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## CONSULTANCY, DISRUPTION, AND THE PULSE OF PEDAGOGY

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### *Introduction*

Teaching generates stressful contradictions that a thoughtful pedagogy converts into productive tensions. An effective classroom environment must somehow combine authority and difference; instruction and resistance; formality and familiarity; evaluation and encouragement; agenda and experiment. So, in a strong learning experience teachers and students must explore intellectual, emotional, ethical, and even spiritual issues while navigating potentially conflicting perceptions of institutional hierarchy and intimate mentorship [1]. This is the profound subjective ambivalence that conscientious teaching and learning confronts reflexively, rigorously, but also playfully, with the unique gravitas only ludic engagement enables. A requisite of such serious play [2] is *disruption* within a freed horizon of thought. But this disruption must be *radical*: pressuring the limits of our sensibilities and understandings, it must threaten to deracinate our rooted perceptions.

Such radical disruption can occur in many ways big and small. We usually associate disruption with intellectual dislodging of ideological doxa or received wisdom. For instance, we may find in Marx's claim that religion expresses economic suffering an unsettling challenge to liberal-secular dogma; in Nietzsche's tracing egalitarian universalism to resentful vengeance a rejection of "morality"; or in Freud's view that we are playthings of our drives an upending of individual self-legislation. When students seriously confront such ideas, they risk feeling "de-centered," thrown off, existentially disrupted. But what is the best way to *communicate* such ideas? Examining how to convey difficult ideas, pedagogy studies complementary points of method, matching the form and content of disruptive experience. If a teacher desires to "show not just tell" Marx's views, she may design a lesson plan to expose and perhaps interrupt features of capitalist exploitation or commodity-forms on the campus, perhaps disrupting "power relations" between teacher and student via a thought-experiment or role-play that shakes the hierarchy of instruction. Even a tiny physical gesture can alter the direction or feeling of a discussion, as when I abruptly sit on the opposite side of the class from my usual spot. The key point: whether inviting students into a theorist's heterodox thinking or jolting them by re-spatializing the classroom, *the method is to disrupt by affecting consciousness*.

Successful pedagogy counsels us, in short, by exploring productive disruptions of consciousness. In contrast to mnemonic imprinting or maieutic testing, teaching that recognizes how awareness and provocation operate in learning help us to instruct at the nexus of intellect and experience. *The "consultancy" feature in the pedagogy [3] of the Teaching and Learning Institute (TLI), based at Bryn Mawr College [4], exemplifies this promise by disrupting and provoking the consciousness of a professor*. In this essay I will deconstruct how consultancy vivified my performance by rattling my sense of my purposeful actions in class. After an overview of pedagogical disruption, I will discuss

the social disruption of student consultancy. Finally, a concluding retrospective situating consultancy in a broad discussion of the pedagogical project will, not so secretly, attempt to inspire further conscious disruptions.

### *Consultancy as Disruption*

I want to convey how consultancy disrupts by dislodging practices and premises, stirring reflection [5] and self-awareness [6] in engaging students [7]. Before distinguishing these disruptions, I wish to describe the practices of student consultancy and how they unsettle the dynamics of teaching environments deprived of reflexive pedagogy.

I should pause to note that I write from my own experience after one semester at Bryn Mawr, where I taught the political science survey course to mainly first-year students. I have not researched for this thought-piece by, say, interviewing teachers and consultants or perusing literatures. Still, if I speak only for myself, while taking inspiration from idiosyncratic sources, I write with TLI-hosted faculty-consultant discussions close to my mind. I have no reason to think my experiences of the consultancy process are unique or eccentric, and plenty to think they are representative.

I begin where most instruction does, with the image of one teacher, leavened or burdened by years of study, before a classroom of students equally leavened or burdened. One old-fashioned metaphor for this situation imagines teachers as dump trucks unloading knowledge into student receptacles. But teacher-student relations are mediated in many ways, like all social interaction. Most people, especially those picturing dump trucks, don't think much about these mediations, but they are the founts of pedagogical consciousness and refinement. By exploring the density and diversity of teacher-student mediations we can carefully address our pedagogical methods. One step back, *student consultancy* is a potent means to explore the promise of teacher-student communication by intensifying our sensitivity to these mediations.

