Research in Higher Education, Vol. 37, No. 4, 1996

CLASSROOM INCIVILITIES

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The scattered, little-known literature on classroom disturbances depicts their aversive nature and growing costs, but rarely in higher education. Here I summarize a five-year study of classroom incivilities (CI) at a large research university. In systematic observations of large survey courses, I ranked the most problematic CI as (1) teachers displaying aloof, distancing mannerisms; (2) teachers discouraging student involvement with fast-paced lectures; (3) students' noisiness and indifference; (4) students coming late and leaving early; (5) students' sarcastic remarks/gestures; and so on. High levels of CI corresponded to low levels of student attentiveness and note-taking—and to low levels of teacher enthusiasm, clarity/organization, and immediacies (i.e., expressions of warmth and approachability). High CI meant fast-paced lectures, student confusion/annoyance, and perceptions of teachers as uncaring and incompetent. The key initiator of CI may be teachers' deficits in immediacies, particularly during the first few days of classes. Immediacy was coached here with demonstrable reductions in CI.

We may know classroom incivilities best from news accounts about intimidation and violence directed at high-school teachers. The topic has become a chief concern of educational leaders:

> What people really want are their own schools and they want the schools to be safe and orderly. It is insane to set up a system where we move 98 percent of our kids away from the 2 percent who are dangerous instead of moving the 2 percent who are okay. . . . Independent surveys and our own polls show that the overwhelming majority of Americans put school safety at the top of their concerns. (Shanker, 1995, p. 48)

We say comparatively little about classroom incivilities in higher education. Still, there are at last signs of a growing concern even within our ivy towers:

> Caught in this web of laxity, indiscrimination, and materialism, the young, by the time they are ready to enter college, have established within themselves a mental fixity born of fear and disorientation that is strikingly narcissistic in its monadic self-encapsulation, in its fear and resentment of authority, and in its conformist rigidity and intellectual lassitude. The result is the high-tech barbarian: rude, without sympathy for culture, crude in his tastes, raucous in his behavior, enthralled by the loud pulse of his

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0361-0365/96/0800-0453$09.50/0

> music, and devoted to the accumulation of megabucks and the amassment of the shining baubles of tawdry affluence. (Bartlett, 1993, p. 308)

I too had paid little attention to classroom incivilities (CI), even to occasional incidents in my own classes, until I undertook a decade of observing new faculty cope as teachers. Then CI emerged as a major factor, frequently dominating classes, often making or breaking novice teachers. I remember wondering: Why isn't this problem the subject of more study? Why don't we recognize its commonness and cost in higher education? In my search for answers I found that more information is available than I had realized, most of it, though, from different, more indirect vantages than I had hoped for. Still, they establish a useful background. These are four extant views as I understand them.

1. CI AS TABOO, AS EMBARRASSING

Social psychologists study the reason why we do not persistently question people's failings or seriously examine their excuses, or why we resist admitting our own struggles with problems that presumably reveal our intelligence, including teaching. Doing so can be an embarrassment, a social impropriety (Snyder and Higgins, 1988). Nonetheless, some of our colleagues do better than we at facing up to the taboo. Psychotherapists acknowledge why they dislike admitting annoyance with difficult patients. Such a disclosure might be interpreted by colleagues as a sign of poor therapeutic skills (Fremont and Anderson, 1988).

The point of digging into such a dark corner of professional activity is to show why we typically neglect or distance ourselves from CI. It helps explain why what we know about CI is so amiably remote.

2. CI AS MORE STUDIED/PUBLICIZED AMONG TEACHERS WITH LESS STATUS AND PRIVACY

Elsewhere in the profession of teaching, in the lower grades, accounts of student disruptiveness proliferate. News reports routinely depict urban schools, even some rural settings, in terms of insolent, indifferent students (Coles, 1993). Elementary schools now obviously require programs of violence prevention (Goleman, 1993); students at surprisingly young ages find school a nightmarish experience of sexual and other aggressive taunts (Baringer, 1993). By early adolescence they commonly talk about the pain of enduring mean, boring teachers—and they act in classes accordingly (Manegold, 1993). Soon after, they often demand the good grades requisite for college but without interest in learning (Lee, 1993). This atmosphere, of course, demoralizes and exhausts teachers (Toby, 1993). It even turns immigrant students away from the good study habits they had imported (Associated Press, 1994).

But when we look past the dramatic, we can learn practical things about the nature and prevention of CI. Examples: Disorder (inside and outside the classroom) may engender a loss of community spirit and with it a lessening of the informal social controls that maintain interest and order. Teachers accustomed to working amid disorder suppose that little can be done to change it and do less to discourage the rudeness, violence, and demoralization that follow (Toby, 1993). In settings where teachers establish truces with classes, by demanding little and getting it, a few intimidating students can discourage open displays of interest in other class members. Even there, solutions for CI are possible. Briefly angry but caring confrontations with students can enable the teacher and most of the students to break the hold of fear and foreignness on both sides (Coles, 1993). And when classes discuss what provokes anger, students share ways of resolving conflicts more peaceably (Goleman, 1993).

3. CI AS MORE READILY ACKNOWLEDGED AMONG OTHER DOCTORAL-LEVEL PRACTITIONERS

We can also profit by looking at the experiences and reactions of other practitioners who must deal with difficult patients and clients. Physicians place most of the responsibility for misbehavior on patients; there is little onus for doctors whose patients resist and noncomply. Still, physicians (far more than professors) are coached in ways of reducing the stress and burnout that come with manipulative, controlling, uncooperative patients. These are common admonitions: (a) understand the causes of resistance (e.g., fear and misinformation) and respond impersonally; (b) balance caring with objectivity; (c) have confidence you are doing the right thing; and (d) find more peer support and hobbies (Smith and Stendler, 1983).

Therapists model another bold move not typically considered by teachers facing resistance. They publicly acknowledge which of patients' behaviors annoy them most (e.g., impositions such as late-night, nonemergency calls) and which should be tolerated (e.g., "dynamic" struggles that patients display in working through difficult problems—Fremont and Anderson, 1988). More important, they constantly and firmly remind patients of what behaviors help or hinder therapy (Tryon, 1986).

Because of this openness and inquisitiveness, I think, therapists are far more likely than teachers to suppose that their successes rely on practicing the right skills, not on inheriting the right genes. Hill and Corbett (1993) show why the skills approach has found widespread acceptance with therapists. Early research by Carl Rogers established the value of skills like a "focused voice" that has an irregular pace, moderate to high energy levels, and variable accents. Robert Carkhuff added more credibility to this skills assumption by demonstrating that early training of therapists is best aimed at teaching basic ways of working:

problem-solving and decision-making skills (cf. usual emphases on teaching graduate students about diagnosing pathologies). Process researchers, as they call themselves, even show the teachability of more advanced skills. Norman Kagan pioneered research that identified two skills essential to expertise: learning to share patients' perceptions of how therapy sessions progress and knowing how to get beyond performance anxieties that inhibit already learned skills. The upshots of this tradition may be worth noticing in higher education. Therapists boast a sharing of ideas between humanists and behaviorists, because the same skills prove to be essential to either approach. Said another way, empathic, warm, skilled therapists require no theoretical orientation (only skills like interpretation and nonverbal immediacy—e.g., smiling, facing, moving, and moderate distancing). Where these practices are missing, Hill and Corbett note, so is adequate awareness and anticipation of client reactions, especially of the negative kind.

4. CI AS HIGHER EDUCATION APPROACHES IT

We are, clearly, decades behind therapists in empirically evaluating what affects success among college teachers in domains including CI (Weimer and Lenze, 1991). And when we do approach the awkward topic of trouble in the classroom, we do so with monumental indirectness. We talk abstractly about the breakdown of traditional student-faculty relationships but not specifically about how it demoralizes faculty (Wilson, 1990). We blame deteriorating conditions of teaching on democratic tendencies to admit underqualified students into college, without addressing the immediate problems of ever more crowded classrooms (Henry, 1994). And on the few occasions when faculty development practitioners examine CI on their own campuses, the information is often held back from public distribution. I know of two large campuses where such studies/programs were kept from publication by administrators concerned about institutional image. Another, particularly sound program produced a report that was effectively limited to a campus newspaper (BQ, 1990). Its facilitator identified common disruptive classroom behaviors on her campus (e.g., students conversing with neighbors; students coming to class late and leaving early; students expressing direct anger about course content or tests). She also listed seemingly effective interventions for CI: (a) defining acceptable behaviors at the outsets of semesters; (b) decreasing students' anonymity by knowing and using their names; (c) encouraging active learning that involves students in classroom endeavors. Unfortunately, this model program remains nearly invisible.

