

“It’s only words.....”

Roy Ford

May, 2006

The words are spoken
every instant
and transmitted
every instant
from a million points,
a million horizons
all over the universe.

As soon as they are spoken
they flash
into the darkness,
in all directions
as minute lights,
as sounds,
as touches and embraces
from me to all.

The words
are immortal.

There are hundreds of tongues
in which the words can be spoken.
There are hundreds of ways
in which the words can be heard.
But they are not to be compared
with the original words.

The source is anonymous.
It is I.

J.L. Moreno.

Introductory Material

“...advice from MOM do more writing and less gazing . as you see i write words no punct. good luck reading this

WE LOVE YOU DAD & MOM(mom typed her own name)...”

Email from Dad May 2, 2006

This report is about authority. Who is the author? Am I the author of my own life? Do outer authorities shape and move me? I have been looking for a leading quote; one that could set the stage for what is to follow. I did not want to cite an expert to give credence to my writing. Reasons for this will be evident as you read on. The quotation I selected is from mother to son passed on by father; from *my* mother given by *my* father to *me*. They are the first co-authors of my life. I heard their life history in their voice and then in their words. I took in the story and made it my own.

My father, infamous in the family for his relentless correction of grammar and punctuation errors writes in this free way with blatant disregard for the rules (except for spelling, I notice!). This is the man who argued on more than one occasion, “It’s the words that matter, you can’t read anything into ‘tone of voice’ or inflection”; himself the master of innuendo and sarcasm. Mom gently chastises me for looking out the window at the beautiful Norwegian landscape when I was supposed to be writing an important paper. She worked every day from five in the morning until well past midnight raising her eight children. This short message from my parents conveys love and support. I hear laughter and encouragement. I feel seen and recognized by them. I am grateful.

This report is also about writing: Writing as learning, as knowing, writing to create knowledge, to teach, to find out what we know, to share our thoughts, to join in the great conversation, writing as action and doing. It is about finding and having the courage and skill to use one’s own voice. It is about helping and encouraging others to do the same.

This story has one beginning in January of this year. I was traveling by bus with two colleagues from the masters program. We were returning from Fyresdal in Telemark after finishing the block session where we presented our plan for the project that is being reported on here. We were stuck waiting out a storm in the mountains. I say stuck but our circumstances were not exactly unpleasant. Our heroic bus driver managed to get us to an Inn with a flaming hearth, a young man playing classical guitar for hours, and all the peppery hot fish soup, waffles, and beer or coffee that you could possibly want. I wrote this fragment of a poem as we watched a lone skier head out into the valley toward the mountain with the storm raging around him.

Blizzard at the Haukeli Sæter

My mother's eyes
can see very far, They
look out the window
gazing, watching
waiting
for me to come home.

There must be eagles here
or maybe they used
to be here, on
this mountain
in this snow, looking
watching, waiting
for me to come home.

The native peoples of North America and probably throughout the world pass on sacred teachings and mysteries learned from mother earth and the creatures of the earth through stories, myths, and legends. The healing “medicine” of the animal kingdom assists and guides the human beings. Teachers pass on the secret qualities and messages from these totem animals. Modern followers of this medicine path have made some of these gifts available in written form. They speak reverently of the teachings and honor their teachers by striving to stay close to the ancient truths while speaking in a language that can be heard in these times.

The Eagle is endowed with these qualities as passed down in this tradition:

... Eagle is reminding you to take heart and gather your courage, for the universe is presenting you with an opportunity to soar above the mundane levels of your life. The power of recognizing this opportunity may come in the form of a spiritual test. In being astute, you may recognize the places within your soul, personality, emotions, or psyche that need bolstering or refinement. By looking at the overall tapestry, Eagle teaches you to broaden your sense of self beyond the horizon of what is presently visible (Sams and Carson, 1988).

The skier miraculously reappeared emerging out of the whipping wind and snow as if he had just gone off to the store for a loaf of bread or for a nice leisurely afternoon stroll. Our bus driver announced that it was safe to go on. We would lead a caravan through the tunnels. We found out how lucky we had been to be warm and well fed at the Inn. Others had waited out the storm in their car on the road or in the tunnel with only thermoses of coffee, bag lunches, and blankets. They all seemed alright, sharing an adventure of their own. My friends and I started off on this research and writing journey: from Epiphany to Easter and Whitsun.

The image of the Eagle flew mysteriously into this story at this mid-winter time of Epiphany. Nancy Mellon, a gifted story teller and Waldorf teacher, suggests that it is important to pay attention when these characters make their presence known. When birds come they can, “solve riddles and mysteries and sing about what must be done. Like angelic visitors, they see and speak beyond the power of available human sight and speech.” She goes on to speak more of the special qualities of our feathered visitor:

... Eagle's also offer majesty of wing and breadth of view; having the ability to soar higher and see farther than any other winged creature, the eagle is emblematic of the closest companion of Jesus, Saint John. His vision closes the New Testament in the book called Revelation. So in the story world of imagination, apocryphal wisdom may pour through a story bird that knows from the heights the ways of the earth and can bring farseeing vision down to the earth (Mellon, 1992).

So... with the blessing of mother and father, the warmth of the hearth fire, the faithful skills of our ferry-man/bus driver, the wisdom of the native medicine teachers, the courage, vision and beauty of the eagle, the spark of initiative from the Epiphany, and the power of the words of St. John, "In the beginning was the Word..." let us start out once again on our journey.

(An aside)... but we have started the process; in fact we have made considerable progress:

Already, I have placed my self and this text which I have called a report, into a particular context. I run the risk of alienating you, reader, or conjuring pictures within you that I can not control or direct. You can only begin to guess at who I am and what significance I place on the above words. You have your own meanings, connections, feelings, interpretations or expectations. A report has a certain shape, direction, content, style. Judeo-Christian images, personal reflections, or weather metaphors may draw you in or push you away. My intention is not alienation but an invitation to engagement: to join in a conversation.

Themes for this conversation have already been introduced. They will be presented from different angles and with different pictures ...

I: The Thesis Proposal

I place the final chapter, the culmination of the project here at the beginning...

*This project has been an experiment in writing. I am proposing to continue and take this experiment further for my Masters thesis. What you are reading now reflects the path that leads to **Fiction as Educational Research** being the choice for my thesis topic.*

This is the story of the exploration of my core questions (see pg. 7). The "passion" or loving interest in these questions initiated a process of immersion in literature ranging from slightly pre-first century philosophical/religious to current academic research and popular fiction. This writing now is a remembering, a recapitulation, a re-creation of the process that I have been in since Christmas.

Influenced by all the currents and happenings of living, I faithfully tracked my guiding questions- following clues from other writers, unlikely genres and inner urgings – returning to the questions – returning to the task of finding and describing a thesis proposal. I have reached this point. I have an idea and proposal for my Masters thesis. A question, an approach or methodology, and a representational form have emerged through the current work. Details could shift and change during the writing process. I do know what I want to do and have a plan for doing it.

This composition reflects a play between data, notes, beginning drafts: It is the story that unfolded as the rest of my life went on around me.

Laurel Richardson is a qualitative researcher and writer. She has been a pioneer in exploring the idea of Writing as Research and expanding approaches to representing academic research. Her poem, *While I was Writing a Book*, captures an image that I am looking for with poignancy and humor:

While I was Writing a Book

my son, the elder, went crazy
my son, the younger, went sad
nixon resigned
the saudis embargoed
rhodesia somethinged
and my dishwasher failed

my sister, the elder, hemorrhaged
my brother, didn't speak to me
my ex grieved and overdosed
hemlines fell and rose
texans defeated the e.r.a.
and my oil gaskets leaked

my friend, the newest, grew tumors
my neighbor to the right was shot
cincinatti censured sin
and my dracaena plant rotted

I was busy.

(Richardson, in Gergen.)

Richardson's poem highlights the reality that everything that goes on around one interacts with and affects one's writing.

Fiction as Educational Research:

Questions:

What is the purpose of education?

What image of the human being stands behind the different pedagogical stances?

The thesis proposal has three components:

- 1) **To write a novel**—exploring the above questions.

I will work with a mentor (novelist) and utilize workshops and conferences in order to elevate the literary quality. I want the novel to have literary as well as research value. (Excerpt II in the “Learner’s Document” offers a possible genre choice and theme.)

2) To present and defend the “novel” as viable arts-based educational research

I will present: data collection examples, and share the ample literature from the US, Canada, and New Zealand where this debate has flourished for some time.

3) Identify theoretical positions or pedagogical stances in the novel

I will give a synopsis of the novel which will include indications about the interplay of these differing positions. I would prefer that the novel was able to stand alone, leaving “interpretation” to the reader.

The Novel as Educational Research

The novel is dialogic. Multiple points-of-view, multiple voices converse in the fictive or imaginary realm. There is a long history of writers moving in and out of fiction and theoretical genres.

Julia Kristeva is one of the contemporary researchers and writers who move between fiction and theoretical writing. I offer her opinion now as a beginning, to indicate the direction of this thesis project and share some of the ideas which are influencing this direction.

When asked to account for her shift from theory to the novel after her first novel **The Samurai** appeared she responded:

I was recently reading the manuscripts of Proust's notebooks, and I came across a question he asks in one of his drafts: "Should I make this into a novel or into a philosophical study?" People have always wondered if they should treat a subject that interests them through theory or through fiction. Is there really a choice to be made? Must we prefer one form of discourse to the other? If we think of more recent writers, we realize that Being and Nothingness did not prevent Sartre from writing Nausea. And Merleau-Ponty, who was less committed than Sartre or perhaps committed in a different way, planned to write a novel although he never did so. (Kristeva).

