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Editor's Note

On September 20, 1982, L. Glenn Smith wrote a memorandum to colleagues, proposing an educational biography conference at Iowa State University, where he taught. Smith explained, "I hope to find money here at Iowa State to publish the conference papers—either in a proceedings or in the first issue of a new journal (proposed name: Vitae Scholasticae: The Bulletin of Educational Biography)." He noted that, given sufficient interest, the first meeting of the conference would be held in Spring 1983 and "would also serve as a platform for launching a Society for Educational Biography."[1]

Smith's memorandum, provided by Martha Tevis, (a founding member and current secretary of the International Society for Educational Biography), offers insight into the initial purpose of the organization and its journal, *Vitae Scholasticae*, which was launched in 1983. From the beginning, Smith envisioned a variety of scholarly approaches to the study of educators' lives, including "translation; autobiography/reminiscence; living figures/interview; neglected people; various geographic areas or time periods….; critiques of past work; and biographies that need to be written." He noted, referring to the first conference meeting, "A separate session on methodological considerations can be organized, but I hope most presentations will include some attention to this."[2]

In the first article of this 30th anniversary issue of *Vitae Scholasticae*, former International Society for Educational Biography (ISEB) President Lucy E. Bailey writes that, over the years, scholars have "used these generative spaces [in ISEB and *Vitae Scholasticae*] to explore diverse interactions among lives and education that have expanded the contours of educational research." Bailey's essay primarily focuses on auto/biographical research and its current and future possibilities. One example of the genre of auto/biographical research can be seen in the next article by Joel Hardman, titled "Bad Teacher Under Reflection." Using narrative inquiry, Hardman analyzes his experience teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) to high school students. In the subsequent article, Drew Moser depicts Ernest Boyer, who served as U. S. Commissioner of Education and President of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. Moser's focus on Boyer's early life reflects Smith's desire that *Vitae Scholasticae* portray educators' lives in "time periods."

The book reviews in this issue present stories of people whose lives were educative. They include "biographies that need to be written" as well as life narratives of "neglected people." Allison Karmel Thomason offers an example of the first category in her review of Jeffrey Abt's book, *American Egyptologist: The Life of James Henry Breasted and the Creation of His Oriental Institute*. As the founder of one of the premier academic institutions in the United States—the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago—Breasted's biography makes an important contribution to the history of higher education. In the second review, Sarah Morice-Brubaker addresses Catherine Brekus' book, *Sarah Osborn's World: The Rise of Evangelical Christianity in Early America*. Osborn, a teacher who became an evangelical leader, had been included in the category of "neglected people" until Brekus' exhaustive research changed that. Another woman's life story is reviewed by Amy Freshwater in *Soundings*, Hali Felt's biography of Marie Tharp. Although Tharp's name is also not a household word, she performed an important educative function by mapping the ocean floor and sharing her knowledge through mentoring students.

This anniversary issue of *Vitae Scholasticae* celebrates the 30-year staying power of an organization and a journal, as well as a vision that is still relevant today. We hope these articles inspire readers to continue to "expand the contours of educational research," thereby stimulating the growth and significance of ISEB and *Vitae*.

—Linda Morice

Notes

[1] L. Glenn Smith memorandum, September 20, 1982.
[2] L. Glenn Smith memorandum, September 20, 1982.

Auto/biography in Educational Contexts:
Reflections and Possibilities

Lucy E. Bailey
Oklahoma State University

> *Auto/biographical narrative [is] a form that could express the complexity of teaching, the way it is rooted in personal and social history, the way it gathers up our hopes and relentlessly requires us to play out the compelling issues of our lives in classrooms, day after day.*[1]

In Madeleine Grumet's introduction to *A Poet of Weird Abundance*, Paula Salvio's auto/biographical foray into the teaching life of poet Anne Sexton, Grumet captures eloquently the promise of auto/biography[2] as a vehicle for exploring educational issues. Indeed, believing in the power of auto/biographical accounts to enrich educational theory and practice and the educational potential of lives helped fuel the formation of the (International) Society of Educational Biography (ISEB) in 1983 and the journal, *Vitae Scholasticae*, now in its 30th year of publication. Scholars have used these generative spaces to explore diverse intersections among lives and education that have expanded the contours of educational research.

I am pleased to contribute to the 30th anniversary edition of *Vitae Scholasticae* and its service as a "repositor[y] of knowledge" for educational biography.[3] I have been a member of the organization for a number of years and was honored to serve as President of ISEB during 2011-2012. The organization has introduced me to new research in biography and qualitative methodologies and provided a welcoming space to explore my interests in 19th century women's education, faculty retirement, methodology, historiog-

raphy, and other educational topics that cross disciplinary borders and situate human lives in their educational and historical contexts. In this essay, I take the opportunity to revisit previous editions of *Vitae* to explore publication patterns over the last few years, consider responses from a recent survey I conducted with ISEB members, and discuss some emerging trajectories for educational auto/biography. From the journal's earlier emphasis on "scholarly chronicle" biographies[4] to the diverse narratives, qualitative studies, auto/ethnographies, and methodological pieces it publishes today, the journal and the ISEB conference continue to preserve a key site for researchers and teachers to produce and disseminate biographical scholarship, to theorize the relations between subjects/education, and to develop and share strategies for using auto/biographies in classrooms.

Offering such a repository remains essential. Schools remain formative spaces for shaping our identities, relationships, and futures; the relationships we cultivate with peers, teachers, and texts inform our social imaginaries and understandings of the world; teachers and administrators carry out vital cultural labor for our citizenry; and education remains a rich political site in which all kinds of conflicting epistemologies and messy cultural issues are negotiated. In addition, in our increasingly confessional, technological society, in which the borders among "personal" and "private" and "public" are constantly being redrawn—where we are, as technology scholar Turkle describes, constantly "alone together"[5]—we need critical tools for studying and theorizing lives and for situating them in these New Times.

In her work on Anne Sexton, Salvio asks a series of productive questions that speak to broader reconfigurations of public/private and, I suggest, the importance of utilizing locations such as *Vitae* for expanding and theorizing our auto/biographical practice: "How can we incorporate the personal into teaching without slipping into demand, confession, voyeurism, or unrefined reflection? How do we make our classrooms a space for the enunciation of something other than predictable retellings of socially inscribed stories of failure and success?"[6] How are teaching practices sometimes narcissistic extensions of our own interests?[7] More broadly, in directing her analytic gaze to a poet who defied the image of the "ideal teacher" through controversial topics and struggles with addiction and mental illness, Salvio raises questions pertinent to educational auto/biography: whose lives come to matter, and to be told, and why? How do we construct "good teaching," and what are the implications of such constructions? How do "normative standpoints" and criteria direct our educational practice?[8] These questions, as well as Salvio's work, echo an ISEB member's recent reflections: "the study and use of autobiography is becoming more complex and sophisticated. It is an entry point to some of the more intriguing work happening in scholarship today."[9]

This diversity and complexity is reflected in the manuscripts and book

reviews published in *Vitae* over the last five years. In revisiting these journal issues, I was reminded of how readers' relationships with texts shift and change as our conceptions of subjectivity shift and change—or, as Alice expresses in Lewis Carroll's classic text, *Alice in Wonderland*, "I can't go back to yesterday, because I was a different person then." In previous readings, I tended to first dive in to Editor Linda Morice's introductory notes, search for papers by familiar authors, and then read the essays in order. My focus on content sometimes took priority over my methodological interests. In this reading, I skimmed, surfed, and re-read editions to seek patterns in methodological strategies and topics across issues. In the interests of highlighting biographical diversity, I also noted in more detail the particular form and technique authors chose to conduct and represent their work. I present a few examples here.

Historical Investigations

In terms of biographical form, each journal issue during this period includes historical scholarship, a key genre to render visible diverse educators who shaped educational practice and place them in their educational and historical contexts. Although this body of work reflects consistent attention to subject/context, researchers portray this relationship in diverse ways: some portray biographical figures as agents in shaping historical events while others focus on the insights lives offer for analyzing broader cultural events. Each reflects subtle differences in analytic emphasis, narrator voice, and biographical form and structure. For example, some manuscripts that focused on historical figures and events reflected aspects of the form, "scholarly chronicles," which uses documents and records to describe, often chronologically, an individual's experiences and accomplishments in a specific context. Dredge's (2008) account of an educator who developed programs for textile workers during the early 20th century reveals aspects of this biographical structure. Others, such as Kolodny's (2008) portrait of Mary Swift, and Pittman's (2009) account of Leopold, reflected narrative biography techniques, using descriptive writing to bring the subject to life for a contemporary reader based on the archival evidence available.[10]

Another form of historical representation that surfaced is what we might term a political biography, in which researchers examine a particular period of heightened political, educational, or theoretical activity in an educator's life and analyze the broader significance of their actions during this space and time. Rather than crafting a full biographical portrait of a given individual or politician, the focus in these cases is illuminating portions of a life to convey individuals' roles in navigating a series of critical historical incidents. The reader is left with the sense that people's daily actions can shape historical

events in profound ways. Stallones' (2011) discussion of two African-American educators in Texas who strategized how to advance education for African-Americans in the late 19th century provides a compelling example of this approach.

In contrast to these examples emphasizing agency and action, another biographical form evidenced in the journal is what might be called an instrumental biography, a rigorous focus on a life for what it reveals about broader cultural patterns. As one example of this approach, Wakefield (2011) examines the insights John Milton Gregory's life offers into religious and educational changes in the 19th century. These categories are not necessarily discrete. While such approaches may overlap and authors may draw techniques from varied traditions as their project demands, the nuances among the approaches underscore the diverse topics in educational biography and the complexity of forms available for studying and representing lives.

Methodological Trends

Attention to methodological approaches and studies of contemporary lives complements the journal's historical scholarship. Manuscripts discuss how to conduct and write biographies, consider methodological issues in researching ancestors, present auto/biographical and auto/ethnographic accounts of teaching lives, demonstrate narrative techniques, and report on qualitative studies of faculty lives.

Consistent with contemporary qualitative practices that foreground the author's voice in the telling of their tales, the manuscripts I revisited often include to varying degrees the researcher's reflections on the process of conducting and representing their research. As biographer Louis M. Smith notes at the close of his essay on Nora Barlow's work as an editor of Charles Darwin's manuscripts (2011), "I have continuing trouble in separating Nora, 'Charley,' and me. In an early draft of this presentation I found that I was really writing about Darwin and not about the issues of Nora's editing. At other times, I find that I tend to focus more on me rather than Nora."[11] Smith's observations undoubtedly echo the experience of many biographical scholars whose immersion in the lives of their subjects muddies clear distinctions among texts, subjects, and authors in the interpretive process. Indeed, some argue that biography is inherently autobiographical. Significantly, Smith emphasizes different voices in different manuscripts, in this study positioning his reflections in a methodological appendix to draw a line between author and biography.[12] Other manuscripts, such as Philipsen's (2011) qualitative study of female faculty, place the author's reflections early in the manuscript to emphasize how the topic under study relates to her own lived experiences.

Other scholarship demonstrates new methodological and representational techniques incorporating a/r/tography, poetic inquiry, and collaborative narratives to expand the boundaries of how we examine and share life accounts. This scholarship is in conversation with traditional biographical and qualitative conventions, asking questions, as Salvio does, about the implications of normative practices that have shaped educational and auto/biographical endeavors. One example of this scholarship is MacKenzie's (2011) reflexive exploration of her teaching choices, identity, and practice through poetic inquiry. She mobilizes the metaphor of breath to organize the stanzas throughout her poetic representation, highlighting the "living" nature of her inquiry and her story's "momentary" nature. Her framing comments and poetic form invite dialogue with her unknown reader. As Lather and Smithies, Richardson, and other scholars have explored,[13] implicit in such methodological choices and their evident disruption of historical conventions for representing research is the desire to utilize a broad array of research strategies and narrative techniques to create knowledge and explore the complexity of lived experience.

Auto/biography as Resistance

A third pattern I noted in my re-visiting of journal editions is the attention to individuals and processes that have been peripheral or excluded from dominant accounts. Indeed, the biographical genre has been embraced by many historically because of its role in exploring lives, experiences and processes that fall outside of traditional stories of success, leadership, and accomplishment. It is clear that the genres of autobiography and biography—and their implicit but always shifting methodological intersections (auto/biography)—continue to offer welcoming space for recovering and narrating lives that are lesser-known, or marginalized, or at times erased, and that their telling can illuminate relations of power in the creation of knowledge historically and enrich and shift our understanding of educational processes. As one respondent in my recent survey of ISEB members expressed as an important role of auto/biography: they offer a "space for the epistemological stances from voices and experiences that have been marginalized…allowing for new ways of understanding the world."

In this spirit, authors have sought *Vitae* as a location for exploring questions and concerns of people of color, women, members of the working class, and diverse initiatives undertaken to advance educational rights and access for under-represented groups. Examples in the journal abound. In 2009, Reeves contributed an autobiographical essay focused on the challenges and possibilities involved in developing a charter school for indigenous people in the late 1990s. In 2010, with guest editors Lucy Townsend and Susan

Fransoza, the journal published a special issue on women's education, incorporating essays on teacher anger, accounts of both historical and contemporary women's activists and leaders, female faculty's efforts to balance their professional and personal lives, and a variety of book reviews that analyzed texts focused on gender issues in education. In 2011, the journal published a collection of essays focused on the pedagogies of black educators. Edited by Donyell L. Roseboro and Sabrina N. Ross, the journal highlighted the work of black educators and activists who worked for educational equity and reform and theorized and initiated pedagogical practice through both informal and formal educational mechanisms. These rich exemplars point to topical and methodological patterns in the journal's recent history that will continue to evolve in future editions.

Voices of ISEB Members

To gather fresh insights into how educators experience ISEB and journal resources and use auto/biographical tools in their scholarship and teaching, I recently (2013) conducted a short on-line survey with ISEB members consisting of a mix of quantitative questions and seven open-ended questions. In this IRB-approved study, I also provided the opportunity for participants to expand their thoughts in a brief interview. In the open-ended survey responses, I asked participants to reflect briefly on 1) ways they have benefited from attending ISEB; 2) examples of how they incorporated conference material into teaching and research; 3) their future vision for ISEB; 4) their earliest memory of encountering auto/biography; 5) How they use auto/biographical work and assignments in teaching and research; 6) why they believe the study of auto/biography is important; and finally, 7) what changes and developing trends they observed in auto/biographical research.

Although data collection is ongoing, the open-ended responses thus far point to scholars valuing an array of genre characteristics that I explored above: auto/biographies can offer insights into marginalized lives; can place self, education, and historical context in conversation; can prompt educators' reflexivity about teaching and learning processes; and significantly, can foster our imaginations and sense of becoming. As one member expressed, the study of auto/biography "shows readers who we have been, who we are, and who we might become." The dynamic relationship of past and present, history and future also emerges in other responses. One participant suggested that auto/biography offers "an understanding of the past that may be helpful in decision making and problem solving in the future." Similarly, another member reflected that it is "one of the many ways to explore the past and the present. I love its intersections with larger issues such as memory, social memory, commemoration…" For this researcher, life history, archival

methods, and "various accompanying theoretical frameworks" have enabled research on 19th century figures who left few records behind.