This same tradition, the one that perpetuates obscurity for CI, encourages another oversight: We rarely ask whether some kinds or degrees of CI might be adaptive in our classrooms. Still, there are hints of alternative ways of conceptualizing CI. One clue lies in representations of traditionally acceptable stu-

dents. They can be seen as so eager to please authority figures, so oversensitive to negative evaluations as to approach what psychotherapists label as a dependent personality disorder (Bornstein and Kennedy, 1994). So it is, possibly, that school impresses many independent students, including the bulk of people who find greatness, as uncongenial and irrelevant (Simonton, 1994). Another irreverent hint is that traditional teachers may err in adhering too closely to academic norms of rationality, impersonality, and formality—so much so that even positive emotions are discouraged in students (Bowen, Seltzer, and Wilson, 1987). What does it matter? For one thing, emotions help learners to focus attention on important topics, to persevere, and to find inspiration. For another, emotional expression makes teachers seem more human to students. And third, consider that cultures different from our own (usually white) orientation see a value for, say, emotional trash-talking as a leveler and motivator (DeJonge, 1993). There is a point to this alternative literature: It reminds us that in looking for ways to moderate CI, we can go too far. After all, the ultimate of psychological health and functioning, self-efficacy, depends not only on success but also on learning to reinterpret stressful events in more tolerant, optimistic ways (Bandura, 1986; Perry et al., 1993).

Even higher education's few empirically based accounts of CI are generally abstract and indirect. In an extensively documented program, Amada (1992) treats CI largely as a mental health problem; more students with schizophrenia, manic-depression, and personality disorders are coming to our campuses. Their incivilities are best treated in campus mental health centers (or, in extreme cases, with legal action). What makes Amada's approach indirect and limited? The bulk of CI needs to be dealt with in and near the classroom by teachers themselves; only extremely disruptive or disturbed students require formal treatment.

Another drawback to our own little-known research on CI is that it tends to prove the obvious. Wyatt (1992), for example, found students more likely to cut classes they did not like. Even so, some of these confirming studies help clarify things. Examples: Not just absences but cheating (another form of CI) relate to disliking a class, particularly when students see it as irrelevant to their careers (Didner, 1992). And, more interesting, CI can be conceptualized, at least in survey responses, to fall into three general reciprocities between students and teachers. Both especially dislike people in the other role who come to class late. Students dislike teachers who run overtime; teachers loathe class members who pack up early. Both complain about counterparts who cut or cancel classes (Appleby, 1990).

Other more surprising research may prove even more useful. Tracking studies suggest that most newcomers to teaching rely on personal experiences as students, not on direct observations of their own students, to determine when difficulties are likely to arise in classes (Lenze and Dinham, 1994). Similarly,

novices often make erroneous assumptions about their students' prior knowledge. With the right kinds of experience, though, teachers develop enhanced sensitivity to problems such as inattention (Fogarty, Wang, and Creek, 1983). Most uncommon in this genre are assumptions that teachers commit CI. In fact, some of our colleagues are guilty of lapses in dealing fairly and empathically with diverse students (Williams, 1994). In samplings of core courses at large public universities, as many as a third of faculty treated students with unmistakable rudeness and condescension. In a few cases they physically assaulted students who pressed them for answers or help (Boice, 1986, 1993b), perhaps about as often as students assaulted professors. In many more instances (we do not know the exact figures) professors take advantage of teaching dynamics to sexually and otherwise compromise students.

The most experienced researchers on CI assume that students and teachers are partners in generating and exacerbating it. They even report its commonness and its varieties: In a typical class of 30, 5 or 6 students resist doing what the teacher wants (and just one troublesome student can ruin an entire class for everyone). CI typically means missing classes, cheating, refusing to participate, coming unprepared, and distracting teachers and other students. Kearney and Plax (1992) remind us that some kinds of student (and teacher) resistance can be labeled constructive (as when substantive questions are pressed), even though most teachers react to any kind of confrontation as problematic.

What other roles do teachers play? How they present themselves may be the most telling factor, at least in initiating CI. In laboratory simulations, Kearney and Plax find that students decide to resist and misbehave depending largely on how they interpret two interrelated kinds of teacher behaviors. One is a matter of whether the teacher employs mostly prosocial motivators (e.g., "Do you understand?" and "You can do better") or antisocial motivators (e.g., threats and guilt induction). The second is about immediacy—the extent to which the teacher gives off verbal and nonverbal signals of warmth, friendliness, and liking (e.g., forward leans, smiles, purposeful gestures, eye contact). With positive motivators and, particularly, immediacy, student inclinations to CI drop off dramatically. But without these skills, teachers are seen as cold, uncaring, and incompetent by their students—as deserving targets of incivilities. So, according to Kearney and Plax, power in classrooms is relational. Teachers have the power (if they have the skills) to use motivators and immediacies to moderate CI. And students have the power and the skills (far more than most teachers appreciate) to effectively undermine teachers who seem not to care about them.

Something else is worth knowing about skills of immediacy. They can be taught. Resulting improvements bring skills to levels already exhibited by experienced, successful teachers who, for instance, exhibit a large array of positive motivators (Plax and Kearney, 1992). This research on communication in teaching may be a significant breakthrough in understanding the origins, preventives, and correctives for CT. (Many of us, incidentally, already know parallels to

immediacy in older research on expressiveness and enthusiasm.) Given that leap forward, do we know enough to begin setting up programs to moderate CI?

WHY THESE VARIED PERSPECTIVES LEAVE US SHORT

Consider what we have learned from the four perspectives on CI: It seems to be increasingly problematic, at least in K–12 classes. It is usually left undiscussed, most so (probably) in higher education. It involves common complaints such as teachers running overtime and students clamoring to leave early. Its costs include discomfort, danger, and derailed learning. It has attracted informal study and faculty workshops at some campuses, but in generally unpublicized ways. And, while tradition holds students mostly responsible for CI, emerging research suggests that teachers' underuse of positive motivators and immediacies may be more powerful. Teachers themselves can be uncivil.

Then consider that we still do not know much about (a) the frequency and kinds of CI in any broad sampling of college classes; (b) its costs (and benefits) for students and teachers in live college classrooms; (c) why some of our colleagues encounter more CI than others of us (although we have one hint from Kearney and Plax's research); (d) how CI relates to turning points—within classes or within teaching careers; and (e) how to teach the skills for moderating CI. In this paper I describe my own systematic but modest attempts to illuminate these unknowns. First I outline the methods for observing and analyzing CI and some usual kinds and costs of CI. Next I report how types of teachers (new vs. senior faculty) compare in CI experiences. And finally, I portray intervention programs that coach the skills of tempering CI. By the end, I conclude that those of us interested in teaching improvement owe CI more attention.

DIRECT STUDIES OF CI

With so few clear precedents, I began by observing inductively and atheoretically, much as I once did as an ethologist learning the social dynamics of pack rats or grasshopper mice. I had little idea what to expect and I took notes on almost everything until normative behavior patterns and individual differences grew familiar. Here, though, the classes I tracked offered an advantage over the communities of desert rodents I once haunted. Students and faculty proved to be eager reporters and interpreters of CI. After two years of patient observation and discussion, I had derived a working taxonomy of CI and I felt prepared to undertake the more formal study I report here. Still, my work needs corroboration and extension to other campuses and investigators. These reports about intemperance may even need some tempering; the locale for these observations is near enough to New York City so that the incivilities could be near maximum.

Assessment Scheme

Classroom Ratings

These were difficult for me to refine to the point where its components were few enough for reliable rating and rich enough to capture much of the complexity of CI. During the pilot stage, I winnowed the rating system from a larger list by opting for 10 items that proved reliable (with at least 80% agreement between a graduate assistant and me) and valid (by correlating items with the impressions of teachers, students, and independent observers). Table 1 shows the final rating scheme. In after-class interviews with students, I had them rate the day's meeting, using similar rating schemes to those in Table 1 (see Table 4).

TABLE 1. Classroom Rating Form (S = Student, T = Teacher, 10 = optimal level)

A. Notes About Class Prior to and Including Formal Start:

B. Category Rated (1–10)	First Segment	Middle Segment	Final Segment
1. background noise			
2. S attentiveness			
3. S note-taking			
4. T immediacy			
5. T pace			
6. T enthusiasm			
7. room comfort			

C. Counts of:
1. T neg. motivators
2. T CI
3. S CI

D. Notes on Things Done Well:

E. Notes on CI (with parenthetic ratings of inappropriateness):

F. Notes on Things That Could Have Been Done Differently:

Pilot work revealed that upper-level undergraduate courses were too diverse in size, content, and teaching styles to permit the broad, basic generalities I wanted to draw here. So, this study was limited to large (enrollment over 100) survey courses (nominally at freshman and sophomore levels) in easily accessible, centrally located lecture halls. And here, despite my collections of pilot data about CI at several universities, I report on one large, public research campus with about 11,000 undergraduates and 1,500 faculty. I balanced courses for study between sciences, social sciences, and humanities.