II: The Logos

Journal entry...

This started as a search for the Logos, from a passion for the word.

And the Word was made flesh

and lived among us.

And we have beheld his revelation...

Old words, passed down through many ages, translations interpretations...talking about, describing, honoring, discounting, trivializing, glorifying... the “word of God”, the origin of all creation, love, the way the truth and the light: New words trying to find the meaning of the old words, to find the being behind the words, behind the world.

“I am passionate about modes of expression and ways of meeting. I am interested in how ideas come into the world, meet the world, interact with and change the world.”

These are the lead- in sentences from my study plan describing this project. They initiate background ideas which lead to these questions:

How does the written word interact with the world? What is the relationship between reading and writing? How do writing style and form interact with, effect, or create social reality and relationships? What sorts of relationships are created by our forms of Social/ Human science writing? What are the movements and ideas in current academic writing circles?

Although the background section of the study plan illuminates some of my social-spiritual interests, I elaborate on these first two sentences to place this research in a biographical, professional, and educational context.

The project has been undertaken to fulfill a semesters worth of credit in the Mastergrad program at the Rudolf Steiner Høyskolen. This is a degree in Steiner pedagogic or Waldorf education with a focus on pedagogical action research. Some of the stated underlying principles are to develop an extended concept of action research steeped in a tradition of the reflective practitioner. There is not an established discourse community around this endeavor as this is the first year for the program. It will be interesting to observe the evolution of this literature and representational language. What factors will exert the strongest influences on the development? Will it be from the examining bodies, the preference of the faculty, student skills and interests, or modeled after a particular style or convention? Will it reflect arts-based values or lean more towards the scientifically based research stance? The discourse may be drawn from such diverse writings as: educational/pedagogical research, Spiritual scientific literature, one of the many approaches to action research, or perhaps from other disciplines or practices.

“I am passionate...”

In a discussion of conventions in academic discourse, Peter Elbow points out that there is often a stylistic effort to be inexplicit. He presents this example from an essay by James Berlin entitled “Contemporary Composition: The Major Pedagogical Theories” to illustrate. The essay begins with these words, “My reasons for presenting this analysis are not altogether

disinterested.” The author could have said something more direct like, “I am interested in this subject” or as I have started this section, “*I am passionate about...*”

My passion takes many forms and serves various purposes. Sometimes anger that builds toward an inner sense of rage or outrage around power imbalances, oppression, dogma or arbitrary rules provides motivation. Other times, I can be overwhelmed- almost paralyzed- by sadness: about the general state of the world and my part in helping to create it. Most often a loving interest in the theme and process encourages exploration and a desire to find ways to meet and share ideas, and perhaps be of some help in creating positive changes.

“...modes of expression and ways of meeting.”

By using these words, *modes and ways*, I am saying or implying or now stating explicitly that it is important to recognize multiple points-of view, world views, opinions, and ways of knowing teaching and learning. There are a myriad of approaches to the sharing of ideas, expressing feelings, and listening to others. Expressing ideas or meeting the ideas of others is possible through musical, artistic, verbal, written, or dramatic mediums to make a beginning.

I choose to explore *writing*. Each of the five guiding questions reflects this interest and preference. These two rather famous paragraphs written by Michel Foucault speak to this choice and provide kindling for my passion around the subject. :

'Aren't you sure of what you're saying? Are you going to change yet again, shift your position according to the questions that are put to you, and say that the objections are not really directed at the place from which you are speaking? Are you going to declare yet again that you have never been what you have been reproached with being? Are you already preparing the way out that will enable you in your next book to spring up somewhere else and declare as you're now doing: no, no, I'm not where you are lying in wait for me, but over here, laughing at you?'

'What, do you imagine that I would take so much trouble and so much pleasure in writing, do you think that I would keep so persistently to my task, if I were not preparing - with a rather shaky hand - a labyrinth into which I can venture, in which I can move my discourse, opening up underground passages, forcing it to go far from itself, finding overhangs that reduce and deform its itinerary, in which I can lose myself and appear at last to eyes that I will never have to meet again. I am no doubt not the only one who writes in order to have no face. Do not ask who I am and do not ask me to remain the same: leave it to our bureaucrats and our police to see that our papers are in order. At least spare us their morality when we write' (Foucault 2002).

Why do I react so strongly to these paragraphs about going into the maze of writing, the pain, the exposure, the striving ... for being understood, for discovering something, for the path of discovery, for being on the path, for offering his ideas and thoughts to the world, for accepting, for taking the criticism, for writing some more, for changing his mind, for questioningfor questioning authority? I have cried and almost cried each time that I read

these words and now even as I just think of them. I would like to write with such courage, honesty, and clarity. That is clear.

I can now state some of the underlying and so far unspoken motivations for this project. I want to write! I want to know why I have this strong passion. Why do so many others share this passion? Why is it so important to me? What do I want to say? What is this act, this process of writing?for me?for others? Can I learn to write well? What would happen if I began to write every day?.... if I began to write well? This project has been an experiment in writing, exploring the questions by while and through writing, entering the *labyrinth* with openness to discovering what was there to be found. Sometimes there were treasures, sometimes blind alleys-but always valuable.

“I am interested in how ideas come into the world, meet the world, interact with and change the world.”

The focus on the writing process reflects a shift of emphasis in my professional life. This second sentence will serve as a springboard into describing this shift to create a sense of a biographical context while placing the work into the field of extended action research.

Psychodrama is an umbrella term for the body of work created by J.L. Moreno, further developed by his wife Zerka and other professionals from many disciplines. The parameters of the practice, the possibilities for application, and the theoretical underpinnings are virtually unknown outside of the practitioner circles. Vague notions are often put forth usually mentioning terms like “feelings”, “catharsis”, and occasionally perhaps “group therapy”. Moreno’s ambitions for his work were much more wide ranging. He has articulated methodologies for effecting change in the realms of: personal/psychological, educational, organizational, axiological, and social. The theories and the practice have roots that are equally placed within science and art.

Practitioners of the methodologies (Sociodrama, Psychodrama, Axiodrama, or Sociometry) translate content from the realm of ideas into enactments appropriate to that content and the particular context. Thoughts, dreams, relationships, future projections, or past difficulties are all possibilities for exploration. These are methods that can serve action research needs of the traditional problem solving as well as the newer appreciative approaches. For instance, if you are oriented in the way that says, “We must identify the problems, list them, describe them-then we can search for solutions or *a* solution”, psychodramatic techniques offer an opportunity to shift the process from talk to social/artistic activity. Similarly, if your orientation tells you, “Let’s find out what is working, and move towards our ideal picture”, the method can help facilitate this.

This has been my work in education, therapy, organizational development, as well more traditional artistic activities like playback theater or drama productions. The director, conductor, facilitator, to suggest a few of the names given to the role, elicits themes and initiates group interaction. The work is protagonist centered. The protagonist can be an individual or a group, as is the case in Sociodrama. The protagonist’s ‘truth’ is accepted as valid and explored without interpretation and analysis by the leader, teacher, or therapist. Space is reserved after the action work for this type of theoretical discussion. Themes and solutions are

arrived at through group process and artistic enactment. The director's theories and views should carry the same weight as the other group members. A high value is placed on on-going self-reflective and group supervisory practices designed to support the maintenance of appropriate boundaries and balance of power. The director's influence expands around the creation of the artistic activity and the connecting of themes; finding the story or stories, designing and facilitating enactment strategies, and maintaining a container in which it is possible and safe to try new behaviors or ideas.

My skill or art, my gift or plague is to be able to take any theme, concept, or picture and almost immediately come up with at least five different ways to explore them in action. The offerings would be on many different levels, vary in their artistic style, and have potential goals that were nuanced to meet perceived or unspoken objectives. Often, I am able to have equal spontaneity when speaking or telling a story—remnants of the “blarney” from my Irish ancestors.

I sit down to *write* filled with these same imaginative possibilities. ***I stare at the white page.***

“Where is the way? The way is always to be found. A white sheet of paper is full of ways.At noon he found himself once more facing infinity, the white page. Every trace of footsteps had disappeared. Buried”. (Jabes, in Derrida, 1978).

The words are spoken in my mind. ***I stare at the white page,*** I make coffee. I do the dishes. What stops those words from moving to my hands and onto the paper? Is it the same forces that I so readily identify when I assume the role of psychodrama director? Are there parental, societal, religious, peer, or cultural injunctions? Am I experiencing lacunae of my super ego? Am I allowed to make jokes at a time like this? This is serious. If this was psychodrama, I would place all of those voices outside of myself, experience their influence through embodied interaction, choose how to be with them, and move on. This is not psychodrama. I am writing now. ***I stare at the white page...***

I am not alone. This research project has given me the space to converse with others around their experience of the writing process. The conversations, at times face to face, have been primarily experienced through reading; reading the words with which others have filled the *white page*, ideas rippling through time and space as readers and writers share in the creation and naming of the world. These may sound like grand words filled with romance and drama but I offer this picture: *As I sit here, gazing out the window, being amazed at the way the sun and blue sky reflect off the water of the fjord, struggling to find the next word to describe my research story in just the right way... I am connected to the One who uttered the words, “Let there be...” and to the one who wrote those words for the first time.*

Michel Foucault puts it this way *“Language gives the perpetual disruption of time the continuity of space, and it is to the degree that it analyzes, articulates, and patterns representation, that it has the power to link our knowledge of things together across the dimension of time”* (Foucault, 1966).

