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# "O Captain, my Captain": A Pedagogy of Transformation in the Teaching of Frank Abrahams

## ABSTRACT

*Countless scholars have utilized Critical Pedagogy as a philosophical frame to reorient teaching and learning as, among other things, a conversation between teacher and student. As an educator and theorist, Frank Abrahams has championed a Critical Pedagogy for Music Education that aims for the "acquisition of a critical consciousness, the ability to create meaningful teaching and learning experiences, and the attainment of agency" (Abrahams, 2017, p. 25). For nearly 25 years, I have been in conversation with Frank. He has been my teacher, my colleague, and a dear friend. In these roles, he has lived the pedagogy he teaches, embracing and enacting an approach to music education that is liberating for the many students he has worked with, myself included. In this article, I offer a personal reflection on the profound and lasting impact of Frank Abraham's teaching on my professional life. Embracing a narrative ethic, I draw conceptually on the film, *Dead Poets Society*, as a metaphorical touchstone and political text for transformational teaching. In this celebration of the scholarship and teaching of Frank Abrahams, I illuminate the role of Critical Pedagogy, the Critical Pedagogue, Place-Based Pedagogies, Student Agency, and the Self-Actualization of educators, a set of powerful approaches that Frank employed to great effect.*

## Keywords

critical pedagogy; music teacher education; mentorship; place-based pedagogies; Frank Abrahams

## TO BEGIN: "...WORDS AND IDEAS CAN CHANGE THE WORLD."

I am sentimental in my appreciation of *Dead Poets Society* (DPS). Among a number of "teacher as hero" films from the 80s and 90s (i.e., *Stand and Deliver*, *Lean on Me*, *Mr. Holland's Opus*), DPS stands out as a nuanced synthesis of the maverick teacher and

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a pedagogy of subversion. Set in 1959, the story centers upon John Keating, an inspirational teacher of English literature played by Robin Williams. Keating's teaching is transgressive, as he sets out to fracture the traditional ethos and hegemonic curricular structures at a fictional elite boarding school, The Welton Academy.

As a political text, the film is not without its faults. A cursory scan of critical analyses by English, Humanities, and Teacher Education scholars points to the film's embrace of seductive oppositional theories in teaching (Heilker, 1991). Critics are uncomfortable with Keating's apparent overreliance on personality over pedagogy in shaping—or perhaps recruiting—the hearts and minds of a loyal fanbase of high school students, all of whom are easily swayed by a larger than life protagonist who possesses a contagious passion for poetry (McLaren & Leonardo, 1998). Despite these valid critiques, I remain fond of the film. John Keating's strengths, insecurities, and complicated personal journey of self-discovery in and out of the classroom resonate with me in ways that (I must confess) played a role in my own decision to become a teacher.

The parallels between *DPS* and Frank Abrahams's scholarship would be obvious to those who have studied with him. Frank referenced the film often in his teaching, particularly as a tool for examining pedagogies of resistance and transformation. "Is Mr. Keating a Critical Pedagogue?" he would have asked before launching into his own careful analysis of John Keating's favorable and flawed moments as a critical educator. Maudlin but poignant film quotes such as, "No matter what anybody tells you, words and ideas can change the world" would serve as entry points for lengthy class discussions on transformational teaching. With enthusiasm and wit, but more measured in his use of humor, Frank commanded a comparable level of engagement and deep respect afforded to the fictional Keating by his devoted students.

Leaving aside the evocative parallels between Keating and Abrahams, I isolate three scenes from the film that may constitute an entryway into the work of Frank Abrahams as a pedagogy of personal transformation.

## **SCENE 1: THE PRITCHARD SCALE**

In one of the more memorable scenes in the film, Keating asks his students to read aloud the introduction to their course text, "Understanding Poetry" by Dr. J. Evans Pritchard, Ph.D, a fictional essay loosely adapted from the very real "Sound and Sense: An Introduction to Poetry" by Laurence Perrine (1969). Pritchard's prelude serves as a stuffy entree into poetic form, going so far as to measure a poem's "greatness" with vertical and horizontal axis of "perfection" and "importance":

A sonnet by Byron may score high on the vertical, but only average on the horizontal. A Shakespearean sonnet, on the other hand, would score high both horizontally and vertically, yielding a massive total area, thereby revealing the poem to be truly great. As you proceed through the poetry in this book, practice this rating method. As your

ability to evaluate poems in this matter grows, so will your enjoyment and understanding of poetry (Schulman, 1989, 0:22:02).

