

The
Oneonta Convivium

Proceedings

Volume XVI
2002–2005



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PREFACE

The Oneonta Convivium Committee is pleased to announce that the publication is back, with some changes.

We have changed our name from “Collected Essays” to “Proceedings.” The name change reflects the change in presentations. Since the last volume, we have had presentations that included an original short story reading, and a vocal musical presentation. We look forward to the day when we will have visual presentations as well. We also hope in the future to be able to include those in our publication.

We have also changed our name from the “Oneonta Faculty Convivium” to the “Oneonta Convivium” because our presentations are not limited to faculty presenters. We regularly have student presenters, and we would welcome appropriate presentations from any college employee.

We have kept the numerical sequence because we want to make it clear that this is a continuation of the prior works. Our last publication was volume XIII (dated: 1996–1997, although it included some later materials). These newest volumes represent an accumulation of presentations since that date. Because of the large number of papers, and in order to maintain our format, we have had to issue three volumes (XIV, XV, & XVI). We have tried to contact all presenters from Fall 1996 through Spring 2005 (unless they had already been included). A total of 15 have responded positively, and their works are presented here in chronological order. If we have missed anyone, please contact the Convivium Committee.

The members of the Convivium Committee would like to thank Ms. Sue Nelson & Ms. Katherine Milavec for their ongoing work in organizing the lunches, and Ian Lascell at the Instructional Resource Center for his help and advice in producing these proceedings in printed form. We are also deeply grateful for the continuing support of the College at Oneonta for both the Convivium lunches and the publication of these proceedings.

Robert Rothenberg
For the Convivium Committee

WHAT IS THE CONVIVIUM?

The Convivium Lunches represent opportunities to hear (and perhaps see) what other faculty, students, and staff are doing. We meet for lunch and an informal presentation several times each semester. Presentations may be interesting because the presenters are “doing interesting stuff,” because parts of their work overlap with ours, or merely because it’s a free lunch. We may be entertained, educated, or bored to tears. Sometimes more than one in the same presentation. I have been impressed by the overwhelmingly positive responses we have received.

For the presenters, the experience can also be positive. Most of the presentations are followed by a Q&A session, at which the attendees often make suggestions that provide the presenters with “food for thought” (a particularly appropriate metaphor). The lunches also provide the presenters with a friendly environment in which to present serious research (sometimes in an early stage), and a publication opportunity.

On a personal note, my presentation forced me to rethink a project that I had prepared for a specialized audience (teachers of law), and to make it palatable for a much more general group. Such an exercise brings one’s thoughts into sharper focus, and sometimes suggests questions that would not otherwise occur.

One of the most rewarding aspects of the lunches is the opportunity to hear the student presentations. Since our institution is about the students, it is gratifying to see our efforts “paying off.” Being new to the Committee, I have only attended one such presentation, but both the students were well prepared and enthusiastic. It is unfortunate that we cannot give them more opportunities for such experiences. Finally, one of the most enjoyable opportunities is to see friends and colleagues, and have a few minutes in which to catch up on what has been happening to them since we last met.

ANIMAL OF MASS DESTRUCTION: AN EXOTIC SPECIES THREAT NOW IN OUR MIDST

Thomas Horvath

Biology

Exotic species (also known as non-native, nonindigenous, or alien species) are organisms that are found far outside their native range. These species often are transported, either intentionally or unintentionally, by humans. Exotics pose one of the most problematic environmental concerns worldwide, as they tend to reduce native biodiversity and are extremely difficult to remove once established. In the US, over 50% of the federally listed species (those threatened or endangered) are negatively impacted by exotic species.

One of the most problematic of the exotic species that has taken hold in North America is the zebra mussel (*Dreissena polymorpha*). This tiny mollusk, usually no more than an inch long, has caused wide-spread ecological and economic impacts. Although exotics have been causing problems for centuries, it was the invasion of the zebra mussel that finally prompted federal action to combat exotics (e.g., Executive Order 13112 established the National Invasive Species Council in 1999).

The zebra mussel's ability to successfully invade the freshwaters of North America and be such a nuisance stem from its life cycle. Zebra mussels are dioecious, meaning there are both male and female mussels. Females can produce over a million eggs per reproductive season, which around this part of the country goes from about May to September. Zebra Mussels are broadcast spawners, meaning that eggs and sperm are sent into the water column, where fertilization occurs. A developing larva, or veliger, will stay in the water column for 2–4 weeks, during which time it is easily dispersed anywhere the water is flowing. A mature larva will then settle onto available hard substrate, secure itself by producing byssal threads, and then metamorphose into an adult. The adults continue to secrete new threads, thus firmly attaching to the substrate. Mussel densities can reach many 100's of thousands per square meter, with mussels piling up many inches thick. These dense accumulations on hard substrate, and the mussels feeding habits can disturb the ecosystems they invade.

The most obvious ecological impact zebra mussels have are on our native freshwater clams in the family Unionidae. Unionids provide a favorable substrate for zebra mussel attachment. Large accumulations of zebra mussels on the unionids will eventually kill the host bivalve by depriving it of food, interfering with the normal valve movement, and adding weight to the clam to carry around. In many of the ecosystems now harboring zebra mussels, the unionids have all but disappeared. This direct threat to unionids is regionally problematic because North America is home to the highest biodiversity of unionids in the world. To make matters worse, almost 70% of the native unionids are already listed as threatened or endangered, and the arrival of zebra mussels could be the proverbial straw breaking the camel's back.

Less direct impacts come from the feeding behavior of zebra mussels. They are avid filter-feeders, meaning they siphon water and filter out the suspended material. Some of what they siphon is digested and the remainder is either discarded as feces or pseudofeces, both of which become available to other bottom-feeding organisms. In essence, zebra mussels can “flip” the energetics of lakes from a system normally having high energy resources in the water column to a system where the high energy resources are in the bottom sediments. For example, a typical lake has a trophic structure where the algae feed the zooplankton, which feed the smaller bait fish (planktivores), which then feed the larger game fish (piscivores). In invaded lakes, the zebra mussels out-compete the zooplankton and decrease the available energy to the high trophic levels. However, the bottom-feeding invertebrates often respond positively, which may compensate other energy paths. This issue is certainly unresolved. Additionally, zebra mussels are selective filterers in that they remove the “good algae” and leave the “bad algae” behind. Lakes with zebra mussels often experience blooms of the noxious blue-green algae that can produce substances that are toxic to other organisms including humans. They also impart a bad taste and odor to water. All the filtering activity does allow for more light to reach the bottom of invaded lakes, which stimulates aquatic plant growth.

Economically, the zebra mussel has cost raw water users in North America billions of dollars. Zebra mussels will settle in large numbers in intake pipes, thus clogging them. Industry has to shut down systems for routine cleaning, or install expensive preventative measures to keep pipes zebra mussel free. When zebra mussels get into water bodies that serve as drinking water sources, the above-mentioned problem with algae blooms causes expensive

problems to municipalities. The Great Lakes region has experienced substantial declines in water quality directly related to zebra mussels. Recreational use of infested waters also is impacted. The massive numbers of zebra mussel shells that accumulate can wash-up on shore and be unsightly or cut hands and feet of bathers. Boats and motors are suitable sites for zebra mussel attachment. This biofouling can damage watercraft.

North American has experienced a very rapid expansion of zebra mussels since it was first introduced in around 1986 in Lake St. Clair (between lakes Huron and Erie). Within the first couple of years following the introduction, zebra mussels were found in all the Great Lakes. In the few years that followed, zebra mussels had spread to nearly all connected waterways, including the Mississippi, Ohio, Mohawk, and Hudson rivers. In the early 1990's, inland lakes, not directly connected to the Great Lakes were colonized. New York now has at least 20 lakes colonized by zebra mussels.

Locally, zebra mussels have been surprisingly absent from lakes and rivers, despite the fact that the area has been surrounded by mussels for many years. Oneonta area is part of the Chesapeake Bay watershed, with the Susquehanna River, the largest of the Bay's tributaries, having its origin in Otsego Lake, home of the Biological Field Station (BFS). The first zebra mussel population in the watershed was found in 2000 by a BFS researcher. This caused great concern through the Bay's watershed and discussions about draining the reservoir as an eradication method were ongoing. However, in 2002 the mussel was confirmed to have established in nearby Canadarago Lake. The local community is making great attempts to limit the further dispersal of zebra mussels to other area lakes. Recreational boating is suspected to be the main way zebra mussels get dispersed from lake to lake. Because the mussels are found in large numbers on aquatic plants, and these plants can get entangled on boats, motors, and trailers, boaters going from one lake to another serve as vectors for dispersing zebra mussels. The best way to prevent the further spread of zebra mussels is to prevent inadvertent transport by boaters. A number of local, state, and federal agencies actively disseminate information to recreational boaters to educate them about what they can do to prevent dispersal. However, Canadarago Lake is drained by Oaks Creek, which gives the mussel a means to spread into the Susquehanna River. More research is planned to investigate factors that may limit the dispersal of zebra mussels through these connected waterways.

