

ALL ABOUT

MENTORING

A Publication of the Empire State College Mentoring Institute



EMPIRE STATE
COLLEGE

STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

Issue 5 • Spring 1995



Issue 5, Spring 1995

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From the Editors

Jay Gilbert and Chris Rounds

Empire State College's reputation is built on mentoring. Mentoring is what distinguishes us from others in the educational marketplace; it is our unique "differential advantage". Other colleges may promise the recognition of prior learning and flexible scheduling, but they can't match the extraordinary and invaluable record that we have accumulated at ESC- more than 20 years of experience with mentor-mediated learning for adults, all kinds of adults, women, men, older, younger, part-time, full-time, singly and in groups, studying the full spectrum of the liberal arts and sciences, across the desk or across the country, more than 100,000 of them-who else can even come close to making this claim?

As ESC mentors, we have developed and perfected many different ways to work with our students. We meet with them at lunchtime, in the evening, on weekend, on e-mail, and over coffee at 7:00 a.m. We use print and media and community-based resources and sometimes each other. We support their study at home and at their workplaces and even at sea! And in each region and location and special program, we have over the decades developed procedures and adapted our styles such that there is now a wide range of practice in mentoring at the College. However, get a group of us together in a room for a meeting, and just listen to us defend how our own approach indeed serves "individualization" and "student-centered learning" and other parts of a clearly shared value system of mentoring that we all have worked so long and hard and successfully to develop.

As cochairs of the Mentoring Institute, we see it and *All About Mentoring* as strong and proactive vehicles for the encouragement and support of this shared system of values. We want the MI and AAM to continue to serve as the primary medium within the College for encouraging conversation and sharing across the boundaries that have been created for us by others and that we ourselves have created.

We want to encourage and support each other in our professional development activities, and we want to make it easier for mentors who have been here for a few months to share insights and discuss practices with those who have been here "since the dawn of time". We want to serve as catalysts to help mentors "visit" with each other- in person, in groups, electronically. We want to advocate for mentoring as we have all practiced it, and continue to welcome innovations rooted in our shared commitment to education and learning that values the student as an individual, whole person.

Mentoring is what we do, all of us, sometimes brilliantly, sometimes not so well, in all of its varying appearances. We are a community of mentors, creative, experienced, professional, and the Mentoring Institute is committed to sustaining and encouraging the growth and development of that community. We and the members of the MI Advisory Group want to hear from you. There is somebody from every center on the MI Advisory Group- see the list in *MI News*--please talk to them and to us! We need to know what you'd like us to do, and how you can help us to do it. Let us know what activities or actions or support structures would help you and your colleagues, and we'll do our best to provide them.

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Mentoring as Care/Roles of the Mentor **Mayra Bloom, Hudson Valley Center**

*Last year, I was asked by Kathleen Taylor to contribute a chapter to **Shift Happens: Supporting the Needs of Re-Entry Women**, a Jossey-Bass "New Directions" volume which will be coming out in 1995. The enclosed essay is a final draft of that chapter. In preparation for writing, I had extended conversation with mentors at the Union Institute and with several of their learners, some of whom are mentors now themselves. I also spoke with colleagues and students at ESC.*

I gratefully acknowledge my thanks to Elizabeth Minnich, Rhoda Linton, Gail Wheeler, Margaret Blanchard, Wendy Goulston, Barbarie Rothstein, Cheryl Kurash, Barbara Kantz, Rob Koegel, Diana Worby, Miriam Tatzel, Barbara Marantz, Jim Case, Felix Carion, Mary Priniski, Brooke Portman, Debra Schultz. I would also like to thank ESC students in the Advanced Writing Workshop who responded honestly and insightfully to successive drafts -Tom Reid, Eldene Towey, Layne Wilhelmsen, David Fichter, Judy Bieber.

When the aim of education is understood to be the development of the whole person - rather than knowledge acquisition, for instance -the central element of good teaching becomes the provision of care... Daloz, p. xvii

Mentors not only care about their students; they also care for them, as Nel Noddings points out, by making an effort to understand their experience.

Apprehending the other's reality, feeling what he feels as nearly as possible, is the essential part of caring from the view of the one- caring. For if I take on the other's reality as possibility and begin to feel its reality, I feel, also, that I must act accordingly; that is, I am impelled to act as though in my own behalf, but in behalf of the other (16).

Mentors act on students' behalf by carrying out a myriad of roles and functions; they stand in different relationships to students at different points in the mentoring process. At times, for example, the mentor stands behind the student, providing what Robert Kegan calls a "holding environment." At other times, the mentor walks a little ahead of the learner, functioning, as Laurent Daloz suggests, as a guide. Much -perhaps most -of the time, the mentor engages the student face to face by listening, questioning, connecting.

Finally, the mentor stands shoulder to shoulder beside the student, offering herself as companion, ally and fellow learner. Underlying all of these models is the assumption that human learning and development are rooted in relationship.

I. Standing Behind the Student-Providing a Holding Environment

According to Robert Kegan, development consists of a series of emergences from (and newly constituted relationships with) cultures of embeddedness -families, schools, institutions, mentors. In order to foster an individual's growth, embedding cultures must fulfill three basic functions -they must hold on, let go and remain in place (Kegan, 1982).

The mentor "holds" the reentry woman by accepting her precisely as she is now, at this point in her development; by designing studies which start where she is - with her interests, her skills, her current level of knowledge and competence; by seeing her "in the most favorable light consistent with reality" (Noddings, p.193) . As one mentor puts it,

I work from the assumption that whatever I respond to is already within the student; my job is to develop my own ability to draw it out. So, for example, when we talk about research methods, I assume that the ways people want to learn are within them; my job is to help them name and identify these.

Or, as ESC Mentor Wendy Goulston describes it, "I try to create a container for them to do their own thinking, conveying a quality of attentiveness without invasiveness."

Students often respond to such "holding" with a sense of freedom, relief and confidence. "It was freeing to realize that I didn't have to fit into traditional categories. In a sense, I was being reassured that I was ok; my mentor affirmed the way I did what I did."

Another student says,

My mentor doesn't talk a lot or fill my head with her ideas -she knows how to be in the background but she has a real presence. Her timing is great; she gives you room to grow. Sometimes just a phrase or a group of words will stay with me and have a shaping effect- it helps guide me or give a sense of direction. I've learned to really pay attention to what she says.

ESC Mentor Barbara Marantz provided a visual image of "standing behind" the student when she described an outstanding ski instructor who skied behind her down a slope.

From his vantage point behind me, he was able to see everything clearly -strengths as well as weaknesses. He was able to provide accurate, precise, helpful coaching while allowing me to set my own pace. For me, that experience has remained a metaphor for excellent teaching.

At the same time that the mentor "holds" the student as she is, she is prepared to "let go" or, as Robert Kegan puts it, to "assist in the [student's] timely differentiation" (127). In this sense, the mentor refuses to impose her own biases, learning style or projects on the student, but rather encourages her to find her own way.

A student expresses it like this,

The critical thing is that she listens to YOU the learner; she brings her stuff to it, but she doesn't impose her stuff on it. She listens to what I want to do and what I struggle with and reflects it back to me in a critical, validating and wonderful way. She observes and tells me what she sees me doing; she has a philosophical and practical ability to see what I'm doing and transform it to another level, but it's still me.

Finally, the mentor must "remain in place." The mentor provides a kind of dynamic constancy in that she continues on the path of her own growth as a learner and one-caring at the same time that she preserves the memory of how far and in what directions the student has come. The mentor, like Penelope, preserves the hearth while the student embarks on her own heroic journey. Thus, a mentor may sometimes serve as the keeper of the student's deepest commitments, even - or especially -when the student loses sight of them. This can happen in small ways over the course of a single session, as Wendy Goulston describes.

I have my antenna out for the key questions and words; I listen to their first few responses because these are seeds which I spiral back to again and again. As they discuss their own experience, I see my role as pulling these together in relation to their opening statements.

Or, as a graduate describes, the mentor may play a role in keeping such commitments on a larger and more profound scale.

Twenty years ago, I had told a professor/ mentor whom I respected enormously that I wanted to do my master's on the "Self Through Literature." When he said, "That's such a misuse of literature," I immediately capitulated and said, "You're right; that's stupid and wrong," and I did a traditional master's program instead. Twenty years later, I needed to reclaim the original journey, and with my mentor's help, I've been able to do it.

My mentor has helped me stay true to my abiding commitments to love and democracy even when I've forgotten them. It's both whole and soul making. I know that somebody heard me way back when and remembered. It allows me to say, "I am who I say I am. I haven't lost it, haven't gone off the deep end; all I care about is integrated in this deep work."

The mentor "remains in place" so that, as the student becomes surer of her own educational direction and gains fuller possession of her own voice, the two can meet as fellow/sister learners.

2. Leading the Student -The Mentor as Guide

Laurent Daloz sees education as a transformational journey, in which mentors act as guides. "They embody our hopes, cast light on the way ahead, interpret arcane signs, warn us of lurking dangers, and point out unexpected delights along the way (17)."

Daloz points out that mentor-guides express care for their students by engendering trust, issuing challenges, providing encouragement, and offering visions for the journey (30). They can be trusted because they have "been there before" -they have learned from, and can draw upon, their experience.

As ESC student David Fichter points out, however, the terrain may be as unfamiliar to the mentor-guide as it is to the student. "As guides, mentors don't necessarily know the territory better than anyone else; what they do have are the skills to survive once you're out there."

As a mentor, I have noticed that many reentry students experience a period of anxiety, ambiguity and even chaos before their educational purposes become clear. I have also seen that for most students, there also comes a moment of clarity, of crystallization, when their programs suddenly fall into place and they -and I - suddenly realize where they have been headed all along.

One student described this process vividly.

My mentor often let me flounder around. At the time, I would get very frustrated. Now when I look back, I say, 'Thank you,' because if she had been quick to rescue me, there wouldn't have been as much learning. She allowed the frustration so that the work that finally emerged was all mine, not hers.

