Teaching through Duoethnography in Teacher Education and Graduate Curriculum Theory Courses

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The Conversation

Joe: My teaching at the university level has always been underpinned by the belief that the medium is the message (McLuhan, 1964), that there are multiple ways of knowing, and that each media used, word, number, image, gesture, and sound (McLeod, 1987) influences its meaning and vice versa. While I recognize the value of expository writing, I have questioned its hegemony in teaching, assessment, and research dissemination (Norris, 2008). In the early 1990s I began to invite students to explore a number of different ways of presenting their final assignments, the expository essay being but one. Over the years I have received recorded music, quilts, stained glass, collages, sculptures, paintings, and movie reviews and programs, all with metacognitive logs, articulating the meanings that

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emerged through the art-making processes. Some adorn my office wall. I was amazed at the deep thinking that was conveyed and many students claimed that they better understood the material through these types of assignments.

Also, based upon Pinar's (1994) concept of currere or curriculum of life, I wanted to expand the notion of curriculum beyond that of schooling. We learn from our experiences and the culture in which we live, and these, too, are part of our curriculum. Using the concept of reconceptualization (Pinar, 1981), in a graduate curriculum theory course I taught students how to look at themselves transtemporally. They looked at how the past shaped the present, how the present could reconceptualize the past and how both could create a newly imagined future. We watched *Groundhog Day* (Ramis, 1993), asking what was Phil's curriculum that took him from being a misanthrope to that of altruism. The character's life could be considered a remedial classroom of sorts. We applied to our own lives asking what life experiences informed our present beliefs, and, in so doing, expanded our definition of curriculum beyond that of subject matter. In some ways, this approach was autoethnographic (Bochner & Ellis, 2002) with an emphasis on the changes of a particular phenomenon over time.

One assignment option was take a look at their curriculum of X. A number of students chose to reexamine their own curriculum of something including fitness, body image, and perceptions of gender. Others did movie reviews in which the character went through major life changes. One student compared *The Last Samurai* (Zwick, 2003) and *Dances with Wolves* (Costner, 1990), claiming that they shared a basic plot structure. Despair and cultural displacement led the characters toward change. For these and others, their understanding of curriculum expanded. Duoethnography is a dialogic form of currere.

Sean: Right at the beginning of a course called *Integrated Foundations*, I introduce students to duoethnography because at this point in their program they have taken a number of courses together within the Univerity of Prince Edward Island (UPEI) cohort model. Students tend to feel like they already know one another, especially in Prince Edward Island (PEI), where the common story is "We are a friendly place, we all get along." And that sense of how the "we" is constructed needs to be troubled. Students normally have vague and dualistic ideas about difference: white/black, male/female, rich/poor. Few understand their unique particularities and how events in their life stories have shaped who they are and their perceptions of others. Doing a duoethnography disrupts their comfortable communi-

ties that normally evolve through sameness. By asking them to refocus on their differences, I hope to enrich their experience of another. One aim of the *Integrated Foundations* course is to assist preservice teachers untangle themselves from some of the normative ideals and grand narratives of teaching (Britzman, 1998; Freitas & McAuley, 2008).

In explaining the basics of duoethnography, I emphasize that the *site* of the research is their life story, and the *data* they will be focusing on are how the events of that story have shaped who they are. Using research language challenges them, but when I break it down into these two emphases, site and data, students can usually follow. Archeological imagery is helpful: Students travel to the site (the life story), then start to dig (gather data through dialogue), then pay attention to the differences in one another's stories.

Lastly, I ask them to be creative in the representation of what they've done; this is an invitation to share their dialogues in an aesthetic way. In my explanations I use the terms *theoria*, *praxis*, and *poiesis,* and suggest that representing their knowing (*theoria*) through *poiesis* (art-making) enriches what they know, and creates a third space for how their knowing/making changes them and others (*praxis*).

Joe: Similarly, I use Gadamer's (1975) concept of translation, explaining that the third space is between the media chosen.

Sean: Praxis, of course, means doing. Preservice teachers often think of their practicum as *praxis* and their course work as *theoria*. In duoethnography the knowing/doing binary changes: the experience of doing duoethnography changes the knowing of who they are. My hope is that this changes what it means to be a teacher.

Rick: In the teacher preparation course that I teach I work with preservice teachers who have not traveled far, so they've been socialized into a particular culture that doesn't necessarily value diversity. Many of these students also identify with schools and the overall process of education. My goal in using duoethnography is to encourage my students to develop a more complex and diverse lens. I want them to start seeing education and schooling as a construction of which they are part. Sean, I like how you said that you want your students to see themselves as the site of the instruction. They filter the teaching and learning experience through who they are—their beliefs and values that allow them to either critique or reinforce the status quo.

