

Navigating by the North Star

Bridging the Pedagogical Gap between Content and Structure in Higher Education

Kendall Dunnigan

New College of California, 15290 Coleman Valley Rd., Occidental, CA, USA, kcdunnigan0023@yahoo.com

Abstract

Numerous institutions of higher education throughout the United States are dedicated to providing education that seeks as its goal a more socially just and ecologically sustainable world. Progressive curricula challenging ecological and human exploitation and promoting alternatives is being taught in classes throughout the nation. However, a gap exists between curricula and management in most educational institutions that diminish the teaching goals. Administrative and governance structures to which academic programs are tied for students services and overall college functions lag behind the progressive thinking in classrooms and often lack systems and structures that embody the mission of the institution. Administrative and governance systems can do more to support academic goals directly in terms of effective, mission-based management as well as indirectly by modeling the progressive society envisioned in classrooms in the administrative and governance systems and, thus, extend the learning of the classroom to an integrated totality of the college experience. A sociologist at heart, Mahatma Gandhi advocated, "Be the change you wish to see in the world."

The purpose of this paper is: 1) to analyze the hidden socializing impacts of organizational systems and structures in formal education on students; 2) to place the purpose of modern education into an ecological and social context; and, 3) to promote ecological and community based organizational systems that may serve in to bridge the gap between teaching and governing in higher education.

I have been working for seven years with a group of committed staff and faculty at New College's North Bay Campus (NBC) to "bridge the gap" and create an organization that embodies its mission in every aspect of the organization from curricular content to toilet bowl cleaner to effective accountability systems. Examples of the work that has been implemented at New College will be given at the end of the paper. I hope that documenting the governance work being done at the NBC will inspire other progressive institutions of higher education (and perhaps other institutions as well) to work toward diminishing the gap between their mission and operating structures in order to strengthen the impact of their educational goals.

Keywords: higher education, sociology; democracy, governance, organizational systems

The Hidden Curriculum

"The hidden curriculum is taught by the school, not by any teacher...something is coming across to the pupils which may never be spoken in the English lesson or prayed about in assembly. They are picking-up an approach to living and an attitude to learning."
Meighan

Recently, an undergraduate student of mine calculated that "by the time we graduate from high school, most of us will have spent about 2,600 days or 18,200 hours in school." Yet a person who is ready to learn can learn the basic reading, writing, and math skills in just 100 hours. What then, my student asked, is done during the remaining 18,100 hours of school?

In the US, residents are legally required to attend school from the tender age of 5 until 16. Formal education is a ubiquitous experience in this country, yet few of us, students or teachers or administrators, question the purpose or impact of the educational process on our personal lives and society as a whole. Why are we taught math instead of gardening and English composition instead of conflict resolution? Why are students in a class grouped by age? Why is lecturing a common pedagogy? As progressive educators in higher education whose goal of education is toward creating a more just and sustainable world, we are challenged to understand the tool of education and how it can be utilized to bring about that better world. Is what is being done with the remaining 18,100 hours moving students (and us) any closer to the vision of a better society?

Conventional education socializes or domesticates students to perpetuate the structures in our society by keeping the structures and processes of both the schooling system as well as society at large invisible while at the same time shaping students with them, consciously and unconsciously. Students are unable to "protect" themselves from being shaped by these influences because they have little or no awareness of the process being done to them. Of course, many students can feel the process of socialization they are going through even if they are not able to name and articulate it. Lacking the tools of critique to create an analysis and guide their actions, students rebel in chaotic and often self-destructive ways. In turn, school leaders and teachers, who often also lack an adequate analysis

of the institution of schooling, allocate significant time, attention, and money to maintaining order through authoritarian means. Their efforts are unsuccessful at stemming the steady rebellion by students against “authority figures”. Whether administrators, teachers or students recognize it, the additional 18,100 hours of schooling result in highly developed social behaviors.

Sociologist Philip Jackson originally coined the phrase "hidden curriculum" to explain the idea that schools do more than simply aid the transfer of knowledge between one generation and the next. Jackson described education as a socialization process; specifically “a process that involves the transmission of norms and values as well as a body of socially approved knowledge (that also involves socially-derived conceptions of what constitutes valid knowledge, acceptable levels of understanding and so forth).

The basic concept of the hidden curriculum is that students learn things that are not actually taught in the formal curriculum. In his 2004 book, *Themes and Perspectives*, Haralambos explains, "The hidden curriculum consists of those things pupils learn through the experience of attending school rather than the stated educational objectives of such institutions." The hidden curriculum refers to the way the learning process is organized both consciously (the physical organization of the school as separate from home and work and the organization of the classroom with the teacher in front and pupils typically seated in rows) and unconsciously (the way individual teachers interpret the behavior of pupils and the way teachers have different expectations of pupils based on interpretations of behavior in class). The structure of the educational process silently communicates values held by the larger society. Values are expressed through structures such as where the education takes place, who the participants are, the relationship between the participants, how success is measured, and the overall purpose of the educational process.

At the level of social interaction in the classroom, societal values are translated into norms that govern the general behavior of the “participants” in the socialization process. Norms are expressed through such things as how order is created and maintained in the classroom as well as the specific relationship between the various participants. Norms play out in a class based on a number of factors including class, race and gender.

New York State Teacher of the Year, John Taylor Gatto describes what is taught in the classroom as:

Forgetfulness - “Forcing students to forget that they taught themselves important things like walking and talking.”

Bewilderment and confusion - Schools teach the disconnection of everything. All subjects are taught separately and out of context- math separate from science, English separate from history.

Class position - Children are assigned to a social class and a child’s success is judged by how well they conform to that order; Can they sit still, follow directions from the teacher, color in the lines, and so on.

Indifference - “Schools teach that nothing is worth finishing because some arbitrary power intervenes both periodically and aperiodically.” Students are forced to follow the teachers interests never their own.

Emotional dependency and provisional self-esteem - “By stars, checks, smiles, frowns, honors, and disgraces [and grades], schools condition students to lifelong emotional dependency... Schools reinforce how absolute power really is by granting and denying access to fundamental needs for toilets, water, privacy and movement.”