“PROJECTING THE CAMPUS:
REPRESENTATION & THE PROFESSORiate,
OR
THE ABSENCE OF TEACHING,
SCHOLARSHIP, AND SERVICE”

Richard Lee
English

There is a relationship between the cultural system of institutional academics and the cultural system that represents that world: the campus novel. More broadly, representations of teaching faculty and their professional lives operate in narratives in ways that call into question the relationship between the “Real” and “Representations of the Real”:

- I. There is often a connection between teaching & violence (physical or emotional), what I will come to call *externalized action*, in the sense that the representations of the life of the mind seem to often include, or even require, substantial attention to a context fraught with domination and power relations in general. Sometimes, the violence is visceral and central to the narrative:

Examples –

Nightwatchmen, by Barry Hannah (1973) where professors of the Humanities—especially English professors—at Southwestern Mississippi University, are beheaded in the halls of the Administration Building. Boring professors who seem unable to publish tend to be especially at risk in this novel.

The Rebel Angels, by Robertson Davies, in which a member of the Comparative Literature Department at a Canadian University—a Catholic priest, no less, calling up memories of Aquinas and the City on the Hill—conducts archival research which leads to the discovery of just who is murdering the graduate faculty of the program.

Disgrace, by J.M. Coetzee, which folds together sexual dominance and dramatic violence as the narrative focuses on the changing nature of the South African university systems as it emasculates a formerly tenured English professor first by demoting him, then involving him in a student-directed affair (also a theme in such other texts as *Blue Angel*, by Francine Prose) which causes his dismissal. Central to this narrative is the brutal rape of the professor's progressive daughter at the hands of black Africans amongst whom she had sought to live.

It's probably not surprising that Pop Culture's representations of the teaching professional—often constructed by those outside of the Academy—seem to require violence and sexual impropriety. Three video clips follow (the first, from 1984, shows Clint Eastwood as an Art History Professor; the second, from 1977, shows Donald Sutherland as a desperate English Professor; the third, from 2002, offers Michael Douglas as a terminally blocked author/professor conducting a writing seminar). In these clips, it is not just THAT we see representations of Professorial instruction in the Humanities (inevitably white, male, tweedy, oriented on things other than the work in front of them) but HOW those representations function. Clip 1 stars Clint Eastwood, Clip 2 Donald Sutherland, Clip 3 Michael Douglas:

—The Sutherland clip, from *Animal House*, with its withering take on what I will later call the indexical effect of instruction is sandwiched between a scene of sadomasochism and a scene of sexual voyeurism (Bacon and Legs?). In the interests of gender equity I could have shown a scene from *The World According to Garp*, where the writer/hero's wife, played by Mary Beth Hurt, allows herself to be drawn into an affair with a callow graduate student named Michael Milton. The *intertextual* connection—where texts are only able to refer to other texts, rather than to the “world” itself—between the two clips is obvious. In *Garp*, the professor's infidelity leads to castration (Milton's), the death of a child by misadventure, and the failures of both speech and writing.

—The Eastwood clip, from *The Eiger Sanction*—and by the way, when was the last time you received a rousing ovation for telling your students what you really felt about them?—has the hyper-virile Eastwood avoiding the sexual bargaining of a nubile co-ed. In this clip, violence and sex also encapsulate this scene

quite graphically—Eastwood is an Art Historian/World-Class Mountaineer/Professional Assassin—but he only kills to earn money for black-market Impressionist paintings.

—In the third clip, from the film version of Michael Chabon's *The Wonder Boys*, this opening scene shows us the isolation of REAL writing—in the figure of Tobey Maguire as he is vilified (Maguire is the only real writer actually IN the narrative—by his writing peers. The professor, Michael Douglas, must be ejected from the campus before he can productively represent again. Much of the plot of this movie—aside from the dissolution and sexual proclivities of the English Professor—involves the need to dispose of the body of a dog that has been shot by Tobey Maguire's character.

2. The sexual improprieties of especially, but not only, male professors extends the line from violence into domination and power relationships in general. Examples include: *Lolita*, the already mentioned *Blue Angel* and *Disgrace*, David Lodge's various campus novels, especially *Changing Places* and *Nice Work* (1988)—in which a female instructor of English named Robyn Penrose, who will be mistaken for a man in her application, is hired at Lodge's fictionalization of the University of Birmingham (see Lodge's author's note to this novel, below). In the third chapter of *Nice Work*, a third-person narrative relation of Robin's lecture—on castration and sexualization in 19th-century industrial novels written by women—is interspersed with descriptions of unemployed youths preparing to go a-mugging, and a “good-old-boys” decision to eliminate jobs at a nearby industrial complex. In these cases, and others, novels written by those from within the Academy continue certain textual traditions, while adding one that perhaps typifies what we can call “campus novels” in general: **texts primarily concerned with issues of campus relations that take into account teaching, scholarship and professional service—the tripod upon which our existences sit.** This definition thus excludes narratives that use a campus, or a teacher, or a writer as a plot device—or as a simplistic characterization that carries echoes of the kinds of tweedy stereotypes we have come to recognize—which is subordinated to some other, dominant narrative purpose (such as the solution to a crime, or the development of a character).

I suggest, cautiously, that campus novels call into question the act of representation itself even—or perhaps especially—as they make a claim to realistic representation of this environment. They do this by a sometimes obvious, sometimes surreptitious concern with the possibility of writing

*itself ever really reflecting reality. Before I discuss several examples of this, I need to take a walk through some basic issues in theories of representation. I'd like to do this by focusing on what we can call a precursor text for all future textual representations of Professors of the Humanities, a selection from Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* that highlights the implicit connection between words and the things to which they refer that powers realistic representations in general:*

During Gulliver's sojourn on the Isle of Laputa, he encounters the Academy of Lagoda, and he listens with rapt awe as learned Professors of Language discourse upon their schemes to systematize their language(s):

We next went to the School of Languages, where three Professors sate in Consultation upon improving that of their own country. . . The first Project was to shorten Discourse by cutting Polysyllables into one, and leaving out Verbs and Participles, because in reality all things imaginable are but Nouns.

...

He [a Professor of Language] assured me, that this Invention had employed all his Thoughts from his Youth, that he had emptied the whole Vocabulary into his Frame, and made the strictest Computation of the general Proportion there is in Books between the Numbers of Particles, Nouns, and Verbs, and other Parts of Speech.

One Professor has constructed a scheme for making "concrete" all possible combinations of language. He will construct a "literary engine," not unlike a Japanese *katakana* frame—each character or word occupies a discrete square on a machine. Turning tiny handles enables a language "user" to isolate the actual word/symbol and array it in sequence with others so that a finite model of language would be available for display:

Six Hours a-day the young Students were employed in this Labour, and the Professor shewed me several Volumes in large Folio already collected, of broken Sentences, which he intended to piece together, and out of those rich Materials to give the World a compleat Body of all Arts and Sciences; which however might be still improved, and much expedited, if the Publick would raise a Fund for making and employing five hundred such Frames in *Lagado*, and oblige the Managers to contribute in common their several Collections.

But more amazing—and more central to our focus today—is another idea: one that insists that words are intimately and inextricably linked to the things to which they refer.

The other, was a Scheme for entirely abolishing all Words whatsoever; and this was urged as a great Advantage in Point of Health as well as Brevity. For it is plain, that every Word we speak is in some Degree a Diminution of our Lungs by Corrosion, and consequently contributes to the shortning of our Lives. **An Expedient was therefore offered, that since Words are only Names for *Things*, it would be more convenient for all Men to carry about them, such *Things* as were necessary to express the particular Business they are to discourse on.** And this Invention would certainly have taken Place, to the great Ease as well as Health of the Subject, if the Women in conjunction with the Vulgar and Illiterate had not threatned to raise a Rebellion. . .

However, many of the most Learned and Wise adhere to the New Scheme of expressing themselves by *Things*, which hath only this Inconvenience attending it, that if a Man's Business be very great, and of various kinds, he must be obliged in Proportion to carry a greater bundle of *Things* upon his Back, unless he can afford one or two strong Servants to attend him. I have often beheld two of those Sages almost sinking under the Weight of their Packs, like Pedlars among us; who, when they met in the Streets, would lay down their Loads, open their Sacks, and hold Conversation for an Hour together; then put up their Implements, help each other to resume their Burthens, and take their Leave. . .

Ultimately, the learned experts insist that communication can proceed using the tactile manipulation of objects themselves:

But for short Conversations a Man may carry Implements in his Pockets and under his Arms, enough to supply him, and in his House he cannot be at a loss: Therefore the Room where Company meet who practise this Art, is full of all Things ready at Hand, requisite to furnish Matter for this kind of artificial Converse. . . Another great Advantage proposed by this Invention, was that it would serve as a Universal Language to be understood in all civilized Nations, whose Goods and Utensils are generally of the

same kind, or nearly resembling, so that their Uses might easily be comprehended. And thus Embassadors would be qualified to treat with foreign Princes or Ministers of State to whose Tongues they were utter Strangers.