As the student finishes reading aloud, Keating steps forward to proclaim: "Excrement. That's what I think of Mr. J. Evans Pritchard. We're not laying pipe, we're talking about poetry." A moment later, he directs the students to rip the introduction out of the book all together. Initially incredulous at his request, the students eventually comply and erupt into chaotic laughter as the classroom floor is enveloped with the crumpled-up pages of Pritchard's fictional scale.

### **Critical Pedagogy Requires a Teacher**

Throughout my years as a student and professor, I have been most inspired by those teachers who have had the courage to transgress those boundaries that would confine each pupil to a rote, assembly-line approach to learning. Such teachers approach students with the will and desire to respond to our unique beings, even if the situation does not allow the full emergence of a relationship based on mutual recognition. Yet the possibility of such recognition is always present (hooks, 1994, p. 13).

In revisiting this passage from bell hooks' (1994) seminal work, *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*, coupled with the *DPS* scene described above, I am reminded of my time as a student of Frank's at Westminster Choir College, an institution that is arguably as traditional as the fictional "Welton Academy" in its veneration of a curricular heritage. From the institution's roots in the Presbyterian church to a commencement ceremony that would rival Queen Elizabeth's coronation in terms of pomp and circumstance, the rich history and canonized culture was palpable in all aspects of Westminster's curriculum.

Learning and living in such a regulated space came with a set of routines, rituals, discourses, and challenges, far too many to problematize in this short essay. To be clear, studying at Westminster was an overwhelmingly positive experience and one that I look back upon with very fond memories. Alongside these nostalgic joys, however, is the acknowledgement that conformity and compliance were seen as indispensable to the learning experience. While nothing as rigid and bloodless as Pritchard's introduction intruded on our learning of choral music, the scene from *DPS* dramatizes the dangers of the top-down approach to education in the arts. bell hooks (1994) warns again this form of authoritarianism, as "that approach to learning that is rooted in the notion that all students need to do is consume information fed to them by a professor" (p. 14), an approach that often dominated our study of the Western choral "masterworks." As is the culture in many elite conservatories of music, it was our conductors who held sway on campus, particularly within the choirs, where the asymmetrical power dynamics of the U-shaped seating surrounding the maestro, the homogenous vowel shapes, and literal blending of student voices, left little room for individual interpretation. The discipline and uniformity found within these spaces were touted as reasons for the

institution's international renown. A headmaster might well have asked, why would anyone question the success of this model?

To his credit, Frank dared to do so. While he may never have gone so far as to mobilize his students to rip pages from a textbook, his approach, like Keating's, was to create alternative spaces, both within and outside of the classroom, that existed alongside the more traditional learning environments of the institution, spaces that permitted his students to consider and embrace conversation, contradiction, and uncertainty in the production of knowledge. At the same time, he created spaces that recognized the project of the lauded performance-based paradigms at Westminster. Unlike Keating, however, Frank was more careful in his resistance to the dominant ideology of the college. His effectiveness as a critical pedagogue, while situated in the highly ritualized context of Westminster, was his cautious avoidance of relying on pedagogical binaries and grand acts of subversion to make his point (Heilker, 1991). In a quieter fashion, his teaching foregrounded dialogue over direction, problem-posing over solutions, and the embrace of individual student voices in ways that were not necessarily acknowledged in the adjacent choral rehearsal rooms. More importantly, and in a similar gesture to the sidelining of Pritchard's poetry doctrine, Frank encouraged us to take a more active role in our own education as aspiring teachers, by quieting—not silencing—the voices of those in perceived positions of authority. He challenged us to lean forward, recognize, and defend our own experiences and subjectivities in the construction of knowledge.

In doing so, Frank brilliantly bridged the gap between perceptions of critical pedagogy as *only* a theory of resistance, and the conventional day-to-day practices that allow for the tenets of critical pedagogy to emerge and engender real change in the lives of students. In modeling this approach alongside rather than against the normative charter of the school, he permitted us to critically consider the gaps that exist in the institution's curriculum and, in seemingly small but impactful ways, make change where we could; what Bartolome (2003) describes as “creat[ing] conditions that enable subordinated students to move from their usual passive position to one of active and critical engagement” (p. 412). In other words, carefully, quietly, but impactfully, he *became* the teacher that Critical Pedagogy requires.