Intellectual dependency - “Good people wait for a teacher to tell them what to do. Good people do it the way the teacher wants it to be done.”

Gatto’s description of what students are learning is an indictment to the establishment of formal schooling that purports to be simply helping “students succeed”. The overwhelming socialization of the schooling process seems to be as hidden to school administrators and educators as it is to students. The unconscious focus on the socialization aspect of education is exemplified by The San Francisco Unified School District’s top ten academic goals for 2000-2001 in which only the first goal mentions academics. The rest focus on increasing enrollment of particular groups of students in particular programs, increasing overall attendance, and decreasing suspension. Enrollment, attendance, and suspension are directly addressing the behavior of students in relation to the social order and could be argued have little to do with a student’s academic learning.

During the 1800’s in the US, educational leaders gave little pretense that schooling was for anything but “character development and economic and social control.” The hidden aspect of the curriculum was that the purpose of the social control was not towards maximizing democratic and economic rights but to “further the privileges, power, and wealth of one social group [the economic elite] at the expense of other groups.” Rhetoric about the purpose and goals of education has changed since the 1800’s, with current educational mission statements that focus on “school-to-career” preparedness in a high tech world. Nonetheless, the structure of the school has remained virtually the same: students sitting in desks inside of classrooms following directions from the teacher who is teaching a state-mandated curriculum and who is in turn taking orders from a principal/president and superintendent/Board of Trustees and so on. In spite of the frequent discussions in schools about civic and career preparedness, few schools employ methods in the classroom and fewer in school structures of governance and administration that truly prepare students to meet the goals that are ostensibly set for them.

A major problem in 20th and 21st century education has been the philosophical shift away from the political to the perfunctory or technical purpose of schools. Schools no longer understand their role in society as molding students into a particular political context, and instead take a technocratic view of education as merely the training of skills to be undertaken by the most efficient means possible. Educational leaders today present the school as a group of apolitical, gnoisological professionals concerned solely with student mastery of skills for an increasingly high-tech economy. Giroux explains, “Citizenship education became entwined in a ‘culture of positivism’, one that displayed little interest in the ways in which schools acted as agents of social and cultural reproduction in a society marked by significant inequities in wealth, power, and privilege.” Yet, education is inherently political because of its socialization aspect. In her 1983 book, *Ways With Words*, Shirley Brice Heath describes the political nature of school by saying, “The school is not a neutral objective arena; it is an institution which has the goal of changing people’s values, skills and knowledge base.”

Educators who are aware of the social construction of knowledge and the socialization aspect of education are compelled to ask whether the

reproduction of current societal structures is a goal to seek or whether there are other visions of society that we would like to aim towards with the tool of the education.

Peter McLaren expresses the opportunity of teachers as,

“While it may be true that we can never escape ideology, the teacher must both reveal how subjectivity gets constructed and legitimated through dominant pedagogical discourses and eventually challenge the imaginary relations that students live relative to the symbolic and material conditions of their existence.”

Giroux further challenges critical educators to not stop at describing the hidden curriculum but to use it to move from confusion and apathy to action and empowerment in social change. He says,

“It is crucial that the notion of the hidden curriculum be linked to a notion of liberation, grounded in values of personal dignity and social justice... concerned with both reproduction and transformation. At the core of such a theory would be the imperative to link approaches to human consciousness and action to forms of structural analysis that explore how they interpenetrate each other rather than appear as separate pedagogical concerns.”

If progressive educators wish to achieve the goal of creating a different society then a school's philosophy must be re-politicized acknowledging the power of education to do as the famed popular education theorist and practitioner, Paulo Freire, repeated - either to domesticate students to the status quo or to empower students to participate in shaping the world around them. The opportunity of progressive educators is to consciously harness the awesomely powerful tool of education to educate and socialize towards ecological sustainable and socially just goals by embedding the values of those goals into both the content and the structure of the classroom as well as the organizational whole.

Earth in Mind

If the replication of current societal structures is not the desired goal of education, then what is the goal? In order to answer this question, a broader view of the world we live in is instructive; what is the world we live in today, how did it get like this and where would we like to go from here?

In his book, *Earth in Mind*, David Orr offers an ecological perspective:

If today is a typical day on the planet earth, we will lose 116 square miles of rain forest, or about an acre a second. We will lose another 72 square miles to encroaching deserts, the result of human mismanagement and overpopulation. We will lose 40-250 species, and no one knows if it is 40 or 250. Today the human population will increase by 250,000. And today we will add 2,700 tons of chlorofluorocarbons and 15 million tons of carbon dioxide to the atmosphere. Tonight the earth will be a little hotter, its waters more acidic, and the fabric of life more threadbare. By year's end the numbers are staggering: The total loss of rain forest will equal an area the size of the state of Washington; expanding deserts will equal the size of the state of West Virginia; and the global population will have risen by more than 90,000,000. By the year 2000 perhaps as much as 20% of the life forms extant on the planet in the year 1900 will be extinct.

The truth is that many things on which our future health and prosperity depend are in dire jeopardy: climate stability, the resilience and productivity of natural systems, the beauty of the natural world, and biological diversity.

It is worth noting that this is not the work of ignorant people. Rather, it is largely the results of work by people with BAs, BSs, LLBs, MBAs, and PhDs. Elie Wiesel once made the same point, noting that the designers and perpetrators of Auschwitz, Dachau, and Buchenwald- the Holocaust- were the heirs of Kant and Goethe, widely thought to be the best educated people on earth. But their education did not serve as an adequate barrier to barbarity. What was wrong with their education? In Wiesel's words,

‘It emphasized theories instead of values, concepts rather than human beings, abstractions rather than consciousness, answers instead of questions, ideology and efficiency rather than conscience.’

I believe that the same could be said of our education... It is a matter of no small consequence that the only people who have lived sustainably on the planet for any length of time could not read, or like the Amish do not make a fetish of reading. My point is that education is not guarantee of decency, prudence or wisdom.

Orr's point is not to do away with formal education, but to demand that education be situated within the context of a living planet whose resources and biological capacity for sustaining all of life (not just human civilization) are strained to the breaking point. Placed in this context, formal education would be a powerful tool to address these issues.