And then, similar to what you are doing Joe, *currere* is a central construct as we examine life as text in a transtemporal way, using the past to reconceptualize their view of the present and the present to reconceptualize their

view of the past. The class is partly about life as curriculum. I want them to have agency and recognize that their story is a construction and thus to expand their notion of curriculum is not very narrow and just confined. Similar to the work of Ted Aoki (Aoki, Pinar, & Irwin, 2005a), I want them to experience in a conscious way how curriculum is lived and embodied. And I also want them to see that a dialogic curriculum involves democracy and that it is never finished or certain. So this is all background and some of my goals.

Joe: What I find interesting in listening to your stories and comparing them to mine is that I am no longer in a faculty of education. I am no longer in a teacher education program, although I do call my program a *pre* preservice teacher education program because I teach the teaching of drama. I have not had much opportunity to teach education students for about eight years, although in the summer of 2014 I taught a graduate course on curriculum theory at the University of Alberta and one of the chapters in this book was written by students from that class. In the falls of 2014 and 2015 I taught a research methods course for the Social Justice and Equity Studies program at Brock University but not much time was spent on duoethnography

So my recent teaching experiences with duoethnography are limited and I don't see myself doing more in the near future. So, for me, I'm drawing on experiences of a number of years ago. So as one with a more distant perspective, I would say Rick is looking at currere both outside and within the school system, Sean seems to be more on within the school system focusing on teacher identity, and I've tended to focus more on outside of school, if we want to make that a distinct comparison.

Sean: Because I have an audience of teachers, it's probably fair to describe their work as a *within* school process, but as students seek to understand the history of their construction of who they are, I tend to think of that as an *outside* the school process. There is a tension here—as you both have written about—because positioned as an actor or character in the classroom setting, student/teacher life histories unfold differently, as if significant life moments cannot be interpreted without reference to becoming a teacher. As an aside, I like the simplicity of the phrase life history, or life writing. Chambers, Hasebe-Ludt, Leggo, and Sinner (2012) have simplified the language of *currere*; duoethnography is also well-named, as the name is a straightforward representation of what is happening.

Rick: Yes, given that I'm working with people who want to be teachers, I focus on their classroom lives. But I also consider their curricular lives

within and outside the classroom something of a dialogue, and I want them to see how they live in an in-between space that connects to what they do with students inside the classroom. And of course their students have their own life histories as well. I draw on Jean Clandinin and Michael Connelly's (2000) notion of curriculum and the history of the discipline, so curriculum is a narrative with multiple transtemporal intersections. And I want the students to understand that their views of curriculum are probably grounded in something that they need to deconstruct to work equitably with people different from themselves.

Joe: I guess for me, not implying that one is better or worse, I am trying to pull away from school and look at the curriculum of life beyond the school system. I wanted to break the teacher conversation or disrupt it because I found that when I taught practicing teachers, the students would say, "Well, you know what happened this year" or "you know what happened last week", and they would get wrapped up in their story and their ideology. While they needed to vent there wasn't that critical reflection that was necessary for the course. Going back to their life histories gave them distance from the immediate. Geertz's (1974) concepts of experience-near and experience-far, which are a better set of terms than objective and subjective, apply here. I deliberately pulled away from school experiences because they were too close to it and most of the course was actually about school experiences. The outside of school currere brought a wider perspective.

Rick: I'm trying to help my students construct a notion of who they are as a teacher—of who they are becoming—and to pull them away from normative views of schooling and curriculum. So, the emphasis is outside the classroom but intertwined closely with their classroom identity and the construction of that identity.

Joe: The courses that I taught had teachers with 5, 10, or 20 years of teaching experience. Their identities were well established. To directly challenge them could generate resistance. The distance of life in general was an easier way in. Rick, in your case there experiences are very recent, correct?

Rick: Right. They are becoming teachers and this course is at the beginning of their program. They haven't even gone into a secondary classroom yet. So their notion of self is tied to induction by observation (Lortie, 1975)—tied to their own history of teaching and learning.

Joe: So, an important distinction to make throughout this chapter is whether we are referring to preservice or in-service teacher teachers. Sean, do you teach mostly preservice or both?

Sean: Duoethnography is something I do mostly with preservice teachers, but I did teach a graduate course last January where I gave in-service teachers the choice to do a duoethnography. In my preservice teacher education course the whole class experienced it over three sessions (nine hours total of class time), and, because it was right at the beginning of the course, doing the duoethnography was critical to how the class unfolded.

Rick: I've done both as well and there has been a difference in working with preservice and in-service teachers. Maybe we can explore this further because I think that there are important distinctions between the two groups.