The confidence to let the student flounder comes with experience, as does knowledge of particular educational systems, access to resources, or competence in identifying areas of potential life experience credit. In these areas, certainly, the mentor functions as a guide.

3. Face to Face: The Mentor as Listener, Questioner, Connector

It is no accident that we have begun to think of women's development in terms of voice (Belenky et. al., 1988, Gilligan, 1982). In traditional settings, it is the teacher's voice which drives the educational process; the students are there to absorb and parrot back what they hear. In contrast, the mentor is concerned with the development of the student's voice; she facilitates this development by listening. It is primarily through listening that the mentor gains that access to the learner's experience which, again according to Nel Noddings, is the basis of caring. To the developing reentry woman, who despite her accomplishments often feels like an imposter in the academic world (McIntosh, *Feeling Like a Fraud*), being heard confirms that she has something valuable to say, that her voice deserves to be heard.

As a learner once wrote to her mentor,

I'd never have had the nerve to share any of the thoughts I've shared with you -especially those that show that I take

myself seriously. [But] you make people feel that you take seriously what they care to think about and you take the fact that they care to think even more seriously.

In reviewing ways in which mentors support their students' development, Laurent Daloz also starts with listening. "We can listen to our students' stories, seeking to understand how their quest for education fits into the larger questions and movements of their lives.. (xviii)"

But at the same time that the mentor is listening to the student's story, she is listening through the words in order to discern the patterns, the characteristics, the structures of the student's thought. According to Elizabeth Minnich, author of *Transforming Knowledge*, this kind of listening often follows a pattern of taking in, retrieving and reflecting.

For Minnich, the first crucial step is to simply take in the student's words and presence; to refrain from giving an immediate response even if the student wants one.

The real need is to be what Simone Weil, the well-known French writer, called,

"attentive;" trying, precisely, not to meet what you're hearing with categories. Categories do not come first; experience comes first. Categories should be used to check things out or point in particular directions. But first, you participate; you join. The first movement is that of going quiet, going in.

At the same time that the mentor is listening without judgment or premature categorization, she may become aware of images or metaphors which arise as if unbidden.

What happens is that you begin to 'find yourself with' the student. You may see an almost visual mapping of the form of someone's thought; you get a picture of the person, for example, piling thought upon thought as if she were building a building. Or you may see that she works from a central insight, weaving in and out of it in a process of articulating and unfolding that central idea. Or you say to yourself, "This person is always working between two apparent opposites. On the one hand, she is always speaking about structure, logic and proof. On the other hand, she is always making connections and focussing on interrelationships, which seems, on the face of it, to be a contradiction."

As Minnich describes it, listening is not simply a cognitive process. Being attentive involves one's entire body-one's entire being.

When you listen attentively, you sense by the end that you know the person better; if someone asks how you got that sense, the culture points us toward the content of what they said. Actually this is only a small-perhaps the smallest-part. You are also listening with your body; your whole body listens.

While listening intently in mentoring sessions, I have sometimes had the visual impression that the student was "coming forward" even though she was not actually moving at all. At first, I assumed that this meant the student was sharing something particularly important. Wendy Goulston suggests that this is a visual token of the fact that I am listening in a different, deeper way and that the student and I are connecting.

As Minnich describes it, there then comes a time when the mentor "turns her scanners inward" to see what she has taken in.

You [learn] to listen longer with more and more things open; you begin to see how much you are always taking in. Before you try to make something out of what you've taken in, you try to describe it to the other person. I often find that when I'm trying to describe or summarize what I've taken in, I can actually lose track of time. If this is happening in a group situation, then other people in the group literally disappear; the only one there is the person I'm speaking to. Eventually I 'come to' and realize that while I was 'retrieving' what I had taken in, I was not tuned into the outside world at all. It's almost as if I were reading back what I found there and translating it, but keeping the other person and her reaction very much in mind. As I'm describing what I heard, I'm also trying to remain respectful of the person and her reactions to what I'm saying.

Analyzing what one has heard occurs in several dimensions. Listening for the student's metaphors, tone, rhythm and voice requires literary analysis. Watching for how thinking is enacted by the body involves theatrical/ movement analysis. As a philosopher, Minnich also watches for the "moves" which the student makes.

I take thinking to be an example of philosophical work which can be analyzed like a philosophical text. My training as a philosopher leads me to speak less about what they say than about what they are doing. That is, I try to watch for the moves that they make. I look for basic operating principles-selection, for example. If a student gives a string of examples, I try to hear through the selection to the more or less choate principles which are indications of her inclinations.

Students who have been listened to in this way often describe it as the core of the learning experience.

The real value of someone listening to your thinking is that it strengthens your own ability to think. It gives you confidence in your own thinking even after you've left the educational experience. We've been trained to think that if our thinking is not happening in the prescribed or traditional way, then our thinking is not worthwhile. Part of what I learned is that I can think and that I have something to say. My way of thinking was valued. And because it was valued, I can now enter other groups and it no longer matters whether my thinking is valued there. It takes a while to believe that you have a valuable contribution to make -it's something that you have to hear and experience again and again.

In encouraging students to develop their own voices, mentors must be careful to modulate their own. Reentry students are often vulnerable to doing "what the teacher wants," instead of figuring out what they need to do for themselves. Yet mentors are far from passive listeners. If mentors are to care for students, they must accept the necessity of challenging learners to think more precisely, more broadly, more profoundly. They often accomplish this by asking questions.

As one learner put it,

[My mentor] always asked questions which made me think and which challenged my assumptions. Her questions would knock me off my guard in a wonderful way...[they] help[ed] me make my own decisions and come up with my own answers...she didn't let me get away with anything; she would pick up on those little statements that don't hold a lot of water and question me about them.

In traditional educational settings, students frequently come to fear or avoid the teacher's questions, for they know that the teacher's intention is either to elicit predetermined answers, or to ferret out their ignorance. Far from seeking to catch students in contradictions or label their thoughts with jargon or catchwords, mentors try to frame questions which enable learners to reveal their inner coherence and intelligence. ESC Dean/Mentor Jim Case uses open ended questions such as, "Could you tell me some more about that?" Students respond by discovering their own opinions as they participate in a deeper, more intimate level of conversation. Not incidentally, such questions remind mentors not to step in too quickly with their own answers.

Mentors also help students make connections. Traditional "separate" (Belenky, et. al. , 1986) knowing is concerned with making distinctions. Subjects are compartmentalized, atomized; dissociated bits of data must be memorized; learning is positioned within disciplines and outside personal context. As Belenky et. al. point out, even selective liberal arts women's colleges may encourage women's procedural/separate knowing at the expense of developing their own voices.

In contrast, the mentor values "connecting" as an intellectual activity .She helps the student make connections among apparently contradictory phenomena; between the way the student thought previously and the way she thinks now; between the student's experience and the mentor's knowledge (and vice versa.) By building on what the student already knows, the mentor validates and confirms the student's capacity to know.

4. Shoulder to Shoulder -The Mentor as Companion, Ally, Fellow Learner

Although, as mentioned earlier, there are situations in which the mentor has the experience to act as the student's guide, (particularly insofar as she is well and consciously embarked on her own educational journey), it is the student who must ultimately guide them both toward an as yet unknown destination. The mentor listens for and reflects back clues that the student knows where she is going. In this sense, I think of the mentor as a companion in what Lev Vygotsky calls the

"zone of proximal development" (p.102) .

According to Vygotsky, there is a gap between the level of performance which a learner can achieve on her own and the level which can be reached with a mentor's support. This gap, the "zone of proximal development," represents the student's growing edge; it is the space in which the learner's grasp exceeds her reach.

In traditional educational settings, the student's intelligence and/or achievement are measured according to what the student can produce alone in an isolated, unassisted testing situation. Cooperation or guidance are viewed as cheating. According to Vygotsky, this approach not only denies the essentially social (and interdependent) nature of human learning and development, but it results in a flattened, inaccurate underestimation of the student's capability (80). It also countermands Nel Noddings' insistence that one function of moral education is to confirm the student by seeing her in the most favorable light consistent with reality.

When we attribute the highest possible motive consonant with reality to the cared-for, we confirm him; that is, we reveal to him an attainable image of himself that is lovelier than that manifested in his present acts. In an important sense, we embrace him as one with us in devotion to caring. In education, what we reveal to a student about himself as an ethical and intellectual being has the power to nurture the ethical ideal or to destroy it (193) .

The mentor, therefore, encourages the student to explore the "zone of proximal development" as fully and freely as possible, for it is here that images of future growth begin to take shape in the student's mind. I have experienced this most frequently while working with students on their writing. There are times at the beginning of the process, for example, when the student dictates while I sit at the computer. Occasionally she will look at her own words with a sense of admiration and surprise and say, "I knew what I was trying to say, but I just couldn't get it down on paper," or even, "So that's what I've been trying to say!"

In such cases, the student stands, as Vygotsky puts it, "a head taller than himself." With the assistance/in the presence of the mentor, she has done something which she cannot yet do alone. Yet she begins to feel a sense of dawning confidence that soon this, too, will be within more independent reach.

As both mentor and adult learner, I have observed that many students feel chronically and/or acutely stupid. I have come to believe that one of the mentor's most important roles is to assist in the student's struggle to undo "feeling stupid" and thereby reclaim her intelligence. For many students, the "reclamation of intelligence" is a crucial subtext to virtually every learning activity. Mentors can provide direct assistance in this process by helping students demystify , redefine and enlarge their concept of intelligence (Minnich, Gardner); by helping them obtain college credit for life experience; by facilitating the design and execution of self-directed learning activities, learning contracts and degree programs (Knowles) ; and by assisting in what Jack Mezirow calls "perspective transformation" -in this case, recognizing the extent to which "feeling stupid" helps to maintain oppressive control in families, schools and political institutions. The mentor helps the student move from embeddedness in "feeling stupid" to a relationship with it as a personal, social and political phenomenon. This process may support the learner in her own-and others'-liberation.

