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EDUCATIVE SCHOOL CHANGE: LIVED EXPERIENCES IN HORIZONTAL EVALUATION

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Horizontal evaluation differs from the dominant view in important ways [1] Although most schemes try to control what teachers do, horizontal evaluation attempts to promote change by empowering teachers. Teachers are given the opportunity to reexperience the ordinary and therefore to act on a critical accounting of practices and aims as opposed to acting out of habit.[2] Practitioner knowledge not only becomes a central part of the evaluation process, but teachers enable other teachers to take a critical look at this knowledge base In contrast to the dominant tradition that attempts to provide teachers with right techniques," this approach to evaluation examines the relation between educational means and ends and therefore exposes the political, moral, and ethical implications of schooling.

Dominant forms of evaluation involve one way communiques directed at the observed teacher, horizontal evaluation encourages a two-way form of communication where both participants work together to scrutinize teaching and schooling. When this process succeeds, "The person with understanding does not know and judge as one who stands apart unaffected, but as one united by the specific bond with the other, he thinks with the other and undergoes the situation with him."[3]

Finally, while traditional forms of evaluation are individualistic, focusing on only one teacher, horizontal evaluation holds to a communitarian ideal that tries to bring the discourse to as many members of the educational community as possible. There is more to school change than merely altering how teachers think and act in the classroom. Challenging the structures and relations that define schooling in narrow ways requires collective action from various interest groups, not the least of which are students and parents

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[1]Andrew Gitlin and Stan Goldstein, "A Dialogical Approach to Understanding. Horizontal Evaluation," *Educational Theory* 37 (Winter 1987)· 17–27

[2]Ira Shor, *Critical Teaching and Everyday Life* (Chicago University of Chicago Press, 198")

[3]Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method,* trans G Barden and J Cummings (New York Seaburg Press, 1975), p. 288.

Horizontal evaluation is part of an *educative* model.[4] One of the primary commitments underpinning this model is that teachers' "understanding of themselves is a first step in their radically altering the self-destructive patterns of interaction that characterize social relations."[5] An educative model considers how understanding and behavior are intimately linked and gives teachers an opportunity to "decide for [themselves], on the basis of lucid, *critical* self-awareness, the manner in which [they] wish to live" (italics added).[6] Teacher evaluation of this kind has the potential to be a catalyst that sparks participants to change how they live and react to others.

LIVED EXPERIENCES IN HORIZONTAL EVALUATION

If we are to take seriously the claim that educative models of evaluation can alter the nature of schooling by enabling teachers to examine educational means and ends, then we must look closely at what influence these alternative approaches have on teachers' lived experiences. This section analyzes how horizontal evaluation affects teachers' understanding of educational issues and what they do in the classroom.

To gather the data, 20 teachers volunteered to use the horizontal-evaluation model. For the most part, these teachers were typical of elementary school teachers in the United States, they represented all grade levels, held a wide range of political beliefs, and came from varied socioeconomic backgrounds.[7] At the beginning of the 1986–87 academic year, the diverse group of teachers was introduced to the horizontal-evaluation model in a workshop. Following the workshop, the teachers broke up into groups of two or three of their own choosing and audiotaped trial runs with the model. At a second group meeting, they read and discussed the transcripts to identify and clear up any problems or uncertainties with using the model. After the second meeting, the teachers began using horizontal evaluation about once a month for the eight months remaining in the school year. Thus, each teacher was observed by a peer and acted as the observer eight times over the course of the study. After each observation, the teachers held and audiotaped a post-conference. Finally, at year's end, all the teachers were interviewed to obtain

[4]John Symth's work in clinical supervision also follows this educative model. See John Smyth, "Developing a Critical Practice of Clinical Supervision," *Journal of Curriculum Studies* 17 (January–March 1985), 1–15.

[5]Brian Fay, "How People Change Themselves: The Relationship Between Critical Theory and Its Audience," *Political Theory and Praxis: New Perspectives*, ed. Terrance Ball (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1977), p. 204.

[6]Ibid., p. 207.