This scheme is central to a simplistic way of viewing the world and language use, and Swift is delightfully satirizing this sense. However simple it seems when viewed in this way, however, this assumed connection between *words and things* exists as a way in which we often uncritically consume narrative representations of reality: we ascribe a level of belief—whether scant or great—to the belief that an accurate, *mimetic*, representation of the real is at least possible. We can call this *Platonic Reflectionism*—the belief that the things in the world can be mimetically conveyed—like an artist holding a mirror up to nature, in M.H. Abrams’s famous construction. Ultimately, however, the relationship between words and the things to which they refer is arbitrary (and consensual); therefore, representations which seek to elide the disjuncture collapse under the weight of that which they cannot say. *In other words, the more a narrative strives for “realism,” the more it displays its own ambivalence about its ability to represent.* Simply switching the elements of the relationship is but a first step, though an important one. Instead of adhering to the commonsensical truism that “good” art is an imitation of life, we are well advised to consider Oscar Wilde’s suggestion(s) that the relationship between Art and Life is best viewed obliquely: “A really well made buttonhole is the only link between art and nature” & “Paradoxical though it may seem, it is none the less true that life imitates art far more than art imitates life.”

In *Imagining the Penitentiary: Fiction and the Architecture of the Mind in Eighteenth-Century England*, John Bender suggests that narrative (and art in general) is part of a continuing construction of our sense of the Real, rather than either a cause or a reflection: I consider literature and the visual arts as advanced forms of knowledge, as cognitive instruments that anticipate and contribute to institutional formation. . .[narratives] are primary historical and ideological documents; the vehicles, not the reflections, of social change. (I) Anthropologist and cultural critic Clifford Geertz concurs, stating that a more subtle construction of the Self who consumes narrative representations is the proper focus for consideration:

Subjectivity does not properly exist until it is. . .organized; art forms generate and regenerate the very subjectivity they pretend

only to display. Quartets, still lifes, and cockfights are not merely reflections of a pre-existing sensibility analogically presented; they are positive agents in the creation and maintenance of such a sensibility.

Thus, a focus upon *how* representation operates—not alone upon *what* the representation shows—is necessary and appropriate. A common way of looking at representation itself is one that analyzes the ways that one can properly represent something. “All representation is of someone or something, by someone, for someone”...& there are three basic types of representation:

- *Iconic*, looks like
- *Symbolic*, arbitrary, stands for
- *Indexical*, indicates a relationship, like cause and effect

(McLaughlin I-5)

- *Iconic Representation*: Resemblance, no matter how feeble, allows us to construct a connection—realism in the visual arts is the most obvious example...



- *Symbolic Representation* is arbitrary and consensually derived. ALL literary representation falls into this category, as do the creations of what Aristotle called *homo symbolicus* generally.



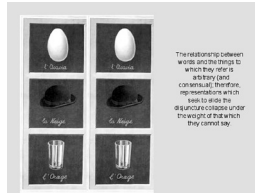
- *Indexical Representation* suggests a relationship between the *trace* and some maker. For example, a footprint presupposes the passage of a human; thus, the effect (representation) suggests a causative agent.



All three pictures represent a human being, each in a quite distinct way. The sock-puppet “looks like,” the tree symbolizes (change over time, mortality, bilateral symmetry, etc.), the footprint points to cause and affect (the passage of a human leaves a *trace*.)



(“The Treason of Images”)



(“The Key of Dreams”)

But, as Rene Magritte’s surrealist paintings, *The Key of Dreams* and *The Treason of Images*, make clear, the relationship between words and the things to which words refer is inevitably arbitrary. Second, as the caption below the pipe in *The Treason of Images* makes clear, “this is not a pipe.” Representations displace the real, in literal and figurative ways. What is important to us is the fact that literary realism, the ways in which we buy into narrative—in this case, narratives about professors of the Humanities—are conventions, constructions of cultural, and not, therefore, inevitable or “real.”

- We affiliate ourselves with texts that most closely subscribe to the world we know. . .
- But we also wish to “suspend our disbelief” and “visit” other times, worlds, possibilities. . .as long as the *rules for engagement* are not too extreme. . .
- We naturalize, make normal, various *narrative conventions*, including “rules” such as *Aristotelian coherence*, the *reality effect*, and our expectation of the *integrity of characterization*.

N.B.—We KNOW that fiction is not real, but we have to be constantly reminded of that fact!
For example,

Like *Changing Places*, to which it is a kind of sequel, *Small World* resembles what is sometimes called the real world, without corresponding exactly to it, and is peopled by figments of the imagination (the name of one of the minor characters has been changed in later editions to avoid misunderstanding on this score). Rummidge is not Birmingham, though it owes something to popular prejudices about that city. There really is an underground chapel at Heathrow and a James Joyce Pub in Zurich. . .The MLA Convention of 1979 did not take place in New York, though I have drawn on the programme for the 1978 one, which did. And so on. (“Author’s Note” to *Small World*. David Lodge, 1984)

Lodge feels compelled to remind even his *implied readers*—who are presumably fairly sophisticated—that he is not writing a *roman à clef*, nor even “basing” his novel on the real.

But What about “Scholarship” & Professional Development?

We began by looking at, and talking about, teaching. Our professional lives consist, too, of service to our professional development and service to our institutions. As regards scholarly activity, the absence of any real “activity” seems all too apparent. Alas, scholars at a professional conference are no better behaved, no more focused than were the students in the classroom in *Animal House*:

Perse yawned and shifted his weight from one buttock to another in his seat at the back of the lecture room. He could not see the faces of many of his colleagues, but as far as he could judge from their postures, most of them were as disengaged from the discourse as himself. Some were leaning back as far as their seats allowed, staring vacantly at the ceiling, others were slumped forward onto desks that separated each row, resting their chins on folded arms, and others again were sprawled sideways over two or three seats, with their legs crossed and arms dangling limply to the floor. In the third row a man was surreptitiously doing the Times crossword, and at least three people appeared to be asleep. . .” (Lodge, *Small World* 13)

Concerning the value of scholarship in general, one might turn to *Pale Fire*, by Vladimir Nabokov (1962); to *Lucky Jim*, by Kingsley Amis (1954); to *Publish and Perish*, by James Hynes (1997); to *Straight Man*, by Richard Russo (1998); or to *Moo*, by Jane Smiley (1995). In fact, *Writing, its ties to representation in general, and its significant absence—failure—occurs in too many texts to mention! Writing becomes the true focus of novels that purport to represent professorial existence, but the perspective on language almost inevitably points to writing’s own inability to represent (because of the arbitrary nature of symbolic representation, for one thing).*

Professional Service & Administration?

- from *Straight Man*
 - Novel starts with The Chair of the English Dept. being attacked by

a poet with a spiral-bound writing journal during a Personnel Comm. Meeting... Huck & Tom revisited, as Lucky Hank later snoops—from his loft in the ceiling—on his faculty’s recall meeting of his leadership... “writing” drops” from on high to end the problem...

- From *Moo*

- Who is the most powerful administrative force in the novel? A secretary, Mrs. Walker.

As David Lodge puts it in *Nice Work*, one of very few campus novels that exhibit female professors in anything other than stereotypical, subordinate roles,

“What’s the point of it, then?” He said. “**What’s the point of sitting around discussing books all day**, if you’re no wiser at the end of it?”

–“Oh, you’re wiser, said Robyn. “**What you learn is that language is an infinitely more devious and slippery medium than you had supposed.**” (244)

Much of what readers absorb as they read these texts is tied to philosophical realism which counters the pre-modern notion that “universals” (abstractions) contain truth: Descartes, Locke, Thomas Reid, etc., posit the particularity of individual experience as the key to “truth” and the “real”

** Therefore, the particularity and specificity of narrative representations accumulate into a structure *which acts as if real*. BUT...



A Picture of a Pipe is NOT a Pipe!

The particularity of experience—a positive marker for readers to buy into the real, and thus to affiliate—is a part of the *reality effect*: one of the narrative conventions that we uncritically assume are part of the way narratives should

operate. Many campus novels link the act of writing to specificity and narrative realism—even as some of them comment on this very fact (meta-narratively):

Back when I was a writer [says “Lucky Hank” Deveraux, terminally blocked from writing these last ten years], I might have to justify such musings, **since odd details and unexpected points of view are the stuff of which vivid stories are made**, but now such thoughts seem more like evidence of an unbalanced mind...” (Russo, 73)

Or...

“Is this where the narratee sits? [Morris Zapp] enquired. Philip [Swallow], gazing absently into the fire, smiled vaguely, but made no reply. [Philip tells a story to Morris, adding, after what seems to be a superfluous detail]...” That comes into the story.”

“I should hope so, said Morris. **There should be nothing superfluous in a good story.**...” [story continues, Philip mentions that]...” I was sitting next to an English businessman, a salesman in woolen textiles I think he was...”

“Is that relevant?” [asks Morris]

“Not really.” [replies Philip]

“**Never mind. Solidity of specification,**” said Morris with a tolerant wave of his cigar. “**It contributes to the reality effect.**” (Lodge, *Small World*, 67)

By Way of Conclusion...

- Wish fulfillment and “affiliation” notwithstanding, all those narratives which most aspire to realistic portrayals operate by way of a significant absence:

They will tend to focus on WRITING as either a dominant or implied theme... (meta-narrative or the inability of characters TO write) BECAUSE... the text is forced to contend with its own inability to represent.