Joe: I have no experience with preservice in relation to duoethnography, but one of the things that you raise, Sean, which I think is an important one, is the concept of choice. For me, I typically give four assignment choices: They could do a traditional paper on a course concept. For those who needed the security of something they knew well could go that way. Another choice was an arts-based approach, like collages with metacognitive logs. Two students in the 2015 Research Methods course did collages, another an interpretive dance, and another wrote a scripted hypothetical conversation with the literature authors. A third was *currere* of a character in a book, novel, or movie. The fourth choice was duoethnography. Two groups of students in the 2014 curriculum theory course chose the duoethnography option for two reasons: one, they wanted to do a paper with somebody else, they were tired of doing an assignment alone; and, two, they sort of embraced the idea of wanting to learn from someone else. So it was both the process and the product that seemed to draw them to conducting a duoethnography as their final assignment.

Sean: My students tend to have an overly romantic notion of why they want to become teachers and some courses in our Bachelor of Education[1] program nurture this, so students have heard things like, "If you don't love children, you can't be a teacher." Students respond to these overly optimistic and intensely positive experiences of being a teacher. I think this relates to what you are saying, Rick, about a sense of normativity. In my integrated foundations course, doing a duoethnography is an opportunity to disrupt that. Previous to calling this assignment a duoethnography, I was working with a Deborah Britzman (2009) chapter that asked, "Why would anybody want to be a teacher?" I wanted students to really question their inspirations and aspirations for wanting to be teachers, hoping they would see in each other's life constructions what was pulling them, what

was constructing who they were, and hoping they would find something apart from this romanticized story of being a teacher.

Rick: There are all sorts of normative forces at play right now: the notion that there is a "best practice" for all, that the dominant discourse doesn't really need to be unpacked, the notion of expert knowledge and who owns that knowledge, what counts as knowledge, how can that be tested, and the need for accountability. In my program a lot of people treat the preservice teachers completely as novices who are not bringing in any previous knowledge or experience.

Joe: After listening to both of you, I found a third reason why my students chose duoethnography as an assignment. Sean, you mentioned that you give them a duoethnography to read. Therein lies the third reason. I gave my students an earlier version of Rick's and my update piece on sexual orientation (Sawyer & Norris, 2015) and they were just blown away by it. They liked both the content and the form; they loved the narrative style; they thoroughly said that they began to think of their own stories (like duoethnographers do) as they read that story, and thought it was such a great read that they wanted to write one like it. This was articulated in all three graduate courses.

Sean: What my students responded to, which was new to them, is that their site for the collection of data was right there in the person's life story. The immediacy was a surprise, also that they were generating the data themselves through dialogue. Even though my students are in their fifth year of university, most of them have never considered the idea that the construction of a life story can be analyzed as part of the research process. They learn that dialogue can be more than chatting—in between them, in that third space, something can emerge that is a co-constructed analysis of each other's stories where synthesis is not the objective, and that is counterintuitive. Students are surprised when I ask them to focus on their differences. In research difference *is* counterintuitive. With coding, for example, themes emerge from similarity and frequency. In my integrated foundations course, I want them to understand alternate ways of being and knowing, to question knowledge, policies, or practices that are justified because of a sense of what is held in common.

Joe: Imagine if the common phrase "Oh, we have so much in common" was replaced with "Oh, we have so much in difference." Norm referencing is hegemonic with difference considered an outlier. There are major axiological dimensions of the normal curve that need to be addressed, too

much for this chapter. However, because difference is one of the pillars of duoethnography, the methodology it challenges is normative structures.

Rick: Students want to make sense of things: I understand that. That resonates with a part of my past, as opposed to "stop making sense". Sean, you talk about the counterintuitive and that we start to challenge ourselves when something does not make sense or is not consistent with our frameworks. Because duoethnography is founded on the premise of learning from difference, it disrupts normative views of our lives and histories.

So, how do you set it up, Sean, if you are going to use duoethnography in the classroom?

Sean: I mentioned earlier the archeological metaphor where I emphasize that the *site* of the research is their life story, and the *data* they will be focusing on are the events of that story. But I'm also asking them to take particular notice of places of difference, and to articulate those differences, to leave them unresolvable. An important part of the setup is students knowing that it is okay to have unresolvable differences.

Joe: And this is more than epistemological. Reason and Hawkins (1988) discuss in their chapter *Storytelling as Inquiry* that this type of research has elements of both express and explain. The expository essay explains. In my work with playbuilding (Norris, 2009) we emphasize expression. We provide unresolvable scenes with thesis and antithesis and invite the audience to form and articulate their own unique synthesis, albeit ever so fleeting. Extending Barone's (1990) perspective on the narrative, expressions evoke, creating dialogue, while the act of explaining tends to privilege the author's perspective. Smith and Heshusius (1986) caution against closing down conversations and, coupled with Rosenblatt's readers' response theory, texts that bring readers into the conversation expand; they don't shut down. By structuring the narrative in a dialogical format duoethnography brings more of the reader into the process, making it a different axiological approach.