The varied emphases on either subject or context evidenced in biographical essays discussed earlier in this essay also surface in respondents' assessment of the value of auto/biographical study. For one participant, individual agency is important: "I like to consider the impact of individuals on various facets of education." For others, auto/biography offers "insights into individual experiences during a particular time period or event…that we may not capture in any other way." Several members valued the learning and connections auto/biography offers audiences: "the reader can relate to the story being told;" "it brings life and understanding to my classes." And for some, the practice is foundational to the research process. One member's response was particularly eloquent in this regard. S/he wrote, "this process, this study of the self, is at the core of developing one's ontological grounding. This is critical to knowing about the world and positioning one's self within the research process." In this view, auto/biographical work prompts researchers in any given study to consider relationships among self, context, research, and the creation of knowledge.

Some members reported that autobiographical and biographical resources also enhanced their classrooms. Teachers used resources in various ways: one respondent used biographies to "inform and broaden [her/his] perspective and approach," several mentioned incorporating biographical material through oral history, YouTube, and film clips while another taught through "autobiographical comments" and references. One approach respondents shared was using case studies and oral histories in teacher education and history of education courses. One member explained, "I communicate and give the skill or oral histories as a way to capture what previous generations of students and educators experiences were—especially before [computers]." The data also indicated that ISEB members were considering new ways to incorporate auto/biographical tools; one researcher mentioned beginning to "promote biographical research in undergraduate classes to provide application of theoretical, psychological concepts." Teachers of literature, life history, disability studies, and curriculum studies refer to integrating biographical snapshots in their curriculum and assigning research projects using life story tools. Such methods have empowering potential. As one member expressed: "my students have learned that this topic, their story, is a legitimate topic of study."

Members discussed both personal and professional benefits from attending the annual ISEB conference. The conference provides, first, a vehicle for scholars with similar interests to interact and learn from one another; second, it fosters interests in educational biography and opportunities to expand scholars' knowledge base of resources and ap-

proaches; third, it offers opportunities for networking and professional development; fourth, it provides an outlet for scholars in diverse fields to present, publish, and further develop their work; and fifth, it exposes educators to tools and models for classroom use. I also suggest that attending to educators' lives may also serve an important psychological and political function in an era in which support for public schools continues to erode, accountability measures escalate, public discourses castigate educators for "inadequate" student performance, and educational demands constantly fluctuate. Auto/biographical approaches prompt us to construct and highlight the human agents in education; as one respondent expressed, the "people behind the teaching, the theories, and the practices involved." Not all auto/biographical approaches center on individual stories, as poststructuralist work displaces the humanist and individualistic subject in an effort to chart how such a subject functions and the discourses in which she is positioned. Salvio's work on Anne Sexton as personae demonstrates how, for example, teachers' lives can become productive sites for investigating normative and oppressive educational practices and springboards for thinking differently. Whether lives or discourses, diverse auto/biographical work can be rewarding for researchers, subjects, and readers alike.

Moving Forward: Possible Directions

Scholars' accounts of trends in auto/biographical research reflect conflicting reactions to the growth of social media, digital resources, and technologies. Researchers now use diverse technologies and tools to experiment with crafting different auto/biographical figures; to access and collect data; to collaborate across institutional and national borders; and to facilitate and share genealogical research. For example, in a recent presentation at ISEB, Lora Helvie-Mason and Amanda Pape (2013) described productive uses of electronic spaces such as websites and blogs to narrate family stories, post and discuss family pictures, records, and artifacts, and collect genealogical information. Researchers can limit access to such spaces or open them to any with Web access. In one productive instance, Pape described how a genealogical blog attracted the attention of a distant relative on another continent who was able to access and translate local family records written in her ancestor's native language that expanded her family knowledge.

In another example, Thalia Mulvihill and Raji Swaminathan (2013) described how a digital oral history collection with search word tools facilitated their research into school administrators' experiences. Digital resources and technologies thus enable new connections and collaborations, facilitate data gathering in unprecedented ways, and shape the possibilities of how researchers conduct and share auto/biographical research. As one survey

respondent expressed, technology makes it "easier to access the work and life stories of others."

Yet technologies pose an array of personal, theoretical, and methodological dilemmas for auto/biographical researchers as well. If "technology has become the architect of our intimacies" as Sherry Turkle asserts, the vehicle by which we "recreate ourselves as online personae and give ourselves new bodies, homes, jobs, and romances,"[14] researchers must grapple with how to imagine, study, and understand the auto/biographical personae and relationships such technologies produce. We are "inundated with public accounts of the private," one survey respondent expressed, with insufficient "auto/biographical literacy" to analyze and contextualize such accounts. These comments underscore the continuing importance of Kridel's charge to biographical researchers: despite increased, even relentless, attention to methodology in some qualitative circles, biographical work must reflect greater theoretical and methodological awareness, reflection, and transparency—awareness that authors as well as subjects are positioned within particular historical discourses, and that concepts of the Self are theoretically and historically situated.[15]

Some must also consider, as a survey respondent expressed, "how to cope with the decline of the print article… and to deal with electronic publishing and self-publishing." This wording, "how to cope" and "how to deal," has practical, psychological and conceptual connotations and conveys, I suggest, the implications of broader changes for researchers. Those who developed their skills and affinities for biographical work through the pleasures and trials of the archive must grapple in their daily research practice with some degree of loss that broader technological changes prompt. In addition, they must figure out the practical matters of how to access new digital materials, to navigate the new resources, and to learn about the new outlets—all of which take time, energy, and commitment for "digital outsiders."

As I have taken some necessary steps to learn about digital resources and technologies in my own work and teaching, I have begun writing an article entitled, "Reluctant Novice goes Techie," to capture my own (constructed) nostalgia for our print past and my own (constructed) reluctance to spend time learning these new tools amidst other demands and, admittedly, my preference for the tactile, familiar, and beloved experience of reading books-on-paper. I travel this terrain here not to reduce relationships with technology to simplified philia/phobia binaries, or to lament broader cultural changes that necessitate new theorizing and new practice. Rather, I acknowledge that new media and technologies are shaping auto/biographical research and methodology in rewarding and challenging ways and our field would benefit from auto/biographical scholarship that takes up the topic directly.

Another area of potential growth in autobiographical and biographical

educational scholarship (I separate the terms purposely here) is greater focus on methods. Kridel noted that, too often, educational biographies continue to overlook the nuances among various auto/biographical approaches and forms and the significance of a given account for scholarship and practice.[16] As I discuss elsewhere, we cannot dictate a priori or universally, of course, what theoretical and methodological detail a given researcher deems necessary to highlight in their auto/biographical endeavors. Yet a degree of reflection and transparency regarding research design, approach, narrative form, researcher/subject relation and theoretical allegiances can work against the "god trick," or what Haraway describes as the performativity of an omniscient narrator unbounded by time, space, or the particular messy subjectivities of a corporeal form.[17] In this view, embodiment and context is always implicated in the researcher's construction of knowledge.

Several scholars propose approaches to validity in qualitative research that seem relevant to the need for producing more theoretically grounded auto/biographies; in an article in which six qualitative scholars discuss paradigmatic differences in quality criteria, Lather calls for a "rigor of reflective competence" in which researchers demonstrate validity in part through conveying "some sense" of the history, sociology, and philosophy of inquiry.[14] In this vision, researchers position their study in their broader research context, rather than relying on a simplistic and perfunctory checklist of validity criteria that ignores the historical and contextual production of any researcher's study. A contrasting conception of validity that holds promise for auto/biographical researchers concerns the practical effects of their accounts. For Erickson, researchers can demonstrate quality work through "educational imagination"—the degree to which their studies address and "illuminate" educational issues that aid schoolworkers and strengthen schools.[18] The benefit ISEB members describe in incorporating biographies and auto/biographies in their courses suggests a promising trajectory to explore. I welcome the opportunity to read about these pathways, and others, as we move forward.

Notes

[1] Madeleine Grumet in Paula Salvio, *Anne Sexton: Teacher of Weird Abundance*, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2007), x.

[2] The term auto/biography refers here to a range of approaches in studying lives, whether our own, others, or selves-in-relation. The slash can also signal a theoretical assumption of life study that the self is always implicated in the study of others. Researchers' conceptions of their work within this complex category are important distinctions in the field.

[3] Lloyd Goodall, *A Need to Know: The Clandestine History of a CIA Family*. (Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, 2006), 233.

[4] Craig Kridel, "Biographical Meanderings: Reflections and Reminiscences on *Writing Educational Biography,"Vitae Scholasticae*, 25 (2008), 8.

[5] Sherry Turkle, Alone Together: *Why We Expect More From Technology and Less From Each Other* (New York: Basic Books, 2011).

[6] This paragraph draws from pages in Salvio, *Weird Abundance,* including her questions, 4.

[7] Salvio, *Weird Abundance*, 8.

[8] Salvio, *Weird Abundance*, 6.

[9] All quotes from ISEB members are taken from the 2013 survey I conducted.

[10] These initial categories are drawn from Kridel, 2008, 8-9.

[11] Louis M. Smith, "The Artistry of an Editor: Nora Barlow and the Darwin Manuscripts," *Vitae Scholasticae 28* (1), 37.

[12] Smith, Artistry, 37.

[13] Patti Lather and Chris Smithies, *Troubling the Angels: Women Living with HIV/AIDS* (1997) and Laurel Richardson, *Fields of Play: Constructing an Academic Life* (Rutgers University Press, 1997).

[14] Turkle, *Alone Together*, 11.

[15] Kridel, Meanderings, 2008.

[16] Kridel, Meanderings, 2008.

[17] Lucy E. Bailey, "Necessary betrayals: Methodological reflections on a racist ancestor." *Vitae Scholasticae,* (2009).

[18] See Pamela A. Moss, D.C. Phillips, Frederick D. Erickson, Robert E. Floden, Patti A. Lather, and Barbara L. Schneider, "Learning From Our Differences: A Dialogue Across Perspectives on Quality in Education Research," *Educational Researcher* 38 (2009): 506.

[19] Moss et al, Learning, 501-517.

Bad Teacher Under Reflection

Joel Hardman

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Introduction

My grandmother was a teacher in rural Georgia for over 40 years. My mother and father were both teachers. Two of my sisters are teachers. All things considered, teaching was not the most unlikely career path for me to follow. In fact, when people who aren't teachers have asked me what else I might do in life other than teaching (a question, I fear, teachers are asked more often than others), I can't begin to come up with an answer (create teaching materials?). I started teaching English as a tutor in college, and have continued to do so in one form or another for the past 30 years. Overall, my education as a teacher has been rigorous and never-ending. This personal pedagogical history should serve as a backdrop to the main story I tell here, about a recent spring I spent teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) to a few high school students, and discovered – through reflective journaling – that I am just beginning to be aware of my deep weaknesses and insecurities as a teacher.

My primary area of scholarly and teaching expertise is the education of English language learners. My current position entails teacher education in English as a Second Language, yet I rarely have an opportunity to actually *teach* English language learners myself. So, when I had a sabbatical coming up a few years back, I decided I wanted to spend significant time working with some English learners. Going into this experience, I planned to keep a reflective journal to document the experience and learn something about myself as a teacher.

Bailey et al. describe how keeping a journal helps a teacher make sense of immediate experience, "like arraying the jumbled pieces of a jigsaw on a table."[1] However, they go on to note, it's not the journals themselves that allow one to see the bigger picture – the greater story. That perspective comes from reading the journals over time. A later narrative inquiry into the story being told by the journals can allow a teacher to see, and critically examine, the picture made by those jigsaw puzzle pieces.

Narrative Inquiry

Jean Clandinin and Michael Connelly were some of the first within the field of teacher education to link narrative inquiry to teacher development. In their 2000 overview of narrative inquiry, they discuss one of their primary intellectual influences, John Dewey, from whom they've adopted an emphasis on experience and continuity.[2] One experience leads to another, leads to another, and another, and so one needs to understand the connections *between* experiences to understand any *one* experience. That is, new experiences need to be connected to old in order to make sense. Narrative Inquiry, then, can be seen as the process of making the connections that give meaning to experience. Carola Conle describes narrative inquiry as a practice involving the study of connections between experience, institutions, and situations "with the understanding that action and beliefs are grounded in personal, cultural histories and should not be inquired into without accounting for these as well."[3]

As Clandinin and Connelly and Conle acknowledge, narrative both instills practice and experience with its meaning, and is also a mode of uncovering that meaning. Arthur Bochner pushes this point forward a bit more, saying, "the sense of coherence that we need does not inhere in events themselves. Coherence is an achievement, not a given. This is the work of self-narration: to make a life that seems to be falling apart come together again, by retelling and 'restorying' the events of one's life."[4] There is a two-part distinction, then, that needs to be developed between the idea that life itself is experienced narratively (narrated in the moment), and the idea that we narrativize life after it happens, through reviewing and retelling our histories. The near-the-moment narrating can be seen in reflective journaling, while later re-storying of these journals, as I will be doing here, can reveal other, larger, narratives.

According to Bochner, "Storytelling is both a *method* of knowing – a social practice – and a way of telling about our lives."[5] This dual nature of narrative inquiry is emphasized by teacher-educators Nona Lyons and Vicki LaBoskey as both a way of learning and a way to express that learning.[6] From Jerome Bruner,[7] Lyons and LaBoskey take the notion that narrative knowing is com-

plementary to traditional scientific knowing. Knowledge is socially constructed and situated, which is the heart of story-telling.[8] We can generate theorized knowledge through narrative inquiry, and use narrative inquiry as a way of understanding theory.

In his introduction to a recent special issue of the *TESOL Quarterly* (the dominant journal for teachers of English as a Second Language), Gary Barkhuizen comments on the benefits of narrative inquiry:

> In the process of constructing narratives, narrators make sense of their lived experience; they understand it, give it coherence, make connections, and unravel its complexity. The converse, of course, may also be true; the act of narration can sometimes confront disconnections, dead-ends, and uncertainties.[9]

The latter use of narrative inquiry is particularly important to the story being told here, in which I confront tensions between confidence/insecurity, and expertise/inexperience.

The Story of My Teaching

I worked as an aide during this sabbatical period with a K-12 ESL teacher, Diane.* In my journal writing I focus on work I did with two boys: Paulo, a 7th grade boy who came to the US three years ago from a country in South America, and Mark, a 10th grade boy whose family moved here from a European country a couple months before I met him. This reflective journal alone demonstrates the storied nature of experience. When I re-read it, I see myself using the students and Diane as characters in a story into which I was inserting myself. I understood our actions and motivations in terms of a long story arc surrounding my growing self-awareness as a teacher. Here, though, I'm more interested in re-storying what I read in that journal, to use narrative inquiry as an organizing principle retro-actively to make sense of and learn from what happened that particular spring.

There are two layers of meaning-construction at work in this analysis. There is a primary level in the act of journaling itself as I narrate my experience, and a secondary level as I re-read that narrative and see thematic connections across time and settings. The secondary level of meaning-construction helped me identify the three themes I will exemplify and discuss here: overconfidence, a preference for the easier student, and blame. For each of these themes, I will present and discuss examples from my reflective journal.

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*All identifying information (names, national origins, exact ages) has been changed for the purpose of confidentiality.

Overconfidence

This first theme ties together incidents when I am displaying expertise to myself, assuring myself that I know what I'm doing. Here is my first piece of journaling about Paulo, after observing him for one morning:

> From South America, hardly any prior formal education before coming here 3 years ago. He is tall, quiet, and attentive. He is old enough to be in 9th grade, but is in 7th.

I was observing Diane working with him and four other children in her ESL office.