## **SCENE 2: “CARPE DIEM”**

In another often-cited scene from early in the film, Mr. Keating introduces himself to his new students by mysteriously appearing in the doorway at the rear of the classroom. With an informal greeting of, “Well, come on,” he invites the students to rise from their desks, leave the room, and follow him to a large corridor where several black and white framed pictures of former Welton students are housed in reflective glass cases. Once the class has gathered, he asks a student to read aloud the first stanza from a Robert Herrick poem, “To the Virgins, To Make Much of Time:”

Gather ye rosebuds while ye may

Old time is still a flying  
 And this same flower that smiles today  
 Tomorrow will be dying.

Keating then asks the students, "Gather ye rosebuds while ye may. The Latin term for that sentiment is 'Carpe Diem.' Now, who knows what that means?" He then says,

I would like you to step forward over here and peruse the faces of the boys who attended this school 60 or 70 years ago. You've walked past them many times, but, I don't think you really looked at them. They're not that different from you, are they? Same haircuts. Full of hormones, just like you. Invincible, just like you feel. The world is their oyster. They believe they're destined for great things, just like many of you. Their eyes are full of hope, just like you. Did they wait until it was too late, to make from their lives into even one iota of what they were capable? Because, you see, gentleman, these boys are now fertilizing daffodils. But, if you listen real close, you can hear them whisper their legacy to you. Go ahead, lean in. Listen....you hear it? (Schulman, 1989, 0:14:56).

Keating loudly whispers for the class to hear, "Carpe...Carpe Diem. Seize the day, boys. Make your lives extraordinary."

### **Critical Pedagogy Requires a Place**

People as beings "in a situation," find themselves in temporal-spatial conditions which mark them and which they also mark. They will tend to reflect on their own "situationality" to the extent that they are challenged by it to act upon it. Human beings *are* because they are in a situation. And they *will be more* the more they not only critically reflect upon their existence but critically act upon it. (Freire, 1970/1995, p. 90)

For Freire, critical pedagogy acknowledges the importance of cultural context and the need for spaces that allow learners to critically reflect and then act. In the passage above, he reminds us of how spaces may "mark" us human beings, and how we must, in turn, be encouraged to imprint ourselves on such spaces. Gruenewald (2003) similarly recognizes that, "Reflecting on one's situation corresponds to reflecting on the space(s) one inhabits; acting on one's situation often corresponds to changing one's relationship to a place" (p. 4). Mr. Keating does just that. He removes the students from the traditional classroom setting and, in his very first encounter with the class, disrupts the relationship between the classroom, the student, and the study of poetry. The formal postures and processes of schooling are set aside for a more experimental approach within a more informal space, and thus, the imprisoned young body is free to roam and explore in new physical and temporal dimensions. Referencing the Foucauldian notion of the surveilled body, McLaren and Leonardo (1998) offer their own analysis of the scene:

In *Dead Poets Society* Welton ritualizes the student body by beginning the day with a lesson on poetry in the morning while sitting "properly" in their (apparently) assigned seats. This sets the tone for what the students can expect as normal usage of the body while learning: sitting quietly and speaking when asked to speak. Keating disrupts this

arrangement by having the students follow him into the corridor, thereby transforming their potential energy into kinetic movement. Their bodies are made to relate to poetry under new circumstances. (p. 133)

Huddled together, in dialogue, and locating themselves in close proximity to photographs of their peers from the past, the students must confront and reflect upon their own identity, their legacies, and their potential contribution to the world around them. Further, they are mobilized to take action by Keating's charge, "*Carpe Diem*, seize the day, boys." Released from the confines of the regulated classroom space, the teacher and students together create a new, fluid place for learning, one in which poetry is personal, relevant, conversational, and conscious.