I asked permission of teachers to visit their courses. I showed them anonymous examples of what kinds of information I record. I assured them that I would report as much of what I observed about their classes to them as they wanted to hear (but always with a balance, as in my notes, of what they did well and what they might have done differently). And I got their permission to interview a small sample of students from their classes immediately after each observed period ended, in a balanced fashion that would encourage evaluations of what was satisfying and what was bothersome. Over a three-year period, I asked 16 colleagues to let me monitor and assess their classes. All agreed and all persisted in brief weekly conversations with me about my ratings and their experiences with CI for at least one full semester. (And most did all this despite initial feelings that they would have too little interest or time to persist. Some of these stayers are individuals whom colleagues assured me would not cooperate. Said another way, my subject faculty were not exceptionally compliant.)

Participants and Interviews/Ratings

Eight of the faculty I observed were senior; eight were junior (i.e., in their first three years of teaching). Of each of those groups, I adjudged half (in preliminary scans of potential participants) to be clearly excellent or deficient as teachers compared to their age/experience cohorts. I used student ratings, collegial nominations, and campus awards to help make these distinctions. I ended up selecting only those teachers whose ratings were uniformly high or low in all these dimensions; the decisions were easy. With rare exceptions I visited their courses at least once per week in 12 weeks of the study semesters. Usually, to make my schedule manageable, I attended only the first and last 20 minutes (including the 5-minute periods before sessions formally began and after they ended) of what were typically 80-minute classes. Occasionally, I sampled middle segments of classes or even entire sessions.

I sat near the rear of classes so that I could come and go without disturbing them. And I located myself so that I could see most students while closely observing four of them at note-taking. As I made my own notes and periodic ratings, I identified 2–4 students to interview after class. Here too I tried for balance; roughly half my interviews were with students I judged to be diligent

listeners and notetakers and question askers, half with students I saw as casual, indifferent participants. (I cued no one about memberships in subgroups.) I also stopped and interviewed students and teachers who exhibited salient forms of CI that day. Surprisingly few students and faculty denied me these 3–5 minute interactions (only, I believed, because they were rushing elsewhere). I was often told, somewhat jokingly, that my great height and unmistakably professorial mien induced compliance, but I sensed that students and teachers liked to talk about their classroom experiences, at least to someone who would not use the information against them. Those who admitted to CI usually seemed relieved to talk about it and to explain what had happened (often, to ponder ways of avoiding repetitions).

In routine interviews with students after classes, I took notes on their comments and I asked them to rate (on 10-point scales) (a) the worth of the teaching for the day; (b) the interest/immediacy of the teacher; (c) the clarity and organization of the material presented (most concretely, how easily and memorably it could have been put into useful notes); (d and e) the degree to which all students seemed involved in the class session and the extent of their own; and (f and g) the extent/severity of CI and the degree that it hindered or helped their involvement and learning. I prodded for incidents that were perceived as CI and, one by one, asked for the 405 interviewees' reactions to them.

After classes I asked students (half of them diligent and half not) to show me their notes of the day. From these 230 sharings I noted length, content, and apparent thoroughness/understanding. And then I asked students why they had taken notes in the way they had (and how well they understood a central concept from the day's class). Here too students were remarkably cooperative (although surprised; for many, this was the first time anyone other than a peer had looked at their notes); they liked the attention and its implicit caring. On some occasions I photocopied students' notes and then shared them (after ensuring their anonymity) with faculty. (Professors looking at notes taken by their students, particularly poor teachers, were amazed at how different students' perceptions were from what they thought they had presented in class.)

Weekly interviews with faculty usually took place in their offices or by phone (because immediately after classes they were typically occupied with students asking questions). In their 192 regular meetings with me, teachers answered questions and made ratings, much as I depicted above for students. I specifically asked them to recall awkward moments and incivilities in classes that had met a day or two earlier. I also asked and reasked them about their longer-term experiences with CI, particularly about especially salient, difficult incidents. Only with repeated recollections did these teachers/reporters move beyond superficial evaluations of what had happened to more process-oriented accounts (see Boice, 1993a, for a description of this method).

Analysis

I report only descriptive statistics; sample sizes and variabilities made more demanding analyses questionable. I focus on representative frequencies and experiences connected with CI.

General Patterns

Common Perceptions of CI

Much of what I noted as instances of CI confirms the existence of the kinds suggested in the literature. Both students and teachers were annoyed by lateness, early or late stopping, and each other's cutting or canceling. And students were clearly responsive to the kinds of motivators and levels of immediacy that their teachers typically displayed. But on the study campus, these were only part of the picture and evidently not the most crucial—at least at a first glance. The picture grows clearer as I move from general norms to patterns of individual differences and of their correlates.

After listing each category (below), I present three kinds of data parenthetically: (a) the percentage of courses in which the particular kind of CI was noted in at least three class meetings per semester; (b) the mean percentage, in those designated courses, of daily sessions where the CI was noted; and (c) the percentages of those classes overall that produced ratings of intensity/disruptiveness of at least 5 out of 10 in interviewees. That is, the indices depict the commonness (in two ways) and then the intensity of CIs. (Why did I pick the number 3 to indicate a minimal level of CI? The truly exemplary, immediate teachers in the sample had even fewer.) Teachers and students agreed only in ranking only these three kinds of CI as strongly disturbing:

1. Students conversing so loudly that lecturers and student discussants could not be heard throughout a third or more of class meetings (68% of all courses—71% of classes in those courses—88% of incidents rated as significant).
2. Students confronting teachers with sarcastic comments or disapproving groans. A typical example, one that came after teachers finished giving assignments, was the student remark "You're kidding!" . . . accompanied by sneers and the noises of notebooks slamming shut (62%—37%—50%).
3. The presence of one or perhaps two "classroom terrorists" whose unpredictable and highly emotional outbursts (usually as insulting complaints or as intimidating disagreements) made the entire class tense (25%—75%—68%).

After these three common perceptions of CI, students and teachers diverged

on the rank ordering and content of other bothersome kinds. For *students*, who perceived half-again as many incidents of CI as did their teachers, the following categories ranked as next most common:

4. Teachers seen as distant, cold, and uncaring; i.e., lacking in immediacy (81% of all courses—60% of classes in those courses—80% of incidents rated highly disturbing).
5. Teachers who surprised them with test items and grades that they had not prepared for or anticipated (43%—19%—88%).
6. Teachers who came 5 min.+ late to class and/or who cancelled classes without advance warning (75%—51%—37%).
7. Students who taunted/belittled fellow class members (37%—34%—56%).

Teachers, in contrast, produced these fourth through seventh rankings of CI in their classes:

4. Students who seemed reluctant to participate by answering or asking questions, or reluctant to display interest (87% of all courses—60% of classes in those courses—64% of CI rated high).
5. Students who came to class unprepared (56%—53%—71%).
6. Students who imposed by demanding make-up exams or extended deadlines for projects (68%—21%—72%).
7. Students who arrived late and left early, disruptively (62%—45%—51%).

A preliminary glance at these second-level (but still intrusive) experiences of CI reveals interesting differences and similarities between students and faculty. Examples: Students seemed far less likely than faculty to notice when other students were not participating or being civil in class; both sides particularly disliked classroom terrorists for the pallor they cast over whole semesters. My own class observations using the format in Table 1 produced similarities and differences to the rank orderings just seen:

1. Teachers alienating themselves from students via negative comments and nonimmediate nonverbals (75% of courses—59% of classes in those courses—61% of CI rated high).
2. Teachers distancing themselves from students via fast-paced, noninvolving lectures (81%—55%—58%).
3. Students conversing so loudly that lecturers and discussants could not be clearly heard (62%—80%—69%).
4. Students coming late and leaving early, without apparent attempts to be unobtrusive (62%—50%—71%).
5. Students making sarcastic remarks/gestures (68%—43%—69%).

6. Teachers eliciting student mistrust via surprises on tests and grading (43%—15%—89%).
7. Teachers and students being intimidated, distracted, and demoralized by a classroom terrorist (25%—88%—93%).