> Paulo has some writing work to do. Diane shifts over to work with Paulo. She reads aloud to him from his text about indigenous people. When done, she indicates to him which questions he could answer with that information. She then gets him to read the next passage. He reads quietly and hesitantly, getting frequently stuck on words (suffix difficulties). Diane skims and summarizes the text a bit, and turns to the questions for him to answer (fill in the blank). "So the main idea is … what?" No answer. "Are they learning science?" No answer. "They're basically learning to survive, right?" "What do they eat?" Paulo repeats part of the question: "They eat?"

Paulo read aloud a passage, with prompting/correction from Diane. The other three students continued to work silently on their own. Paulo, with Diane's help, worked on a study guide for about fifteen minutes. At the end of class, Paulo interrupted Diane, who was then working with another student, to tell her what he would work on before their next meeting.

After the observation, I wrote the following reflection:

> As I watched Paulo I was trying to work out a puzzle: after three years in school here, why was he still struggling so much with reading and writing? The obvious answer is his lack of previous formal schooling, but there might be more going on. I tried to focus on what was going on cognitively during reading activities. From his reading aloud, I could see his struggles with longer, multimorphemic, words, but I couldn't really tell much about comprehension. I could see he had trouble understanding the texts, but not exactly why (The words? The content? The organization of ideas?). Or maybe he understood more than the "study guide/worksheet" revealed, and he was just having trouble with that task.

> I think I will try the following types of activities:
>
> *A modified think-aloud:* after reading a sentence, I will ask Paulo to tell me what he thinks it means, and what he was thinking as he read it. I will model this for him first.
>
> *Create a different comprehension task:* I'm not sure what this will be, yet. The think-aloud will help, but I'd like another task that involves writing. A graphic organizer of main ideas?

I think after a one-hour observation I am already beginning to get Paulo. The voices of theory and expertise are weaving together here ("what was going on cognitively…"). As a teacher, I had hopes that after my diagnosis of his reading needs I could follow a simple prescription for improvement.

Here is my first journaling about Mark:

> I observed and worked with Mark for about an hour. He simply needs a lot of help with his homework. He is from Europe, and has just been in the US a short while (family moved here). I have the sense he has had a good education before coming here, and is quite smart. We worked on a rough draft of a paper about the St. Louis arch. Watching him work and seeing his notecards and outline, I sense that he has a strong perfectionist streak, and likes his writing to be perfect before moving on. His ideas seem to run ahead of his proficiency level. Perfectionism + low proficiency = very slow writing. He might need work with more bottom-up strategies for getting his work done.

My thought was that he mostly needed to work on improving his writing process, as he seemed to be following writing habits that weren't working that well, which he was most likely transferring from his writing process in his first language. As with Paulo, I attempted a quick diagnosis and prescription.

One day when Diane was out sick, Paulo and I worked in the library. I asked him what he wanted to work on, and I thought at first he said "the fractions." Later, when it was clear he had to write something about *The Diary of Anne Frank*, I understood he must have been saying (or intending to say) "reflections." My guess was that he might not know exactly what that word meant. I asked him if he had an assignment sheet for it, and he looked through his notebook for a few minutes, unsuccessfully. His notebook was a bit of a shambles.

I asked him what the word "reflection" meant to him, and he said it should show he understood the book. I told him that would be part of it,

because the reflection did serve that purpose for most teachers, and so it should summarize some of what happened in the book. I suggested to him that it should also have some of what he thought about the book. I orally went through the different ways he could show that, then wrote them down: What did the book remind you of? How did the book make you feel? Did you like the book, and why? We talked a bit about the last question, and I wrote down his reasons for liking it.

After jotting those ideas down, I reviewed them and asked him how he would organize them in a paragraph. That gave him trouble – so I prompted him by telling him that when I first asked him about the book, he reviewed the plot, so maybe that would be a good place to start. I asked him to summarize the plot for me orally, then I repeated back to him my understanding of it, and prompted him to write it down. I wrote in my reflective journal about that moment:

> He took that prompting very well. Maybe too well. It's very tempting to just tell him what to write, because he doesn't resist it at all. I want to model for him the kind of thinking that goes into a complex writing task, but involve him as much as possible in that thinking. There is a tension between those two goals, for me. That's the art of scaffolding – to keep a learner involved and progressing without giving them more help than they need. Time ran out just as Paulo finished working on the summary – we didn't get into the real "reflections" part, but I left him with my notes.

In that reflection, I seem to just be displaying my knowledge to myself. Why would I do that? This self-talk props me up, but is it helping me learn anything about my teaching? Here is a limitation of my journaling: rather than help me learn something about practice, it just confirms my current state of expertise; I am already at the end of my story of teacher development. My reflections continued:

> His English still shows some of the same issues I identified last time –the seemingly intractable grammar problems. At one point I tried to give him a mini-lesson on articles. He had written in his summary of the book: "The girl hid in the house." It would have been more appropriate in the context to have written "a house," so I asked him if he knew what the difference would be between "the house" and "a house" in that context. He said something about possession that I didn't follow at the time, and so I orally gave him the usual explanation about first mentions of a noun in discourse using "a," and then later moving to "the." He could tell I was indicating that he

> should change the "the" and erased it, then he wrote down "our" in its place. All along he had been thinking I was comparing "the house" to "our house" (he himself says something like /a ae/ for "our"). "Our house" would have made no sense at all in the paragraph he was writing, but he was going to write it that way if he thought that was what I was suggesting. That indicates three problems: serious grammatical issues, phonological problems, and over-compliance. He'll do whatever someone asks of him, whether it makes sense to him or not. Could that instinct for compliance – pleasing authority - be interfering with his learning?

So, perhaps the affirmation of competence that "the voice of expertise" gives me is needed, because elsewhere, as above, I recognize myself as hopelessly inexpert. I might try to wring a useful reflection out of my incompetence ("Could that instinct…"), but that doesn't change the facts of the situation: I was struggling in these instructional moments to just do no harm.

A Preference for Easier Student

That last story also relates to a second theme in these journal writings: how much I preferred working with Paulo than Mark. As another example, in my second meeting with Paulo, he had begun work with Diane on an essay related to Martin Luther King Day. He and Diane had webbed some ideas for how he could connect his life with Martin Luther King's ideals, and he had the idea to write about problems he had with his family that were resolved peacefully. I thought it was time to move from the web to an organized outline, so most of our time was spent talking that through as I wrote down ideas. Paulo was very good at responding to my suggestions/ideas/prompts.

I first asked him to describe his problems with his parents. They were about difficulties communicating with each other. I kept pushing Paulo to think of specific incidents that could be the details of the problem description. He had trouble thinking of any, but we came up with general types of problems, such as when he didn't understand the chores they wanted him to do. His mother would get mad, and he would get mad in return. We built the essay around this issue (conflicts solved peacefully by identifying them as misunderstandings, and how understanding was achieved). By the end of the 50 minutes, he had completed his introduction paragraph and started his second.

> What struck me the most working with Paulo wasn't just his compliance (which was so refreshing!), but the types of errors he made in his writing. …I spoke with Diane about these issues afterward, and

> we compared Paulo with Mark. Unlike Paulo, Mark does not take direction well, or accept suggestions. He tightly controls what and how he writes. He will not let a sentence be until he considers it grammatically/lexically/contextually perfect. Drafting is painfully slow for him (and me).
>
> Is it right for me to feel so much teaching pleasure just because the learner is so obedient? How is obedience connected with learning?

These reflective moments reveal my own learning about myself as a teacher, and about learning/teaching generally. I'm stepping outside the plot of my work with Paulo and Mark, and stepping into a longer plot line: what am I learning about myself? About ESL? Questions such as these should be the core outcome of reflective inquiry, but were just beginning to pop up in my journaling after a few months of engagement with these two students.

Related to some work Paulo and I were doing on *The Outsiders*, I wrote the following on what turned out to be my last day with him:

> There were a couple questions about events in the book he couldn't remember at all, so he didn't know where to look to find the answers. I was unable to help. He said he has trouble remembering things in books. I asked him if he remembers things he sees in movies, and he said that was no problem. I continue to think he has trouble processing print. We had that discussion on the way out of the library.

So, in our last minute together, I'm finally able to get Paulo to begin to open up about his own understanding of his English difficulties. Could I have pulled that out of him earlier if I had tried? The question leads back to my initial contact with Paulo when I arrived at a rather quick diagnosis of what his difficulties were and what help he needed. It took me three months to realize I should have investigated what *he* thought his learning needs were.

One day when I was working with Mark, I can read myself trying to address one of my weaknesses and challenge a bad habit. Mark had not yet finished an essay on the St. Louis arch, so we were going to work on that. He had received some feedback from his teacher, and knew he had to add citations and make it longer. He mostly wanted help with making it longer, and I could tell he just wanted to add information from his note cards. However, I knew from before that there were deeper problems with the essay than note cards could address, and decided to wade into those (also knowing they might help him make the essay longer). I went into it with some fear – Mark did not take suggestions for revision very well. I wrote:

The essay really has no thesis – the introduction has two sentences, and Mark claims the thesis is "The St. Louis arch is a national monument and millions of people have visited it." Not only is this not an argumentative statement, most of the information he presents in the essay is not related to those points (he has info about the history of its construction, its physical characteristics). The second sentence in the intro is slightly more argumentative ("The arch is a symbol of westward expansion"), so I convince Mark that it would make a better thesis. I have a great deal more trouble getting Mark to think about what else he needs to add to the introduction to make a connection between that thesis and the information he presents in the following paragraphs. I tried to prompt a sentence from him ("what sentence would connect that thesis and your information about the making of the arch?" etc.), but it was clear he didn't want to do that. He wants to be given a sentence. That part is understandable – the maddening part is that when I would suggest a sentence, he would never like it. It involved this painful negotiation. It took about half an hour to construct two sentences on the board that could be added to his introduction. His essay also had no conclusion, and he really never seems to have heard of such an animal. So we talked a bit about that, and I outlined some standard ideas for what goes in a conclusion. After we did that, he asked if he should add in some information about when the guys who made the arch died. After all the work we had done, it was clear he was still focused on just adding more decontextualized info to the essay to make it longer. I tried to tell Mark that the info had to relate to the thesis and be interesting in some way. He still decided to just stick it in the body somewhere. He knew he had to add citations, but didn't know anything about them (how they are structured, whether or not he needed a reference list).

The contrast with Paulo is clear. While Paulo will accept a suggestion even when he shouldn't, Mark won't accept the suggestion even when he should. Paulo should be more resistant and I want Mark to be less so. I come back to a complementary question: is Mark's resistance interfering with his learning?

My journal ends with a comparative reflection about working with Paulo and Mark:

I'll miss working with Paulo more than Mark. I felt I was accomplishing more with Paulo than Mark, and also that Paulo was more appre-

> ciative of what you did for him. So, those are kind of selfish reasons for the preference, and display my laziness. Mark was more of a challenge. To make progress with Mark would take a lot more effort, but in these pull-out situations you're not even allowed to put in effort: only react to immediate need. I do plan to continue working with Diane to help her change that situation.

I recognize at this point that my preference for working with Paulo did not reflect well on me as a teacher. I'm admitting that I don't like the extra work required to help Mark. The final point I make about pull-out situations relates to a theme I will pick up next about blame – how I often blame the context of teaching for my failures.

Blame

On a day when Diane was absent, I ended up with three of her students, not having done any lesson preparation. Maria, a student from the Philippines, had nothing she really needed to work on. Mark was mostly finished with an essay we had been working on, and Chen, a student from China, had nothing she wanted help with. I came up with a bit of work for Maria and Chen to do on their own. Mark got out his essay and I looked over that quickly. I didn't really want to get into editing it because I knew Diane wanted Mark to consider the essay done, without his continuing perfectionist editing. I just gave him a bit of feedback on the format of his works-cited list. Then he turned to an economics textbook and opened to a section he was working on about annual percentage rates and finance charges. We worked through a bit of that, and an exercise about the evaluation of some different loans. After the girls finished their work, the four of us spent the final 15 minutes or so just talking - about schools in different parts of the world, strict teachers, teenage freedom.

In reflecting on that class time, I focused on how Diane's ESL program worked:

> If I really had curricular control, we could do an interesting comparative-education project, I think. I'll talk with Diane about that. So I had three students for 45 minutes with no plan, and none of them with a pressing need. What could I have done differently? There's certainly a lot I could have done if I felt I had more control of the learning situation. But my role is "help students with their school work," and I've defined that as more of a passive job. However, it doesn't have to be.

As I do here, I often found myself struggling with the structure of the program within which Diane had to work. I know she struggled with it, too. However, I was too quick to blame this situation for causing my problems as a teacher.

Another example is a time I worked with Paulo on some papers related to an essay he was working on about what life will be like when he becomes very old. He had an assignment sheet and the first four of five paragraphs already written. We worked on a conclusion paragraph, and ended up focusing on some tense issues he was having. I first got him to underline all the verbs, doing the first couple for him. I then asked him what tense was, and he didn't know. After I explained it, he couldn't say if what he had written should be past, present, or future. I showed him how most of it was correctly in the future tense, and we worked on getting the rest of it right. After that, we worked on adding something "catchy" to the first paragraph, which he thought he was supposed to have. I reflected on Paulo's compliance:

> As before, I'm now struggling with getting around Paulo's easy compliance. I want him to understand what we're doing, what changes I suggest, but I'm not sure if we're getting there. I feel like I get too talky when he seems to not know something, but I don't just want him to write down the transition I prompt him to write, I want him to know what a transition is for and maybe come up with one on his own. I know there is a nice inductive method for doing this, but we have a real time issue. This is a constraint of working on someone else's curriculum.

It's easy, when one is confronting a weakness in one's teaching, to blame it on the context, as I do here. I start off identifying something I feel I am doing wrong, and quickly shift to writing about how the situation is out of my control, constrained by others: Diane, other teachers, the students, the school.

One day Diane mentioned that Paulo had some science to study for. That excited me, as it would be different from the work we'd been doing. It would be content, and reading, rather than writing. When Paulo came in, though, he wanted to work on *The Outsiders*. He had a study guide that was full of questions he had to answer. Two problems immediately presented themselves: I had never read the book (or seen the movie), and he had only read a few pages into it. I had to make a quick decision about how to spend time. Should I just ask him to read silently, till he had the right information to answer a question? No, that didn't seem right: he read without comprehension. Just having him and me take turns reading the book aloud seemed like a waste of time, but there didn't seem much else to do.

I started by having him read over the questions about the first two chap-

ters while I quickly read the back cover and skimmed a few pages. I saw that the back cover blurb had some of the information needed to answer the first question. He should certainly have been able to answer it ("what's the difference between the Greasers and the Socs?") based on the 10 pages he had already read, but he couldn't. I tried to have a general discussion with him about what the story was about before we began reading aloud from where he had stopped. I also skimmed to see what else he had already read that might be useful for answering the first few questions, and we discussed those parts.

> I was happy to do the reading aloud. It went fast (we didn't have much time), and Paulo would stop me when there was something he didn't understand. I also stopped often to talk about what was going on.
>
> I felt frustrated at not being able to plan my own lessons, and to have to step mid-way into someone else's lesson, obviously. Diane feels this frustration at that, too, but feels obligated to first help students with their coursework, rather than teach them anything separate of her own. I see the pressure. It's an institutional issue. Everyone looks to the ESL program as support for the students in their mainstream classes. I think I'll talk more with Diane about this. It might hurt the students' grades in the short term to move away from the current model, but maybe help them in the long run if she made the class "her own." The flip side is that it would add a lot of work for her. As it is, she doesn't have to prep, really.