Ultimately, caring for the learner by providing a holding environment and functioning as a guide, a listener, a companion and an ally are dimensions of the mentor's own work as an adult learner and as one learning to care. In order to provide such care, the mentor must be willing to learn publicly in and as a result of the relationship with the learner; to continually explore her own zone of proximate development; to develop her capacity to listen, question and connect; to continuously engage in the reclamation of her own intelligence.

Conclusion

As I think over the many conversations which contributed to the preparation of this essay, I am struck by mentors' use of words like "luscious," "fascinating," "delightful," "amusing," "fun." What this tells me is that an important (and often overlooked) role of the mentor is to invite the learner to participate in the pleasure of learning -the erotic as described by Audre Lorde. Mentors do this, in part, by modelling a healthy relationship to pleasure, intellectual and otherwise.

Wendy Goulston describes the pleasure of mentoring as follows:

I feel enormously privileged to be in my office with the sunlight streaming in through the windows, with my favorite pictures on the walls and my telephone and books, and these people enter in and share bits of themselves with me. I love that people talk to me intimately and they can't not talk about themselves when they talk about a book. It's like dancing. I'm in awe of people who move in realms that I'm terrified of -nurses, policemen, etc. It feels like pleasure- privilege; almost like a bubble bath that I have something they find valuable. In a humble way, it serves my sense that there is kindness in the world.

Not only are they able to enjoy the diverse ways of thinking presented by their students, but, even when they disagree with or are disappointed by their students' work, mentors enjoy their own engagement and processing of that work. When I commented on this to one learner, she pointed out yet another dimension of the mentor's pleasure.

Part of my mentors' commitment to clear thinking is in the service of social change and social justice; as a means toward a more ethical way of being. I remember in an Ethics Seminar the comment that Nazism was possible, in part, because people didn't think. And in our culture, thinking is a challenge because society is telling us in many different ways not to think, and to let others do our thinking for us. Part of the pleasure that mentors get from the process comes in that helping people think is helping them to grow. Part of their ethical commitment is to help people think; there is pleasure in seeing that happen.

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A Publication of Empire State College

Issue 5, Spring 1995

Taxonomy and Mentoring Feature and Voice

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Perhaps it is best to begin with a confession: I mentor, and I instruct. The mentoring takes place in a small ESC unit, and the instruction on American campuses in the Jerusalem area. This fractured existence leads to an ongoing reflection on the strengths and weaknesses of mentoring and instructing. Of particular interest to me, and to many of my instructor colleagues, are the differences in subject area presentation. How, they ask, can you communicate either in quantity or quality 36 hours of subject matter in considerably fewer tutorial hours? There is usually the inference that successful educational outcomes are a function of the lecturer's time and exertion, rather than of the student's.

This short piece is not designed to defend the validity of mentor-based instruction. Rather it is an attempt to explore ideas on the fundamental aspects which have shaped subject area learning. My own subject area is business (management, marketing and accounting) and it may be that the ideas presented are unique to this subject. However, it seems possible that similar shaping of content may have occurred in other disciplines, and that there too the core values of the mentoring process might be able to restore a more useful balance.

A taxonomy for Business Transactions

It might seem that the body of knowledge contained in a study of accounting, is substantially different from that of marketing. The language is different, as are the goals and the perspectives. However, these bodies of knowledge are the product of accretion, traditions, selectivity and evolved neglect. The student might assume that a wide gulf separates the worlds of marketers and accountants, however, both are fundamentally concerned with economic transfer and its communication. Both accountant and marketer deal daily with this interlocked cultural and social process. They may accentuate either the economic transfer, or they may emphasize the communication, but they can never isolate or eliminate these two aspects.

In identifying subject areas for study and instruction, there are two basic taxonomies which can be used. The first is functional and empirical. This functional/empirical (FE) framework mirrors the approach of early biological classifiers like Carl Linneaus. He distinguished living forms according to objective criteria, and used these criteria as a key to identification. Features of difference assumed taxonomic weight if they served to distinguish one species from another. If a purpose was served by classifying flowers by their floral parts then that was the feature of classification. And there was a purpose; to specify and to place in unique isolation.

This approach is sensitive to detail and difference. It results in collections which stressed isolated items not arrangements-"letters of the alphabet not words", to use the metaphor of Claude Levi-Strauss. Such a taxonomy has validity. It preserves detail. It avoids imprinting the resulting collection with the current fashion in the ideas, and the constructs, of relationship.

However, there is an alternative approach to classification of biological entities, and of subject content. In biological terms this is seen in the taxonomies which were influenced by people such as Charles Darwin. These taxonomies aligned with

an assumed evolutionary process. The purpose of classification was to pick up patterns of relation. Patterns might be looked for in biology, in social anthropology, or in business transactions. Social anthropologists called this a rationalist/structuralist (RS) approach (Leach, 1976). If there was an evolutionary structure then the role of the taxonomist was to accentuate this in the taxonomic key. The entity was not perceived to be isolated from the whole. It occupied not simply a space, but a place.

All taxonomists ask, "Does it work?" It is an ambiguous question. Constructed classification must show a consistent internal logic, and must work at that level. But the arrangement must also give another level of information regarding the whole. The taxonomist is not content with an arrangement of letters if those letters could be rearranged into words. All taxonomic keys work in the sense of classification; good keys hint at metaphor and perhaps even at fragments of story.

But many stories can be inferred from the same elements. If a new taxonomy really does "work" we recognize this in two ways. First, by providing a more penetrating picture about what we have presently, we will come to recognize the parts which are missing. Second, we can successfully incorporate future discoveries into the existing pattern without destroying that pattern.

In the presentation of business as an academic study, it seems that an FE taxonomy was the one used to transform business transactions into a cluster of academic subjects. In the history of the academic presentation of management for instance, the recurring theme is functionalism. Management courses traditionally stress the functional interdependency of departments in the organizational structure. We see the role of management as functionally divided (planning, organizing, etc.) and operating in a functionally divided environment (accounting, marketing, etc.).

Using this historical FE taxonomy, marketers were segregated from accountants-academically organizationally and - because they differed in what they were perceived to do. Marketing and accounting, and most other bodies of business knowledge were identified, described and explored in terms of functional differences. The central problem, is that by concentrating on the letters and their differences we have diminished the ability to construct the words, let alone a vocabulary, of business transactions. By neglecting an RS approach we neglect a system which might give business transactions a more coherent language. This is most evident in the areas of recognizing what is missing and incorporating the new.

This is not the place to analyze the difficulties which we encounter in contemporary presentations of marketing, management and accounting. The point is that many of these difficulties have resulted from a rejection of things which were considered not to fit into the taxonomic cluster of the perceived bodies of knowledge. Property rights, market mechanisms, notions of exchange, cultural expression and media of exchange were considered outside the marketers professional horizon. By using a taxonomy of isolationism, marketing, management and accounting isolated their perceived bodies of knowledge-and ignored the gulfs which opened up between them. This is perpetuated in the bundles of skills and assumptions which we currently present in the fractured world of business education. A lack of creativity, integration, and balance in business education characterize the rudderless drift into the future which commentators like Porter and McKibbin (1988) discuss.

In Feature and in Voice

If indeed an inadequate taxonomy has caused dysfunctional schisms in the way that we define curriculum and competence in business education, what can be done? Perhaps it might be best to completely reformulate our academic presentation of business transactions. Perhaps the new taxonomic map might stress commonality, and interrelations-exchange, risk, communication, culture, etc. However, without an upheaval of this magnitude, the individual educators can accentuate creativity, integration and balance, which bridge the schisms produced by traditional material presentation.

The mentor role is wonderfully appropriate for the development of a balanced language in business education. It can allow the student to absorb standard functional readings of marketing or accounting, while challenging him/ her to develop a more meaningful vocabulary for future engagement in the business world. Rather than be a presenter of a divided-and divisive-FE world vision, the mentor can seek out novel RS patterns across the divisions.

When using the mentor approach in subject area education, the mentor must consider the form of the interaction; the

centrality of the student, the communication dynamics-the "voice". But he/she must also consider the content of the presentation; the partially explored possibilities, the discipline assumptions-the "features". Effective mentoring ensures that presentation and content are appropriately matched, and this may require a more critical examination of assumed taxonomies of subject classification.

"And Athena... drew nearer to them, wearing the likeness of mentor in feature and voice."
Homer: *Odyssey*, Book 24

Notes

Leach, E. (1976). *Culture and Communication; The Logic by Which Symbols are Connected (Themes in the Social Sciences)* Cambridge, MA; Cambridge University Press. The differences in the EF and AS classification approaches in social anthropology which Leach explores greatly influenced this article.

Porter, L. & McKibbin, L. (1988). *Management Education and Development: Drift or Thrust into the 21st Century?* New York: McGraw-Hill.

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Issue 5, Spring 1995

Mentor Role Variability and Mentor Versatility: Some Implications for Selection and Development

Alan T. Belasen, FORUM/East

Good mentoring practice necessarily involves establishing a balance within the variety of mentoring activities demanded by the workload (*The Mentor Role at Empire State College*, 1994: p. 9).

The Mentor's Task Environment

Being a mentor requires the enactment of multiple roles. These roles involve academic counseling and advising, designing individual degree programs and contracts, providing instructional services, assessing students' progress in light of their needs and objectives, measuring and evaluating students' performance against institutional standards and expectations. The primary function involves helping the student identify professional and intellectual needs and match them against a range of academic alternatives.

Mentors' work context, however, also include institutional responsibilities—they play a key role in the development of academic policies, are involved in planning and decision making processes, in setting priorities about program scheduling, in making personnel decisions, and in managing and developing instructional resources.

