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Doc 1 Research Forum Abstracts

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Adult Education Doctoral Forum
April 10, 1999
Chicago Campus • Room 608D

In this forum, seven members of the 1999 ACE Doctoral Cohort will present their research for public review and discussion. These presentations are a formal component of the Critical Engagement Project—a sustained and critical inquiry.

Through their Critical Engagement Project doctoral students infuse their dissertation with a critical sense of self, their commitments, and their vision of both self and the world they seek to build through their inquiries.

9:00–9:50 a.m.	**Elena Bront de Avila** Shattered Images: The Self Through the "Looking Glass" of Oppression
10:00–10:50	**Gordon Craigo** Toward a Theory of the University System Part 1: The Mission of the University
11:00–11:50	**Denise Frer** An Exploration of Selected Social Dimensions of Experiences Using Electronic-mediated Communication in Adult Education
1:00–1:50 p.m.	**Patricia Anderson Flanagan** Learning and Loss as Companions During the Transitional Phases of Learning in Adulthood
2:00–2:50	**Susan Kerstein** Hello! Is Anybody out There? Developing Online Learning Communities—An Exploratory Study
3:00–3:50	**Christine Kowalski** The Evolution of a Practice: Physical Therapist Assistants Respond to Social Change

4:00–4:50	Meng-Yang Li
	Fostering Self-Directed Learning (SDL) Ability to Develop a Life-Long Learning Society—A Study of Educational Reform in Taiwan
5:00–5:50	Roberto Sanabria
	Decolonizing Ourselves

ABSTRACTS

Elena Bront de Avila

Shattered Images: The Self Through the "Looking Glass" of Oppression.

Grounded in my personal experience, the purpose of this study was to find out how the self was affected by the Romanian totalitarian regime of communism. The relationship between oppression and the shattered images of the self is not necessarily a concern restricted to the areas of sociology or social psychology. It is my belief that within my mission as an adult educator I will foster human growth by researching the effects on the self of the imposition of a single way of thinking, of the restriction to one way of communicating and acting, and of the confinement to one space of living.

Oppression is not characteristic only of despotism. It is a chameleon that changes faces from promoting individualism to repressing alternatives, from indulging in abundance to taking away the basic means of life. Regardless of its expression, oppression eclipses the individual's paths; consequently, people may be easily coerced into the purpose of any group or interests since they have little sense of their own direction.

At the outset of my study, I named my research the distortions of the self under totalitarianism, but I questioned myself how I could give it a name if I did not know whether the distortions existed. I selected six interviewees: three of them live in US and three of them live in Romania. I approached the phenomenon by reaching, beyond the surface, the emotions they went through and their experiences of the social and political environment of communism. Another method to collect data was through observation that maximized my ability to grasp beliefs, interests and concerns and provided me with the participants' emotional reactions to their remembrances.

The data analysis was organized in ten phases. This implied transcribing the interviews, reading and rereading. The core of this process lied in the phase three, four and five. Semiotic and hermeneutic analyses were used to identify the themes of the interviews that were further organized in thematic categories. In the final stages I worked on reading the thematic categories

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with the participants and I double-categorized with a colleague who speaks Romanian.

The findings were interpreted from symbolic interactionist and existentialist perspectives. The interviewees' emotions were indicators for me of how the self responded and was affected by the oppression of the totalitarian social and political circumstances. Participants spoke about feelings of despair provoked by realizing that their past and their way of being were destroyed. This sudden rupture in the continuity of existence developed lack of trust among community members, and a disruption in the sense of self that was expressed as "unweaving the tapestry of the self." Since communism did not come as an alternative but as "the thief comes at night," the self disrupted its dialogue with his or her collective otherness.

In conclusion, building a fluid image of the self requires answers to the questions "Who am I?" and "Who am I becoming?" The questions help the self critically reflect on biographical contexts in order to identify barriers that have to be torn down, interruptive cognitions that must be transformed and change that needs to be handled. The fluidity of image does not mean envisioning existence without challenge. A fluid image is composed of the dialogue between the "I" and the "me." This dialogue implies understanding of the past, the will to relate to others, the desire to take agency in the reorganization of emotions and in the change of dysfunctional assumptions. If the self maintains fear of the social environment, lack of knowledge of what is wanted and needed, the fluid image is not possible. Then the self will be merely shattered images of its own being-in-the-world.