As in other entries, I see myself working to find a programmatic fix to the challenges I faced. I'd moved from diagnosing student problems that I could fix instructionally to diagnosing instructional problems that could only be fixed programmatically, a shift in responsibility that let me off he hook. I begin my journaling with a narrative in which my character is an expert problem-solver, but as that fails I move toward constructing a narrative of powerlessness in the face of forces beyond my control. Had I more experience with the particularities of this situation – the students, the program, the administration – I imagine I would have identified, the way Diane had, exactly where I had agency and what the limits to that agency were. The blame would shift to critique, and then to action.

Discussion

The overconfidence I started out this teaching experience with begins

this story of an imbalance between expertise and experience. It is a story about the limits of my expertise. In my immediate reflections, I thought I was deploying expertise to make sense of my experiences, but my general lack of experience with learners in that particular situation becomes more apparent through the lenses of the other two themes. My preference for the easier student comes out of that inexperience. Quite simply, my experience didn't prepare me to teach Mark, as if my Theories of Learning had all been built around the image of students like Paulo, students who would essentially agree to accept my protagonist role as expert. As I grow to recognize that I'm unable to help Mark as much as I'd like, I re-frame that story to be a plot about the program and its constraints, and my new character is an outsider-idealist blaming the system. In retrospect, my more distanced narrative inquiry reveals a character who is more of a bumbling antagonist in a narrative in which Diane and the students are the more appropriate protagonists.

As discussed by clinical psychologist Michael Bamberg, some narrative investigations "are apt, and often even designed, to reveal discrepancies between the told and the lived, and to reveal the fragmentations and the unknown in the narrative charting of self and identity."[10] My story exemplifies how narrative is inherent to practice *and* can be used later to analyze practice, and the latter analysis can reveal the tensions between the lived and the narratively examined. Psychologist Donald Polkinghorne claims:

> Language takes up the contingencies of existence, and the perceptual openness of life to the natural and intersubjective worlds, and molds them into a meaningfulness that is greater than the meaningfulness they originally hold. One of the ways language does this is to configure these givens into a narrative form in which desires and aspirations are used to transform the passing of life into an adventure of significance and drama.[11]

My use of narrative inquiry to examine reflective journaling wrings usefulness out of the struggle of teaching, transforms my frustrations into a meaningful drama. The secondary level of narrative inquiry above and beyond my original journaling helped me discover much about myself as a teacher. The tensions between my confidence and inexperience, my tendency to avoid difficulty and shift blame, was invisible to me in the teaching moment.

A narrative approach to analyzing experience is not a fatalistic and uncritical one. We exert agency over the stories we are part of. Another way of viewing narrative inquiry from this perspective is through the framework of master vs. counter narratives. According to Molly Andrews, master narratives provide"what is assumed to be a normative experience."[12] These are the

stories that embody internalized expectations for how the world is supposed to work. Example master narratives from my journaling would be "expertise should determine practice," or "local institutional constraints prevent change." Counter-narratives rebut these expectations, whether through challenging the authority of expertise or deploying power to critique and confront existing institutionalized practices.

The construction of theorizing counter-narratives by teaching professionals offers a way to bring together theory and practice, knowledge and experience. My early journaling here demonstrates my attempts to match knowledge and practice uncritically, to create a simple coherence between knowledge and experience. When we tell stories, we *tend* to tell stories that reflect/support the dominant stories – the master narratives. However, that is not the only possible relationship between narrativized experience and knowledge. As Andrews says:

> When, for whatever reason, our own experiences do not match the master narratives with which we are familiar, or we come to question the foundations of those dominant tales, we are confronted with a challenge. How can we make sense of ourselves, and our lives, if the shape of our life story looks deviant compared to the regular lines of the dominant stories?[13]

She is drawing a tension here between experience and expertise. It's an interesting tension because the two concepts have an etymological connection: originally, "expertise" is that skill one gains from "experience," but now it's typical to think of "expertise" as coming from some sort of graduate training in contrast to "experience." The implication of Andrews is that the Master Narrative is the narrative of experts, but I think there are two ways to conceptualize it. On one hand, yes, the master narrative is the narrative of experts, which can be countered by the local knowledge (the "life story") gained through practice and experience. But on the other, the master narrative can be the life narrative itself, grounded in experience, which can be countered or resisted by new knowledge and theory from other contexts.

Which kind of counter-narrative should teacher-educators desire from their students? The most typical desire is for more of the kind of self-criticism in which students use the "expertise" that teacher-educators represent to question their practices. However, both types of counter-narrative are valuable, both evidence of different and equally important types of developing expertise. I have always pushed teachers-to-be to keep reflective journals as part of being an inquiring professional, and I've taught the use of narrative inquiry as a mode of investigation for action research. However, I haven't explicitly linked the two as I have demonstrated here, as a way of performing

a two-tiered examination of experience. I think such a use of journaling artefacts can push beginning teachers beyond surface-level reflection on experience, which can be constrained by the master narratives of immediate political, educational, institutional, personal, and experiential narratives to the more critically-reflective counter narrative that distance can provide.

Notes

[1] Kathleen M. Bailey, Andrew Curtis, and David Nunan, *Pursuing Professional Development: The Self as Source* (Boston: Heinle & Heinle, 2001), 48.

[2] Jean Clandinin, and Michael Connelly, *Narrative Inquiry: Experience and Story in Qualitative Research* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2000).

[3] Carola Conle, "The rationality of narrative inquiry in research and professional development," *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 24, no. 1 (2001): 30.

[4] Arthur Bochner, "It's about time: Narrative and the divided self," *Qualitative Inquiry*, 3, (1997): 429.

[5] Ibid., 435.

[6] Nona Lyons, and Vicki LaBoskey, *Narrative Inquiry in Practice: Advancing the Knowledge of Teaching* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2002), 2-3.

[7] Jerome Bruner, *Actual Minds, Possible Worlds* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986).

[8] Lyons and LaBoskey, *Narrative Inquiry in Practice*, 18.

[9] Gary Barkhuizen, "Narrative Knowledging in TESOL," *TESOL Quarterly* 45, no. 3, (2011): 393.

[10] Michael Bamberg, "Considering counter narratives," in *Considering Counter-Narratives: Narrating, Resisting, Making sense*, ed. Michael Bamberg and Molly Andrews (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2004), 354.

[11] Donald Polkinghorne, *Narrative Knowing and the Human Sciences* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1988), 31.

[12] Molly Andrews, "Counter-Narratives and the Power to Oppose," in *Considering Counter-Narratives: Narrating, Resisting, Making Sense*, ed. Michael Bamberg and Molly Andrews (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2004), 1.

[13] Ibid., 1.

Will I Learn to Read Today?: Ernest Boyer's Early Life and Career in Higher Education

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Scholar, administrator, education reformer, devoted Christian, husband and parent, Ernest Boyer (1928-1995) was one of the most influential leaders in higher education of the twentieth century. Boyer held prominent positions of educational leadership spanning three decades. As former chancellor of the State University of New York System (1971-1977), United States Commissioner of Education during the Carter administration (1977-1979), and President of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (1979-1995), Boyer's career was devoted to public education in America. This paper will explore Boyer's early life, the development of his Christian faith, and the primary influences during his formative years. It will also explore his formal education and will identify key individuals and events that shaped his childhood, young adulthood, and chosen career. Also, the paper examines his brief stint as a Brethren pastor, his graduate studies at the University of Southern California, and first role as a professor and administrator at Upland College (a small, Brethren college in California) to observe how a diverse educational pedigree and professional life shaped Boyer the scholar and administrator.

Early Life (1928-1944)

The years of childhood are undoubtedly formative. Trajectories are set. People and experiences mark one's mind and soul, forming belief systems,

worldviews, passions, and interests. Ernest Boyer's childhood is no exception. The people and experiences of "Ernie" the young boy instilled distinct values, formed salient beliefs, and fostered a commitment to service, a strong work ethic, and a love for learning. Together, they prepared Boyer to be a pivotal leader in education in the latter half of the twentieth century.

Parents. Ernest Boyer was born on September 13, 1928 to Clarence William Boyer and Ethel Marie Boyer in Dayton, Ohio. Ernest entered a family with modest means and a hopeful future. His father Clarence had been a bright student with a wide range of interests. He finished high school, a rare feat for members of the "Plain Church" (a Brethren denomination with Pennsylvania Dutch Roots). According to Ernest Boyer's wife Kay, Clarence would have loved to attend college, but "that was pretty much unheard of. He then became a business man. And he was successful. But he was totally self-educated . . . a Renaissance man. He knew everything."[1]

As a young bachelor, Clarence started an office supply business. His father, William, founded a mission in Dayton which employed a young woman named Ethel. Clarence and Ethel fell in love, and were married on April 2nd, which also happened to be their joint birthday.[2] Starting and sustaining a business at the advent of the Great Depression was a risky endeavor. Boyer's parents ran their business out of their home.[3] It was truly a family affair, remembers Boyer. It took "the effort of the entire family to make it pay. Some of my earliest memories are working with my brother in the basement where we packed boxes full of greeting cards."[4]

When Clarence was not building his business, he was pursuing numerous hobbies. For example, he had an insatiable curiosity illustrated in his pursuit of a life goal to meet Albert Einstein. He traveled to Princeton to meet the renowned physicist to pose an equation to him with deep theological implications: *nuclear weapons plus X = peace*. At Princeton, he waited in the hallway until Einstein emerged from his office. Boldly walking up to the world's most popular genius, he introduced himself and posed his query.[5] Unfortunately, no historical records provide Einstein's response.

Clarence and Ethel were devout Christians, actively involved in the Brethren church. Clarence served as a lay minister, preaching often.[6] Devout though they were, they refused to blindly adhere to tradition in the practice of their faith. Fred Holland, who married Ernest's cousin, Grace, remembers Clarence as a bit of a rebel in the church.[7] Conservative Anabaptist rooted congregations traditionally are suspicious of the world outside the church community, and therefore keep themselves intentionally and cautiously separate. Clarence and Ethel refused to succumb to this historic pressure. This cautious heritage did not stand in the way of their son Ernest's thirst for knowledge and interest in the broader world, nor did it hinder Clarence and Ethel's desire to nurture Ernest in a well-rounded manner. Ernest Boyer

would later reflect:

> My main glimpse into a larger world was found in the case of books at one end of the living room. In it was the Bible, a set of encyclopedias, my father's books on business . . . there was the National Geographic. I spent hour after hour with this magazine.[8]

Boyer's love of books nurtured a passion for the world. Fortunately, Clarence and Ethel's small business flourished, growing to include a typewriter shop. Their success afforded them the opportunity to travel far more than the average family growing up in the Great Depression. Ernest, with a penchant for organization and a thirst for knowledge, meticulously documented each trip he took, organizing the information into souvenir books.

Ernest was instilled with a strong work ethic and a sense of gratitude from his parents. Daily he was confronted with the plight of others who fell victim to the Great Depression. His father's success was not "old money," and was built largely from nothing to something with hard work from the entire family. He learned from his father crucial lessons of persistence, diligence and hard work that would serve him well in some very trying times in his career. Ernest respected his parents, and continually strived to make his father proud. In Kay's words:

> [Clarence] was brilliant and had great expectations for Ernie who felt that he did not reach [Clarence's] expectations. Ernie always had enormous respect and love for his father, and he wanted to honor his high standards.[9]

Where Clarence demanded excellence, Ethel took a more gentle approach. She adored Ernie and his brothers and could always be counted on for an encouraging word. After a long and successful run as small business owners, Clarence and Ethel eventually sold their business and their home in Dayton, and retired in Pennsylvania at a Brethren retirement village.

This supportive, yet challenging environment helped shape Ernest Boyer into a successful higher education leader. Raised amidst the tension of living with financial wealth while surrounded by crippling poverty, the Boyer family stressed the serving of others. For that, he can thank Clarence's father, the Reverend William Boyer.

Dayton Mission/Grandfather. Ernest's grandfather, William Boyer, was another formative influence. Later in life, when Ernest was a much sought after speaker, he would often refer to his grandfather as the most important person in his childhood. Where his father Clarence was known for his financial success, William Boyer became known for his service. A minister in

Dayton, Ohio, William founded and led the Dayton Mission for 33 years.

Before starting the mission, William worked in a Pullman trolley-car manufacturing plant. There he was known for his kindness and compassion. On the factory line, William worked alongside two deaf brothers. In order to develop a friendship with them, he learned a simplistic form of sign language to communicate. He liked the interaction so much he taught it to his grandchildren.[10]

While his work at the Pullman factory paid the bills, William was never content. He had bigger plans to serve the entire city of Dayton. The place of his discontent was never money; it was service. And service required time. Devoutly Christian, he was burdened for those who were "lost." His daily commute on foot took him across a bridge that provided an expansive view of the city of Dayton. He would often stop on this bridge, look at his city, and grieve for all of its residents who were not of the faith.[11] He did what he could, but had a nagging sense that there was something more. In 1901, William travelled to Chicago for the World's Fair. As he sat in a movie theatre, he was struck with conviction: What if the Lord returned while he was watching a movie? In the middle of the film, he stood up, walked out, and swore he would never attend something like that again.[12]

Such experiences reveal a drive, devotion, and passion that compelled William to a life of simplicity and service. He was deeply concerned that his time on earth be faithful to the gospel. Extravagance was a vice that impeded the ministry. William never drove a car, as walking was an opportunity to minister to people on his way.[13] To William, a car isolated the individual, ignoring a suffering group of people in need of the Gospel. In 1912, at the age of 40, William left his stable income, moved his family into the heart of Dayton, and lived among the poor. He started the mission that became Ernest's second home.

William Boyer ran the mission on a tight budget. Initially, none of the staff were paid; they lived solely off donations from local farmers.[14] Ever the careful steward, William was a great bookkeeper, always ensuring that all donations were spent and meticulously recorded. Given his ministerial role among the poor and homeless of the city, William also presided over 1,400 funerals, providing dignity at the end of life for those many considered undignified.

The residents of Dayton who subsisted on the mission's charity were "a part of Ernie's life . . ."[15] It was at the Dayton Mission that Ernest encountered poverty and suffering. He attended services multiple times per week, worshipping with and serving people from all walks of life. In his childhood, Ernest heard hundreds of sermons delivered by his grandfather, and stood by his side while he ministered to thousands. Bill Paugstadt, a friend of the Boyer family during this time, remembers William's ministry: "You knew that he

walked with the Lord. There is no doubt because his eyes would literally shine as he preached . . . You never ever saw him greet a person without the love of Jesus shining through his eyes. People commented about that for many, many years."[16]

Under his grandfather's tutelage, Ernest developed an appreciation for the spoken word. Ernest admired his grandfather immensely for his compassionate spirit, his way with children, and his ability to listen. In his own words, "Grandpa taught me by example lessons I could not have learned in any classroom. He taught me that God is central to all of life, and he taught me to be truly human, one must serve."[17] William also influenced Ernest towards a "people centered life."[18] That which he admired in his grandfather are the very things for which he is now remembered. Ernest's friends and relatives all attest to how alike Ernest and William were. Ernest's cousin Grace remembers that "Ernie had his grandfather's personality. . . his ability to relate to people . . . his good sense of humor."[19]

Lester Mosebrook, former student and friend, reflects, "It was a sound Christian family that really made him the person he was . . ."[20] For better or worse, Boyer's faith tradition was formative. The Boyers were a close-knit, devout family that took very seriously the responsibility to be charitable to others. Just four days before his seventh birthday (September 9, 1935), Ernest was baptized in the Miami River by Isaac Engle. Nearly three years later, when he came of age in the eyes of the Brethren in Christ Church, he officially became a member.[21] These were milestones of a faith that would remain central to Boyer's own family and professional life, one in which he integrated his grandfather's service with his father's success.