Why were my own conclusions different from those of the teachers and students whose classes I analyzed (even though students and I were closely similar in attributing the highest levels of CI to classes of teachers whom I had preselected as deficient in prior semesters)? It was a matter of timing. If I had included my earliest pilot observations, my rank orderings would more closely have resembled those of teachers and students (who at this stage were also inexperienced observers of CI). What became clear with systematic practice at noticing CI is the importance of its patterning over a semester. CI usually gets set in its course on the first few days of classes. Not until teachers' negativities confirm students' skepticism (and exacerbate the playful or exploratory CI of settling in and of testing how teachers will respond) do incivilities become salient and problematic.

Exceptions of sorts occurred in two circumstances. In one, teachers evidently gave off such strong cues of nonimmediacy and low self-esteem that classes quickly, almost imperceptibly, escalated to chronically high and aversive levels of CI. (I observed this pattern in four cases, two of them amongst novice teachers prerated as deficient, two with senior teachers prejudged as deficient.) In another exception, something traumatic happened during the semester that changed the course of student-faculty relationships from what had been established: Students revolted after particularly demanding, surprising exams—and their teacher (senior, deficient) responded in kind. In the third exception, two classes were dominated by student terrorists and the other students blamed the teachers for not handling the problem (one novice-deficient; one novice-exemplar).

Which source of information about CI is most important? All three perspectives on CI seem vital. Not until I presented all three vantages in a follow-up semester, where teachers were looking again at CI as they taught a new round of classes, was there evidence of understanding that translated into reliably changed practices in classrooms. Anon, I mention more about what happens in such interventions, but here I turn to something that faculty apparently needed to appreciate beforehand: knowing what CI is, its generality among other teachers, what prices it exacts, and how students experience it.

Representative Comments About CI from Students

The following excerpts typify what I entered in my general notes after classes:

1. About how teachers seem to alienate and distance themselves from students on the first days of class: (a) "He seemed very smart, very businesslike. I was impressed that he talked so far over our heads. But I got the feeling that he didn't' really like students, not ones like me . . . that was pretty much when I gave up on him and decided to lag it." (b) "Who is he kidding? He doesn't want to teach us. He starts off by telling us that he won't be talking to us outside class, only his TAs will. He tells us that his lectures won't count on tests. In other words, don't bother me, don't bother to come to class. It pisses me off to think I'm paying for this. . . . If he doesn't care, why should I?" (c) "We just wasted time today. Okay, so it's nice that we had a short class, but I wanted to know what it's going to be about, what the requirements are. Not a good start!" (d) "It's not good when the class begins so confused. I don't think she is going to be able to handle this class; it's going to be too much for her. She lets people insult her. That's dumb." (e) "I'll tell you what turned me off. He's a snob. So he went to school at Harvard. So? If he's so much better than us, what's he doing wasting his time here with us?"

2. About fast-paced lectures: (a) "'Whoa' is what somebody should have said. Impossible to keep up. I just quit trying to take notes." (b) "What a jerk. He doesn't look to see if we can stay with him . . . with his blackboards full of stuff, off in space far, far away." (c) "It's hard to understand what is going on in here. If you catch on to one thing, you're already way behind on the next one."

3. On students conversing during class: (a) "Now this really makes me mad. You couldn't hear a thing that was going on. Almost nothing. I finally lost interest and tried to read something for my next class." (b) "I put the responsibility on him. He's not a good teacher if he doesn't take the effort to be heard." (c) "I don't understand this. Why doesn't she just tell some of those guys to shut up? Who's in charge?" (d) "Why was I talking through most of the class? Because the class is boring and I don't like the professor. Because the lectures don't matter; everything is in the book. I'm only here because they take roll."

4. On students arriving late and leaving early: (a) "All this coming and going, like a train station, it makes it hard to concentrate. A stop should be put to it." (b) "Well I am usually late. I guess when I have a prof who doesn't make a big deal about it, I probably do it for sure. . . . He doesn't seem to know who we are."

5. About sarcasm and catcalls in class: (a) "Don't like it. It shows disrespect. It makes the atmosphere unpleasant. . . . It just fits in with the general hubbub here, where everyone seems to be doing their own thing." (b) "Sure. I jeered at him and I'll probably do it again. I don't like the man. He's a nerd. He doesn't explain things. He disses students who don't catch on right away. Not a nice man." (c) "Somebody has to complain. The assignments are unreal. This course takes more of my time than all the others put together. . . . If I liked him, if I thought all this hard work was worthwhile, I would probably be quiet. But I get agitated, nervous in this class, and I sit there feeling that something has to be done. All I did, you know, was a bit of a groan. Well?"

6. About students being surprised on tests and grades: (a) "No way, man, were we prepared for this test. It was hard, tricky. Some of it wasn't what we talked about in class. Not even [in] the review session [that] her TA did. It is totally unfair." (b) "I studied like mad for this test and I thought I knew it pretty well. I came to every class and worked like mad to get all the notes, even by borrowing other people's notes. I'm used to getting As and Bs. I got a C−. I can't believe it."

7. On the presence of classroom terrorists. (a) "Whew, is it unreal? She, all by herself, is screwing up everything. Everything. She talks all the time. She gets out of control, I think. She attacks anyone else who argues with her. I feel sort of, how can I say it?, frightened by her." (b) "Why isn't something being done about him? I think he's dangerous. He's drunk, I guess; you can smell it. Maybe crazy. And he gets so loud and aggressive. I hate it." (c) "As it is, [the teacher] tries to act like nothing bad is happening. Ridiculous." (d) "Yeah, today, once more I made a fool of myself. I talked way too much; I got too excited. You know, I always hope I won't do these things again. Then the class gets boring because no one asks questions. So before I know it, I'm talking and then arguing. [In response to my question, *What might help you have better self-control in class?*] Well, some teachers tell me, in a nice way, in private, to shut up, or wait my turn, and then I do."

Common kinds of CI as perceived by teachers (again, I categorize these interview data using my own taxonomy, one based on my rank orderings of the most common, bothersome CIs):

1. About how they are perceived by students during the first few classes: (a) "[shrugs] I couldn't really tell you that much. I was nervous and I just wanted to get through it." (b) "Who knows? I mean, there are definitely some in there who don't like me, or the class or whatever. That's probably par with such poor students." (c) "Really, who cares? This isn't what matters. My chairman told me not to pay too much attention to this, just to get through it." (d) "There's an easy thing I learned to make a better impression. Took a while to figure it out. I spend time finding out who they are and why they are in class. I talk about myself and why I like the course. I show them I care and it makes a world of difference."

2. On presenting material at a fast, noninvolving pace: (a) "Was I? Yeah I was, wasn't I? Darn. I know I tend to do it. I try not to. But I guess I do it without being much aware of it." (b) "Suppose so; I didn't really notice. Well, there's a lot to get covered and they've got accept that. We're not in there for a picnic. This is a science course and I have covered all the basics so they will be prepared to take the next courses." (c) "I know I was rushing. I was exhausted at the end . . . couldn't sleep later that day. And the worst thing, I didn't really connect with them. It wasn't at all what I hoped for, what I had imagined in my mind's eye." (d) "You know what I'm noticing, maybe because I'm talking with you about this, is that when I rush, they get more unruly, noisier. Right?"

3. On student noise in class: (a) "Yes, there was lots of noise and disorder, I guess, in the class. It was upsetting, but what can you do? These are not very good students." (b) "I can't say I noticed it much; you may be overreacting." (c) "Let's hope it quiets down soon. I'd just as soon they didn't come to class if they aren't going to listen." (d) "Well there was some of it at first but you notice it isn't always so bad now. I'll tell you why, in my opinion: When the material is stuff I really like, it must be I show more enthusiasm. Then they settle down and take notes."

4. On students coming late and leaving early: (a) "I try not to pay attention to them; I really can't make them do anything they don't want to, including being in college." (b) "I notice it, yes. I don't like it, no. I spoke about it on the first day but without much apparent success. That's how they are here." (c) "There wasn't so much of it, not for this school. The good students are okay. (d) "I know this class is bad and I have had classes with very little of this problem. There are some trouble-makers in this class, you know, and they make the difference." (e) "I started the semester, you saw it, by telling them why it is important to be there on time and what not. I'm nice but firm about it and I don't have much trouble with it."

5. On sarcastic, catcalling students: (a) "Oh that. That's the way kids get raised on Long Island. Disrespect at home, disrespect at school." (b) "To tell you the truth, I haven't mentioned it to anyone before, but it bothers me. [Long pause.] A lot. It hurts me and it makes me feel unfit to be a teacher. Like quitting." (c) "I grew up in the city and so I'm not so shocked. I can live with it and I can give as good as I get." (d) "That can be dealt with, you know. I'm going to win over some of those tough guys with their hats on backwards by getting to know them, just by giving them attention and help."

