledge, but also inspire the child to partake of the *living* waters of knowledge.

Calder, too, wanted the entire world to enjoy his works of art. He donated many pieces to public places. He made hundreds of small sculptures that he gave away as gifts. Winnicott's potential space is a gift that offers plenty room in which to move through our imagination. Like Calder's mobiles, Bowie (2000) writes that

the space of potentiality which [Winnicott] opens up . . . is multidimensional and

mobile; it is the time-bound space of living human experience and needs to be

protected against theories and analytic practices that would flatten, regularize, and

normalize it by removing its paradoxical core. (p. 15)

When Calder was about 7, he drew a duck on a piece of thin cardboard and folded it so

that it would be three-dimensional. This was one of his first sculptures. It is more useful

and fun to live in a multidimensional world.

I do not know whether Calder lived long enough to realize the far reaching effects

his mobiles have had on our culture. The mobile becomes a part of one's life from birth

when a special mobile is hung above a baby's crib. Babies are fascinated with mobiles

because of the combination of colors, picture representation, and most importantly—the

movement—like life itself will be. Mobiles serve a similar purpose as transitional objects

in that they are an object from the outside that stimulates inner imagination and fantasy.

With the movement, the shapes, the colors, and the sounds of mobiles the imagination is

limitless in what it can conceive of. The major difference between a mobile and a

transitional object is that a mobile is permanently fixed, often out of reach, whereas a

transitional object can be carried around with the child. However, both serve the purpose

of using the inner imagination of the child with an outside object to arrive at a fantasy

somewhere in between.

Winnicott knew that if a child successfully accomplished illusion, imagination,

and creativity through transitional phenomena that this is the first step to greater works of

creation, even cultural creativity. Winnicott also knew that there was a middle space, a

potential space where doing and being meet that is most beneficial. It is a challenge to combine rigor and reverie in the optimal combination.

I feel like an artist as I write this work. I am lifted to another plane and forget about time when I am writing. I wonder how much of creativity comes from within and from without. This is a question that has baffled philosophers. Winnicott derived his theory of transitional phenomena to explain that it comes both from within and without. There is a particular vortex, where a thought from inside meets with an object from outside to invent something wholly different and the points on the line are infinite.

Arieti claims a third separate state, whereas Winnicott combines the internal and external space. Arieti (1976) postulates a tertiary process whereas "Winnicott's framework—on the other hand—does not assume a necessary opposition between internal fantasy and external reality-testing. Intermediate space is an experiential realm whose particular equality is to unite these two" (p. 158). Winnicott urges us to not ask the child whether he conceives of something or whether it was already there. It is both. For Winnicott (2005), "The question is not to be formulated" (p. 17).

Dewey, Calder and Winnicott lived their lives creatively. Dewey produced profound thoughts, wrote over 40 books, and started a hands-on school. Calder produced over 16,000 art pieces with hands that were rarely idle, and Winnicott developed thoughtful theories of child behavior that are still widely used today and put them into practice with over 60,000 patients during his lifetime.

Freud and Creativity

Freud barely scratched the surface in attempting to explain creativity. In the following passage, Hanna Segal (1991) explains Freud's attempt at explaining creativity:

"It is in keeping with Freud's notion of phantasy being a relatively late phenomenon in mental life ("It begins with children's play") that he sees phantasies as highly organized and referring mainly to whole objects" (p. 18). Alternatively, Winnicott sees the beginnings of creativity, illusion, phantasy, fantasy, and potentiality as coming from the very first relationship with the mother and soon thereafter with a transitional object. Babies begin early playing with mother and subsequent objects.

Because Freud formulated psychoanalysis originally to get rid of psychotic symptoms in his patients, he was able to see the connection between psychosis and creativity. The paradox is that these patients have the makings of being very creative, but their psychoses keep them from conveying their artistic, creative abilities to the general public. Segal (1991) notes that Freud mostly connects unconscious phantasy with pathology, "but he is also very aware that it is only a 'short' step between phantasy resulting in a symptom or in artistic creativity" (p. 18). Phantasy with a "ph" is different from fantasy with an "f". Fantasies are conscious make-believe creations, whereas phantasies are unconscious desires that we try to obtain through our actions without being fully aware of the mechanisms that are driving our actions nor these unconscious phantasies. Unfortunately, Freud was not able to account for the connection between unconscious fantasy and creative art. That has been left for Segal and others to ruminate about.

Segal feels that Freuds dream-work is key to understanding unconscious fantasies and how these fantasies can translate into artistic creations and artistic living. Segal further explains that

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Freud's discovery of unconscious phantasy and symbolism gave a new perspective and new depth to the understanding of the supreme symbolic expression of phantasy which is art. His contribution to aesthetics is incalculable, and it is so despite his own apparent lack of interest in aesthetics. (p. 74)

Freud admittedly was drawn more to the content of art work than its form, which, as Milner points out, is a key distinction to be made in the ability to create. It was not until Milner could see the play of the outline, the forms of the jugs that she could draw them with lifelike feeling.

Unlike Freud who concentrated on psychoanalysis in adults, Melanie Klein worked with children, and it was her work with children that allowed Klein to see how much a child's life is affected by unconscious phantasy (Segal, 1991, p. 19). Unconscious phantasies, in Freud's statements, are "like islands in the sea of mental life", whereas with Klein's readings, one gets the picture that the internal phantasy world is more "like a vast continent under the sea, the islands being its conscious, external, observable manifestations" (p. 19). Perhaps Freud's scientific training kept him from seeing the bigger picture. Perhaps Melanie Klein could see this amazing continent of phantasy life because she was a mother and could experience this phantasy world with her children.

Jungians believe that phantasies spring from the collective unconscious. Freud (in Segal) calls it, "the primaeval times of the human family" (p. 18). For Jung and Freud, phantasies are events from the past shared by common cultures, but Klein and Susan Isaacs, according to Segal, believe that it is more like "we share a common instinctual endowment and ways of dealing with it" (p. 20). I agree that much of our phantasies and

dream-work comes from the myths that have been a part of our human history, but as a mother of four I have personally witnessed Klein's viewpoint that babies and children are simply wired for this amazing activity. Winnicott was also able to witness these creative activities in the 60,000 clients he treated in his lifetime. There is a connection between, on the one hand, the mythological symbols that cultures throughout human history have used to link their collective inner feelings and, on the other hand, outer realities and the symbols that each human infant uses to do the same—to connect its individual inner life with outer life.

Winnicott knows that the infant needs the mother and subsequent transitional objects to facilitate the area between fantasy and reality. He also knows that with good-enough care and time, the objects, both mother and transitional, are naturally left behind, given up, or relegated to a space somewhere that is accessible (such as an attic or closet) but not necessarily used. In Winnicott's (2005) words, "an infant's transitional object ordinarily becomes gradually decathected, especially as cultural interests develop" (p. 19). Learning from reality (through experiences) changes our phantasy life. As Segal (1991) believes, "There is a constant struggle between the infant's omnipotent phantasies and the encounter of realities, good and bad" (p. 26). The child can forgo the transitional object and phantasy when a rich creative and cultural life has been embedded by the object and phantasy within the mind and body of the child. Once a child has successfully experienced X and Y, it can let go of X and Y. In the place of X and Y, exists now the area of cultural experience. The child's phantasying in adulthood takes on a different form. The adult can play in his work, relationships, and cultural activities. Segal writes that "higher mental activity, like thinking, is an interplay between phantasy and reality"

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(p. 29) and "the richness, scope, and correctness of our mental activity is linked with our relation to unconscious phantasy" (p. 30). Dreams. Phantasies. Fantasies. Daydreams. Art. Music. All these things will help our students think sharper. Try telling that to the local school board.

From the first symbol between mother and child to the symbols that bind humankind, symbolism is with us all our lives. Before we are even born, symbolism comes from the history of humans. Jung and Freud believe that symbols are universal. Campbell writes of stories from different cultures; their characters and settings are different, but the central themes are universal. According to Winnicott, each infant, in health, forms an attachment to an object, which is first the mother or primary caretaker and then a transitional object that bridges the child from needing the mother to being independent. A psychologically mature person maintains access to the universal symbols and childhood individual symbol (transitional objects) through literature and other artistic, creative, and cultural activities. This latter ability is the responsibility of the educational system. That is why the school and home are inextricably intertwined. It is simple yet complicated. It is universal yet individual. It is reality yet fantasy. It is outer yet inner. And the best way to come to understand this is through an understanding of psychoanalysis, which combines the humanities with the sciences.

In a way, the transitional object is a symbol of the separateness and the connection with a parent. Literature—especially novels and poems, because of their more personal, artistic and autiobiographic styles—can take the place of symbols. Moreover, symbolism resides within the novel and poem. Segal (1991) asserts that "artists in particular, when successful, combine an enormous capacity for symbolic use of

the material to express their unconscious phantasies with a most acute sense of the real characteristics of the material they use" (p. 41). That is why literature can take the place of actual symbols—because the work of literature itself contains symbolism with which we unconsciously and consciously identify.

Threats to Creativity

When my youngest daughter was in the second grade, she came home from school one day worried about how well she would perform on the Criterion-Referenced Competency Test (CRCT)–one of the standards and requirements of No Child Left Behind. The entire month before the test notices were sent home with details on how to prepare, to study, and to take this test. Practice tests were sent home. Parents were informed that a Website with additional practice tests was at their disposal; children were encouraged to take these too. A pizza party was promised to all classes who completed a certain amount of practice tests. My daughter was worried about performing poorly because the teacher kept repeating the test was important—that students would not be able to advance to the third grade if they did not meet the artificial bright line established by bureaucratic gnomes. I think of John Lennon and Paul McCartney's (1967) famous lyrics: "I used to get mad at my school, the teachers who taught me weren't cool / You're putting me down, turning me round, filling me up with your rules" (p. 72). We did not study once at home and Katie did fine on the test. I figured the teachers were stressed-out enough about it, so I was determined to take a no-worry approach.

As a teacher and a mother, I ask myself why schools, that should be a safe haven and preparatory place for childrens' futures, are putting so much pressure on children, teachers, and parents. Was the beginning of this competitive rigor Russia's Sputnik?

Ever since the U.S. has tried to catch up with Russia in the space race, tremendous attention and pressure has been given to improving test scores, especially in math and science.

Beyond the confines of St. Simons Island, Georgia, and to illustrate the purpose of such arbitrary tests, a Florida teacher reported "third graders sobbing because they were so unhinged by the prospect of yet another standardized test" (Quindlen, June 13, 2005, p. 88). So, like Pavlov's dogs, which learned to salivate at the sound of a bell that meant food would be arriving soon, my daughter and others learned to worry at the sound of "CRCT" or any standardized test. This is a first-hand account of the perils of education and of what leads Britzman (2003) to ask: "*What then is education that it should give us such trouble*" (p. 35)? Emphasizing tests and scores rather than providing a safe, worry-free, imagination-rich, higher level rigorous learning environment for children is decidedly a threat to the creativity of the child and to society.

I kept thinking of all the time spent in preparation for one test. That month would have been better utilized reading good literature, writing stories, listening to poetry, and working math problems. Unfortunately, instead of exploring creative avenues, students are learning to be "good little B. F. Skinner lab rats." B. F. Skinner "characterized man as being molded, conditioned, programmed by the environment in rigid, almost inescapable ways" (Arieti, 1976, p. 4). Even though people can be so affected, humans have the ability to escape this oppressive destiny. "Creativity is one of the major means by which the human being liberates himself from the fetters not only of his conditioned responses, but also of his usual choices" (p. 4). Albert Einstein (2009b) is well known for believing that "imagination is more important than knowledge. For knowledge is

limited to all we now know and understand, while imagination embraces the entire world, and all there ever will be to know and understand" (p. 1). Ponder the creativity his mind imagined outside the confines of known established theories. Winnicott's theories of transitional phenomena, potential space, and cultural experience encompass Einstein's beliefs.

"Testing: one, two, three" is the title of a column article by Anna Quindlen (June 13, 2005). It discusses the bombardment of end-of-year testing, including the GQEs (Graduation Qualifying Exam), the SOLs (Standards of Learning), the TAKS (Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills), and the SAT. The National Center for Fair & Open Testing "estimates that public schools give more than 100 million standardized tests each year" (p. 88). As a challenge, Quindlen took the SAT and admits that by the end of nearly five hours of testing she thought her head would blow off. "But more than anything I was enraged by the process, and by the forced march that seems to have replaced creative thought, critical thinking and joyful learning for so many kids" (p. 88). Instead of teaching interesting issues creatively, teachers are forced to teach the test. Quindlen further asks,

> what does this metastasizing testing, for every subject, at every level, at every time of the year, do to kids? It has to mean that students absorb the message that learning is a joyless succession of hoops through which they must jump, rather than a way of understanding and mastering the world. Every question has one right answer; the measure of a person is a number. Being insightful, or creative, or heaven forfend, counterintuitive counts for nothing. This is: (a) benighted; (b) ridiculous; (c) sad; (d) all of the above. You know the answer. (p. 88).

Schools have taken on a schizophrenic personality. They claim, on the one hand, to promote creativity and thinking outside the box while, on the other hand, in point of fact they emphasize test-taking. This schizophrenia reveals that teaching what is on the test is more important—and teaching the test rarely involves critical (much less creative) thinking.

The same double standard that exists in education also puts parents in an unenviable position when it comes to educating their children. On the one hand, children are told half-truths such as: enjoy yourself, enjoy your life, do what makes you happy, follow your bliss, be creative, pick something you love and the money will follow. On the other hand, parents are obsessed with the fear that their child will not make a decent living. When it comes to ITBS, CRCT, SAT and other tests, parents do not want their children to get ulcers over them, but parents also know how important high scores are to be admitted into a top college or university—especially if a child pursues a creative field. Parents want their children to find a career that interests them, but they are aware it is also important to be financially self-sufficient.

My oldest daughter, Ali, took the pre-SAT in the 7th grade and scored in the 98th percentile. After that she received correspondence from various colleges trying to recruit her. At one point she was torn between pursuing a field in medicine or art. She attended the National Youth Leadership Conference Forum on Medicine, and I was proud that one of the questions she asked was how she could combine her creative talents with medicine. The Forum praised her for a unique question. Now she is a freshman at Georgia Institute of Technology majoring in architecture. Ali's solution was to, as Parson's (2000) writes, "balance rigour and freedom" (p. 75). This was her answer to trying to combine her

mathematical abilities with her creative talents. The freedom comes from being able to

live creatively and use this creativity to better herself and others. This freedom to create

is available to all who choose to accept the challenge.

CHAPTER 6

TEACHING: NO GREATER CALLING

In education, teachers must prioritize the emotional health and creative capacities

of human beings. Nell Noddings, educator, has written elaborately on compassion in

education. The recently appointed chancellor of New York's public schools, Joel Klein,

(in Kingsbury, 2006), asks students, "How many of your teachers care about you?" when

he visits schools because, "it's a very illuminating question" (p.79) for educators and

students alike. Compassion encompasses an awareness of the emotional or the creative

needs of students and teachers, and as the majority of psychoanalysts agree, the

emotional needs of a child are or should be met first in the home. The teacher who has a

good rapport with students and parents is not necessarily one who has read a lot about the

unconscious, but rather, she is "one who has a deep intuitive understanding of human

nature, an experience of inner and outer relationships, a capacity for happiness and the

enjoyment of life without denial of its seriousness and difficulty" (pp. 84-85). Although

psychoanalysis is not a prerequisite for teaching, Winnicott believes that teachers gain

further insight by undergoing analysis (p. 85). However, Winnicott also warns that

students should be treated by those professionally practicing psychoanalysis. Bleich

(1975) suggests, as a priority for secondary teachers of literature, that "our initial and

most important aim is to produce an *awareness* of one's own personality; the explanation

of it comes later" (p. 5). A teacher benefits from psychological insight into himself as

well as his students; this will promote healthy emotional responsiveness as well as

generate creativity from both the teacher and the students.

In addition to feelings and emotions, education should encompass rigor and discipline. Awareness of early psychic events and of emotional needs is central to the rigor of learning. Bleich (1975) believes that:

> certainly the biographies of those who achieved the most and the best in civilization show that not only does feeling precede knowledge but that knowledge is achieved only because of the *passion* to know and discover. The passion preceded the knowledge—not vice versa. (p. 3)

Most educators agree that a child learns more by doing than by watching; the child learns more by utilizing all of the senses—including touching, smelling, hearing, seeing, tasting, and feeling (emotionally), than by one sense alone. Thus, we learn more when we connect emotionally with that which we study and experience jointly. This resonates in William Blake's (in Singer, 1990) poetry: "How do you know but ev'ry Bird that cuts the airy way / Is an immense world of delight, clos'd by your senses five?" (p. 5). When in touch with our emotional selves, we are in touch with all of our senses. Dewey (1964) wrote that no matter how important the subject matter is in the curriculum or "however judiciously selected, [it] is empty of conclusive moral content until it is made over into terms of the individual's own activities, habits, and desires" (p. 132). Discovering oneself means tapping our creative self; this is especially critical in the realm of education.

Part of who I am is revealed when examining my varied educational and work experiences. My stepfather was a computer analyst thus I felt obligated to get a degree in computer science. Halfway through college my favorite professor, Dr. Marc Gilbert, convinced me to change majors because of I loved literature, history, and writing. I had a

difficult time deciding between literature and history. In the end, I chose history. What

Palmer (1998) writes is true:

> Many of us were called to teach by encountering not only a mentor but also a
>
> particular field of study. We were drawn to a body of knowledge because it shed
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> light on our identity as well as on the world. We did not merely find a subject to
>
> teach—the subject also found us. (p. 25)

In the humanities, I was more able to explore the world and myself. Dr. Gilbert

epitomized the self-reflective teacher this chapter is about, and because of his own self-

reflection, he was able to know me and direct me to a better suited path.

After graduating from college, my goal was to immediately obtain a Ph.D. in

history and then to teach college history. Instead, I got married, had four children, and

worked in the areas of law, marketing, administration, counseling, and in a library. My

favorite job was working in a library helping people research and being responsible for

conducting weekly children's story time. There I was in contact with research, learning,

and sharing with others. It was fulfilling and I knew then that I needed to get back on

track and pursue a teaching career.

At age 33, twelve years after graduating from college, I earned a M.Ed. in middle

grades education. Then I was armed with a teaching degree and had experiences to bring

to the classroom. Now I am convinced that had I walked into my first seventh grade

classroom straight out of college, I would have been paralyzed with fear. At 20 I lacked

sufficient sense of who I was.   Yet in my 30's, I was somewhat frightened of the

classroom and the challenges therein, but I had more experience and more confidence to

really be myself. In order to become more confident, I first had to be confident in myself.