The disconcerting presence in the classroom of a student consultant — an unnerving conjunction of counselor, coach, and court stenographer — vivisects these mediations by shattering our comfortable or habitual performances. Consider the plurality of mediations we work through, listed in a crude ascending order of pedagogical self-awareness as consultancy is introduced to complicate the dump-truck model:

{scholar ⇔ **text**} ⇒ student  
{scholar ⇔ **research**} ⇒ student  
teacher ⇔ {**culture** ⇔ student}

scholar ⇔ **text** ⇔ student  
teacher ⇔ **language** ⇔ student  
teacher ⇔ **politics** ⇔ student

teacher ⇔ **pedagogy** ⇔ student  
teacher ⇔ **consultancy** ⇔ student

Here in **bold** are various **mediations** that constitute the site of pedagogy. Teachers and students communicate through **texts** (assigned readings), **research** (asymmetrical knowledge), **culture** (values, expectations, desires of generation, campus, gender, etc.), **politics** (many meanings of “class” power), **language** (contested vocabularies), **pedagogy** (cooperative methods of learning), and, finally, **consultancy** (the shadowy absent presence or present absence of an older student in the class silently but fiercely watching, listening, writing). This list has a rough or schematic, or maybe just artificial, progression from a relatively naïve idea of teacher and student as mediated by a shared text to a more complex consciousness of the mediation process itself, availed by the jarring surveillance of a note-taking third party. At the risk of tedium, note that the list is broken into three groups: (1) traditional “one-way arrow” (or dump-truck) models in which instructors impart the truth of texts or research to students, while students inform instructors of campus or generational culture (the brackets signal “ownership” of text, research, or culture); (2) more reciprocal models of engaging texts while increasingly challenging the languages and politics of this engagement; (3) explicitly reciprocal pedagogy that supplements the textual, linguistic, and political conversation with methodical reflection about learning *per se*.

As I have suggested, the presence of an observer taking notes on classroom performances and teaching strategies raises pedagogical consciousness to a high level. This consciousness recalls the trajectory of, for instance, painting from external subjects to internal processes — where, in short, painting is finally not only about kings, wars, flowers, or fruit but about *painting itself*, the material elements and productive composition of visual representation. Likewise, consultancy intervenes in a course by making a teacher, and perhaps students as well, distinctly conscious of the production of knowledge *pedagogically*. The difference between the student-consultancy process and, say, vigorous political debate in class — i.e., between pedagogical and political self-awareness — may clarify the unique impact of the TLI’s method.

Consider a professor teaching Yasmina Khadra’s novel *The Attack* — about a Tel Aviv bombing that spurs a labyrinthine search for its roots in the occupied West Bank. The teacher might give a lecture on the text, providing details about the Palestine-Israel conflict, the political geography of various sites in the narrative, and so on, of the form: {scholar ↔ **text**} ⇒ student; or he might lead an analytical recapitulation of the story, of the form: scholar ↔ **text** ↔ student. But the professor might elect to discuss not only the *internal events* but also the *external politics* of the text — *reading the novel’s meaning alongside the political history of its production, translation, approbation, and adaptation into a celebrated film*. Why is the novel palatable, acceptable, or worthy of general recognition? Does its circulation fulfill an agenda, e.g., concerning Palestinian terrorism, the war on terror, or Israeli politics? Discussion moving inside/outside the text, across its internal/external significations, takes the form: teacher ↔ **text/politics** ↔ student. Similarly, discussion of the novel’s vocabulary and symbols, perhaps decrypting its subterranean message, could take the form: teacher ↔ **text/language** ↔ student. The pedagogical insight here is that discussion of the politics or language of texts *entails* discussion of the politics or language of the class — i.e., the *political or linguistic*

*mediation of teacher and student*, and thus of the forms: teacher ⇔ language ⇔ student and teacher ⇔ politics ⇔ student. In other words, as we grow aware that to appreciate fully a novel, building, opera, poem, film, cartoon, play, urban design, or chrestomathy we have to explore its socio-political construction; *and this awareness naturally extends to the classroom as yet another text in this sense*. There is something contagious and overlapping in this flow of coming-to-consciousness, in the growing reflexivity of teaching. [8]