6. On students being surprised by tests and grades: (a) "Of course—for most of them. I give hard tests but I also provide everything they need to do well. Reviews, homework, you name it. Those who do the work get the good grades." (b) "I was surprised too. They should have done much better, I think. I don't know why they didn't." (c) "Well, yes, I am a hard grader. I'm no panderer and never will be." (d) "I guess I should have given them some practice questions but I got behind and had too much to do."

7. On classroom terrorists: (a) "This is a disaster. I wasn't ready for someone like _____ and I don't know what to do except to write off the whole semester. I think, I hope, that the rest of the students understand it is out of my control." (b) "What a bad dream! This has now happened several times to me; I had one in my first class too. This is what makes me want to get out of teaching." (c) "What can be done about someone like this, an insane person? I could use some help with this." (d) "Well I shudder at this sort of thing but I'm trying to put out the fire. He and I are meeting, here in my office, to talk things over and I think, based on past experience, that it will help. [*How did you learn this approach?*]

That's a good question. I imagine I just learned it on my own. I've never heard these things discussed. They should be."

Interim Summary

In these general patterns, then, differences in student and faculty perceptions of CI were predictable. Students usually saw teachers as the main culprits, and vice versa. But that conceptualization oversimplifies CI and makes it seem inevitable and hopeless. It casts teachers and students as natural adversaries. Throughout the study, I couldn't miss noticing that some teachers (almost always those picked for having been good teachers beforehand) were less affected by and less often involved in CI (even with many of the students present whom I had seen exhibiting CI with other professors). When I finally analyzed the data by subtypes and patterns, I felt reassured about prospects of depicting only some teachers in a negative way, as unskilled individuals who need help in managing CI.

Specific Patterns

Here, then, I sort out those individuals who suffered most and least from CI. I look more carefully at the roles of timing and experience in CI. I highlight some uncommon experiences (and common but generally unnoticed incidents) tied to incivility that devastate teachers. And here, at last, I get to mention how my other observations of classroom teaching relate to CI.

New Faculty Versus Senior Faculty as Teachers

Curiously, novice teachers were no more likely to have classes with markedly high levels of CI (i.e., in the top quartile of all classes so rated). Still, they (particularly amongst those pregrouped as deficients) more often encountered it, typically for entire semesters at chronic but moderate, disheartening levels. Senior faculty evidenced a more bimodal pattern; as a rule, they either had very little CI or lots of it in their classes (overall, in accord with their predesignations as good or poor teachers). It seemed to me that senior teachers had settled into habits of liking teaching, of treating students with general enthusiasm, fondness, and immediacy—or not.

Some new faculty, though, fell into similar patterns with surprising swiftness; those who treated their undergraduates with disdain and distance approached the worst levels seen in their poorest counterparts with extensive experience. But what kept disdainful, defensive newcomers from exposure to as much CI? Students themselves suggested an answer. They could usually spot novice teachers and they felt inclined to go easier on them (e.g., "He's new. He doesn't know better. Maybe he needs some time").

There is also a telling variation in these data that casts experience into a stronger role than I first had. Senior teachers displayed more kinds of positive motivators (e.g., ways of coaching students to make better answers in class) and more depth of skill at expressing immediacies (e.g., ease at walking about the classroom and making eye contact with a variety of students). Evidently, complex skills such as composing, writing, and teaching require some 10 years of regular, deliberate practice before true expertise is achieved (Ericsson and Charness, 1994). Only a lucky few of us ordinarily get the supports, coaching, and rewards that sustain such extensive practice (Simonton, 1994).

While the dimension of inexperience-experience mattered, it was overshadowed by the two factors predicted by Plax and Kearney (1992). What influenced CI more, evidently, were kinds of motivators used and degrees of immediacy displayed. Table 2 helps make the point by arraying my two indices of motivator valences and of immediacy against teachers partitioned by CI levels.

These data help buttress the other indications that teachers' incivilities weighed heavily in CI. Moreover, Table 2 reaffirms the observation that experience alone does not suffice to lessen CI. Indeed, some teachers may grow more adversarial and uncivil to their students (who respond in kind).

There is an important exception to this pattern, one that occurred in survey classes whose students were mostly nonmajors enrolled to meet graduation requirements. Where the teachers of these captive audiences tailored their teaching to cover problem solving and listing in lock-step ways that clearly prepared students for tests, classes were only moderately inclined to CI. Where one teacher tried to infuse these classes with more conceptual material and attempts to teach critical thinking, students became generally uncivil (even with moderately high degrees of teaching immediacy present). What we usually consider the best approaches to teaching are not always the best moderators of CI. But, and this is important, most are in my experience.

TABLE 2. Relationship Between Ratings of Motivation/Immediacy and CI

Group (and Level of CI)	My Ratings of:	
	% of Motivators Used Positively	$\bar{X}$ Level of Immediacy
New Faculty (best quartile)	81	6.2
New Faculty (worst quartile)	56	3.7
Senior Faculty (best quartile)	93	7.6
Senior Faculty (worst quartile)	42	3.2

The data in Table 2 leave a neighboring question unanswered. What role do students play in these results? The best answer may rely on analyses of how CI develops over the course of semesters.

How Timing Affects CI

Consider how classes in the study began. To an impressive extent, students started semesters with reserve, respect, and optimism; they were sometimes unruly (often because they were greeting friends and testing limits in playful ways). On first days of class, they showed generally moderate to low levels of CI. Even in the required, nonmajor classes I mentioned above (and in one especially threatening statistics course), students waited for teachers to make the first move. Where the first few days of class were marked by conspicuously positive motivators and strong immediacies, CI dropped off to at least moderately low levels and generally stayed there. Early periods in courses may have been the crucial turning point for CI. Table 3 shows how clearly good starts related to CI.

There were also, in most courses I observed, other potential turning points in semesters. Students seemed primed to exhibit CI before and after first and second exams (especially big tests such as midterms), and near deadlines for major projects. When teachers helped prepare students for tests and projects with approximations (e.g., practice tests; preliminary deadlines for preliminary versions of projects), reactions were subdued or more optimistic. One other series of events proved pivotal: Where students got to talk with faculty outside class in friendly, egalitarian fashion, CI levels were lower. Students were candid in explaining why: "When you get to know him, he's a pretty nice guy. Not so intimidating after all. . . . That was when I realized that he cares about students,

TABLE 3. Patterns of CI During Semesters for Subgroups of Courses with Good or Subpar Starts (N = 4 per Subgroup)*

		Time of Rating (and $\bar{X}$ Counts of Salient CI per Class)				
Course	(My Focus)	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Fifteenth Mtg	Last Mtg
New Fac.	T	3.0	3.5	3.8	4.3	3.3
(Good start)	S	4.3	2.0	3.3	1.8	2.3
New Fac.	T	5.8	5.5	8.3	4.0	8.3
(Subpar)	S	3.9	9.5	10.5	10.3	11.3
Senior Fac.	T	1.5	1.3	0.8	0.5	1.3
(Good start)	S	3.5	2.0	2.0	0.5	2.5
Senior Fac.	T	5.2	6.8	9.0	6.3	8.8
(Subpar)	S	8.0	17.0	17.8	12.3	16.0

*My ratings of teachers (T) and of students (S) appear in alternate rows.

that he wants me to do well in the course. No, now I wouldn't dream of giving him a hard time."

A Single-Case History of a Class Over the Semester

Another way of appreciating the patterning of CI may be seen in synopses of courses. I depict the following case because its teacher was a veteran member of the faculty, a renowned scientist, but a novice at teaching large, core courses. (Prior he had been considered an excellent teacher for advanced majors; he was pregrouped here among exemplars.) What follows are a few excerpts from that semester [I denote incidents I rated as CI in brackets (and rating levels in parentheses); higher ratings indicate *more* favorable conditions]:

Class 1: First 10 min. after formal start (with friendly greeting), room is full, Ss quiet. T makes efforts to answer S questions but misses many hands [CI]; his pacing and patience are good (ratings = 6,7) but he isn't cueing Ss when to take notes. When he presents problems (that he claims are easy) on the board, Ss near me are clearly confused and get the wrong answers. . . . T doesn't notice, assumes everyone gets it [CI]. Class ends with moderate background noise (5), much of it due to students' confusion.

Class 2: T is more hurried (pace = 4), less immediate (4) today; writes more on board . . . and twice misses clusters of raised hands [2CI]. Background noise goes from 7 to 3 [i.e., it gets worse] within 15 min.; note-taking from 4 to 2.

Class 3: Begins with exam information and Ss listen quietly (noise rating = 9); next, T stresses need to proceed quickly, without being able to cover everything completely. He then rushes (pace = 3) with mannerisms that clearly discourage questions ("Can you hold off on that question?" [CI]. His immediacy ratings drop (7 to 4) despite his continuing enthusiasm; noise goes from 8 to 3; the room is now so noisy that students in back cannot hear T [CI].