THUS:

- * The themes of violence (physical and psychic) and dominance (sexual and social) are prevalent because these distracters occlude the fact that

the cultural systems (of colleges and college novels) share a narrative logic. This narrative logic questions the direct transmission of information (a mimetic conception, an iconic construction), but fears that symbolic (arbitrary/consensual) and indexical categories—where, for example, we “exist” only insofar as the traces of our actions are apparent—are insufficient. Finally,

- Texts Are Always About Other Texts!
- EXTERNALIZED, particularized ACTION is prioritized over
- INTERNAL (unrepresentable, passive) WORK!
 - The pretense of *mimesis* is uncovered by the fact—on campuses real and fictive—that only indexical, indirect measurements of the professoriate are possible (Ravelstein, e.g.)

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APPENDIX: Campus Novels

N.B.—This is not meant to serve as a definitive list. This author has not read all of the texts mentioned here. An asterisk () reflects the author's awareness of the fact that the marked text is not primarily a campus novel in the sense that it has been defined within (4).*

- Albom, Mitch. *Tuesdays With Morrie**
- Amis, Kingsley. *Lucky Jim*
- Bellow, Saul. *The Dean's December*
— *Ravelstein**
- Bradbury, Malcolm. *Stepping Westward*
— *Rates of Exchange*
— *The History of Man*
- Byatt, A.S. *Possession*
— *The Biographer's Tale*
— *Babel Tower*
- Carrier, Warren. *Death of a Chancellor*
- Chabon, Michael. *Wonder Boys*
- Coetzee, J.M. *Disgrace*
- Conroy, Pat. *The Lords of Discipline*
- Cross, Amanda. *Death in a Tenured Position** (Kate Fansler mystery series)
Et alii
- Davies, Robertson. *The Lyre of Orpheus*
— *The Rebel Angels*
- DeLillo, Don. *White Noise**
- Dobson, Joanne. *The Northbury Papers*
- Everett, Percival. *Erasure*
- Farber, Jerry. *Gorman*
- Fisher, Dorothy. *Seasoned Timber*
- Fitzgerald, F. Scott. *This Side of Paradise**
- Fowles, John. *The Ebony Tower*
- Frayn, Michael. *Head-Long**
- Galbraith, John. *A Tenured Professor*
- Gill, Bartholomew. *Death of a Joyce Scholar**
- Godwin, Gail. *The Good Husband*
- Grudin, Robert. *Book*
- Haley, Susan. *A Nest of Singing Birds*
- Hannah, Barry. *Nightwatchmen*
- Hardy, Thomas. *Jude the Obscure*

- Hassler, John. *The Dean's List*
- Hassler, Jon. *Rookery Blues*
- Heilbrun, Carolyn. *Writing a Women's Life** (pen name for Amanda Cross)
Et alii
- Hynes, James. *The Lecturer's Tale*
— *Publish and Perish* (novellas)
- Isherwood, Christopher. *A Single Man*
- Jarrell, Randall. *Pictures from an Institution*
- Jones, D.H. *Murder at the MLA*
- Kelly, Nora. *My Sister's Keeper*
- L'Heureux, John. *The Handmaid of Desire*
- Lodge, David. *Changing Places*
— *Small World*
— *Nice Work*
— *The British Museum is Falling Down*
— *Thinks*
- Lurie, Alison. *Imaginary Friends*
— *The War Between the Tates*
- McCarthy, Mary. *The Groves of Academe*
- Nabokov, Vladimir. *Lolita**
— *Pale Fire*
— *Invitation to a Beheading*
- Oates, Joyce Carol. *Unholy Loves*
- Osborn, John Jay. *The Paper Chase*
- Parker, Robert B. *The Godwulf Manuscript**
- Pelletier, Karen. *The Northbury Papers*
— *Quieter Than Sleep*
- Perotta, Tom. *Joe College*
- Peterson, Bernard. *The Caravaggio Books*
- Powers, Richard. *Galatea 2.2*
- Prose, Francine. *Blue Angel*
- Roth, Phillip. *The Human Stain*
- Ruff, Matt. *Fool on the Hill: A Novel*
- Russo, Richard. *Straight Man*
— "The Whore's Daughter" (from *Student Bodies* and *The Whore's Daughter*)
- Sarton, May. *The Small Room*
- Sayers, Dorothy. *Gaudy Night*
- Sharpe, Tom. *Porterhouse Blues*
- Smiley, Jane. *Moo*

- Snow, C.P. *The Masters*
- Stegner, Wallace. *Crossing to Safety*
- Steinberg, Janice. *Death of a Postmodernist*
- Tarloff, Erik. *The Man Who Wrote the Book*
- Thompson, Charles. *Halfway Down the Stairs*
- Wilhelm, Kate. *The Hamlet Trap*
— *Stoner*
- Wolff, Geoffrey. *The Final Club*

YOUR EARLIEST MEMORY MAY BE OF A SONG: OR A BEAR

Mary Howes

Psychology

Our earliest memories have been described as “fragment” or “island” memories, because they usually have little context. That is, the individual does not recall what happened before, or after, the recalled episode. And the episode itself is usually brief. It has been described as similar to a stage, a bright scene on which the curtain briefly lifts, then closes again (Salaman, 1970).

Fragment memories date, on average, to the age of three years (Dudycha & Dudycha, 1933). The type of events that an individual experiences as a small child appears to influence the age of earliest occurrence (among other variables). Striking episodes such as the birth of a sibling, or moving from one home to another, may produce particularly early recollections (Usher & Neisser, 1993).

A question of theoretical interest centers on why the given fragment memories are retained permanently, when everything else has been forgotten. In general, we are amnesic for the first years of our lives. Although a sibling birth is indeed a notable event, many fragment memories involve less dramatic content. Two major theories have been advanced in the literature concerning this issue. It has been established that most early memories show distinct emotion (either positive or negative). According to one view, the fact that the memories were emotional leads to them being rehearsed frequently. That is, they are either thought about a good deal, or talked about, and one or both of these factors strengthens the memory to the point where it endures into adult life. Another model posits that emotion directly strengthens memory, such that it is the emotion itself that produces the longevity of the fragment episodes (White & Pillemer, 1979).

Across the literature, recollections of earliest memories have been reported in the form of events. The individual remembers some, usually brief, happening. In an earlier study conducted here at SUNY, Oneonta, our participants also described events (Howes, Siegel & Brown, 1993). However, one individual reported that her earliest memory consisted of the

recollection of an object. It was a memory of a child's chair.

This raised the possibility that some of the first memories of life may consist of non-episodic recollections. The possibility was bolstered by the fact that one of my own early memories is of a child's three-legged stool, which I recall as being mine although I do not recollect any episode in which it played a part. Given this background, I conducted a second study, with support from three student associates (Anna Legname, James Diego and Kathryn Valesco).

In the second study, students at Oneonta were asked to think back to their earliest memory, as best that memory could be identified. They were told that the memory could be of anything at all: a face, a song, an event, an object, and so on. They were also told that they would probably not be able to identify their earliest recollection, as against later recollections, with certainty, but should simply pick the candidate-memory that seemed the most likely for their earliest. They were then asked to fill out a questionnaire concerning numerous properties of this memory. They were also asked to briefly describe the memory.

When the questionnaire had been completed, participants were asked to fill out a second questionnaire, tapping their second-from-earliest memory, as best they could identify it. 284 individuals participated, generating a total of 568 memories.

The results of the study were as follows.

The most frequently recalled type of memory involved an episode (65%), followed by object memories (14%), memories of faces (6%), of landscapes/scenes (5%), of songs (3%), of being in a certain spatial location (.9%), of animals (0.4%) or dreams (0.2%). A few participants failed to respond to the question.

Participants had been asked whether their memory had been rehearsed or reactivated in some fashion (through thinking, talking or seeing pictures). The majority (84%) had been reactivated, with "thinking about" as the most common form of reactivation. The remainder, who reported that there had been no earlier form of rehearsal, showed essentially the same pattern of episode and object memories as the majority (64% and 14%).

The memories of being in a spatial location were very brief, and perhaps primitive. An example of this form of recollection was, “I was in my father’s arms and I was looking at a barn door”.

Reported ages for the memories dated from under a year, to ten years, with an average age of 3.9 years. The higher than typical average age reflected the fact that a substantial number of individuals (45) could recall no memory until the age of seven or older. The modal age for the memories was three years.

Episode and object memories showed no relation to age. That is, one type was not typical of a younger or of a later age.

The majority of memories were characterized by emotion (69%), of which 22% were negative, and 43% positive. The pattern of emotion differed across episode and object memories. Object memories were significantly more positive than were episode memories overall, as indicated by a chi square test of significance.

There was also a significant gender difference reflecting the type of memory reported, with male participants recalling on average more object (and fewer episode) memories than female participants.

Based on the data, it is clear that humans do recall isolated objects among their earliest memories. Earlier studies had failed to identify this, presumably due to the wording of the instructions.

Given that objects do rank among our earliest recollections, a direct reactivation hypothesis would predict that objects receiving high levels of reactivation should constitute most of these very early memories. It appears unlikely that individual objects would be the subject of discussion (or even of thought), but certain objects are encountered frequently in the life of a young child. Items of furniture and the fittings of a house, for instance, would be seen repeatedly on a daily basis, and would thus accumulate many hundreds of reactivations. Also, the longer the individual was in contact with an object, the more likely it should form the basis of an early memory.