[7]A background questionnaire indicates that 9 participants thought of themselves as conservative, 7 liberal, and 1 a left wing radical. Eight teachers indicated that their family background was working class, the others described their background as middle class.

their reflections on the evaluation process.[8] These interviews were also audiotaped, transcribed, and analyzed along with the post-conference transcripts. From the analysis of the evaluative dialogue and the teachers' reflections on the process, three strong themes emerged: teachers altered their views about evaluation; they challenged on both an ideological level and in practice the prevailing rationality that guides many school practices; and they took some modest steps toward changing school relations.

CHANGING VIEWS OF TEACHER EVALUATION

Assuming Evaluation Is Something Done to Teachers

One of the most powerful assumptions held by teachers is that evaluation is something done to them, an assumption justified by common evaluation practices such as the following:

> When he [my principal] does his evaluation, he comes in, he watches me, we sit down, and he tells me what I did. I don't have to tell him anything I don't have to explain why I don't ever have to say anything to him (interview, Susan)

If teachers retain this view when educative forms of evaluation are carried out, they are likely to put on a show for the evaluator and void serious discourse. New approaches will quickly be transformed into hierarchical gamelike exercises that resemble the dominant form unless fundamental assumptions about the nature of evaluation are reconsidered A review of the transcripts indicates that over time most of the 20 teachers did indeed begin to rethink evaluation. Specifically, they abandoned the notion that evaluation is something done to them and began to see it as an enabling process. The following is typical of their views:

> I think it gives me a new perspective on what I'm doing. I'm more able through talking with someone else to see what I'm doing instead of just doing it. It's something I can almost not explain because you think you know what you're doing, but there's so much that is taken for granted. But when you sit down and someone asks you, "Why are you doing that, what was your intention, why is it important to you?" you really have to think about it: "Is that something I've done because it is easier or because I've done it before?" (interview, Mary)

As the teachers changed their views on evaluation, other behaviors that seemed natural in the confines of the dominant approach started to disappear

[8]Post-interview questions include Why did you get involved in the peer evaluation project? If you had an opportunity to continue using the model next year, would you? Was the experience worthwhile? If so, in what ways? What about the other side? What were the disadvantages of the process? In what ways could it be improved? What effect, if any, did the horizontal-evaluation process have on your beliefs about teaching? What effect, if any, did horizontal evaluation have on your teaching style? What effect, if any, has horizontal evaluation had on what you do in the classroom? What effect, if any, has horizontal evaluation had on your relationships with teachers, parents, and administrators? Has the horizontal process changed over the year? Is there anything else you want to say about the experience?

Specifically, they were more willing to let the observer see commonplace, everyday teacher practices:

With the principal [during evaluation observations], I made sure that my lesson fit the model we were supposed to follow. I'd get my anticipatory set [the Hunter design for lesson plans] and everything laid out. With horizontal evaluation, I wanted it to be more natural than the way I usually do things. Inside I didn't want to be that perfect model like when the principal came in. I wanted to look at myself so I could be evaluating myself. (interview, Judy)

The teachers' willingness to open their classrooms suggests that they are more likely to resist a socialization pattern that encourages them to put on a show when an evaluator enters the classroom, if evaluative procedures are enabling. This openness also challenges the commonly voiced complaint that teachers do not want to be evaluated. They do want to examine what they do when the evaluative process considers practitioner knowledge and is not something imposed on them.

While this openness allows teachers to enter into a serious discourse on schooling, they also have to be willing to push each other and ask hard, critical questions if educative approaches are to challenge unquestioned notions of schooling. By the end of the study, most teachers started to see through the public servant tradition that encourages them to be overly accepting and docile; they learned how to raise difficult, critical concerns.[9]

I think one of the things I thought as I listened to the first tape [of a post-conference] was I was very accepting of everything. I just went through and said, "This is nice, J." I never really got below the surface. From the last tape, I felt I was beginning to be able to ask questions better. I learned how to ask the questions that were important that would push her. (interview, Judy)

By opening their classrooms and asking difficult questions, the teachers were able to rethink prejudgments that act behind their backs to shape what they do. These changes in evaluative behavior suggest that educative forms of evaluation will be empowering only if teachers see the process as an integral part of their teaching.