In a similar act of repositioning teaching and learning towards spaces of reflection and action, Frank created his own "new circumstances" for the study and performance of choral music. A place that, as he describes it, allowed students to "become agentive and able to use their agency to foster their own musical learning" (Abrahams, 2017, p. 21). While I was an undergrad, I was fortunate to have the opportunity to serve for two years as a conducting intern with the Westminster Conservatory Youth Chorale, a community high school choir that met every Saturday morning for three hours under Frank's direction. Frank founded the choir, served as principal conductor, recruited music education majors at the college to serve as interns with the group, and linked the ensemble's identity and mission to the broader philosophical focus of Westminster's Music Education program. Structurally, the Chorale functioned much like the typical choir; there was a conductor, an accompanist, singers, weekly rehearsals, and seasonal performances of repertoire from various musical genres. What made this ensemble unique, however, was Frank's commitment to a critical pedagogical approach, one in which issues of power, politics, and student agency were front and center as part of the choral rehearsal experience.

Frank shifted the dynamics of the traditional choral rehearsal by disrupting the hierarchical power structure of the conductor/singer relationship. His rehearsals employed democratic approaches to decision making. In dialogue with the conductor, the high school students were regularly asked to weigh in on decisions about the technical elements of the piece, such as tempi, dynamics, and articulations. The strengths of Frank's critical pedagogy were evident: The students provided their own interpretation of the composer's intent with text treatment, discussed how they might act if in the role of composer, and contextualized the text, compositional devices, and stylistic choices within the political dimensions of the time period. As Frank notes,

Issues of politics within the context of the songs and within the context of our own performing them became topics that evoked impassioned dialogue, discussion, and responses from the students. Should we be singing about such things in choir? (Abrahams, 2017, p. 23)

Frank experimented with method, content, and space in ways that, although more commonly deployed by choral directors today, were, 20 years ago, rehearsal strategies

that lived radically outside the Westminster approach to choral pedagogy. Singers were asked to leave their chairs often and gather in student-led groups around the college campus where the repertoire was rehearsed and learned in a messy but successful process of trial and error. The actual rehearsal space was often reconfigured as well, with seating arrangements conducive for a dialogic approach to the choral rehearsal; Frank set up the room so that there were intersecting circles with outer and inner layers, the conductor positioned amongst the choir members, and students regularly invited to the podium to co-lead rehearsals. The passive posture of the attentive choral singer, sitting tall and facing forward in anticipation of the conductor's next direction, was replaced by a tactile, kinetic practice of flexible, communicative movements between singer and conductor, resulting in a more organic and reciprocal approach to music making and learning. As such, the semiotics of the typical conducting gesture were transformed as the ensemble members, free to move away from their assigned seats and interact with one another, functioned collectively without the constant presence of a centralized authority. Body movement, eye contact, facial expression, and breath became the grammar of a new somatic discourse.

What was most effective about the Chorale as a site for change was how closely the ensemble resembled a traditional chorus. From an outsider's vantage point, nothing radical seemed to occur in our regular Saturday morning rehearsals. Those who were more intimately familiar with the philosophical focus of the ensemble, however, understood what "changing one's relationship to place" looked like in practice (Gruenewald, 2003). Existing between traditional and progressive pedagogical traditions, the Chorale functioned as a laboratory space in which the singers and teacher/conductors experimented and explored in a collaborative process of becoming. The "business as usual" perception of the Chorale permitted us to covertly engage in our own pedagogy of resistance, one that challenged the students to reflect and act upon their own "situationality" by not only questioning the asymmetrical power structure of the traditional ensemble, but also, by changing it (Freire, 1970/1995). I turn again to McLaren and Leonardo (1998) who, in their analysis of *Dead Poets Society*, speak to this dynamic: "By making the familiar strange, Keating begins the rudiments of a lesson on the unnaturalness of classroom settings, that is, its hierarchical spatial organization and centralized arrangement" (p. 136). Frank similarly made problematic the regulatory practices of the typical choral classroom by modeling a progressive approach within a traditional structure. In doing so, he provided the blueprint for practical change within existing paradigms, creating his own Critical Pedagogy of Place (Gruenewald, 2003), but more impactfully, modeling how to construct such a space within our own classrooms, schools, and communities.

### **SCENE 3: "A SWEATY-TOOTHED MADMAN"**

The students in Mr. Keating's class are tasked with writing an original poem. On the day the assignment is due, Mr. Keating invites the students to the front of the

classroom to stand and read their compositions aloud for their entire class to hear. After a few students reluctantly share their work, Mr. Keating looks in the direction of Todd Anderson, an introverted and awkwardly quiet student played by Ethan Hawke, and states, “Now, who’s next? Mister Anderson. I see you sitting there in agony. C’mon, Todd, step up. Let’s put you out of your misery.”