Furniture and house-related items (such as wallpaper) did not constitute the content of the reported object memories. There was no single item of

adult-type furniture (or “fittings”) reported. Also, the objects that were recalled varied in terms of the length of time that they had been presented in the participants’ environment from a few weeks, to several years. There was no pattern favoring a long period of contact. A strong reactivation hypothesis was thus not supported.

In contrast to the reactivation hypothesis, if emotion forms the base of permanent early recollections, then objects likely to elicit emotion in the child would be expected to be the content of early object-memories. Such objects might be toys of a certain kind, and objects of attachment such as child-blankets, as against, for instance, rattles, building blocks, plastic rings, and so on.

Two classes of object constituted the bulk of all reports. These were stuffed animals (with teddy-bears included in this class), and dolls. Following these common responses there were a range of objects that were reported more than twice (child furniture, candy jars!, pictures), and a wide range of objects reported only once. This latter included a toy with wheels, a small blanket, a doll’s house, a dolls’ tea-set and a glow-worm night-light). None were of cups, spoons, high chairs, or other objects that might have been commonly encountered but were unlikely objects to elicit affection or emotion in a child.

The data of the present study thus appear to support a direct-emotion hypothesis concerning the longevity of fragment memories, rather than a simple reactivation hypothesis. It is of course likely that the two factors work together, but reactivation alone does not appear to provide permanent early memories.

The advanced age reported by a few participants, relevant to their earliest memories, remains puzzling. The explanation most commonly put forward for this phenomenon is that of repression, implying emotional distress related to early memories. Other explanations are possible, however. I know of several individuals who do not possess early memories, although their childhood experiences, to the best of their knowledge, were not negative or traumatic, and their mnemonic capacities as adults are strong. It may be that episodic information is simply of less interest to some children than others, even though episodes remain the most likely source of very early memories. The issue remains to be examined further.

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NINETEENTH CENTURY TRANSFORMATIONS
OF CHILD GUARDIANSHIP:
A CASE STUDY OF THE ADDITION OF A
GUARDIANSHIP CLAUSE TO THE 1848 NEW YORK
STATE MARRIED WOMEN'S PROPERTY ACT

Marilyn Helterline

Sociology, Women's & Gender Studies

During the nineteenth century men in the United States lost their common law right to sole guardianship of their children. Sociologists and historians have attempted to explain this change. Change that occurred over a period of nearly a century and a half and separately in the courts and legislatures of each state needs to be looked at with greater historical specificity. This paper looks at the efforts between 1848 and 1862 to add an equal guardianship clause to the Married Women's Property Law in New York State. This case is used to evaluate existing theories of change.

Nineteenth Century Child Guardianship Changes

Between 1790 and 1930, first in the courts and later in the legislatures of the states, legal traditions that gave fathers control over children in intact marriages, the right to appoint guardians for their children in case of their deaths without the consent of their mothers, the right to apprentice their children without the consent of their mothers, and the right to custody of their children after separation or divorce were eroded. Fathers' rights, based on common law (Goldstein and Fenster 1994) seem to have been uncontested in the eighteenth century. In 1796 in *Nickols v. Giles* in Connecticut a federal court awarded custody of a child to her mother rather than a father with a questionable temper and little property (Boris and Bardaglio 1983). This signaled a change in the courts. In the early nineteenth century there were an increasing number of custody awards to mothers (Grossberg 1985; Zainaldin 1979). In the 1840s and 1850s states began to liberalize divorce laws (Brown 1981) and in some cases these laws supported the emerging pattern of judicial discretion (Zainaldin 1979). In these early cases the judgments were made based on the "best interest of the child," but in the 1840s the "tender years doctrine emerged," and by the 1880s the courts generally accepted

that it was in the best interest of a child to grant custody to the mother. The change from common law occurred primarily in the courts. In 1900 only nine states and the District of Columbia gave women equal guardianship by statute. Women's equal rights to guardianship were generally written into law between 1900 and 1930 (Brown 1981).

Explanation and Analysis of Change

Why did these changes occur? Five explanations appear in the historical and sociological literature on this topic. These are not mutually exclusive explanations and many social scientists argue that there were multiple causes of this change. The first explanation is that guardianship changes reflect changes in the roles of men and women and the ideology of motherhood (Goldstein and Fenster 1994; Grossberg 1983; Maidment 1984; Mason 1994; Vanderpol 1982). Lisa McIntyre (1984) argues that while social scientists have studied the idealization of women that justified this change, they have not sufficiently studied the vilification of men that justified this change. The second explanation is that the change resulted from the activism of feminists. This cannot be the only explanation because the changes began before the feminist activism of the nineteenth century. There is no doubt that guardianship reform was an issue pursued by some feminists in the nineteenth century (Brown 1981; Maidment 1984; Mason 1994). Debra Friedman (1995) argues that because of the lack of consensus on divorce among nineteenth century feminists, the activism on this issue was modest. Maidment (1984) points out that the middle class women who fought for change were not always feminists, but sometimes women motivated by their own custody battles. A third explanation is that men willingly gave up custody when children ceased to be economic assets (Boris and Bardaglio 1983; Gordon 1988). This explanation has significant weaknesses. Children had ceased to be economic assets among the affluent long before these guardianship changes (Friedman 1995; Goldstein 1994). Mason (1994) argues that men would have wanted to maintain custody as a means of deterring women from seeking divorce. The state is a third party in the explanations of guardianship change. Some argue that the rising divorce rate and the lowering middle class birth rate were seen as a crisis and the growing judicial discretion reflects the intervention of the state to protect the social order (Friedman 1995; Grossberg 1985; McIntyre 1994). Susan Boyd (1989) argues that the primary purpose of patriarchy is the control of women for reproduction and male privilege is secondary. When male privilege or

guardianship rights interfered with the primary function of patriarchy, men lost privileges. The final explanation for nineteenth century custody changes is that the interests of women and the state coincided and produced a coalition that usurped male privilege (Gordon 1988).

1860 Change in Guardianship Clause in New York State Women's Property Act

Between 1848 and 1860 in New York State a successful campaign was waged to add an equal guardianship clause to the 1848 Women's Property Law, but this part of the law was repealed in 1862 and replaced by a much weaker guardianship clause. Legal changes in New York State were influential because it was a large state, the center of the press, and an exporter of lawyers (Hartog 2000).

Both primary and secondary sources were used to study this change. While there is no single study of this specific event in the history of guardianship, many scholars that have studied the general pattern of change have looked at this change in the law. Norma Basch (1982) wrote a book focusing specifically on women, marriage, and property in nineteenth century New York law. The coverage in the *New York Times* was examined. Most information was obtained from biographies, papers, and letter of the leader of the nineteenth century feminist movement that were active in New York State: Susan B. Anthony, Lucretia Coffin Mott, Ernestine Rose, Elizabeth Cady Stanton. A major source of information was the *History of Woman's Suffrage* edited by Stanton, Anthony, and Matilda Joslyn Gage ([1881] 1969).

In March of 1860 Governor Edwin D. Morgan signed a bill into law that had been passed by the New York State Assembly and Senate. The law stated: "Every married woman is hereby constituted and declared to be the joint guardian of her children, with her husband, with equal powers, rights, and duties, in regard to them, with her husband" (Basch 1982: 234). This was revision of the 1848 Married Woman's Property Law. In 1854 the New York State Assembly discussed changes in the 1848 law, including changes in guardianship. The Assembly appointed a Select Committee. In March of 1854 the Committee reported to the Assembly. It rejected most proposed changes on the basis that God had made men superior to women and that conflict in the family could only be avoided with a single head, but the report granted the need for some change. They recommended "the assent of the

mother, if she is living, be necessary to the validity of any disposition of a child by means of appointment of guardians or of apprenticeship” (Stanton et al. [1881] 1969: 617). All but one member of the Committee signed the report, but the change failed to pass the Assembly. Again in 1855 the Assembly held a hearing on changing the law, but no change resulted. In 1859 a revision of the Married Women’s Property Law supported by Senator Andrew J. Colvin passed the Assembly, but was never voted on in the Senate. Finally, after discussion in the Judiciary Committee a revision of the Married Women’s Property Law containing the guardianship clause was approved by the Judiciary Committee, the Senate, and the Assembly (Stanton et al. [1881] 1969). In 1861 Clark Brooks, separated from his wife, went to court to get custody of his son. The judge in the New York State Supreme Court ridiculed the new law that allowed a wife to leave her husband and retain custody. He ignored the law and affirmed paternal rights by granting custody to the father (Hartog 2000). In 1862 the clause giving mothers an equal right to their children was repealed and replaced with a clause giving far less rights. The new clause read: “No man shall bind his child to apprenticeship or service or part with the control of such child or create any testamentary guardianship therefore, unless the mother if living, shall signify her assent thereto” (Basch 1982: 237).