Gordon Craigo

Toward a Theory of the University System
Part 1: The Mission of the University

Based on 1990 US Census data, slightly over half of all students who entered college did not complete either an associate's or bachelor's degree, which translates into an overall college and university system graduation rate of just under 50%. This graduation rate was achieved despite many initiatives undertaken to improve the chance of success for students within higher education.

My research indicates that no theory of the university system, considered as a whole, has been developed. An overall theory should help to achieve understanding and prediction, thereby helping both faculty and administration efforts to help more of their students graduate than are graduating today. Such a theory will require much work to develop, and must address such variables as university mission, retention, quality efforts, and governance.

This CEP investigates the university mission. From a mission is developed the focus and character of a particular institution, and from individual institutions is evolved an entire system.

State and independent university mission statements typically address the three foci of teaching, research, and service; service is typically addressed as direct service to the community. Religious universities differ in that their primary mission addresses teaching. Service is also addressed, but derives from the moral and intellectual development of the student through teaching; the student is then able to provide service as a result of their learning and development.

Missions are difficult to operationalize, and are subject to cultural influences and governmental edicts. Hidden missions, such as the desire for nationally competitive athletic teams, develop over time. The division of power between faculty, administration, and government bodies, as well as competition among individual institutions, tends to frustrate efforts to fully realize the potential of a stated mission. Due to these difficulties, there is no apparent correlation between a mission - as currently stated - and graduation rate.

Theresa Caron and Nancy Hyland

The Ultimate Striptease: Bureaucracy in the Buff—a Conversation about the Bare Essentials of Power

As we look at the approaching millennium we realize its bleak economic and social future. It appears "We need to have in place new methods so that we can co-create a more positive future" (Theobald, 1996, p. 8). Nemiroff (1992) and Guinier, Fine, and Balin (1997) have given voice to alternative methods, counter-hegemony, within the fields of education and law. However, other voices are near non-existent. Encouraged by the shared confidence of our research we have chosen to join the voices of Nemiroff and Guinier. We have determined that there is a pressing on-going need to inform practitioners in the field of adult education of the existence of counter-hegemonic activity and of the power of their own agency to participate in counter-hegemonic activity; a silent, positive revolution. This positive revolution maintains the integrity of both the organization and its mission while achieving social change within the organization—in other words, democratizing the workplace. The adult educator has the capacity to be a facilitator and/or catalyst who ignites the process of this yet unidentified positive revolution.

It is incumbent upon us who have lived and attempted to create social change within bureaucracies, to add to these voices and unmask the

counter-hegemonic activity within our own practice. The field of anthropology has informed us that cultures rise and fall depending on their ability to redefine their criteria for success which enables citizens to re-adapt how they function within their community. "Imitating the past is not good enough; only the creative society will survive" (Dale, 1972, p. 20). Our study will constitute our linkage to this creativity. It will become our contribution to expanding the knowledge base of adult education through an examination of both content and process; content in relation to understanding oppression and empowerment; and process in relation to the potential of co-operative inquiry as a process for democratizing workplaces.

Our voices will be heard through the product of our research, our book. This book in itself will be counter-hegemonic. The Critical Engagement Project (CEP) has provided us with the impetus to make it so. We have not been forced into the framework of the traditional dissertation but rather provided the opportunity to create outside of the box, disseminating our knowledge by means of a stated format that reaches beyond the academic community to the practitioner community. The format and framework of the book are also counter-hegemonic. We have chosen to write in the écriture feminine style of the French feminists such as, Cixous (1981) and Kristeva (1982) in our adoption of the metaphor of the striptease to communicate our research findings. Taking into account the power within authorship, we have written the test in such a way that jargon of academia is transformed into a language of transparency.