School. Throughout his career, Boyer spoke fondly of his early schooling in numerous speeches. He recalls his schooldays with whimsy, inspiration, and some anxiety. His elementary school in Dayton, Fairview Elementary, provided ample opportunity in all three: "Fairview Elementary was not free. Each day's schedule was precise. It never varied . . . The classroom could be a fearful place, but it could be a place of joy too. It all depended on the teacher."[22] The personal experience of a teacher at the center of his education helped shaped what would later become an unapologetically teacher-focused agenda for education reform. He often spoke of great teaching and its relationship to great education. One example:

> First of all, every great teacher I had knew their subject. They were well informed. Second, every great teacher I had knew their students. They knew how to relate the knowledge of their discipline to the readiness of children in the classroom. Third, every great teacher I had created classrooms that were active, not passive. And finally, every great teacher that I had was an authentic, appealing human

> being. They were three-dimensional. They were willing to say, "I don't know." They laughed, they cried. They became not just a great teacher but a good and trusted friend.[23]

To Ernest Boyer, a teacher had the potential to foster a sense of "fascination, when my urge to learn was driven by a sense of mystery or wonder."[24] It became the cornerstone of his educational policy, and it all began with the first teacher he ever had.

Will I learn to read today? Miss Rice, 1st grade. Ernest's first day at Fairview Elementary, with Miss Rice in first grade, was one of his favorite stories to tell. It was a warm day in the Fall of 1934. Ernest and his mother were on their way to the school. Boyer, the eager and naïve boy he was, asked his mother, "Will I learn to read today?" His mother gently replied, "No, not today, but you will before the year is out."[25] Boyer, unfazed, approached the two story brick schoolhouse and found Miss Rice's class lined up outside. The warning bell rang, and the class marched into its respective room, and in Boyer's words, "immediately, we set to work."[26]

He remembers his first encounter with Miss Rice vividly:

> . . . there she stood, half human, half divine, my first grade teacher. I was sure that in the afternoon she ascended into heaven and the next day came down to teach the class. She looked at twenty-eight frightened, awestruck, anticipating children and said, "Good morning, class. Today we learn to read."[27]

And learn to read he did. He left his first day with the ability to read four simple words: "I go to school."[28] Boyer and his classmates traced them, sang them, and recited them. When the end-of-day bell rang, Ernest ran home to his mother, took out a piece of crumpled paper from his pocket, flattened it, and enthusiastically proclaimed to his mother, "Today I learned to read!"[29]

This experience of education fulfilling more than expected never left him. Miss Rice instilled his interest in language and writing, and Boyer tirelessly used his platform to promote language at the center of the curriculum.[30] This was no coincidence. Boyer himself attributed his views to "the influence of an unremembered first grade teacher at Fairview Elementary School …. Great teachers live forever."[31] His first day with Miss Rice provided the symbol of educational reform that shaped his agenda: "if I had one wish, it would be that every child during his or her first day of school would hear some teacher say: 'Good morning class. Today we learn to read.'"[32]

High School, Carlton Wittlinger. Ernest Boyer loved learning, yet never felt he excelled as a student. His wife, Kay, believed it was due to his father's extremely high standards.[33] He worked hard, received good marks,

and continuously sought to win his father's approval. Miss Rice had instilled within Boyer a thirst for learning, but another teacher came along to instill within him a confidence to pursue academics as a career.

The critical moment in Boyer's life occurred in a passing conversation in the halls of Boyer's high school in Dayton, Ohio. His 11th grade history teacher, Mr. Carlton Wittlinger, had just dismissed his class. Boyer enjoyed Mr. Wittlinger's class and felt it brought history back to life.[34] As students were filing out of the classroom, Mr. Wittlinger stopped Ernest to share what he probably thought was merely a small compliment. To Boyer, it was life changing. He said, "Ernest, you're doing pretty well. You keep this up, you just might be a student."[35] Boyer was elated, and referred to it as the "highest academic accolade I'd had . . . He redirected my thinking at a time when I wasn't sure who I was or what I would like to become."[36] That small pep talk would be the catalyst Ernest needed to emerge as a leader among his peers in college and grow into a global leader among educators.

Teachers, to Boyer, had the distinct privilege of empowering the mind and the soul of students. They changed Boyer's life, and he devoted much of his career in providing that same experience for others.

College Years

Messiah College. In the Fall of 1944, at the age of 16, Ernest Boyer enrolled in his junior year of high school at Messiah College, a high school academy and two year college located in Grantham, Pennsylvania. Founded in 1909 as Messiah Bible School and Missionary Training Program, Messiah added the first two year college degree in the state of Pennsylvania in 1920. Boyer's first semester tuition and fees totaled $150.50.[37]

Boyer's first term at Messiah was arguably the most important three months of his life. His first week on campus, Kathryn "Kay" Tyson, the woman who would become his wife, remembers Ernest quickly emerging as a favorite among the female students. In her words: "the girls were all beginning to notice and comment about him. In the large bathroom that we all shared, someone walked in and loudly said 'Boy, did you see that cute Ernie Boyer?'"[38] Kay was at Messiah as a 15 year old high school student. She attended Messiah to fulfill her ambition to be a serious student, not looking for love. Ernest, on the other hand, arrived at Messiah with a firm suggestion from his mother to use his experience away from home to find a good young lady.[39]

One day in the beginning of the Fall 1944 semester, Kay was on her way across campus to register for classes. As she approached the doors of the registration lounge, she noticed a handsome man holding the door open for her. That man was Ernest Boyer.

That very next day, Ernest and Kay met on the dining room stairs. Kay, desperately searching for a topic of conversation to extend her time with Ernest, asked if he would take her place for her assigned kitchen duty shift. He replied, "No, but I would like to ask you to do something for me. Would you go with me to the all school dinner on Friday night?" She was amazed that a "simple farm girl with a lot of freckles" would be noticed by a "more sophisticated city boy."[40]

A few weeks later, Ernest wrote a letter to his brother Bill, recounting this budding relationship. He wrote that he "took Miss Kathryn Tyson, a Junior, from Frappe, Pennsylvania, to both the formal dinner and the L.S.A. party."[41] It was the beginning of a six year courtship that led to a 45 year-long marriage.

Ernest spent his college years immersed in studies, choral activities, and in local church ministry. Throughout all his engagements, Boyer began to hone and develop his love for the spoken word. He delivered his first sermon at Messiah. He wrote about the experience to his brother William: "I suppose you heard I gave my first sermon the other Sunday. I really enjoyed it and was not as scared as I thought I would be."[42] He was the designated speaker for the college chorus, providing sermons on the Christian faith within the musical performances. It was helpful practice for a man who would deliver hundreds of speeches and sermons in his lifetime. He was devoted to learning, and due to his father's business, was one of the few students to have access to a typewriter.[43] He was a good student at Messiah, earning mostly A's and B's.

Ernest was, in most respects, the typical college student. He complained about the types of things most college students do, including homework. In a letter to his parents, he wrote what could be considered a universal mantra of the college student in America: "I've gained about 10 lbs. so far. I am very low on money. My laundry and all is taking it down pretty fast. (Tell [his brother] Paul to write)."[44]

Boyer was popular among his peers and professors. While he enjoyed his college experience immensely, it was a tense time to be a young man in the world. World War II wreaked its havoc, and forced students raised in the peace tradition to consider their role. Most students at Messiah were conscientious objectors, refusing to enter combat due to their pacifism. Boyer agreed with the conscientious objector view, yet felt compelled to contribute in some way. In the summer of 1946, Ernest participated in a service trip aboard a Liberty Ship, a humanitarian vessel funded by the Brethren Church. The ship transported animals to war torn countries as the citizens who survived tried to pick up the pieces. Boyer and a friend travelled to Poland, delivering animals to a country still very much recovering from war's devastating effects. Kay spent most of the summer worrying about his safety: "he didn't

tell me all of the dangers . . . they narrowly missed some mines in ocean crossings . . . they could've gotten blown up."[45] She remembers the trip being supremely formative for Ernest and his pacifist beliefs: "He felt that we should lead such virtuous lives that there would be no need for war. That was one of his goals, even for schools—to let children learn how they can live virtuous lives."[46]

Boyer's return from his summer at sea was somewhat dramatic. His ship returned to port in Montreal. From there, Boyer hitchhiked to Pennsylvania, first to Grantham, and then on to Frappe to reunite with this love. Kay remembers the scene vividly: "I will never forget the day when I saw him come walking down the road. He looked so handsome. He was so very suntanned and handsome. He had on a very fancy hat . . ."[47]

His junior year, Boyer emerged as a leader. His senior year, he was elected class president for the 1947-8 academic year. One of the traditional duties of the position was to lead a class trip to New York City. A classmate, Rhoda (Sider) Heis spoke favorably of Boyer's leadership: "Ernie did an outstanding job of leadership on that trip. For me New York City was a big overwhelming place . . . [the trip] just pointed out his leadership abilities."[48] Ernest also served as co-publisher of the Messiah College yearbook, *The Clarion*. The yearbooks were printed annually in Indiana, and in order to hand them out to the class before commencement, Boyer and his co-publisher hopped in a car, drove to Indiana, picked up the yearbooks, and turned right around to drive back. On their return journey, their car broke down on the Pennsylvania Turnpike in the middle of the night. Kay and Ernest's brother Paul left Messiah to rescue them. On their way, they spotted two young men pushing a car on the side of the road. It was *The Clarion*'s publishing team, slowly pushing their way back to campus, sweaty and sleep deprived. To Kay, it was an example of his inner drive: "He did what you had to do, no matter what it took!"[49]

On June 4, 1948, Ernest Boyer graduated from Messiah College with a two year degree. It was the College's 38th commencement. Kay, reflecting on Ernest's time at Messiah, said, "He was very persistent and hung onto his beliefs and ideas . . . he didn't change if someone disagreed. But he also had an open mind."[50] Boyer, many years later, referred to his Messiah experience as "liberating," expressing deep thanks for the college's intentional pursuit of whole-person growth.[51]

In 1967, Boyer returned to his alma mater to deliver a chapel address. He was firmly established in his role as the Chancellor at SUNY, and had many years of leadership experience from which to draw. The crux of his message to the student body was that Christian leadership begins today. He said, "Even now, you must begin. There is no such thing as instant leaders."[52] For Boyer, this was not just a leadership principle. It was his experience. Boyer's

leadership journey began at Messiah. It was a formative experience.

Greenville College (1948-1950). When Boyer's time at Messiah neared its end, he went to see the school's president, C. N. Hostetter, for guidance. Hostetter's advice was simple: continue his studies. He presented three options to Ernest: Goshen College (a Mennonite school in Indiana), Houghton College (a Wesleyan school in New York), and Greenville College (a Free Methodist school in Illinois). President Hostetter knew each of the institutions' presidents well and felt Boyer would excel at any of them. Boyer left the meeting mulling over his decision. The next week, a recruiter from Greenville College visited Messiah's campus, offering Boyer a full scholarship. Boyer accepted the offer, and he persuaded his best friend and roommate (and president Hostetter's son), D. Ray Hostetter, to join him. Ray Hostetter recalls: "We decided to go to Greenville. We decided to room together . . . I think it was Ernie's and my impression that Greenville was a little clannish . . . Ernie and I were the only ones from Messiah. We had to stick together."[53] Ernest boarded a train with his roommate Ray, and headed west. He left behind his girlfriend Kay, who was continuing her studies in Pennsylvania. They had to continue their relationship through letter writing. For the next two years, Ernest and Kay wrote letters to one another daily.

When Boyer arrived at Greenville, he began courses with a professor by the name of George Tade, who taught speech, debate, and rhetoric. Boyer was transfixed by the power of language and pursued degrees in Philosophy and Psychology, with minors in History and Sociology.[54] Professor Tade quickly noticed Ernest's oratorical skills and recruited him on the college debate team. Boyer's speaking ability, practiced while preaching with the choral team at Messiah College, was further trained and refined at Greenville. He became known at Greenville for his gift of words and his power of persuasion. In Kay's words, "He was fascinated by language and the mastery of words. He loved audiences . . ."[55] Debate, for Boyer, inspired a deep, lifelong interest in the field of language. It taught him how to craft ideas and words, useful skills for a man who delivered countless speeches over his career.

He employed his public speaking and debate skills in his final year at Greenville, running for (and winning) the student body presidency.[56] A fellow student, Darrel Dawes, remembers his creative campaign tactics: "he hired a plane to fly over the campus and drop leaflets, and on the leaflets were 'Vote for Ernest Boyer and a down to earth policy.'"[57] It was not until his election at Greenville that he truly considered himself a leader.[58]

As his education at Greenville came to an end, Boyer's thoughts turned toward his future. Armed with the gift of public speaking, a love of learning, and a servant's heart, it seemed as if Ernest could pick his field. He never expressed interest in being an educator while in college.[59] He assumed he would return to Dayton and take over the family typewriter business. He

thrived in the educational setting, but it appeared to be ending. Clearly, others would need to draw him back into higher education.

Boyer graduated from Greenville in the Spring of 1950, weeks before the start of the Korean War, at the advent of Senator Joseph McCarthy's war against Communism. Boyer's friend Ray's father and Messiah president, C. N. Hostetter, delivered the baccalaureate speech. After the graduation, Hostetter approached Ernest, asking if he would pastor a small Brethren in Christ church in Orlando, Florida. The church had recently suffered from a split in the congregation, and needed new leadership to bring healing. According to Kay, "Hostetter didn't tell Ernie that there were only seven people left . . . It was a totally unexpected request and we did not know how to think about it."[60]

That evening, Ernest and Kay had a lengthy conversation with his parents. By this time the two were engaged to be married in August of 1950. To announce their engagement to their family and friends, the couple sent out little white paper bags with a card inside. When the recipient pulled the card out of the bag, it read: "It's out of the bag, Kay and Ernie are engaged!"[61] They were acclimated to the idea of moving back to Dayton. It was a city Ernest loved. The family business was booming, and the Dayton mission was still ministering to the neediest of the city. Despite his grandfather's influence, he had never considered full-time pastoral work. Florida was a long way from both sides of the family.

After much discussion and prayer, Ernest's parents encouraged them to take the job in Florida. Kay and Ernest were uncertain of what awaited them, but they were certain of one thing: they would encounter it together. They wed that summer, August 25, 1950, and headed south to pastor a small, fledgling congregation in Orlando, Florida.

Pastorate in Florida

Ernest Boyer became the sole pastor of the Brethren in Christ Church in Orlando just before his 22nd birthday, 1950. It was the first of many roles in which he was appointed well before his time, asked to lead those much older than he. He and Kay began their marriage in the Sunshine State. The first Sunday seven people were in the pews.[62] There was much work to do.