Being older and having had some varied experiences helped. I had been given the gift of time and given opportunities to discover myself—my weaknesses and my strengths. My life journey prepared me to take on *the most* important and fulfilling job in my life—that of a teacher.

Choosing Our Story

Why tell you *my* story? Because, we each have a story, although some of us are not sure *what* our story is nor how it has shaped us. Consider important factors. First, one needs to be aware that one has a unique story; each must find out what that story is. I share my story by using personal examples and literary examples. Second, one needs to explore *how* to come to recognize that story and what it means to personal growth and discovery. This can be done in many ways; however, I focus on psychoanalysis as the most viable technique. Third, one should accept the importance of knowing oneself in relation to the quality of life and its application to affixing a standard of quality we seek in teachers. This is achieved by exploring various texts and philosophies.

Robert Frost (1951) was keenly aware of his own story, which he refers to as the "road" in his poem entitled, "The Road Not Taken."   Interestingly, Frost did not gain recognition until he was much older, and his poetry often reflects his lived experiences, insights, and wisdom. The last lines of the poem reveal the wise choice Frost made and encourages others to make:

> Two roads diverged in a wood and I-
>
> I took the one less traveled by,
>
> And that has made all the difference. (p. 270)

A more naive and simplistic interpretation of this poem (and one that is often given in high schools) is that the narrator—Robert Frost—went for a walk, came to a fork in the road, examined both for a while, and then decided to take the one that looked less worn. Upon careful reading, one realizes that both roads "[h]ad worn . . . really about the same." Therefore, scrutiny results in realizing that the difference was not in the roads themselves, but in Robert Frost *him*self. "The road that Robert Frost took was not only the 'different' road, the right road for him, but the only road he could have taken" (p. 270). In fact, Frost's or the poet's "'difference' is in him from the beginning, long before he sets out on his career" (p. 270). One can interpret this to mean that Frost was predestined to take that particular path in life and, consequently, he had no choice in the matter. I do not believe that to be the case; even though he may have been called to a certain path, he had the choice of heeding that calling. The words in the last stanza, "I *took* the one less traveled by," indicates his conscious, active role in choosing his path. He recognized his path *and* he chose to walk it. Greene (1995) reveals that "looking back, I find myself seeing past experiences in new ways—and I realize what it means to say that I have lived one possible life among many—and that there are openings even today to untapped possibilities" (p. 77).

To take the right road, one must first be aware of the fact that there is a right road; second, one must find the right road; and third, one must accept and choose the right road. All three steps require recognizing and pursuing our talents; if we do not pursue our own path, how can we properly inspire others to pursue their dreams? By choosing teaching, I chose a path that requires great fortitude but delivers the greatest rewards.

I have chosen a wise path for me. If my need to please my stepfather and become a computer programmer had outweighed my desire to learn (and eventually teach) history, literature, and writing, then my life would be much different. My life certainly would not be as fulfilling nor as satisfying. I had a teacher who was insightful and instrumental in guiding me to my right path; it was not predestined. As with me, it is possible not to recognize the path at first. Famous rock song, "Stairway to Heaven," declares that "there are two paths you can go by, but in the long run, there's still time to change the road you're on" (Plant/Page, 1971). "It's never too late" is a comforting thought for mortals who invariably make mistakes.

That Dr. Gilbert was in my life at that time, I believe, was not a coincidence. All of us have had certain people and events that have served as sparks to enlighten us of an awaiting destiny. Hillman (1996) describes this feeling of fate or destiny:

> There is more in a human life than our theories of it allow. Sooner or later something seems to call us onto a particular path. You may remember this 'something' as a signal moment in childhood when an urge out of nowhere, a fascination, a peculiar turn of events struck like an annunciation: This is what I must do, this is what I've got to have. This is who I am. (p. 1)

In the novel, *The Alchemist*, Paulo Coelho (2006) writes of a calling as a personal legend. He outlines four reasons why one may not fulfill his or her personal legend. The first reason is that a person does not grow up in a home where personal dreams are important, or even discussed. Even if a child shows special interests or talents, parents can discourage the child. The child may be told that he can not or is not worthy enough to pursue a personal legend. The second discouragement can occur when a person falls in

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love, as most are bound to do, and the personal legend is abandoned because it does not fit into that specific relationship. Thus, the personal legend may be abandoned because it can be perceived that the loved one does not want it, and usually "love" wins out over the personal legend. In such instances, the reality is that such people lose the legend unless the personal legend is sought within the restrictive bounds of the relationship. The third deterrent exists when the full scope of the personal legend is revealed—the hard work and sacrifice to obtain the path is recognized . The personal legend, again, faces jeopardy of being abandoned. The last impediment is that before the personal legend comes to fruition, it is abandoned out of fear of the unknown. Franklin Roosevelt warned an entire nation that there is nothing to fear but fear itself, and this can also apply to individuals. So many times a person works hard for a cherished dream, but the unknown, not the personal legend or path, is scarier than the known; so one finds an unfulfilled dream and an unfulfilling life.

The pursuit of one's dreams, both conscious and unconscious, is the purposeful goal of psychoanalysis. Psychoanalysis helps reveal what one's dreams are and gives the person the knowledge and strength to pursue that legend. A psychological hurdle to acquiring a personal legend for many people is that they start out life feeling they are not worthy to know themselves better. Second, many turn their attentions to romance and other worldly diversions thus blinding themselves to self-recognition. Third, many seek psychoanalysis but soon realize the pathway to self recognition is full of pain regarding honest self-scrutiny and scrutiny of one's interactions, so they abandon ship. Last, to the dismay of many analysts, a person may work through many or many inhibiting issues only to lunge back into shark infested waters of an old unhealthy lifestyle. People that

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complete the trip, disembark into a wonderful paradise—a mental place that many only visit in nighttime dreams or in the pages of novels into which they project themselves.

In *The Alchemist*, the main character, Santiago, realizes that it is the journey that is the most important part of having a dream. It is the living, flowing, everyday movements of which a legendary life is made. Winnicott's life and work centered around movement. He was constantly moving. In his work, Eigen (2004) points out that

> Winnicott fights against deadness in his writing. He wants his writing to be alive, to be moving. He says explicitly that he wants his concepts to convey movement, process, paradox and not to deaden (Eigen 1992a; Rodman 1987, p. 42). His "transitional experiencing" and "use of object" notions express movement between persons, between dimensions of self, between worlds. He did not want to fight deadness in his office only to die in his writings. (p. 16)

Eigen is right about the transitional object theory becoming popular because it gives practitioners something to hold on to, and paradoxically, it remains useful because it is an idea that is not static. Like Calder's mobiles, Winnicott's theories are solid but fluid. It changes with each person, with each relationship, and with each circumstance. In this respect, it is timeless. The breadth of transitional phenomena is captured by Eigen (2004):

> Transitional phenomena may include an infant's babbling or a child's repeated songs while preparing for sleep. The transitional expands into art, science, religion, and culture in general or contracts into addictions and fetishes. Winnicott's concept covers a lot of ground. It is no wonder he has been criticized

for being vague. Vague but usable. It is no wonder that many practitioners have

tried to tie him down. (p. 70)

Like Jonathan Swift's (1957), Gulliver, who awakens to find himself tied down by

natives on a remote island, after taking three years off to take care of my son, I have

awoken to find myself tied down with federal and local mandates, such as standards,

benchmarks, and the CRCT. It is natural for people to resent being bound too tightly,

especially the students, who need room to roam, physically and academically.

Just as Robert Frost, after long deliberation and inward reflecting, took the *best*

path for him, I have chosen the best path for me—teaching. Despite or because it is the

most challenging profession I have encountered, I love teaching. Combine physical work

and mental rigor with intense self-reflection and one has the makings of a great teacher

capable of making a difference in hundreds of lives.   I am saddened that there are so

many who do not have the means by which to reflect or the inclination to do so. I am

convinced that knowing oneself brings greater inner happiness to self and to relationships

with others.

Knowing oneself allows one to be master over his or her life. For example, I am

the type of person who, when approaching a green traffic light, thinks to myself, "How

lucky I am; that's the fifth green light in a row." If the light is red, I find myself thinking

something like, "Too bad, I wonder if perhaps that bit of luck saved me from an accident

or will allow me an opportunity that I wouldn't have had if the light had been green, such

as seeing an old friend in the car next to me." Every little thing that happens is not

prearranged because of inner core/personalities, but the way we experience them is. I

experienced serendipity, coincidence, or synchronicity when my fourth child began

having seizures, which I describe in Chapter 3, *The Power of Psychoanalysis*, section "Finding Kyle." Buddha taught approximately 2,500 years ago to, "Subdue yourself, And discover your master" (in *Teaching of Buddha*, 1993). There is something about knowing oneself that makes one less susceptible to life's disappointments and to think on the brighter side. To look on the bright side is to be a master of one's self and one's path.

 A cursory ending of the poem, "The Road Not Taken," seems to suggest that deciding on the proper path is quick and easy. However, to those who seek true enlightenment, this is not the case. The path to self-realization is a long, arduous, and varied one. A person can be self-realized and still choose the path that contradicts that self-knowledge. Conversely, a person can naturally or instinctively be on the true path without deliberately working on self-awareness. The ideal situation is to be both self-realized *and* on the right path.

One of the most effective ways of accomplishing self-realization is through psychoanalysis. Thankfully, our society is at a point where many people are re-advocating and realizing the benefits of psychoanalysis, therapy, and counseling. Doctors can help treat and/or cure us of many physical ailments. Now, society must invest more time and attention to emotional well-being, which involves complex analysis of the psyche and the brain. In his book *The Road Less Traveled*, M. Scott Peck, M.D. (1978) encourages persons to go down the hard road to self-healing and self-realization. Similar to Frost investigating his own life and choosing his own path, Peck advocates that we analyze ourselves, and in so doing, we will be freer emotionally and spiritually. He makes it clear that few people venture on this road, and even less come to the end of the

road; those that attempt self-realization and accomplish this feat have truly endeavored on "the road less traveled" to a personal legend.

How does one come to know and understand oneself? Does "to know" mean simply to know one's name? I had an experience in a college sociology class which challenged my awareness of the complexity in a name. On the first day of school, our sociology teacher made the following request of our freshman class, "Now, I want all of you to write down on a piece of paper who you are." That sounded simple enough. Almost everyone in the class wrote down their names.   A couple of people wrote down who they were in terms of their greatest attribute or accomplishment (e.g. soccer player, musician). When I took my pen in hand and put it to paper, I wrote the word "me." He looked at me curiously and asked me why I wrote "me." I told him that in my mind I was not just a name, and there was not any one thing that I could think of that I felt was wholly me. I am me, and that includes every personality trait, every attribute, and every flaw. Derrida (1985) drives the point that

> we are constantly being named by different names which add up, disappear, accumulate, and so on. But what one may well ask oneself is whether, beneath the proper name or names that are in one way or another public knowledge, there does not exist a proper name that is unconscious and secret, a name we are in search of or that the reader or analyst must seek out. (p. 105)

Everything is me. I am everything I have ever experienced. I instinctively, without knowing it, hit upon the very point my professor wanted students to discover. It was then that I became cognizant of the innumerable things, people, places, ideas, experiences that make up who I am, and Derrida reminds me that my name is continuously evolving.

In my first year teaching, I had detailed lesson plans. I studied and knew my subject well, I was organized, I was animated in my teaching. Still, I was frightened that the students (and parents and faculty) would not think that I was good-enough. Then there were behavior problems with the students. The student's behavior caused me to question my abilities as a teacher. I discovered that all the technique, preparation, and hard work could not guarantee a successful teaching environment. Parker Palmer's 1998 book, *The Courage to Teach*, helped me realize I was leaving my *whole* real self out of teaching. I had stumbled on an epiphany. I had worked on my emotional well-being outside the classroom, and I needed to bring that dimension to the classroom, to the students, and to the curriculum. Thus, I brought more authenticity to the class, and I could tell a difference in my teaching right away and in the students' reception. Dewey (1964, p. 436) agreed that the time given to preparation or presentation of lesson plans might be better spent tending to the powers of imagination, including helping to form vivid images of various subjects with which the child comes in contact.

Knowing myself allows me to connect with my students and creates the possibility to bring out their best and to develop in each a spark of enlightenment. The next year I started fresh; I taught with more feeling, I felt closer to my students, I shared more of myself with my students, they felt closer to me, and they shared more of themselves with me. Part of this greater success came with experience, but it mostly came from connecting closer to myself and, therefore, to my students.

As teachers, it is crucial that we know who we are and who we want to become. When we are more aware of who we are, we can choose a path that is right for us. Too much is at stake, our personal health, the psychological, and intellectual wellbeing of our

students. Sadly, curriculums omit the importance of self-knowledge altogether, and concentrate mostly on subject matter and the different developmental stages of students. The one thing we seldom learn more about is *ourselves*. Just keeping up with the subject matter, educational research, government mandates, and administrative duties makes teaching a highly complex career, but Palmer (1998) points out "another reason for these complexities: we teach who we are" (p. 2).

Why should teachers teach from any other stance than from who we are? A comparison can be made between teacher and psychoanalyst, for Parsons (2000) writes, "to call psychoanalysis a vocation is to see it as the uniquely appropriate choice by which the analyst expresses who he is. When he is doing analysis he is being that" (p. 15). Palmer (1998) explains eloquently the connection between self-awareness, soul, and teaching:

> As I teach, I project the condition of my soul onto my students, my subject, and our way of being together. . . .Viewed from this angle, teaching holds a mirror to the soul. . . .Good teaching requires self-knowledge: it is a secret hidden in plain sight. (pp. 2-3)

The question remains: How can we bring this "hidden secret" in full view? As Bleich (1975) brings out,

> it is not simply a matter of habit and tradition to avoid speaking of one's own feelings; our linguistic forms for discourse seem especially to facilitate speaking of what we perceive to be outside ourselves before speaking of what we know to be inside. (p. 9)

For example, when we are frustrated with someone, we are tempted to say something like, "You make me so angry!" We project an anger onto someone else and blame them thus giving them power over our feelings and actions. Worse, we are not addressing the real issues inside of us.

I Never Said it Would Be Easy, Only Worth It

Anne Haas Dyson (1997) quotes a teacher who began the road to self discovery as a child: "I know with double heritage—I'm Native American and African American, and there are times when you are younger, and you're pitting one against the other and you are just [thinking], "'I'm just me'" (p. 170). It is difficult to know who we are under the easiest circumstances. But this is the task that is set before each of us, if we choose to accept this challenge. "I never said it would be easy, only worth it" is a phrase I remember hearing from a General Authority of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, which pertains especially to the field of curriculum studies. Educators are dealing with the lives and emotions of hundreds of children, and it is a moral obligation that teachers have to get to know themselves and their students as best as possible.

If I too am "just me" and I am *everything* I have experienced then it may seem that it is harder to *totally* know and understand me, myself, and I. Some argue that one can never know oneself completely, and some argue that it is not important to know oneself. To use Deleuze and Guattari's (1987, pp. 3-7) metaphor of the rhizome, not only are we complex beings to begin with, being influenced by everything which, in turn, causes our selves, our personalities to branch out in a million directions, but we are also *changing* all the time. This makes knowing ourselves even more challenging. We must strive for self-knowledge, for as Michel Serres (1997) writes, "the temporary guide and

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the schoolmaster know the place where they are taking the initiate, who doesn't know it now, and who will discover it in time" (p. 8). If we are to be guides on the side to help show our students the way, like Dr. Gilbert did for me, then we teachers had better know much of ourselves, our subjects, and our students.

In order to know our present selves, we must follow the advice of Pinar to slow down and even reenter the past. Simon & Garfunkel (1982) echo this belief in their lyrics to the song *Groovy*, "Slow down, you move too fast / You've got to make the moment last." Autobiographical awareness is critical to effective teaching. Through self examination, I know I had a happy childhood up until the age of 11. My parents, for a while, loved each other and did not fight. I had four sisters to whom I was close and I had some good friends. Growing up in St. Thomas, Virgin Islands, I spent most weekends snorkeling, boarding docked cruise ships, roller-skating, or skateboarding. At any rate, I had a good-enough childhood and I believe my roots were planted and grew deep enough to withstand the oncoming challenges and traumas in my life, such as my parent's divorce and my best friend's death. Because my roots were embedded deeply in fertile soil, I branched out and expanded my mind. My life may have caused my branches to bend occasionally, but this only makes for a more interesting, varied branch system with infinite possibilities. Realizing how complex life is makes life simpler. Buddha taught that realizing that life is painful is the first step in making it more acceptable, if not enjoyable.

This year my 4th grade class had the amazing opportunity to participate in an archaeological dig at a colonial period historical dig site on St. Simons Island, Georgia. As the students dug carefully with their trowels, I saw them delight as they uncovered

important artifacts, like ceramic pieces from plates and bowels, metal pieces from rifles and farm equipment, and glass pieces from bottles. The dig site was just a bunch of dirt until they uncovered artifacts that told a story about how people lived at Fort Frederica during the 1400s.

I think of our lives as an archaeological dig. Important artifacts are underneath our consciousness waiting to be excavated. We can uncover exciting memories, thoughts, and feelings when we use psychoanalysis as a tool to excavate important ideas that drive us and inspire us. Some students eagerly dig the artifacts out, while others cautiously scrape away a little at a time. Similarly, some people are ready to dig in and learn all they can about themselves and others, while others take their time. Either way, the experience is sure to bring a flood of feelings. While excavating our minds can be exciting, it can also bring fear and sorrow. Digging too eagerly with a trowel can break valuable artifacts like uncovering memories can shatter some of our previous beliefs and ideals. Some students who timidly brush away the surface of the artifacts never get the chance to see the entire artifact. They miss the opportunity of finding purpose and value in their superficial discovery. Our guide, Ellen Provenzano, repeated several times that it is not *what* you find that is important, but what you find *out*. Psychoanalysis is the same. All the work of excavating ourselves is fruitless unless we put our knowledge into positive action.