Our stated work is epistemologically grounded in our autobiographies. Our methodology, the co-operative inquiry process, forms the framework for our conversation. This methodology is also counter-hegemonic in that it is defined as outside of traditional research paradigms. Consistency of process and product are the strengths of our endeavor. We have come to the research from the margins of our feminine voice. We have communicated the results of our research within a marginalized feminist style and we have gone beyond our research into our meta-learning through the co- operative inquiry model. This vehicle by its very nature validates emotion and invites change. Therefore, our co-operative inquiry model, although similar to the Heron (1996) model is uniquely our own. In summary, we have begun with who we are. We continue to live through who we are becoming and we have encountered both on the stage of our practice. We are the holistic representation of the interdependence of theory and practice.

Like hooks (1994) we have attempted to merge "critical thinking in everyday life with knowledge learned in books and through study... passionately concerned with education for critical consciousness" (p. 2).

Ricardo Estrada

Inspiring Learning among Tri-non-Traditional (TNT) Students

The field of adult education has been explored for years in relation to divers adult students, especially regarding opportunities in higher education. These explorations have looked to the development of self-esteem and personal growth, social mobility, and issues of empowerment. Attention has also been concentrated on contrasting traditional and non-traditional students in the U.S.

The purpose of this study is to call attention to a third category, the tri-non-traditional adult student with a combination of characteristics including the absence of formal schooling or extended intervals between periods of schooling, language barriers, poverty, and family responsibilities as a single parent with two or more children. This study explores the ways in which the TNT student learns and methods of teaching that inspire learning in three specific areas: 1. Guiding strategies for the first day of class, including language usage and syllabus negotiation; 2. Methodology, including Andragogy, self-directed learning, and Paulo Freire's alternatives to "banking education;" and 3. Political support, including economic and social factors.

The study was conducted in three educational institutions, each representing a different spectrum of adult education practice. It concludes with recommendations both to instructors on the use of the "Guiding Strategies" and to institutions engaged in the development of curriculum and programs for the TNT student.

Patricia Anderson Flanagan

Learning and Loss as Companions during the Transitional Phases of Learning in Adulthood

The consequences of learning and loss as companions during the transitional phases of learning in adulthood may present difficult issues for those participating. It may cause an individual to avoid or interrupt any or all of the formal or informal learning activities that are available to adults today.

Employing a qualitative and phenomenological approach in design and attitude, this research focused on the interviews of four main participants. Their experiences and thoughts were analyzed with the aid of terminology suggested by the work of Elisabeth Kubler-Ross.

The study has shown that the interviewees have indeed dealt with a variety of learning phases during which the concept of learning and loss as companions was evident during the process and also as an outcome. This

was identified by the following terms: denial/isolation, anger, bargaining, depression, acceptance, and hope.

The implications for practitioners focus on understanding the phenomenon and then being able to anticipate or manage the phases of learning. It is suggested that facilitators help participants to reframe the experience. A list of specific suggestions for adult education practitioners, from the interviewees identifies problematic elements of adult learning activities.

Further research is suggested in the many other emerging themes that are discussed in the literature review as well as the study of homogeneous groups. It could be extremely helpful to identify trends and patterns.

Sherry Foster

Fostering Change: Research and Reflections of an Educator's Practice in Social Service

Fostering Change: Research and Reflections of an Educator's Practice in Social Service is a critical ethnography that analyzes my practice. The initial research topic proposed was to conduct an examination of the nonprofit sector specific to rural areas with emphasis on impacting the social service delivery system. Questionnaires were distributed to one hundred rural social service agencies to enable the comparison of my practice and responsibilities to those of others in similar positions. Data was analyzed and models for social change were reviewed to supplement my own existing knowledge of the social service field of practice. The culmination of this journey resulted in a comprehensive model proposed to visually illustrate an emerging framework for my continued practice - one which is illustrative of the depth and breadth, as well as the interconnections, apparent in the diverse disciplines within which I practice. The model—Fostering: The Cyclic Model of Feminine Interaction in Social Change Efforts—is the result of this ethnographic work.

Denise Frer

An Exploration of Selected Social Dimensions of Experiences Using Electronic-mediated Communication in Adult Education

This study is an analysis of various issues relating to the power of electronic-mediated communication to accelerate the pace of communication. This study explores the inner experiences of adults and their reflections on the challenges that electronic-mediated communication brings to their communication process. This study also provides discussions of the impact and use of electronic-mediated communication on the relationship between the participant, the medium, the message, and the code used for deciphering messages.