Sean: When I use the terms *theoria*, *praxis*, and *poiesis*, the key for me is to avoid synthesis. So, when I invite students to poke and prod in their partner's life text, they have to resist that tendency to seek commonality. Commonality is a form of closure, and the trouble is there is no letting go of the ownership. Closure is always a temptation because it feels like success. The assignment is complete. "What next, prof? Do you have any other quaint assignments for us?" Resisting closure is one way duoethnography is like currere, particularly in the analytical phase—so I say to students, "When you're looking at the text of another person, you become its *deconstructor* and *reconstructor*". We tend to feel like we own our life stories, that

it is a single authored text. But when we let go of our text, when we share the deconstruction and reconstruction, it is easier to resist closure.

Joe: Could I add the word muse?

Sean: I like that.

Joe: I also say, "create texts that will haunt you and your readers for eternity. In so doing, we become each other's muse."

Rick: I can see that there is a new dialogic space and people are imagining something new based on the dialogue.

Sean: The basic overview is looking for differences; being the site of each other's research; listening to the other person's story without doing any analysis at first; then going back to that text and together constructing an analysis of this person as a becoming teacher. Lastly, they are avoiding the grand narratives of teaching, especially the romantic ones, like I mentioned before, avoiding those tropes of "I want to change the world" or "I really love children", that kind of thing.

Joe: Building upon Weizenbaum's (1984) concept of "unbounded questions" Henderson (1992) in *Reflective teaching: Becoming an inquiring educator* talks about their value in guiding practice. *Such* questions can never be fully answered but need to be always asked. For example, Scudder (1968) asks, "How can one teach with authority as an expert in a discipline, without violating the integrity of students?" (p. 133). This is one that I still ask daily. I invite my students to go on such quests. "To dwell", as Aoki (2005b) would say, "in the question" (p. 156), with the recognition that it is complex and unbounded. It's a journey I think we should all enter into. Sean, unbounded links to your concept of uncertainty.

Sean: I should also mention that I ask them to represent what they discover in an aesthetic way. They could write a series of poems or create a dramatic piece to present. There is no limit here, but there are two things I emphasize: I want them to be able to reveal and feel comfortable revealing because in the artistic form they're saying this isn't exactly who we are, but something else that we've created together, and that nicely demonstrates something that's often more intensely personal than they realized, and gives them a form of safety because they're now creating art as the final representation.

Joe: Sean, it seems that you start with the abstract and I start with an example. Rick?

Rick: So my course is part of a broader curriculum, not just about duoethnography. The thread that this relates to is embodied curriculum. In the class we begin with some theory, with readings by Ted Aoki (2005a),

Paolo Freire (1986), Louise Rosenblatt (1978), and James Macdonald (1995). We examine the lived curriculum, the spiritual curriculum, and try to reframe our view of justice to begin to discuss larger processes. Then we examine Clandinin and Connelly on curriculum (1988, 1992, 1995) and shift into arts integration and examine an article that you wrote, Sean (Wiebe et al., 2007)—and at this point the students are swimming in a sea of new ideas (which as a temporary state, I consider a good thing).

Joe: Like Phil in Groundhog Day.

Rick: So we start somewhat abstractly, but I then ask the students to bring in a photograph without any words as a metaphor for what they think curriculum is. We all, including myself, do this and then present our metaphor in class. I organize them into pairs and initially they are not allowed to explain their own image. Someone else has to interpret their own image for them. And then we begin to develop an elaborate class text for curriculum. This text becomes the basis for a discussion about difference and multiple ways of knowing. This project shares with photovoice an emphasis on participatory research and critical consciousness (Wang & Burris, 1997), but differs by its greater emphasis on learning from difference and dialogism (Bhabha, 1991, 1994). We don't try to combine these different views into one singular view of curriculum—which is impossible because there are too many different views of curriculum to weave together into a single coherent stable meaning. The view of curriculum is so complex that we can't quite wrap our minds around it.

Then, as a class, we move into the topic of duoethnography more explicitly as a way to begin to deconstruct our views of curriculums. However, in many ways, we have already been living in a duoethnographic state. I then have them read at home the duoethnography on beauty (Rankie Shelton, & McDermott, 2011). This is a good choice because they all understand that cultural images of beauty are a construction. The important part is that they know that as teachers they do not want to have their views of their children framed by cultural images of beauty. We read the duoethnography on beauty and they are speechless at first, followed by a rich conversation.

Joe: What percentage of your students are female?

Rick: Sixty percent and this is in our secondary program. So having this many, in a way, is a good thing.

Joe: How do the males respond to the beauty one?

Rick: I think that the assignment/topic does resonate more with the women. The males did it as well. Part of their response, though, was

contingent on how they are positioned in terms of how they identify with processes of education, and, to a certain extent, many of them are -counter-identifiers. Many of them want to change the system and so I think they get it, not about beauty per se, but that it is a construction and that they are interested in those ideas and that many of them are intellectual. But this topic appeared to be gendered in different ways and the women found that topic very interesting.

Joe: What I like about this example is that you've chosen is one that will personally resonate but not necessarily from a school perspective.