But in my experience, and in the TLI's view, if I get it right, *awareness that language and politics constitute our education is not tantamount to pedagogical self-consciousness*. Indeed, charged, uninhibited, and highly sophisticated self-criticisms often proceed absent conscious pedagogy; this is why political and pedagogical consciousness are radically distinct in principle and, usually, in practice. The coming-to-consciousness of the linguistic or political (social, "racial," gendered, ethnic, etc.) provides a necessary component of good teaching, namely, a sense of who we are as we approach our coursework. Addressing directly our diverse vocabularies and positions thus transcends by complicating *all the terms in the teacher-text-student model*. Teacher, text, student, classroom, and college may all come under linguistic-political scrutiny without *methods of teaching* being affected whatsoever. And precisely because heightened awareness of power and position in class is *necessary* for successful teaching and learning it is often misconstrued as *sufficient*. But on the view that a classroom may be interrogated as a text, as another nexus of political meanings and social capacities, this continuity must apply to the difference between (1) our *refined and expansive sensitivity toward the text* and (2) our *method of accomplishing that sensitivity*.

Pedagogy advances political-critical rigor through an awareness of the *method of the political-critical encounter*; we can say that political consciousness addresses the structure of a classroom (its members, spaces, hierarchies, terms) while pedagogical consciousness explores approaches to and within that structure. Pedagogy is, then, a distinctly self-conscious mediation of teacher and student, of the form: teacher ⇔ **pedagogy** ⇔ student. Unlike political discussion, pedagogy does not eventually turn in on itself, as painting eventually becomes about painting. Political talk, like painting, *becomes about itself over time*, after a period of *not addressing itself as political (or as painting)*. The model teacher ⇔ **politics** ⇔ student ramifies into two formats: *addressing the politics of the classroom* and *addressing the politics of addressing the politics of the classroom*. It is common to find professors assailing elite-college social privilege while exempting themselves from the hierarchies that sustain it! We can see, then, that politicized classroom discussions vary in the level of their auto-critique and *pedagogical consciousness*. That is, politics as a mediation of teacher and student actually refers to a range of teacher-student relationships, comprising an awareness limited to the politics of texts to the politics of teaching texts. In contrast, pedagogy as a teacher-student mediation, as itself a method, lacks the duality of *becoming about itself*; it lacks this range of relationships between teacher and student. Pedagogy is *always* directly about teacher-student communication, and so represents the full consciousness of this relationship.

But this pedagogical consciousness presents a conundrum, one the TLI is devoted to resolving, in part through student consultancy. If pedagogical awareness proceeds stepwise by viewing our objects of inquiry from outside — we ask *political questions about texts*, then we ask *pedagogical questions* about those political questions — then what is the external vantage point from which we assess pedagogy itself? Within the class setting, how do we stand outside our teaching to see its contours and patterns and shapes, parallel to how we stand outside the text politically, or we stand outside politics to ask pedagogical questions? In short, how do we achieve a pedagogical rigor toward pedagogy itself, in the mediation: teacher ↔ **pedagogy** ↔ student? The TLI's reply to this conundrum is the introduction of a student consultant into the classroom: a person whose presence and activities, as I have suggested, disrupts business-as-usual in multiple overlapping ways. Student consultancy is the final mediation, of the form teacher ↔ **consultancy** ↔ student, in my schema. The student consultant is an inside/outside character in the class, a liminal and unexpected figure foreign to traditional teaching and central to raising pedagogical awareness. [9]

Who, then, is this student consultant, bearing such gifts? She is a student at the college who attends every alternate session of the course taking copious and meticulous notes on everything salient to teacher-student learning. She then meets once a week with her “partner,” the teacher she is observing, to discuss her observations, including productive commentary on patterns and tendencies she has observed. My student consultant, whom I'll call L, an especially insightful and subtle record keeper and interlocutor [10], would note my movements, speech patterns, use of the board, pacing, timing, and techniques of various kinds. L would send me her comments from the class, which I would review, and then we would have an enlightening hour of structured but also open-ended discussion about pedagogy. It all seems simple enough, but for the rest of this piece I wish to describe how prolifically disruptive L was toward a greater pedagogical consciousness.

Imagine it for a moment. Picture a person watching you as you work and vigorously but silently taking notes on all your actions, which she'll send to you later [11]. Consider how this would affect your sense of your actions, performance, choices, and efficacy. For me the effect was rather like hearing and seeing myself on a recorded lecture — by being drawn closer to my appearance, to my teaching decisions and style, I felt pushed away — estranged, repelled, and even incredulous. A consultant's physical presence disrupts a teacher's pedagogical presence simply by being visible, observant, active, *and not immediately communicative*. L's presence in and discussions about my classroom performance rippled along a surprisingly large number of pedagogical lines.