An ecological education would allow students to understand that human populations are not immune to natural laws. Not only would an education with the awareness of the planet we live on teach students that we are not immune to nature, but that we are inextricable part of nature. We are animals existing within the same bounds of yeast, rabbits and hawks.

The planet's resources are limited and humans are pushing up against those limits. People are experiencing the impact of resource over-consumption and environmental degradation in places all over the globe: water supplies are polluted and depleted, top soil washed away, seed diversity lost, farming knowledge lost, oil reserves depleted, and so on. Humans in less-consuming nations have long been effected by the dire state of the environment from wars over the last remaining fertile soils in an area like Sudan to poisoned drinking water from industrial farming of bananas in Central America to the lack of fish off the coasts of all the continents due to massive over-fishing by commercial fleets to the

decreased in seal hunting days experienced by Inuits as a result of global climate change.

Middle and upper class communities in the US have insulated themselves from immediate environmental poisoning by placing toxic waste incinerators and the like in poor communities of color and relegating unsafe and unhealthy work to the working and lower classes in this county as well as overseas. A vivid example is that of the infamous maquiladoras, factories producing goods for the American market that sit just miles over our southern border. Beyond the US's southern border, maquiladoras also sit beyond US laws on labor, safety, wages, and environment and, unfortunately, beyond the radar of the most Americans. In Nogales, Mexico very near Arizona, maquiladora workers are exposed to an array of cancer-causing substances not allowed under US law. In an interview with Amy Goodman on *Democracy Now*, Teresa Leal, an organizer with the Southwest Network For Environmental and Economic Justice, explained,

"The most endemic is lead, over 70% of the maquilas have lead in some process. ...Prestalite makes batteries, the terminals for car batteries and other spark plugs... all of that is a high content of lead in it. Workers... were getting 50 parts per million in their bloodstream of lead. And the only reason they found out is because they were getting dizzy spells, they were having chronic headaches, they had nervous problems... and they didn't go to the plant manager because he refused to accept that. They would test them and the testing would be secret. They would not allow them to know the results. Ten parts per million is acceptable and even that is not acceptable.

This case is not only an unthinkable human and environmental abuse based on deep-seated racist and classist values but one of environmental myopia; as humans are suffering from poisoning as a result of processes illegal in the US, toxic materials from the maquiladoras wash into rivers that run into the US and out into our shared seas. Toxic plumes, over-fishing, global climate change, and peak oil respect no boundaries. There is no hiding from resource contamination and depletion. An education with "earth in mind" would help us to understand these issues, impacts, and solutions.

Education towards Justice and Equality

If we consider the Earth as broadest context framing a meaningful educational system, then the human community becomes the next rung on the chart. As humans on a planet, we are challenged to live within nature's limits; as well we are challenged with living within our own species, negotiating the social structures, ideologies, and dynamics that are in place. How can education help us successfully navigate the landscape called society?

Although the human experience includes economic, cultural, spiritual, ecological, physical and emotional realms, the concept of progress in US society has been unduly defined in economic terms by incremental gains in Gross National Product (GNP). The GNP is not only a purely economic measurement, but also a radically narrow one at that. In *Schooling in Capitalistic America*, Bowles and Gintis explain,

"Progress and welfare in capitalist society is highly uneven. Americans believe in progress. We believe that the United States is the most advanced country in the world. We mark our achievements by the wondrous development of science, technology, and organization that can potentially benefit all areas of social life... But the only area in which we measure real, clear-cut progress is in the area of commodity production: Per capita gross national product (corrected for inflation) has quadrupled since the close of the nineteenth century.

Where else should we expect social progress to be equally evident? In greater community integrity, better environment, more meaningful work, greater equity... many of these aspects of life are deteriorating in the United States. But this is not necessary or inevitable."

The modern view on life is constricted by neo-colonial agendas that diminish what is "valuable" to that which can be traded on the stock market. Commodification of mind, body and soil is the doctrine of neo-liberal economic theory. Our thoughts, ideas and DNA are the only territories left for further colonialization and privatization. However, in communities all around the globe, there is resistant to the global corporate agenda. Education can serve the people's agenda to reclaim the commons, both in the ecological and the human domains.

Cognitive Dissonance and the Dearth of Democracy

Any discussion of the purpose of education in the US must include citizen education or education that enables citizens to participate in the democratic (rule by the people) governing of their city, state and nation. Giroux explains,

"In the classical Greek definition of citizen education, education was seen as political, designed to educate the citizen for intelligent and active participation in the civic community. Moreover, intelligence was viewed as an extension of ethics, a manifestation and demonstration of the doctrine of the good and just life... If we were to use citizenship in the Greek sense against which to judge the quality and meaning of civic education in this county, a strong case could be made that, for the most part, it has been a failure."

Giroux goes on to say that ideals of democracy can be seen in the rhetoric of modern education but "such ideals have not made their way, in general, into the day-to-day practices of schools". Since the concept of democracy is so revered in the US, the lack of integration of democratic practice in to society at large is deeply problematic - hypocritical rhetoric leading to cognitive dissonance, confusion, rebellion, and, ultimately, lack of participation (and any hope or dream of). If we agree that societal values are passed on through the structure of the school, workplace and civic life, then one could argue that democracy is *not* a value held by Americans, but rather propaganda used to perpetuate a myth, maintain ideological control, and to generate buy-in from an uncritical citizenry for blatantly undemocratic state actions such as subjugating portions of its

citizenry, imprisoning its citizenry, sending citizens to die for elites, mismanagement of precious resources, and using its citizenry's money for occupying other sovereign nations, kidnapping democratically elected foreigners and undermining democratically-elected foreign governments.

Schools are hardly alone in their lack of adherence to democratic ideals. There is little democracy occurring in most places in the nation. In schools, students have little if any say in the running of the school. At work, employees typically have little say or even input into the functioning of the workplace. And in civic life, fewer than half the population participates in even the most rudimentary form of democratic decision-making -that of voting.