Class 5: S attendance down markedly for first time, from a start of about 120 (Day 1) to about 50 today. Students are generally attentive only to demonstrations (6), but take few notes on them (3).

Class 10: Attendance down to 22; most Ss noisy (4) but otherwise passive (involvement rating = 3). Pacing of T increases as noise level goes up (or is it the other way around?).

Class 15: $N = 30$; 5 leave, noisily, after writing down assignments [CI]. I interview all early leavers; all claim they are busy and have things to do (e.g., renew driver's license), that they work better on their own. In class, no takers when T poses question and waits for answer [CI]; when he then writes on the board material that he says is critical, about half of Ss take notes on it (5). After class, Ss angry about confusion they experience; in later interview with T, he attributes the anger to the cumulative nature of the course ("They didn't learn the early material, so they are lost now").

Class 18: Attendance = 15; Ss start fairly quiet (6), but inattentive (3). Four Ss leave and return, loudly, with lunches [CI]. Even when he tells Ss that one of the three problems he is solving on the board will be on the test, only about half of Ss take notes on them. Non-note-takers sit slumped, with feet up on top of chairs in front of them, talking loudly [CI].

Class 22: T asks Ss to stay after and ask questions; no one does.

Class 25: T describes new, interactive format for getting Ss to answer his questions (while he does so, not one S smiles or nods); only one question elicited, a rude and cynical remark [CI].

Class 27: Nine Ss eating lunch loudly [CI]; T now seems not to notice when noise grows past point where he cannot be heard by Ss in back half of class (rating = 3) [CI].

Class 29: N = 25 attendance. Ss who come 10 to 15 minutes late (N = 6 today) now take extended time getting settled in (e.g., noisily rifling through packs/purses) [CI]; some chatting at full volume with friends as they walk in [CI]. T now using several negative motivators per class (e.g., Calmly: "Haven't you read the syllabus?"). Four Ss sit through class with Walkmans on [CI]; one S shouts complaint while leaving at 20-minute mark ("You've lost us!") [CI].

Final Class: N = 28; many students here today I haven't seen since first few classes. They are insolent (e.g., shoes off, feet way up, bodies slumped way down, negative facial cues) [CI]. Despite maintaining a generally high level of enthusiasm through class (8 down to S), T shows first signs of being ruffled (head down, no eye contact; immediacy = 3 by end of class), of anger toward some especially unruly Ss [CI for T; CI for Ss]. His attempts to lecture today constantly interrupted by demands for clarification about the final exam, one of them rude [CI]. Almost all Ss leave class abruptly at end, in midst of T's final attempt to wish them success [CI].

Uncommonly Traumatic Kinds of CI

Some of the most upsetting incidents were the least visible, the least likely to be admitted by teachers in ordinary circumstances. Usually these CIs were embarrassing and indelibly hurtful. Faculty were disconcerted by students' personal comments on formal evaluations at ends of semesters (e.g., "she dresses badly"), even when the great majority of their students' comments were positive. They often found it hard not to key in on students who displayed especial disdain and disapproval in class ("Did you notice him? He just sits there, arms folded, glaring at me, shaking his head in disapproval"). But most devastating were incidents where students went to departmental chairpeople to complain about a teacher—and where faculty perceived that chairs assumed them guilty until proven otherwise. In my experience, all three of these problems can be moderated by more humane practices. Student evaluations can be screened by a

neutral third party to exclude or edit personally hurtful, nonconstructive comments. Newcomers can be coached to realize that even the best teachers do not please everyone (or want to). Chairs can handle students' complaints by asking students to first discuss concerns with professors, then by approaching colleagues in ways that do not put them on the defensive (e.g., "Can you help me think what we could do to make this student happier in our classes, less likely to complain to me?").

Another incident that demoralized teachers in two cases here was student cheating; in both cases apparent culprits acted defensively and angrily. The tension produced in such confrontations seemed to distract these professors from their work and exacerbate their health problems. One teacher who handled a similar problem in a way that apparently limited incivility bears mentioning: He put some of the responsibility on his students to solve the dilemma (his report to me of a private conversation: "Look, I need your help with this uncomfortable situation. The two of you turned in papers that seem very much alike. How can we figure out what happened and what to do?").

How CI Relates to Other Behaviors of Teachers

Tables 4 and 5 suggest that the general indices of teaching prowess used here over semesters were negatively related to levels of CI. Students' ratings of classroom experiences (Table 4) show all the expected relationships: How students related the worth of the teaching just experienced, its clarity and organization, its pacing, the overall involvement of the class members in what was going on, and their own involvement—all these estimates were generally lower as noted incidents of CI increased. And, in classes with the highest, most chronic levels of student-noted CI, students' ratings of the effects of incivilities were also highest. So, in these constantly disrupted and distracting classrooms where students often appeared to be more detached and indifferent than in other courses, CI continued to be noticed and disliked. If habituation occurred, it was largely limited to external reactions. In courses with high levels of CI, even where attendance was required, students most often cut classes or left early.

TABLE 4. Students' Ratings (10 = maximum) of Classes Juxtaposed Against CI Counts

CI Level for Class (My Rating)	Rating Item					
	Worth of T	Pace	Clarity/Org.	Class Involv.	Personal Involv.	CI Effect
Worst quartile	3.3	2.5	3.8	4.3	4.3	7.5
2nd quartile	3.0	3.3	4.5	4.0	4.8	5.8
3rd quartile	5.5	6.2	5.0	6.2	5.3	3.9
Best quartile	7.0	6.0	8.3	7.8	8.0	2.3

TABLE 5. My Own Overall Ratings of Courses in Terms of CI Level Compared to My $\bar{X}$ In-Class Ratings of Classroom Conditions (where 10 = optimal and where 1 = unacceptable)

Level of CI for Class	Rating Item					
	Noise	S Attentiveness	Note-Taking	T Enthus.	T Pace	Room Comfort
Worst quartile	2.2	3.8	1.8	3.0	2.6	5.2
2nd quartile	4.5	3.2	1.5	3.1	3.0	4.8
3rd quartile	5.6	6.0	3.1	6.4	7.2	4.8
Best quartile	9.1	7.3	4.5	7.1	7.6	5.6

Table 5, based on my own classroom ratings, adds to this picture of how CI relates to teaching styles and environmental conditions. Background noise levels were, not surprisingly, highest in classes with high course ratings of CI. In the worst examples, teachers were upstaged by a constant buzz of conversations, paper shufflings, openings of food and drink containers, fidgets, and coughs. (Francis Galton, the pioneer of psychology, would have been pleased at corroboration of his results of measuring boredom in lecture and concert halls over a century ago.)

Student attentiveness followed much the same pattern (Table 5). While a minority (usually about 10–20%) of students remained obviously involved in the courses with high CI, their peers typically did not attend to the teacher or to classroom discussions with the teacher. Instead, about a third of the remainder usually sat passively, sometimes listening, sometimes closing their eyes and drowsing, sometimes looking around the room. Another third usually read or wrote for other classes, put on makeup, or ate. The final, most salient third spent most class periods conversing, greeting latecomers, even moving around the room to engage new conversations.

Note-taking was not a regular activity of most of the students in these classes, even where CI was low and involvement high (Table 5). These undergraduates, if they took notes at all, typically entered only a few lines at the beginning of classes (e.g., announcements, assignments) and some of the salient points or diagrams or equations put on the board. That is, notes for the day usually comprised about a half-page in the notebooks of 50% of the students, regardless of classroom climate. (Still, I only twice saw students with nothing on which to take notes.) Better note-takers (overall about a quarter of the students I observed) usually entered two or three pages of writing and diagrams, but often with little explication beyond lists, definitions, and graphics that were proffered with emphasis in class. The best note-takers typically produced 3–5 pages in their notebooks per class. They were unique in several ways: in noting explanations and examples; in adding their own questions and reminders about what they were processing; in politely trying to interrupt professors for explanations.

How did other, more normal students in these large survey courses explain their general lassitude? Their answers often amazed me (and too, the teachers with whom I shared them; such occasions reminded us that we had never before gotten to know introductory students well, except perhaps for outstanding performers). In high CI courses, normal students usually explained their uninvolvement in terms of retribution (e.g., "I'm not going to do anything for him" [speaking of his teacher]). When pressed for more explanation, these same students generally made excuses about not needing to pay attention in class (e.g., "Everything is in the book" [a belief that often proved demonstrably untrue in tests]; "I'll figure it out later" [also unverified, as a rule, in my informal checks]). To a lesser extent students offered the same attributions for noninvolvement in low CI classes. What made their answers different was their additional claim that by listening instead of taking notes, they comprehended more of what was presented in class [this assumption proved untrue in all but a few students when I then asked them for explanations of key concepts from the day's class, particularly after a few days' delay]. In high CI classes, again, students made even fewer notes and offered even fewer excuses for not doing so.