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This relationship opens the discussion of the influences that electronic-mediated communication produces on the interconnected social, cultural, and political consciousness of the users. Because the participants are not isolated or one-dimensional human beings, a philosophical approach to understanding the relationship between communication, technology, and learning in the educative process is presented.

The works and ideas of Jurgen Habermas have been used as examples of attempts to develop critical consciousness among persons within culture and society. This means that developing a critical consciousness of how we live and communicate with others as human beings face to face and through electronic-mediated technology requires critical understanding, analysis, and evaluation of human reason. Habermas is clearly one of the philosophers who understands that reason is necessarily connected to improving human life with human society. According to Habermas, human beings need to know more and more, and to understand, analyze and to continuously evaluate how knowledge impacts life and society.

Electronic-mediated communication brings together people across international boundaries and creates a social environment in cyberspace. These virtual communities engage people in interaction in real electronic social places and provide opportunities for greater participation among the public. The patterns of language and communication are a specific response to the electronic medium and result from the participant's influence on the medium. Participants modify the communication system to meet their needs while also modifying their behavior to compensate for the system demands. A study of the effects of electronic technology upon the participants includes a study of the role of the participants in shaping and reshaping the context. This study is a reflection on and observations of the social processes that provide a link between electronic technology and our communicative patterns. Observing and documenting the impact of the communication on the user is a critical part of the feedback from the communication process and provides a more complete picture of the reality for the participants and the process.

Habermas argues that every language has consequences for the participants. What I know, think, and believe as participants work with electronic-mediated communication and with others becomes the critical factor that shapes my communication. In this study, the words of participants in the study align with their understandings and use of electronic-mediated communication and reflect their view of the world.

Saundra Frison, Maureen Greeg, and Anna Hammond

An African Centered Perspective in Adult Education: Celebrating Voices from the African Diaspora

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Heretofore, the Eurocentric frame has been used in the identification, analysis, and interpretation of the sociocultural reality of people of the African Diaspora and the creation of adult education programs for people of African descent. As such, the existence and the influence of racism have not been acknowledged as being a primary impact factor on the lives of people of the African Diaspora. Those adult education programs that have been developed with their stated goal the empowerment of members of this group do not accurately reflect the problems or appropriate solutions for this group.

The purpose of this Afrocentric study is to identify, understand, and explain the relevance of cultural elements, the Nguzo Saba (Seven Principles), in terms of them becoming the foundation of culturally grounded community-based programs for members of the African Diaspora. We are seeking to identify ways the Nguzo Saba are manifested within communities of people of African descent and to translate that into a foundation for developing appropriate educational programs for adults in these communities.

Discussed in this study are the African-centered philosophical contributions of selected educational theorists and activists who are of African descent. Dr. Asante's theory of Afrocentricity is detailed in the methodology section. The study focuses on personal stories people shared in interviews in the communities of Loiza, Puerto Rico, and Beuafort County in the Georgia Sea Islands. The voices of the people we interviewed are our major data source.

The information obtained through these interviews and review of relevant literature led to our findings, which include: 1.) That there are cultural commonalties which exist among people of African descent throughout the African Diaspora; 2) People of African descent know what elements should be included in adult education programs developed for them; 3.) When the history and culture of people of African descent is acknowledged and included in the activities of everyday living, this serves to minimize the impact of oppressive racism and acts as motivation for social action and involvement; 4). These elements can be used as a foundation in designing adult education programs for all people. The elements that should be considered in the design include the history of the people of Africa, cultural selfethnic education, skill and intellectual development, and spirituality.

The study concludes with the application of our work in the form of a book for all communities, but specifically for communities of people of African descent. The book includes the voices of the people we interviewed and an annotated bibliography to be used to assist anyone who may want to learn more.

Winnie Kauffman

Spiritual Development within Adult Learning Programs: How Stories Trigger Identification of Our Shared Humanity through Reflection and Discussion Processes.