Teacher is the word that I use most often if I am asked to state my occupation; something like vocation is probably a more apt description. I find myself called on to “teach” no matter which professional hat I put on. Consequently, this study that I have under taken considers this role. There is a song from the 1900's called *School Days*. It has an innocent nursery rhyme gentle quality; already in 1907 it evoked feelings for the “good old days” when times were simple and

care free. The words and tune are familiar in many American households; even today you can hear the tune and sing along as you open personal and school web-pages on the internet.

*School days, school days
Dear old golden rule days
Readin' and 'ritin' and 'rithmetic
Taught to the tune of the hick'ry stick.*

Music by Gus Edwards
Lyrics by Will D. Cobb

The second line about the golden rule is now often sung as *Dear old fashioned school days*. Some listeners to this idyllic voyage down memory lane hear other, less romantic motifs. Overtones of hickory switches wielded by stern authoritarian teachers who knew that to “Spare the rod” would “spoil the child” reverberate within the sweet romantic melody. There is a sense of loss for a remembered time when rules, order, rhythm, and routine provided a sense of security and safety. If it were possible to return to this realm of childhood, would we find things just as we remembered them? Is it possible to return to the “garden”? Did we need to leave?

This work favors the second of the three R's mentioned in the song. The harmonies and discords between readin' and 'ritin come into play. 'Rithmetic is not really mentioned, I'm afraid! A “writing” approach to teaching and learning is being explored in contrast to and in relationship with a “reading” approach. To use a Judeo-Christian contextual metaphor: We are looking at the relationship between the Father-God and the Son- God, the Old Testament and the New, or the outer authority of the commandments and the inner possibilities of the Sermon on the Mount.

There are many beginnings to this story. One way to tell it would be to start with presenting imaginative pictures about teaching and learning:

III: Ways of Teaching:

“In the beginner’s mind there are many options. In the experts, there are few.”

Zen Master- DT Suzuki

“St. Augustine...in a conversation which made him the opponent of the Manichean Faust – voiced the opinion: ‘I would not accept the teachings of Christ, if they were not founded on the authority of the church.’ The Manichean Faust said, however: ‘You should not accept any teaching on authority; we only wish to accept a doctrine in freedom’” (Steiner, 1904).

Picture 1:

Ben Weatherstaff is a very good teacher. He may not even think of himself as a teacher. He is a gardener. He knows how to take care of the land, how to nurture and support the land so that flowers and vegetables can flourish. When the little girl came into his world, he was curious. Mary, the little girl thought that he was perhaps a little bit annoyed. She asked a lot of questions. She was used to adults being aloof, distant, or a little bit annoyed.

This is how Mr. Weatherstaff performs his task of teaching:

Ben is a gardener. He stands in his garden doing his work.

A child enters his space. She is a rather awkward, unattractive child. He has been curious about her.

He sees her. He recognizes her. He offers her an imagination. He suggests that his friend the robin is talking to her; hints that the robin may even “like” her.

There is a secret garden that the adults whisper about. They have forgotten where it is.

Ben loves the secret garden. He helped create it. He takes care of all the gardens. Does it seem possible that he would forget where the gate to the secret garden is located?

Ben does not tell the child about the garden. He only introduces her to the robin, listens to her, and answers her questions.

The robin points to the lost key and shows her the gate.

The children enter the garden and begin to explore, work, and play.

Ben climbs the wall. He can see into the realm of the children. He does not go over the wall.

He enters through the gate when he is invited, in fact, commanded to come in by the children.

He is an adult who bridges into the world of the children.

In the garden, Ben looks at the children with a loving gaze, works side by side with them, engages in their play and fantasy, provides them with tools, protects their secret, and shares in their hopes and dreams.

When father comes to the threshold of the garden for his son, Ben quietly withdraws.

Ben Weatherstaff is a fictional gardener. He is a creation of Frances Hodgson Burnett in her novel **The Secret Garden** published in 1911. I have chosen to describe him as a “very good teacher” illustrating some of his behaviors and interpreting them as exemplary qualities for a teacher. Ben himself hints that he may be a teacher towards the end of the story. Colin is one of the children that come into the garden. He has lived as an invalid, learning about the world from books. Now, enlivened and enthusiastic we hear:

... Colin sometimes gave them Magic lectures.” I like to do it,” he explained, “because when I grow up and make great scientific discoveries I shall be obliged to lecture about them and so this is practice.”

Ben replies with his characteristic low key, tongue-in-cheek style of humor:

“Th’ best thing about lecturin’,” said Ben, “is that a chap can get up an’ say aught he pleases an’ no other chap can answer him back. I wouldn’t be agen’ lecturin’ a bit mysel’ sometimes”. (Burnett,1911).

The Secret Garden is most often considered popular fiction. The introduction refers to the author as “commercial” and ascribes no deeper meanings to the novel. It has been popular with adolescent girls although it is widely read and enjoyed by a diverse range of people. On further scrutiny it is possible to find a rich array of cultural impulses that were active at the beginning of the 20th century. The novel is a unique example of a Bildungsroman with at least two protagonists being accompanied on an educational rite of passage, a boy and a girl.

Rudolf Steiner was emerging as a teacher and creator on several fronts during this same time period. He was a prolific lecturer. The school which initiated his new pedagogical approach known now as Waldorf education opened in Stuttgart in 1919. This quote from a lecture series given in 1921 called *The Art of Lecturing* has echoes of Mr. Weatherstaff’s comments above:

“When one approaches people as a lecturer, then one has to do chiefly with the workings of various instincts: The thinking which one kindles in oneself does not interest people, willing annoys them. Thus, if one were called upon for this or that act of will, we would find that we had called up, not his willing, but his annoyance. And if we were to sketch our most beautiful and ingenious ideas in a monologue before people, they would walk out. That must be the fundamental guiding line for the lecturer” (Steiner, 1921).

Steiner pedagogical principals support the incarnating human being. The gradually emerging “self” of the child is drawn and nurtured into the world. The first Waldorf School opened in Stuttgart, Germany in 1919. In the same year the Progressive Education Association was founded in the US.

Picture 2:

We meet the Robin again. We are in the beginning, the first garden. It is naming day for the creatures of the earth. We first meet a “gentle” but stern God, something of a transition god figure – between old and new testament. He is giving distinguishing features and names to all of the animals. He calls a little gray bird *Robin Redbreast*. The bird is told that he must “earn” the red coloring for his breast. God does not tell him how to do this.

Robin takes up his destiny in earnest. He tries singing, love, fighting-- all to no avail. Legends of robin lore are passed down with the same message living in the Robin soul for many

generations, “He missed it, as all the others have missed it and even as you shall miss it.” There will be no Redbreast for Robin.

Time passes with the Robin soul in this resigned state until we come to a time in Jerusalem many eons after the creation. On this certain day God’s promise is fulfilled. Robin watches from his nest as the man is led to the top of Golgotha hill. Filled with compassion, he flies to the crucified Christ and pulls a thorn from his bleeding brow. A drop of blood from the forehead of the crucified one colors the Robin’s breast; fills his heart and fulfills his destiny. Robins to this day carry the emblem of this deed.

Robin flies through time, announcing spring, new beginnings, new possibilities, with his love filled song. Carrying blood from the mind of God, the Word made flesh, the Logos in his heart. And we see him again in Frances Hodgson Burnett’s story leading the children *back to the garden* (Lagerlof,1904).

*“We are stardust, we are golden, we are billion year old carbon-
and we’ve got to get ourselves –
back to the garden.”*

Crosby, Stills, Nash, and Young

Selma Lagerlof was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature in 1909. In the presentation speech Mr. Claes Annerstedt praised her as a faithful daughter of Sweden and for her power in using “the mother tongue”.

“In the works of Selma Lagerlöf we seem to recognize the purest and best features of our Great Swedish Mother...That is why she has succeeded in eliciting beautiful secrets from fairy tales, living folk legends, and saints' stories; secrets that had been hidden from the worldly-wise but which true simplicity perceives because, as the poet has the old grandmother say, it “has eyes to see the secrets of God” (Nobel Prize- presentation speech, 1909).

The above story called **Robin Redbreast** is found in Selma Lagerlof’s collection **Christ Legends**. This group of stories appeared in 1904 so they would have been within the body of work considered by the Nobel committee. The Noble prize was in its early years and the newly formed committee was intent on honoring the will of the benefactor as well as promoting wholesome societal values.

Journal entry... *Robin’s voice—robin connecting heaven and earth—head and heart-
Writing toward Easter, wanting to discover if there are any “pedagogical notions” to be found in stories in the early 20th century, wanting to find a story that talked about a particular bird- a Robin, looking for women writers...*

Picture 3:

You can see the first grade children singing, painting, and moving (Are they dancing?), in the classroom or outside exploring the country side with their teacher. They are learning to write. For many months, they imagine and try out primordial sounds and movements, they listen for the music of the spheres, they hear the angels talking and meet the invisible being behind each vowel and consonant. Slowly, they bring these magical beings down, into the space around them, into their feelings, into their bodies—feet, hands, movements and finally into their heads.

Willi Aepelli is a Waldorf teacher. In **The Developing Child** he eloquently describes how he led his group of students into the world of the written word. This is the way he describes the final stages of that process:

“In that way the long path, which so to speak led from heaven to earth, was covered. As I wrote the alphabet on the blackboard in white chalk for the first time, after the beauty of living color, I could not help but feel sad, even horrified, as I saw the white skeleton of letters. On what kind of downhill path had I led the children? You truly are quite a derelict, I said to myself. And to the children I said (silently, of course): I actually feel terribly sorry for you poor little things for being forced to write these letters like this, but that is how grown-ups write. But the children soon cured me of these thoroughly unhealthy feelings. What do you think they did when they saw the slanted, bony letters on the blackboard? They began to laugh boisterously, for such writing seemed exceedingly funny to them” (Aeppli, 1986).