Performing these roles effectively requires mentors to become familiar with key elements of the learning process and the unique environment of adult learning. Effective mentors are expected to provide the context for learning as well as to be knowledgeable about the content of learning which is often outside the boundaries of the mentor's areas of specialty.

This multiplicity in role behavior and performance places enormous pressure on the mentor to become versatile and function simultaneously in a variety of environments: social/interpersonal, institutional/promotional, educational/adaptational, and technological/informational (see Figure 1). These environments were identified as a result of juxtaposing two important dimensions of mentor orientations: degree of flexibility (versatility) and the mentor's focal point of reference (focus). Flexibility ranges from uniformity and integration (e.g., in applying standards for evaluation) to innovation and change (e.g., in rethinking and redesigning individualized degree programs). Mentors' focus ranges from being student-centered (e.g., personal concerns, professional needs) to emphasizing the well being of the organization as a whole (e.g., supporting ESC's core values and mission).

The social environment includes the system of communication relationships with students and tutors. The institutional environment consists of the system requirements, policies, codes and standards. The educational environment involves both the mentor's personal growth and development, and also the student's professional goals and needs for instructional resources and learning activities. The technological environment involves coordination and monitoring, maintaining the flow of information, supervising and guiding the process of learning.

Understanding these environments and enacting a variety of mentor roles within them is essential for effective mentorship. Perceptually these environments and their associated requirements seem to be dialectical and mutually exclusive. For example, the need to maintain high flexibility may conflict with the need to conform to the institutional

rules and regulations. Empirically, however, these environments are complementary and lead to a synergistic effort on the part of the mentor.

Figure 1 :

Mentor's Enacted Environments

Note: No figure found in online copy.

Multiple Roles

This framework permits the systematic identification of the specific roles that are associated with each environment and that must be enacted concurrently by effective mentors. These roles are: Creator, Ambassador, Standard-Setter, Energizer, Assessor, Process Specialist, Coach, and Collaborator. These roles are shown in Figure 2.

As a "Creator" the mentor applies imagination to the formulation of new educational opportunities that advance learning. Flexibility, openness and participation in decision making processes with students, tutors, other mentors, and educators are all essential for making positive contributions to learning and education. Mentors are expected to be adaptive in interpreting their roles and in fulfilling their responsibilities depending on the educational needs of their students. They create opportunities for joint efforts with other instructors, explore library resources and make information available to students.

As a creator the mentor must show a willingness to identify solutions to students' problems and must promote creative learning opportunities. When the educational goal is to develop a unique learning contract to fit the student's needs, the availability of a rich selection of reliable and high quality resources, and the ability to consult with knowledgeable colleagues in and out of the College become crucial. In this role the mentor is intellectually curious, open-minded, adaptive and innovative. The mentor/creator solves problems proactively by anticipating obstacles and by identifying alternative solutions for overcoming these obstacles and creating challenging learning opportunities for the student.

As an "Ambassador" the mentor acts as the representative of the College at large and as an advocate for the student. The mentor is a boundary spanner who collects and disseminates information, is a liaison between the student and the institution, and is a communication link between tutors and students. In this capacity, the mentor is expected to understand the mission of the College and its learning units and to identify learning resources for students. Through personal and professional associations, the resourceful mentor can also create opportunities for students to enrich their programs through internships, practicum studies and field experiences. Thus, an important responsibility for the mentor performing the ambassador role is to manage and develop external resources and network students with others who are working on a similar topic or who have similar interests.

The ambassador role is extremely important for it involves the many interfaces which exist between the mentor and elements within the educational environment. The mentor must promote the nontraditional, experimental, and community-based programs that make ESC unique and advantageous. The mentor is also expected to maintain effective communication relationships with businesses, government agencies and other organizations to discover potential internship placements for their students wherever applicable. The mentor/ambassador also recruits tutors and adjunct-faculty and initiates payments to them.

As a "Standard-Setter" the mentor plans, supervises and directs activities in individual learning contracts. Since learning is at the heart of this role, the mentor must adopt a positive regard and develop high expectations for students by holding them accountable for doing substantive work. The mentor/standard-setter must diagnose the level of competence and knowledge of students, their readiness and writing abilities, and select the methods of evaluation and the standards to be employed.

Figure 2: Mentor Roles

Note: No figure found in online copy.

Since the mentor/standard-setter serves in the dual role of academic guide and planner, he or she must retain the overall academic supervision of a learning contract, even when a tutor is employed. A mentor performing in the role of a standard-setter is also a learning role model: an individual with aptitude and with the ability to reinforce vicarious learning on the part of the student. Since the mentor must respond to high learning variability, his or her ability to learn and unlearn, and willingness to acquire knowledge outside his or her discipline while engaging in growth and professional development is extremely important.

As an "Energizer" the mentor encourages students and tutors to pursue new ways of thinking and doing things and to take charge of their own learning. The mentor/energizer is a self-motivated individual who applies simple solutions to seemingly complex problems. The mentor has a sense of humor, a flexible set of behaviors, is communicative, personable, and receptive to the excitement of students' learning experience. The energizer shows sincere interest in helping others deal with their problems. The mentor/energizer's main concern is to encourage students to be actively involved in their own learning experience and to help them become self-teachers.

The mentor as an "Assessor" is a skilled individual who is knowledgeable about the methods of evaluating adult learning needs, capacities and progress. The mentor/assessor provides advice and direction about degree program planning and implementation and establishes individualized criteria for evaluation. The mentor/assessor inquires periodically about students' rate of progress and considers possibilities for expanding the learning contract by including components of academic or experiential learning. The mentor/assessor is an instrumental individual with the capability to help the student walk through existing policies and guidelines without being frustrated by them.

When performing the "Process Specialist" role, the mentor helps students become independent learners by participating in designing their own study programs that meet students' individual goals and that conform to institutional requirements. Thus, the mentor/process specialist guides students into content areas, sequences of study and learning methods, and fits college study to the lives of these adult learners. In this capacity, the mentor/process specialist locates, hires, trains, and evaluates tutors, selects learning material and translates institutional expectations for the student.

The mentor as a "Collaborator" appears as a firm believer in win/win situations and integrative efforts. The mentor/collaborator acts as a partner in the process of helping the student design and implement studies. The mentor in this capacity is a learning facilitator who focuses on the need to change students' attitudes and behaviors in the direction of accepting the responsibility of being their own greatest learning resource. The mentor/collaborator is a team player who uses shared leadership with students and with other mentors to generate high trust, confidence, and commitment to the values of learning and education.

The role of mentor as a "Coach" centers on communication relationships with students through advisement and direct instruction. The mentor/coach shows concerns for students' personal problems and frustrations and guides them through their degree program from concept to implementation. The mentor/coach encourages, motivates, and rewards students through counseling and negotiating. The mentor/coach tries to understand the student's life and work contexts and own way of learning. The mentor/coach also offers help in identifying learning resources and in fostering acquisition of knowledge and skills.

Balancing the Roles

Mentors are expected to act out all of the above roles and to simultaneously consider and balance the competing demands that are represented by each set of expectations. Mentors are further expected to shift their focus as needed and to broaden their knowledge and skills in the various facets of their mentor roles. Mentors should view their work context as a complex, dynamic environment that is constantly evolving. Mentoring is a challenging job that requires maintaining creative tension and responding innovatively to the competing demands existing in the mentor's multiple environments.

Selection & Development

Recognizing the multiple roles played by mentors and considering the complex set of responsibilities associated with these roles, should help decision making bodies within the College as well as program directors and human resource managers make optimal choices in regard to mentor selection and mentor development. Once the roles are clearly described, recruiters typically must identify critical competencies and personal characteristics that mentors must bring to the job to perform successfully. What level of professional expertise is required? What specific skills and abilities are necessary? What knowledge will the mentor need to perform the job well? What personal characteristics are helpful in dealing effectively with the unusual conditions of the mentor's work environment?

Constructing a cognitive map of the eight roles should help the decision makers form rational hypotheses about what mentors should bring to the job to be successful and to identify resources essential for mentor development. Maximizing the level of congruence between personal competencies and work requirements should strengthen the mentor's professional identity and boost his/her personal satisfaction and performance. These are desirable outcomes at a strategic level that the College must constantly value and support. Effective mentors, the backbone of the College, are expected to make positive contributions toward the realization of the College's objectives. The critical element is the linkage between the mentor's development needs and activities and the College's explicit mission and strategy.

Mentor development should focus on four important outcomes of career development: professional identity and adaptability, task performance, technical training, and attitudes (see Figure 3). Professional identity is a measure of the integration of the mentor's role perceptions. Adaptability is the extent to which the mentor is engaged in action planning intended to meet long-term professional needs. Task performance relates to the "job specifications" or the requirements for successful job performance. Technical training measures the level of knowledge, skills and abilities a mentor has in performing the roles discussed above. Attitudes represent the thoughts and feelings mentors have about their careers.

Any activity which enhances one or more of these four career outcomes constitutes development. Exchanging information, open discussions, coaching, self- assessment, and feedback are all development efforts which can be initiated at the individual level. At the institutional level a planned or structured approach should also be initiated. For example, seminars with a focus on technical training and new methodologies (e.g., use of information technology) can enhance the effectiveness of the assessor and process specialist roles. Teambuilding retreats with a focus on interpersonal communication can enhance the effectiveness of a mentor playing the roles of collaborator and coach. Role playing and behavior modeling workshops can contribute to a mentor's effectiveness as a standard setter and as an energizer. Finally, cross functional movements and job variety can enhance the creator and ambassador roles by providing new opportunities for mentors to pursue activities associated with these roles in different parts of the College and/or through continuing reassignments.