Explaining the Change in the Guardianship Clause

Few would question the contribution of role changes to facilitating this legal change. The language of the cult of motherhood is present in the speeches of supporters. According to Basch: “The common law violated the sanctity of motherhood . . . Thus . . . they argued that the care of children was women’s own special function.” (1982: 80). But, as McIntrye suggests, the “vilification of men” was important in justifying these changes. The fight for custody rights among New York feminists was fought both at women’s rights meetings and in the temperance movement. When women first met in a separate temperance meeting in Rochester in 1852, Elizabeth Cady Stanton argued for the right to divorce drunkards and that drunkards should not have control over their children (Harper [1898] 1969). The infidelity of men was also a frequent theme in guardianship discussions. At an 1852 Women’s Rights Convention in Syracuse, Carolina Howard Nichols complained that women who divorced unfaithful or abusive husbands lost their children (Harper [1898] 1969). In 1853 at the Women’s Rights State Convention in Rochester, William Henry Channing presented a set of

resolution to the Convention. One resolution argued that women should have guardianship of their children “where, by habitual drunkenness, immorality, or improvidence, fathers are incompetent to the sacred trust” (Stanton et al [1881] 1969: 582). Similar themes appear in Stanton’s 1854 address to the Women’s Rights Convention in Albany that was adopted by the Convention as their address to the Legislature of New York. In 1854 she describes men as having “an inordinate love of power” that has led to the creation of laws that allow a man to “apprentice his son to a gamester or rum-seller” and “bind his daughter to the owner of a brothel.” She complains of the mother’s inability to maintain custody and protect her child from men that beat them and that they abandon because of “profligacy and confirmed drunkenness” (Stanton et al. [1881] 1969: 602–3). While statements referring to women as morally superior do not appear, it is men not women that are associated with drunkenness, abuse, infidelity, gambling, and brothels. An exception is found in a letter written by Channing and read at the 1853 National Women’s Rights Convention in Cleveland, where he advocated that “confirmed drunkenness of either the husband or wife be held as sufficient grounds for divorce; and that the temperate partner be appointed legal guardian of the children (Stanton et al. [1881] 1969: 131).

If the idealization of motherhood and the vilification of men contributed to the change in guardianship, the above quotes by leading feminists of the era demonstrate that feminist were active in trying to bring about change. Between 1848 and 1862 feminists in New York State consistently advocated for change in guardianship laws. It appears in the *Declaration of Sentiments* that was produced at the 1848 Seneca Falls Convention. Ernestine Rose, a New York feminist, raised the issue again at the Second National Women’s Rights Convention held in Wooster in 1851. The following year at the 1852 convention in Syracuse, Lucy Stone and Carolina Howard Nichols discussed the issue (Stanton et al. [1881] 1969). In 1853 Rose again raised the issue at the National Women’s Rights Convention in Cleveland (Kolmertin 1999) and the same year Rose, William Henry Channing, and Matilda Joslyn Gage advocated change at a State Women’s Rights Convention in Rochester. At this meeting, they progressed from complaints about guardianship to concrete plans to change the New York laws. They left the Convention to plan an address to the Legislature, run a petition drive, and plan a convention in Albany during the next legislative session (Stanton et al. [1881] 1969). In the ten weeks prior to the February 14 and 15, 1854 State Convention in Albany, they collected six thousand signatures on a petition that called

for changes, including equal guardianship (Harper [1898] 1969). At the Convention Antionette Brown asserted that the mothers of New York State did not want to give up the guardianship of their children (Stanton et al. [1881] 1969). Stanton gave her speech, which associated men with rum, abuse, and brothels, and advocated equal guardianship. Channing made a motion to adopt it as the Conventions' address to the Legislature (Gordon, 1997). On February 20, 1854 copies of the speech and the petitions were delivered to the Legislature. When this failed to produce a change, the movement did annual petition drives until the law was changed in 1860 after a second speech by Stanton to the Legislature. During these years the issue of guardianship continues to be discussed at conventions. At the 1856 Women's Rights Convention in New York, Lucy Stone pointed out that Michigan had a equal guardianship law pending, a right that New York women lacked. Again Rose raised the issue. There was no national convention in 1857, but in response to speech by Sarah Hallock on New York laws the issue was raised by a member of the audience at the 1858 convention (Stanton et al. [1881] 1969).

While feminist efforts between 1848 and 1860 to add an equal guardianship clause to the New York State Women's Property Law do not support Friedman's hypothesis that feminists were too divided on the issue of divorce to advocate for this issue, her hypothesis may be correct in other states or later in New York. Divorce does not appear to have been a seriously divisive issue in the New York movement until the 1860 National Women's Rights meeting in New York in May, two months after the change in the law. Elizabeth Cady Stanton had created a controversy in 1852 at the Women's State Temperance Convention when she advocated changes in marriage and custody laws to take away the rights of drunkards to their wives and children (Barry 1988). While many of the temperance advocates were shocked by her speech, feminists supported her. Among those who supported her during this controversy were Susan B. Anthony, Lucretia Mott, Lucy Stone, Frances Gage, and Martha Wright (Harper [1898] 1969). The following year at the Rochester State Women's Temperance Convention, Stanton who had been elected as president the previous year in spite of the controversy, again advocated separation from drunkards (Stanton et al. [1881] 1969) and this time she was defeated by three votes in her attempt to retain the presidency (Harper [1898] 1969). This controversy occurred within the Temperance Movement and feminist supported Stanton. The division within the temperance movement probably had little effect on future attempts to

change New York laws because the New York temperance movement faded in the mid 1850s and did not emerge again until 1879 (Barry 1988). Divorce does not appear as a significant divisive issue in the women's rights movement between 1848 and 1860. A rare and seemingly civil mention of it occurred in the 1853 convention when Antionette Brown suggested substituting the word separation for divorce in William Henry Channing's resolution to deprive drunkards of custody (Stanton et al. [1881] 1969).

In 1860 the situation changed. A liberalized divorce law had been passed in Indiana and a similar bill was introduced in New York (Lutz 1974). At the 1860 Convention Stanton advocated the right to end marriages that did not produce happiness. Brown strongly objected (Barry 1988: 139) and Wendell Phillips and William Lloyd Garrison tried to have Stanton's resolution expunged from the record of the Convention. The controversy continued outside the Convention. Horace Greeley, the editor of the *New York Herald Tribune*, used the paper to support Phillips (Lutz, 1974). While divorce was clearly a controversial issue in 1860, of the women who presided over national women's rights conventions between 1848 and 1860 all supported Stanton's position on divorce reform, except Lucy Stone (Griffith 1984). Ernestine Rose (Lutz 1974) and Susan B. Anthony (Griffith 1984) supported her at the 1860 meeting. Lucretia Mott, who helped organize the Seneca Fall meeting sent her a letter of support after the 1860 controversy. Martha Wright signed a feminist appeal for divorce reform in New York State in 1860 (Stanton et al. [1881] 1969: 525). Paulina Wright Davis also held liberal view on divorce (Palmer 2002). While Stone did not want divorce included as a women's rights issue, she did not object to divorce reform and in 1852, when it was less an issue of public controversy, at the 1852 National Women's Rights Convention had said: "In questions of marriage and divorce . . . both parties in the compact are entitled to an equal voice" (Stanton et al [1881] 1969: 525).

Even if divorce had been a divisive issue, it would not have stopped women's rights activist from advocating for reform of guardianship laws. Problems with current guardianship laws were usually discussed in the context of widowhood, apprenticing children, or separation as they were in Elizabeth Cady Stanton's 1854 address to the Legislature. She does not mention divorce. If divorce reform and guardianship reform were issues in the same speech, they were often treated separately. Anthony's speech to the 1854 convention is an example of this. Her speech included a list of proposals.

The proposal that drunkenness be a grounds for divorce and the proposal of equal custody rights were separate, and not even adjacent items (Gordon 1997). The *Declaration of Sentiments* is an exception to this pattern. Divorce and guardianship appear in the same resolution.

Is there evidence that men voluntarily gave up guardianship in the case of the New York guardianship clause? There clearly was some resistance. New York feminist lobbied the legislature for change for six years before they succeeded in getting the clause passed and then the Legislature substantially weakened the clause two years later. Still, the reform was proposed by Senator Andrew J. Colvin, passed by a male legislature, and a male governor signed it into law. There were men within the women's rights movement, including William Henry Channing that supported guardianship change. There is also evidence of support from men outside the movement. Fathers were said to be supporters of the women's property laws and Elizabeth Cady Stanton said that support for the reform of the New York's married women's property reform came from the men of the Dutch aristocracy who wanted to see their wealth passed on to their daughters and grandchildren (Stanton and Blatch 1922). Basch (1982) sees this as a continuation of a legal trend that had begun earlier with the creation of trusts. Fathers created trusts to be administered for their daughters. This allowed them to pass money to their daughters without giving control over it to their sons-in-law. Clear support for guardianship change came from one father. In 1858 Francis Jackson donated five thousand dollars to the women's rights movement. Jackson seems to have been motivated by his own family troubles. His son-in-law had used Massachusetts' guardianship laws to remove his children from Jackson's daughter (Anthony 1954). While there was no consensus among men of the affluent classes to give up guardianship rights, there were male supporters.