The socialization process of school is so powerful that students believe they live in a democratic society even though they are never allowed to participate in the governance of their own classroom or school. McLaren argues that not only does schooling not teach students how to take part in democratic systems but acculturates them against them.

“Americans traditionally have assumed that schools function as a mechanism for the development of democratic and egalitarian social order... [But] schools do not provide opportunities in the broad Western humanist tradition for self and social empowerment and in fact often work against those opportunities.”

What is the impact on students who have been shaped to replicate societal structures of hierarch and authoritarianism, but who intellectually believe in the concept of democracy? Those who are not part of the plutocratic ruling class and attempt to have power in decision-making in their lives are often faced with societal condemnation for behavior that is not seen as acceptable by the more thoroughly domesticated masses. Students who ask or worse demand to shape school policies are often seen as troublemakers. Workers who demand to have power in decisions about the workplace are often shunned, illegally fired, and blacklisted. People at large who dedicate themselves to participating in the political process are often labeled as unpatriotic activists, dissidents, or traders.

Cognitive dissonance develops when people believe in the messages they have been told in school such as democracy and justice that are not in reality valued by the society. People who think they have been prepared to take part in a democratic society but find a society with little tolerance for the application of these values as well as who find they have few of the skills needed to implement such ideas often have strong feelings of confusion and anger which can give way to depression, apathy or violence. The slang term “going postal” may give us insight into the deadly outrage that can result from this cognitive dissonance. However, most people are so successfully socialized to uphold norms of behavior that their anger at a system that does not actually embody the values that they were made to believe it should turn in on themselves in the form of depression, apathy or addiction.

What is the impact on a *society* whose students have been shaped to replicate societal structures of hierarch and authoritarianism, who intellectually believe in democracy but who have not practiced in it? Other than the anger of a small, throwaway portion of the society, why might one be concerned with the lack of consistency between educational rhetoric and social reality? Jared Diamond, UCLA geography professor and author, argues that fate of the human race may depend on our ability to effectively practice democracy. He has done extensive research on why some societies live on for millennia while others wither and disappear within centuries or even decades. The Highlanders of Papua New Guinea have lived for over 47,000 years on their remote island, farming for over 7,000 of those years. The Greenland Norse on the other hand, died off in little more than 400 years. What factors influence a group's likelihood to survive? Diamond offers five key factors that greatly determine a society's ability to thrive or perish. A society only has control on one of the five - how the society responds to the four others (the rest are environmental conditions such as soil fertility, climate change, and the like). A successful response (that will allow the society to survive over time) depends on the degree of openness of the society to change with changing conditions. Is the society curious, innovative, and adaptable like the Papua New Guineans or rigidly attached to those behaviors that once proved successful but not longer are so like the Greenland Norse? If a society is open to change, how does it change as a group and adopt new methods? What kinds of tribal decision-making proved to serve the adaptability of a society? In many cases, “bottom-up” decision making like that in Highland New Guinea or in Tikopia (small island near the Solomon Islands) proved essential in allowing the group to respond to changing environmental conditions.

When issues arose for the people of New Guinea they would sit, and sit and sit and talk and talk and talk until everyone was satisfied with a solution to the issue. Islanders used a form of consensus decision-making in which each person's view was considered, many plans weighed, and, ultimately, when all members felt they could live with it, a decision reached that all would abide by. ,

If education is placed in the context of the survival of the human race and if democratic decision-making is vital to that success, then how can we design an educational system that teaches to that end? What if this educational process is designed not for social reproduction but rather social innovation? How would values such as democracy, justice, equality, and ecological sustainability be taught so that students graduating into society could actually practice them?

In *Teaching Democracy*, W.C. Parker states that, “... the role of education in democracies new and old is to help to form citizens who are deeply engaged in the service of the public good, not merely in their own self interest. From this perspective, education would aim us towards preparing people to contribute to a particular vision of the world, a non-self interested, democratic human community. Banks takes this argument one step further by proposing that, “The national community should embody democratic ideals and values, such as those articulated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights. Students also need to acquire the knowledge and skills required to become effective citizens in the global community.” Here Banks suggests that not only should the human community be based on democratic values but also offers a model for what type of values those should be.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) can be used as a framework for basic human justice and as a basis for democratic citizenship, which embraces global diversity while attaining a global standard. It offers a common underpinning to the highly political topic of “democratic education” that allows the discussion to rise above the fray allowing the conversation to remain political but within a context that is difficult to be rejected as unworthy as a national goal of education. The community-related goal of education could then be to proliferate the rights set out in the UDHR as well as the responsibilities proposed by Starkey. We would not only educate but also socialize students into “a culture of human rights”.

Crafting Context-based Education

To achieve a different kind of education that prepares students to grapple with the reality of living on a changing planet as part of a human society that would like to survive, even thrive indefinitely, an integration of curricular content, classroom pedagogy, and organizational structure and processes must be attempted. For students, the school is the society. Any critique of the society must extend through the classroom and into the functioning of the school as a whole. When like in most school settings this fails to occur, the first inklings of cognitive dissonance arises for students due to the rift between message and practice from the classroom to the school board room. If we concur with the concept of the hidden curriculum, the structure of the school administration as well as the classroom sends a powerful message to students about what values are truly held by educators and, thus, society at large. As contextual educators, we must challenge ourselves to weave the purpose of our teaching and the values that support it through every aspect of an educational institution to create a truly transformative educational experience.

Radical pedagogists have argued for consistency between values and practices in progressive education. They reason that if our goal is to teach toward liberation (where individuals are empowered to participate in shaping the world around them into a more equitable and just society), then the values that underlay liberation must be practiced in the classroom. Freire explains “Liberatory education is fundamentally a situation where the teacher and the students both have to be learners, both have to be cognitive subjects... critical agents in the act of knowing.” Both students and teachers must be engaged in the deconstruction and reconstruction of the social construction of knowledge as well as the socialization aspect of education. Students can experience this in class because it is likely the first time the veil has been lifted for them, and teachers can experience because they can continue to have fresh insights on the nature of society due observing what is important to students and how school and society has impacted them. Freire’s words are inspirational but limited to the container of the classroom. The classroom is only a small unit in the school as a whole and does not necessarily play a role in the power base of the school - meaning who decides what about whom. By criticizing traditional schools, we must remember that we are actually criticizing the industrial, capitalistic society that shaped it. Therefore, our critique of the traditional school must not stop at the walls of the classroom but must extend throughout the school itself as we wish it to extend to society itself. We are compelled to apply our understanding and analysis of the transformation of society beyond the coursework and into the governance of the school. Here in the heart of school decision-making can we begin to transform ourselves, our students, our classrooms, our schools and society.