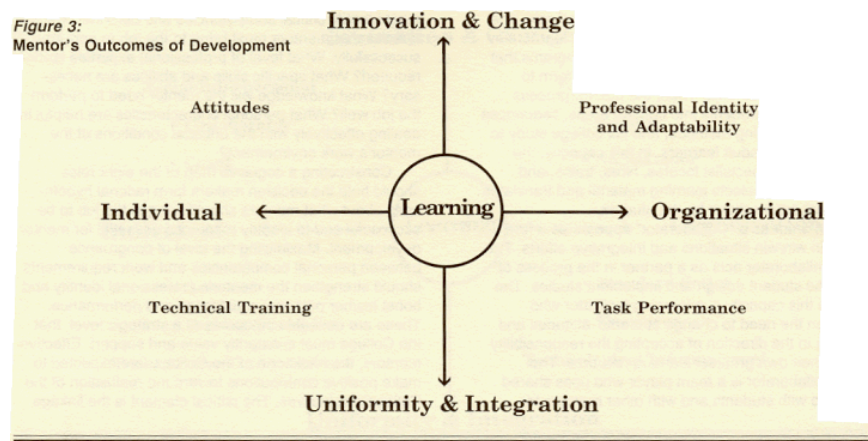
Conclusion

Successful mentoring requires performing a variety of roles which span multiple environments. The personal challenge on the part of the mentor is to create an "optimal mix" which enables the mentor to respond effectively to the various task environments and their conflictual messages. The institutional challenge on the part of the College and its units is to create a greater congruence between mentors' perceptions of their role behaviors and their professional career opportunities within the College. The mutual benefit is self-evident: identifying the specific mentor roles and their related skills should augment learning and professional development and ultimately support explicit College goals and strategies.

Note: Two conceptual frameworks have been integrated to produce the construct appearing in Figure 3: "The Competing Values Framework" in Quinn, R. E., *Beyond Rational Management*, Jossey-Bass, 1988; and, "The Strategic Human Resource Development Model" in Hall, D. T., & Goodale, J. G., *Human Resource Management*, Scott, Foresman & Co., 1986.

The author thanks Chris Rounds and Jay Gilbert for their helpful suggestions on an earlier draft of this article.

Figure 3



ALL ABOUT

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Crossing Boundaries with Cross-Location Mentoring

Robert N. Seidel, Genesee Valley Center

With its unanimous endorsement of a cross-location mentoring (CLM) proposal at the Area of Studies meeting on October 7, the ESC faculty gathered in Albany also declared a willingness to sponsor a faculty-monitored collegewide experiment in this mode of learning.

Beginning with a design of mine, a seven-person volunteer committee of the Faculty Conference made the proposal that we approved in Albany. Committee members were Joe Angiello, Shirley Ariker, George Bragle, Joanne Corsica, Peggy Morrison, Chris Rounds, and Bob Seidel. The faculty constituted a group of three -Joanne Corsica (Watertown) , Pat Loveless (Corning) and myself (Rochester) -to monitor the CLM project in its first year.

Background

Here's the scoop.

The practice of mentoring in Empire State College involves a willingness to cross conventional jurisdictions, whether they be institutional, intellectual or professional. Responding to the interests of students and the College itself, ESC mentors have pioneered in establishing norms for guided independent study with adults. All problems and objections notwithstanding, this is a genuine achievement of which we should be proud.

At this time, however, there are good reasons for us to move beyond another frontier, the one comprised by physical distances that separate students from mentors and skills that may be necessary or appropriate to assist such students in the pursuit of their educational goals and to complete their programs of study.

Do not misunderstand. Cross-location mentoring (CLM) is not utterly unique. Mentors practice it individually, if idiosyncratically, and it is a mode of study for the Center for Distance Learning, in our graduate programs, and elsewhere in ESC.

-CLM occurs when a mentor in metropolitan New York is integrally involved in educational planning with a student in the North Country .

-CLM occurs when a student in the Southern Tier gets tutorial service pertaining to the special and unique expertise of a mentor on the Niagara Frontier.

-And CLM occurs when a student on Long Island, requiring a CDL study not being offered that term, has agreement to work individually with the tutor, a mentor in Central New York.

What we can do with greater determination, and with potentially productive outcomes for all, is CLM as a more generalized aspect of mentoring on a day-to-day, face- to-face basis. (Please note that the term is cross-LOCATION-

mentoring, NOT cross-CENTER-location-mentoring.)

There are potential difficulties with CLM. For example, CLM can be labor-intensive, and contact in some CLM circumstances may be too attenuated for high quality interaction and learning. Some feel also that CLM may exacerbate intra-center competition to the degree that, under CLM, student enrollment would be allocated to the mentor recorded as doing the academic work rather than to the mentor referring the student to the distant faculty person. I believe these are issues we must acknowledge; we can minimize their negative effects by conscientious and prudent actions.

Potential

There is, then, strong potential, based on sound experience, that CLM can have positive benefits. CLM is likely to:

- (a) foster an integrated College faculty, and the equally important sense that we constitute one College;
- (b) enable students and various College sites to share more effectively in the human resources of the entire cooperating faculty, nearly regardless of where students and faculty are;
- (c) offer mentors opportunities for modest and rewarding specialization;
- (d) impel further faculty learning in instructional and communications methods and in the use of learning resources suitable especially for CLM;
- (e) make excellent use of the VAX for data storage, searches, communication, and quick changes in the database without requiring that CLM activity be "high tech";
- (f) eventuate in the elaboration of simple and effective protocols for the comfortable and accountable practice of CLM; and
- (g) move the College toward making other systems more "transparent" for everyone -simpler regulations, access to pertinent academic records from any College location by any authorized person, accounting systems of various sorts, available resources, and so forth.

I wish to stress one point. CLM does NOT require a "high tech" mode of communication. CLM does not **REQUIRE** interactive video or the use of e-mail. It makes use of the V AX to make sure that information is equally available to all. Modes of communication (using the telephone, postal service, etc.) must be agreed upon in each instance involving student and mentor, and these should be deemed satisfactory to the student's purposes and the mentor's skills.

Where We Are Now

In mid-October, I wrote Jane Altes, vice president for academic affairs, to inform her of the faculty's action in Albany to move ahead with CLM as a voluntary , faculty-monitored activity. I asked her cooperation to implement and to publicize CLM. I am sure you'll be hearing more about this soon. At this writing, while I expect a favorable response from Dr. Altes, I have not yet heard from her about the CLM memorandum.

To find out what the CLM information protocol will be (it's really very simple) and how the CLM information system will look, do the following:

- Log onto the V AX;
- At the \$ prompt, type @[SHARE]MENTORFIND and hit ENTER; and
- Read, perhaps print out, the screens on CLM that follow.

Larry Greenberg built this elegant little system. Thanks, Larry. Now, we can begin to use it.

The protocol is straightforward. Initial contacts may establish the possibility and usefulness of doing CLM among mentors and students. At this point, the director from the center where the student is enrolled will request a go-ahead from the director of the center where the mentor works. When there's an OK, what will follow, so far as record-keeping and administration are concerned, is a matter of the proper filing of contracts, outcomes and evaluations.

Would you like to participate? Check out the MENTORFIND utility. Let Joanne Corsica, Pat Loveless and me know of your interest. Supply us with information analogous to what appears for mentors currently listed on MENTORFIND. When the system is up and running, our contact in Computer Services will be able to enter and update information with ease.

Beyond this, Joanne, Pat and I want to know of your CLM experiences. Don't tell us only the good news. We'll report to the faculty on what CLM is and can be. We need to know its flaws, and we'll have suggestions for making it function well. In short, we'd like to hear from you.

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Science as a Window on to the World
(or, Teaching Science In a Non-Traditional University, Part 2)
Lorna McPherson, Central New York Center

Nearly every student who has studied human biology with me in the last two years has read this story. I am repeating it here as a preface to what I would like to discuss. I would like to tell you the story of a man who lived in Maine decades ago.

This man, who we shall call Mr. Smith, discovered that his farm was producing a very rare type of potatoes. He was pleased and at first he used them for himself and some of his immediate neighbors. Somehow (I don't remember how) a man in Florida by the name of Mr. Jones heard about Mr. Smith and decided that he too wanted the potatoes. Mr. Smith agreed but he had a problem-how to get the potatoes from Maine to Florida. After much discussion, the two decided that they would build a road from Maine to Florida, get a truck and some crates in which to put the potatoes. So potatoes were taken from Maine to Florida. Mr. Jones then wondered why send an empty truck back to Maine. Why not send Mr. Smith some tomatoes? Thus began a two-way traffic between Maine and Florida.

What began as a simple operation soon expanded as people in New York, D.C., Maryland, Georgia and indeed all of the 50 states craved these special potatoes. That meant more roads, more trucks and more crates. It also meant having facilities to repair the roads and the trucks, and to recycle the crates. As people started to use the system to transport other things, a controlling/coordinating center had to be set up to ensure smooth movement, another for accounting, etc. What a monumental operation this had become and what possibilities for it to become a nightmare!

Of course none of the above is true-it is a fable made up by me. What is very real is the (human) body which this whole operation represents.

Maine can be compared to the lungs and the potatoes to oxygen. The only place through which oxygen enters the body is the lungs. To get oxygen from the lungs (Maine) to the toes (Florida) blood vessels (roads) are needed. Also needed is the blood (trucks) and red cells (crates) in which the oxygen is actually carried. Blood takes oxygen in one direction and other substances such as carbon dioxide (tomatoes) in the other. Other parts of the body (other states) also use the same blood to transport other things such as urea from the liver and digested food from the intestines.

One can extend the analogy to the network of blood vessels which traverse the whole body and the great task which the body has keeping them in a state of repair. One question that might be asked, therefore, is what damages them and how is repair facilitated. I mention that old crates had to be recycled and one can see the comparison with red cells being recycled as bile to aid digestion. One can even think of the coordinating function being carried out by the brain.