Does this temporary change in the New York guardianship laws reflect the interests of the state or a coalition of women and the state? The Legislature was reluctant to support women and provided only weak support after being pushed by women activists. Except for the governor's 1860 signature, the executive branch is invisible in the history of the debate over the law. No state agencies appear as advocates for change at this time in New York. The New York Supreme Court ridiculed the law and Basch (1999) argues that in general the courts in New York weakened the legislative reforms in the Property Law with conservative interpretations. But Stanton in her 1860 address to the Legislature does argue that the changes

in position of women benefit women, the sons they raise, and consequently the nation (Miller 1999). The 1860 change in guardianship seem to have been promoted by both men and women of the propertied class and for the benefit of the women and grandfathers of this class. The state does not seem to have taken a significant role in this change. There is more support for the concern of the state in property law reform. The guardianship clause may have benefited from its inclusion in a bill on property reform. Basch (1999) argues that part of the motivation of Assemblyman Thomas Hertell who had proposed a bill to reform married women's property law in 1837 was that protecting the assets of women married to drunkards.

Conclusion

The 1860 addition of an equal guardianship clause to the 1848 New York State Married Women's Property Law was primarily a result of the efforts of women's rights activists. During the period from 1848 until 1860 divorce was not a sufficiently divisive issue among women's rights activists to prevent their efforts to change guardianship. The separation of the issue of guardianship from the divorce issue, by discussing it in the context of separation, widowhood, and apprenticeship probably contributed to the lack of controversy on this issue. They were able to bring about some change because of idealization of mothers and the vilification of men in the culture at this time. They received support from some men. Both property law reform and guardianship change seems to have been seen by some men as a means to protect their daughters and grandchildren. The process of change was slow and the law was weakened in 1862 because the activists faced significant resistance in the male Legislature. The state does not seem to have taken a significant interest in the issue of guardianship, but property law reform was seen as a way to avoid pauperized women and children becoming a burden on the state. Elizabeth Cady Stanton argued that the society would benefit from guardianship reform that would protect women and children from morally degenerate fathers and husbands, but the state does not appear to have echoed her concerns. When the women's rights activists stopped meeting for the duration of the Civil War and concentrated their energies on the abolitionist cause, the Legislature substantially weakened the 1860 law.

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AN INVESTIGATION OF STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF FAIRNESS OF CLASSROOM POLICIES

*Lisa Flynn**

Economics & Business

Abstract

This study investigates student responses to two scenarios, a student missing more classes than acceptable as per the syllabus, and a student failing to hand in a paper by the due date. In both scenarios the policy states that failure to meet the requirements will result in automatic failure in the course. Students were asked to evaluate the fairness of an instructor's actions, where in one scenario the instructor enforced the policy and failed the student for missing classes and in the other the instructor allowed an extension of time to complete the paper. The study revealed that just over half of the respondents viewed failing the student for too many absences as unfair, and that over 90% of the respondents answered that it was fair for the instructor to allow an extension of time to complete the paper. Subgroup data was collected for both scenarios, with the only statistically significant finding being that students receiving a scenario where the instructor and students negotiated the absence policy rated the action as less unfair than when the absence policy is state mandated. We speculate that the scenarios and outcomes need further refinement in response to student comments that the consequences were too harsh and the reason for noncompliance by the student in the scenarios needs more explanation in order to make an accurate assessment of fairness of policies and their implementation by the instructor.

The current study arose as a result of an initial inquiry in a CPA Law class, where the instructor posed a series of questions to students relating to contracts. The instructor was interested in an apparent misunderstanding of contract law and the students' misapplication of the principles of contract law to specific scenarios. To bring the principles more clearly into focus for the students, the professor created scenarios involving policies stated

* This paper is a direct result of a presentation given at the Oneonta Faculty Convivium and as such was presented solely by Lisa Flynn. However, the work is part of a larger research stream that has included the involvement of Robert Rothenberg, Richard Insinga, and Anuradhaa Shastri.

in a course syllabus. The first scenario related to a student missing more than the acceptable number of classes and failing the course. The second illustration dealt with a student receiving an extension of a deadline for a paper submission, without which (s)he would have failed the course. The students in the CPA Law class were asked to assess the fairness of enforcing and waiving the policies as stated in the syllabus, and the professor received inconsistent answers from the students. This prompted the instructor to do some further investigation into college students' perceptions of fairness of instructor policies in the classroom.

The goal of this line of research is to better understand the ways in which students perceive and assess the fairness of instructor policies, for two different reasons. The first is to see if adjustments are warranted in instructors' approaches to courses and students, and the second is to correct any misconceptions of the students to help them fully understand course requirements, instructor policies, and to have appropriate expectations with respect to the courses they take and what the workplace environment requires.

In the researchers' initial investigation, open ended essay questions were developed as either part of class requirements or as extra credit opportunities. The essays asked the two questions referred to above, where the students were asked to evaluate whether it was fair for the instructor to fail a student for missing too many classes and whether it was fair for the instructor to grant an extension to a student for a paper if without the extension, (s)he would fail the course. The essay questions were given to students other than those in the original CPA Law class, and responses were categorized and reported in a prior publication (see Rothenberg, et al., 2004 for results of the study). Based upon the issues identified by the student responses, the survey instrument was refined for the current study to take into account external factors and to determine whether the students were evaluating the policy itself or the enforcement of the policy, and if they could articulate that difference.

The questions remain in essay format and the two scenarios have both had one series of manipulations added to them for this study. For the question regarding absences, in the initial investigation it was clear from student responses that the students were at times addressing the policy itself and at times were addressing the instructor's enforcement of the policy. In order to get clear responses to the fairness issues of interest, the absences

question clearly asked students to address whether the policy itself was fair and then separately, whether the instructor's implementation of the policy was fair. The manipulation for this question revolved around the way in which the policy was decided. Specifically, the question was asked in four ways, where the student would receive one of four possible situations: the policy was mandated at the state level, mandated at the college level, the policy was the instructor's own policy, or the policy had been negotiated by the students and the instructor early in the course. The reasoning for this manipulation stems once again from the initial research, where responses questioned the very basis of an absence policy where a student fails the course after only a few absences. The actual essay question is as follows:

Assume there is a(n) [state mandated, college mandated, instructor mandated] policy [negotiated between the instructor and students] in which it is stated that students who miss more than two classes must fail the course. The instructor has published and discussed this policy clearly in his/her syllabus. Assume further that a student in this class misses four classes due to a lot of problems at home. The instructor fails the student in the class. A) Is this policy fair? B) Is the instructor's implementation of the policy fair?

The second essay question involved a missed deadline for handing in a paper. Based on the initial response given in the CPA Law class, the researchers were interested in whether or not students would view the enforcement of the policy differently if it applied to themselves or to another student. For the current round of essays, the paper deadline scenario was manipulated to have one of three possibilities: the respondent is the student in the situation, the student in the situation is someone in the respondent's class, or the student in the situation is in another class altogether. The actual essay question is as follows:

Assume an instructor has a published and discussed policy requiring submission of a paper on a certain date. If not submitted on time, the student will fail the entire course (as opposed to receiving a failing grade on just the paper). [You, a student in a class you are taking, a student in another class] have (has) had a number of personal problems at home and failed to hand in the paper on time. [You, he/she] request(s) an extension of time of a week for handing in the paper, and it is granted. Do you think this is fair?

The two sets of essay questions were handed out to students in business law and accounting courses, with the students ranging from sophomore to senior status. Ninety-six students responded in a usable fashion to both questions. Three sets of responses were recorded: fairness of the absence policy, fairness of the implementation of the absence policy, and fairness in granting the paper extension.

Beginning with the question pertaining to absences, out of the total number of responses, 53% found the absence policy to be unfair, while 50% found the implementation of the absence policy to be unfair. Then the responses were categorized by manipulation, which reveals the following descriptive information regarding the absence policy:

<u>Manipulation of Absence Policy:</u>	<u>Subgroup N</u>	<u>Percent of Subgroup responding 'Unfair' to Absence Policy</u>
State mandated policy	25	64%
College mandated policy	27	63%
Instructor mandated policy	23	48%
Negotiated policy	21	33%

A t-test of means was conducted between all subgroups, and the difference between state mandated policy and instructor-student negotiated policy does reach statistical significance at the .05 level (t-value of 2.022). All other differences are not statistically significant. There were no statistically significant differences among the manipulations for the implementation of the absence policy. All subgroups showed approximately 50% of responses as unfair, ranging from 48% to 52% among the four groups.

The results for the second scenario were quite different from the first scenario. Taken overall, just over 9% of the respondents found the granting of a paper extension to be unfair, indicating that most students (over 90%) perceived the lack of enforcement of the stated policy to be fair in that situation. By way of contrast, only half of the students responding to the first scenario would presumably say that lack of enforcement of the absence policy is fair.

Categorizing responses according to the manipulations of the paper extension scenario provided the following results:

Manipulation of Paper Extension:	<u>Subgroup N</u>	<u>Percent of Subgroup responding 'Unfair' to granting of extension</u>
Student him/herself requests extension	28	7%
Member of student's class requests extension	34	15%
Student in another class requests extension	34	6%

While the percentages suggest there may be some perception differences depending on which individual requests more time for handing in a paper, there were no statistically significant differences between the subgroups for the extension manipulations. The authors do note, however, that in both scenarios the small numbers within subgroups make statistical inference difficult. It is noteworthy that the percentage of students thinking it is unfair for a student within their own class to receive an extension is more than double the percentage of students thinking it is unfair for themselves to receive one, or someone from another class entirely. It has been both the perception and concern of the researchers that students appear unable to clearly apply rules of fairness consistently, without reference to whether or not they benefit or are harmed personally by the application of a principle. These responses, though they lack the statistical backing for concrete conclusions, do provide some indication that more scrutiny is warranted.