I remembered more details of my early life when I turned 11; this is around the age that many psychologists believe that children become more cognizant of interpreting their environment. This was the year my parents were divorced. This was also the year that my best friend, Nancy Schlier, died of Leukemia at age 12. It was unfortunate that

these traumatic episodes occurred at a developmentally crucial time in my life. Even though I tried to block them out of my mind, my physical body bore the imprint. I tried to replace these unhappy memories with happier memories, but this proved to be detrimental in the long run. These memories resurfaced with vengeance when I was older, was a mother myself, and I could no longer squelch them. Now I understand Morris (2001) when she warns that "people who do not fit into happy histories, those who suffer and are persecuted, slip into what George Orwell (1949/1977) terms *memory holes*" (p. 199). It is important to remember what has caused the memory hole (the trauma) in order to be whole—even if remembering it causes substantial pain. Working through painful memories through psychoanalysis is, more often than not, less painful than a lifetime of incompleteness and misery. Eigen (2004, pp. 16-17) warns about some people who are not ready or able to accept the pain and work of psychoanalysis; they may not ever be able to work through the pain that psychoanalysis might help to alleviate. Peck (1978) states life is difficult, but "[o]nce we truly see this truth, we transcend it" (p. 15). The only way to transcend life's difficulties is to understand our pain. The only way to understand our pain is to examine ourselves, our minds, and we do this with psychoanalysis. This is precisely why psychoanalysis is invaluable, for no person lives a long, full, and unscathed life. The Torah, Bible, Vedas, Koran, and other religious writings chronicle the value of living *through* and *facing* trials and tribulations. We should not ignore our problems and *hope* they go away. If I had faced my sorrows and fears when they arose, I believe it would have saved me years of pain. However, I did not have the necessary help at home or at school to allow me to head off some of the ghosts and demons that haunted me for so many years. This is why I advocate that

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adolescents be given the necessary resources to remove the skeletons and to purge the demons rather than guarding them in a closet of memory holes.

Accepting and understanding how life's events affect us, is how and when we grow. A story of a currant bush I learned in Sunday school, originally told by Hugh B. Brown (2009), illustrates this point as I paraphrase. There was a pretty bush growing in a garden. It had been allowed to grow without much fuss until one day the gardener began cutting its branches. As the bush began to weep, it asked the gardener, "Why are you cutting me? I was pretty and getting so big." The gardener replied, "I know, but I am doing this for your own good. Just wait and see." The bush accepted this, and the next spring the bush was delighted to find itself bigger and more beautiful than it ever imagined.

This story strikes a personal cord with me. There was a time when I thought my life could and should be perfect and I was extremely aware of people and their psychological needs. I analyzed people close to me and I determined that I would learn from their mistakes as best as I could. I called myself an optimist, always knowing things would get better. Being an optimist *can* be good—unless one is always looking for and waiting for the time when your life is perfect. And because I see life is not perfect, at least to limited comprehension of what perfection is or should be, one day the optimist must accept this. At this point, the optimist can relegate himself to disappointment, or, continuing to be the innate optimist, he can accept this inevitability of life. At one point I became so upset when things seemed to go wrong. After becoming wiser, I now see these wrongs and challenges as growth opportunities. Reading Morris's (2001) chapter on dystopia, caused me to think about this whole idea of desiring a utopia. "There is

something deeply psychological about the investments one has to a particular way of viewing the world" (p. 201). Parodoxically, now that I have shifted my paradigm and no longer seek for impossible perfection, I am more content. I accept chaos and messiness in life better (my house is a wreck as I write this). Like the currant bush that wanted to keep growing without hindrance to its definition of perfectness, I wanted my life to go smoothly without glitches. However, also like the currant bush that did not grow to its fullest potential until it was cut and pruned, I did not to start to grow either. I have grown stronger and wiser with life's challenges when I came to accept and understand them through psychotherapy and spiritual awareness. This is analogous to a bruise or a scar. On the surface it is rough and perhaps not so pretty, but it is stronger because of the way the skin heals itself; we do not want emotional scars that never heal, holes in the soul, the inner being of self.

I have been fortunate to have a spiritual philosophy and to have had access to psychotherapy. I have been able to heal most of my emotional scars through toiling in self-reflection. Self-analysis and spirituality go hand in hand. I am convinced of that. One cannot have one without the other. Parsons relates the story of Noah as a striking metaphor for this spiritual journey. This story is similar to the myths that Joseph Campbell relates, where a hero must venture out to the unknown and comes back changed, stronger. When the waters have abated, Noah sends a dove from the ark to look for dry land. It returns with an olive leaf, which indicates there is solid land, but how much solid land? In an effort to find out more substantial information, Noah sends the dove away again. This time it does not return; it vanishes. This is shocking because, at least, the first time it showed Noah something—the olive leaf. However, upon close

reflection, we understand that in not returning at all, the dove has shown that there is actually something more substantial out there—to the point that it causes the dove not to return. In not returning, the dove has shown Noah the full truth. And, as Parsons (2000) explains, "The dove that returns and the dove that vanishes, which are the same bird, represent twin aspects of psychoanalysis" (p. 196). For a while, it seems that the therapist gives nothing to the analysand (besides hope). Then, if given time and effort, the analysand sees what the therapist offers (something more solid to depend upon like the olive leaf). Finally, analysis is needed no longer, and the therapist leaves the analysand. At first the analysand feels abandoned, but then realizes that analysis is no longer needed because the therapist has given him everything he needs to survive emotionally.

Parsons uses Noah's dove to describe the relationship between the analyst and the analysand, and this could also describe many different relationships. When the dove returns with nothing, this signifies that it is not yet safe to stop the analysis. The dove returning with the leaf evidences that the analyst is bringing hope, something tangible, to the analysand. The dove vanishes when the analysand no longer needs the analyst. This metaphor is significant to the imaginative realm because often one needs an object, or fantasy to navigate through life's rough waters.

I wanted life to bring me olive leaves, like the dove brought Noah, but I see that in getting and facing things that were unexpected I have been given more than I could ever have expected. To be truly spiritual, one must continuously look inward, evaluate oneself, and connect with the world around oneself. My experiences have made me

strong, and *understanding* them has made me stronger. I accept that I may not find what I am looking for, but instead, something unexpected and better will find me.

Deleuze and Guattari (1987, p. 13), through their ideas on schizoanalysis, appear to reject the simplistic ways of knowing and defining ourselves such as heredity, historical, environmental, and psychoanalytic. I acknowledge that I am at this point in my intellectual and emotional growth because of hard work in psychoanalysis. The reality is that most people will never reach that apex of self-realization, and if they do, they will likely have achieved it by taking initial baby steps in the direction of psychoanalysis. Chinese philosophers taught that each long journey begins with a step.

In addition to realizing that a journey starts with baby steps, one must also accept that, at times, it is a long, arduous journey. In fact, Peck (1978) goes as far to say that to find ourselves and grow spiritually is downright painful. Winnicott (1986) similarly states that "no one would claim that the word 'health' is synonymous with the word 'ease'" (p. 25).   Peck refers to the first of the "Four Noble Truths" that Buddha taught which is that "Life is difficult. This is a great truth, one of the greatest truths" (Buddha in Peck, p. 15). Peck goes on to explain that

> it is a great truth because once we truly see this truth, we transcend it. Once we truly know that life is difficult—once we truly understand and accept it—then life is no longer difficult. Because once it is accepted, the fact that life is difficult no longer matters. (p. 15)

Choosing the path of self-realization is like choosing to go to the gym. The hardest part is making the decision to go, but once you are there, and even though you are working hard and experiencing pain, you are glad you went. This illustrates that choosing to

pursue one's personal legend becomes less arduous when it is something that delights and sustains one creatively.

Jacques Derrida uses the word "archive" in historical perspectives, but he also uses archive metaphorically to mean the "archive of the mind" (Morris, 2003). Just as Derrida embraces the idea and the act of deconstructing words, historical events, and political events, he also encourages knowing our own personal history and memory. However, Derrida (1998) points out that, "yes, I have only one language, yet it is not mine" (p. 2), acknowledging the complexity of language and historical ramifications of language. Psychoanalysis, like philosophy, involves deconstruction of one's past and present experiences in order to get a clearer picture of oneself. An irony is that one must dissect and examine all the possibilities before one can escape the hole and become a healthier whole.

Besides tumult, there can even be a void, or what Eigen (2004) calls "psychic deadness." Even periods of deadness contain movements in between. "The *movement between* is the important moment in Winnicott's writings. I would add the *movement through*. To move between or through experiences, to let an experience build, to go through something" (pp. 16-17) is one of Winnicott's contributions to psychoanalysis. However, as Eigen's practice has shown him, some patients cannot *do*, or go *through*, or be *between*. They are stuck until some catalyst helps them out of their rut.

People want quick fixes without the effort, a whole *real* life is not like that. Derrida (1995) makes the point when questioned about the resurgence of philosophy in France and its role in the political arena by responding:

You think I have been all that clear? For whom? What I have just outlined would

remain quite inaccessible for a mass of readers. They would perceive its stakes

only through a silhouette of meaning. I am thinking of some of those who never

open *Le Monde,* and of certain readers of this newspaper who play an important

and singular role in the (prescriptive) formation of a rather cultivated public,

one that is open to a language with a philosophic air (but not too specialized) and,

in certain conditions, to a discourse on discourse. (pp. 174-5)

France is representative of much of the world in that there is a shortage of people willing

and able to do philosophy, whether it relates to spirituality, politics, history, or

psychology.

My mother encouraged me to look honestly at life's difficulties and she roused in

me an interest in psychoanalysis by talking openly about the benefits of studying one's

feelings. She read books that helped her to better herself emotionally. When she died

when I was 21, I fell into a deep depression, but I remember her advice. I remember she

said that self-aware people get help when they need it. I needed it; I got help. It opened

my eyes and my mind to a new discipline, a discipline of searching and healing. Even

now, years later, when I have significant emotional pain or problems, I seek help through

a professional counselor, through serious self-exploring, and journal writing, reading

applicable literature, and by being still and listening for *me* about *me*.

Generally, our educational system is designed to ask certain questions. "What"

subjects and facts should we teach? "How" should we teach using certain methods and

techniques? "Why" are we teaching certain subjects in certain ways is an important

question *sometimes* asked. However, as Palmer (1998) asks, "How can educational institutions sustain and deepen the selfhood from which good teaching comes" (p. 4)? This is a question that I have been thinking about daily and dreaming about nightly. I am determined that there is a way to meet the high-stakes testing criteria without giving up—in any way, shape, or form—good teaching.

Peck (1978) clearly states that a *good* therapist engages in therapy for *himself* so that a therapist may better understand the client. Palmer (1998) compares teaching to psychoanalysis when he reminds us of the saying "Technique is what you use until the therapist arrives" (p. 5). The same is true of teaching. Technique is what you use until the *real* you arrives to teach *real* students. Like the Buddhist proverb, teachers use technique until the teacher arrives, and when the student is ready, the teacher will appear. Dismayingly, some teachers are never ready themselves because they have not accepted life's opportunities to learn from within. Inner knowledge of the teacher's self draws out the students that are ready and sometimes, if we patiently listen and observe, those that may not yet be ready. So it can be accurately proffered that "*good teaching cannot be reduced to technique; good teaching comes from the identity and integrity of the teacher*" (Palmer, 1998, p. 10).

Teaching the Social Self

Teachers come in contact with many young, impressionable minds every day. Derrida (2002, p. 59) agrees that because teachers are constantly in the public sphere, it is imperative that they be encouraged to think, speak and act more intellectually.   I believe that being intellectual starts with knowing one's self. Peck (1978) makes clear that there is only a "small minority of people—perhaps five percent—[who] have psychiatric

problems of a nature that does not respond to psychotherapy and that may even be made worse by the deep introspection involved" (p. 312). Therefore, it is possible for almost everyone to benefit from actively seeking self-awareness.

Some people argue that all this talk of self is narcissistic. I would agree with Derrida (1995, p. 199) that we are all narcissistic to some degree, and that this can actually be beneficial; how can we help anyone else without helping ourselves first, and we do this through self-reflection. I heard a story about a ship capsizing and leaving a family stranded in the ocean. When asked who should get in the boat first, the father, mother, or children, most people replied, "The children of course!" Those that felt the children should get in first, were appalled that some felt the parents should get in first; however, it makes better sense for an adult to get in first, so that he/she can rescue the others more effectively. This kind of narcissism is a positive type. It is essential to save ourselves, so that we can save others. When a child is "saved" by a good-enough environment, they initially feel that, in Winnicott's words (2002), "the world is in [their] control." Then,

> from this initial *experience of omnipotence* the baby is able to begin to experience frustration and even to arrive one day at the other extreme from omnipotence, that is to say, having a sense of being a mere speck in a universe, in a universe that was there before the baby was conceived of by two parents who were enjoying each other. (p. 78)

Is it selfish to be happy? Is it selfish to enjoy another person? Not when it results in helping raise a child who is both self-confident and aware of others and the universe around him.

When one comes far enough on the journey to self-realization, one gains a peace that Peck (1978) refers to as "grace" (pp. 161-3). Grace is difficult to define. Peck points out that the paradox about grace is that one must both search and work for it and also be still and let it come (pp. 306-7). This brings me to another dimension. I have spoken mostly about what one must do for oneself to gain self-realization, peace, and grace. However, there is evidence that forces beyond our selves and our control contribute to our state of grace. Peck, who espouses psychotherapy as the means in which to find oneself, and therefore, better oneself, also admits that, "our growth as human beings is being assisted by a force other than our conscious will" (p. 263). Peck is referring to the natural phenomenon of evolution, which by common scientific knowledge, should not be possible. Peck considers this a miracle, by which humans have become the highest evolved beings and for which there is no scientific answer (pp. 263-7).

Another factor to consider is that 95% of our brain activity is on an unconscious level (p. 243). Another force beyond our control is what Hillman (1996) describes as a "calling," "fate," "character," and "innate image. . . .Together they make up the 'acorn theory,' which holds that each person bears a uniqueness that asks to be lived and that is already present before it can be lived" (p. 6). In other words, honor who we are by nature, *and* accept responsibility for what we can control. Reinhold Niebuhr (in Hazelden, 2005) gently reminds us: "God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference."

Why are some people more naturally good than others? Why are some people more at peace than others? The answer may lie in the fact that we are not solely products of our genetic makeup and environmental conditions. There is something deeper, more innate in all of us. This *something* has many names such as core or soul. With his obsession about the order of things, Foucault (1970) reveals that

> there is nothing more tentative, nothing more empirical (superficially, at least) than the process of establishing an order among things; nothing that demands a sharper eye or a surer, better-articulated language; nothing that more insistently requires that one allow oneself to be carried along by the proliferation of qualities and forms. (xix)

That is because what is most important *cannot* be seen, like our soul.

One might argue that if we already have an inner core or soul before we are born, then we are predestined to be *that* person only. There is a distinction between predestination and predisposition. We are predisposed to being that basic person or possessing that particular personality; however, we are also influenced by our parents' genes and our environment. Remember that Robert Frost's path was likely available for him from the beginning, but he still had personal agency as to whether he would choose it or not. Winnicott was primarily concerned with the environmental influence on infants and children. To my knowledge, he did not examine closely the possibility of an innate pre-birth or pre-conception personality.

Some blame their problems on heredity and environment, but Hillman (1996, pp. 4-6) offers us a way out of that trap by reinforcing the belief that our character was set before birth. It is a philosophical question like, "which came first, the chicken or the

egg?" Humans will continue to ask how much of our personalities are innate (pre-birth), environmental, and hereditary. To believe that character is set before birth is largely a spiritual viewpoint; to believe in environmental influences on personality is largely a sociological point of view, and; to believe in hereditary contributions to personality is mostly a biological, scientific point of view. Psychoanalysts take all of these theories into consideration when they work with a patient. However, Winnicott strongly supports the environmental, mainly the parental, influences on a person's personality.

As addressed earlier, many people choose never to seek for themselves, inner peace, or grace. Why is this? Peck (1978) cites several reasons why more do not choose a self-reflective path. One reason is that there are differing degrees of psychopathology; the sicker (and Peck feels that we *all* are sick to some degree) one is the more difficult it is for that person to be helped. "Moreover, the severity of one's mental illness is directly determined by the severity and the earliness of the parental deprivation that one experienced in childhood" (p. 312). People with character-disorders (believed to be severely abused before the age of nine months) and people with psychosis (believed to be severely abused sometime before the age of two years old) have difficulty using psychoanalysis to their benefit. Winnicott (1996) reinforces this belief that "as dependence becomes relative, so environmental failure ceases to be necessarily, and immediately, disastrous, and indeed graduated failures of adaptation take their place as positive features of the environmental function" (p. 279). Winnicott chooses to look at the positive aspects of "failure" without diminishing the severe consequences of a not-good-enough environment.

My husband, an assistant district attorney in our county, teases me sometimes that he will eventually get my "failures"—students that get lost in the fog. Unfortunately, he may be right. If parents and schools fail to provide what a child needs, the repercussions will manifest themselves with social deviants who eventually enter the criminal justice system. By using Winnicott's theories, there is hope. For example, Barbara Dockar-Drysdale (1990) has used Winnicott's theory of "primary experience" in her therapeutic work with very disturbed children in institutions. Many of the teenagers she treated were neglected or abused as babies and children. Dockar-Drysdale provided a safe-enough environment for these teenagers to emotionally regress back to their infancy and childhood in order to move on to the next stage of living. As a teacher, I feel I sometimes provide, not a primary experience, but a temporary safe holding environment for some of my students. Teachers must do more than teach subjects; they must also engage in a form of social teaching.

Threats to Good Teaching

With No Child Left Behind legislation, the necessity of bringing one's self into the classroom and the necessity of each student developing to the best, truest, and most creative plane inside the classroom, are "left behind." Teachers and students are forced to concentrate on taking tests; this means there is little time, energy, or opportunity to teach and develop real and meaningful thinking processes.

First, there is the problem of time. Teachers barely have enough time to teach all the standards that are going to be on the intermittent benchmark and end-of-year cumulative tests, much less spend time on time-consuming synthesizing and application experiences with the students. Second, there is the problem of energy. After carefully

preparing the students for the tests they must take and pass, teachers have little energy left to "sneak-in" teaching anything that is not directly related to the tests. The lack of energy comes from the high-tension, adrenaline pumping fear that the teacher will get caught teaching something truly meaningful to the students. Therefore, for many teachers, it is not worth the energy nor the risk. The third problem is that, given the best case scenario of ample time and energy (which is extremely rare) to teach meaningful content, a teacher may not have the opportunity, emotionally, physically, or intellectually, to teach optimally and meaningfully.