Offering a transformative learning experience while failing to bring liberatory structures to the school administration and governance undermines the Freirian goal of liberatory education in its totality. In the short term, we fail by not using the most powerful, situated, and applied learning opportunities at hand. It is powerful and situated because students experience school as society and it is a microcosm of society. It is applied because students are in school every day so it is the perfect learning opportunity. We don’t need to take students to the city council to see democracy in action. We can invite them into staff and faculty meetings and onto the Boards of Trustees where they can *participate* in democracy. Through their participation we further our goal of liberatory education while gaining invaluable insight and assistance from them in the running of the school. The magnitude of the assistance should outweigh our fear of losing control (left-over struggles with our own antiquated internal colonization). In the long-term, we will always fail to achieve a transformed society if we cannot transform the educational institution that cradles the student, teacher and curricula.

Making the Road by Walking

There are only a handful of modern schools that attempt to integrate educational goals and values (i.e. content and structure merger) into the whole school (classroom to boardroom). As a group these schools are often referred to as open or democratic schools. The most famous in the US is the Sudbury Valley School, which has no “teachers”, no required classes, no set curricula but has twice the national average of students accepted to US universities each year. Homeschooling, unschooling, and indigenous education could also be argued to fit into the category of content/structure merger but they are not institutions. There are “work colleges” such as Berea and Warren Wilson in which students not only take classes but also staff the school in order to gain work experience and as an ethic of service. Outside of universities exist popular education centers such The Highland Center founded by Myles Horton. Highlander was instrumental in the civil rights movement training hundreds of people to be community organizers. It was one of the first educational centers to train blacks and whites in the same classrooms as well as to employ blacks and whites in equal positions on the staff.

How do teachers, administrators and students work together to create a values-integrated learning organization? The story of the title of this document, *Navigating by the North Star*, may be illustrative. Ancient Polynesian ocean explorers would fill up their vaka taurua (the ancient double-hulled voyaging canoes) and set off to distance points such as the Hawaiian Islands. It took numerous trips to find the Hawaiian island and then to settle them. To return to the motherland after a voyage and then to again find the new lands, the Polynesian paddlers depended on the Hoku-pa’ā or North Star to guide them. Since the North Star stays in the same place in the night sky, seafarers were able to discern which direction they were going in depending on where they were in relation to the star. The North Star was a reliable navigation point since it was so far away that it appeared to remain stationary. A mountaintop wouldn’t be a good navigation point for long voyages because it would soon be out of sight over the horizon.

Like the ancient mariners, modern educational explorers have a north star of our own - the vision we articulate in mission statements, goal and purposes of courses. We can use our highest vision of what the education can be as our North Star, a goal that can never be wholly realized but that can act as navigation point by which we can understand where we are, where we are going, and how far we have come. Our task is to

bridge the gap between the vision and the practice of education as much as possible by developing criteria that help us to assess our practices in light of our north star.

Androgogy Embodied: New College of California's North Bay Campus

Within educational institutions, alignment between the institutional mission and the academic program is common goal. However, congruency between curricular content and organizational systems is rarely a focus of concern.

New College's North Bay Campus is different in this manner. A unique aspect of New College's North Bay Campus is its work to align the mission with the systems of governance. The North Bay Campus works to embody the campus mission by creating effective governance structures and processes that are in line with the campus mission, that include meaningful participation from those directly involved and impacted by the educational institution, namely faculty, staff and students, and that are transparent to stakeholders. Faculty, staff, and students weave a basket of governance by defining the structure (the basket itself), employing processes (how we handle the basket) and methodically working through governance, organizational and administrative issues (the contents of the basket).

For five years, the campus has been continually working to align academics and governance systems. The following section details the history and mission of New College's North Bay Humanities Program in Culture, Ecology and Sustainable Community in order to demonstrate how the governance goals line up with the academics. (Detailed descriptions of the academics assessment system and governance systems used at the North Bay Campus can be attained by contacting the author.)

History and Mission of New College's North Bay Campus

New College of California is an institute of higher education that has as its mission education towards a more just, sacred, and sustainable world. By "just" it is meant that New College aspires to teach toward a world in which all forms of inequality and dehumanization among people is overcome through both conventional liberal achievements like the expansion of legal and political rights as well as through emerging modes of social action that foster empathy, trust and mutual understanding. Educators at New College follow in the philosophical tradition of popular educators and critical pedagogists. By "sacred" it is meant that New College aspires to teach toward to affirm the inviolate beauty and interconnectedness of all life and deepen the sense of awe and grace that accompanies an awareness of this interconnectedness. And by "sustainable" it is meant that New College aspires to teach toward a world in which all human activity is expressive of an ecological sensitivity that assures the extension of a just and sacred world to all of existence across the dimensions of time and space.

New College's North Bay Campus recognizes that humanity is at a pivotal moment in its history. As societies face growing resource constraints, they must inevitably undertake a comprehensive transition away from an extractive, exploitive model of development characterized by political and economic centralization, long-distance transportation of goods, and ever-increasing consumption of resources. They must move instead toward a sustainable mode of existence characterized by local production for local consumption, distributed decision-making powers, and dramatically reduced rates of resource usage.

Given this historical and social context, the mission of New College of California's North Bay Program in Culture, Ecology, and Sustainable Community is to:

- Provide an education that both honors the passions and talents of our students, and focuses these passions and talents in formulating holistic solutions to create a sustainable world;
- Develop and model ecological systems thinking, critical thinking, empathy, and intuition as the basis for understanding society and culture;
- Model equitable, transparent, and effective decision-making processes;
- Provide a supportive community for intellectual inquiry, activist work, and healing at both the personal and collective levels; and
- Synthesize personal transformation, practical leadership skills, eco-literacy, and the building of alternatives into strategies and practices that lead to a more just, sacred, and sustainable world.