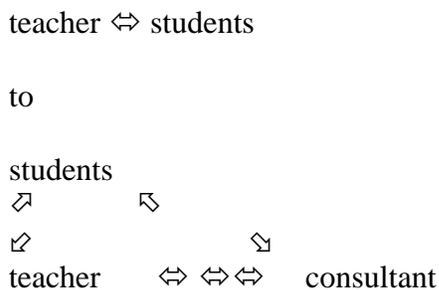
Two central disruptions to the routine teaching of prepared materials even by a seasoned and egalitarian teacher occur at the sociological/hierarchical and linguistic/analytical level. Both of these may be situated within a central dilemma of meaningful teaching: if we are necessary, it is because we *are* (presumed to be) in a position of authority to direct a course of study. Dilemmas of hierarchy and speech must accommodate, not eliminate, this asymmetry. First, the sociological/hierarchical disruption is the one confronted in Paulo Freire's “pedagogy of the oppressed” [12]. In most respects TLI's method approximates Freire's, notably locating egalitarian dialogical criticism in the classroom,

where the substance *and* technique of coursework bear decentralized and anti-authoritarian scrutiny [13]. The second disruption is the linguistic/analytic problem, in which language registers a lack, hopelessly “speaking” the unsayable and assigning words the hopeless task of representing what cannot be symbolized [14]. Teachers rarely discuss dilemmas of hierarchy and impasses of language, in my experience, but they define our profession’s activity and structure much of the TLI’s pedagogical research. The student consultant is the central agent of self-awareness and -correction in such central areas of our work.

Note that these disruptions *disrupt our habits of forgetting* the hierarchies and aporias we often ignore when we teach, as we confuse transcending them in our *beliefs* with overcoming them in our *methods*. In other words, teachers too easily claim to suspend social disparities or semiotic inequities, that is, to disrupt their worldly imprint, in the pristine and “safe” space of “open” and “fair” discussion. In this sense the idealized notion of the free exchange of ideas, sentiments, or narratives *itself disrupts our awareness of social reality*. Thus, to return to our classes a robust consciousness of these enduring social facts may be seen as *a disruption of disruption* — that is, a suspension of the suspension of the idealized, allegedly neutral, space of “free” discussion. The TLI attempts to *disrupt disruptions* of our perception of social inequality and linguistic failure in the classroom in many ways — chief among them is the teacher-consultancy relationship. Below I will sketch crucial, if not exhaustive, experiences of social disruption under the consultancy project.

***Social disruption: the student-teacher-consultant triad***

The presence of the note-taking student consultant undercuts the traditional structure, or social order, of the classroom: the teacher-student dyad. In this conventional teaching model teachers and students meet “alone” for all scheduled sessions of a course, creating a consistent, seamless, or repetitive pattern of interactions in a given space. The introduction of consultancy, as I have mentioned, interrupts this model, replacing it with a triadic “social” structure, from



This crude representation of the change from dyadic to triadic pedagogical situation shows the increased complexity of classroom interactions, which I roughly chart below:

<u>triangulated dyads</u>	<u>dyadic contacts</u>	<u>dyadic activity</u>
teacher ⇔ student	every second class	textual analysis procedural planning
student ⇔ consultant	mid-term evaluation casual discussion	formal student evaluations informal student assessments
consultant ⇔ teacher	weekly meeting	discussion of in-class notes “cultural” recommendations

The attendance of a student consultant changes the teacher⇔student dynamic, and then adds two altogether new relationships and experiences, between teacher and consultant and student and consultant. Suddenly the professor is “alone” only half the time with his class, which for me was nearly devastating. I have always considered my classes private places and procedures for cultivating our own unique and cumulative dialogue, one whose continuous encouragement and progression provides a reliably consistent atmosphere for the risky experiment of thought. To be more blunt, I consider academic work to be inherently transgressive; it requires a fundamental violation of accepted normativity, and so on, which can require a form of trust, and at times my own modes of disruption. Given all this, to have a person in the class who is not participating yet appears to be monitoring and recording everything going on utterly undid me at first. There is something secretive about teaching to me; we insulate ourselves from scrutiny to think freely... so what is this person *doing in the classroom*? I don’t think the students cared much either way, but to me L’s attendance felt, at first, like surveillance. My response was claustrophobic.