This is my second year teaching elementary school, after teaching middle school for several years, and it is the most arduous endeavor I have undertaken. I stay at school until 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday catching up on administrative paperwork and getting ready for the next day's teaching. I am healthy from a lifetime of physical fitness, yet I am exhausted at the end of the day. I usually come home, eat, then go to sleep. I struggle to complete all that is required of me as a teacher. I agree with Palmer (1998), who admits, schools insist that teachers "instantly adopt whatever 'solution' has most recently been concocted by our national panacea machine; and in the process, we demoralize, even paralyze, the very teachers who could help us find our way" (p. 3). I am one of those teachers.

Some do not think that teachers must teach the test. Recently, my students did not improve on one of their benchmark tests; therefore, I was under pressure to improve their scores. It was suggested and enacted that I not teach Social Studies for the remainder of the year in order to concentrate on teaching reading and grammar. Fortunately, it was a suggestion that was eventually overturned. I continued to teach Social Studies *and* drill

what I knew would be on the next benchmark test. It worked. My students surpassed the county scores on their benchmark test, and when guest speakers reenacted historical Revolutionary War heroes, my class was *also* able to ask pointed historical questions and make intelligent comments. I was able to teach what was on the test as well as teach vital historical concepts. This was a major feat, taking a lot of extra planning, creativity, and work. I was able follow Roy's (2003) suggestions:

> I try to find ways that innovation can find new lines of flight here. To reiterate, innovation is not a structure that is repeated, but a progressive differentiation that alone can enter, through slippage, the in-between spaces. Innovation is the lateral insertion of a space of becoming that is not metric in the sense of measurable, and yet rigorous in terms of effects. It must take place within the confines of the district rules and guidelines, and yet produce novel effects in thought and curriculum. (p. 68)

Like Dewey, educators repeat that true learning accesses individuals' styles and personalities, yet in actuality, much of education deals with students as though they are all the same. Consider Michel Serres's (1997) comment about learning:

> Certainly, one must go to libraries; it is assuredly good to make oneself learned. Study, work, something will always come of it. And after? For there to be an after, I mean some kind of future that goes beyond a copy, leave the library to run in the fresh air; if you remain inside, you will never write anything but books made from books. (p. 58)

If a student is to write his own book of life, the student must learn more than what will be on the next standardized test. A student must learn what it is to run in the fresh air and to create new things that are called by and answer to their unique yearnings.

One of the main reasons my students were able to both do well on a standardized test, as well as participate intelligently in a question and answer setting, is that I allowed room for them to investigate and "play" with ideas by completing projects that explored the causes of the Revolutionary War. I instinctively followed Winnicott's (1987) cautions that in attempting to raise children and to

> mold them into little scientists, there exists a real danger that we might destroy their early imaginative world. Education must provide an environment for the mind of the child to unfold, while not snuffing out fantasy or 'the capacity for enjoying intense sensations. (p. 4)

Simon & Garfunkel's (1982) famous *Kodachrome* lyrics, "When I look back at all the crap I learned in high school, it's a wonder I can think at all" have credence here.

Eisner (2002) has figured out how many benchmarks students must take in one year. Seventy-five standards from grades 1 to 12 seeming reasonable, this results in 2,250 benchmark tests, and since "each benchmark has four proficiency levels: advanced, proficient, basic, and novice. . . . [we end] up with 9,000 descriptors" (p. 166). In addition, "the idea that students will take the same paths and learn the same things at the same rates flies in the fact of what is known about human development" (p. 166). The problem is that

> there has been a longstanding tension in the field of education between the desire to be rigorous in a disciplinary way, that is, to provide programs that initiate the

young into the concepts and procedures of the disciplines taught within the school

curriculum, and programs that relate field to field and are relevant to the student.

(p. 155)

Eisner asks, "Why does a nation as diverse as ours need a common curriculum" (p. 163)?

Daniel Webster (in Spring, 2001), in an argument that reportedly brought Chief Justice

John Marshall to tears, asked, "Shall our state legislature be allowed to take that which is

not their own, to turn it from its original use, and apply it to such ends or purposes as

they, in their discretion shall see fit" (p. 79)? This bears a strong resemblance to my local

school board recently passing unanimously the decision to force students to attend an

intersession in order to bring their CRCT test scores up, even if this means giving up their

recess time (which is now only 10 minutes a day and is no longer called recess, but brain

break) and their exploratories (music, art, PE, and Spanish). Is this intellectually or

morally right? The important point, according to Joel Spring (2001), is that "embodied in

this question is the fundamental issue of the extent to which government power should be

allowed to operate in the management of institutions" (p. 79). More and more mandates

are affecting all public institutions, including and especially, schools.

A critical question to ask is: How does education give *everyone* an equal

opportunity for learning without hindering any certain group of people or any one

person's individual creative yearnings? Is this possible in our republican/democratic

society? And is this possible without federal and state mandates?   I believe John Dewey

realized the balancing act that is involved in helping the masses, and at the same time, not

hindering those with higher aspirations. This is perhaps why his educational philosophy

did not take hold. Educators almost always look to Dewey's ideas on education, but

because his ideas are complex and hard to blueprint, others', whose ideas are more simplistic (and less wholly encompassing), are often put into practice.

Winnicott was keenly aware of the importance of the good-enough mother. However, the history of American education seems to indicate a difference of opinion, as sociologist Edward A. Ross (in Kliebard, 1995) explains,

> Another gain lies in the partial substitution of the teacher for the parent as the model upon which the child forms itself. Copy the child will, and the advantage of giving him his teacher instead of his father to imitate, is that the former is a picked person, while the latter is not. Childhood is, in fact, the heyday of personal influence. The position of the teacher gives him prestige, and the lad will take from him suggestions that the adult will accept only from rare and splendid personalities. The committing of education to superior persons lessens our dependence on magnetic men. (p. 80)

I agree that it is best for teachers to be of the highest caliber, but it is dangerous for anyone to believe a teacher can make up for failure in the home.

In a democratic society, the aim is for everyone to be educated; however, the problem becomes partially illuminated when considering whose or what knowledge is to be taught. Around the 1890s in early American education, Kliebard (1995) writes,

> not only do we see the theory of mental discipline starting to unravel as a consequence of increased awareness of social transformation, but we see beginning to gel the interest groups that were to become the controlling factors in the struggle for the American curriculum in the twentieth century. (p. 7)

It is a bit of like trying to have our cake and eat it too, this attempt to educate the masses at no expense to any special groups or persons. As Kliebard states,

> The route between the knowledge a society values and its incorporation into the curriculum becomes infinitely more tortuous, however, when we take into account the fact that different segments in any society will emphasize different forms of knowledge as most valuable for that society. Rarely is there universal agreement as to which resources of a culture are the most worthwhile. (p. 7)

America being such a tossed salad and melting pot of people makes this task most daunting. Perhaps the best we can and should hope for is what Paulo Freire (in Giroux, 2000) suggests,

> to think of history as possibility is to recognize education as possibility. It is to recognize that if education cannot do everything, it can achieve some things. . . . One of our challenges as educators is to discover what historically is possible in the sense of contributing toward the transformation of the world, giving rise to a world that is rounder, less angular, more humane. (p. 137)

The professors with whom I have had contact with at Georgia Southern University's Curriculum Studies Program have asked these difficult questions, and while they have not arrived at many definite answers, they have given students the historical background and subjective elbow room to make of their education and to discover what will be most meaningful to each them.

It is our responsibility, as educators, to ask these questions of ourselves and our students. Derrida (in Giroux, 1995) asks these questions that are pertinent to educators,

"What do we represent? Whom do we represent? Are we responsible? For what and to whom" (p. 7)? Then Derrida responds,

> If there is a university responsibility, it at least begins with the moment when a need to hear these questions, to take them upon oneself and respond, is imposed. This imperative for responding is the initial form and minimal requirement of responsibility. (p. 24)

Hopefully, our students will take the metaphorical ball and run with it, but educators should at least pass the ball by equipping students good possible game plans and the equipment with which to score.

Winnicott's transitional object theory supports the belief that the majority of people can benefit from this third area, called potential space, that results in a rich creative and cultural life. It is educators' jobs to ensure that this cultural life be found, continue, and even flourish. For instance, many in academe grapple with the challenge of combining street-smarts with academic smarts. Gerald Graff (2003) struggles with the fact that "educational institutions themselves contribute to the problem by making the culture of ideas and arguments look opaque and therefore more remote than it actually is from the wisdom of the street" (p. 2). How can we promote conversation between individuals' home and street sub-cultures with a general common culture? This is especially negotiable in pluralistic America. Graff summarizes the widespread uses of cultural ideas and arguments in the following explanation worth quoting in its entirety:

> By the culture of ideas and arguments, I refer to that admittedly blurry entity that spans the academic and intellectual worlds on the one hand and the arena of journalistic public discourse on the other. Not all 'academics' are 'intellectuals,'

and intellectuals come in many different types, including academic scholars, journalistic public intellectuals, policy wonks, information managers, media pundits, and legal and government professionals. What these different types have in common, from the research professor to the newspaper editorialist to the mythical educated lay person on the street, is a commitment to articulating ideas in public. Whatever the differences between their specialized jargons, they have all learned to play the following game: listen closely to others, summarize them in a recognizable way, and make your own relevant argument. This argument literacy, the ability to listen, summarize, and respond, is rightly viewed as central to being educated.

For American students to do better—all of them, not just twenty percent—they need to know that summarizing and making arguments is the name of the game in academia. But it's precisely this game that academia obscures, generally by hiding it in plain view amidst a vast disconnected clutter of subjects, disciplines, and courses. The sheer cognitive overload represented by the American curriculum prevents most students from detecting and then learning the moves of the underlying argument game that gives coherence to it all. (pp. 2-3)

Basically, there is no reason why we cannot include more citizens in intellectual and cultural interests. Nussbaum (1997) urges that, "above all, we can teach them how to argue, rigorously and critically, so that they can call their minds their own" (p. 295).

If there is a student who is not being reached, then we may assume that they were

not provided a good-enough early environment, did not connect with transitional phenomena, or we have failed somewhere. Stanley Aronowitz (2000) admits his occasional shortcomings:

> Sometimes I fail to reach a group of students in a class, and it's usually because I have been unable to find the match that might light a fire in their bellies. Mostly when I don't make connections, it's because I haven't tried hard enough. (p. 193)

Occasionally, it may be neither the fault of the parents or the teacher, but a natural depression may come on to cut off cultural or religious awakenings. As Winnicott (1992) puts it, adults "may mourn someone, and in the course of mourning cease to enjoy cultural pursuits; recovery from the mourning is accompanied by a return of all the intermediate interests (including religious experiences) which enrich the individual's life in health" (p. 58). Sometimes depression or other illnesses can cause a transitional object to be temporarily meaningless or non-existent.

One of the trends in American education is to minimize the importance of cultural knowledge and concentrate on a trade, with the goal to gain immediate employment. The risk here is that science and technology are advancing and changing so rapidly that if one is trained in a strict or narrow vocation, his future may be unstable. Sting (1986)—a teacher—clearly expresses this: "Don't want no dead-end job. I don't wanna be no number." This is certainly a demand for a creative, enduring applicable education. Thus Perhaps Sting of The Police agrees that "if you give a man a fish, he can eat for a day, but if you teach a man how to fish, he can eat a lifetime." This is an analogy that can apply to a quickly learned narrow vocation that will enable a person to work for a short while, but

if you teach a person to think critically and use a broad base of knowledge, the person can work a lifetime. I see the sense in Aronowitz's (2000) reasoning on this matter:

> Despite apparent short-term gains for some universities and colleges, vocationalization is the wrong way to go. Notwithstanding their anxiety about the future, students are ill-served by educational regimes that tailor their learning to a rapidly changing workplace whose technological shifts belie the assumptions driving many specialist curricula. Ironically, the best preparation for the work of the future might be to cultivate knowledge of the broadest possible kind, to make learning a way of life that in the first place is pleasurable and then rigorously critical. For it is only when the learner loves literature, enjoys puzzling out the meaning of art works and those of philosophy, is intrigued by social and cultural theory, or becomes an indefatigable researcher that she acquires intellectual habits that are precondition for further learning. The learner who really understands the economy knows how fragile is the concept of career. (p. 161)

As is usually the case, there are no easy roads. Vocational schools have their place, but Aronowitz is advocating that these students also be given the opportunity to think long-term and in depth in order to be prepared for unavoidable career changes.

Frank H. T. Rhodes (in Aronowitz, 2000), president of Cornell University spells it out further:

> I believe the purpose of an undergraduate education is to develop a person of judgment, discernment, and balance, with professional competence in some specific area. . . . We should strive to produce not only competent engineers, for example, but also engineers who practice their profession with a keen

appreciation of social, economic and national environment in which they operate

and with a sense of aesthetic scale and human proportion as well as the economic

costs and benefits. (p. 50)

I believe Winnicott would agree that Aronowitz's description of loving learning and

Rhode's description of the use of learning can be included in the third area of living, of

cultural life.

This is important given the alarming statistics that "the United States of America

spends more on primary, secondary, and postsecondary schooling than any other nation

in the world" (p. 1). In addition, "most Americans will soon spend an average of

eighteen to twenty years in school, which implies that a considerable number attend

school for a lot longer" (p. 2). Administrators and legislators must be reminded of a

larger purpose for gaining the broadest and most rigorous education possible, and that

reminder would come in the form of quoting Thomas Jefferson's (in Giroux & Giroux,

2004) preamble to the 1776 Bill for the More General Diffusion of Knowledge:

Whereas . . . certain forms of government are better calculated than others to

protect individuals in the free exercise of their natural rights . . . experience hath

shewn, that even under the best forms, those entrusted with power have . . .

perverted it into tyranny; and it is believed that *the most effectual means of*

preventing this would be, to illuminate, as far as practicable, the minds of the

people at large; And whereas it is generally true that people will be happiest

whose laws are best, and are best administered, and that laws will be wisely

formed, and honestly administered, in proportion as those who form and

administer them are wise and honest. (p. 146)

"The university" as far as Bill Readings (1996) claims, "no longer participates in the historical project for humanity that was the legacy of the Enlightenment: the historical project of culture" (p. 5). Instead, "the contemporary University is busily transforming itself from an ideological arm of the state into a bureaucratically organized and relatively autonomous consumer-oriented corporation" (p. 11). In addition, there is recent movement in globalization of education to suit the needs of corporations both in the United States and abroad. However, according to Jane Kenway and Elizabeth Bullen (in Apple, Kenway, & Singh, 2005) there are instances where "educators are struggling to force a shift from a calculative formation of international education, framed predominantly within an income-generating perspective, to another that emphasizes the education of transnational knowledge workers, national/global publics, and learners for life" (p. 17). This would be a dream come true for Winnicott, who I am sure would welcome the educational value of appreciating cultures all over the globe, rather than culture isolated in one's own country, one's own town, or strictly one's own cultural life.

As Saltman and Gabbard (2003) point out, the militarization and corporatization of schools is successful because it breaks down a person, causing him to forget (lose) himself, so that it can build them back up to be faithful to the military and the corporate ideology, no longer an individual but a part of a whole. Likewise when a person is hired to work for a corporation, they must learn the corporation's employee handbook and the company's vision statement so that the company's corporate vision becomes the vision of the employees as well. And the preparation for the indoctrination into such military and corporate establishments begin in the *schools*! There is a strict curriculum that the students must follow otherwise they are labeled as "problems." This "containment" says

Webber (2003), "empowers the hidden curriculum to control students in ways that limit their educational freedom and their right to express frustration and disagreement in positive ways, especially through nonviolent means" (p. 12). Students and parents have little to say about how the students will learn because the curriculum is already carved in stone for them instead of routed with water that can change course. Blaming school violence on the media, technology, and armaments, according to Webber, "leave out two key features mediating the relationship between popular culture and students: students subjectivity and the hidden curriculum's inability to acknowledge student subjectivity" (p. 12). Webber believes that "there is an overwhelming emphasis on 'knowing' in the cognitive sense, but not 'believing,' so that 'doing' becomes a worthless, repetitive gesture on the part of students who can see nothing in education that speaks to them as people" (p. 13). Noam Chomsky (in Saltman & Gabbard, 2003) knows that "you only learn if the material is integrated into your own creative processes somehow, otherwise it just passes through your mind and disappears" (p. 27). Winnicott (1992) cautions educators by writing that, "as applied to education, it is pointed out that subjectivity must be understood by teachers, otherwise the objectivity aimed at must be in danger of fatal distortion" (p. 390). When curriculum theorists develop curriculum they are aware of the "average" interests of the student body, but they need to expand awareness to outside the bell curve. Pinar (2004) writes that "subjectivity is cultural, and the cultural is subjective. Fantasy is private but public; it is through ideas expressed in specific traditions one can engage the private fantasies of another: our students, for instance" (p. 129). Winnicott (2005) asserts that "the creativity that concerns me here is a universal. It belongs to

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being alive" (p. 91). All teachers, administrators, parents, and students need to do is look around and see *who is alive!* These are the people who can engage in play and creativity.

My 17 year-old son listens to, plays, breathes, and lives music, and I am sure that the courses prescribed for him are giving no credence to his innate interests. He probably looks dead in Geometry class, but anyone who knows my son knows he is *most alive* when he is playing a musical instrument. Most do not know that from a very young age Chad learned best auditorily. From the time he was an infant, he responded most to music and sounds. This is excellent information for a teacher to know so as to utilize and incorporate more auditory strategies in his learning, or now that he is in high school, give him a choice to prepare a project or presentation using his music skills. Unfortunately, even if teachers know his talents, they are forced to stick to the militaristic form of education, not daring to veer from the concrete path.

As parents and teachers, we must look for the ways that bring our children *most alive*, and that means *be*ing playful and creative. Winnicott (2005) clearly means that creativity is the right of every human being; "it is present as much in the moment-by-moment living of a backward child who is enjoying breathing as it is in the inspiration of an architect who suddenly knows what it is that he wishes to construct . . ." (pp. 92-93). Parents and teachers can use Winnicott's transitional object theory to provide a proper holding environment for children to live creatively no matter what their age.

While teachers are usually not aware of my son's musical talents, education has at least been looking at the marginalized. Identified learning disabled students are protected by the law and generally receive excellent services. I know this first hand with one of my children and many children I have taught, at least in the Georgia public school system

which is notoriously low in overall national averages. In addition, students with different languages receive special attention; however, a lot of work needs to be done in this area as well, including giving the parents special help. Educational systems are at least looking at these particular problems, which is significant because "looking is an exercise of power, and to be looked at is therefore to become the object of power" (Fiske, 1993, p. 46). Groups of marginalized people are being looked at; however, only one aspect of these groups is being considered: learning disability and language, respectively. These students, like my son, have many different interests, and so it is only a partial victory to lump a group of marginalized people according to one common characteristic. We must look at these students according to what they have in common *and* what is unique about them. Only then can we present them the opportunity to learn for themselves – which is the only true way to learn.