New College North Bay seeks to provide students with the knowledge and skills that will enable them personally to thrive during this period of change, and also to be effective social change agents able to help humankind undertake the transition to sustainability with intelligence, compassion, and creativity, protecting the natural environment while advancing the cause of social justice.

Weaving the Basket

New College's North Bay Campus' governance development was supported by several important elements:

1. A committed core group of empowered decision-makers
2. A trusting and respectful work place atmosphere
3. Weekly meetings with core group and additional time during the week for members to undertake tasks related to the decisions made
4. A clear governance agreement document that defines the decision-making group's:
 - a. Purpose
 - b. Membership

- c. Meeting time and place
- d. Type and method of decision-making
- e. Standard agenda format and method for bringing forth proposals
- f. Type and method of record-keeping and storage location of notes
- g. Workspace descriptions
- h. Systems of accountability and of communication
- i. Method for resolving organizational disputes as well as personal conflict.

How many times you have been part of a group that agrees on the method of decision-making they will employ? The founding fathers in this nation did it; the United Nations did it; Any high level group forming for the purpose of decision-making first agrees to the purpose of the group, how decisions will be made, by whom, where, and when. Answers to these questions formed the basis of the NBCG governance agreement that has been expanded overtime. The NBCG agreed that staff and faculty would collectively govern the campus using consensus decision-making during a weekly meeting held at the NBC. Six years later this agreement is as strong as ever. Additional information on a few of the elements of the governance agreement is given below.

Membership

An academic institution at the college-level must involve students in decision-making. Students are the most impacted participants in the institutional project of education and thus have valuable perspectives, concerns, and solutions that can assist the institutional move toward its goals. Core participation by students at the departmental (weekly meetings) and institutional level (Board of Trustees) contributes greatly to an academic institution.

Weekly Meetings

Informed, egalitarian, democratic decision-making takes intelligence, creativity, thoughtfulness, and, especially, commitment. Regular weekly meetings have been a cornerstone to the creation and maintenance of the North Bay's governance system. One member of the North Bay Campus Group (NBCG) recently joked that he saw a new book titled *Freedom is an endless meeting* about the history of community organizing moments in the US in the 20th century. The title is a play on the common groan that one often hears in the activist community, "More meetings!?!". Nonetheless, facilitated, focused meetings are a venue where basic democracy thrives. Thus, a regular meeting commitment has been an essential ingredient to success at the North Bay Campus.

Consensus Process

What is unique about the North Bay Campus is not the use of consensus decision-making but the use of it within a hierarchical decision-making campus. The consensus process works within the larger hierarchical institution by clearly defining how decisions from above can be introduced into the NBCG process or overturn a NBCG decision.

Work Spheres - Areas of Autonomy and Authority

The NBCG operates under an agreement in which areas of autonomous work and authority are divided among the members. The work spheres are areas of autonomy and authority describing the work a department or person is accountable for implementing as well as is authorized for making daily decisions to implement that work. Decisions that would significantly change the scope or practices in the sphere or department or that would affect other spheres or departments such as substantial changes to curricula or procedures, hiring or firing of staff or faculty, proposals for grants under the New College name, and any issue that may impact others outside of a work sphere must be brought to a regular campus meeting. The NBCG retains the authority to ask that any issue in any sphere, program or department be brought to a campus meeting for discussion and decision-making. Members are encouraged to bring any item in their work sphere to a campus meeting for information sharing and/or advice as well as to err on the side of informing others of changes even if there is no foreseeable impact.

The work sphere sits in relationship to a system of accountability in which each person, program, and department is accountable to department directors and the NBCG to ensure that the highest quality work is being done in all areas. At the root of the accountability system sits the weekly campus meeting. Participants regularly report on their work spheres and are asked about issues in their work sphere by other members. There are many other layers to the accountability system including annual reviews and campus reflection and planning retreats.

Conflict Resolution

Since the North Bay Campus mission includes teaching toward a more just and sacred world, conflict resolution in our governance as a step toward modeling effective communication and interpersonal dynamics. Staff, faculty and students are required to participate in a formal conflict resolution process (that is outlined in the student and faculty handbooks) when personal disagreement occurs.

The following is a short summary of the process:

1. Speak directly to one another.
2. Ask for third party support.
3. Convene a conflict resolution committee hearing, if necessary.
4. Implement a resolution.
5. Engage in whole group reflection.

Governance Assessment

Parallel to the academic and administrative assessment systems, a governance assessment system assists the North Bay Campus to steer toward their North Star in the organization as a whole. The systems are planned and measured using mission-driven criteria to drive the system development toward the organizational mission. Each decision to change or add to the governance system is measured by the following criteria:

- Just and Equitable - Does the decision result in more just and equitable social relationships among the stakeholders (and beyond)?
- Ecological Sustainable - Does the decision result in more ecologically sustainable practices within the organization?
- Democratic - Is there participation in the appropriate decision-making circles by the appropriate stakeholders including students (this

does not mean that every person should sit at every table; an underlying question is: who (by job title or class e.g. staff, faculty, student) should participate in what category of decision and why)?

- Cooperative - Does the decision promote cooperation between participants and help create a supportive and effective work/learning environment?
- Student-centered - Does the decision result in more student-centered systems that support holistic academic learning? Were students included in decision-making or consulted for input?
- Transparent and Accessible - Are the governance systems and processes fully documented, easy to understand, and easy to find by all stakeholders including students? Do stakeholders know how decisions are made and by whom? Do stakeholders know how to participate in decision-making and how to challenge decisions that have been made?
- Effective - Does the decision result in more effective governance structures?
- Financially responsible - What are the fiscal impacts of the decision? Is the decision financially responsible? Does it stay within budget?
- Accountable - Is there a method of accountability built into the decision?
- Simple - Has the most simple (and, of course, effective) solution been adopted?
- Enjoyable - Do decision-makers feel satisfied with how they interacted while making the decision? Is trust and support increased via the decision-making process even when disagreement existed?