Teachers' levels of enthusiasm (Table 5)—that traditional index of good practice—also accorded with the pattern of what I deemed successful behaviors. But in everyday occurrence, it seemed more a by-product of immediacy, where students repaid warmth with enthusiasm, than of a traitlike quality of teachers that showed itself regardless.

The same can be said for pacing (Table 5). Fast pacing was clearly incompatible with the signs of involvement I have been calling immediacy; teachers who took the trouble to establish eye contact, to listen and encourage, to move about while looking for comprehension, necessarily proceeded more slowly than did counterparts talking and/or writing nonstop on the board. What was more interesting was what had presumably happened to the pacing of some teachers with experience. The best senior teachers were nearly unique at displaying rhythms in their gaits, usually sauntering but sometimes galloping with excitement. In many ways their styles resembled those of successful therapists mentioned earlier, whose strengths included a "focused voice."

Room conditions (Table 5) proved an enigma to me. I went into these observations convinced that CI would vary in obvious ways with poor classroom conditions such as overheated, stuffy rooms and dim lighting. It did not, except in one short-lived condition: Where classes began as overcrowded, with more students enrolled than seats, with many students clamoring to "add" an already filled class, chaos marked the day. And with it (at least until the problem was resolved) came CI. But this kind of CI was different from most that I saw; it was usually not personally directed at the teacher. Still, it was disconcerting and it seemed to contribute to bad starts that endured in three junior faculty I observed.

Uncommonly Considered Origins

Here I refer to origins of CI outside classrooms, CI factors about which we still have much to learn. These are possibilities: One was a sense communicated by central administrators that they cared little about classroom conditions ("You know those people in administration just tell them [students] to just go ahead and burst into my class, even though they know it's overenrolled. The students they send over are already agitated and angry. They [administrators] care about maximizing enrollments but not about us. . . . The classes get unruly because of them, and I find myself caring less and less about teaching"). The second was the behavior of faculty toward students elsewhere. Because I found the most reliable access to faculty during their posted office hours, I noticed which individuals treated student visitors with immediacy. My distinct impression was that low levels of immediacy in offices was associated with high CI in classrooms. And, third, only some of the teachers, those who fared best on most ratings, had taken immediacy/involvement to the next level, of enlisting students from classes as actual collaborators (in presenting classroom materials; in helping with research outside class). Teachers who scored lowest on immediacy and highest on CI, in contrast, supposed that such collaborations were impositions on students.

Situations Where CI Is Tolerable, Perhaps Even Helpful

Earlier I suggested that CI might serve useful functions under the right conditions. In my own observations, the reality proved somewhat at odds with what I had expected. The better-rated, more immediate teachers simply perceived occasional, moderate incidents (of what could have been CI) differently than did other teachers. If exemplary teachers noticed these disruptions as incivilities, they did not let on. Instead, they usually treated them respectfully, by listening carefully, as though they had been offered up as well-intentioned comments or cues. These are typical excerpts from my notes of such interactions:

> S in row 5 emits loud "uugh" and sinks in his chair. T: "Oh no [laughs gently], I've worn you down, worn you out with all this. I do that sometimes. So thanks for alerting me. What do you think? Would it help if I stop and go through it again with you?"
> S _____ abruptly interrupts: challenges point T just made: "I *know* that's wrong . . ."
> T listens cheerfully. Says: "Well, you might be right about that. I can always stand to be corrected; I can survive that. Can you come by my office and we'll share resources?"
> T: "I'm seeing some big yawns and abandoned note-taking. I'm sorry. I'm losing you. Let's all stand and stretch for a minute and then we'll backtrack a bit."

So these excerpts show how teachers maintain immediacy (and its kin, optimism) through what could have been CI (but were not generally rated so by

teachers or students). And they hint at how CI, in moderation, can help improve classes. Socially skilled, positive responses by teachers to student frustration help calm classrooms. They reengage students who had been distancing themselves from the class. And, according to teachers who tolerate and use them best, such distractions can, if treated imaginatively and optimistically, provide breaks in the action, even helpful cues for redirection or changed pacing.

How Early Experiences with CI Affected Teachers' Styles and Attitudes

This study provides glimpses of what probably were turning points in some new faculty's teaching careers. Each of the four new faculty here who taught amid CI described the experience as traumatic and disillusioning. Consider this representative comment [after an unruly first day of a class]: "This is what I'll be doing for a living? I hope I prove better at publishing. . . . Can I imagine solutions? Sure. I'll concentrate on my graduate teaching. I'll write grants to get time off from teaching."

Other observations incline me to think that these initial reactions are lasting. Senior teachers faring badly here recalled early experiences and decisions similar to the one just excerpted. (And the most successful did not.) In related studies, where I tracked new faculty longer, these traumatic events and resulting impressions of undergraduates as adversaries were among the few early turning points that derailed careers (Boice, 1993a). The faculty at midcareer who display the most depression and oppositionalism seem to suffer most from long-standing patterns of student disapproval (even in departments where only research, not teaching, is overtly rewarded—Boice, 1986, 1993b).

In my notes from two decades of offering workshops on teaching for junior faculty, the same basic problem has seemed dominant. The most urgent, common questions from novices are about classroom management, especially about maintaining classroom control, dignity, and student involvement. New teachers first want help with unruly students who disrupt, demand extra effort, cheat, and make teaching miserable. Curiously, this is not the focus of most published advice for newcomers.

A Trial Program to Ameliorate Teachers' Contributions to CI

Merely observing and eliciting comments about teachers' exposure to CI is an intervention. When these participants asked me, inevitably, about how often CI happened to their colleagues, my answers relieved them. Many had imagined their own experiences as unique ("You never hear such things mentioned"). When I brought up incidents that they had not noticed, they tried harder to notice and understand CI. And when, eventually, they inquired about

what colleagues did to cope with CI, they typically tried emulating the strategies I summarized. This did not produce generally impressive outcomes during the same semesters; entrenched patterns of CI in such large classes are not easily turned around. Most teachers experiencing high CI wanted to bring it under control almost immediately, and when attempts went badly, they resumed old styles. Still, all of these teachers expressed an interest in trying new strategies in future semesters.

In the formal intervention phase, I again observed, noted, and interviewed weekly. But this time I actively coached faculty with repeated reminders, before and after classes, about the general patterns of actions/attitudes that distinguished low CI teachers. And, to make this difficult transition more realistic, I concentrated my measurements and feedback on what I assumed was the most crucial and practical category: immediacy. Its specifics included (a) arriving at classes early, for informal chats with students coming in the door and after they had taken seats around the room; (b) deliberate practice at presenting parts of classes with active focus/moderate pacing, forward leans and open body postures, smiling and direct eye contact, walking about while lecturing/listening; (c) salient reminders in class notes of times to pause, slow, and check student note-taking for involvement/comprehension; and (d) taking care, in meetings with students after class and in office hours, to listen patiently and reflectively while avoiding signs of impatience (e.g., reading materials on one's desk while students talked).

Six of the ten teachers I invited as participants stayed throughout the intervention program (the other four concluded that immediacy was a dishonest expression of their personalities). All six showed reliably observable gains of about 30–50% in my measures of immediacy (with no apparent differences between four novices and two seniors who had fared badly in the prior semester). And all six evidenced far lower levels of CI than before (three in nearly identical courses; three in less demanding survey courses). So my data about the modifiability of CI in teachers and their classes are only suggestive but promising.

CONCLUSIONS

Overall, CI was more common than uncommon; it occurred in significant ways (i.e., disruptively in at least three class meetings during a semester) in over two-thirds of the courses I tracked. Of those large survey courses, about half showed chronic, disheartening patterns of CI. In the high CI courses, both students and faculty usually reported annoyance and demoralization. But whatever the setting, faculty (even novices who had little time to habituate to CI)

noticed far less of it than did their students. And faculty took less personal responsibility for CI.