My M.Ed. is in middle grades education, and I taught at a middle school. After teaching the 7th and 8th grades, my principal asked me if I would consider teaching the 6th grade. I asked why, and she related that she had received comments from parents that their children enjoyed my language arts classes because I included personal and in-depth discussion as well as encouraged them to display art work and creativity and imagination with their writings. I accepted. My way of teaching, including the visual arts and emotional expression (e.g. dramatic interpretations), apparently fit more with the 6th graders. The replacement teacher was more traditional and rigid, which the principle felt was needed for older students. In my opinion, however, my way of teaching fits with every age. Eisner (2002) remarks that "to be able to create a form of experience that can be regarded as aesthetic requires a mind that animates our imaginative capacities and that

promotes our ability to undergo emotionally pervaded experience" (xii). Knowledge of psychology and its application has greatly enhanced my ability to bring creativity, emotion, and relevancy to the classroom.

Child development courses are required for all public school teachers precisely because they are requisite for understanding children of all ages and how they learn. It is for teachers to understand specifically the psychodynamics of fostering children's growth in order to be more effective. Educators, possessing the paradigm of mass production and training versus education, are more focused and obsessed with test scores, standardization and essentialism, than the emotional well-being and creative rights of the child. In Eisners words, "it falls to those of us in education to try to design the situation in which children's efforts become increasingly more sophisticated, sensitive, imaginative, and skilled. This is no small task, and no minor achievement when realized" (xiv).

How Psychoanalysis Made Me a Better Teacher

Through my connections working at Charter Lake Hospital in Macon, Georgia and Charter-by-the-Sea Hospital on St. Simons Island, Georgia, I had an opportunity to go through a program called New Visions. It was a psychiatric program designed for individuals who were not necessarily in crisis, but who were having difficulties in their lives and wanted to go through an extremely introspective and relationship-building experience. The program was introspective in that patients examined their individual problems by self-reflecting, reading about people with similar problems, attending classes where the instructor taught them successful and practical ways of dealing with their problems in a healthier, more successful way and in discussing their respective problems

with a therapist. The New Visions program was also a community building program in that individuals collectively made up a group. Everyone was encouraged to honestly express themselves with other participants. This had the effect of allowing individuals to see that other people experience similar situations and dilemmas. It also had the added benefit of presenting several different ideas on how to live a more effective and joyful life.

I learned more about myself in those two weeks than I had in several years of my life. For example, I learned that I had a pretty normal childhood until the age of eleven when I witnessed something traumatic—sexual abuse of my sister—and shortly thereafter, my parents divorced. I learned that, although I was 30 years old at the time, emotionally, I was functioning at the age of an eleven year-old. When my husband and I would argue, I would go to my room and cry. When I was frustrated, I threw little tantrums. Simply realizing my stunted emotional growth helped me to get past traumatic experiences in my life and to mature emotionally. I learned to discuss problems more maturely with my husband rather than withdrawing into the—hole.

Not only had my stunted emotional growth affected my home life, but there is no doubt that it also affected my teaching. For one thing, I allowed the students to engage me in debates on the consequences I was doling out. Now I seldom question my decision because I have more confidence that it is a fair one, not one given out of frustration and anger. I can also recall two times that I cried out of frustration at the student behavior. I did not know how to deal with it more maturely. This is not to say that I do not believe in crying; crying can be extremely cathartic. Michalinos Zembylas (2003) points out in his

article, "Interrogating 'Teacher Identity': Emotion, Resistance, and Self-Formation,"
that,

> the focus of analysis of the self and one's experiences is the *discourse* of
>
> experience rather than the experience itself. The identity is knowable in itself and
>
> that it has a core, if one could only find the way to it. (pp. 111-112)

Thus, as earlier addressed, let us examine our past so that we may be more effective in the present and future. It is also important for us to discuss these problems, as they likely will relate to and help someone else as well. There is no shame in having bad things happen to us, but we need to recognize the causes and take proactive steps in understanding them, thus avoiding further negative consequences.

It was during this two-week "retreat" that I chose to fulfill my calling to be a teacher. Three years later, at the age of 33, I earned my Master's degree in middle grades education. Ironically, even though friends and family tried to persuade me to teach elementary school, I answered "the call" and chose the middle grades where I could work with students ages ten through fourteen. Because I was fortunate enough to experience two weeks of immense emotional healing, growth, and self-reflection, I was extremely cognizant of my choice to teach middle grades. I chose the middle grades because I remember *clearly* what it was like to be a young teenager, I understand what teenagers endure; I sympathize and empathize with many of the situations in which teenagers find themselves in; and, I have *compassion* for this age group. I have had many students sense my understanding of their circumstances and share their problems with me. I just listen and nod "yes, I understand." That is usually what they need and want from me -

my acceptance and understanding. At times I refer students to our school counselor, who is a wise, listening and compassionate person.

After those two weeks, I stood at a crossroad. I knew that I had a choice to make. I chose to answer the call of being a teacher. My eighth grade class read Jack London's novel, *The Call of the Wild.* My students asked me why, at the end of the novel, Buck—a halfbreed dog—chose to answer the call of the wild and go and live with the pack of wild dogs in the wilderness. After much discussion, they came to believe that even though Buck was raised as a ranch dog and had all the comforts of living a "civilized" ranch-dog life, once he had a taste of the life of his ancestors before him, of living in his natural environment, of roaming free, of being head of the pack, and of living a life of adventure, he could never go back to his ordinary life on the ranch. Once I realized what I wanted to do, teach, I could not turn back either. First, I chose my path as Robert Frost chose his – because it was the only true path for me. I chose teaching because I was probably preordained to teach. As Hillman (1996) mentions,

> I believe we have been robbed of our true biography—that destiny written into the
> acorn—and we go to therapy to recover it. That innate image can't be found,
> however, until we have a psychological theory that grants primary psychological
> reality to the call of fate. (p. 5)

Second, and even better, I journeyed along the road less traveled that Peck (1978) encourages everyone to journey on – the road to self-discovery through therapy and other ways that work for the individual. I am still on my journey, always looking for ways to improve myself and to relate better to the people around me.

Psychoanalysis has given me the gift of looking at myself and the world in a different way. It is something I want to share with others. I am reminded of my first trip to the Smokey Mountains. It was fall. The air was crisp and fresh. The sky was azure blue, with a few big puffy clouds. And the leaves. The leaves were the most beautiful of all, in every shade of bright yellow, red, and orange. It was the perfect day, and I have yet to ever see the fall mountains look as beautiful as that day. I remember wanting everyone to see what I saw that day, experience the delight that I experienced that day. In his essay titled "The Fixation of Belief" Charles Sanders Peirce (in Menand, 1997) is amazed that a thirteenth century scientific man, Roger Bacon, believed that "of all kinds of experience, the best . . . was interior illumination, which teaches many things about Nature which the external senses could never discover" (p. 7).

Another reason I choose to believe life has purpose, is that it frees me from the potential bondage that many people pay to their families/parents of origin and to the negative enmeshment of co-dependency despite my less than optimal origins and upbringing. I choose to be anyone or anything I want. My autobiography is shared as anecdotal evidence of this innate calling. I am drawn to those authors who write about the fulfilling of one's dreams. Frost (1951) did not know where he would end up, thus, he says in his poem at the end:

Two roads diverged in a wood and I—

I took the one less traveled by,

And that has made all the difference. (p. 270)

This poem reflects that we all have our individual roads to traverse and explore. Who and what we will meet remains a mystery, and those who choose to follow their true path,

and "to boldly go where no man has gone before", with complete awareness are, indeed, in small company.

Like Derrida's play on words, in this chapter, we see the word "call" many times. If we analyze this word, we find it has many meanings. If you call someone, you may be calling them on the phone, or calling them to dinner. To take a call, is to accept a call, as in a phone call, or some sort of job. To answer a call, again, could mean to take a phone call, or more deeply to take that part of life that was destined to be yours, or offered to you. Buck answered his call—the call of the wild. I have answered many callings, not the least of which was to teach. In reality, I am teaching every minute of the day. In all my interactions with people, I am teaching who I am and that for which I believe.

"This above all: To thine own self be true, And it must follow, as the night the day, Thou canst not then be false to any man" wrote Shakespeare (1980) in *Hamlet* (p. 22). This same advice is given repeatedly, through famous literature, throughout history, and throughout cultures all around the world. Its same precepts are quoted by writers, poets, philosophers, historians, politicians, theologians, famous men, and ordinary men from different walks of life the world over. With such a sentiment constantly and continuously being set forth from, most likely, the beginning of time until now, maybe, just maybe, we should heed this advice. Begin the journey. Answer the call. Accept the call of teaching.

Winnicott and Dewey Called to Educate

Comparisons can be made between Dewey and Winnicott. Both were born toward the end of the 20th Century, Winnicott died in 1971, Dewey died in 1952. Both

were interested in educating others, in the personal, self-fulfillment of the individual, in the success of society as a whole, and in democracy. In a letter to a colleague, Winnicott (in Rodman, 2003) expresses the importance of teaching:

> I personally am one of those who feels that I have been fairly seriously neglected as a teacher. The only teaching that I have ever done to students has been confined to the three lectures which I give to the third year students, and I certainly would not have been asked to give these. It was entirely my own suggestion. . . . The fact is that my own very considerable experience in the psychoanalysis of children has been absolutely wasted although as a matter of fact I have had more experience of long child analysis than almost anyone else.
>
> (p. 214)

Rarely does one hear a tone of negativity in Winnicott's writings; however, it is clear that he feels neglected in the area of being able to teach students what he knows – to the point of stating above that without being able to convey his knowledge through teaching that his experience "has been absolutely wasted." This imparts to me the strong desire Winnicott had to give as much of himself to the world as possible, and he felt that the best way to do this was through teaching.

Both Winnicott and Dewey were influenced by their religious backgrounds; however, both chose a less religious path for themselves. Dewey was influenced by three professors at Johns Hopkins University: G. Stanley Hall - distinguished child psychologist, Charles Sanders Peirce - brilliant originator of philosophical pragmatism, and George Sylvester Morris – a Hegelian. Of these three men, Morris had the most profound and lasting effect on Dewey; "[h]is passionate desire for organic unity led him

to study with Morris" (Encyclopaedia, 2005). Much of Dewey's philosophy stemmed

from this period and remained with him throughout his lifetime. As in Taoism, Dewey

believed in the unity of life, not its separate parts. He believed in an interconnectedness

between actions, human beings, and the world.

> The action itself gives quality to truths….Human beings are a connected whole,
>
> not a series of unrelated mental and physical planes. The body and spirit are
>
> inextricably interwoven, and so also are the freedom of the spirit and the freedom
>
> of the body. Because the will is free, the body also enjoys freedom.
>
> (Goodenough, 1986)

This describes organic unity, which is the basis for much of Dewey's philosophies.

Winnicott spent much of his life searching for ways to integrate individuals, both with

themselves and with their surroundings. He went to great lengths to help make people

whole.

Dewey and Winnicott were both influenced by Darwin's Theory of Evolution.

Dewey was influenced by Darwin's Theory of Evolution by coming to the realization that

the evolution which occurs in small organisms, also occurs in human beings, in cultures

and in societies as a whole. "Dewey remembered deriving 'a sense of interdependence

and interrelated unity that gave form to intellectual stirring that had been previously

inchoate'" (Encyclopaedia, 2005, p. 147). Dewey believed in experimental naturalism

where human nature is perceived as part of nature. He was "an organic holist"

(Encyclopaedia, 2005), which is partly what makes Dewey hard to categorize—much like

Winnicott.

Winnicott first read Darwin's book, *The Origin of Species*, when he went away to school, and this had a profound effect on him. Winnicott was encouraged by the fact that, even though there are gaps in what we know about the evolutionary process, we have enough knowledge to know that it is a viable process. When working with patients, Winnicott often came across gaps in their memories, but this did not preclude the end results from being truthful or significant. In fact, often the holes, or missing pieces are as significant as or more significant than what is in plain view. His interest in gaps and holes may have contributed to Winnicott's formulation of the theory of potential space.

It would not be far off to say that Dewey had a love affair with philosophy. It is interesting that the word philosophy comes from the Greek words "philein" (to love) and "Sophia" (wisdom) (Encyclopaedia, 2005, LW 5: 155). Even though Dewey revered knowledge, "In Dewey's philosophy, loving and creating surpass mere knowing" (Encyclopaedia, 2005, LW 5: 155). "John Dewey is one of a few twentieth century American intellectuals who '. . . can be acknowledged on a world scale as a spokesman for mankind'" (Boydstron & Dykhuizen, 1973, xv). Dewey's philosophies included psychology, education, politics, and social issues. He was always extremely concerned with the practical and socially responsible life. During his lifetime of intellectual pursuit, Dewey wrote "40 books and over 700 articles, in addition to countless letters, lectures, and other published works" (xv).

Winnicott was also a prolific writer, in addition to maintaining a thriving pediatric and psychoanalytic practice. Despite his extensive medical and scientific background, Winnicott looked at each case anew, with little pre-conceived solutions or notions. This likely contributed to his ability to develop new theories that are still applicable because

they allow us leeway in interpreting and in finding solutions. Despite all of his academic and intellectual achievements, Dewey admitted that "the forces that have influenced me have come from persons and from situations more than from books" (Encyclopaedia, 2005, LW 5: 155).

Winnicott never subscribed to one psychoanalytic society. Rodman's (2003) biography, *Winnicott: Life and Work*, gives personal insight into Winnicott's personality, including reasons why Winnicott chose to remain independent and outside the major, Freudian and Kleinian analytical societies of his time. Similarly, Dewey never wanted to be identified with any one tradition, although many people identify Dewey with the progressives and the pragmatists. There were many competing groups that felt they had the answers to America's social and educational problems; some of them included the *humanists*, *developmentalists*, *social efficiency educators*, and *social meliorists* (Kliebard, 1995, pp. 9-23). Dewey studied the pros and cons of each group carefully, and chose the aspects that he valued most to include in his personal philosophy. According to Kliebard (1995),

> The paradox of John Dewey is that, although he gained worldwide recognition during his own lifetime and has unquestionably earned a place in the panoply of the world's great educators, his actual influence on the schools of the nation has been seriously overestimated or grossly distorted. (p. 27)

It is ironic that Dewey's name is closely tied with education, yet according to historians such as Kliebard (1995), Dewey did not actually influence education as much as other people. We can question what it is in Dewey that we revere and makes us want to be more like him. About Winnicott, we can ask what it is about Winnicott's ideas that

attract us, yet keep us from tying up his ideas into neatly wrapped packages. Is it because they both drew from many sources and did not pigeon-hole themselves into an unbudgable theory as did, say George Counts and Melanie Klein? Interestingly, while educators have historically linked themselves to Dewey, that tendency is waning, whereas while psychoanalysts have not historically linked themselves to Winnicott, that trend is waxing. In fact, Winnicott's research and theories are used by literary critics, educators, social workers, and many other professions as well as psychoanalysts, such as Deborah Britzman, Julie Webber, Michael Eigen, and Michael Parsons.

Like Winnicott, Dewey drew his own viewpoints from many different sources. Dewey was adept at considering more than one side and reaching a balanced middle-of-the-road approach in his examination of the philosophies of Rousseau and Plato. Dewey thought Rousseau emphasized the individual and that Plato overemphasized the society. Instead, he agreed with Vygotsky that the

> mind and its formation is a communal process. Thus the individual is only a meaningful concept when regarded as an inextricable part of his society, and the society has no meaning apart from its realization in the lives of its individual members. (wikipedia, 2005)

Dewey believed in a well thought-out balanced approach that leaves room for continual evolutionary movement.

Both Winnicott and Dewey had thorough intellectual training; however, it is interesting that they both valued the insights that children brought them. Dewey went as far as to construct the Laboratory School so that he could have direct and daily contact with students. Winnicott, because of his pediatric practice, naturally had daily contact

with children. Dewey's School was set up so that students' natural inclinations and interests were taken advantageously and garnered at the moment they were evidenced. Winnicott's office was arranged so that children felt comfortable and that whatever was on their mind could be spontaneously tapped. This included the paper and pencil that Winnicott always kept handy to play the Squiggle Game, a game of free-association drawing with which children feel comfortable expressing themselves.

Winnicott's personality was heavily shaped by the many women in his life, including his mother, two sisters, and three hired domestics in the Winnicott household. Likewise, Dewey was also influenced by his mother and educators, Jane Addams and Ella Flagg Young. Dewey gives credit to Ella Flagg Young as the one person who influenced his educational ideas more than anyone else (Schugurensky, 2005). Rodman (2003) points out that Winnicott's identification with the feminine and nurturing personality came from the female influences in his life. Dewey likely derived his sense of justice and compassion for others from seeing, and at times helping with, his mother's religious charitable work.

A large portion of Winnicott's and Dewey's thinking concerned aspects of creativity. Dewey was not a fine artist, but through his reading and appreciation for experiencing art, he came to be regarded as an expert on aesthetics. This is a paradox about Dewey in which I am intrigued. He became an expert in aesthetics (and other fields) by diligently studying everything he could obtain on the subject. Dewey himself chose a life of academia, but he always tried to remain close to the workers entrenched in their perspective fields. One cannot address "the calling" without recognizing teacher

relationships with students and with parents are of an upmost value to the process of instruction and learning, but must function as designed.

Teachers' Contributions

Winnicott emphasizes how important the *first* relationship between the parent and child is to pave the way for a lifetime of creative relationships and endeavors; however, he also recognizes the role teachers take on as children become more independent of their parents. Winnicott (1996) writes that

> the teacher who is in a good position to deal with the parent who has read about
>
> the unconscious is not the one who has also read a book on the subject. Rather is
>
> he the one who has a deep intuitive understanding of human nature, an experience
>
> of inner and outer relationships, a capacity for happiness and enjoyment of life
>
> without denial of its seriousness and difficulty. Such a one may have chosen to
>
> deepen his understanding and develop his natural talents further by undergoing
>
> analysis himself. (p. 85)

Teachers and students are often with one another for many hours during the week. This calls for a solid knowledge of psychological phenomena that exist in close relationships.