Summary

A hidden curriculum in education socializes students to particular ways of participating in the world. Progressive educational institutions are challenged to address and make overt the hidden curriculum in order to more fully educate toward a socially just and ecologically sustainable world. Progressive organizations can challenge themselves “to be the change they wish to see” by continuing to reach toward a North Star and attempting to extend their vision to every aspect of the organization.

New College’s North Bay Campus has nested progressive classroom curriculum into a holistic educational institution by carefully constructing a governance system using the institutional mission as a guide and assessment tool. Each semester brings new challenges and reveals more governance work needed to achieve a more just, sacred, and sustainable educational organization. Nonetheless, creating consistency in content and method between academic curriculum and governance has been a challenging and rewarding endeavor for all participants at the North Bay Campus.

Bibliography

A Clear View. VHS. Directed by Mary DeLave and Al Mayberry. 2001; Stinson Beach, CA.

Bank, James A. *Educating Global Citizens in a Diverse World*, <http://www.newhorizons.org/strategies/multicultural/banks2.htm>.

Barbalece, Roberta C. *Environmental Justice and the NIMBY Principle*. <http://EnvironmentalChemistry.com/yogi/hazmat/articles/nimby.html>.

Bowles, Samuel and Herbert Gintis. *Schooling in Capitalist America: Educational Reform and the Contradictions of Economic Life*. New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1977.

Diamond, Jared. *Collapse: How Societies Chose to Fail or Succeed*. New York: Viking Adult, 2004.

Freire, Paulo and Ira Shor. *A Pedagogy for Liberation: Dialogues on Transforming Education*. Massachusetts: Bergin & Garvey Publishers, 1987.

Galileo High School website:

http://portal.sfusd.edu/template/default.cfm?page=hs.galileo&show_desc=true&len=351

Gatto, John Taylor. *Dumbing Us Down: The Hidden Curriculum of Compulsory Schooling*. Philadelphia: New Society Publishers, 1992.

Gatto, John Taylor. *The Underground History of American Education: An Intimate Investigation into the Prison of Modern Schooling*. New York: Oxford Village Press, 2006.

Goodman, Amy. *Ambos Nogales: A Look At Border Patrol, Pollution and Maquiladoras at the Arizona-Mexico Border*, <http://www.democracynow.org/article.pl?sid=03/10/14/1716254>.

Giroux, Henry. *Theory & Resistance in Education: A Pedagogy for the Opposition*. Massachusetts: Bergin & Garvey, 1983.

Haralambos, Michael, Martin Holborn and Robin Heald. *Sociology: Themes and Perspectives*. London: HarperCollins Publishers, 2004.

Heath, Shirley Brice. *Ways with Words: Language, Life, and Work in Communities and Classrooms*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983.

Henson, Dave. *Conflict Resolution*. Internal document from the Occidental Arts and Ecology Center, Occidental, 1996.

Horton, Myles and Paulo Freire. *We Make the Road by Walking: Conversations on Education and Social Change*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990

Jackson, Phillip W. *Life In Classrooms*. New York: Teachers College Press, 1968.

Kane, Herb Kawainui. *In Search of the Ancient Polynesian Voyaging Canoe*. http://pvs-hawaii.com/newsletters/nl_ancient_canoe.htm.

King, Jean. *Chapter 22 Tikun Olam: The Roots of Participatory Evaluation*. Alkin, Marvin, editor. *Evaluation Roots: Tracing Theorists’ Views and Influences*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 2004.

Lovos, Annalysa. “An Education for Life.” Undergraduate thesis, New College of California, 2005.

McLaren, Peter. *Life in Schools: An Introduction to Critical Pedagogy in the Foundations of Education*. White Plains: Longman Inc., 1989.

Meighan, Roland. *Sociology of Education*. London: Cassell Academic, 1986.

Orr, David. *Earth in Mind: On Education, Environment and the Human Prospect*. San Francisco: Island Press, 1999.

Parker, W.C. *Teaching Democracy: Unity and Diversity in Public Life*. New York: Teachers College Press, 2003.
Polletta, Francesca. *Freedom is An Endless Meeting: Democracy in American Social Movements*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002.
Polynesian Voyaging Society. *How the Wayfinder Holds the Canoe's Course*. <http://pvs.hawaii.org/navigate/hold.html>
San Francisco Unified School District's website page: http://portal.sfusd.edu/template/default.cfm?page=sup_goals
Sociology Central. *Hidden Curriculum*. <http://www.sociology.org.uk/tece1tl.htm>
Starkey, Hugh. *Education for Human Rights and Democratic Citizenship: Reciprocal Rights and Responsibilities* (draft paper). San Francisco: American Education Research Association Annual Meeting, 2006.

-
- [1] Meighan, Roland, *A Sociology of Education* (London: Cassell Academic, 1981), 314.
[2] Lovos, Annalysa, "An Education for Life" (Undergraduate thesis, New College of California, 2005), 1.
[3] Ibid.
[4] Ibid.
[5] By saying conventional schooling I refer to the typical classroom and school, public or private, in any town in American today (and since the 1800's) in which same-age students sit in desks in indoor classrooms listening to teachers instruct them on *the basics* (reading, writing, math, history, and science) and, with less frequency if at all, P.E., foreign languages, art and music.
[6] Haralambos, Michael, Martin Holborn and Robin Heald, *Sociology: Themes and Perspectives* (London: Harper Collins Publishers, 2004), 702.
[7] Jackson, Phillip W, *Life In Classrooms* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1968), 34.
[8] Sociology Central, *Hidden Curriculum*, <http://www.sociology.org.uk/tece1tl.htm>
[9] Haralambos, *Sociology: Themes and Perspectives*, 699.
[10] Sociology Central, *Hidden Curriculum*, <http://www.sociology.org.uk/tece1tl.htm>
[11] Haralambos, *Sociology: Themes and Perspectives*, 699.
[12] Participants is in quotes because I would like to this that participants understand what they are participating in, which in this case is obviously not true.
[13] Haralambos, *Sociology: Themes and Perspectives*, 744.
[14] Gatto, John Taylor, *The Underground History of American Education* (New York: Oxford Village Press, 2006), 308.
[15] Ibid.
[16] Ibid., 309.
[17] Gatto, John Taylor, *Dumbing Us Down: The Hidden Curriculum of Compulory Schooling* (Phildephia: New Society Publishers, 1992), 2.
[18] San Francisco Unified School District, http://portal.sfusd.edu/template/default.cfm?page=sup_goals

On their website, the academic goals continually refer to an undefined concept called 'student success'.