The absolute fascination of this is that the body functions, constantly, and without our aid like a well run country ensuring that each member of its population (each cell) is properly served. In a normal healthy body there are no problems analogous to homelessness and inadequate health care. It is only when some part of the body ceases to function as it should that morbidities occur. As we study the human body, therefore, (and any other life form in fact) the challenge to us

is to understand the laws which keep it in balance and to ascertain whether or not the application of those same laws to other spheres of our existence, could keep those in perfect balance also.

In the liberal tradition of American education, there is insistence on the study of some science by all. Although this is laudable, one can question the value of four credits of biology in a degree comprising 120 -128 credits, with a major in say, business (here I go again - no aspersions being cast of course).

When I came to ESC, I came with a background in the natural sciences learned in the British system of education in which I was nurtured from kindergarten to graduate level. This meant that I majored in the natural sciences for the "0" level, the "A" level, bachelor's and master's. As a result, I was well grounded in the practical aspects of the disciplines and in their methods of inquiry. My post-doctoral research as a Fulbright was also very laboratory based. I had also taught "0" and "A" level science to students who had made a decision that the study of the natural sciences was what they wanted to do.

At ESC, I was asked to teach science without a lab, a microscope or a test tube. In addition, my students were generally not doing my course by choice-they were merely fulfilling the requirements of a liberal education. I had my work cut out to lend relevance to four credits of science! Out of the urgent need to find a solution to this problem has come the notion that science can be studied as a window on to the world and that there are lessons in living that can be learned from a study of the natural sciences. The two examples that will follow will illustrate my point.

In the summer one cannot help noticing the abundance of flowers everywhere. What is common to all of these flowers is the fact that they contain the reproductive parts of the plants. At that point the similarity ends. Thereafter they differ in color, shape, size, scent, arrangement on the plant and type of animal which they will attract, to name a few. And based on these differences they are given different identities; they will be placed in different groups and given different names. A rose (flower) will be a rose (flower) and a tulip (flower) will be a tulip (flower). Thus, flowers illustrate the concept of diversity in sameness and vice versa. Looking at the flower causes me to wax (that terrible British term) philosophical, and sad. I become sad because the human species cannot seem to accept diversity in sameness and vice versa. Why do we have difficulty with the notion that a group of people may have a common ancestry in Europe or Africa but by virtue of many factors, may be divided up into different subgroups? Knowing one of the group does not mean that one knows all of the group. Can't we learn anything from the flowers?

Other useful lessons can be learned from mammals and birds in the wild. Among these animals it is usual for 'child rearing' to be divided into two stages. The first stage is the care of the young while it is helpless and cannot care for itself. This stage may be of varying length and one or both of the parents do all that is necessary to ensure the safety of the offspring. The caring stage is generally followed by the learning stage during which the young is taught the skills needed for survival. The initial part of the learning process is observation; later this is followed by supervised practice. When this stage is mastered, the young is allowed to go out on solo trips before finally taking up an independent existence. Again, is there anything we can learn from the birds and mammals?

These are just two examples of ways that we can study the life sciences. A study of animal and plant communities can reveal much about the principles and laws which sustain these communities in balance. We can then look at the human community and see if there is any virtue in applying variants of these laws. Yes, the study of the sciences, particularly the life sciences, can provide us with windows through which to look out on to our world.

In a previous article I looked at the integration of science into other studies. This article looked at a different aspect of the study of science. There is yet another way to study science-as a means of developing certain competencies in students. And if our long suffering editors will allow me space in another edition of our newsletter, I shall discuss it and, thereafter, forever hold my peace.

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A Publication of Empire State College

Issue 5, Spring 1995

The Dance

James Robinson, Long Island Center

We arrive at Andreas Georgiou's house in Kaimakli in the early afternoon to find the household in a state of scrubbed readiness. Nana and George are neatly dressed for a semiformal occasion with family. George alternates between adult restraint and adolescent enthusiasm as he greets us and explains that his father will be a moment longer getting dressed; Nana swoops and pounces and flies out of the room, her voice crying down the hallway.

"They are here! Papa! Hurry up!"

A tall, dark-haired and imposing man with a wide grin and firm handshake, he greets us with the infinite courtesy of an ambassador. He is the administrator to whom I answer at our host institution, Frederick Institute of Technology.

"Good," he says smiling, "you are here."

Andreas has come into the room with his jacket in his hand.

"Bella," he calls to his housekeeper, a round-faced, tolerant woman from Goa, "have you seen my tie?"

"Can't we have Cokes, Papa?"

Andreas shakes his head. "There is iced tea," he says. "Sella, get the girls an iced tea. And one for Jim, too."

Bella sighs. "Do you want anything?" she asks, with just the right note of exasperation.

"I'm fine," I respond.

"One for each of them," Andreas overrules. "Jim, you sit over there. I am looking for my tie."

"It's on the sofa," Sella says, pouring the girls their drinks. Andreas grabs his tie and throws it on in a practiced swirl, a gesture of finesse.

Andreas has taken us in, and made us what amounts to honorary members of his large extended family. Hardly a week has passed that we have not been invited into his house, or the house of a cousin or brother or aunt for dinner, drinks, a birthday party or wedding. We have been grandly entertained. I have gained ten pounds, and lost some of the sadness that hovered over my head on first arrival.

My daughter Liz, and Andreas' twelve-year-old daughter, Nana, have become fast friends. They are a remarkable pair, one petite and blond, the other tall and dark, with bright brown eyes. When we come to the house the girls sit obediently for a little while paying homage to adult conversation. Then, more quickly with each visit, they rush away to Nana's room to

talk in deep secrecy about their lives. Whether shrieking with conspiratorial laughter or silently sharing their homework, they have become apart of each other's reality.

Today Andreas is taking us to his village for the blessing of the ikon at his church. He and I have been battling lately over an iron and an ironing board. I insist the apartment requires them and he insists they are too expensive, a luxury in Cyprus where appliances have to be imported. I think he's being cheap; he feels he is being prudent. He is not sure that my college, Empire State, will keep a resident faculty member in Nicosia; I argue that his college, Frederick Institute, can't expect to keep a resident if they don't support one adequately.

There is nothing new in our quarrel. We have haggled over dishware, plumbing, heat, and furniture in the months since I have arrived. It's partly the dance of two male egos, and partly life in Cyprus.

Negotiations proliferate daily. Will my college continue to operate a program in Cyprus? If so, what will be the exact nature of the agreement? Will the current Government of Cyprus approve of the agreement? Will the State University of New York agree with the Government of Cyprus? If this were not enough, the Government of Denmark has recently announced its unwillingness to provide its share of troops to guard the Green Line in Nicosia. It's easy to imagine how far down the list my ironing board stands.

I feel I am being tested. There is a deep personal bond between Andreas and my boss Ken Abrams, whom he jolts out of bed with early morning transatlantic phone calls. But our international program here sometimes resembles a marriage between rival dynastic families, where each set of in-laws is keeping a watchful eye on the other.

I have had to give up trying to get a decent Xerox machine for our office, and I no longer try to control when my students show up for appointments. But if I lose my tug-of-war over the ironing board, who knows what may follow? Will Frederick Institute continue to place calls to Athens for me? Will Andreas take back our sofa? Will Ken leave me here, deciding I am too much trouble to bring home?

My only hope has been to bring pressure on Andreas. In this I have resorted to the crudest tool available to me, the withdrawal of social contact. We have not visited the house lately, nor accepted the usual invitations. I find it childish to stoop to this, but as an institutional orphan, I can perceive no other point of leverage. Liz has been pained at the loss of her contact with Nana, and both girls have let me know just how stupidly their fathers have been behaving.

For the past two weeks, it has been stalemate. I have not even been sure that Andreas has noticed our absence, but I have underestimated his sensitivity. Last week we stopped by unannounced and were welcomed immediately for supper. Seizing the initiative, Andreas has gone a further step by inviting us to his village, aware that I can't honorably refuse.

The girls barely have time to sip their tea before the phone rings, and Andreas disappears once more into the house, making last-minute arrangements with his family. The village is some distance, and we need to arrive before dark for the ceremony.

"We have to go now," he announces. "Are the children ready?"

Without waiting for reply he calls them and we bundle together into the cars. Andreas takes the two girls and George in his old blue Volvo and I follow with Bella in my rented Honda.

Keeping up with Andreas as we fly out of Nicosia requires my best concentration. He likes to drive, and to prove he knows the roads better than me. I don't mind his winning this game, but I have to keep him in sight.

"You'll never catch him," Bella giggles with delight.

"I wouldn't try," I assure her.

It occurs to me that if I just slow down he won't lose me entirely. I can see Liz has caught Nana's excitement, but she waves from time to time through the back window to be sure we still follow.

When we get to the village, clusters of villagers are assembling on the roadside in front of a small grocery. These are hard-working people, burned by the sun and schooled in the fields and kitchens. The suit-and-ties are arriving now from Nicosia, but everyone appears to know each other, and there is little standing apart.

I hang onto Bella, who is keeping watch over Nana and Liz. The girls are bored, restless to get through the ceremony and on to the fun. They stand scuffing gravel with the toes of their good shoes. Bella smiles indulgently.

"It's quite a crowd," I remark.

"Oh, yes," she says quietly. "The whole village is here." Her tone says anything else would be unthinkable.

Andreas appears suddenly behind us, his deep voice startling in its passion.

"Come along," he says urgently.

We are following the ikon. It is a heavy wooden tablet some three or four feet high, a little taller than it is broad, and several inches thick. The saint's portrait is painted in brilliant reds and golds on its varnished surface, his features shining with a deep, paternal calm. Several men struggle with the honor of carrying the saint down the street towards our destination, anew and substantial-looking whitewashed church. The priest in his black robes and caftan moves ahead, leading the village.

We keep pace with the procession, a little to the rear of the ikon as the priest moves forward dispensing blessings. People swarm the street and the sidewalks in front of their houses, offering welcome to the ikon as if the saint himself were present.