Seeing the Evaluator as Fault-Finder

The dominant tradition in teacher evaluation also assumes that the evaluator is the fault-finder and the observed teacher is the needy recipient. If these roles remain unchanged, teachers will likely view evaluation as oppressive and alienating. Furthermore, the process will do little or nothing to enhance teachers' self-understanding or understanding of schooling. An encouraging aspect of this study is that the teachers over time saw through these commonly accepted roles and acted in ways to develop a more reciprocal

[9]Robert V. Bullough, Jr., and Andrew Gitlin, "Schooling and Change: A View From the Lower Rung," *Teachers College Record* 87 (Winter 1985). 219–237.

arrangement in which both participants questioned each other about teaching The teachers confronted unforeseen hierarchical tendencies in the horizontal evaluation approach to alter these role boundaries.

When discourse is based on the observation of only one participant, the observer tends to ask all the questions while the other tries to respond Because of this focus on the observed teacher, the evaluator more likely will act as the grand inquisitor or fault-finder. To overcome this problematic aspect of the horizontal-evaluation process, the teachers on their own accord decided to combine two post-conferences. Thus, the post-conference dialogue reflected the observations of both participants, and neither teacher felt obligated to ask the bulk of the questions.

> [Toward the end of the experience], we would dialogue without the boundaries of "I will interview you, and you respond to my questions." All of a sudden, those boundaries disappeared, and we just started talking about things in common justifying why we did those kinds of things. Or not justifying but saying, "Maybe we shouldn't be doing those kinds of things. Why do we fill our time with this? Is it really teaching that we're doing when we are doing that?" (interview, Susan)

These actions suggest that the teachers were no longer content to accept the traditional role of the evaluator and the observed teacher. They took steps, therefore, to correct hierarchical tendencies in the model The teachers were not prisoners to an approach but rather they transformed the approach, where necessary, to further educative interests.

The teachers also started to rethink the meaning of evaluation; they sharpened their focus on the limits of the dominant view, seeing value in educative forms, and casting aside patterns of interaction that constrain the potential empowering effects of evaluation approaches. Clearly, the teachers' resistance to traditional forms of evaluation is not simply an attempt to close their doors and be left alone. They want to critically examine what they do and why. If given the opportunity, they can begin to rethink views and practices hidden in the fabric of classroom life.

CHALLENGING TECHNOCRATIC-MINDEDNESS

Teachers' actions are often constrained by a technical orientation to teaching, what Bullough, Goldstein, and Holt refer to as *technocratic-mindedness*. Where technocratic-mindedness influences teachers' actions, "value issues—those in the realms of the social, the political, the ethical, and the educational—get reduced to technical questions. The concern is not what should be done but rather how it can be done "[10] In this situation, the teacher role is limited to finding ways to facilitate ends determined by experts. There-

[10]Robert V. Bullough, Jr., Stan Goldstein, and Ladd Holt, *Human Interests in the Curriculum Teaching and Learning in a Technological Society* (New York Teachers College Press, 1984), p 7.

fore, teachers often do not see the political nature of school problems and instead focus on such issues as how to get information across to students, how to raise test scores, and how to control the classroom so that information can be delivered to students.

This limited teacher role is evident in Willis's ethnography of a working-class school.[11] The teachers in this school focused exclusively on how to keep the "lads" under their control and therefore could see how their actions and those of the lads are part of a reproductive process where working-class kids get filtered into working-class jobs. If teachers are to confront injustice, they must escape the grip of technocratic-mindedness. While doing so will not ensure particular practices, moving beyond the technical allows teachers to act on these hidden dimensions of schooling. Challenging technocratic-mindedness allows teachers to see ways to act where previously there were none. They are no longer "submerged in life with no possibility of emerging from it" but can begin to make their own existence.[12]

> Unlike men, animals are simply in the world, incapable of objectifying themselves or the world . . . Men, on the contrary, who can sever this adherence and transcend being in the world, add to the life they have the existence which they make.[13]

The lived experiences of the teachers in this study indicate that they moved beyond a technical framework and started to pose problems that examined political, ethical, and moral dimensions of schooling.