- [19] Ibid.
[20] Giroux, Henry, *Theory & Resistance in Education: A Pedagogy for the Opposition* (Massachusetts: Bergin & Garvey, 1983), 169.
[21] Ibid., 249.
[22] Galileo High School, http://portal.sfusd.edu/template/default.cfm?page=hs.galileo&show_descr=true&len=351.
[23] Giroux, *Theory & Resistance in Education*, 170.
[24] Heath, Shirley Brice, *Ways with Words: Language, Life, and Work in Communities and Classrooms* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 12.
[25] McLaren, *Life in Schools*, 241.
[26] Giroux, Henry, *Theory & Resistance in Education*, 61.
[27] Orr, David, *Earth in Mind: On Education, Environment, and the Human Prospect* (San Francisco, Island Press, 1994), 7.
[28] Barbalace, Roberta C. *Environmental Justice and the NIMBY Principle*. EnvironmentalChemistry.com. 2001. Accessed on-line: 4/11/2006, <http://EnvironmentalChemistry.com/yogi/hazmat/articles/nimby.html>.
[29] A US environmental issues include superfund sites, chemical spraying on farm workers, toxic waste incineration in poor neighborhoods, toxic waste emissions from oil processing plants and computer manufacturers, water depletion and soil loss from industrial farming.
[30] Goodman, Amy. *Ambos Nogales: A Look At Border Patrol, Pollution and Maquiladoras at the Arizona Mexico Border*, <http://www.democracynow.org/article.pl?sid=03/10/14/1716254> (transcript of radio show from Tuesday, October 14th, 2003).
[31] Orr, David, *Earth in Mind: On Education, Environment, and the Human Prospect* (San Francisco, Island Press, 1994), title.
[32] Bowles, Samuel and Gintis, Herbert. *Schooling in Capitalist America: Educational Reform and the Contradictions of Economic Life* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1977), 275.
[33] Giroux, Henry, *Theory & Resistance in Education*, 168.
[34] Ibid.
[35] Iraq, Jean Bertrand Aristide, and Chavez's government in Venezuela.
[36] Millions of American workers find themselves voiceless on the job since the Supreme Court ruled that employees do not have freedom of speech on the private property of their corporate employers. Many of these same workers do not even have unions to help further the workplace issues that effect their work and well-being.
[37] McLaren, *Life in Schools*, 162.
[38] Diamond, Jared, *Collapse: How Societies Chose to Fail or Succeed* (New York: Viking Adult, 2004), 421.
[39] Ibid., 12.
[40] Ibid., 277, 429.
[41] Ibid., 284.
[42] It is worthy to note that dozens of endemic, egalitarian decision-making systems have been developed and practiced in North America from the Iroquois Nation to New England town hall meetings to the Black Panthers, Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) and the Anti-nuclear movement. Our rich history of indigenous democratic decision-making can provide inspiration and models for us to draw into our educational institutions.
[43] Parker, W.C., *Teaching Democracy: Unity and Diversity in Public Life* (Teachers College Press, New York, 2003), 42.
[44]

- ~~Bank, James A. *Educating Global Citizens in a Diverse World*. New Horizons for Learning Website; <http://www.newhorizons.org/strategies/multicultural/banks2.htm>. This article is adapted from: James A. Banks, "Introduction: Democratic Citizenship Education in Multicultural Societies." In James A. Banks (Editor). *Diversity and Citizenship Education: Global Perspectives*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2003~~
- ~~[45] Starkey, Hugh. *Education for Human Rights and Democratic Citizenship: Reciprocal Rights and Responsibilities* (draft paper for the American Education Research Association Annual Meeting 2006, San Francisco, CA), 2.~~
- ~~[46] Ibid., 12.~~
- ~~[47] Ibid., 7.~~
- ~~[48] Freire, Paulo and Ira Shor. *A Pedagogy for Liberation: Dialogues on Transforming Education* (Massachusetts: Bergin & Garvey Publishers, 1987), 33.~~
- ~~[49] Horton, Myles and Paulo Freire. *We Make the Road by Walking: Conversations on Education and Social Change* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990), title.~~
- ~~[50] *A Clear View*, VHS, directed by Mary DeLave and Al Mayberry (2001; Stinson Beach, CA)~~
- ~~[51] Kane, Herb Kawainui. *In Search of the Ancient Polynesian Voyaging Canoe*. Polynesian Voyaging Society; http://pvs-hawaii.com/newsletters/nl_ancient_canoes.htm.~~
- ~~[52] Hoku-pa'a ("Fixed star"): This circumpolar star, which does not rise or set in the Hawaiian sky, appears "fixed" at the north celestial pole with other stars circling around it. Polynesian Voyaging Society, *How the Wayfinder Holds the Canoe's Course*, <http://pvs.hawaii.org/navigate/hold.html>.~~
- ~~[53] This section written collaboratively with campus staff and faculty; primary editor, Carolyn Stayton.~~
- ~~[54] This section written collaboratively with campus staff and faculty; primary editor, Richard Heinberg.~~
- ~~[55] King, Jean, Tikun Olam: The Roots of Participatory Evaluation (Alkin, Marvin, editor. *Evaluation Roots: Tracing Theorists' Views and Influences*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications), 339.~~
- ~~[56] Contact author for a copy of the governance agreement.~~
- ~~[57] Polletta, Francesca, *Freedom is An Endless Meeting: Democracy in American Social Movements* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), title.~~
- ~~[58] Henson, Dave, *Conflict Resolution*, Internal document from the Occidental Arts and Ecology Center's Policies, Occidental, 1996.~~