Willie Aepelli’s children may have laughed.

I cried.

IV: Educational Policy- Think Tanks

Letter to mentor...

I was actually on the road back from my excursion into 1st century rhetorical development that very week. I was sort of jolted back to the present when I came across a form of discourse that I was only vaguely aware of. I don't even know what genre it could be classified as. These are papers generated by the "Think Tanks". I have been interested in think tanks for some time but never really seriously investigated them. The articles that got me fired up are pretty right wing, conservative slants on educational practice, theory, approach, and goals. They are designed to influence policy, or more likely to justify policy. My thesis became "The Logos Meets No Child Left Behind". The papers masquerade as academic research while at the same time bashing academia. They seem to express current and future American educational policy directions. They rely heavily on polarization: progressive vs. traditional teachers, student-centered vs. teacher-centered classrooms, whole language vs. phonics, qualitative vs. "scientifically based" research. The list goes on. There are attacks on "balanced teaching" and "joy" in the classroom. I have had an impression, though, that all of this kind of talk may be some kind of smoke screen to mask a more economic/political agenda.

The above is part of a letter or email, which is actually a re-organization of the following hurried and pressured entry in my journal:

Journal entry...

Pretty exciting today—too many things may be coming together. I am in the transitional time—Jewish/Roman/Christian (old Greek influences)—time—Rhetoric, socio-rhetorical analysis, the writing of the Bible, Letters—Social, political, language, geography—of those times. I have said for a long time that we are stuck in the "Roman Times"—Time to check it out... old to New Testament, letter writing as research method...

Fictional Narrative I

And this is a third way of working with the same material. This is a fictional narrative written in reaction to finding the "think-tank" papers in the midst of my other reading. I was fascinated with the idea that these authors could create "policy" by writing it one day and then hear it spoken out on the news or TV on the next. I recognize that I use ironic humor in an effort to deal with the uncomfortable feelings aroused by these texts and this kind of process:

And then...

Dear Inhabitant,

I am writing you this personal letter with hope that you are well and happy. I represent an organization that supports hopeless and helpless people in the most desolate parts of the world: people who have completely given up and see no way to help themselves.

We know that you are the type of person who will not let these people continue to suffer. You are kind, compassionate and always ready to help.

This is what you need to do:

Kindly give up all hope in order to help these other needy people.

We thank you in advance for this altruistic action.

Sincerely yours,

Our organization.

He was sitting in his underwear having that ‘Oh! so tasty’ first beer of the day as he read the nice letter. He felt all warm inside, like after a bunch of beers not just the half can that he had finished. *Finally* someone understood him—a whole organization even. Here was something he could do; and without even having to leave the house, probably without even quitting beer drinking or having to exercise. This was the miracle he had been waiting for!

And then...

John noticed the clock. He had better finish his breakfast, wash the dishes, fold the laundry, and put on his blue tie. It was Monday again after all. This pleasant daydream would have to be put on pause.

The President could be very moody, especially on Monday mornings. John began to focus on their 9 o’clock briefing.

“Good morning, John.”

“Good morning, Mr. President.”

“What’s new?”

John took a slow deep breath. No joke, no “how’s it hangin’?”, no quote from yesterday’s homily---another lost weekend at the ranch! Where to start; John had many options: “Iraq... no, “Your popularity is... no, “The schools are... no sense spelling that one out, “Your father... certainly not... -oh well

“Not much, Mr. President—pretty quiet this weekend.”

“Thank you, John... tomorrow then.” “Oh yeah, John I almost forgot. Could you fix up this letter a little for me—you know—check the spelling a little and all. Thanks.”

He took the bright orange envelope marked **Top Secret** and slipped it into his briefcase. He had thought to mention this evening’s state of the union address – give some updates and pointers – but he decided not to, on the “need to know” criteria.

The president first asked John to help with these letters after he had had some trouble with that letter to Sadam.....

He read quickly.

Dear *(Please find a more manly salutation!)* Ahmed,

Please don't think that I am threatening you or your wife, children, mother and grandmother with this letter. I do know where you live and have been having you and your family members watched for some time, though.

Your children are quite remarkable. I watched a video of them in school for several minutes the other day.

I hope this letter finds you well, and you realize that good health cannot last forever.

I have told you many times that I am a big man, and want things to fit me perfectly. You have repeatedly refused to change your measured opinion of me. I will no longer tolerate this behavior.

I want you to know that I will not punish you because I am angry -- -- but, in order to ensure that the rest of the world will be safe and secure.

Sincerely,
Mr. President

On the fresh piece of presidential stationary, John wrote:

Dear Ahmed,

I have been "hoisting a few too many" lately, if you catch my drift. Could you please let my trousers out about one inch? I plan to have a big dinner tonight before giving my "state of the union" address, and I would really like to feel comfortable on the podium.

Thanks for your help, I hope this is not too much trouble for you, I know how busy you are.

Greetings to the family and see you at the speech,

Love, Mr. President

He sealed the envelope and dropped it in the inter-office mail, to go this hour to the White House tailor. This urgent work done, he started to make the finishing touches on the president's speech.

** This section is still in process.*

The think tank methods:

They employ a rhetoric of sarcasm, battle, and confusion. They cite sources that they have created previously as "expert" opinions in later papers. They incite or invoke a sense of "holy war". This is a war of "us against them", the good against the evil. If you don't choose on the side of righteousness, your children will perish. They name the enemy: progressive thinking, student centered teaching, Piaget, Freire, Dewey, Vghotsky, Qualitative research.....they name their educational goal: better test scores for Americans on standardized tests....lower socio-

economic “disadvantaged” students would especially benefit from their policy changes. They replace these enemies with heroes of their own....

They employ many different scare tactics. This paragraph is not so subtle:

In the case of constructivism and its closely associated cousin, discovery learning, the supporting evidence is lacking. Tom Loveless notes that: Without suggesting that constructivism endorses a social order out of Lord of the Flies, it is fair to say that authority definitely shifts from the adult to the child in the constructivist classroom. Research does not confirm the belief that such a shift in authority promotes learning. Studies of discovery learning, the last manifestation of student-centered instruction, suggest that placing youngsters at the helm of their own intellectual development is generally unproductive. Student-centered practices may be defended on ideological grounds—that granting students power, whether it is educationally beneficial or not, is intrinsically good—but empirical support for enhanced learning is weak.(Loveless in Izumi, 2001).

The formatting is from the original document. I have not been able to make Word change it. These are well thought out papers. I think that the authors name is ironic, given the approaches being promoted in this discourse. This not-so-subtle invocation of chaos and anarchy as the goals of student-centered, constructivist oriented teaching... *“ladies and gentlemen of the jury, please disregard the statement that you just heard”*. The first words of each line: Make a powerful statement: *the order definitely constructivist belief...* and ending with the words *learning is weak*.

I have hesitated to mention the moderately veiled implications in the first line of the above quotation. In many circles the phrase *constructivism and its closely associated cousin* would engender snickers and hidden laughter, invoking memories of jokes referring to in-breeding and illiteracy.

Keeping the pictures of teaching situations and environments that I have offered above, listen to this statement by ED Hirsch in the same paper:

Hirsch further says:
*We must not accept the claim that knowing how to learn (which is an abstract skill that does not even exist) is more important than having a broad foundation of factual knowledge that really does enable further learning. We must reject the disparagement of verbal learning and the celebration of “hands-on” learning, based on the false Romantic premise that mere words are inauthentic components of human understanding. **We cannot afford still to accept the untrue belief that adequate schooling is natural and painless, and mainly a function of individual talent rather than hard work. We must reject the false claim that delaying learning until the child is “ready” will speed***

up learning in the long run. We must cease listening to the siren call that learning should be motivated entirely by inward love of the subject matter and interest in it, without a significant admixture of external incentive. In short, we must cease attending to the Romantic ideas that the reformers of the 1990s, echoing the reformers of the 1920s, '30s, and '40s and all the decades in between, have been pronouncing in chorus. These ideas are emphatically not reforms. They are the long-dominant controlling ideas of our failed schools (Hirsch in Itzumi, 2001). Emphasis mine

Hirsch has become a major spokesperson for school reformation in the direction of teacher-centered, “traditional”... approaches. His writings spell out strict curricular guidelines and a structured systematic approach to teaching this prescribed content.

As we can see the same formatting devices are used. I would like to let the paragraph stand for itself... the black/ white thinking, the us/ them, We must and we must not, broad unsupported and personal constructs stated with the air of authority and power. I can't just let it go.

I see these statements being made: *Schooling is not natural and painless...it must hurt, the American dream is: work hard and you will succeed, inward love and interest is evil- a significant admixture of external incentive is good! i.e. "Shut up and listen or "Spare the rod spoil the child" once again.*

One could say that this kind of interpretation verges on paranoid or conspiracy theory type thinking. How can you question hard work, incentive and reward? I am worried. The results of this discourse can be seen in the **No Child Left Behind**, the US educational act. Scientifically based research strictly defined to parameters set by the policy designers, funding tied to student test results.... public ridicule for transgressions... are all hallmarks of the Bill.