One phenomenon about which teachers can benefit, is the interplay between subjectivity and outer objectivity. The line between inner subjectivity and outer objectivity can be translated to private and public life, respectively. Stuart Hall (1996) relates the seriousness of this discrepancy:

> I learned about culture, first, as something which is deeply subjective and
>
> personal, and at the same moment, as a structure you live. I could see that all

these strange aspirations and identifications which my parents had projected onto

us, their children, destroyed my sister. (p. 488)

Pink Floyd's lyrics, written by Roger Waters (1979), "Mother's gonna put all of her fears

into you" proved prophetic in Hall's sister's life. Hall (1996) continues talking about his

sister:

 She was the victim, the bearer of the contradictory ambitions of my parents in

this colonial situation. From then on, I could never understand why people

thought these structural questions were not connected with the psychic—with

emotions and identifications and feelings because, for me, those structures are

things you live. I don't just mean they are personal, they are, but they are also

institutional, they have real structural properties, they break you, destroy you.

(p. 488)

The family, the school, and society are all institutions, and we must take great care to

bring the best we have to each of these places. The only way to improve from one

generation to the next is by understanding the psychoanalytic drives and defenses behind

behaviors. This can be best accomplished through psychoanalysis.

Britzman (2003) compares teachers with psychoanalysts by writing that "analytic

time is quite different from the ordinary chronology of classrooms, grades, semesters, and

years. It is a play between reality and phantasy, between time lost and refound, and

between the meeting of the unconscious and the narrative" (p. 3). This is especially true

because of all of the mandates which compel teachers to "teach the test" in the shortest

period of time. Relationships take time and space. Certainly relationships occur in

families, the strength of which varies between the members and the length of the

interaction within the family unit and varies from mere minutes a day to several hours. A therapist and a patient come together at a regular time each week for about an hour and wait for the trust and the relationship to unfold. A teacher has the advantage of seeing students every day in the classroom, at lunch, on the playground, and with friends.

Often teachers are seen as extensions of the parent/therapeutic role. If a teacher is intuitive, as Winnicott describes above, the teacher and the student are in a place where time will allow a relationship to unfold. Education needs psychology and psychology needs education. As Britzman writes, "where interpretation was, there education shall become" (p. 3). She further explains, "If Freud tried to undo the aftereffect of education without educating, his understanding of education was made from trying to distinguish learning from indoctrination, influence from hypnotic suggestion, and working through from acting out" (p. 5). Education is a very psychological endeavor. One must be aware of the psychological phenomena that exists in education. Teachers often take on the role of parents, and similar relationship dynamics that exist at home also exist at school. There is also a dimension of females teaching in a patriarchal system, which has, mostly unconsciously, had consequences in the psyches of teachers and students.

Similarities exist between psychoanalysis and education. For example, analysts and analysands come together every week at a regular time, as do teachers and students. Analysts prompt analysands to remembering their past thus learning more about themselves. Teachers guide students to learn history, science, and literature thus, hopefully, imparting knowledge that will connect students to what courses within themselves. Both teachers and analysts must patiently wait for students and analysands to have epiphanies of insight. Teachers and analysts must listen patiently while students

and analysands articulate their thoughts, which is the best way of learning and retaining truths and knowledge.

Mothers and Literature

When parents are attuned to their children, they derive great insights into the personalities and into the creative abilities of their children. Mothers, in particular, need to write on this subject because most of the mothers with whom I have spoken about this subject have commented that their newborns had particular personalities and, in many cases, a decided personality from the moments they first felt their babies move, first laid eyes on their babies, first held their babies, and first fed and cared for their babies. Hillman (1996) follows the beliefs of philosophers and psychologists from Plato to Jung that humans have a fundamental personality to their individuality.

Not only did I feel a distinct personality when all four of my children were born, but, interestingly, they all had different preferences when it came to books and literature. I am quite certain that my mother's five daughters also had distinct tastes for reading. The first three books I remember my mother reading to me were: 1.) *Where the Wild Things Are* by Maurice Sendak; 2.) *The Little House* by Virginia Burton, and; 3.) a funny book entitled *Tall Tales* (which I have since not been able to find). I do not think my mother read much to me because she had four other children, three being younger than me, who demanded her attention. She must have made these rare readings very special and entertaining in order for me to have such vivid and fond memories of these books and our time together. I feel she enjoyed these as much as I did, especially *Where the Wild Things Are*. In fact, I love these books so much today, at age forty-four, because *she* loved and shared them with me.

My mother was a very passionate person. She definitely had her ups and downs; this is a nice way of saying she likely had bi-polar disorder. Looking back, it makes sense that she chose these particular books to read to me. The first one, Sendak's (1991) *Where the Wild Things Are*, she read as ferociously as the monsters in the story were. I remember being quite mesmerized and a little frightened of the book. The second one, Burton's (1969) *The Little House*, was read by my mother with compassion. She remarked how sad the little house must have been when it was abandoned in the big city. To this day, I sometimes cry when I read it. Whether I cry because of the content of the book, because of sentimental memories it brings back of my mother, or because of a combination of both reasons, I am not sure. Louise Rosenblatt, originator of reader-response theory, would likely agree that my responses are typical of many readers. The third and final book I remember so well because it was so funny. My family and I would sit in the living room flipping the three flaps back and forth to make up a variety of hilarious stories.

I do not recall much of school at a young age and certainly not anything specific regarding reading. I was not a particularly good student; I think this was because my parents moved often, and I switched schools about once or twice a year until I was twelve. At age twelve, I entered high school (in eighth grade) and stayed put until graduation. Living in one home and attending the same school was beneficial to my academics. I was a slow reader, but I tried really hard.

The first book I remember devouring on my own was Judy Blume's (1970) *Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret.* I related to this book because of the personal problems of the main character and her family problems. I read a couple other Judy

Blume books, but S. E. Hinton (1967, 1971, 1975,) was my heroine, with her books, *The Outsiders*; *That Was Then, This is Now*, and *Rumblefish*. I was attracted to these characters who came from tough circumstances and sometimes did or did not "make it." They were realistic because they did not have ideal, polyanic conclusions. Additionally, I was *very* impressed with the insightfulness and talent this young author possessed; I believe Hinton was only sixteen when she wrote her first book.

Other books I remember loving were required books about which I had to write essays. These included *The Scarlet Letter* by Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Once and Future King* by E. B. White, and *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee. I remember these books so well because of the demands made on me to analyze them and respond critically to them. Ever since then, I have enjoyed American and English classical literature tremendously and even considered majoring in literature. I enjoy the back and forth fluidity of the reading/writing process. I see the necessity and vitality of interchanging the two and using them together for a more complete language arts experience. Eisner (1998) describes the writing process adeptly:

> Writing forces you to reflect in an organized and focused way on what it is you want to say. Words written confront you and give you the opportunity to think again. Thinking on its own, without the commitment that writing exacts, makes tolerable—even pleasurable—the flashing thought, the elusive image. When one writes, the public character of the form demands organization, and when autobiographical, the problems of appearing egoistic or saying too much or seeming self-promoting are constant threats. (p. 57)

The term "language arts" is a lovely one which invokes, in my mind, the close relationship between reading, writing, and the arts.

As an adult, being a lifelong student of learning, I have had to read a lot for informational purposes. There are three main genres that I prefer to read: informational, classic literature, and fantasy. It is interesting that I enjoy fantasy so much; I have to say that J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* are my all-time favorite books. I am enthralled with the "little guy" accomplishing heroic deeds. It suits my philosophy of life—big changes start from the grass roots, one person at a time.

I love books, I love reading, I love literature, and I love writing. I strive to impart this to my students on the very first day of school each year. I present students with choices. I ask questions of them to discover what they enjoy doing and what they enjoy reading. I divide them into literature circles, which are like book clubs for children. In individual groups, they are allowed to select usually books of their choice. In 4th and 5th grade, I tap their emotional selves. I take them back to their first reading experiences by reading their childhood favorites, such as Dr. Seuss, Maurice Sendak, Judith Viorst, and Eric Carle. I want them to remember from where their joy of reading originated. I also read aloud advanced books so they hear more complex sentence structures and more difficult presentation of ideas to challenge and push their envelope. Occasionally, I read aloud in Spanish. This really touches Hispanic students that I can read in Spanish. The teacher is reaching out to them in a very unique and caring way—the way a mother communicates to her child—in the child's native language. The interaction between the child and mother is germaine to learning. I try to utilize this in the classroom.

Madeleine Grumet has written extensively on what it means to be a mother and

educator. Grumet (1988) admits that

> entering the field of curriculum theory as a grown-up woman, deeply involved in
>
> the care of our three children, I was somewhat astonished to discover that only the
>
> public activities and interests of men were being studied as significant sources of
>
> contemporary education. (xv)

In particular,

> The experiences of family life, of bearing, delivering, and nurturing children,
>
> were absent from this discourse. Silent too was the language of the body, the
>
> world we know through our fingertips, the world we carry on weight-bearing
>
> joints, the world we hear in sudden hums and giggles. (xv)

For Grumet, who taught at the university level, this lack was more pronounced. As
Grumet (in Adan, 1991) reveals in her introduction to Jane Adan's book *The Children in
Our Lives: Knowing and Teaching Them*, "At conferences my colleagues talk about their
kids for hours in the coffee shops, but rarely talk about children, theirs or anyone else's at
the podium" (x-xi). It is so important for mothers who are teachers to recognize their
mothering style in the classroom. It is also important to know our students in similar
ways that we know our own children. Jessica Benjamin (1998) adds to this by reminding
us that "the mother's mental work is so essential to the constitution of mind, and yet the
mother's own subjectivity was not represented" (xv). Women like Grumet, Benjamin,
Doll, Morris, and Greene have been writing about women thus giving them a voice.
Work is still needed to continue making women's voices louder and stronger.

For most, like me, who teach in primary, middle, and high schools, navigating between waters of schools of children and our own children is more natural and prominent. Grumet (1988) describes this well:

Women who teach make this passage between the so-called public and private worlds daily. . . . They go back and forth between the experience of domesticity and the experience of teaching, between being with one's own children and being with the children of others, between being the child of one's own mother and the teacher of another mother's child, between feeling and form, family and colleagues. (xv)

Finally, Grumet gives poignant advice:

For, if the world we give our children is different from the one we envisioned for them, then we need to discover the moments when we, weary, distracted, and conflicted, gave in, let the curtain fall back across the window, and settled for a little less light. (xv)

Taking Grumet's advice, I think back to when my mother read to me as a child and also to my mother's bookshelf behind the kitchen table that I often stared at as a teenager. On it lay books entitled *My Mother, Myself*; *Creative Divorce*; *Passages*; *Your Erroneous Zones*; *How to Live Rich When You're Not*; and, *What Color is Your Parachute*? I never bothered to read most of these books, but I stared at them wondering what they revealed about my mother. I have picked up a couple of these books at yard sales with the intention of reading them to see if I can capture something of what my mother was about.

As a teenager, I remember my mother encouraging me to read Nancy Friday's (1977) book, *My Mother, My Self*. I recently bought a copy of it a library used book sale,

and this one I read. In this book, Friday makes the point that we cannot escape our parental upbringing, especially the affects our mothers had on us. I agree. Whether we consciously realize it, our mothers are the biggest influence in our lives. They are the first teachers in children's lives.

Now I know why my mother gave me this book – to tell me that she loved me and that she tried to love me the best she could in her limited capacity. I love her for her Herculean efforts. Now she is dead, but I remember her taking my hands in her small strong hands and saying, "I am proud of you. I love you even though my actions and words sometimes contradict this. I believe in you, that you can do anything you desire and work hard enough for." Mary Aswell Doll (1995) shares a poignant coming-to-grips with her mother in this quote:

> The next time I saw my mother she was in the hospital. She had had a series of lung emboli, was tied to an oxygen machine, and had lost weight. I was wearing her clothes—pair of trousers slightly too large around the waist, white blouse with a necktie. I wanted her to see herself in me. But I was unprepared for a similar effort on her part. For, when I entered her otherwise colorless hospital room, there, spread over her like a riot of purple, was an afghan I had made long ago for her seventieth birthday. It had seventy squares of her favorite shades of paint, one square for each year of her life. I had never seen her use it in the twelve years she had had it. Now she seemed to be thanking me, as I was her. "Come closer, my daughter," she said as I entered, "I want to see what you are wearing." We were mirrors for each other's gaze. (p. 85)

Mothers were our first teachers; most teach as best they can, sometimes using books to help them along the way. Even though some mothers try, they fall short of providing what their children need. In worse cases, some mothers never know their daughters, and some daughters never know their mothers. Hopefully, as in Doll's case, even though we may become estranged from our mothers, we will find them somewhere along the way. And in finding our mothers, we come closer to finding ourselves.

Last Christmas break I did little writing and concentrated instead on reading some novels that had long intrigued me and called out for me to read them. These novels were *Ethan Frome, Crime and Punishment*, and *My Anotonia*. The novel that coursed within me most was Willa Cather's (1999), *My Antonia*. I can identify with the heroine, Antonia, who is a vibrant, loving woman who chooses the path of motherhood over something deemed more "accomplished." Ironically, the main character, a man who has loved Antonia since he first laid eyes on her as a teenager, not only for her physical beauty but for her beautifully uncomplicated personality, mentors one of her sons (from her marriage to another man) because he chose to marry an aristocratic woman who did not want and never did have children; he realizes what he missed in not fathering children of his own. Antonia chose the more ordinary path of becoming a mother; they both realized how rich she became because of it. While he gained all the material wealth, she gained the wealth of solid relationships with each of her children.

Women are often faced with balancing motherhood and career. Grumet suggests that we women combine the two in order to be true to ourselves, true to our children, and true to those with whom we work. Grumet (1988) writes:

Curriculum is a project of transcendence, our attempt while immersed in biology

and ideology to transcend biology and ideology. . . .This perception invites us to

refuse to run the classroom like a conveyance, designed to transport children from

the private to the public world, but to make it instead a real space in the middle,

where we can all stop and rest and work to find the political and epistemological

forms that will mediate the oppositions of home and workplace. (p. 20)

This is a challenge that many men are incapable of attaining, perhaps because they have

not historically had the challenge of trying or needing to "do it all." Kristeva (in Grumet,

1988) seems to invite women and men to meet the challenge by doing the following:

By listening, by recognizing the unspoken speech, even revolutionary speech; by

calling attention at all times to whatever remains unsatisfied, repressed, new,

eccentric, incomprehensible, disturbing to the status quo. A constant alternation

between time and its "truth," identity and its loss, history and the timeless,

signless, extra-phenomenal things that produce it. An impossible dialectic; a

permanent alternation; never the one without the other. It is not certain that

anyone here and now is capable of it. An analyst conscious of history and

politics? A politician tuned to the unconscious? A woman perhaps . . . (p. 30)

When I say that being a teacher has improved my abilities as a parent, and that being a

parent has made me a better teacher, I mean that I am continuously teetering on a live

tension wire between the two. Considering Helen Reddy's (2009) lyrics, "I am woman,

hear me roar," (p. 1) I am strong and courageous enough to stay grounded and tame the

lion in the circus act of life, yet I am also agile and wise enough to walk the tight-rope

between home life and work. My desire and goal is to walk the tight-rope quickly and effortlessly without needing a safety net below me.

Nancy Friday (1977) describes honestly the predicament many women find themselves in at one time or another:

> Mothers may love their children, but they sometimes do not like them. The same woman who may be willing to put her body between her child and a runaway truck will often resent the day-by-day sacrifice the child unknowingly demands of her time, sexuality, and self-development. (p. 21)

This need to procreate as well as self-create is at the heart of the problem of being a mother. Perhaps mothers who struggle with such dilemmas similarly voice their concerns as does Friday in an imaginary conversation with her own mother:

> There are some things I know about. I'll teach them to you. The other stuff—sex and all that—well, I just can't discuss them with you because I'm not sure where they fit into my own life. We'll try to find other people, other women who can talk to you and fill the gaps. You can't expect me to be all the mother you need. I feel closer to your age in some ways than I do my mother's. I don't feel that serene, divine, earth-mother certainty you're supposed to that she felt. (pp. 19-20)

This was a soliloquy that Friday imagined her mother uttered to her. Fortunately, my mother actually had a similar conversation with me. Even though my mother made choices I did not understand, I appreciated the fact that she was trying to juggle being a single mother, working full time, and somehow trying to make space and time for herself. The predicament women are in is that, as the primary caretakers, they must make decisions as to how much to dedicate to family, friends, work, and personal endeavors.

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It is difficult for mothers to make their mark in stone. Doll (2000) discovers "that the story of the woman quest leaves a trail remarkable for its lack of marks in stone" (p. 99). Woman is more like water. "Highest good . . ." explains Lao Tzu (in Doll, 2000) ". . . is like water. Because water excels in benefiting the myriad creatures without contending with them and settles where none would like to be, it comes close to the way" (vii). My mother said that she felt like a small piece of butter trying to spread herself over an entire loaf of bread. In attempting to cover it, she had the constant fear of tearing the bread. I understand and share her fear now that I am a mother of four, working full time, and seeking my doctoral degree. I find myself juggling a full time job, family, friends, and just-me time all the time.

Winnicott appreciates the creativity and imagination of women. He accepts paradox and delights in the endless creative possibilities brought about by internal and external occurrences in a person's life that begin at birth. Winnicott considers and expounds upon the innate personality of the child and the child's environment; he is primarily concerned with the maternal environmental relationship. Both mothers and infants have needs. Some needs are altruistic, like the need to love and cultivate relationships, but some needs are selfish. Babies have instinctual urges to survive that border on predatory while mothers are ready to give their bodies over to the baby as though they would be attacked. This is a different way in which to look at the bonding and nursing period. Take it from one who has breastfed four children for a period of about one year with each child. By the end of that first year I wondered whether my body was my own, and I longed to have it solely mine again. But the urge to give it over to my baby for 12 months was equally as strong.

What happens when the mother does not have the urge to nurse and be nurturing? She is not considered a good-enough mother, and the baby suffers as a result. Winnicott mentions the importance of giving mothers the time, space, and resources so that they can give undivided attention to their newborns. This is the only way in which a mother can properly give the baby exactly what he needs when he needs it thus providing the illusion that he created it. Winnicott also asks us to accept this philosophical and real paradox of the baby feeling he creates that which he needs. When my first child—who was colicky—cried, it was my job to produce nourishment in the form of a breast, bottle, pacifier, or attention. Delivering this promptly gave her the illusion that she produced it, and in a way she did—by crying. Inversely, I produced it out of a sense of knowing what she needed. It is this mutual experience that is treasured reward of parenting and of being parented.