Rick: Right. It's that tension between being inside and outside school.

Sean: What you said, Rick, about how your students encounter a number of curriculum theories before they move into duoethnography reminds me that before beginning my course with duoethnography, students read Martha Nussbaum's (2009) *Education for Profit, Education for Freedom.* She helps students see skill acquisition for employment as part of a larger discourse, and they begin to deconstruct their main assumptions about education, understanding it as more and less than what they thought it might be. It's helpful for them to be thinking about how they are often complicit in these discourses, reproducing certain kinds of privileges, certain kinds of community power relations, and then when we move to duoethnography, they more readily see that complicity in each other's life stories.

Rick: Joe, you've talked about this before—that we don't really consider duoethnography being about epistemology but also about ontology. How do you go beyond epistemology?

Joe: As stated earlier Reason's and Hawkin's concept of express and explain help, although they are not a completely accurate division. Still, I regard epistemology as explaining with expressing being ontological. When I read a story written by others, I enter into their live-worlds, I can feel things, I can smell things, I begin to create my own dialogue, so very much part of the duoethnography graphic nature is the concept of storytelling, so in duoethnography we both express and explain. When I give feedback on papers that's one of the things I point out, not just in courses but in the books that we are co-editing and as a referee for journals. Too much explanation loses that ontological feel and that it is through expression that narratives work. The axiological dimension is that the ontological evokes readers' stories, brings their voices into the virtual trialogue. Today, if we were to name the methodology, I would suggest trioethnography, making the reader's present explicit.

Sean: The boundaries and intersections of *theoria*, *praxis*, and *poiesis* is a way to explain the difference between epistemology and ontology. In the expressive (*poiesis*) we can show how we live our practices (*praxis*), and how we have been living *is welcome* in the classroom where too often *theoria* is privileged and exclusive in school spaces. Students often dichotomize who they are as teachers and who they are outside of the classroom, so I invite them to bring these identities together, to live and represent themselves in the classroom more fully. In my own life, being a poet, I've asked myself what it means to teach poetically. For my students, I help them get beyond epistemology by integrating knowing, doing, and making.

Joe: For me, the act of conducting a duoethnography is a curriculum itself. We learn through its constructions and we reconceptualize ourselves and the world in which we inhabit through the dialogue.

Rick: I also like them to beware of the lived curriculum within the class, so we read Ted Aoki (2005a) and the embodied curriculum. Many of them will want to do a topic that is related to something important to themselves and then they tend to not to want to deconstruct but rather just reify it in some way. So, maybe, what I need to emphasize more is not who they are but who they are becoming.

Joe: And that gets to that notion of "moving towards", Sean.

Sean: I like that phrasing, moving toward. I first encountered it in an academic way in your article *Towards the Use of the "Great Wheel" as a Model in Determining the Quality and Merit of Arts-Based Projects* (Norris, 2011). In my everyday life as a researcher and teacher, even in hallway conversations with colleagues, I have the opportunity to say we don't have to have this all figured out, we can even change our minds and take things in a different direction. Moving toward is about growth, and ironically (given that I am in an education faculty) so many of the dilemmas I encounter in a day are framed as final, or fixed in place, as if everything in our future depends on getting it right, right now.

Something I'd like to emphasize a bit more is how engaging in duoethnography makes the participants a little more aware, and simply having this increased awareness permits more openness to the complexity around them, and then they can be more intentional about noticing who they are, not holding on so tightly to these reified and simplified notions of what and who teachers are supposed to be. What I find troubling is this tendency for new teachers to shape themselves into the social construct of what they perceive teachers to be.

Joe: If I can rephrase that in light of what you just said, Sean. It is not as much who they are, but who they are becoming.

Rick: Maxine Greene's (1973) concept of *Teacher as Stranger* fits in here as she puts the emphasis on choice as we become aware of how we want to change and who we want to be as human beings and in trying to become conscious.

Joe: A while ago I began to play with the terms accept/encourage/reject, and concluded that teaching is a destructive act. We must always reject our students for who they are, and accept them for who they may become. No matter what we do we are expecting students to grow, to change. In a scene in *Great Expectations* (Norris & Mirror Theater, 1994) I play a coach providing feedback, "If you go backwards you might do it a little bit higher." One student may consider that encouragement, another student could consider it a putdown or rejection and a third, acknowledge-ment of ability. In fact, all three co-exist. So I believe that in every peda-gogical act there is an act of rejection. In all learning we reject our present selves as we move toward our future selves. So, Rick, in an example you told me about a student who explored religion, he resisted moving forward, and entrenched himself where he was. He rejected a possible future self. This of course is within his purview. I use the terms stop, start, and continue as a way of making decisions about insights gleaned from any form of reflective practice. A key aspect of duoethnography is an openness to become.