Ernest and Kay focused their efforts on reaching out to the youth of Orlando. It was long, hard work. They revamped the Sunday School curriculum, and sought to reach out to families in the community. Kay wrote a letter to her parents and said, "I wish you would especially pray for our young people's work which at the present is virtually at a standstill."[63] Church membership was small, but began to slowly grow. Their church was featured on the cover of a Brethren in Christ publication called *The Evangelical Visitor*.[64]

Ernest's work as a small church pastor was a humble beginning of a very well-known career.

As a young pastor, Boyer was a progressive voice within his denomination. One congregant, Curtis Byer, remembers Boyer boldly challenging the denominational dress code at the Brethren in Christ's General Conference in Manhattan, Kansas: "He got up to let people know that there were temperature differences in Florida, too much clothing can be unbearable. They should take that into consideration . . . A rather clever point. How do you argue against the weather?"[65] While a reformer nationally, locally he was innovative. Kay remembers: "Some Sundays we would have the children send off balloons. We would attach Bible verses or an invitation . . . and send them off. . . Sunday evenings the young people would do the service. I would do chalk art on a big easel up front, with music and drama in the background."[66]

All their efforts to reach the youth in their area began to make a difference. Young people flocked to the church. The Brethren bishop presiding over Orlando visited their church on Easter Sunday, less than one year after Boyer became pastor. The church was so packed on Sundays that chairs would have to be set up in the aisles. The church in danger of dying was now a vibrant community. The Boyers ministered to the city of Orlando very much like William ministered to those in inner city Dayton. As Kay recalls: "It was very much like the work that his grandfather did."[67]

Ernest pastored the church for one year, but continually struggled over his future plans. He loved the work at the church, but felt he was called to something else. He felt a strong desire to pursue graduate school, yet struggled to see how he could afford the tuition. He was married, and they had just had their first child, Ernest Jr., in 1951. He sat Kay down and explained his wish to pursue graduate school. He clearly and honestly explained the long, arduous, financially difficult road to a Ph.D. There would be sacrifices and uncertainty. Kay replied, "It's impossible." He responded, "Others have done it so it must be possible."[68] Kay struggled to see how it could work, but trusted that they would find a way. She wanted her husband to follow his dream.

An Emerging Scholar/Administrator

University of Southern California. Optimism was a start, but Ernest needed an opportunity that would allow him to pursue a Ph.D. while providing for his growing family. He and Kay left the church in Florida to pursue graduate studies in audiology at Ohio State University.[69] It proved difficult to make ends meet, and there is very little historical data that reveals his experience in Columbus. For unknown reasons, the Boyers were looking for another path. John Martin, a senior administrator of the fledgling Brethren in

Christ-affiliated Upland College (Upland, CA), gave Boyer a call. Martin had just been hired by President H. G. Brubacher to lead an effort to achieve accreditation for Upland College through the Western College Association. Martin knew he needed a team to be successful in such a monumental task, and first on his list was Boyer: "When I started to lay the plans to get Upland College accredited, I realized I needed to gather a team. When I observed Ernie's abilities in thinking, planning, and communication, I went to Ernie and shared with him my hopes that he would become dean, suggesting the need for him to have his Ph.D."[70] Boyer replied with enthusiasm, but concern. He was barely surviving graduate work in Ohio. How could he make it work in Southern California?

Martin was persistent, offering him a full-time salary to teach half-time at Upland College and pursue his Ph.D. at the University of Southern California (USC). Upland College would also cover his tuition. Upon earning the Ph.D., he would become the school's academic dean. It was a great offer, one Boyer accepted on one condition: "John, I'll be dean. But don't ever ask me to be president."[71] Years later, when Boyer assumed the chancellorship at the State University of New York, Martin often reminded him of this statement.

In 1952, the Boyer family packed up their belongings and headed west to a new life, a new career, and a new state. Ernest was amazed and grateful to have an opportunity to earn his Ph.D. Martin and others at Upland viewed it a bit differently: "I think Ernie would have gotten his Ph.D. some time. He was that kind of guy. At that point we were just the stepping stone."[72]

Boyer dove into his graduate studies with gusto, studying audiology at the highest levels. He particularly enjoyed a class on Shakespearean literature by Professor Joseph Smith. Smith was an orator like Boyer, and had a profound way with the spoken word. As Professor Smith read works such as King Lear and Macbeth aloud, Boyer "understood that literature is not a remembrance of past writing, it's an inquiry into the deepest yearning of the human spirit."[73]

He worked hard, earning his M.A. in 1955 and the Ph.D. in 1957. He divided his time among his family, his studies, his teaching, and his church. Life was busy and complicated. Boyer maximized the few spare moments that remained. His many responsibilities included some teaching at USC and preaching at their local Brethren church. On his commute to USC's campus, he practiced his sermons for the upcoming Sunday service. In one instance, while idling at a stoplight, he was belting his sermon out loud, and a carload of his students pulled up next to him. Bursting out into laughter, they exclaimed, "Professor Boyer, we knew it happened to every professor eventually, but you're so young."[74]

Ernest somehow found the time to write his dissertation within the

family's cramped two bedroom apartment in Los Angeles. Kay, in an effort to help Ernest focus, blocked the bedroom door with a ribbon, a sign for the children to keep their distance. Boyer saw it and said, "If they want to come in, they should be allowed to come in. I'm always available . . ."[75] Despite the many distractions, he eventually finished his dissertation in 1958. It was titled *An experimental study of speech fluency under stress as a function of the emotionality of speech content*.[76] By this time, the Boyer family had grown to five, as Beverly (1953) and Craig (1955) joined Ernie Jr. Nearing graduation from USC, he met with his faculty advisor to discuss next steps. Boyer proudly revealed that he planned to continue to work for Upland College to help them achieve accreditation. Boyer's advisor looked sternly at him and threatened to withhold the degree should he follow through with this plan. Proudly he boasted, "Our Ph.D.'s go to bigger jobs."[77] Distraught, Boyer sought counsel in John Martin. Martin helped Boyer develop a plan. He would seek part time teaching employment at a larger school to get the degree, allowing him to continue the work started at Upland College. Boyer found an adjunct position at Long Beach State teaching night classes. To Boyer's delight, the position was sufficient in his advisor's estimation. He was approved to graduate, and in another stroke of fortune, the classes at Long Beach State never received enough students to materialize. Armed with a Ph.D., Boyer could now begin the arduous task he was recruited for nearly five years prior, to secure accreditation for Upland College. A professor at Upland who became a close friend of Boyer's, Wendell Harmon, remembers hearing the news of Boyer's hire. He was conducting research in the UCLA library and ran into another Upland professor, Gene Hass. Gene shared the news that the college had hired Ernest Boyer. Harmon replied, "Who's Ernie Boyer?" Hass' response, "I understand he's a good man." Harmon reflects, "And—neither of us realized how good he was."[78]

Upland College. While Boyer attended graduate school, he worked at reforming Upland College. He was marked by his experience at Messiah and as a pastor. Though it was a two year school, the community formed at Messiah was vibrant. Upland conferred four year degrees, but had a long way to go in the cultivation of a Christian educational community. Boyer devoted himself to deepening the campus community beyond the classroom. A former colleague at Upland College, Merle Brubacher, remembers Boyer championing and forming this vibrant community at the school: "Boyer was very strong on community . . . After chapel we would go out to the snack bar and meet with the chapel speaker and sit and talk. . ."[79] The small school environment provided a place where students and faculty alike could be known. The school's unofficial slogan became "a climate of conversation," a place "where people talked and listened to each other, where learning was intimate and informal, and where the pursuit of ideas was the central quest."[80]

At Upland, Ernest also found another key mentor in life that would inform his leadership: H. G. Brubacher, the college's president. Brubacher was a man well known for his foresight. Said one former Upland student, the president was "a man ahead of his time. He predicted the speed of air travel a year or two before it really happened."[81] Each spring, the college looked forward to his baccalaureate sermon, where he would foretell what would happen in the world in the next five to ten years. This foresight influenced Boyer greatly, and many of the speeches in his career had a similar tone.

Boyer adopted Brubacher's approach. He was passionate about educating Upland's student body on their civic duty, devoting many chapel messages to inform them of current events and their responsibility to engage them. He created and coached a college debate team, passing on skills from his own experience at Greenville College.[82] He also preached the virtues of civic engagement from the pulpit at their local church, the Chino Brethren in Christ Church. Church members remembered his argument well: "We needed to remember that we were not only citizens of our immediate group but we are also part of the larger community and had responsibilities to both."[83]

This push for innovation and civic engagement within the context of a community was a formidable force for such a small college. It is best exemplified in his creation of a mid-year term at Upland College: a creative, common educational course held during the month of January. Lectures and assignments focused on a common theme decided upon by student leaders. Boyer proposed the concept to the Ford Foundation, who awarded Upland College a grant to launch the program. The first mid-year term occurred in 1953, and the topic was the "Role of the Individual in U.S./Soviet Relations."[84] It was a bold choice. Anti-communists felt a college conversation on the subject opened the door to sympathizers. Yet students were enthusiastic about the idea. At this time, Upland College was the only college in the country educating with a 4-1-4 academic calendar. Today, this plan has been adopted by hundreds of other colleges.[85]

His innovative drive to foster meaningful civic engagement extended to the faculty as well. He often encouraged faculty to engage and discuss current events. As one of the few faculty members who owned a television, he often hosted his colleagues in his home. The faculty would hear and watch a speech from the likes of journalist Edward R. Murrow, and then engage in a discussion.[86]

He gradually rose through the faculty ranks at Upland College, spending two years as an instructor, two as an assistant professor and department chair, and five as academic dean. All the while, he remained an active member of the Chino Brethren in Christ congregation, assisting Pastor Eber Dourte in the ministry of the church.[87] Congregants enjoyed his preaching:

"He was always well-spoken . . . What he said counted. It was beautifully phrased, always. But also with substance. With always such a warm underlying feeling."[88] Friend Lester Mosebrook coined a phrase that was often used among Boyer's friends and family: "He never said anything that wasn't interesting."[89] Friend and colleague Merle Brubacher believed his words were interesting because he himself was always interested.[90]

While faithful to his church, Boyer was cautious of rigidity and legalism that can so easily accompany devout evangelicalism. He was known for promoting new approaches, and was sensitive to the church remaining stagnant.[91] He was considered by most in his conservative congregation as socially and theologically progressive. On Sunday evenings, Kay worked as a nurse at a local hospital. Ernie was responsible for getting the family to Sunday evening church services. He would often catch the female nursery volunteers off guard by walking in to change a Boyer child's diaper. In such churches, gender roles in volunteering were fairly prescribed, to the point that men never entered a nursery. As a minister of the church, he was one of the first in the Brethren denomination to wear a necktie instead of the traditional clerical collar. He also performed some of the first double ring ceremonies in the Brethren church.[92] The traditional Brethren approach was to only provide the bride with a ring. More egalitarian-minded couples desired a ceremony where both bride and groom exchanged rings, and Boyer was one of the first ministers in the Brethren church willing to perform the ceremony.

Harvard. In 1956, at the age of 28, Boyer was named Dean of Instruction at Upland College. To hone his administrative skills, he attended an Institute for Academic Deans at Harvard University. He entered the institute humbly and with great hesitation. He was by far the youngest dean in the room, and he came from the smallest institution. Yet the experience proved empowering. He told Kay that he wished he had some gray hair, thinking others might take him more seriously if he looked older. But he surprisingly found that the more seasoned deans in the room were not magically more intelligent than he. His ideas were in step or even ahead of his fellow deans. He grew in his confidence as an educational leader while at Harvard. The experience also connected him with the mainstream of American higher education. He formed relationships with administrators who would become lifelong friends and colleagues, such as David Reesman (Harvard), Nathan Pusey (Dartmouth), and Sylvia Field (Minnesota).

The experience hardened his resolve to allow schools such as Upland College to have a seat at the table of American higher education. Boyer and John Martin, eager to replicate their accreditation success, were instrumental in the founding of the Council for the Advancement of Small Colleges, a group that helped small colleges navigate through the accreditation process. They coached small college administrators and lobbied accrediting bodies to

not only consider classic metrics, but to also give weight to what their graduates have contributed to the world.[93] As a result of the Council's efforts, 90 small colleges received accreditation, including Boyer's *alma mater*, Messiah College.

The impact of Boyer's participation in Harvard's institute is substantial. It instilled confidence in Boyer and helped many colleges achieve accreditation. Additionally, his work in lobbying accrediting bodies on the merits of small college higher education planted the seeds for his well-known views on scholarship. Boyer's most popular and influential work, *Scholarship Reconsidered* (1990) was largely formed due to his experiences in accrediting small colleges.[94] Boyer synthesized his own personal educational journey with the potential he saw in the small college. Perhaps the large, public research institutions had something to learn from the small college? Could teaching be viewed as a scholarly act, and return to its former prominence in the modern university? Could service be the primary aim of scholarship, restoring the service mission of American higher education? This paradigm expanded Boyer's view on what contributes to an excellent education: quality teaching, a common sense of purpose, and a collaborative academic community where students and faculty work closely together.

At Harvard, Boyer's views began to find traction with a broader audience. The experience opened the door to a career outside of the confines of Brethren in Christ higher education. It proved timely. Despite Boyer's good work to cultivate a vibrant, quality academic community at Upland, the college was going bankrupt. It quickly became clear in the early 1960s that the college needed to close. Closing an institution is no simple task. In addition to the physical plant, plans must be made for other assets (library, state charter, alumni relations) and liabilities (institutional debt). Azusa Bible College, just 20 miles east of Upland, expressed interest in a merger. Boyer was adamantly opposed, and convinced the leadership of the denomination to reject the offer. He had worked tirelessly for nearly a decade to develop Upland from a Bible college to a strong, vibrant, liberal arts institution. Merging with Azusa, in Boyer's mind, would reverse all of that good work.[95] His hard line actually turned out to be beneficial for Azusa. Its leaders took Boyer's critique seriously and made an intentional effort to improve the school. Years later, in 1981, Boyer would be honored by this improved institution (which was renamed Azusa Pacific University), giving its commencement address. By this time the Brethren in Christ denomination also officially endorsed the institution, and Boyer's brother Bill became a member of the faculty. But in the meantime, there were immediate tasks to close Upland College. Boyer helped the school through negotiations to send the college library and its seal to Fresno Pacific University (they were tied to the California state charter, so they needed to remain in the state). Messiah

College absorbed Upland's remaining debt, and become officially recognized as its merging partner in 1964. Boyer later reflected upon the closing:

> Upland College not only lived, it died as well. Institutions like individuals have cycles of their own. And what is significant is not that Upland closed its doors, but the way the closing was conducted. It resisted the temptation to veer off course, reaching the sad yet clear-headed conclusion that it had fulfilled its mission. Several generations had been honorably served, and better to stop with dignity than to compromise and lose by default. It's a story all of us must learn.[96]

As Upland College prepared to close its doors, the youngest Boyer child, Stephen, was born, and the six-member Boyer family quickly had to determine what was next. Upland had provided a space for Ernest to grow as a professor and administrator. Soon he had to choose which path to take.