The summary of our findings from this study is that students overwhelmingly view a bending of the rules as fair with respect to granting a paper extension, but do not react in a comparable manner with respect to a refusal to bend the rules in the absence scenario. When the manipulations were investigated, we found some preliminary evidence that students view the policy itself to be more fair if they have had input into crafting the policy, at least with respect to the number of absences. No other manipulations produced statistically significant differences between subgroups. It was and still remains a concern of the researchers that the goal for many students is to do well, regardless of how, and that either enforcement of rules or a lack thereof is acceptable as long as the student benefits.

Areas for further research revolve around both the weaknesses in the current study and a desire to expand the work. The sample size has been

increased in the next stage of the research in order to test manipulations in larger subgroups, where it may be possible to achieve some statistically significant differences. In addition, many students voiced disagreement with the severity of the outcomes in the scenarios, indicating that failure for the whole course was unreasonable, particularly in the paper extension scenario. Student reactions to the severity of the consequences will be addressed by altering the policy statements in such ways as having a loss of points on the final average for excessive absences instead of a failing grade in the course, and having a failing grade on the paper instead of failing the entire course. Additionally, there was much written by the students about the nature of the personal problems listed in the scenarios. The problems were purposefully undefined in the original and current studies because the authors felt the reason for the failure to comply with the policy was irrelevant to the fairness of the policy and its implementation. However, it was an issue that was raised repeatedly and the students stated in a great majority of the responses that the nature of the personal problems was highly relevant in assessing whether or not the consequences of noncompliance with the policy should be implemented fully.

Related to expansion of the current work, future scenarios will move beyond the classroom and address issues relevant to the workplace. There are parallel questions such as the consequences for missed days at work and missed deadlines due to personal problems. It would be interesting to see if students view the classroom environment differently than the working environment. At the heart of the issue is the student perception of the acceptability of 'excuses' for non-performance, and whether the classroom environment prepares students adequately for the work environment in this area of expectation. Students' perceptions of fairness of rules share in defining the classroom environment, and may limit the ability of faculty to serve as mentors and role models, to the extent that instructors are viewed as unfair when enforcing the rules as well as unfair when waiving the rules. A principal aim of the research is to first identify the predominant perceptions students hold and then use that information to alter expectations and perceptions where needed in order to establish better learning environments, better relationships between instructors and students, and realistic expectations about the work environment outside the classroom.

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PEDAGOGY OF PRIVILEGE

Zanna McKay

Elementary Education and Reading

“But what can we do about it in our classrooms?” students in educational foundations classes exclaim. Learning the history of education in America, including the history of blacks, women, Native Americans and other minorities, in addition to an overview of educational finance, students are confronted with the terrible inequities of power.

To help you understand my response to this question, I will share with you the beginnings of my understanding of the limits and constraints inherent in instances of institutional privilege, not only for those who are obviously disempowered but also for those seemingly privileged.

During the two years I taught at the American Institute School of Bamako (AISB) one of my biggest projects each year was taking my students to live with the Dogon for a week. The Dogon are one of the last of the indigenous peoples who have not been converted but have maintained their worldview for hundreds, if not thousands of years. They live in cliff dwellings, growing onions as they have for generations.

I developed an integrated curriculum that involved students researching, investigating and making a power point presentation about an aspect of Dogon life. Preparation for the trip, especially the second year, was very involved. Each student interviewed at least one person from the Dogon about some aspect of Dogon village life. These people included the three guides who would accompany us, a local man who was now a practicing physician in Bamako, and the many local people who were Dogon and provided services to the ex-patriot community. Following these interviews they investigated through books and the Internet the ideas and questions their interviews highlighted for them. Our guides provided excellent resources by reading stories and myths into tape recorders, as well as offered their insights as “border crossers” (Giroux, 1992).

While watching the guides interpret and translate for students, I often wondered about the amazing strengths they showed in “reading the world” (Freire, 1993). They spoke upwards of eight languages each and could

reasonably discuss the difference between the worldview of the Dogon and the Fulani, yet only one of them could read at all. Did illiterate really describe them? These men developed a strong sense of *communitas* and lived in a place of liminality, between the worlds of the Dogon as they have lived and the modern visitor as the world is now. They traveled the chaos of liminality and brought some sense of understanding through to both worlds, as well as provided a much needed income to the Dogon villages (Turner, 1997).

As a group we prepared for our trip by having a parent night where the students presented what they would investigate. The local travel agent also worked closely with me and the students to develop a trip with meaningful exchange among students and villagers. I watched these students of privilege and power look to others to understand the world they would be entering. The actual trip provided a period of liminality, as it required a day and a half of bus travel on dirt roads, followed by a challenging hike down a thousand foot escarpment. During this time students read, played cards, and more and more just stared out of the window at the never-ending savanna. The world of the African bush became more and more real, and as this happened, the world of their place of privilege and power receded somewhat.



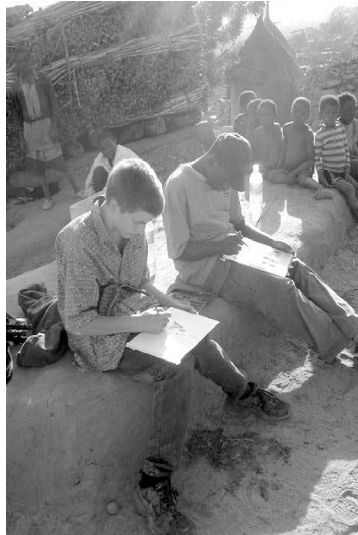
Arriving at our Dogon village.

Arrival in the village brought work for students to organize resources and begin their studies. Each student used the digital cameras, and some used the video camera. We worked as a group each day to learn the traditional style of pottery making. We dug our own clay, wedged the clay, and each student formed a pot. During this time about half of the class did pottery and the other half learned about village life. Then they switched. Students shadowed a person in the village doing tasks such as pounding millet and

grinding nuts with a stone, cooking and hauling water. Students were required to keep a journal with questions and observations, as well as produce a poem and some watercolor sketches. Because of these requirements, students could be seen spending long periods of time watching the cliffs or people in the quiet of a time before machines. Their reflections were powerful reminders of the need we have for reflection. We also conducted a deforestation research project that sent data back to Washington D.C.

The daily chores of a Dogon family would include pounding millet, cooking porridge, grinding peanuts by stone, hauling water to wash and working the fields.

Finally, students produced books about themselves that covered interesting personal facts, such as where they are from, what their family looks like, what their dreams are, and even the music they like. Every other page was left blank. When AISB students went to the Dogon school they met with an interpreter and a Dogon student and wrote down the Dogon student's information on the blank pages. These books were left as gifts for the village students. Many of my students continued to write to their friends in the village after they returned home. When we discussed this project later, students were more surprised by their similarities to the Dogon children rather than their differences.



AISB students paint under the watchful eye of village children.

As an aspect of our project, students had a Night of the Dogon presentation for the International Community of Bamako, West Africa. They presented their power point presentations and produced a display of their art and writing. The students also developed a fundraising project to buy a hand pump for the village well and school supplies for the school. As a personal aside, the supplies provided brought a flourishing of art produced by the children of Dogon. I bought these amazing pictures of masked dancers and mud huts when I returned for my own time of reflection in the cliffs of the Dogon.



A mask dance celebration was provided for us by the Dogon.

Pedagogy of Privilege seeks to liberate the advantaged in society from their bondage and to empower them to be able to connect with others and see that all humans can live rich and full lives, that the lives of the temporarily economically privileged can be immeasurably enhanced by developing an understanding of others and a capacity to be in service to something larger than themselves. We want to nourish the capacity of those of economic and political advantage to both understand and transform their world through connection (Noddings, 2003).

Six tenets of culturally relevant teaching for Pedagogy of the Privileged based on the tenets for multicultural education by Ladson-Billings and revised by me are:

Students whose education, economic, social, political and cultural futures are most *secure are helped to recognize the intellect and leadership qualities of those whose same futures are most tenuous.*

Students are apprenticed in a learning community rather than taught in an isolated and unrelated way.

Students' real-life abilities *for connecting and empathizing* are legitimized, as they become part of the "official" curriculum.

Teachers and students participate in a broad conception of literacy that incorporates both literature and oratory *in the worlds of both the privileged and the oppressed.*

Teachers and students engage in a collective struggle against the status quo. Teachers do not accept the prevailing belief that their students *cannot understand power differentials and act to change unfair practices.* They have high expectations for their students and convey their belief to the students.

Teachers *and students* are cognizant of themselves as political beings.

I guess the answer for education students who wonder, "What can we do about inequities of power?" is as much about them, their lives and their abilities to connect and really **see** others and themselves, as it is about learning what to do **for** others. There is a saying in the bush, if you meet someone on the trail the traditional greeting is "I see you," and the answer is, "Then I am here." I hope that my students moved a little closer to at least beginning to say, "I see you." I believe we now live in a world that needs more than anything to educate children to see and be seen, a world in which we can all say, "Then I am here."

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