Parents and Teachers Coming Together for One Purpose

It is ironic that education in the United States claim to promote individuality while its policies aim at producing equal citizenry. Any good mother will say that she loves her children equally. This means that she does not love one child any *more* or any *less* than the other; but it would be more accurate to say that she, in fact, loves her children *differently* – differently because each child is unique and requires love specially tailor fit. I spend more time with my son on his homework and school projects than I do my daughters; an outsider could construe that I love him more. However, I spend more time with him because he needs my help in this area more than they do; I love him in the way he needs to be loved, customized and personally unique to him.

Our public schools face the same situation. Even though many schools' mission statements often proclaims that the goal is to give each student equal treatment"; we hope that schools do not literally mean that each child receives the exact same treatment. Pinar (2003) asserts that "rather, knowledge and intelligence as free exploitation become wings by which we take flight, visit other worlds, and return to this one to call others, especially our children, to futures more life-affirmative than the world we inhabit now" (p. 11). Schools must remember that each child needs to be taught differently according to that student's unique personality. Administrators may acknowledge how precariously these students came about developing their own personalities. I am touched and can relate to the following quote by teacher Karen Gallas (in Appelbaum, 2003):

> As the years progressed, my concept of 'teaching well' altered and good teaching became more than believing that I was covering important curricula and that children were mastering subject matter. I wondered what was the most important part of my work. Was it to get the content across, or to get out of the way of the very serious work that children do below the surface?. . . The classroom is like perishable art. It has an evanescence that makes it, for me at least, energizing and joyful, but also bittersweet, because the events are impossible to hold in time as a complete entity. Being a teacher researcher, however, has given me some capacity to grab onto fragments of the life that is streaming by me. (p. 31)

I am grateful to be writing this while in the midst of teaching, because it forces me to analyze myself, my students, and to learn what is best for my students and to continue on my path.

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In many instances, American education is viewed as having a creative emphasis. China is in the middle of revamping its education system (using American schools as examples) to achieve more creative "thinking outside the box" entrepreneurialship among its students. Ironically, America opts to focus on improving students' objective scientific and mathematical skills (and China is the chosen model). It would be fairer to consider the personality of each child by helping each student identify where his or her strengths lie based on their developed and developing personalities. But that realization is outside the No Child Left Behind box and stored away because creativity is individualistic and challenging to those in authority.

As a parent and teacher, one of my major goals to identify each of my children's talents and strengths and to capitalize on them. When I ask successful people from any area of endeavor what factors were pivotal in their success, they almost always give credit to a parent or teacher, one who identified an existing talent, nurtured an existing talent, and took time to create an environment conducive to bringing that talent fully alive. This is what we, as parents and teachers, can and must do.

"All creativity, in Winnicott's view, is intrinsically connected to the creativity of the infant by which it becomes itself" (Parsons, 2000, p. 159). Winnicott holds that a person cannot be creative unless he is being himself, and a person learns to be himself in the first months of life. Otto Rank (in Parsons, 2000) agrees that "the creative artistic personality is thus the first work of the productive individual, and it remains fundamentally his chief work, since all his other works are partly the repeated expression of this primal creation" (p. 159). While Rank applies this primal creation to the artist, Winnicott bestows the ability to live creatively on a greater portion of the population.

The ability to live creatively derives from the first moments that an infant bridges inner and external, or shared reality, which "constitutes the greater part of the infant's experience, and throughout life is retained in the intense experiencing that belongs to the arts and to religion and to imaginative living, and to creative scientific work" (Winnicott in Parsons, p. 160). If parents, teachers, and students will conceive of the importance of the first few months of life and how this formative time affects the rest of one's life and one's ability to live a healthy creative life, our emphases would clearly be different. To do otherwise is to arguably be inhumane.

A quality I feel that makes me a good mother and teacher is my ability to remember the past—what it was like to be a child. This is why I let my kids jump in rain puddles without their boots on, paint all over the sidewalk and wait a month for a good rain to wash the paint away, and eat junk food all day long until they say they never want to eat unhealthy again. I also remember what it was like to be a student and not being able to stay still more than 20 minutes at a time, feeling like I would go crazy if I did not get to go outside for at least 15 minutes during the school day, and wanting the teacher to acknowledge me in some small way at least once a week. Imagining what it is like to be the other person is what good parents and good teachers do best.

No Success Can Make up for Failure in the Home

Some historians have dubbed the area around the Tigres-Euphrates River (where Iraq is today) as the "cradle of civilization" because they have found artifacts evidencing signs of one of the first civilized societies. My own spin on this phrase, the "cradle of individuation," regards the *family* as the cradle of civilization *and* individuation. The family is where an individual begins. However, it must be acknowledged that the

individual is shaped by his or her environment as well as innate characteristics.

Ferdinand de Saussure (1966) goes as far to say that "every means of expression used in society is based, in principle, on collective behavior or—what amounts to the same thing—on convention" (p.68). Marie-Louise von Franz (1980a) writes that

> the past has handed on some rare reports of individual experiences, but on the
>
> whole, symbols of the unconscious reach us in the more traditional way, due to
>
> the fact that, normally, mankind has not approached the unconscious individually,
>
> but with few exceptions, has related to it indirectly through religious systems.
>
> (p. 18).

Winnicott (1999), writing about democracy in general, asks, "How can one study the emotional development of society? Such a study must be closely related to the study of the individual. The two studies must take place simultaneously" (p. 156). Val Richards (1996) adds that

> Coltart's acknowledgement of Winnicott's "there is no such thing as a baby"
>
> (1952, p. 99) brings us back to the recognition that the arena of all Self experience
>
> is, for all its "splendid isolation", inexorably shared. The potential Self emerges
>
> through relationship of a particular kind, through engagement in the intermediate
>
> space between two or more participants, asserting, "We cannot speak ourselves".
>
> Coltart faces the painful as well as the positive implications of this, suggesting,
>
> finally, one might say, that "there is no such thing as a Self", in an enquiry that is
>
> saturated with selving. (p. 6)

Richards's words remind us that we are not alone, no matter how much we might like to be. We are products of many circumstances and experiences, and the most important circumstance is the family in which we grow up.

Winnicott was a lifetime advocate of the importance of the family in raising children. I have heard that no success can make up for failure in the home; Winnicott would likely agree with the caveat that we can and must surely try. He was one of the first psychoanalysts to emphasize the importance of environment on the individual. Indeed, most of his theories were based on this belief. Unlike many psychiatrists who doubted the capabilities of many parents in raising their children, Winnicott had faith in parents' natural tendencies to know and do what is best for their children. Best known for his terms "good-enough mother" and "ordinary devoted mother" and for his ideas on potential space, holding environment, and transitional object theory, Winnicott spoke to parents, educators, and health care professionals in articles, seminars, and radio broadcasts throughout his life. Winnicott's job was to make up for failures in the family. He likely would agree that no matter how hard psychoanalysts, educators, and social workers try to make up for failure in the home, there is no substitute for good-enough parenting.

Winnicott was disappointed that he did not have more formal teaching opportunities, but one could argue that speaking to hundreds or thousands of people in articles, seminars, and radio broadcasts is a form of teaching. Winnicott's professional life was spent in pediatrics, but he soon realized the importance of the psyche as well as the body and found parents just as concerned about the psychological and emotional well-being of their children as they were the physical health of their children. He

believed that, "whereas adult psychiatry must unfortunately be split off from medical and surgical practice, this splitting off need never occur where infants and children are concerned." (Winnicott, 1988, pp. 1-2). Winnicott recommended being knowledgeable about psychology from the very beginning of a human's existence—the psychology of individuality.

Age of Adolescence

I agree with psychologists who say that this is, arguably, the generation of the adolescent. Education and psychology went through a period when it focused on the development of the child. Adolescents have always been more difficult because they are in between a child and an adult. In some ways, adolescents are forced to grow up too fast because of their exposure to a smorgasborg of exciting elements that exist in society today (movies, videos, video games, television, sex, drugs, and the like) Burton, Obeidallah, and Allison (in Dimitriadis, 2003) explain the dilemmas that many adolescents face:

> Within the context of the school setting, adolescents are often treated like "older children" who require assisted learning. At home, however, some inner-city adolescents are treated like "grown folks," often saddled with adult responsibilities that are in direct conflict with the "older child" treatment and adult monitoring they receive in school. (p. 9)

However, in other ways such adolescents do not mature appropriately; for example, many teenagers are allowed to stay at home with no responsibilities. Winnicott (1990) cautions that "premature ego development or premature self-awareness is no more healthy than is delayed awareness" (p. 22). Many adolescents seem to have a premature self-awareness,

but not the self-developed skills to address this self-awareness. The worst-case

consequences of this, which is violence, is analyzed by Julie Webber. This could be

compared with the in-between-ness that Deleuze and others speak of. Perhaps that is

why adolescents have always intrigued me. Adolescents are much more capable than we

assume, yet we permit them so little with which to navigate their course. Education is the

compass and the map which is supposed to lead to a successful life.

Winnicott's personality resonated with adolescents whom he treated. In addition,

his unwillingness to adhere to any one school of thought, made him popular with the

American culture. His ideas were fresh, timely, and creative in a time that was focused

on intellectual trends. Rodman (2003) explains that "it has been noted that 'Do your own

thing,' one of the mottos of the 1960s, was typical of Winnicott long before it became a

worldwide slogan of youth" (p. 379). While infants and children cling to their

transitional objects, adolescents are trying to let go of theirs, much like the infant tries to

let go of the original object, the mother. Instead of objects, adolescents search out and

cling to ideas and ideals. As Phillips (1994) asserts, "parents [and objects] are replaced

by ideals, and sexual desire is partly usurped by moral principle and ambition" (p. 44).

When institutions of education expose young adults to a variety of meaningful literature,

they give them further vessels in which to place their ideals. We will have failed them

just as the not-good-enough mother fails from time to time if we do not give them what

their souls need to thrive. Phillips advises that "ideals should feel like affinities, not

impositions. It is striking how tyrannical—hypnotic and intransigent—people's ideals

can be. And this is particularly vivid, I think, during adolescence and young adulthood"

(p. 51).

You may have heard that "those who can do, those who can't teach." It is my belief that any person who stays in the teaching field for any length of time *must* be able to do; otherwise, they would not survive the rigors of actual, successful teaching—the imparting of knowledge. The teaching field contains people who are thinkers and reflectors, who are caring and nurturing. This path of teaching allows such people to flourish. Of all my experiences working in different fields, teaching has provided immense satisfaction and the fulfillment of a calling. These characteristics are vital to being a good, effective and content teacher.

Teachers have the responsibility of taking these natural traits of being caring thinkers to a higher level. This higher level is that of being self-reflective, and I have experienced no better way of being self-reflective and self-knowing than by participating in psychoanalysis. Dewey (1964) left no doubt when he said, "every method or device employed by the teacher that is not in perfect accord with the mind's own workings, not only wastes time and energy, but results in positive and permanent harm" (p. 198). He further stated that "to know these things is to be a true psychologist and a true moralist, and to have the essential qualifications of the true educationist" (p. 198). It is one thing to know a topic. For example, I can take a psychology course (as I did) in college and learn *about* some important foundational psychological principles; however, if I want to *know* something, I must experience it firsthand. Thus, I must undergo psychoanalysis *myself* in order to know inwardly and personally those principles that taking a psychology course can only teach me *about*. Robert Young (in Britzman, 2003) goes a step further to warn us that "knowing about something often operates as a defense against knowing it in a deeper, emotional sense" (p. 133). I have acquaintances who spout off their knowledge

of defense mechanisms, while sipping their nightly habitual rum and coke or checking to see whether they, indeed, did lock the front door for the umpteenth time. I know these people have a knowledge of the psychological terms describing their own unhealthy habits. Either they do not recognize that they themselves exhibit some of these defense mechanisms, or perhaps they know to a degree, but are unable or unwilling to bring that knowledge into themselves. According to Britzman (2003), "the symptom [i.e. alcoholism or Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) as shown in the above examples] is a placeholder, made from that volatile combination of wishes and fears that belongs to individuals" (p. 98). For whatever reasons, these individuals are not able to give up these defense mechanisms. "It becomes difficult to say whether talking about it or repressing it is more harmful" (Morris, 2001, p. 36). Morris made this comment in regards to Holocaust survivors and whether repressing the atrocities perpetrated against them might be safer considering, "many Jewish fiction writers, after having written about the Holocaust, committed suicide" (p. 36). Similarly, perhaps admitting the symptom that one has (e.g. alcoholism or OCD) is also to admit a deeper, underlying atrocity in these individuals lives that they are not ready to or might never be ready to confront. In such case, denial and repression might be safer. However, this is assuming the trauma is truly atrocious. Otherwise, it makes better sense for the individual to talk about the problem and understand it, thereby, giving them the power to gain control of and even to expel the negative defense mechanisms and behaviors.

My husband and I were discussing the plight of teenagers in this new millennium. He commented that some teenagers may have too much freedom, based on his paradigm. The real issue is not too much freedom, but not the right kind of freedom. "We treat

adolescents as adults for consumer purposes, but delay their entrance into the productive

system" (Macdonald, 1995, p. 37). American children watch, on average, four hours of

television every day, and this does not include the countless hours they spend on the

computer searching the web, chatting, or playing games, much more time than physical

activity. They also have the freedom to eat what they want, as much as they want,

wherever they want, and whenever they want. My family and I learned while watching

the documentary, *Super Size Me*, produced, written, and directed by M. Spurlock (2004)*,*

that America is the fattest nation in the world with 100 million obese people. Since 1980

the number of overweight adolescents has tripled. In addition, many teenagers are free to

experiment with drugs and sex. I would like to see our youth spend more time in reverie

without all the outward excesses. If we can sit still long enough with no distractions,

maybe we might hear and experience what Percy Bysshe Shelley (in Bachelard, 1988)

puts into poetry: *Listen too, How every pause is filled with under-notes, / Clear, silver,*

icy, keen, awakening tones, / Which pierce the sense, and live within the soul (p. 49). I

am always amazed how awareness comes from being still. All the action in the world

sometimes cannot bring to us thoughts, knowledge, and revelations that come by being

still. Yet, in that stillness, comes the revelation of what we should *do*.

Many parents seem lackadaisical, even oblivious to these superficial freedoms.

However, many teenagers do not have the freedom to make important life decisions.

This is where parents sometime draw the line. This is where many parents dictate to their

children that they must do well in school, must make good grades to ensure college

acceptance, must study a certain subject to be successful and make a good living.

Phillips (1994) points out that it is "particularly difficult to entertain alternatives in a

culture so bewitched both by the idea of success and by such a limited definition of what it entails" (p. 58). The safer one feels as a child and youth, the freer they are later to take chances.

Something else I perceive is how influenced youth are by their parents regarding political views. As in many schools, the recent historical presidential race and election of Barack Obama were causes for mock elections. My high schooler, my middle schooler, and my elementary schooler all participated in such elections at school. The mock election results mirrored the actual results. What disheartened me most was when a little girl asked my daughter, Katie, who she voted for. When Katie told her friend, the girl became angry. Productively, we took this opportunity to discuss the pros and cons of each candidate with our 11-year old.

About the closest most schools come to addressing student's personal worth and integrity is through a program that many schools call "Character Education." However, even this character education is aimed at uniformly disciplining each and every student into a set standard; it does not give much insight nor credence into the unique, individual personalities of each student, very much like the federal criminal sentencing guidelines. Instead, as Pinar (1994) describes it,

> Having spent 6 hours a day, 5 days a week, for 12 to 20 years in classrooms dominated at least by words if not by thought, seated in chairs sufficiently uncomfortable to keep our attention off both the chairs and the discomfort, in rooms sterile enough to keep us away from noticing it, and disciplined to keep our thoughts to ourselves, made to listen to words which usually bear little if any

relation to our immediate physical and existential situations, understandably we

are trapped in thought. (p. 15)

I contend that Pinar means that students *do* have important thoughts, they *do* have

something worthwhile to say, but schools are not allowing them to voice their opinions—

to allow them to grow. Instead, they are trapped in their thoughts with no one listening to

them. Michael Moore (2003), in his documentary on the Columbine shootings, *Bowling*

for Columbine, asks punk-rocker Marilyn Manson what the school could have done

differently. Manson replied with a most reasonable answer—that school officials should

have listened to the two teenagers that went on the shooting rampage. Clearly, this

experience has thus taught that teachers need to listen to adolescents, no matter how

grandiose, unconventional, or creative their thoughts may be. Officials and teachers must

also remember what Phillips (1994) states simply, "Psychoanalysis . . . is torn between

helping people to conform and helping them to create revolutions" (p. 131). Of course,

this is no simple task, this tightrope, balancing act. Even expert wire walkers like the

Great Walendas sometimes fall. This balance is precisely the root of my fascination with

Calder's art work – its balancing act of movement and freeness.

When asked to speak on women and fiction at a societal arts gathering, Virginia

Woolf (1929) declared that "a woman must have money and a room of her own if she is

to write fiction; and that, as you will see, leaves the great problem of the true nature of

woman" (p. 2). Woolf boldly spoke on behalf of women's rights in this essay, but I

believe this concept can apply equally to anyone. Winnicott (1987) advises women

planning to become mothers, "to have a space to yourself in which you can start your

infant off with a sound basis for life" (p. 19). Likewise, students today, especially

adolescents, need a room, a physical and a mental room, of their own to think, write, grow, speak, reflect, and do anything that moves them to explore and to express their evolving selves.