A man standing on his second-floor balcony in quiet reverence utters a sudden cry and rushes down to the street, leaving his wife and daughter alone. He plunges past the onlookers and takes the priest's blessing in tears, his face flushed red, calling out to the saint. His white shirt flutters wildly, and his hair flies in all directions, but he runs oblivious to all but his own passion. The city folk flinch at this display of enthusiasm, but his neighbors seem to approve. I see Liz clinging to Nana in the crowd, both girls giggling self-consciously.

"We will go into the church," Andreas says, appearing suddenly at my side.

As we enter the church, he directs me to the proper place to sit, or rather to stand, for the beginning of the service. The congregation surrounds the central altar. Following the lead of the cantor they sing a deep, and to my ear, slightly discordant hymn. I cannot follow or anticipate the melody as it winds from deep bass harmonies to an almost wailing outcry. The music is as elemental as the sea or wind, and sung by a hundred or more village voices it achieves a resonance that smothers thought. The psalm threatens to exhaust me, and I struggle either to follow it, or to detach from its droning power.

I shift my posture only to receive a quick tug on my sleeve from Andreas. He nods and purses his lips with disapproval.

"We don't cross our legs in church," he informs me.

I respond promptly and in mild chagrin, wondering why I didn't think of this myself. The careful traditionalism here reminds me of my own childhood in the South, where hands left in one's pockets were taken as a sign of disrespect. One is not casual before God.

Yet that is not quite the point, for the children of the village are invited to celebrate the mass by sitting on the low steps of the area near the altar. A few of them have joined spontaneously, while others are edged forward by their parents. These small celebrants sit quietly in the great solemnity of the church, playing in the sunlight that pours from the high windows behind us. The ikon stands on its own platform just before the altar, the eyes of the saint somber and intense.

At the end of an hour we are excused.

"The service will go on for some time," Andreas explains, and we move quietly outside to the open courtyard surrounding the church, where about half the congregation has gathered. Andreas returns to the service, showing his bond with the older generation, including his mother, who continue their devotions. A trickle of celebrants moves back and forth, into the church and out again as people continually adjust their obligations to church and kin.

I stand in the courtyard, chatting to those from Nicosia whom I have met. Andreas's sister, who speaks no English, smiles broadly as our eyes meet, her face transparent with welcome. She wears her hair traditionally, drawn in a bun on the back of her head. The family resemblance is powerful. I see the familiar smiling turn of the lips, the high forehead, the clear eyes. There is a calmness and self-assurance that runs through this family, an inheritance of character granted them through generations. It strikes me how strongly their presence must have shaped this village.

Opposite the church is a battered taverna where the renegades of the village sit in open defiance drinking their coffee or beer, their chairs propped against the rough walls of the cafe. The men at the tables engage in the minor outrages of bad boys in school. They spit, or stretch and joke a little more elaborately than necessary, the more raffish among them showing their indifference by staring into their cups or reading the paper. On our side of the street no one takes notice, or more likely, the indifference is registered and returned in kind. There are old wounds here, and unforgiveness. Perhaps I am not the only one feeling uncomfortable, standing here in my good blue suit and tie, and wishing I were in the cafe.

Once the church service is finished the bells begin to ring, and the village slowly reunites, or at least gathers, for the celebration that lies ahead. It is nearly dark, and in the twilight the electric lights strung along the street begin to glow. Tables have been spread in files two deep, covered in white paper cloths, paper plates, plastic cups and utensils. Cypriot women are now free to talk and eat alongside their men without the awful dread of the cleanup.

There are places for several hundred at the tables, which run the length of the main street and then turn to the left into the heart of the village. On every table the traditional bottles of Famous Grouse whiskey and Keo beer appear, and the crowd is quick to celebrate. Portions of roast lamb and potatoes are passed in their aluminum foil wrappings as the guests are steered to their preassigned tables. The logistics must be staggering, I realize.

One of Andreas's cousins comes to explain our seating. Liz will sit with Nana and the younger cousins, and I have been placed with the English forces from the UN.

"Is that all right?" she asks.

I am surprised to feel the pang of separation. Liz and I have grown so much together that I no longer feel comfortable without her. I will also miss Andreas's family, who are spread strategically throughout the assembled throng.

Still, it is the practical solution to a small social awkwardness. The Republic of Cyprus is only 30 years old and the quarrel with England is a living memory for some. There are some present who regard the IRA with affection. As an American, I am an acceptable buffer, a fraternal member of the club of ex-colonials. Besides, the UN contingent are not likely to speak Greek. It might even be a compliment; I'm enough part of the family to handle the chat with outsiders.

"Of course," I tell her.

Andreas, always correct, comes to be sure I am not slighted.

"You will be all right here?"

"I'm fine," I say, unsure myself.

The UN contingent are a mixed group, older and younger international travelers, all sharing the slightly weary professionalism of those whose lives don't belong to them. An athletic man in his mid-thirties sits opposite. He's an "agricultural expert" but his bearing and build mark him as the British equivalent of a "foreign advisor." He speaks

guardedly at first of his current job, with the elitist's tone of superiority and resentment.

After a couple of plastic tumblers of Famous Grouse he begins to let it out. He misses his wife, he's been screwed out of his overseas allowance, his leave time is too short. He wishes he'd never got into this mess.

And the Cypriots? They're impossibly stubborn. They won't plant the right crops or use the right fertilizers. They'll promise you anything, but just try and pin them down.

I sit uncomfortably. There's truth in what he says, the Cypriots don't move until they are ready. I have spent months trying to learn this lesson, only to find repeatedly that I haven't. Witness the Xerox, and the ironing board.

"You mean a Wednesday appointment is really a Friday appointment?" I joke.

He stares at me like a child who has been promised dessert one too many times.

"Too bloody right," he agrees. "The only way to get cooperation is to grab them by the throat and force them to do it your way."

My tablemate pours us each another beer and glowers over the tables surrounding us.

"There's no helping them," he declares. "They like to be stuck. That's why the Danes are pulling out. They know when they're not needed."

I catch the glimmer of truth in his pain. So that's the tooth that hurts him. He's not sure of being needed. It can be very frustrating to want to do good in the world and find the good already done. Maybe that's what irritates me, too, the feeling that the Cypriots don't really require my presence.

"Do you know your next assignment?" I ask him, hoping to rescue us both from post-imperial gloom. He should be about ready for Serbia, I figure.

He gives me an adolescent, half-threatening glare with a Hollywood tough-guy sneer.

"I could tell you," he acknowledges, "but then I'd have to kill you."

Is God punishing me, I wonder? If this is what I sound like, whining about an ironing board maybe I deserve this conversation. I have been attached to the idea that I have to reestablish my life here on the model of my life at home. No wonder Andreas can't give me one, it would only further my narcissism. Next I will be asking for a toaster oven and a microwave. And no wonder he dropped me here. Whom else could stand this lout? Any self-respecting Cypriot would have lodged a beer bottle between his eyes by now.

I struggle to catch my balance.

"I like Cyprus," I tell him. "You never know what to expect. It's part of the fun."

My new-found friend stares at me mockingly.

"Oh, yes," he drawls, "fun."

I pour myself another small glass of Keo and attempt a conversation with the expatriate lady in a floral print dress to my right. She is surprised that I find the Cypriot-run English School adequate for Liz's education.

"Actually," I parry, "I think it compares pretty well to her school at home."

I see her eyebrows lift.

"We're only here for a half year," I add.

She wades in with her truncheon. "I suppose that would help."

I am relieved when the official part of the celebration gets under way. The table falls silent as a student declaration is read in Greek, then translated in English. Macedonia is Greece and Cyprus is indivisible. Next is a patriotic poem by a vibrant young lady with coal-black hair. Finally Andreas presents a few remarks for the occasion read in his own fine rhetorical style.

The crowd has gotten weary with speeches. There is movement and noise from the "other" side of the village and the applause grows thinner with each round of oratory. Finally the band stirs behind the microphone, a mixed group of drums, violins, guitars and an electric piano. The sharp rhythms of a Mediterranean dance song begin.

My tablemate looks up with disdain.

"Not even a proper band," he grumbles.

I smile over my beer to acknowledge his concern for the world's cultural standards, and search the crowd for a friendly face. This is turning into a life or death struggle. Another five minutes and he will be sharing the worst moments of his life.

I have spotted my dancing partner, Solon, who waves to me from another table where he sits with his wife and baby close beside. I have promised myself to stay off the dance floor, which is prominently located at the center of the festivities.

My friendship with Solon, which began at the first family gathering three months ago, begins and ends with the dance. His English is as slight as my Greek, so we talk haltingly and with the help of grimaces, shrugs and sighs when we are off the floor. His son looks like a miniature version of his father with his serious brow and his tiny laughing face. It is a strong face, and a happy one. Solon is a caring husband and a good father.

The band plays, but there are no takers. The Cypriots are caught between their desire to be modern and their longing for the past. I see Andreas in the distance seated next to the priest, his face animated. He never dances, has not since his wife died. Something in his heart refuses to be moved. But he is satisfied tonight, I can see, for despite all their differences, the village has turned out, filling the streets with feasting and laughter .

He is arguing with someone, his finger pointing heavenwards, his body poised as if to spring at his listener, who one must assume, has become illogical. Nothing delights Andreas more, except the moment when the straying lamb returns to the fold and listens to right reason.

My sad-hearted Englishman snorts. "Can you believe they dance to that noise?"

I look at him with a steady gaze. I'm tired of supporting his spleen. Even if my listening can be excused as ordinary politeness, I am beginning to feel like his accomplice.

Solon nods toward the dance floor, his right hand raised in the half-rotated gesture that indicates a question. Would I like to dance? I shove back my chair quietly and smile down at my table-mate.

"Excuse me," I say, "but I need to do something."

Rising, I peel off my suit jacket and undo my tie, abandoning my sense of civic responsibility. Let someone else listen to the UN.