New Directions

University of Iowa (Postdoc) (1959). At the time, Boyer still wanted to pursue a career in research. He determined that the research he had already done, coupled with his engagement with the broader academic world, would help secure him a post at a larger institution. He was right, accepting a coveted one year post-doctorate post at the University of Iowa, where he worked at the university's hospital studying the effectiveness of a new procedure to combat middle ear deafness.[97] His work was lauded by his peers. The University of Iowa, at the end of his contract, made him an offer to try to retain him more permanently. Kay Boyer recalls:

> It was a very fine offer, and we loved living in Iowa City. We had three children at the time, and they were thriving . . . we bought a house . . . then he got the offer that became the total turning point in his life. I think it was the only time in his life that I thought he had made a mistake . . . He was offered to head up a program in California that would result in changing the teacher education crediting program from four years of preparation to five years . . . I don't know if he actually knew so clearly at that time that it was going to be an end to his research and his professional field. I think he kind of knew that.[98]

Ernest felt compelled to return to California, and his career path was suddenly thrust into a new direction. What had been intended to launch a

research career in audiology turned out to be its final chapter. His career took a new trajectory of educational administration and reform. It was this decision that eventually led to his most prominent roles as Chancellor of SUNY, U. S. Commissioner of Education, and President of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

Conclusion

This paper explored Ernest Boyer's childhood, education, and early career in higher education. Ernest Boyer was raised in a comfortable, conservative upbringing. Yet he spent much of his childhood at the hip of his Grandfather William Boyer, ministering among the poor and homeless of Dayton, Ohio. Ernest's Christian background and affluence afforded him the opportunity to pursue college at Messiah and Greenville Colleges. From there he served briefly as a pastor in Florida, before pursuing his dream of graduate school at the University of Southern California. While a graduate student, Boyer served on the faculty of the small Brethren-affiliated Upland College.

His experiences at the Dayton Mission and these Christian Colleges provide early glimpses into the work Boyer is most well known for. His tenure as SUNY Chancellor and U. S. Commissioner of Education were marked by his ardent efforts to translate the close-knit small college experience on a larger scale. In this approach Boyer earned both followers and detractors. His early life paved the way for his most popular work, *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate* (1990).[99] While popular, it was also highly controversial. Boyer's attempt to broaden scholarship to include domains such as teaching and service find their roots in his small college experience. A question that continues to haunt the academy today is: Can the tenets of a small college education be translated to the large modern university? Boyer felt adamantly that they could. Ernest Boyer is often cited for his views of scholarship, but the source of his inspiration is rarely understood. This article attempts to illuminate Boyer's views by exploring his early life and career.

Notes

[1] Richard Bonnabeau, Interview of Kay Boyer, December 20, 2003, box T02, folder 02, The Ernest L. Boyer Center, Messiah College, Mechanicsburg, PA.

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[3] Mark F. Goldberg, "A Portrait of Ernest Boyer," *Educational Leadership* 52.5 (1995): 46-48.

[4] Ernest L. Boyer, "Reflections on My First Day at School—And Beyond," n.d., box

R001, The Ernest L. Boyer Center, Messiah College, Mechanicsburg, PA, 3.

[5] Brubacher, Interview of Grace Herr Holland.

[6] Merle Brubacher, Interview of Ruth and Eugene Blakkletter, July 20, 2004, box T02, folder 01, The Ernest L. Boyer Center, Messiah College, Mechanicsburg, PA.

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[10] Merle Brubacher, Interview of Ruth Herr Pawelski, July 6, 2004, box T02, folder 01, The Ernest L. Boyer Center, Messiah College, Mechanicsburg, PA.

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[16] Merle Brubacher, Interview of Bill and Marge Paugstadt, July 23, 2004, box T02, folder 01, The Ernest L. Boyer Center, Messiah College, Mechanicsburg, PA.

[17] Ernest L. Boyer, "University of Utah Commencement Speech," June 11, 1993, The Ernest L. Boyer Center, Messiah College, Mechanicsburg, PA.

[18] Goldberg, "A Portrait of Ernest Boyer," 46.

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[20] Merle Brubacher, Interview of Lester Mosebrook, July 12, 2004, box T02, folder 01, The Ernest L. Boyer Center, Messiah College, Mechanicsburg, PA.

[21] Brethren in Christ, Baptism Record of Boyer Family, September 27, 1977, box R058, The Ernest L. Boyer Center, Messiah College, Grantham, PA, 17019.

[22] Boyer, "Reflections on My First Day at School—And Beyond," 5.

[23] Boyer, "University of Utah Commencement Speech," 9.

[24] Boyer, "Reflections on My First Day at School—And Beyond," 13.

[25] Boyer, "University of Utah Commencement Speech," 8.

[26] Boyer, "Reflections on My First Day at School—And Beyond," 2.

[27] Boyer, "University of Utah Commencement Speech," 8.

[28] Boyer, "Reflections on My First Day at School—And Beyond," 2.

[29] Ernest L. Boyer, "School Days," n.d., box R001, The Ernest L. Boyer Center, Messiah College, Mechanicsburg, PA.

[30] Goldberg, "A Portrait of Ernest Boyer."

[31] Boyer, "University of Utah Commencement Speech," 8.

[32] Boyer, "School Days."

[33] Bonnabeau, Interview of Kay Boyer.

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[38] Bonnabeau, Interview of Kay Boyer.

[39] Richard Bonnabeau, Interview of Carolynn Reid-Wallace, n.d., box T02, folder 02, The Ernest L. Boyer Center, Messiah College, Mechanicsburg, PA.

[40] Bonnabeau, Interview of Kay Boyer.

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[44] Ernest L. Boyer, Letter to Ones at Home, n.d., box R058, The Ernest L. Boyer Center, Messiah College, Mechanicsburg, PA.

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[53] Merle Brubacher, Interview of D. Ray Hostetter, February 25, 2004, box T02, folder 01, The Ernest L. Boyer Center, Messiah College, Mechanicsburg, PA.

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[65] Merle Brubacher, Interview of Curtis and Jean Beyer, July 10, 2004, box T02, folder 01, The Ernest L. Boyer Center, Messiah College, Mechanicsburg, PA.

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[74] Merle Brubacher, Interview of Bob Carlson, November 8, 2004, box T02, folder 01, The Ernest L. Boyer Center, Messiah College, Mechanicsburg, PA.

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[79] Merle Brubacher, Interview of Mike Brown, November 1, 2004, box T02, folder 01, The Ernest L. Boyer Center, Messiah College, Mechanicsburg, PA.

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[84] Merle Brubacher, Interview of Phyllis Womack, July 2, 2004, box T02, folder 01, The Ernest L. Boyer Center, Messiah College, Mechanicsburg, PA.

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[86] Brubacher, Interview of Wendell and Laurie Harmon.

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Book Review:
Abt, *American Egyptologist: The Life of James Henry Breasted and the Creation of His Oriental Institute*

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Abt, Jeffrey, *American Egyptologist: The Life of James Henry Breasted and the Creation of His Oriental Institute*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2011. 536 pages. ISBN 978-0-226-00110-4. $45.00 (cloth); $30.00 (paper).

Jeffrey Abt's encyclopedic critical biography of James Henry Breasted, the founder of one of the foremost academic institutions in the United States, the Oriental Institute at the University of Chicago, is a treasure trove of information about the development of the field of ancient Near Eastern epigraphy and archaeology. Abt's rather long (over 500 pages) biography follows Breasted's life from childhood in the 1880s in Rockford, Illinois to the end of his life due to illness in 1935. Along the way, we travel to Chicago, throughout Europe, Egypt and throughout the Middle East during a time of geopolitical unrest and military and diplomatic maneuvering before and after World War I. Abt's biography is remarkable for its intricate portrait of the complex mind and career of Breasted as well as the way in which it situates Breasted's academic impulses within the rise of secular education and within the early 20th century progressive vision of education as community. Through careful analysis of the tremendous archives at the Oriental Institute, Abt carefully works through Breasted's scholarly projects, journals, photographs, and letters to arrive at a complex portrait of a seminal figure in American academia. Abt aims to provide a critical commentary to Breasted's

life and to situate the scholar within a spate of recent research on the University of Chicago, Biblical studies,[1] Egyptology,[2] and the international politics of World War I.[3]

Abt begins his narrative with Breasted's childhood and quickly explores the gifted academic talents of the young boy. Breasted is introduced to higher education and scholarly research as a seminarian studying the languages of the Old and New Testaments. Under the tutelage of William Rainey Harper, the first president of the University of Chicago and friend of its Rockefeller family founders, Breasted became one of the pioneers of a school of biblical criticism that employed empirical methods and "scientific" positivism to "study Judeo-Christian sacred texts in the context of the ancient Near Eastern linguistic and historical traditions from which they emerged" (17). At Harper's urging and with the promise of a potential position at the University of Chicago upon completion, Breasted continued his doctoral training in Germany before WWI, where he became increasingly intrigued with the language and monuments of ancient Egypt. Under Egyptologist Adolph Erman, Breasted switched his doctoral focus and became one of the first of a class of new scholars devoted to studying the intricate grammar of the ancient Egyptian language. Abt's in-depth analysis of Breasted's work habits shows how this early persistence and doggedness, combined with his singular devotion to his studies, would contribute to Breasted's success in securing funding for his own scholarly pursuits as well as the institutions that he helped to develop such as the University of Chicago and its Oriental Institute.

With his doctorate complete and position at the University of Chicago secured, Breasted's first mission was to visit Egypt. Abt unfolds the story of Breasted's first visit to the country of his scholarly imagination with vivid detail and wonder. Trained in the German historical method that emphasized examining actual ancient monuments to understand the language, Breasted set out to draw and photograph as many ancient Egyptian monuments as he could in six weeks. This was the first of many voyages through Egypt and Sudan where Breasted experimented with the epigraphic method, a precise, careful, and exactly drawn rendering of images and texts carved into the stone walls of temples, for which the Oriental Institute would become famous. Abt delivers tremendous detail in describing Breasted's copying techniques and photographic methods, which the scholar developed in order to accurately record the ancient monumental inscriptions. Throughout the biography, in fact, Abt culls the archives, searching through letters, journals, drawings, and photographs from the Oriental Institute to provide lengthy passages on Breasted's archaeological and epigraphic field methods. These descriptions give valuable insight into the technical aspects of recording information for the historian of photography and they suggest

that Breasted was a pioneer in field photography. However, for the non-technical expert, they distract occasionally from the overall narrative.

Breasted returned to teach at the University of Chicago, inscriptions in hand, and began the development of his early career. He quickly found he had to supplement his teaching income with public lectures to various local clubs and organizations. The most interesting part of the book for the educational historian comes here, as Abt uses Breasted's public addresses and published books to show how the young Egyptologist envisioned his role as educator. Breasted wisely collected many of these public lectures and turned them into books on Egyptian and ancient Near Eastern history aimed at general audiences. Breasted's public lecture program cleverly aligned him with the goals of Harper, who wished to expand the teaching aims of the university to inspire the community at large, and of the Baptist idealism of the University of Chicago. These goals meshed well with the philosophical goals of progressive secularism, which aimed to expose public audiences to the ancient Near Eastern and Egyptian contexts of the Biblical scripture. Despite training as a language specialist, Breasted saw his primary role as being a historian—to expose the public to the pre-Classical civilizations of the "Fertile Crescent," a term that Abt shows Breasted coined, and to situate the translated texts into their historical context. Abt writes that Breasted's embrace of the "'New Historical Method' dislodged ancient Israel from being a place of origins to a site through which more ancient ideas were transmitted to the modern world" (174). At the same time, it fulfilled Breasted's goal of pushing the public's interest in ancient Egypt beyond mummies, mysteries, and curses. Abt's archival detail allows us to see that this dedicated scholar took an unconventional path in academia at an early point in his career: he risked publishing several high school textbooks. Such a move was risky because these publications would not count necessarily towards Breasted's tenure decision at the University of Chicago, as they were directed at a non-scholarly audience. For example, Breasted and J.H. Robinson's *Outlines of European History* (1916) situated ancient Near Eastern civilizations before Greece and Rome and at the beginning of an evolutionary model that culminated in Western Civilization.

The remainder of Abt's biography follows Breasted as he pursues the creation of the Oriental Institute at the University of Chicago, which would be devoted to establishing permanent epigraphic and archaeological missions in the Middle East. Abt focuses especially on Breasted and Harper's relationship with the Rockefellers and their various educational foundations. However, Abt documents how the goal of establishing a particularly American academic "footprint" in the Middle East during the early twentieth century was Breasted's from the beginning. Abt explores how Breasted's vision of an Oriental Institute in America, paired with permanent American

field expeditions and institutes in the Middle East, played into the diplomatic, military and nationalist tensions rising in the prelude to and aftermath of World War I. Breasted wisely used these tensions and competitive impulses to bring attention to his academic agenda, while at the same time he unwittingly became a pawn in the intrigues between the British and the Egyptians as the two governments jockeyed to control a new archaeological museum and research institute in Cairo after World War I. Breasted eventually realized his vision of the museum and institute in America, even if he wearily stepped out of the failed attempt at a similar institution in Cairo. In chapter eight, Abt exposes Breasted's Orientalist attitudes towards the Egyptian government and critically analyzes how Breasted's failure to understand Egyptian nationalism in the 1930s led to a politicized attempt to found the national research institution in Cairo. The reader might have benefitted from more frequent post-colonial analyses of Breasted's motivations, attitudes, and writings vis-à-vis contemporary Middle East throughout the book, but Abt sidesteps such opportunities on many occasions, perhaps to protect the reputation of Breasted, a leading scholar and founder of the University of Chicago, the same institution whose press published the biography. Perhaps the author was ambivalent as to whether this biography would be a genuinely "critical" enterprise. Regardless, Abt's discussion of Breasted's role in the Egyptian Museum episode demonstrates how politically situated archaeology was one hundred years ago, as nations competing on the geo-political stage in the early 20th century attempted to establish comprehensive national museums in order to educate their subjects and display their global influence.[4]

Abt's biography is a welcome addition to the study of the history of American higher education, historical thought, and archaeology as well as a detailed overview of the intellectual and political context of a preeminent American academic and the institution he founded. The book is amply illustrated with high quality images of Breasted's own photographs, maps, and notes drawn from the extensive archives of the Oriental Institute. The historian of education will be inspired by Abt's meticulous archival work and detailed narrative of Breasted's life and accomplishments.

Notes

[1] Thomas W. Davis, *Shifting Sands: The Rise and Fall of Biblical Archaeology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

[2] Donald M. Reid, *Whose Pharaohs? Archaeology, Museums, and Egyptian National Identity from Napoleon to World War I* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002).

[3] James F. Goode, *Negotiating for the Past: Archaeology, Nationalism, and Diplomacy in the Middle East 1919-1941* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2007); Geoff Emberling and Emily Teeter, eds. *Pioneers to the Past: American Archaeologists in the Middle East, 1919-1920*. Oriental Institute Museum Publications, no. 30. (Chicago:

Oriental Institute Press, University of Chicago, 2010).

[4]Tony Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum: History, Theory, Politics*. (London: Routledge, 1995); James M. Cuno, *Who Owns Antiquity? Museums and the Battle Over Our Ancient Heritage*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008).

Book Review:
Brekus, *Sarah Osborn's World: The Rise of Evangelical Christianity in Early America*

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Catherine A. Brekus. *Sarah Osborn's World: The Rise of Evangelical Christianity in Early America*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2013. ISBN 978-0-300-18290-3. 432 pages. $35.00.