These are not “new” issues or debates. We can see this argument in such diverse settings as James Joyce describing his Jesuit education in Ireland in **Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, Gift** by Norwegian author, Alexander Kielland, the Mani/Augustine debates referred to above and in a myriad of settings throughout history.

Dark ages, Crusades, Enlightenment, Luther...

I no longer hear the
Voice
of God
I no longer see the
Face
of God

We hear letters on a
Page
We see the words of
Men

Is it then possible or permissible for a parent, teacher, student- to choose a direction, a world view that steps out of the argument- gives up trying to decide what is “the one true way”, “the right way”- and create the environment that is appropriate for their needs. I say appropriate but what I really mean is ‘feels’ right ‘is’ right. Elisabeth Ameln asks the question in her play called **Can We Love This Time?** Written and performed within the Camphill Community, the play engenders hope for a “now” where it is possible for the individual to choose: to love, to love *this* time. This is a question that continues to resound in pedagogical circles, although at the moment it appears to be more of a whisper than a shout.

Max van Manen, a phenomenological writer, pedagogical researcher and teacher is one of the voices that speak to this topic. In his lecture in Bergen on Feb.7, 2006, he identified pedagogical love and recognition as his number one research priority and as “the central pedagogical issue” for our time. He shared insights that he gained by seeing how his wife worked with a difficult student. The fact that she began to see him with “awe and wonder” allowed him to change after many years of school failure. Another important point in his talk was the description of the difference between Italian and Dutch painting. He says that while Italian paintings needed to be “interpreted”, Dutch “seeing” is “painting the way the eyes see the world-as the things let themselves be seen.”

... intertextual aside: I bring up van Manen here to help make a point about the need for a loving gaze from the teacher to the pupil, as opposed to a theoretically dictated stance and relationship. I came up with the idea in September when I developed the picture of Ben Weatherstaff as “teacher”. This was in response to being asked to start from a fictional narrative and find epistemological stances. I first discovered van Manen by searching for ‘Phenomenological action research’ on the internet, and became fascinated by his concept of “the research is the writing”. Now, this comes into this report about writing research. September is Michaelmas time in many parts of the world. In the Christian Community the Epistles that come at the beginning of the service were given by Rudolf Steiner. They change with the seasons of the year. The Michaelmas epistle describes the “gaze” of Michael (the Archangel for our current times). The verse tells us that Michael’s gaze, which was once stern and brought fear into the souls of those who encountered it, is now gentle and welcoming, silent but supportive and inviting...

The question about how ideas enter into the world, and into the written word returns often within this paper. This “intertextual aside” offers a small glimpse into the possible origins or evolution of an idea. One can start or finish at any point or combine points in an effort to ascribe meaning or to offer an interpretation.

from email to study group...Philosophie Die Freiheit

“What I observe about thinking is not what occurrence in my brain joins the concept of lightning with that of thunder, but rather

*a.) “what motivates me to bring the two concepts into a definite relationship.”
or... (a different translation)*

b.) “the process enabling me to bring the two concepts into a definite relationship.”(Steiner).

*I find myself dwelling on and returning to these words. When I try to “understand” thinking or to figure out what is thinking, I see —thinking is not the concept, not-- “understanding” the concept, not the percept, certainly not any conclusions that I reach, but it is—what motivates or enables me to **bring the concepts into relationship**. For me, to be motivated implies a spark, an important reason, a quickening, being prodded, or given some kind of push. Enabling implies helping, the opening or clearing of the way, or allowing. Somehow this points toward a definition of thinking.*

Julia Kristeva describes something of the same process in this way:

“The imaginary could be understood to be the deep structure of concepts along with their underlying systems. The core of the symbolic lies in the fundamental drives of the signifier, that is, in sensations, perceptions, and emotions. When we translate them, we leave the realm of ideas and enter the world of fiction...” (Kristeva)

This goes to familiar questions, “Where does ‘Authority come from?’ Who is in charge? Can I choose? Are we educating towards freedom?”

Journal entry... *It is not surprising that I wrote about Paolo Friere and Moreno in my personal epistemology paper. Both of them and Alice Miller for that matter talk about ways to help people find and speak with their own voice. So much of education and my education has been designed to mold the individual to fit some ideal or need that does not belong to them. Yesterday, I came across the term “Basic Writing”. Friere was on the forefront of this movement. He was aware of the political implications of teaching reading and writing to the poor and disenfranchised in Brazil.*

His methods were threatening to the regime in power, to the privileged paradigm. What if people did develop their own voice, become aware of their power, know that they could affect their world? Does that serve the economic societal needs or plans? What would become of the world if people ran around having their own ideas and thoughts? This sounds so close to No child left behind!!

V: Free Writing

Journal entry... from a ‘free’ writing exercise

... Writing to learn and learning to write or both. What do I know about all of this? Why can’t I let go and not let the mistakes on this paper stand, correct them later or let them stand. This is just for me for now, only people that I ask can read or evaluate or judge this. MS Word can judge, Can I shut off the automatic spell checker or let my grammar choices override theirs, who ever they are- Computer programmers, linguist, etymologists translated through programmers---Father Cribbin, dad- keep secret rather than risk the judgment\criticism of these powerful others. Maybe I don’t want to speak their language, maybe I don’t understand, kanjse they will know how stupid I really am if I write it down. Maybe I really don’t know anything anyway...

*... here I am fighting with the word processing program. **Stop telling me that I can’t say it the way that I want to. Stop with all the red and green lines... and yes thanks for pointing out incorrect spelling.***

The children in Willi Aepelli's class are given the possibility to remember the secrets, the mystery behind the letters. They may be able to use the magic- to have power over the words—to be friends with the word –to be able to create with the word not be ruled and directed by it. They write the words, and then read the words that they have written. They are the experts, the writers, the authors. Is it possible to take some of the approaches and attitudes intrinsic to Waldorf education into the adult literacy or basic writing classroom? Can adults be offered the opportunity to remember the 'angels' behind the letters and words? Can they be supported to write and speak with power?

Peter Elbow is best known for his work with adult students and writing in the field of composition studies. The titles of some of his books can illustrate the direction of his thinking and teaching attitudes: **Writing Without Teachers**, **Writing with Power**, and **Everyone Can Write**. His methods promote "safety" for the newly emerging and developing writer. He wants to give students the sense of freedom to play with their voice and style of writing while gradually moving towards more polished writing appropriate for the discourse community that they wish to join. Approaches like: graduated writing assignments from "low stake" to "high"—with low being completely private and free to high being a publicly shared and graded paper, alternative and graduated evaluation and grading methods, and group writing and publishing projects all serve this end.

In **Everyone Can Write** he tells the story of a grammar school that instituted some of the practices that he employs with adult students. Each of the very young students authored and published a "book". A journalist who visited the school, with a slightly sarcastic tone, said to one of the students, "So, you've written a book have you?" The child replied innocently, "Haven't You?"

During my tenure as teacher in the Waldorf, Curative education, and Psychodrama fields, I have carried a naïve notion that values and attitudes that are student-centered, dialogic, and collaborative were "the norm". Now, as I begin to explore in wider contexts, I find these approaches designated as *Radical, Critical, or progressive* pedagogical practices. The critical literacy discourse describes teaching and learning in a way close to my thinking and heart:

*"We are what we say and do. The way we speak and are spoken to help shape us into the people we become. Through words and other actions, we build ourselves in a world that is building us. That world addresses us to produce the different identities we carry forward in life: men are addressed differently than are women, people of color differently than whites, elite students differently than those from working families. Yet, though language is fateful in teaching us what kind of people to become and what kind of society to make, **discourse is not destiny**. We can redefine ourselves and remake society, if we choose, through alternative rhetoric and dissident projects. This is where critical literacy begins, for questioning power relations, discourses, and identities in a world not yet finished, just, or humane.*

Critical literacy thus challenges the status quo in an effort to discover alternative paths for self and social development. This kind of literacy--words rethinking worlds, self dissenting in society--connects the political and the personal, the public and the private, the global and the local, the economic and the pedagogical, for rethinking our lives and for promoting justice in place of inequity." (Shor, 1999). emphasis mine.

Journal entry...

This feels like a valuable insight for me as I try to describe what is needed to create the writing classroom environment. I can begin to imagine the adult “basic” learner as they move toward the college world, away from their own language, own voice. I recognize the draw toward “belonging”, being accepted” toward knowing the “way things are done”. Is it possible to learn these ways and not lose ones own self or voice, to be able to travel in both worlds or speak both languages while staying true to your own inner values and choices. The story of the native peoples of North America (I struggle even as I try to find the word for my homeland in this context!) poignantly illustrates this difficult situation. “Indian” children were taken from their families and put into “English” schools. When they came to the door they were to “never speak your language again, English is the only language you know now”. They were given “Christian” names and dressed in “proper” clothes. Does this still happen in our Community College classrooms, our factories, or churches? (This is where colonialism and post-colonialism, feminism come into the picture.) Can one be part of the “great conversation” without speaking, or without writing “the king’s English”? (or... Whose conversation is it anyway?) How does the teacher need to be in this situation? What skills and attitudes and values are called for?