Solon and I take the floor beside a man in his mid- thirties and his small son. We begin to dance slowly, and with a matter-of-factness that makes it all right. I begin gradually, beginning by imitating Solon's half-sliding, half-leaping turns

and pivots, my arms outstretched at shoulder height. After a few moments I am dancing, no longer imitating, but simply allowing my body to follow the swirling rhythm of the violin.

It is a clear night, and the crowd stirs as a few more dancers take the floor. A small boy and his father are joined by an older man, a gap-toothed, down-sized fellow with a raisin-wrinkled face and copper skin. I have seen him many times, but only now do I understand that he is the grandfather of the little boy. He is indisputably the best dancer of the village. His body seems to have lost the clumsy squareness of the human shape, as he glides softly from step to step, his worn black suit flowing about him. An ancient smile lights his face. Seated he is an old man; dancing, he is ageless. People begin to call out to him, and others who are not so confident come to share the floor.

It is important who you dance with. Your partner needs to treat you with respect and concern. Dancing is a risk. You can't help being yourself when you dance. The story is right there, sad or joyful, deep or superficial, for everyone to see. A good partner will help you feel safe enough to tell your story honestly. I am honored that Solon trusts me as readily as I do him. And it is a tribute to the Cypriots that they still respect this form of truth.

We break to rest and have a beer. You can't be drunk and dance well, the demands of movement are too strenuous, but the beer helps me to overcome my inhibitions. I am impatient for the band to begin again, but the musicians have stopped to drink and to chatter with their friends. The moon, half risen against the black night sky, is a sliced lemon wedge over the tops of the low village houses. The air is vibrant with the slight scent of sage that blows off the fields. The bare electric lights strung from wires hung on the housefronts give the scene the look of a stage setting.

The song springs up again as the musicians pick up their instruments. On and on it goes, sliding up and down the scale as the band flings their notes onto the night air. I am sweating now, with my sleeves rolled and my jacket and tie tossed aside on the back of a folding steel chair. My white dress shirt sticks to my back with perspiration. I feel free, released from duty and self-denial.

Andreas moves to the side of the floor where Solon and I sit. He looms beside me, large and protective, proud of me in his big-hearted way, and perhaps relieved that I have not made a fool of myself.

"If you keep this up," he murmurs with a chuckle, "we will have to give you a passport."

I dance until I am tired. When I return at last to the table, the agricultural expert is gone and the UN crowd scattered. I talk instead with Solon and his wife, smiling and nodding as we manage to talk about our children.

Around us the long rows of tables are being stripped of their white paper covers by the women of the village. Here and there a husband gathers the remains of a souvla for the dogs, tossing the empty tinfoil wrappers into plastic garbage bags. Children yell to one another, chasing like swallows around the clumps of adults reluctant to abandon the bare folding tables. A group of women stand at the doorway of a house, one carrying the remains of a huge bowl of salad. The windows are open, the tall blue shutters thrown back. Dishes are passed from the street into the kitchen. Under the strong light of the ceiling fixture they tease and laugh, calling their challenges to one another as they work.

Liz and Nana run up suddenly like birds startled from cover.

"She has to come!" Nana implores. "I'll die if she doesn't."

"We'll both die," Liz echoes.

"Please?" Nana can't bear waiting for an answer. "You have to say yes, you know."

"I can't say yes, because I don't know what you want."

"My cousin's house, then to my father's to sleep over."

"We'll see."

"Oh, Dad."

"You're coming," Nana announces. "You have to."

Andreas finishes a caucus at the head table and ambles steadily up the street towards us. He is deep in thought, but as he catches sight of us his smile flashes again. The embattled public servant is replaced by the affectionate father and friend.

"Come on," he murmurs, stroking Nana's hair. Laying a gentle hand on Liz's shoulder he steers them toward the parking where we have left the cars.

"Papa, can Liz sleep over? Her father said it was all right."

Andreas shoots me a knowing smile. "Is this true?"

"I didn't say anything yet." He nods. "I think it may be a little late this time," he says, then more soothingly, "she can come tomorrow night, nai?"

"Yes," I say, "you'll have another chance."

The girls grumble to the parking but accept our decision. Andreas and I walk in parental tandem as the girls race ahead to the cars.

"Thank you for inviting us here," I tell him.

He smiles, taking my hand.

"You are always welcome," he says. He is being most diplomatic, but he also means it.

I am grateful to Andreas for tonight. I remember our first telephone conversation months ago, when I first called him from New York. Ken had been urging me to make contact and I finally had overcome my basic shyness and called.

"What can I bring you?" I had asked, assuming from my conversations with colleagues that Cyprus must lack some small luxuries.

"Nothing," Andreas had replied, "we have all that we need."

After this evening, I can see what he meant. There is nothing missing in Cyprus, or for that matter, in me. It is odd, but thousands of miles from my birthplace, I feel very much at home.

It is late, nearly two o'clock, when Liz and I stumble up the white marble stairs to our apartment. We are exhausted but happy.

"Did you have a good evening?" I ask.

"The best."

"There's a wedding tomorrow. Do you want to go?" "Dad." She leans wearily against the doorframe as I fumble the key into the lock.

"Just kidding."

Two weeks later, George and Nana bring by an iron and an ironing board. I put them in the kitchen to use in emergencies. I have already begun taking my shirts to the dry cleaner.

ALL ABOUT

MENTORING

A Publication of Empire State College

Issue 5, Spring 1995

Interactions

Miriam Tatzel, Hudson Valley Center

He was once a student here and had slowly amassed some credits. I accommodated his sluggishness in a variety of ways, from plugging in a group study to make up for one lapsed contract to stretching out the contract time. I put my foot down, so to speak, after the year "deadline" for one painfully drawn-out contract, and gave him partial credit for what he had completed. I think he resented my not letting him "finish."

In the intervening years he would call once in awhile to reenroll but didn't follow through. He is a shop teacher at a school in the city, and with a degree he can become an administrator. Last spring he called to say he had a sabbatical for the coming year and wanted to plan courses. I mailed him the application form and the listing of group studies and CDL courses. We made appointments that were broken.

Now that I'm back after August, he's ready to enroll. He comes to a meeting with the partially filled-out application form. I'm annoyed that he hasn't sent in the application or examined the list of offerings, and I hate feeling this way, short-tempered with a student. By way of explaining his lack of preparation, he says he had a difficult and hectic summer. What was the hardship? "So many weddings."

He has an approved degree program, needs 12 credits to graduate and 16 credits for his sabbatical. We go round and round about what he can take. He needs Special Education for his concentration; that will have to be a tutorial. There are appropriate study groups for him in Hartsdale and New Paltz, but he says categorically, he "won't travel." He voices one decision priority: "What's most convenient?" "CDL," I answer and point to the offerings in the social sciences. I ask if anything "jumps out" at him. Just as I had intuited, he asks about "Hispanics in America" (he is Puerto Rican). Good. I sign him up.

Now comes the interesting part. He starts filling out the application form right in my office. I am appalled, but also somehow amused by the situation. How should I respond? I check myself out and decide I am not really inconvenienced, and let him proceed. I shuffle some papers, looking for a resume for a special ed. tutor, among other chores, and at the same time I am observing him.

Today, as in times past, I find him to be lackadaisical, distracted, bemused. Yet I don't see this as a personality trait. We once had a conversation about his kitchen renovation and he came alive for that (I, too, am an enthusiastic remodeler). My feelings toward him soften as I apprehend how much he doesn't want to do this. As if he were reading my mind, he says, "I wish I could get motivated." Then, by way of reassuring himself, he adds, "The problem is getting started."

He finishes filling out the application and CDL book order forms. He shakes my hand in parting, which I take to be a gesture of friendship. Now I'm left with figuring out how to get him enrolled and finding a tutor. I'm out on a limb.

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MENTORING
A Publication of Empire State College

Issue 5, Spring 1995

MI NEWS - December,1995

Mentoring Institute Advisors-

The Mentoring Institute Advisory Group met in at the Northeast Center on Friday, November 4th. The advisors are:

Bob Carey	Metro
Cathy Copley-Woods	Corporate College
Susan Hallgarth	Labor
Marjorie Lavin	Academic Affairs
Tim Lehmann	NCAL
David Livesay	Central New York
Sylvain Nagler	Northeast
Susan Oaks	CDL
Irene Rivera de Royston	Genesee Valley
Bob Rodgers	Niagara Frontier
Paula Silver	Long Island
Miriam Tatzel	Hudson Valley

Members of the Advisory Group and cochairs Jay Gilbert and Chris Rounds can be reached at @[maillist]miadvise.

Themes We'll be Working on-

Several topics kept recurring in our discussions, and we thought these might provide a useful focus for *All About Mentoring* articles, center and regional workshops and All College presentations during the coming year . They are:

- Writing... self-assessment, journaling, critical writing;
- Helping students become effective independent learners;
- Students working with other students;
- Using traditional means toward nontraditional ends; and
- Working outside one's area of expertise as a form of revitalization.

Please let us know if you'd like to join this discussion, and what other themes you'd like to pursue with us.

All College Conference Presentations-

Last year's All College Conference featured several presentations tied to the ongoing work of the MI. We'd like to see that happen again in 1995. Please contact us with suggestions for panels or individual presentations, and we'll do what we can

to help.

Contributing to AAM-

We would like to encourage everyone to consider writing for *All About Mentoring*. We hope to continue the focus on mentoring in theory and practice... emphasizing both what we value most about what we do and new approaches to mentoring practice. We'd also welcome reviews of books and articles you've found most helpful in your work with students or enlightening regarding mentoring. Please send submissions or proposals via e-mail to jgilbert and crouds. You can also call Jay at 914 948-6206 or Chris at 607 721-8654. We want to hear from you!

Choosing the Next Cochair-

Jay will be completing his 18 month term as MI cochair on March 30. We want to be sure that before that fateful day we've canvassed the community for prospective chairs and assured a smooth transition. So expect to hear from us regarding nominations for this position in the next few weeks.