Historian Catherine Brekus begins *Sarah Osborn's World: The Rise of Evangelical Christianity in Early America* with a vivid tableau: Sarah Osborn, sitting at her desk in her Newport, Rhode Island home, pen in hand, wondering how to begin writing her memoir. It is 1743, and Osborn is not yet thirty. It will be fifteen years before she starts a boarding school, and twenty years until she begins holding prayer meetings in her home that draw hundreds. Religious revivalism is "the talk of every tea table" (15), with preachers like George Whitefield reducing thousands to tears, calling them to repent of their sins. Meanwhile, Enlightenment ideas were challenging traditional Christian understandings of the soul, the mind, authority, and social hierarchies, while the merchant capitalist economy invited the residents of cosmopolitan Newport to imagine themselves as free, acquisitive individuals.

How does one write a memoir in such a milieu? How can one make sure – as Sarah surely would have wanted to make sure – that such an account gives glory to God and provides religious edification to others, rather than being an exercise in vanity? In this respect, Brekus' opening image is inspired. For not unlike Sarah Osborn at her writing desk, eighteenth-century American evangelicalism had set out to give an account of the human self, but was struggling to find the right words to do so. And while "freedom,"

"choice," and "self-interest" may have been increasingly attractive watchwords for others, the terms were deeply ambivalent for evangelicals. If such notions could move people immediately to repent of their sins, have a personal experience of God's love, and surrender to Christ, so much the better. Yet evangelicals saw that these values might just as easily lead one to believe oneself free from God's authority and live only to maximize one's own comfort. How, then, to construct an understanding of individual identity that encourages the former but guards against the latter?

Brekus never lets these questions drop out of the reader's view entirely, even though the events of Sarah Osborn's life are fascinating in their own right. Born in England in 1714, the young Sarah settled with her parents in Newport, Rhode Island in 1730. At age seventeen, against her parents' wishes, she married a sailor named Samuel Wheaten, who died less than a year later, leaving his wife, Sarah, with a newborn son. In 1737, during a sermon by Nathaniel Clap, the young widow Sarah was overcome with sorrow for her sins. Those sins would likely strike us as mere peccadilloes today – being too vain, failing to obey her parents as a child – but the religious culture of Osborn's world devoted a lot of attention to human depravity. Having repented, she resolved to turn to Christ – a commitment she would subsequently doubt, and then renew under the counsel of Gilbert Tennent. In 1742 she married Henry Osborn, a widower, and once again encountered misfortune within a few months of marriage. Henry lost a huge sum in a bad investment, and the family – which included Henry's children as well as Sarah and her son — was now bankrupt.

Sarah Osborn earned money for her household by, among other things, opening a boarding school in 1758. When the idea first occurred to Osborn, she agonized over whether she ought to do so. For one thing, many evangelicals believed that poverty might be visited upon a person by God for their own betterment. Ought one interfere with something that may have been meant to teach patience? For another, Osborn was concerned that running a boarding school might interfere with her spiritual life. Finally, there was a certain worry about being successful in market terms. As Brekus explains, "On both sides of the Atlantic, evangelicals worried that commercial success had led to a decline in religious faith" (207). Improving one's lot by taking initiative and setting up a business would have been a fraught proposition for Sarah Osborn, the same woman who once rejoiced at being filled with a spirit of "self-abhorrence" (209). Brekus notes, though, that neither evangelicals in general nor Osborn in particular were opposed to a market economy per se. What they could not abide was "the model of selfhood that formed the bedrock of the emerging capitalist order," a model that "depended on a commitment to the values of acquisitive individualism, benevolent self-interest, and free choices" (213).

Ultimately, though, Osborn needed to support her household. She placed an announcement in the *Newport Mercury*, offering instruction in "Reading, Writing, Plain Work, Embroidering, Tent Stitch, Samplers, &c. on reasonable Terms" (206). In the years that followed she developed a reputation as a kind and pious teacher. She agonized over increasing tuition lest doing so deprive any of her pupils of the instruction their souls needed. Despite this compassionate stance toward tuition charges, Osborn meanwhile used corporal punishment for decades, believing that nothing was more important than the child's salvation. Yet her journal entries reveal that the severity of her discipline frightened Osborn herself. Eventually, and with profound shame, she abandoned the practice after reading Cotton Mather's complaint that beating children was abominable.

Brekus does not spend much time discussing Osborn's pedagogy or her place in the history of education specifically. This is no shortcoming on the book's part, however. One of the most important aspects of Osborn's life – the prayer meetings she hosted in her home – did not begin until the mid 1760's, and Brekus rightly devotes a great deal of attention to those. Attendees included free and enslaved blacks as well as whites, men and women, and Christians of different denominational affiliations. Eventually hundreds of people a week were showing up in her home. Osborn respected social boundaries, even as she crossed them, by having different groups meet on different days of the week: Baptist men on Mondays, blacks on Tuesdays, etc. In deference to social hierarchies, Osborn also refrained from praying aloud in front of adult white men.

Needless to say, historians interested in race, gender, and socioeconomic class in early America will find much of value here, all of it conveyed in Brekus' eloquent prose. Historians of American religion will appreciate Brekus' exhaustive research, thick descriptions, and attention to context. The book likewise offers much to scholars interested in modernity and identity, although at least one well-known work – Charles Taylor's *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* – is only referenced in passing, which is surprising, considering how canonical Taylor's work is for historians of modern subjectivity. No matter one's research specialty, though, the book is a delightful and important introduction to a figure few have studied.

Book Review:
Felt, *Soundings: The Story of the Remarkable Woman Who Mapped the Ocean Floor*

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Hali Felt. *Soundings: The Story of the Remarkable Woman Who Mapped the Ocean Floor*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2012. ISBN: 978-0-8050-9215-8. 326 pages. $18.00.

Hali Felt earned her MFA from the University of Iowa, and she currently teaches writing at the University of Pittsburgh. Her intention with this biography is to investigate and provide details about the life of Marie Tharp, the woman who mapped the floor of the oceans of the world using data in the form of sonar soundings. Felt tells us "….if I could restore the detail to Tharp's life, I could restore the import of her work" (6), so researching Marie Tharp's history is supposed to increase public awareness of the real extent of her contribution to what we know about oceanic cartography and geophysical science. Tharp was born in 1928 and she died in 2006. Felt conveys that, for most of Tharp's life, she was not sufficiently recognized for her work. This book compares Tharp's research, discoveries, and inferences with what we know about the oceans of our world today.

In addition to researching and conveying aspects of geology and oceanography, Felt collected photographs, articles, letters, interview transcriptions, audiotapes, books, maps, and papers related to Tharp herself and those with whom she worked. Her compilation of primary sources for Tharp's story is staggering and extensive. She utilized materials from the Tharp-Heezen Collection in the Library of Congress and Bruce Heezen's papers from the Smithsonian Institution Archives. (Heezen was Tharp's life partner.)

Felt also used transcripts from Tharp's taped interviews and stories told by Tharp's friends, colleagues, and employees. She visited Heezen's and Tharp's houses in order to gain a deeper understanding of their personalities and life styles. In her endnotes, Felt says,"I tried to imagine that I was writing a very long letter to Marie" (303). As a result of her immersion in everything Tharp that she could find, Felt creates a compelling narrative about an unknown woman who made a unique scientific contribution in our time. Felt is a quintessential storyteller, and being allowed to peek at her long letter is pure pleasure.

Felt explains the history of popular geological theories, information that is essential to understanding why Tharp's work was historic and groundbreaking. The book consists of five parts organized into 33 chapters and including endnotes. Felt's introduction explains her interest in Tharp and she says she hopes to"….take the things in front of me and weave them together to make something whole"(7). Subsequent parts of the book address: (Part One) Tharp's childhood, adolescence and young adulthood; (Part Two) Her initial work at the Lamont Geophysics Lab at Columbia University and her meeting and work with Bruce Heezen; (Part Three) Politics, jealousy, intellectual property and gender issues that interfered with continuing work at Columbia; (Part Four) The sudden death due to heart attack of Bruce Heezen (Part four is eleven pages long); and finally Part Five, Tharp's life without Bruce.

As a child, Marie Tharp is described as living a nomadic life, moving from place to place because her father's job with the U.S. Soil Bureau required it (17). She was allowed to be independent, a little girl who went out with her father while he was working, and explored and drew and wrote and was fascinated with discoveries. Felt tells us that the Tharp family seemed to be happy in spite of their transience. Tharp was an only child who argued with her parents (and often won) (19) and accepted the life of one who never stays in one place for very long. Tharp's mother died when she was a teenager (34). Included in the book are a few photographs of Tharp to provide information about her childhood and Felt tells us that much of what she has written about young Tharp was gleaned from interviews conducted later in Tharp's life.

When it was time for Tharp to begin college, she thought that becoming a teacher was her only choice. She admitted that she would have liked to be a surveyor like her father, but realized that such an option wasn't open to a girl. This was the accepted notion at the time, and in later interviews with Helen Shepard (from the Society of Women Geographers) Tharp reported that she didn't balk at it (33). So she began her college career as an art major, where she sketched and learned about design. In her second semester of college, she decided to change majors and study music. In her third semester

she studied zoology and German, and she tried many other majors, including education (which she hated) (37).

What's fascinating about her study process is that her eclectic and varied interests show a divergent character. Felt says that this gathering of educational tidbits would serve Tharp well later on, but also is cognizant of the fact that in today's world of higher education, a student who was such an open-minded thinker might be labeled "directionless" and might never complete a degree. Tharp took classes in historical and physical geology, and was gently mentored into taking drafting and other classes as well (38). Then, having earned more credit hours than were required, she told her dean that she was finished with her undergraduate work. She went on to complete her Masters in geology at the University of Michigan. She worked as an assistant to a geologist in the petroleum industry in Oklahoma for a few years, and, in a later interview, admitted that she was bored with her job (50). She noted that women with Masters degrees were paid to do things that high school students were capable of doing (50). She continued to take math classes toward a second Bachelor's degree at night and, according to Felt, yearned to be allowed to do the work that men do.

In 1948, Tharp left her job in Oklahoma and sought a position elsewhere for herself. She was a woman attempting to get a job in a man-only profession, in a man-only geological world. On the campus at Columbia University, when she entered an office in Schermerhorn Hall and explained to the secretary that she was looking for work, the secretary looked her up and down and responded, "Well. I suppose that since you've got a degree in math Dr. Ewing might be able to use you" (55). Two weeks later, when Tharp was able to meet with Ewing in the geophysical lab at Columbia University, he was struck by the diversity of her education and background. After listening to her enthusiastically talk about her qualifications for several minutes, he asked her, "Can you draft?" (67).

Felt's storytelling is clever, and the reader immediately knows that this is a simple yet profound turning point in Tharp's life. She was hired to work in the geophysics lab because she could draft and her assigned job was "to work as an assistant to the male graduate students, to act as a human calculator, and draft copies of simple maps and diagrams" (68). Tharp was a number-cruncher whose job was "strictly arithmetic" (72).

Felt's descriptions of the "managed" male graduate students and some of their antics are irresistibly funny. The geophysics lab was noisy and distracting. The rowdy young men who studied there slept in their cars, debated over lunch ("salami and cheese sandwiches and beer") and had Friday afternoon parties at the end of the workweek. They went on expeditions at sea, presented their information at conferences, authored papers and books, got their names in print, married and had children (84). Many of the students later

served as Tharp's assistants, and she also worked with high school students who assisted her in map making, creation, and production (178).

Another pivotal point in the book occurred when Tharp, having crunched numbers for the graduate students in the geophysics lab for four years, was reassigned to work as Bruce Heezen's assistant. Heezen had been collecting fathometer records (or echo soundings) since he began voyages on the Laboratory ship in 1947. Tharp continued being responsible for mathematical calculations as she had been before until, according to Felt, Heezen and Tharp considered using sounding records to generally contemplate the structure of the ocean (94).

In 1952, the Atlantic Ocean's depths were measured using echo sounders. A fathometer produced long scrolls of paper with undulating lines representing the underwater terrain. Using countless soundings from 1947 through 1952 and a detailed record of where the Laboratory ship had gone all those years, Tharp spliced ships tracks together, translated 3,000 feet of sounding records, plotted the depths of the underwater peaks, troughs, and slopes conveyed by the soundings, then graphed the depths with dots which she interconnected. When she inked in and cross hatched the spaces, the topographical profile of the North Atlantic was evident, with mountains and plains and a very obvious mid-ocean rift valley indicating continental drift (a horrifying concept for geologists to grasp in 1952). Upon her initial "encounter" with information about Tharp in a 2006 *New York Times Magazine* article, Felt says, "What stood out to me was that no one believed her…. Her claims [*that a rift existed as a result of continental drift*] were dismissed as "girl talk" by Heezen (99). But when Tharp recalculated and drew the map again and again, the valley emerged every time (103).

Tharp's story has been so carefully researched that beyond the seminal "drafting" moments it's difficult to sift out the pieces that are most relevant and interesting; so many details are significant. Throughout the book, Tharp grows as a person, scientist, and researcher. Heezen becomes her co-worker and life partner; she grapples with the politics of personalities, higher education, and research. Her relationship with Ewing and many others lasts for what seems to be a lifetime, and the tapestry of the relationships she builds with male geologists in the book are complex and wryly predictable. She is a woman scientist and researcher who essentially labors, creates, and discovers, and the credit for what she does is often discounted, grabbed, and claimed by a male colleague.

Felt's descriptions of soundings, sonar, mapping, and the controversies associated with the paradigm shift of accepting continental drift are all details that must be caught and mulled over by the reader. Her research on these topics is exhaustive and mind-boggling. And she includes photographs of Tharp and Heezen and the soundings and maps that make the story real and

alive. As a reader, I was compelled to seek out more evidence of Tharp's contribution to what we now know about the oceans. Felt accurately tells us that it was years until Tharp was given any credit for her work in print, yet she acknowledges frequently that Tharp's oceanic profiles were the most detailed representations of the ocean's floor that had ever been produced (98).

Felt uses the label "Tharpophile" to describe someone who initially might have known Tharp, worked with her and admired her, someone who might have wanted to be like her, and someone who wanted to learn from her. The label evolves into a term to describe someone who studies Tharp, and advocates for her rightful place in the scientific community. Felt does not assert that Tharp was a feminist, but certainly she lived a feminist life. A suspicion of mine is that throughout history there have been unnamed women who brilliantly taught, modeled, created, interpreted, and researched: women who were never recognized for their contributions. Admitting that she herself became a Tharpophile, Felt achieves her goal of setting Tharp's story straight in a sublimely compelling way. She tells us, in the endnotes, that as she wrote her book, it became a love letter with the "boundary between author and subject gone fluid" (363).

My interest in this book was piqued by a brief review on the radio. I was intrigued by the title of the book, but, like Felt, I would never say that oceanography and geology are part of my life interests. I would not willingly pursue more knowledge of abyssal plains, geosynclinals theory or plate tectonics….yet in this case there's an important story of a woman attached, and that bears further investigation. We cannot separate a woman from her scientific self, just as we cannot separate a teacher from a learner. As I read I also grew; I learned a lot, and both Tharp and Felt were my teachers. What Felt does in the book is exactly what Tharp herself did when she created her maps: she extrapolates. She weaves in adventures, research, politics, drama, romance, emotion and a triumphant ending (where Tharp is finally recognized by the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute, The Library of Congress and the Lamont Laboratory fifty years after her work had begun). Doing so makes *Soundings* a fascinating read….and possibly makes those who are up for an adventure (like me), into Tharpophiles themselves! I loved this book!

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