Rudolf Steiner placed such a value on these ideas that he spoke of them in his address to the parents of the first Waldorf classes:

Our children will learn to read and write from life itself. This is our intention. We will not pedantically force them to write letters that for every child at first seem all the same. They need not learn it as an abstract thing, as letters were for the North American Indians when the Europeans came. It is true, isn't it? The European destroyed the North American Indians down to the root. One of the last chiefs of the North American Indian tribes destroyed by the Europeans tells that the white man, the paleface, came to put the dark man and all he stood for under the earth. "The dark man had certain advantages over the palefaces," the chief then continued, "he did not have the little devils on paper." We want to say that everything teachers pedantically and narrow-mindedly draw on the blackboard for the pupils to copy, is seen as little devils by today's children. We can draw all such things from life. If we succeed in what we are attempting, the children will learn to read and write more quickly. When we derive everything from life, when writing comes from drawing and not from arbitrariness, children will learn more quickly. At the same time, we can raise strong-willed people who later in life will be up to the task. (Steiner, 19199

From a lecture for prospective parents of the first Waldorf School.

Letter to mentor...

My research focus has narrowed to this topic: teaching writing. More specifically, teaching writing with adolescents and adults. The “Basic writing” class is a place where many of my personal interests around discourse, voice, dialogue, and love for the word meet. Social, political, economic, educational/pedagogical, and spiritual realities are enacted concretely and immediately in this setting. I am exploring the moment in teaching when all of these values, ideas, and people come together as well as processes and approaches to the teaching of the content, “writing”. I touch on the relationship between reading and writing but I privilege writing. I look at values and approaches to teaching writing to children but focus on adults and adolescents. I am attempting to write about these things with a non-violent, non-adversarial style of rhetoric.

Imagine that you are an adult student:

You have signed up for or have been “assigned” to a “basic writing” course at the local Community College. If you have been “assigned”, there could be several reasons. You may have done poorly on a standardized test. You may have submitted a writing sample and received a notice that it would be necessary for you to take a remedial class before being allowed to take part in the program that you have chosen. English may not be your first language. You probably have many ideas about why you have been assigned to the class. Something about your writing is “not good enough”. If you have self-selected, you believe or have been told that your writing ability is not up to a certain standard. In either case, a sequence of writing courses usually with numbers like 001, 030 (no credit) stands between you and your goal.

Now, imagine that you are the Teacher:

You have at least a Masters degree, probably in English. This means that you have gone through certain rights of passage and completed prescribed requirements which included: a fair amount of writing, presented in a particular acceptable way, a lot of reading and passing a series of standardized tests like the GRE (Graduate Record Exam) or teacher certification exams. You may be younger than many of your students and come from a different social, economic, language, or ethnic community. What leading images do you carry into the setting? How do you view your role? Do you have a prescribed curriculum that you will present? Do you have a planned reading list? How will you begin? Will you “front load” (Shor) academic discourse and language or student discourse?

The above scenario presents a learner who enters the situation already in a somewhat marginalized position. The potential for power imbalances can be readily recognized. I became acutely aware of the difficulties inherent in the role of adult learner entering a new academic situation. It can be difficult even from a more integrated position. I write this now in the context of my masters program. I come to the program confident and conversant in several of the predominate discourses that I expect to find there. I speak English, which is the official language for the course. I also speak *education, Waldorf pedagogy, anthroposophy, action and qualitative research, adult education...* I love to give presentations, I create educational experiences for lots of groups, and I am an accomplished theater person- usually well regarded by colleagues. I look like every one else. I do not speak any of the Scandinavian languages or German, and I have been educated in England and the US. I am an American. To say it more clearly: I am a white, hetero-sexual, married male in my fifties; usually a profile that indicates or elicits the designation of a role of ‘privilege’.

This journal entry reflects my experience in the role of *the other* and the feelings of doubt, anger, challenge, and disappointment that often accompany that role:

Journal entry...

Some of the outer trappings that I reacted to were the high value placed on the lecture format, “exercises” which were prescribed and disembodied from the process, and the lack of opportunity for dialogue or discussion as a class. In this place where I envisioned a fairly liberal adult student centered environment, I experienced myself as invisible, a vessel to be filled, a blank slate- at least as far as knowing anything about pedagogy, educational action research, or academia. I was a “novice” and if I followed the path I would eventually join the circle of the “Masters”. I would still have to pass through several trials to approach the realm of the doctors, but that was way off in the future. Some of this is my issue, my projection, but not all. The introductory lectures and

welcoming speeches proclaimed these values loudly and clearly and with much joy and fanfare. I experienced pride and elation that I had been accepted into the pioneer group; ready to embark on this journey. This was my experience in this setting: one of only twelve students in a brand new, exciting graduate program, in an idyllic though isolated mountain valley space, with only three very friendly, kind (teachers, professors, assistant professors, course carriers, lecturers???) The content was interesting, some new things, some new takes on familiar themes, varied reading assignments. I was engaged with the material. The focus was on ways of knowing, learning, and teaching. Out of the large amount of information covered, I want to share two particular areas which illustrate an important point for this essay. There was a lot of interest in Piaget's ideas Assimilation and Accommodation as well as excitement about "Situated learning" as presented by Lave and Wenger. I have no problem following the thinking or even recognizing the "truth" or validity of the theory. I think that learning often occurs in the way that these theories suggest. I begin to reject with some anger and fear the possibility of using these approaches to create learning environments. Personally, I don't really want to assimilate and accommodate. I want to create. I don't want to be situated as an acceptable peripheral participant being gradually led into the center, accepted into the brotherhood if I act in the right way and do the right things.

What were some of the factors influencing my reaction? I have a sense that my experience was similar in many ways to those of adult learners in a basic writing setting. The languages that I spoke, that I knew and loved; languages that I had worked hard to learn and others that I had inherited or made up myself were not valid. I knew the official language, but I did not know the local or cultural language, the language of the land, the place, the social milieu. I began to think about my past students and about what happens in any classroom situation. Most of the students in the high school class that I taught could not read or write. They had no real relationship to the written word. Many of them could not speak. How well was I able to help them to assimilate and accommodate in ways that would help them navigate in society after graduation? Did I help them to speak their truth, to speak with their own voice?

I have been motivated by the struggle and challenge. I have found what I was looking for in the academic situation: I have begun to write everyday, to experiment with voice, to move between reading and writing, and begin to connect to a community of others who may be interested in a dialog about the themes that are important to me. This community may not be within my particular institution but by participating in the program I discovered networks of writers and other teachers that I was only vaguely aware of or had forgotten about. I have begun to connect with these people with an eye to future work. I am fortunate.

VI: Voice – This is the chapter for the future.

Directly... I took my pen in my hand to review that novel by a famous young man; she slipped behind me and whispered, "My dear, you are a young woman. You are writing about a book that has been written by a man. Be sympathetic; be tender; flatter; deceive; use all the arts and wiles of our sex. Never let anybody guess that you have a mind of your own..." And she made as if to guide my pen... (But in doing so) she would have plucked the heart out of my writing. (Woolf in Elbow, 2000).

Virginia Woolf created an imaginary sister for William Shakespeare called Judith. She posed the question, Could Judith have written like her brother? or -- Was it possible for a woman to write like Shakespeare? Writing about Women and literature in her essay *A Room of One's Own* she shares the general attitude prevalent in her day:

“... I thought of that old gentleman, who is dead now, but was a bishop, I think, who declared that it was impossible for any woman, past, present, or to come, to have the genius of Shakespeare. He wrote to the papers about it. He also told a lady who applied to him for information that cats do not as a matter of fact go to heaven, though they have, he added, souls of a sort. How much thinking those old gentlemen used to save one! How the borders of ignorance shrank back at their approach! Cats do not go to heaven. Women cannot write the plays of Shakespeare (Woolf, 1928).

What factors influence this possibility? Are they different now than they were Shakespeare’s time or in Virginia Woolf’s time? Woolf concludes that it would not have been possible for a woman living in Shakespearean times to write with such power and freedom. The role of women dictated by economic, religious, geographical and political factors and by men severely restricted the possibility. In her own times, the 1920’s, Woolf suggests that a *Room of Her Own* and five-hundred (pounds) a month may facilitate this kind of creative achievement. There are many forces at play, seen and unseen, that would need to shift to actualize this picture.

Where are we now?

I have to leave the question open. It is time to wrap up. Work on my Masters thesis will take this question further.

I place these two quotations side by side:

I .A Pedagogical Problem

You may remember having said "Hello" to someone and having received nothing as a response or having received a cold shoulder. The feeling of being discounted, being rejected, and being ignored or not being recognized is certainly not a positive feeling.

Now, you may better imagine the feeling of a nine-year old school boy who wrote a composition entitled "My Father" in which he explained his feelings about the death of his father and received the following answer from his teacher: "Tenses, you keep mixing past and present" (Blackis in Fatemi 1965).

I see the young boy returning to school in the fall. His father has died during the summer. He writes the traditional “My summer vacation” composition and reads the teacher comment about mixing up past and present tenses and he hears, “Your father **is** dead.”

What factors keep the teacher from “seeing” the child standing in front of him? (I always picture this teacher as a man for some reason.) Perhaps he has spent the summer obtaining his teacher certification through one of the new alternative pathways. Perhaps, the key note address went something like this:

II. We cannot afford still to accept the untrue belief that adequate schooling is natural and painless, and mainly a function of individual talent rather than hard work. We must reject the false claim that delaying learning until the child is “ready” will speed up learning in the long run. We must cease listening to the siren call that

learning should be motivated entirely by inward love of the subject matter and interest in it, without a significant admixture of external incentive (Hirsch in Itzumi, 2001).

Heavy handed? Yes. No apology.

I share this in my own voice:

Journal entry...

"...It's only words, and words are all I have to take your heart away...."