Thus my initial objection and discomfiture were *pedagogical* — I felt that the student consultant could impede the environment I needed to make students at home enough to play with ideas. But my early allergy to consultancy was also, naturally, neurotic or hysterical (in the technical senses of these terms). I experienced the widely theorized gaze of the other: watched, not merely seen; but also catalogued, timed, recorded, annotated — made both object of and witness to a report-in-the-making. Neither amanuensis nor memoirist, L hardly seemed my collaborator or partner. Allies of sorts in our private meetings, for a while we became opponents in my private sanctuary of the course because her silence drove me insane. I admit I found the thing as comforting as having Lacan plunk down next to me on a bus and stare at me until I started babbling about my problems. But L’s interjection-as-gaze illuminated my own gaze at the gaze, as I hysterically wondered, “Wait, why is she writing now?” for the first week or two until I forgot she was there.

The disparity between L’s comforting and helpful presence in my office as against her disturbing and distracting presence in my class soon yielded a productive synthesis of her notes and ideas, one presently *integrated as liminal observer* in the classroom. What strikes me in this, as in all aspects of the experience of student consultancy, is the fruitfulness of the disruption, even as it transforms, not least because it remains. Between the alienating alterity of note-taking and the compassionate partnership of note-

interpreting (and crucial “cultural” counseling), I found this disruption continually animating, energizing, and alarming, alerting me to my choices in the moment, often by compelling me to see the room through L’s eyes. As our course progressed, our partnership shed all anxiety, and we began to discuss plans before class. One memorable success in this respect was an essentially joint decision to have the students do a free write on their experiences of Lantern night, one of Bryn Mawr’s legendary initiation ceremonies, which produced some of the most heartfelt, eloquent, incisive, and politically astute expression all semester.

From what I can gather, something similarly inspired unfolded when another innovation of this method occurred, the consultant’s distribution of the midterm evaluations. Rather than my distributing, collecting, and perusing the forms, the student consultant handles the evaluation process in my absence, and holds a discussion about the course that she summarized for me later. Again, this new dyadic relationship between student and consultant altered the teacher-student dyadic conversation. In short, this series of dyadic relationships produced a gestalt triadic effect. Taken together, this triangle creates a special atmosphere. Consultant as teacher in training, as insider, as informant, as observer, as confidant, or as critic if encouraged, can help orient one to the culture of the institution within and beyond the classroom. Many of us have had external observers visit our classrooms to evaluate us and report back to our departments. Student consultancy disrupts in the moment in multiple ways, rather than just reporting back to others.

Consultancy, then, cracks the us/them dyad into mediated triadic relationships that refract and reflect, and unlike videoing or recording oneself, it interacts! I think those first pre-normalized weeks are intensely fruitful; the shocking awareness of oneself as more remote than we might wish from our students in our plans, intentions, perceptions is called out in this stenographic exercise, and this presence alone reminds one not only what one does every instant (in the time-tabular disciplining of the docile body), but also of the gap opened up by the very language intended and derived to overcome the gap of speech. Whenever I am anxious about teaching I remind myself that it’s not about me but about the text, that teaching is not the time for the lordship of the ego. The reminder works, but there is a danger in the practice: one can forget that it *is*, to some extent, about the teacher-student relationship as much as the teacher-text-student relationship. L’s presence in the classroom embedded me in the primacy of the teacher-student relationship in a way I may not have been before. The intrusion and then assimilation of the student consultant in the course innervates the pedagogical space, then, through a process of de-familiarization that opens teacher and student alike to continual self-conscious innovation.

Teachers still confront the dilemma of the general and particular in the class, to be sure. The teacher must proffer a plan-for-all, in normative terms an “address-to-all,” intended to foster a common pursuit among a multiplicity of students whose differences inherently challenge that address. In this opposition, the “lesson-plan,” “syllabus,” or “agenda” constitutes an address-to-all that seeks to unite students in a single project that consciously accommodates differences. This raises the pedagogical version of the “paradox of law” — how to convert “the primordial act of decision” [15] necessary to

constitute social order (polity, college, classroom) into a non-coercive space with an open vocabulary. The inside/outside presence of the student consultant is a novel and successful experiment in bringing pedagogical awareness to the social space of the class.