Until this moment in the film, Todd has been portrayed as an incredibly shy adolescent who, although friendly and forgiving of his classmates’ antics, clearly feels out of place amongst the high-achieving and entitled student body of the prestigious Welton Academy. In response to Mr. Keating’s request, Todd answers, “I...I didn’t do it. I didn’t write a poem.” Looking disappointed, but unruffled, Keating pauses before turning towards the class to announce, “Mister Anderson thinks that everything inside of him is worthless and embarrassing. Isn’t that right, Todd, isn’t that your worst fear? I think you’re wrong. I think you have something inside of you that is worth a great deal.”

Keating then gently guides Todd Anderson to the front of the room where, inspired by the poetic words of Walt Whitman, he asks Todd to demonstrate a “Barbaric yawp!” After several squeamish attempts, Todd, frustrated and prodded by Keating, releases a ferocious “YAWP!” to the class. Thrilled by Todd’s thundering response, Keating then points his attention to the framed picture of Walt Whitman hanging just above the chalkboard as the following exchange occurs:

ANDERSON: YAWP!

KEATING: There it is. You see, you’ve a barbarian in you after all. Now, (stops Anderson) you don’t get away that easy. Picture of Uncle Walt up there. What does he remind you of? Don’t think. Answer. Go on.

ANDERSON: A m..m..madman.

KEATING: What kind of a madman? Don’t think about it, just answer again.

ANDERSON: A crazy madman.

KEATING: No, you can do better than that. Free up your mind. Use your imagination. Say the first thing that pops into your head even if it’s total gibberish. Go on, go on.

ANDERSON: A sweaty-toothed madman.

KEATING: Good God, boy, there’s a poet in you after all. There, close your eyes. Close your eyes. Close ’em. (Keating covers Anderson’s eyes.) Now, describe what you see.

ANDERSON: Uh, I...I close my eyes...

KEATING: Yes.

ANDERSON: Uh, and this image floats beside me.

KEATING: The sweaty-toothed madman...

ANDERSON: ...the sweaty-toothed madman with a stare that pounds my brain...

KEATING: Oh, that’s excellent. Now, give him action. Make him do something.

ANDERSON: ...his hands reach out and choke me.

KEATING: That’s it. Wonderful, wonderful.

ANDERSON: ...and all the time he’s mumbling...

KEATING: What’s he mumbling?

ANDERSON: ...mumbling truth, truth like a blanket that always leaves your feet cold... (the class laughs)

KEATING: Forget them, forget them! Stay with the blanket. Tell me about that blanket.

ANDERSON: Y...y...you push it, stretch it, it'll never be enough. You kick at it, beat it, it'll never cover any of us. (Keating backs away and kneels.) From the moment we enter crying to the moment we leave dying, it'll just cover your face as you wail and cry and scream.

KEATING: (Rising) Don't you forget this.

- *Dead Poets Society* (1989), Screenplay by Tom Shulman

### **Critical Pedagogy Requires a Student**

To be a progressive teacher who dares to teach requires, in Freire's eyes, a set of very particular and indispensable qualities...Through striving to develop these qualities, teachers could also come to understand that they cannot liberate anyone, but rather that they were in a strategic position to invite their students to liberate themselves, as they learned to read their world and transform their present realities. (Darder, 2003, p. 507)

Great teachers help guide their students towards a vision, a vision of themselves in future professional roles, a vision of what they may achieve in a specific area of study, or a vision of the impact they may have on the world around them. Great teachers, then, provide the necessary opportunities for that vision to be realized. I believe this is what Freire (1970/1995) speaks of as an awakening of consciousness. I believe this is what hooks (1994) means when she speaks of "engaged pedagogy" as a practice of freedom (p. 13). I also believe this is the "invitation" Darder (2003) speaks of in the passage above, a teacher's application of care through patience, trust, and mentorship. An invitation, in this sense, is not a demand, but a provocation; an offer to attend and engage in a conversation about how one's "present reality" can be transformed through reflection and action. Such conversations are personal and, at times, even painful. They require a willingness, by teacher and student, to strip away the insecurities and uncertainties that accompany any process of transgression, particularly within the normative structures of schooling. Maxine Greene (1995) speaks of the critical role teachers play in helping students resist dominant social structures that limit one's potential for transformation:

To resist such tendencies is to become aware of the ways in which certain dominant social practices enclose us in molds, define us in accord with extrinsic demands, discourage us from going beyond ourselves and from acting on possibility. In truth, I do not see how we can educate young persons if we do not enable them on some level to resist such tendencies and to open clearings for communicating across the boundaries, for choosing, for becoming different in the midst of intersubjective relationships. (p. 135)

Greene's words, in company with the scene described above, speak to me in very personal ways. I am again reminded of my time at Westminster and of similar feelings of confinement in attempting to meet the cultural norms of the institution. "Enclosure" looks and feels different to different people. While the character of Todd Anderson may have felt trapped by his extreme shyness, I, conversely, relied on an extroverted personality to navigate the college experience. Equipped with a Pell grant, 10 rushed months of private voice study, and a great deal of imposter syndrome, my time at the Choir College was, unbeknownst to many, consumed with feelings of otherness and inadequacy. Self-doubt over my blue-collar family roots, first generation college status, and pre-college musical training, or lack thereof, steered me towards fashioning an amplified social identity at the school, one in which leadership roles in student government, residence life, and our collegiate NAFME chapter, could distract and compensate for what I perceived as significant limitations in my musical abilities.

Some faculty members at the college had little patience for this type of personal insecurity in practice. If anything, my own *Hillbilly Elegy* acted as a springboard for further disdain among a select few. Frank, however, seemed to embrace this essential dimension of my identity, not as a deficit, but as an opportunity for personal growth and possibility. Like Keating does for Todd Anderson when covering his eyes to the laughing faces of his peers and saying, "Forget them, forget them! Stay with that blanket...tell me about that blanket," Frank liberated me from the immense doubt that consumed me, reframing my thinking about my own worst fears, and pointing me towards the possibilities that lay before me as a future educator. As such, he helped me to understand how my somewhat provincial background would make me a stronger, more accessible, more empathetic, and thus, more impactful educator. In both explicit and subtle acts of care and mentorship, Frank helped me craft a vision of who I *could* be.

Frank Abrahams invited me to join him in creating a vision of myself as a teacher, conductor, graduate student, and as an eventual teacher educator. Through casual comments in passing, "There's the future Professor McBride"; in post-recital emails, "Any doubts you may have had about your singing abilities should be immediately put to rest. You stood with poise and professionalism next to a former Metropolitan Opera star tonight"; in handwritten book dedications, "To Dr. Nick McBride, a great friend and colleague. Congratulations on your doctorate!" and even in his backward compliments via congratulatory text, "Just remember, I knew you when you couldn't use 'discourse' in a sentence. I am so very proud of you. I hope Brad, Mom-Mom, and your Mom and Dad understand what a tremendous achievement this is." These exchanges with Frank have meant the world to me, they have been "critical transactions" for me, the type that, as Greene (1995) asserts, allow for a student to "feel oneself en route, to feel oneself in a place where there are always the possibilities of clearings, of new openings" (p. 150). These moments of encouragement are my "Sweaty-Toothed Madman" scene, my reminder, from a teacher and mentor, that there

is "something worth a great deal" inside. They are my invitation to become a student of Critical Pedagogy, to write and rewrite, to reflect and act, and to choose.

## LEGACY AND LINGERING THOUGHTS

In the final scene of *Dead Poets Society*, Mr. Keating's students rise to stand on their desks, shouting "O Captain, my Captain" in a loyal—and subversive—tribute to the teacher who inspired them to see the world from another point of view. This special issue of *Visions* is undoubtedly a similar gesture of gratitude and recognition of Frank's legacy in doing the same for so many. In creating a community of students and educators who now go out into the world having been inspired to contribute in meaningful ways to our craft, Frank's pedagogy and practice endures, reminding us of our "ability to create meaningful teaching and learning experiences" for the "attainment of agency" and, as is perhaps latent in us all, the opportunity for transformation (Abrahams, 2017, p.25).

Frank's influence extends far beyond his work and writings in Critical Pedagogy. While Critical Theory has served him well as a centerpiece of his scholarly output, his greatest impact, in my view, has been his praxis, his commitment to a prevailing, conscious pedagogy that lives, breathes and engenders real change in the lives of his students. His is an embodied critical pedagogy, one that is beautifully woven throughout his teaching, in places, and now, in the daily work of the many students who have been impacted by his philosophical orientation and fierce commitment to the unique journey of each student.

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