These lyrics are from a song, which I can't remember the name of, or what comes before or after. As I spend these days thinking of the Word: How it moves through the world, how it lives, what it does, how people experience it and share. I hear in these words much more than "only words"... There is a voice singing them. I hear pain and loneliness in the voice. I hear a melody that feels sad, but suggests hope and joy. I hear a plea, "please love me" and a statement: "I love you". Some of these notions come from my life story from my relationships--- some from my identification with the person singing or writing the words. The sound of the music moves me. A picture of the one being spoken to, almost makes me cry.....

"It's only words".

VII: Ending

We now come to the end of this journey. On Easter Sunday I wrote: *I gaze down the fjord wondering if the fog will lift today and if we will see the sun. I have lived long enough here in this part of Norway, the West land- near Bergen, to know that at any moment I could look up from this paper and behold a new picture. The cold gray fog and rain can majestically transform to blue sky and bright sun- sometimes offering both at the same time depending on which window you look through.*

It is easy here in Norway to see things through pictures in nature. The dark of winter seems to last forever and then suddenly- the light returns: an apt description of the research process. The task that was set before me was to complete a "pilot project" that would lay the groundwork for writing a Masters thesis next spring.

I have been telling the story of this "pilot project". Actually, I have been composing one rendition of the project. New versions, re-visions, and totally new compositions lie ahead. I've shared my process, ideas, thoughts, and sometimes feelings. The story began at Christmas or actually Epiphany- in winter—I remember the eagle and the lonely skier at the Hankeli Sater-- and finishes now in spring heading into Ascension and Whitsun time back on the bus to Fyresdal.

On Whit Monday in 1828 a strange young man appeared on the streets of Nurnberg, Germany. His appearance caused quite a stir across Europe. His name was Kaspar Hauser. Mystery surrounded him. He spoke only a few words. It is said that he actually came from a princely house of central Europe and had been abducted at birth. Rudolf Steiner saw great significance in this young man. He refers to him in this way, *"if Kaspar Hauser had not lived and died as he did, contact between the earth and the spiritual world would have been completely severed."*(quoted in Pietzner-1983)

The following scene is from Carlo Pietzner's play, **Who was Kaspar Hauser?**

This first scene is the prologue to a play about a young man who was called the, "child of Europe". It is the story of a youth who arrives speechless into the adult world in his late teens. Through the loving care of a tutor and fatherly friend he learned the language and ways of the world and discovered his "I" in a few short years after which he is mysteriously murdered. This paper ends with this beginning:

Scene 1

*As the curtain rises there is the loud clicking of a clock, continuing in the dark. Slowly a little light. Four of **The Five** sit on diverse places on boxes, reading and writing; all five wear everyday clothes of today.*

Five (*enters swiftly at the back, looks around, exclaims*): It's finished!

One: Finished?

Two: What's finished? The government? Democracy? The oil supply? Dinner?

Three: Is there ever anything finished?

Four: Will, my friends, will, miraculous will—it can cease, run out, finish as if finished.

Five (*coming forth slowly*): My report is finished. I have dotted the i's, underscored the essentials as they want them, and I have set the last period with enough deliberation to have punctured the whole padded belly of this paper if my ballpen would have been a dagger. And I'm finished too.

One: Finished!

Two: He means it.

Three: And what does he mean pray?

Four: Having achieved what he set out to do, all his will has been exhausted—he's finished!

Five (*who had stopped while listening, very slowly comes forward when speaking*): You know and I know what we wanted when we started out on this road. We had seen people needing help because we needed help ourselves, trying to become people ourselves. We were told what we had to do and what to learn before we could start helping. O.K.,-- fair enough—but what a lot of bunk it turned out to be! What bunk it made of what we were wanting to do! I can hardly recall it when I look at all the crosses on my clip-board—each one separates me a little stroke further from those we came to help—whatever helping may mean.

So clever it is, just a little at a time, ever so little. Hook it off, check it off, another stroke, another line in the grid, another bit of the cage. Make a chart, draw the curves, my foot! Grind it all through the percentage machine and watch the meaningless results roll out the other side, filling the up-to-date, the in-depth journals, the piling files, the accredited versions of all we came forward to change in the first place.

Slowly we have checked ourselves into the clipboards of expediency, onto the bandwagon of professionally licensed charity, howling the lingo of scientific mouthwash together with the pack.

(Silence.)

One: Finished? Wow!

Two: I told you he means it.

Three: And I ask you: what *does* he mean?

Four: He's had it! He's shot! He's finished his final report and is through with it all.

Five (*still slower*): You understand, don't you? ...

Works Cited

- Ameln, E. (1998). *Can We Love This Time?*. Play, Camphill Soltane.
- Annerstedt, Claes, President of the Swedish Academy, Nobel Prize presentation speech: December 10, 1909. Cited in web page:
<http://nobelprize.org/literature/laureates/1909/press.html>
- Aeppli, W. (1986). *Rudolf Steiner Education and the Developing Child* (A.V. Ritscher-Hill, Trans.) (Third). Bells' Pond, Hudson, New York: Anthroposophic Press (Original work published 1934).
- Burnett, Frances Hodgson. 1987 [1911]. *The Secret Garden*. Penguin.
- Derrida, J. (1978). *Writing and Difference* (A, Bass, Trans.). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Elbow, P. (2000). *Everyone Can Write*. New York: Oxford University Press, Inc.
- Fatemi, S. M. (2000). Authorial Recognition. *Educational Insights*, 6(1). Cited in web page:
<http://www.ccfi.educ.ubc.ca/publication/insights/archives/v06n01/fatemi1.html>.
- Foucault, M. (2002). *The Order of Things* (Tavistock Pub., Trans.). New York: Routledge Classics (Original work published 1966).
- Gergen, Kenneth. *Writing as Research*. Cited in web page:
<http://www.swarthmore.edu/SocSci/kgergen1/web/page.phtml?id=manu17&st=manuscripts&hf=>
- Guberman, Ross Mitchell. ed. *Julia Kristeva Interviews*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1996.) Cited in web-page: 4/2004:
<http://www.msu.edu/user/chrenkal/980/SAMURAI.HTM>
- Izumi, L. T., & Coburn, K. G. (2001). *Facing the Classroom Challenge*. Cited in web page:
<http://math.umn.edu/~gray/challenge.pdf>.
- Lagerlof, S. (1984). *Christ Legends* (V. S. Howard, Trans.) (Floris Classics). Edinburgh: Floris Books (Original work published 1904).
- Mellon, N. (1992). *Storytelling and the Art of Imagination*. Rockport, MA: Element, Inc.
- Moreno, J. (1971). *The Words of the Father*. New York: Beacon House Inc.
- Pietzner, C. (1983). *Who was Kaspar Hauser?*. Edinburgh: Floris Books.
- Shor, Ira. "What Is Critical Literacy?" In *Critical Literacy in Action: Writing Words, Changing Worlds*. Eds. Ira Shor and Caroline Pari. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook, Heinemann, 1999.
- Sams, J., & Carson, D. (1999). *Medicine Cards*. New York: St. Martin's Press.

Steiner, R. (Lecture I). (Dornach Oct,11, 1921). *The Art of Lecturing* (G. O'Neil, Ed.) (M. St. Goar, Trans.). Spring Valley, New York: Mercury Press.

Steiner, R. (Lecture). (Nov 11, 1904- Berlin, 1985). :Manicheism (J. M. Wood, Trans.). In E. Lloyd (Ed.), *The Temple Legend*. London: Rudolf Steiner Press.

Woolf, V. (1945/1928). *A Room of One's Own*. London: Penguin Books.

Learners Document

Parzifal: *Uncle, what ails thee?*

Amfortas: *Thanks for asking—but I am O.K.*

Parzifal: ... but all the blood and all?

Amfortas: That's not blood. It's just rust from washing my clothes in that rusty old washtub.

Parzifal: No, really I know something is wrong—let me fix it for you—or at least let me get you a new basin.

Amfortas: O.K.—that old grail will probably rot through any day now. How 'bout you buy me a new plastic one.

Parzifal: Great! I'll throw that old one away for you. I knew you needed something.

I have filled six notebooks, many megabytes of computer memory, and have piles of random note cards and scratch pads. I have read several hundred complete journal articles and parts of others in areas as diverse as: history of rhetoric, feminist studies, socio-rhetorical analysis, literature, composition, performative writing, educational policy/ philosophy/and research, curriculum development, discourse analysis, qualitative research, and social constructionism. I have read several non-fiction books and chapters of books. I watched videos about writing and teaching writing. I read novels, short stories, and poetry.

My self-reflective “exercise” was to develop a writing practice: to write daily, to pay attention to the process, to write in different genres and for different purposes, to “research” writing through writing. The interplay between reading and writing, between idea and written word, and the author- reader relationship have come into focus.

The report that precedes this “document” reflects and incorporates the examination of the writing process. I won't add much more. I have worked on the composition of the report in such a way that the biographical, inner and outer influences including some of the interaction with source material and the ideas of others can be somewhat transparent. My hope is that the document's form and content work together in a way that engages the reader in the realms of thinking, feeling, and willing. I wanted my values and point of view to be evident while leaving room for many voices to be heard, imagined, or created by the reader.

I will share two excerpts, a course description, and a literary narrative (story) that did not make it into the main body of the paper but serve as indicators of my creative process.

The first is another excerpt from one of my journals, a free writing exercise. Free writing, as developed by Peter Elbow: writing with no intention of sharing, no “critic”, just letting go and writing has probably been the most helpful “exercise”. It has become a practice and although this may sound strange a “discipline”. I now write my way toward a deeper understanding of an issue or theme or sometimes just start to write and see where it takes me. Often, strong and clear text is the result which can be developed and re-worked into something more polished. Even when this is not the case, new directions or movement around and through difficult areas can result.