This critical engagement project is an action research study on the introduction of a four-week, spiritual development program for cross-faith participants within an adult faith formation process, held at a Roman Catholic Parish in the Archdiocese of Chicago, Illinois. The study describes the design, development, delivery, and evaluation of the four-week program, utilizing critical, self-reflection and group processes, based on a different spiritually challenging, brief reading distributed each week. Within the adult learning process, the parishioners and their guests were offered the opportunity to discern their thoughts, assumptions, and actions. By returning participants to the proverbial fork in the road of their lives, through challenging readings, reflection, and discourse, the study shows how they grew in awareness of our shared humanity within an adult education process.

The purpose of the qualitative research project was to introduce and develop interest in adult education processes within adult faith formation programs offered in Roman Catholic communities with greater inclusion of participants from various backgrounds. Referring to the intended collaborative learning process as potentially a dance between the cognitive and affective domains of adult learning, the study explores if adults are more influenced by what they have formally learned or informally learned through life experiences.

Action research was the methodology utilized for the research project to: (1) allow greater flexibility in program design, so that input solicited from participants, during the four-week study, would determine how the program could be altered or further developed, based on their interests and learning needs; (2) pursue new knowledge as to what entices adults to participate in adult education programs; (3) search for meaning in what adults want and need from adult faith formation programs; (4) determine effective methods of presenting spiritual and cross-faith development programs for adult learners; (5) present a research project without preconceived conclusions drawn or other hidden agendas; and (6) invite adults to participate by personal, invitational letters, distributed randomly.

Data collection, analyses, conclusions, and recommendations are based on observation of the research project, interviews of participants and members of the community at large, and evaluation forms completed by all participants. The general conclusions are that interest in cross-faith, spiritual development programs is strong among the participants, even though the study did not include adults from various religious, racial, and educational backgrounds, with few exceptions; the majority of participants are currently

Roman Catholics. They enjoyed the three-step process implemented: critical, self-reflection, small group sharing, and large group discussion. Voicing timidity and unfamiliarity with cross-faith topics as reasons for not inviting guests from different backgrounds, the participants did want this program to continue, and the consensus was that they would be bringing friends from diverse backgrounds as guests to future, similar programs.

Susan Kerstein

Hello! Is Anybody out There? Developing Online Learning Communities—An Exploratory Study

More adults than ever are returning to school. Due to the pressure of jobs, families and multiple commitments, adult students are exploring and choosing alternative forms of education than traditional on-campus programs. The World Wide Web and the Internet are fast becoming another way for students to take classes and to obtain an education. Looking at the best ways to engage students in these environments becomes critical in the teaching and learning process of adult educators.

Using concepts drawn from group dynamics, the purpose of this study was to explore how faculty who use the Internet and the World Wide Web to teach part or all of their courses are consciously thinking about, constructing and developing a cohesive and effective interactive learning community or group in the absence of regular or no face-to-face interaction. To gather data, the researcher became a participant-observer on a two-year field trip traveling all over the world virtually on the Internet and the World Wide Web and in real time (RT) to Washington, D.C., California, Georgia and Canada and sometimes to real places (RP), New York, Massachusetts, Florida, Wisconsin, Illinois, Georgia, Washington, D.C., Washington state and England. She used grounded theory as her research methodology and the qualitative computer program Nud*ist (**N**on-numerical **U**nstructured **D**ata * **I**ndexing, **S**earching and **T**heory-building) as a primary tool to help analyze the data she collected.

In her presentation, the researcher will discuss her quest to find answers to her research question on developing online learning communities, her field trip, the process of how she identified and located interviewees on the field trip, her research methodology and analysis, her findings and their implications for the field of adult education. Throughout the course of the study, as the researcher sat alone at her computer, she regularly wondered, "**Hello! Is Anybody out There?**" She will also attempt to answer this question especially as it relates to teaching and learning on the Internet and the World Wide Web.

Russ Killion and Patti McNally

The Learning Organization: The McNally-Killion Model, Meeting the Varied Needs of an Organization

This paper takes theory to practice in an effort to resolve challenges experienced by a growing company. The foundation for this solution is the ongoing process of the Learning Organization. We review and critique six authors whose Learning Organization models capture the elements we felt were essential to moving this organization on the path of their chosen strategic goals toward a competitive advantage. As we developed a learner-driven process (within the sales, marketing and customer service groups) we focused on the specific, self-identified needs of the groups. It became clear to us that to address those needs and introduce systemic action while supporting competitive advantage, it would be necessary for us to design our own Learning Organization model. This model (the McNally-Killion Model) allowed us the flexibility to be learner driven while facilitating systemic action to direct and accommodate growth in an effective manner that was in congruence with the company culture. Our model requires a level of self-analysis, critical thinking and learning on the part of all employees.