### *Consultancy in retrospect*

In a pretty blistering assault on the logic in Mill's *On Liberty*, Akeel Bilgrami denounces "standard arguments for a conception of academic freedom that we all seem to subscribe to when it is coarsely described but which, when we describe it more finely, and look at the arguments more closely, is quite implausible and leads directly to thoroughly confused ideas about displaying 'balance' in our classrooms and...pedagogy" [16]. He parses the "standard" argument in terms of its ends (pursuing and conveying truth) and its means (free inquiry):

academic institutions are sites for intellectual inquiry and research and therefore one of their chief goals is the pursuit of truth and the pedagogical project of conveying the truth, as one discovers it and conceives it in one's research, to students, and to set students on the path of discovering further truths in the future on their own. And then second, there is a statement of the conditions for the possibility of the pursuit of that goal: this pursuit of truth is best carried out, it is said, under conditions where a variety of opinions are allowed to be expressed on any subject, even if one finds some of them quite false, since it is possible that they might be true and one's own view might turn out to be false. [17]

Bilgrami remarks caustically that, according to this schema, "truth surfaces in the 'marketplace of ideas.'" His concern is to show that this argument, famously proposed by Mill, is a "numbing fallacy" [18]. His refutation is more funny than surprising but it pertains to our call in the classroom, and especially the impressions that education is, or ought to be, instrumental and cumulative and progressive — especially that it is, or ought to be, *corrective*.

As Bilgrami points out, Mill claims that free thought and speech are necessary because these are the only means toward correcting our errors. Mill's *evidence* for this claim is a celebrated syllogism: we know that many of our past convictions were wrong, and thus we don't hold them anymore; we may suppose, on this basis, that our *current convictions are flawed and need to be corrected*; so the mode of correction — open scientific, intellectual, and ethical contestation — must be guaranteed *because we can never know when our convictions are correct*. But if this is true, Bilgrami argues, if we can never be sure we know the truth, how can we use what we happen to think is the truth in the moment to judge our past truths? If our beliefs *now* are flawed, then they cannot be a reliable basis for refuting our *past* beliefs by establishing that *all knowledge may be flawed and corrigible*; perhaps our past and future beliefs are correct and proximate, and for whatever reason we inhabit a period of analytical error, scientific foolishness, or ethical barbarism. The relevance to pedagogical reflection of this conjecture, in concluding, should be manifest. We inhabit spaces — college classrooms — that braid intricate and uncertain textual, analytical, political, linguistic, and pedagogical mediations

that cannot be mastered but may be made fruitful in the consciousness of teachers, students, and consultants alike reflecting on processes of learning.

## Notes

1. For a chilling portrait of a regimented and antagonistic teacher-student relationship in the pedagogy-free-zone of a mandated curriculum, see Dag Solstad, *Shyness and Dignity*, S. Lyngstad, tr. (Graywolf 2006 [1996]).

2. I'm riffing on Nietzsche's view of "human maturity [as] rediscovering the seriousness we had [at] play when we were children," apposite to the intricate, subtle interactions of "mature" professors and "young" students [see *Beyond Good and Evil*, R. Horstmann and J. Norman, eds., Norman, tr. (Cambridge 2002 [1886], 62; for an treatment of this theme apt for pedagogy, see Daniel Shepherd, "Embracing the Child at Play," <http://inter-disciplinary.net/ati/education/cp/ce2/shepherd%20paper.pdf>].

3. For my purposes here, *pedagogy* refers to *the study of teaching*, rather than a *particular approach to teaching*, similar to the distinction between *methodology* (the *study* of methods) and *methods*. Pedagogy reflexively explores processes of apprehension as they vary across systems of instruction; in this sense it may *conflict* with "pedagogies" ("lesson plans," "agendas") when the latter are didactic patterns, as in Jorge Luis Borges's reading of Nazi textbooks ["A Pedagogy of Hatred," *Selected Non-Fictions*, E. Weinberger, ed., tr. (Viking 1999 [1937], 199-200)]. So we must separate *pedagogy* (without article or explicit object) from *the/a pedagogy*; we have to distinguish, that is, *general studies* from *specific approaches* to teaching and learning. My impression is that, at times, the TLI confuses *pedagogy* with *a pedagogy*, advocating *methods* of teaching and learning derived from its *studies* of teaching and learning. There is nothing *in principle* wrong with applying research findings, but on occasion its recommendations *appear* to have an air of settled law, if not dogma. In my experience this critique warrants discussion but ignores the self-reflexivity of the TLI's pedagogy and applied teaching techniques.

4. For a practical overview and theoretical exploration of the pedagogical relationships in the TLI and Students as Learners and Teachers (SaLT) projects, see Alison Cook-Sather, "Dialogue across Differences of Position, Perspective, and Identity: Reflective Practice in/on a Student-Faculty Pedagogical Partnership Program," *Teachers College Record* (forthcoming).