Rick: And it's difficult. With this particular student, he thought that he had encountered a dominant anti-religion narrative which he sought to resist. But he could not interrogate his own position in relation to that understanding. He saw himself as offering a counter-narrative to that larger narrative. But I do think that counter-narratives are important as well—not to close them but to allow duoethnography to give expression to them. So in some ways I was open to his plight as a construction.

Sean: Exactly. Duoethnography is not something that you do to another person, or to yourself for that matter; in the same way, teaching is not something we do to another person. I emphasize this because I've come across too many metaphors that present teaching as an activity that one does to another person, and I would rather understand it as a process of living in the same moment.

Joe: I use the term invite. We invite a person to join us on our quest, to dwell in our quest(ion). We recognize our own inadequacy from Levinas' (1984) perspective, and invite another person to see our construction in

a different way. Through their lens we can reconceptualize ourselves; we become (re)knewed(re)known.

Sean: That's beautiful.

Rick: It's hard to live in the moment—to be open to that dynamic text. But to do this is important. I have students who just want the answer, who just want knowledge to be given to them and for things to be definite and certain, as opposed to fluid. And of course this relates to Bhabha's (1991, 1994) concept of the third space that Aoki (2005b) applies into curriculum studies.

Joe: My duoethnography with Olenka Bilash (Norris & Bilash, 2016) addresses student resistance to uncertainty. The hegemony of the "right answer" is heavily engrained. I regard duoethnography as Neo's red pill.

> You take the blue pill, the story ends. You wake up in your bed and believe whatever you want to believe. You take the red pill, you stay in Wonderland, and I show you how deep the rabbit hole goes. (Wachowski & Wachowski, 1999)

It can be an act of self-liberation.

As I look through my notes another issue that arises is the difference in writing a duoethnography for a course and the writing of a duoethnography for publication. While one chapter in this book does both, I think that I underemphasized a sense of audience in my teaching. I still think, to a certain extent, duoenthnographies for courses are written like most papers, for the professor. A fundamental aspect of duoethnography is that it is not only about the writer's learnings, duoethnographers are also trying to create a third space for their readers. If there's one thing I might do a little differently the next time, if given the opportunity to teach duoethnography, is to emphasize that the text should move beyond the partnership with an awareness of a larger audience. Duoethnographies don't merely report; they question. In so doing they evoke responses from their readers.

Rick: Yes, the notion of audience is really important and for people to begin to examine their own work through the eyes of the other and then to try to imagine it in a different way.

Joe: Sean, your thoughts on that?

Sean: What comes to mind is the difference between explaining and interpreting. Sometimes when students are writing for the professor they become overly rhetorical, like they're trying to control the argument, but what I am looking for is their curiosity.

Joe: Strong point, curiosity is an important dimension of duoethnography.

Sean: I want them to let me hear their interpretation unfold, including their doubts and uncertainties. In this way, when I hear the narrator struggle with an idea, the presentation of the evidence has a narrative arc that advances the text in interesting ways. I think duoethnography foregrounds inquiry in such a unique way for students that I can hear their query, I can hear the curiosity better.

Joe: Yes, it is much harder for two people to control a text than one.

Rick: Before we move on can I ask if there are any dilemmas or troubling or difficult things that we've encountered?

Joe: I try to underplay my own expertise. Rick and I are the creators of duoethnography and have generated a set of basic tenets. But there are also a number of colleagues who have helped us to refine the methodology. But hey, Rick's and my names are on the cover. Students are steeped in a curriculum of please the teacher. The challenge is to create spaces where they are comfortable to move way beyond pleasing the teacher into the inquiry, but if you really immerse yourself in the inquiry, ironically, you'll please the teacher.

Sean: A dilemma I face is when writers (and I include myself here) come up against their own worry and anxiety, and to combat these feelings they move into abstraction, a kind of *academicese*, a language that we have all learned at some point in our lives in order to please professorial readers. Deep and sustained reflection that is located in the inner self is very difficult, not only because of the protective layers that we use to insulate ourselves from others, but also because in academic contexts subjectivity is too often marginalized. When writers move into the realm of abstraction, memories, identities, and reflections are kept in the subtext or excluded from the text altogether. But, as a reader, because I want to know a writer's story and her/his storytelling voice, what matters are the details that are unique to who they are. In duoethnography, when the life story is processed and analyzed with another's perspective, and then represented in an aesthetic way, the dilemma of abstraction is avoided. Not always, but certainly that is the hope.

Joe: This is that explain/express balance.

Rick: The abstraction makes it safe as they don't connect themselves to their own stories. I find that it is almost a catharsis with students that they've been socialized into this notion of abstraction and that when they begin to enter their own story, it is often painful but also a release. I had two students do a duoethnography about ways in which they were either identifiers or counter-identifiers toward schooling. And the person who thought

that she had always been the good student and then wanted to be the good teacher who taught as her teachers had—she realized that she may have been motivated to be the good teacher as an act of compliance. She recognized an insecurity in her in the past in wanting to accept the status quo. To move from that safe notion she experienced some major dissonance. The notion of self in the classroom can be very complex and difficult.