Excerpt I:

I share this first excerpt without editing, although it looks as if the spell checker must have done a little work. This was written on a morning when I wanted to collect some thoughts *on*

the direction and reasons behind the project. I originally thought that this could be shaped into an abstract or introduction. I eventually chose another direction.

*In another arena, perhaps if I was being told to be vaccinated against a “threatening” disease, I could refuse due to “religious convictions or beliefs”.(although there are now rather binding laws for vaccination if you want to attend publicly funded educational institutions or have certain jobs) It is still possible although difficult to resist participation in military service out of objections based on conscience. One’s “patriotism” or love of country or care for fellow man is called into question when you make this kind of statement. I would like to present my thesis my ideas in a non-adversarial form of rhetoric. Kenneth Gergen and John Stotter, among others, discuss the hostile environment and attitude often present in academic discourse. Peter Elbow, Doug Brent, and Kenneth Burke investigate the possibility of a non-adversarial rhetoric or “nonrefutational argument” style. David Cooperider (*Appreciative Inquiry*) and Steve DeShazer (*Solution Focused Approaches*) both utilize non-problem solving methods in their work. Carl Rogers “person centered” therapy has been adapted by some rhetoricians and composition theorists.*

(I get so nervous, on a roll have to stop, want to write everything at once, afraid that I can’t feels like it could all rush out at once or disappear forever.....)

I’m 53. I have argued, debated, compromised, looked at all sides, I feel anger sometimes when I read something, I disagree. I have a point of view. I have a way that I want to live my life. I would like to live in non- violence. I know that it is possible to trace all sides of an argument or opinion backwards and forwards recognizing that there is truth somewhere in all sides. I would have more trouble finding certain “truths” or accepting or agreeing with them. I don’t have to. I can still express my point of view my choice my preference. I don’t need to annihilate “you” in order to live. Paolo Freire says this. The bible tells us “don’t hide your light under a bushel”.

How can I write my thesis in this non-adversarial, non-violent way? Can I call myself when I veer from this path? This is a life choice; a day to day way of being in the world, like Gandhi, like Christ—that serious—an awareness of when what I do or think destroys or hurts another or the earth. (It may be easier just to wield a big sword and a loud voice and “argue to win all the time”!!!)

Even as I mull this over and choose this way of life, research, discourse- feelings of outrage surge up around power and social injustice and oppression. Some part of me says, “We must defeat them”. How can we “all” have our power? Is there evil in the world? (Yes.) So, how do I know when I am making a stand against evil and when I am acting out of an intimately personal agenda? Do I really believe that the human being is intrinsically good, that I am “good”? Can I just keep on as if this is true striving believing listening changing acting from this place? (Yes).

I can only hope that some of these ideas have been realized in the paper.

Excerpt II:

This could be the theme setting idea for the novel I plan to write for my master’s thesis:

The genre will most likely be a dystopian novel. Some sort of catastrophic event will have happened that has left society fragmented and separated (more than it already

is). Different educational and pedagogical forms can be presented based on the “purpose” that each sector recognizes for education and learning.

... Why am I not relieved to read the emergency preparedness document by the home land security organization? I get a dry throat, palpitations, a feeling of impending doom instead. And not from the possibility of getting the Flu! Now we are being attacked on the microbial level, by what we cannot see. First we were attacked by terrorists, now viruses. Big daddy failed to protect us at first from the terrorists but then found many ways to save us from that outside, evil invasion largely by curbing and infringing on rights that we had begun to expect: freedom. The plans for protecting us from this new invisible threat that will come from some other less advanced, less prepared country, i.e.; poor country will allow control and manipulation on a cellular level. Further steps toward isolation, separation and limiting citizen and non-citizen movement are written into the plan. I guess the president ultimately gets to decide when it is time to implement the plan, like the war in Iraq. Medical records and histories become fair game. Forced vaccination, medication, and interventions like quarantine and limits to social gatherings are all possible, in the name of the “common good”. And now I am implicated and afraid because I have written these dissident words on Micro soft word and I refuse to erase them. Yesterday’s sadness finds its source.

A course description:

I had the good fortune to be able to design and teach this course just after Easter. This provided an excellent venue for trying out some of the ideas about the relationship between reading and writing, or authority and individual freedom. The course dove-tailed with a large research initiative within the Curative Education and Social Therapies movement. They are developing a *Trinal* method for education and training which seeks to find the integration of art, theory and practice. For me, the potential for gathering themes and direction for developing the novel as master’s thesis became clearer.

This is a 4 session course offered by Roy Ford for the Curative Education and Social Therapy Seminar.

From Insight to Action:

Working with Rudolf Steiner’s Philosophy of Spiritual Activity

“I was not setting forth a doctrine, but simply recording inner experiences, through which I had actually passed. And I reported them just as I experienced them. Everything in my book is written from this personal angle, even to the shaping of the thoughts it contains.....My purpose was to write a biographical account of how one human soul made the difficult ascent to freedom.”

From a letter from Rudolf Steiner to Rosa Mayreder, November 18th, 1894.

Throughout his life, Rudolf Steiner frequently referred to the significance of his book, which in Norwegian bears the title: “Frihetens Filosofi.” He sometimes described it as a training manual, or a guide in which the seeds of all his other teachings were contained. Working with

the book, an individual can develop freedom as a creative force and an impulse towards action. It has practical and personal value for anyone who wants to work out of anthroposophy.

People are often reluctant to engage with the book, because it seems overly philosophical and the writing style old fashioned. The above quote suggests that there is more behind the philosophical-intellectual trappings, namely one mans personal experience of the path to freedom.

The Course:

We will work with the book through dialogue, expressive artistic activity, reading and writing. Approaching the book in this way we may be inspired to find our own experience of the questions of freedom, thinking, and individual responsibility and action.

There are two parts to the book Practical and Theoretical.

This four session course will move back and forth in both of these areas searching for the ideas while looking at how they relate to our work and personal lives. Chapters 3: “Thinking in the service of understanding the world,” and 9: “The idea of freedom”, will serve as our gateway to this exploration.

Three question for our consideration:

Is it possible for us to make this “ascent to freedom”?

How can studying this book help in our daily life and work?

Is working with this book significant for the theory and practice of social therapy?

Literary Narrative II

This is my favorite piece. It captures most of what I try to say and have discovered about the relationship between reading and writing and author and reader. Readers have had differing but strong reactions from laughter to discomfort. Most have found it challenging and evocative. It contains some language that is not generally considered appropriate in polite company but fills the needs and goals of the story- to change these words would siphon the power and change the message considerably.

Marvin Gardens

by: Roy Ford

The story of Marvin is sad, at least for Marvin. You may enjoy hearing it. You may get happy or angry—but for Marvin, as I have said... well sad is the only word that comes to mind.

Have I piqued your interest? Do you want to hear more about Marvin? Do you wonder what he looks like, or what he does, or what has made his story so sad?

Maybe you don't want to read a sad story. Maybe your life is already sad enough. Maybe you want to hear about somebody else's hard times- so that you can feel better about yourself-so that you can think about helping him—or laugh at him.

Does the name Marvin sound silly to you? Like, how could you empathize with a character called Marvin? Maybe, if you husband or brother was named Marvin.... Is your name Marvin?

Are you already remembering all of the times that you were sad? I'm sorry, you are probably angry at me now- for reminding you of those things.-Making you "feel" them. So, why don't you just stop reading this, tear the book up and throw it on the fire—or just close it, put it on the table, and walk away—have a cup of coffee—never think about those awful things, or Marvin, or this book, or me again.

You never cared about Marvin anyway, right? You don't even know who he is. He's just a figment of *my* imagination. I am trying to make you care about him; want to know him, to know about him. I am trying to make you care about what makes him sad—about what happened to him. You *should* be angry at me. Not, at Marvin. Not at you wife, or your mother. Not at yourself. You never meant to hurt anyone—you are the victim here. Let's forget about Marvin. I won't tell you his story. He can just – well—he can just—I guess sit there and wait—wait until I am good and ready—until you are good and ready. He can keep all those feelings. Who cares about him anyway? Trying to get in the way—between us—all those good times we could have—if it wasn't for fucking Marvin.

“Oh, I'm Marvin... I'm so sad—really, really sad.”
“Fuck you, Marvin.”

“I am trying to build this relationship with this reader and all you want to do is tell us about how sad you are. Do you think we care? No. We have our own lives to live. You can rot in hell, or wherever you fictional type guys rot.

We're going to talk, and laugh, and love each other. We don't need you.
“Right?”

So let's start over... OK,

Do you really love me?—I mean, really love me? Do you want to know what makes me tick, what my great ideas are, how I feel about George Bush or flowers or children? Will you stick by me ... for better, for worse?

I won't mention that S word again—or anger. I know how that makes you feel.

I'm sorry, I didn't get that. What did you say?
Are you there? Are you listening?
Are you still reading?
Are you still upset about that Marvin thing? I promise no more fiction... just, truth from now on.

Come on already, that's not fair! I'm sitting here pouring my heart—my soul out to you—and you just sit there...

I guess you sit there. Maybe you are sitting on the toilet, or on a train. Are you standing up?

Please, enough of this...

Tell me about yourself.

Do you come here often? Got a light?

Hello, hello--- Can you hear me now?

Shit, fuck, piss.....

Uh, Marvin—I'm sorry Marvin. I didn't mean all those nasty things that I said about you.

Please Marvin, please help me, Marvin.

"I'm so sad, Marvin, really, really sad."