Posing Problems

For many teachers, the issue of classroom management is foremost. Unfortunately, the assumptions and values underlying the problem are often not addressed, and discussion is limited to the instrumental concern of how the teacher can control students. What is ignored in this quest for control are questions about the desirability of a hierarchical teacher-student relationship as well as alternative explanations of student behavior that consider how seemingly disruptive actions can be a response to alienating school practices. By posing problems that went beyond the technical, the teachers began to assess these overlooked aspects of classroom management.

One group of teachers started the process by looking closely at an observed practice, the use of a reward system:

> When you planned out the afternoon, you decided on a reward system for them [students]. Is that because they have been responding to a reward system? (Marcy)

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[11]Paul Willis, *Learning to Labour: How Working Class Kids Get Working Class Jobs* (Westmead: Saxon House, 1977)

[12]Paulo Freire, *The Politics of Education Culture Power and Liberation* (Granby, MA. Bergin & Garvey, 1985), p 68.

[13]Ibid., p 69.

By asking why the teacher decided to use a reward system, some of the values underlying the decision emerged. The reward system was a compromise between two concerns. On the one hand, the teacher was worried about having enough supervision for the students.

That's [using the reward system] because I knew there were only two coopers [volunteer parents] there. I was just afraid that there wasn't going to be enough supervision. . . . Also, the sad truth is that kids respond to external rewards (Teresa)

On the other hand, she wanted students to complete their work because they enjoyed the activity and wanted to learn.

I want them to realize internal motivation Moving from completing work for some kind of reward or recognition to completing work for the sake that it feels good and there is learning (Teresa)

At first blush, the use of the reward system suggests that the teacher sacrificed internal motivation to maintain control over students On closer inspection, however, the teachers concluded that underlying the concern for internal motivation was the need to have students complete their work. By assessing this assumption, it became clear that the need for completed work was another, more subtle way for teachers to control students The cost was not only internal motivation but the quality of the students' work

That s one of my dilemmas I find myself thinking, "Now, am I doing this just so kids have something to do?" Sometimes I trade off quality for that busy kind of work (Marcy)

At this point in the discourse, the teachers had arrived at a new problem: the desirability of practices that enable teachers to control what students do To explore the problem further, the observer used communication analysis, an aspect of the horizontal-evaluation process, to clarify what the other participant meant by quality work. Although the participants did not come up with a precise definition, they realized that forms of control often obscure concern for the quality of students' work.

When I say to students, "If you do these three things, you will get extra recess," the natural consequence is that students will dash to all three tables as fast as they can and get the work done. That must have gone through my head at some point because that is when I said, "Now, what does it mean to spend quality time at those places?" (Marcy)

By going beyond a technical view of classroom management, the teachers were able to see how their prejudgments, such as the emphasis on completed work, reinforced a hierarchical teacher-student relationship They also examined the appropriateness of the relationship by considering how worries about supervision often stood in the way of having students do quality work and developing internal motivation. This understanding of management empowered the teachers to reshape school experiences based on articulated and debated educational ends, not on the assumption that teachers need to have control over students.

The teachers, however, did not always escape the grip of technocratic-mindedness. In several post-conferences, the discourse started with a technical term. Fortunately, as the participants explored the issue in more depth, the technical orientation often gave way to questions about the desirability and importance of particular educational ends.

In one instance, the observed teacher was interested in seeing "how *much* cooperative learning I can use in lots of different subject areas" (Susan). The issue seemed to express a value commitment on the part of the teacher; however, she admitted, "I don't think I've really ever thought about what I was doing" (Susan). The teacher had assumed that cooperative learning was worthwhile and was initially interested only in how to carry out the process. What seemed to be hindering the implementation of cooperative learning for this teacher was students' perception that sharing was the same as cheating.