We demonstrate the effectiveness of our model from two perspectives. One, we addressed the specific concerns that were identified within the sales, marketing and customer service groups. Two, we present two case studies, one before and one after the learning process action. Our results exceeded any hopeful expectations we had and validate our model of a Learning Organization in this case study.

Christine Kowalski

The Evolution of a Practice: Physical Therapist Assistants Respond to Social Change

My historical inquiry examines the symbiotic relationship between the mission of allied health education and the philosophical elements of the field of adult education, relative to the paraprofessional field of physical therapist assistants. I examine the social, legislative, economic, and political events that shaped the thirty-year history of the physical therapist assistant as they developed within the professional field of physical therapy.

I explore the struggles that occur within a profession, as strata of workers strive to create identity and achieve a level of status and respect. As a body of knowledge grows, and an occupation becomes a profession, knowledge becomes connected to power. This power becomes embodied in individuals within organized institutions. Exploring a group's history can serve to

facilitate discussion regarding the utilization of power, and the role it plays in decision making and in the creation of non events. History can reveal a professional group's failures as well as its feats.

For me, the "who am I?" component of this Critical Engagement Project/ Dissertation was deeply interwoven into my work, as my background is as a physical therapist assistant. Initially, my personal interest fueled my passion, but as the history revealed itself through the processes of qualitative research, controlling my subjectivity became a dilemma that blocked my energies and interfered with my writing. For me, that became the greatest obstacle to the flow of this work.

Finally, I propose that adult educators involved in allied health education must challenge students to critically reflect on and confront issues of power as they are revealed within health care practice, and within membership of a professional group. If we ourselves acquiesce and continue to promote the status quo by ignoring the existence of power and its impact on practitioners, we will fail in the basic mission of adult education.

Ruby Plazas Lane

Reflections of Cultural Selves

The present status of Hispanics in relation to higher education is a serious problem with long-term effects. Recent research has indicated that among these negative effects are low level of education and limited ability to speak the English language to find good employment. This place them in a condition where they do not have the ability to control the forces that affect them and often relegate them to poverty level income and to experience negative self-appraisals. However, research is extremely limited and what is known is that Hispanics are underserved by the educational system, and that both the socioeconomic and technological complexities of this country have considerable demands on them (Magallan, 1993). The present study addressed the lack of research regarding the implications of self-concept for motivation to learn among adult Hispanic learners. New approaches to learning and student development were examined. This study assessed how institutional barriers as well as environmental barriers outside college, influenced their academic success. Utilizing focus groups themes and survey results, data were analyzed with inductive methods.

Three dialogical group sessions were organized in which eight people participated. Both Hispanics males and females represented different Spanish countries. The age varied from twenty to fifty five years old. The participants discussed how they experience college and concluded (a) Hispanic students have doubts about their ability to be competent college students: (b) college is a struggle for Hispanic students; (c) validation and

support of students' efforts may lead to the transformation of their self-concepts; (d) that when significant others, faculty, and other academic staff members validated them interpersonally or academically, they began to believe they could improve their academic achievement. Based on the analysis of the participants' discussions, two themes were highlighted: Learning is an overwhelming pursuit, and maintaining an identity is a struggle while finding the way to belong and to fit in the academic culture of this society.

Results from a survey identified reasons why Hispanics don't attend college, and factors that motivate Hispanics to study at the college level. The reasons for not participating in college were related to communication barriers, family matters, financial matters, personal characteristics, institutional barriers, factors diminishing motivation, and other restrictions to learn. Factors that motivate Hispanics to participate in higher education programs included enhancement of the self; personal motives related to self-esteem; support from significant others, social others; the desire to learn English and to be educational role models for their children.