Joe: And the methodology does ask duoethnographers to disrupt themselves. Like Shiva we need to continually rise from the ashes, and grow as learners. We have to be willing to enter painful situations, and reflection should do that; it is not a romantic notion. How dare we as teachers create spaces of dissonance for students, how dare we not?

Rick: And I think that we model this in our own work; we show ourselves in vulnerable ways, that we are willing to go through that.

Joe: Vulnerability. Rick, we haven't talked about vulnerability yet in our writings, have we? We implied it in discussions about trust, but we haven't really haven't delved deeply into vulnerability.

Sean: I'm more open for students to navigate their vulnerability with one another when they foreground that what they are constructing is an aesthetic piece, whether it's text, or live performance, or something represented graphically. As they build their relationship over the three or four classes, I remind them to make deliberate and conscious choices about what they can share or not share, but also that the aesthetic representation provides another layer or an in-between space for them to explore vulnerability. Emily Dickinson (1951a) is famous for saying, "Tell the truth, but tell it slant."[2]

Joe: I use a public/personal/private continuum to make this distinction. Public is anything anyone can know about you. Private are things that you don't want anyone else to know about, and personal is that space between public and personal. They are things that you don't mind people knowing but don't readily tell or things that are private that in certain contexts you are willing to reveal. The degree of vulnerability is up to each duoethnographer as to what she/he wishes to bring forward into first the personal level when writing the duoethnography and the public level when decisions are made about what to retain and what to discard.

Sean: We become open to another as we release certain stories to them. This is an act of vulnerability. You said this earlier in our conversation, Joe. One of the reasons why I introduce duoethnography at the beginning of the course is I'm trying to warm up the room; the ways students are vulnerable to one another in the duoethnography does that. I want

to construct a safe place but I am also very aware that no one can control the safety of a room. While they aren't separate vulnerabilities, I find it helpful to think of an analytical space comprised only of the two people involved in the duoethnography and an aesthetic space when the work is made public. In the analytic space I invite students to be personal to one another, explaining how in this space their lives are data, and there can be a unique vulnerability that emerges between them because their interest in one another often goes beyond their interpretations of the data. Toward the end of the research process, I talk about what it means for knowledge to become public. Their audience to one another is different than the public audience. As they move into the aesthetic space, I invite them to shape the story, turning it into more of an artistic piece. Moving between different spaces takes conscious awareness of what can and cannot be shared, and that is part of learning how to be a teacher.

Joe: Rick and Sean, I direct this question to both of you because I no longer have this experience. An implication here and perhaps a challenge is the field experience. Do either of you go into the field and supervise student teachers?

Sean: I used to, but not for a few years.

Joe: Part of my curiosity is in what you see as the pros and cons of knowing these personal stories as you interact with them in the field. When I was at Washington State University I did go into the field every year, and I'm curious how this could create a warmth of relationship, Sean, that you are talking about. Or, could it also work against it, that is, know that I know your story, when I see you in the field I could use this for or against you.

Sean: My impression is this, and I'm basing my impression on the fact that I am getting out into the field and having conversations with English language arts teachers who are cooperating teachers for our Bachelor of Education students. The trend here locally is depersonalization; a teacher is a teacher is a teacher. One teacher is as good as another. The instrumental and mechanistic approach is deliberate in our district, the rationale being that there is a better overall quality when the classes are more alike from teacher to teacher and school to school. In PEI, for the first time ever, students must now pass a literacy test in order to graduate. With this introduction of high stakes testing the intention is to ensure teachers are covering the curriculum in similar ways and with similar emphases. Curriculum is being conceived narrowly as the plan and being a professional means leaving your private life outside the classroom—teachers'

and students' stories of who they are don't matter—so I remind my students that they may not end up teaching in PEI, that in other places in the world they will need to be aware of how other people think about teaching. At the university I try and push against some of what is happening in the district. I prod, and provoke, and push to create conversation around these issues.

Rick: Your question is a good one, Joe—the interplay between duoethnography and who they are or how they react when they enter their own classroom in their preinternship or their internship. We are trying to construct some partnerships right now with schools so that when they enter the classroom they are already working with communities; however, they often focus on the curriculum of the teacher whose classroom that they are in. My preservice students are often sort of critical that it's often a reform-based curriculum and they keep saying that the teacher is missing all these opportunities to enter into the lived world of their students. And so it's difficult because then they enter this closed neoliberal space and it's hard to go beyond that space and consider how to negotiate it and allow the secondary students to express through an emergent lived curriculum.

Sean: A duoethnography between a preservice teacher and a cooperating teacher would unpack some of this, particularly in my PEI context.