In addition, as Webber has researched extensively, schools are going as far as to solicit and promote religious affiliations and prayer in the schools as though this will redeem the school, administration, faculty, and students from poor grades, poor conduct, and poor morale. She examines possible reasons for the violence in schools, and while she does not arrive at any one particular conclusion, she does offer two compelling insights. First, Webber (2003) believes that this newest generation is avoiding political and social responsibilities by spurning their parents' generational values which include, "diverse spirituality, economic equity, peace, public education, civil rights, women's rights, gay rights, and secularism" (p. 68). Second, she proposes that this is a repressed generation "that is physically, spiritually, politically, and emotionally contained in codes imposed by legal structures, police structures, moral codes, and fears of those in power" (p. 68). Indeed, she proffers that this is a lost generation. Not only are they confused and disillusioned by their parents' world views, but these adolescents are also apathetic, even distrusting of organized institutions, including government, corporations, and schools. Historically, each generation has this characteristic as illustrated by The Who's lyrics, written by Pete Townshend (1983), "Talking 'bout my generation / People try to put us down." So, where do they turn? Right now many are turning to consumerism. Perhaps their boredom pushes them to act violently and delinquently. Winnicott (1990) offers insight into the predicament in which many adolescents experience daily:

This layer that is between the unconscious and the conscious is occupied in normal people by cultural pursuits. The cultural life of the delinquent is notoriously thin, because there is no freedom in such a case except in a flight either to the unremembered dream or to reality. Any attempt to explore the intermediate area leads not to art or religion or playing, but to antisocial behaviour that is compulsive and inherently unrewarding to the individual, as well as hurtful to society. (pp. 110-111)

Transitional object theory establishes that the ability to navigate the intermediate area must be achieved as an infant and as a child. Practical approaches to transitional object theory are found in education and in institutions such as the criminal justice system. My husband, who is an assistant district attorney, sees this troubling trend in that younger children are committing rape, robbery, and murder. Clearly, Winnicott is relevant in these circumstances. Transitional object theory establishes that the ability to navigate the intermediate area must be achieved as an infant and child. Thoreau (2003) wrote over 150 years ago that "it is time that we had uncommon schools that we did not leave off our education when we begin to be men and women. It is time that villages were universities, and their elder inhabitants the fellows of universities" (p. 88).

Rather than succumbing to despair, there is hope for those who lacked a good-enough growing-up environment. Adolescents, their parents, and others bold enough can search inside themselves, layer by layer like an onion. There is no better way to address, and possibly end, the confusion and the apathy of this generation of youngsters. The name itself, "psycho," means, "of the mind." "Analysis" means "the study of," and in this case, it means the study of the mind. In his book, *The Engine of Reason, the Seat of*

the Soul, Churchland (2000) takes the reader on a philosophical journey of the brain; during this exploration the reader begins to comprehend the enormous complexity of the mind and brain. People are just beginning to venture beyond the mind's surface.

People experience different journeys through psychoanalysis. For some the journey takes them on an uphill climb. To scale the summit of Mount Psycho-analysis is long, arduous, and frightening, but as one climbs this meaningful journey one can stop often, begin to absorb the grand view of oneself, and when one arrives at its pinnacle, one is privy to the most breathtaking destinations of one's life. However, for some the journey takes them into the dark valleys where they can spiral downward so quickly that they may not be aware of how they arrived in this deep dark place. As a kid, I remember getting excited about going down a steep hill, but the ease and rapidity of running downhill caused me to stumble and hurt myself. Walking up a steep hill was not something I looked forward to, but at least I was sure-footed in my slow ascent.

There are many tools and diversions that tempt the traveler on this trek— intellectualization, consumerism, the use of defense mechanisms, the snare of addictions, secularism, and religion. Any or all of these, without sincere study of one's own mind results in climbing the mountain, only to get to the top and find out that one conquered the wrong one – the wrong path. Psychoanalysis is often different from what one thinks it will be. As Hillman (1975) explains

> Psychological reflections always catch light from a peculiar angle; they are
> annoying at the same time as they are perceptive. Psychologizing sees things
> peculiarly, a deviant perspective reflecting the deviance in the world around. The
> psychological mirror that walks down the road, the Knight Errant on his

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adventure, the scrounging rogue, is also an odd-job man . . . . psychologizing

upon and about what is at hand; not a systems-architect, a planner with directions.

And leaving, before completion, suggestion hanging in the air, an indirection, an

open phrase . . . (p. 164)

It is clear that we have to accept that we do not know where life will lead us, but if we

trust our instincts, we will travel a path that is right for us. It will surprise us. It will

excite us. It may even, at times, scare us.

Think how frightening it must be for teenagers on their journeys. I believe that

part of the problem that many adolescents face in school is that they feel alienated with

themselves and the dominant society. They do not feel connected with anything

worthwhile, they are not reaching necessary personal and social scenic vistas, they are

not valued, and they in turn value nothing.

Families used to be the major nurturing hub for youth, but now that responsibility

has been relegated and delegated to the schools which have failed miserably. "The public

school has lost what little symbolic power it once had to negotiate in the interests of the

free and experimental public place" (Webber 2004, pp. 69-70). Now, adolescents have

nowhere to turn. That is why some turn to violence, in the schools and in the homes.

They are frustrated, and without an inner compass and no wind in their sails, they don't

know where to turn or what to do. As Pinar (1994) believes,

it has taken years of programming and conditioning to take our attention away

from our interior reality, to keep it fixed on the exterior world, both by

suppressing problematic messages from within and by channeling those that do

surface into socially preferred behaviors. (p. 16)

To battle this suppression, Jacques Derrida (1995) writes that he "can no longer teach without trying, at least, to make the content and process of teaching, even down to its details, dislocate, displace, analyze the apparatus in which I am involved" (pp. 27-28).

We function in a time where advantages and opportunities for psychoanalysis is available to more people around the world. Even adults who have often not been afforded this opportunity because of financial, time, and physical restraints can find help in limited federal mental health programs. I want to stress that I do not think that young children cannot benefit from psychiatric treatment. Some need it and get it; some need it and do not find it; some do not need it and receive it. Adolescence is a crucial age in the lifelong venture of self-knowledge because most emotional problems begin to appear at about 12.8 years of age (Chartier, 1998).

Adolescents—between the age of 11 and 18—are making critical choices in their lives that affect the rest of their lives. Thus, middle school, in particular, is a good age to direct young teens because they have three or four school teachers that work as a team. The teachers meet weekly to assess each student's academics and behaviors. The team strives for continuous contact with parents. The team has the flexibility of changing student's schedules to better meet students' needs. Once in high school, the adolescents are not as closely monitored, so the possibility of intervention is less likely.

It does not seem practical to give young children formal lessons in psychology, especially if they are not exhibiting unusual behavior. However, teens are a different matter. Throughout my middle grades education courses, I have read that the adolescent's mind is a jumble of neurons shooting off haphazardly and that their bodies are quivering with hormonal changes and imbalances. Surprising, some educators

believe that in these in-between years, it is almost impossible to teach the kids anything because of their pubescent mental imbalances. I know that this age is a period of great flux, uncertainty, exploring, and experimenting, but I believe the opposite is true—that this is a prime time to educate teenagers. Even the most healthy teen, by virtue of the transitional time in their life and the profound chemical and emotional changes in their bodies and minds, can benefit from gaining psychological insights into themselves, their families, and the culture around them. Give them the tools; direct them; listen to them and validate their issues.

Britzman (2003) asks an important question, "Is professional education somehow reminiscent of earlier episodes of learning authority" (p. 46)? Basically, schools inherit the after-math of education in the family. Parenthood is daunting to those people most willing and best equipped to be parents. What about those less willing, unwilling, or unable to be parents? One of my favorite movies, *Parenthood*, directed by Ron Howard (1989), involves an intergenerational family called the Buckman's. Jason Robards plays the father of four grown children, who are all trying to raise their children with different parenting styles. Plus, they have seven grandchildren. Robards's oldest daughter, who is a divorced mother of two, is having difficulty communicating with her son, and out of desperation, asks her new teenage son-in-law, Todd, played by Keanu Reeves, to talk with her son, Gary, about pubescent issues.   Todd successfully communicates with Gary, who actually smiles for the first time in the movie. In one poignant scene, the mother says to Todd, "I guess a boy Gary's age really needs a man around." "It depends on the man," Keanu replies with uncharacteristic wisdom and proceeds to tell about his alcoholic and abusive father. Finally, Keanu says "You need a license to buy a dog or

drive a car. Hell, you can get a license to catch a fish, but they'll let any . . .[explicatives from movie removed]. . . be a father." Anyone can be a parent even if one possesses poor or no parenting skills.

Many children arrive at school with poor personal and social skills. Consequently, they have psychological and emotional problems that the schools must handle. The problem is that the schools react with them by implementing programs such as Zero Tolerance and No Child Left Behind. Public schools are putting more and more emphasis on standardized testing, as though higher grades will cure our society's ills, especially those of emotional instability.

One positive step schools have taken to ensure a student's personal, emotional, and educational success is that of providing counselors at schools. Fortunately, at schools I have worked at, there have been experienced, wise, and kind counselors who have been knowledgeable about psychological problems. I felt comfortable referring students to them. These counselors were encouraging to the students and had a gift of getting them to open up and tell them what was happening in their personal and home lives to cause them to act out or to perform badly in school. Good counselors value students' emotional health as well as their academic success; they intuit that the healthier students are emotionally the better they perform academically. Some politicians and some educators do not understand this. Counselors must be willing and able to provide a basic level of psychological counseling and refer students to more experienced in-depth professional psychological counseling when needed.

Unfortunately, too many school counselors do not have the wisdom, experience, or compassion to serve unbalanced children. In some higher education counseling

programs, counselors are instructed not to offer counseling. I suppose these "counselors" are acting in more of a bureaucratic capacity concentrating their efforts on administering standardized tests or the school board wants to avoid legal entanglement. A friend of mine who recently graduated with her master's degree in counseling suggested to one of her professors that it would be good for the graduate students in the program to undergo psychoanalysis. She was disturbed by the professor's response that it was not a necessity, nor necessarily a desirable requisite for the program to undergo psychoanalysis oneself. If counselors are discouraged from undergoing and experiencing psychoanalysis, then how can school systems generally expect to help our children? Further, if school counselors are not available to help students, then who will—the absentee, overburdened parent?

In such circumstances, this responsibility falls to the teachers themselves. I know many teachers who are willing, able, compassionate, and up to the challenge – I am one of these. These are teachers who go the extra mile in making these students feel important and capable. Many extra hours after class are spent with students visiting with them, taking them shopping, attending their sports events, and taking time to get to know their parents and their siblings. Unfortunately, even if teachers are willing, they have less and less time to address the students' personal and emotional lives; they are busier attending to administrative duties and "teaching the test" so that their respective students perform better on the standardized tests that the counselors help administer.

Marie-Louise von Franz (1980a) reveals that "if you are fascinated, however, which means that a projection has taken place, then you get emotional and acquire a

tremendous amount of consciousness very easily and quickly. That is the whole secret of

teaching and learning" (p. 117). In reading, Rosenblatt (2005) explains that

> For the triadic linkage of sign and object, Vygotsky says that the meaning of a
>
> sign—I can quote exactly—is "the sum of all the psychological events aroused in
>
> our consciousness by that word." The sign is not only linked to a referent, but this
>
> is embedded in a complex web of associations, sensations, feelings, and ideas.
>
> (xxv)

This is why activating prior knowledge and making everything relevant to the students'

experiences is crucial.

> Activating prior knowledge means nothing; however, if we do not give students

their voice. Suzanne de Castell (1999) points out that

> with the rise of reader response theories, educational applications of
>
> constructivism, writing process and authorship theories and pedagogies, and the
>
> primacy of the monologic, authoritative text has been challenged, and a dialogical
>
> "new literacy" (Willinsky, 1990) commended to teachers as a suitably
>
> "postmodern" educational response to the conditions of postliterate culture.
>
> (p. 404)

These strategies are successful only if we allow the students to lead by their voices, or as

de Castellis puts it, "Central to the theory and practice of this new literacy is its pedagogy

of "coming to voice" through "dialogue"—the text itself is seen as a more or less inert

corpus of potential meanings: it is discourse which brings it to life, realizes its

performativity" (p. 405). What I am experiencing in my language arts class is the

necessity of shortening the literature circle time in order to concentrate on skills that will

be the focus of the next benchmark test. Instead of hearing the students' insights and questions about the novel, I must direct the dialogue to aspects of the novel that I know will be on the CRCT, such as setting, plot, and characters. While these concepts are crucial to literature, I find my students not able to engage in deep meaningful analyses of the book—just role definitions and minor application. I fear that emphasis on the next benchmark test is being prioritized over taking time for meaningful discussion.

In science class last year, we taught electricity and magnetism. We had the copper wires, batteries, light bulbs and magnets all ready to make a circuit. Out of the six groups, only one light bulb lit up indicating a full closed circuit, meaning every element was properly attached and touching. I think reading is like this. If students do not have enough experiences with culture, arts, and life, they cannot attract nor be attracted to good literature. The circuit is not complete. Rosenblatt (2005) writes of the importance of the beginning reader bringing "to the printed symbols a certain fund of experience with life and language. And the reading materials offered to the youngster should bring him verbal symbols that can be linked with that experience" (p. 64). Our school is considering taking away art, music, Spanish, science, and social studies class so that the students can get a double dose of reading and math; but without these other valuable experiences what connection can they make to the literature? With so much experience missing, how can the void be bridged? How can the cornerstone for a successful education be properly set? Rosenblatt asserts that "by establishing the habit of aesthetic evocation and personal response during the elementary years, teachers of children's literature can make a prime contribution to the health of our culture" (p. 86). I question

what contribution teachers and students will make if a benchmark grade is the most important event in their educational life.

Grades are not everything. I made one of the lowest SAT scores of any of my high school friends, yet in college I had the highest GPA in my major. My husband made a low SAT score of 880, yet he graduated Magna Cum Laude from college, Cum Laude from law school, was a member of Law Review, and a published legal writer. I listen to parents at my school tell me the same thing. They were not particularly good students, did not make good grades, but they have turned out fine. These same parents express concern over the stressful emphasis on making the grade on the next test.

As a parent, I find many schools are sufficiently adequate in providing information regarding the grades and the conduct of the students. As a parent, I realize that I am the first teacher in my biological children's lives and that I am primarily responsible for their emotional health. Having had access to psychological counseling, as a student, as a participant, and as a needs evaluation assessor for a psychiatric hospital has aided me and my family's emotional well-being; it makes my heart ache for parents and students that do not have the means or the will to get necessary psychological help they need. I can spend just a few days with my students and I have assessed what their family dynamics are and what problems they face.

A further impediment to education is the change in family lifestyle. Often both parents are working. Children are spending more time at home unsupervised. Parents are working longer hours to pay for things their kids want, not just their needs. And because they are working those hours, the last thing parents want to do is create further tension during the precious little time they share with their children by saying "no" or by asking

the children to do chores. Giving children everything they want and not enough of what they need sets them up for future anxiety and depression. Eigen (1999) sees the problem as this:

> These parents seek a good life and want good things, but they are not
>
> prepared to slow down to deal with personal problems. They imagine that the
>
> mastery of emotional difficulties should conform to the same model as becoming
>
> financially successful. (xvii)

This is exactly what I and many teachers have observed. In Boulder, Colorado, some school systems are taking steps to educate the parents about this epidemic and what they can do about it. I say it is obvious that these children and teenagers need quality time with their parents; children spell love – T I M E.

When my oldest child was in kindergarten the public school she attended offered a parenting seminar. We parents met every week for six weeks and covered different topics, including how to say "no" to your child. This seminar was exactly what I needed at the time because my children, only two—Ali and Chad—at that time, were at the age where they were testing their boundaries and they were becoming more independent. I needed better strategies for effective parenting because *my* parents did not parent effectively. Recently, I was delighted to see a brochure come home from my daughter's school inviting parents and teachers to participate in a parenting workshop that sounded similar to the one I had attended. I could not go, but I hope it was successful in that many parents participated. Perhaps there is a reluctance for parents to admit that they have questions and doubts and lack knowledge as to how to successfully parent because they

think that parenting should be such a natural and easy job. After all, one does not need a license to become one.

As teachers, we have opportunities and the moral duty to educate our students above and beyond the official curriculum. As a middle grades language arts teacher, I have had greater opportunities to discuss more in-depth personal (including psychological) issues with students. This is why I relate to Sumara's (1996) concept of "root thought" (p. 4). Root thoughts occur everyday all the time. Root thought is our feelings and our thoughts we do not express. This validates the belief that what is *not* said is just as important, if not more important, than what *is* said.   Actor Jim Carrey, in *Liar, Liar*, produced by Brian Grazer (1997) plays a disengenuine and opportunistic attorney whose greatest asset is his mouth. The problem is that he never tells the truth. After not showing up for his five year old son's birthday party, the boy makes a wish that his father will tell the truth for a day. Now, Carrey's greatest asset becomes his greatest liability. For that day, whatever Carrey thought came out of his mouth, for good or for bad. This movie was such a hit because people could relate. How many of us mask our true thoughts, our true selves? How many of us wonder what would happen if we uttered the first thing on our minds? How many of us would sometimes like to express our innermost thoughts? To do so could result in social suicide. One idea gained from Freud is that society causes the ego and superego to take precedence over the id. "Instead of staying with that and feeling our fear or curiosity or whatever arises naturally, we grab that thought and try to choke it" (Sumara, p. 4) before we plant our foot in our mouths. This is why, even in a liberal language arts class, where true artful expressions are meant to be exhibited, they rarely are. Getting to the root thought or the "root of the problem"

should be all of humankind's goal. It takes visceral courage, self-confidence, and

willingness to be vulnerable in order to reach the truth for the betterment of education

and the world. This is what each one must do. We must do it for our individual self

worth, and for the sake of the youth.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

This book has been about what makes for a good life. The different chapters touch on those elements most crucial for a successful journey on earth. The second chapter addressed the issues of self-formation and how curriculum theorists and literary critics view this essential aspect of self-hood. In chapter 3, I examined the importance of psychoanalysis in getting to know one's self. The fourth chapter focused on Winnicott's contributions to understanding the first experiences of self. His lifetime of practicing pediatrics and psychoanalysis gave him unmatched insights into the earliest formation of personality and creativity. Chapter 5 concentrated on the importance of creativity in living a more meaningful life. In Chapter 6, I brought the elements of self-hood, psychoanalysis, creativity, and Winnicott's theories together to examine the implications education has on these essential elements of a fulfilling life and also how these elements impact education.

As I conclude this work, I realize there is no such thing as a conclusion. This work has been a part of the stream of life I have dipped into for the moment. I could write this work for the rest of my life, and that is the goal espoused to self and students. Education is more about the journey than it is about the destination. Picasso (2009) believed that no painting is ever finished—"I begin with an idea and then it becomes something else" (p. 1). The artist must pick up where he left off in the next painting just as one picks up in the morning where she left off the night before. I have shared many autobiographical accounts and hope that these accounts have brought the words and thoughts alive. It is my hope that the words and thoughts herein add to the understanding

of psychoanalysis, education, and creativity—all looked at through Winnicott's

theories—and the crucial role they play in living a more complete life and full education.

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