Faculty Awareness of CI

The faculty with the keenest appreciation of CI's nature and liabilities were, ironically, least likely to experience it. They were the teachers of the four classes I observed where CI was virtually absent (and where other indices of teaching such as enthusiasm, pacing, and organization rated highest). Why did other faculty often overlook CI? As a rule, their attitude was reminiscent of physicians' putative reaction to resistant patients: What the teacher offers is undoubtedly valuable, and when students frustrate the teacher, the loss is only theirs. Indeed, high CI professors often acted like specialized kinds of doctors, psychoanalysts who imagined that student resistance proved the meaningful difficulty of the material under discussion. In their defense, though, these professors typically knew no better. No one talks or writes much about the nature of CI or its preventives; most novice teachers I have tracked through first days of classes were simply puzzled by the ruckus in their classes. (A typical comment: "These students are certainly not the kind of student I was.") The solution that occurs to most faculty in this situation seems unacceptable. They imagine that students can be won over only with pandering—easy assignments/tests and entertainment in place of serious classroom material. In the usual vicious cycle that follows, faculty often find ways to confirm this misbelief. When they alternate distant, demanding styles with periodic bouts of lowered standards (e.g., "Okay, I'll drop your lowest test score"), students quiet, but only temporarily.

Costs of CI

Another finding here is that CI matters deeply. The differences between classrooms with a lot and those without it were dramatic. With persistent CI, students grew more and more uninvolved, oppositional, combative. Their teachers found their own seemingly innocent remarks and gestures (often emitted without their conscious awareness) escalating into adversarial interactions with students. Even when the CI was largely limited to a single, disruptive individual (what faculty and students often call a classroom terrorist), teachers were surprised to discover the increased difficulty of teaching . . . and that the other students held them responsible for not squelching the terror. Among new faculty I have tracked closely, experiences of unmanaged and unsettling CI constitute a turning point that can ruin professorial careers (Boice, 1993a). Why? New faculty tend to spend most of their time preparing for teaching (even in research universities), and when they fail at teaching, they lose the

self-efficacy they need to meet challenges of research/scholarship and collegiality/professional networking. Promising newcomers overwhelmed by CI, especially women, too often decide to abandon professorial careers (or worse yet, resign themselves to lifetimes of marginal performance and rewards for the sake of job security). The irony is that observers from a distance imagine that pressures to publish are the only villains.

Faculty Role in CI

The most important point in this study is the one usually overlooked. Clearly, teachers were the most crucial initiators of CI. And, as a rule, their most telling provocations occurred during the first few days of courses. Conversely, professors who most consistently displayed immediacies and positive motivators were least involved in incidents of CI, their own or their students'. In the intervention project I report here, teachers practicing a simple regimen of immediacies showed clear improvements in the CI levels of their classes. These data are not yet conclusive but they suggest the worth of pursuing the usually taboo topic of CI more openly and caringly.

How General Are These Findings?

When I made similar observations at large, public universities more distant from large cities like New York, I generally saw somewhat less CI (but still at levels that were often problematic). The exception came at comprehensive campuses where classes were small ($N = 30$ or less) and teachers were openly interested in teaching (e.g., Appalachian State University). Unfortunately, it is this type of institution that seems to have little generality in terms of CI. At another campus with only moderate CI (California State University at Long Beach), I was able to ferret out the suggestion of another crucial factor. Where new faculty resembled students in terms of SES and educational background (particularly when faculty were graduates of the same campus), they established easier rapport and acceptance with classes. Long Beach's strength in teaching seemed to lie in the commonness of this match. The study campus of this article may be the polar opposite; many of its faculty are from private school, Ivy League backgrounds. Still, few of these faculty, except for some senior-level types, expressed openly negative attitudes toward teaching and students. Instead, they seemed to work as hard and long as their counterparts at other campuses I have studied. Their notes were as well crafted, their lectures were as well organized (in my view, at least), and they seemed to care as much about student approval. What they seemed to lack was mostly the immediacy that could have made their classrooms more rewarding, less uncivil. The same diagnosis we usually make for students who act barbarically could be applied to teachers: "Mediocrity is an intellectual impairment" (Bartlett, 1993, p. 308).

What Will Make CI Difficult to Change?

We know some of the answers. First, CI is rarely mentioned in higher education. Second, CI has enormous momentum, growing from the roots upward, that is already out of control in many K–12 settings. At every campus I observe, senior faculty spontaneously talk about the rise of student incivility over the past two decades. Third, attempts to study CI may be seen as threats to the autonomy of faculty who have always been expected to figure their own styles as teachers, in jealously guarded privacy. At the least, investigations about CI will bring discomforts.

What about CI could be easily changed (given the right timing and supports)? In a way, as we have seen, solutions for CI are easy. Preventives and correctives evidently rely on little more than simple training in social skills such as eye contact and other signals of warmth and approachability. The problem, though, is that we, those of us concerned with teaching improvement, would have to work much harder. Usual palliatives such as books of advice and visits to the office of faculty developers will not suffice, so far as I can see. The reason is that much of CI, especially its initiating incidents, goes unnoticed and unsuspected. Someone accustomed to seeing it (and to noting its occurrence diplomatically and supportively) must be present in the classroom for a while.

How Much CI Is Desirable?

If we agree that CI merits more study (and even that intervention is acceptable), the question remains about how much CI is optimal and tolerable. We might better ask the question this way, in two parts: When and how should we choose to turn CI into positive communicators and motivators (as did the exemplars we saw earlier)? And when should we set clear limits on its expression? The second question is no small matter. When students act in racist, sexist, and other exploitive and aggressive ways, teachers must know how to stop the disruption in its tracks. What helps? On most of our campuses, we are already doing some of the right things: seminars for faculty and students about the nature and costs of harassment; growing pressures for teachers to begin courses with clear explanations of what behaviors are unacceptable (sometimes even referring to teacher behaviors); and setting up easier ways to report these forms of CI. One other thing may help limit intolerable CI: Classrooms with generally low levels of CI overall had no terrorists. In this study, the student members of such courses not only scored low on dimensions like indifference and inattention, but gave high ratings of teachers' use of positive motivators and immediacies. Courses with high immediacy and low CI, so far as I can tell, somehow discourage serious incidents of incivility and terrorism. One student I had seen terrorize another course suggested reasons why he did not in a course with low

levels of CI: "Everyone likes her and she cares about the students; you don't get so antsy in here."

Relating CI to Research and Theory in Higher Education

Consider this brief sampling of ready connections between the seemingly distant problem of CI and our own customary inquiries in the literature. Higher educators already know that students learn by becoming involved, especially in scholarly conversations with professors (e.g., Pascarella and Terenzini, 1991). Tinto (1975) makes a similar point: Students become integrated into campuses (and, so, thrive until graduation) to the extent that they can share normative attitudes and values of peers. Negative interactions reduce student integration, perhaps even with teachers. In my own studies, new faculty who failed to integrate with students (i.e., by not holding some similar attitudes and values) evidenced poor expectations and outcomes as teachers.

Higher educators also know what helps contribute to immediacy: Cohen's (1981) taxonomy of crucial teaching dimensions includes rapport (e.g., accessibility, empathy, and friendliness). Wilson, Gaff, Dienst, Wood, and Bavry (1975) are among the many researchers to demonstrate that effective teachers not only use effective examples and analogies but communicate clear accessibility to students, in and out of class. Overall, this literature makes involvement sound much like immediacy: The more students are involved in "learning activities" including note-taking, discussions, and questioning, the greater the content acquisition (Johnson and Butts, 1983).

There is, then, a shared theme in the immediacy that moderates CI and in involvement theory. Pace's (1984) and Astin's (1984) pioneering notions of involvement in higher education help explain the general patterns of CI seen in this study. The involvement that predicts student success requires high-quality student efforts including a great amount of physical and psychological energy devoted to the academic experience. Student involvement, by definition, seems to be incompatible with CI and its fundamental quality of sullen passivity. There are many other suggestions of similarity between involvement and immediacy. Willis (1993), for instance, analyzed Astin's forms of student involvement and concluded they are a mixture of affective experience, learning outcomes, and classroom interaction. Higher education researchers even specify roles that teachers can play in maximizing student involvement. Perry, Hechter, Menec, and Weinberg (1993), for instance, propose attributional retraining as a way of enhancing students' motivation and achievement by changing how students think about their successes and failures. Good teachers already use forms of attribution retraining, however inadvertently, when they earn the trust and optimism of students who would otherwise experience distancing and helplessness in classes.

What, then, can an awareness of immediacy's role in CI add to already well-established conceptualizations of involvement? Teacher behaviors of warmth and approachability, because they are central to immediacy, must also be crucial to student involvement. In usual studies of involvement, as in traditional looks at CI, we may attribute too large a role to students, too small a part to teachers. (Without classroom immediacies of teachers, how can most students manage involvement in learning?) If, finally, we can see CI as a mere problem of uninvolvement, perhaps we can more easily move past our longstanding reservations about facing up to this embarrassing but important topic.

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Received January 3, 1995.