Joe: My first book, *Learning to Teach Drama a Case Narrative Approach* (Norris, McCammon, & Miller, 2000), gets at some of that. Each chapter starts with a student-written case narrative about a particular issue. It is followed by a response written by a student from a subsequent year to provide an experience-far perspective. It also includes responses from cooperating teachers. Though the exchange is not conversational multiple perspectives are given.

Sean: What I would find interesting would be the different power dynamics.

Rick: It would be interesting … you could have the students select a topic and maybe they could explore it together in pairs—preservice teacher/preservice teacher—and then after that take it out to the field and have it be preservice/in-service teacher and have them look at the same topic. Just understanding the difference and gaining a greater sort of meta-view of the system and the interplay between what we do at the university and what is actually happening in the field. Then for us to actually research that through this methodology and to allow our students to deconstruct it and to have some agency over that would be very interesting.

Joe: Exactly. Bringing it back to our students and have them write responses to it as well.

Rick: Right.

Joe: So, I think we've changed the title of our chapter. It was originally titled "teaching duoethnography in graduate curriculum theory courses", which we could semi-change to "teaching duoethnography in curriculum theory and teacher education courses", or now I'm thinking it could even be "Living curriculum theory through duoethnography".

Let's turn to assessment for a moment. Rick and I have given feedback to colleagues and also grade students' assignments that were written as duoethnographies. The expository essay has been the assessment staple for decades. It's been hegemonic and so overdone, but it's comfortable because it's so well-known. When reading duoethnographies, I cannot respond in the same way. For example, "There could be more expression", "You have more theoretical than analytical", "There are opportunities to integrate the literature", and so on. I thought we could problematize the criteria/tenets of duoethnography. What are the types of responses that you find yourself giving to students?

Rick: I have issues with assessment in general. And with duoethnography I think that there is a range in the quality of their work in general in terms of praxis or change, but I don't think that it has to happen immediately. Duoethnography never really ends: it continues to resonate in different ways. Even people who reify their views may change these views in the future. And when you reify your views, maybe you are starting to challenge them on some level. So I have a hard time with assessment. But I do emphasize if there are some people who have written something that is really excellent, I'll keep emphasizing those good examples in class.

Sean: I'm in the same camp, Rick. I abhor putting numbers on things and fortunately for me I'm in a program that is pass/fail. While our faculty likes to say that a pass means 80 %, I don't actually like to convert student work to a percentage-based scale. I find that if students are committed to the process, if they are able to enter into a space where they can articulate reality differently, then I feel that that is a fair contribution. The only other thing I might be looking for is their sense of reflexivity, so that they have offered something significant in the way that they express their work.

Rick: How about you, Joe?

Joe: I guess that we all went to the same camp. When I taught at Mount St. Vincent University in their summer institutes, some instructors would say everyone gets an A until you prove differently. I followed that practice. So I, too, find giving greater numbers very difficult. Now for the student paper that is going into this book my first set of responses were based upon the qualities for the course. Now I was much more demanding

in relation to qualities for a published piece because there is an audience with a different set of expectations.

Mathematics educators Zack and Reid (2003) employ Varela's, Thompson's, and Rosch's (1993) perspective on "good-enough". If education is about growth then each act is a stepping stone to the next. Mackey (1997) calls these "placeholders" (p. 440). I look at the potential, the moving toward that elusive understanding, that you discuss, Sean. A willingness to dwell in the question, an openness to uncertainty, a resistance to closure and getting it right are some of the tones of duoethnographies. I also provide comments about the balance of express and explain, a sense that there is real listening to another, and that a learning/transformation is explicit in the way that the duoethnography is written, so there is evidence of learning.

Rick: Reflexivity is really important. And there was one article that I can think of where two people selected each other to just basically reinforce each other's views and they just ended up constructing a polemic. So for me it's important that you are open to the views of the other. One of the biggest problems humanity is facing right now with this era of increasing globalization is learning from difference in a way that doesn't reinforce universalism. Wang (2006) offers this thought about third space theory that I think can be applied to duoethnography:

> [In] a third space … both parts of a conflicting (cultural, gendered, classed, national or psychic) double interact with and transform each other so that multiplicity of the self gives rise to a new realm of subjectivity in new areas of negotiation. (120–121)

It is this multiplicity of the self in relation to a different Other that animates duoethnography.

All: This chapter has reinforced for us that we don't merely teach duoethnography; rather, duoethnography is imbedded in much larger discourses of teacher identity and the purpose of education. As we conversed, we elicited nuances that connected to theories that have underpinned our work.

Notes

1. In Canada, the Bachelor of Education degree is typically a two-year after-degree program that best corresponds to a Masters of Teaching in the United States, not their Bachelor of Education degree.

2. Tell all the Truth but tell it slant.
      Success in Circuit lies
      Too bright for our infirm Delight
      The Truth's superb surprise
      As Lightning to the Children eased
      With explanation kind
      The Truth must dazzle gradually
      Or every man be blind—
      Emily Dickinson (1951b)

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