5. I will refrain from irksome nonsense-words like "positionality," which progressives would humanely abjure, and from significant but bowdlerized terms like "intentionality," which TLI has, alas, adopted. A technical concept in the philosophy of mind, *intentionality* refers to processes of intending in mental constructs; it is *not* helpful to confuse this term with *intention*, as in reflexive deliberation in one's activities, or simply motivation.

6. I prefer “self-consciousness” (*Selbstbesinnung*), consciousness about oneself, but as our culture linguistically (and significantly) equates *self-consciousness* with *insecurity*, where for others is it an antidote to insecurity, self-awareness seems generally preferable. I will thus use “self-consciousness” as a synonym for self-awareness.

7. The politically-correct re-naming practices among elevated pedagogical thinkers too-often replaces rigorous consideration with nominal egalitarian gestures. Much the way people get encouraged to “own” their actions without the slightest awareness of the bourgeois presumption behind this concept of individual responsibility, the pair “teacher-student” is sometimes replaced with “teacher-learner.” As this substitution seems to *separate* teaching from learning, and since there is no shame in studenthood, I will revert to “teacher-student.”

8. This is *not* to endorse the debased palaver about “social construction” so ubiquitous in humanist discourse, pointedly the refrain that all artistic and intellectual production directly translates their social surroundings.

9. For a more detailed and informed account, see Alison Cook-Sather and Zanny Alter, “What Is and What Can Be: How a Liminal Position Can Change Learning and Teaching in Higher Education,” *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 42:1 (2011).

10. Here I must re-emphasize that my experience *may* be singular rather than general, as L was a preternaturally insightful, conscientious, and composed individual who was not only a gifted teacher but a wise one. My own experience in this process may be skewed by my good fortune, however impressive other consultants seemed.

11. Though in a different context, the Monty Python job interview sketch gives a good sense of how unsettling it can be:

[http://www.youtube.com/results?search\\_query=monty%20python%20interview&sm=1](http://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=monty%20python%20interview&sm=1).

12. Paulo Freire, “Preface,” *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, M. Ramos, tr. (Continuum 2000 [1968]).

13. A satisfactory comparison exceeds the scope of this essay, but TLI’s commitments resonate most clearly with Freire’s, although TLI does not prioritize extending activist-socialist humanism beyond the classroom, as far as I know, *viz. from classroom to class*. Freire’s pedagogical instruction was dedicated to *conscientização*, defined by his translator as “learning to perceive social, political, and economic contradictions, and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality” (Freire, “Preface,” *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 35, fn. 1). TLI’s ambit engages *all impediments* to open inquiry, including class-race-gender without imposing partisan political objectives on students. All the same, the broader dedication to address dilemmas of defensible, sensitive, and conscientious instruction, if not exactly based on Freire’s political sense of “love, humility, and faith,” echoes his devotion to “dialogue” as “a horizontal relationship of which mutual trust [among interlocutors] is the logical consequence [leading them] into even closer partnership in the naming of the world” (91). In candid discussion of elite-

college education, however, one must resist anti-political softening of Freire's public mission, given the fascist background that spawned his *political pedagogy and its relationship to liberation theology* [see Noam Chomsky's lecture "Pedagogy of the Oppressed," <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-SOW55BU7yg>]. In short, it *may* be argued that, absent public intervention, the TLI does not extend the radical pedagogical principles it shares with Freire, thus compromising the *political basis of its radicalism*. Freire would have been the first, in other words, to reject the radicalism of any pedagogy immured within the campus walls. In my experience, notably, nothing in the TLI prevents or censures consideration of the extension beyond the campus of its pedagogy (see note 3 for the meaning of this term).

14. On the way in which "language evokes the invisible and the inexpressible," see Lucie Cantin, "The Trauma of Language," R. Hughes and K. Malone, eds., *After Lacan: Clinical Practice and the Subject of the Unconscious* (SUNY 2002), 36.

15. Slavoj Žižek, *The Indivisible Remainder: On Schelling and Related Matters* (Verso 2007 [1996]), 13.

16. Akeel Bilgrami, "Truth, Balance, and Freedom," *Social Research*, 76:2 (Sum 2009), 418.

17. Bilgrami, "Truth, Balance, and Freedom," 418-419.

18. Bilgrami, "Truth, Balance, and Freedom," 421.