In addition to the traditional presentation of results, my qualitative research project is transformed into a work of art. The entire story of the participants comes to life on stage. "*Esperanza*," the name of the play I've created, reflects the original dialogue of the participants and their vivid experiences in the academic system of this society. The recurrent theme in the play is related to the participants' enthusiasm for surmounting the sociocultural factors that interfere with their motivation to attend college. Their passion for learning, and the determination to empower themselves by giving voice in their community, encourages them to challenge the traditional system of higher education.

Meng-Yang Li

Fostering Self-Directed Learning (SDL) Ability to Develop a Life-Long Learning Society—A Study of Educational Reform in Taiwan

For the past four years, the Republic of China on Taiwan has been engaged in a comprehensive program of educational reform. The presenter will provide historical and cultural background, summarize government documents on educational reform, discuss the findings resulting from interviews with Chinese scholars and students and reflect upon her own learning experiences in order to show how the reform policy aims to address Taiwan's needs and challenges. She will also suggest that the value and practice of Life-Long Learning, one of the goals of the educational reforms, cannot be realized without corresponding changes in the population's attitude and concept, the first step of reform, therefore, should be an active propagation of SDL from the lowest grade onwards.

Eugene S. Rinaldi

Personal Reflections on Relational Learning through Mentoring

My philosophy of the educational experience is based on showing how complex meanings are built out of the simple direct experiences in everyday life. How I practice adult education, psychology, and business, or how I interact in meaningful relationships evolved from my past experiences, resonates in my present choices and activities, and motivates the adventures of my future. The purpose of this book is to describe my educational process from a personal perspective.

This CEP is a chronicle of the unique learning milestones in my life. I define who the important teachers were, and what various methods they used to enlighten me. I also reflect on what they did, how they did it, and why it made a difference in my life. This narrative is a deep and honest self-reflection; the result of my attempt to understand why I place so much value on the interpersonal relationships that are born from a family, a community, or simply friends educating friends. Perhaps reading about my learning experiences will assist you in uncovering and defining the unique mentoring phenomena (conscious or unconscious) that has occurred within some of your learning relationships.

Roberto Sanabria

Decolonizing Ourselves

I make the assumption that all human beings are transformative beings by nature. As a precondition of our being transformative, first we are free. I define being free as the state of being self- directed, not in the sense that every man is a law unto himself, but that our actions are predicated upon our unrestricted, creative thought. Thus, as transformative beings, not only do we adapt to our surroundings, sometimes consciously and willfully we transform our surroundings; we exist in nature as well as with nature—we are co-creators. When this agency is usurped, so too is the essence of our humanity stripped from us. This is not something we part with willingly. This paper argues that the phenomenon of colonialism achieves the same end but on a massive scale. In the continuous process of colonization, groups of human beings are reduced to non- transformative entities that are stripped of their agency. This paper looks specifically at the case of Puerto Rico, arguably the world,s oldest colony, and asks why do Puerto Ricans seem to acquiesce to their role as a colonized people? As Aristotle once said, "He who studies how things originated and came into being, ... will achieve the clearest understanding of them." This paper analyzes the history of Puerto Rico and offers a meta-historical argument as a piece of the multi-layered

explanation for the continuous colonial domination of the island. In other words, not only do I attempt to analyze the history of Puerto Rico, but I analyze the history of the historical studies and representations of Puerto Rico and of Puerto Ricans as well. Among the examples I highlight are speeches on the floor of the U.S. Senate with respect to Puerto Rico, works of imperialist apologetics, published conclusions of geographers and social scientists who had conducted research in Puerto Rico, political cartoons of the era immediately following U.S. seizure and occupation of Puerto Rico, and the scarcity and the filtration of autochthonous images in the curriculum of Puerto Rican schools. The crux of my argument is this: Symbolic violence is far more effective than physical violence at maintaining unequal power relations. Once internalized, unflattering images can achieve more stable and deleterious results than can gunboats and goon squads.

This paper argues that Puerto Ricans, reluctance to move toward self-determination today, among other things, is not because of a desire to be part of a "great democracy" such as the United States, rather because 500 years of colonialism have had a debilitating effect on our ability to see ourselves as a people capable of transformation. The first step in resolving this mental slavery is recognizing the problem exists. It is my hope that this work will contribute to our collective self- perception in a way that frees us of internalized racist notions of our past and illuminates our possibilities to transform ourselves today.