I've had some problems with cooperative learning in the past because the kids in the 6th grade have not had a chance to work together. I think they see cooperative learning as cheating in a lot of ways. Somehow they think sharing answers is some kind of cheating. (Susan)

In response to this technical problem, the teacher decided to "have [students] answer these exactly together" (Susan). To counter the notion that students are cheating when they work together, the teacher required that students share their views and write down exactly the same words in response to a particular question. Instead of simply analyzing whether this strategy works, the participants turned this type of technical question on its head and discussed what intentions such a strategy would satisfy.

One of the questions I had as I was going around, because I noticed your response to several of them was, "Is it exactly word for word?" what was the intention behind that? (Becky)

The dialogue that followed centered on what cooperative learning is and its importance as an educational aim.

I guess this takes us back to why would you do cooperative learning. Why is it important to do it in the first place? I think the important thing is that we are telling kids that they have the responsibility for each other. Sometimes students have to put behind what they want and think of someone else. (Susan)

This debate enabled teachers to escape an exclusive focus on finding ways to get more cooperative learning into the classroom and pose problems about the appropriateness of the learning process. By posing problems, the teachers challenged not only technocratic-mindedness but the legitimacy of a teacher role limited to making faddish innovations work. Questioning this limited role enabled teachers to act on such schemes and to refer back to Freire's words, "add to the life they have the existence which make."[14]

[14]Ibid

Going Beyond the Classroom Context

Technocratic-mindedness does more than encourage teachers to see problems solely in terms of educational means; it also frames problems in the context of the classroom. When technocratic-mindedness is used as a lens to view schooling, more fundamental issues that cut across classrooms are not addressed. The lived experiences of these teachers indicates that they challenged this narrowing of educational concerns by posing problems about teachers' role and school programs.

One group of participants looked carefully at school programs. In the past, when open-classroom teachers talked about their program, they relied on slogans. In one sense, these slogans became a substitute for more substantive discourse. Not surprisingly when the teachers seriously addressed program issues, they were not sure what an open classroom is.

I'm not really sure if I know exactly what an open classroom should look and feel like. But maybe together we can come up with something we agree upon which will be valuable in understanding the program better (Leslie)

To consider the question, they analyzed and explored in more depth some of the educational slogans they had so easily thrown around in the past One slogan comes from the Deweyan notion that school life and "outside" life should be related. "It's really important that they [students] integrate their outside-school life at school" (Dion). The teachers assessed this program aim when one responded to a query about the importance of linking school life and outside life by saying:

So does that mean kids should have control of the situation? Where they take total responsibility for their learning? You said earlier it was hard for you to let them take the time. (Leslie)

The response to this query reveals what Whitehead and Lomax refer to as a living contradiction.[15] The teacher wants students to have control over the curriculum but is reluctant to give them control because of the great amount of time needed to have students plan the school day.

It takes me so long just to get the planning over with. Then they [students] are fidgety, and sharing doesn't work well. (Dion)

Another slogan open-classroom teachers often voice is that their classrooms are child-centered. The teachers assessed this slogan by considering the relation between this rarely debated program aim and classroom practice They realized then that much of what happened in the classroom was teacher-directed. In fact, one participant suggested that child-centeredness was really a cover-up for a program that in practice was teacher-centered.

[15]Jack Whitehead and P. Lomax, Action Research and the Politics of Educational Knowledge, *British Educational Research Journal* 13 (Winter 1987). 175–190

I think underneath [the open classroom] is very teacher-directed. I think all of our classrooms are. (Teresa)

To further this discourse, the teachers turned to the question of what a child-centered classroom would look like. While they could not come to a consensus, they agreed that the gap between the program aim and practice was partially caused by the difficulty in defining child-centered and the external constraints that shape what teachers do.

A child-centered classroom, first of all, it is a concept that is not easily defined. Second, I think it's a concept that is difficult to work with in its pure form given that we work in a public school and have these external constraints and limitations that we operate under. (Marcy)

Exposing how slogans often act to legitimate an array of practices encouraged the participants to consider in what ways, if any, the open classroom differs from more traditional classrooms.

That's one of my questions about the open classroom. What kind of decisions do we let kids make? What kind of responsibility does that develop? That's all in the name of what end? And how different are we from more traditional classrooms? (Marcy)

Discourse on educational slogans enabled teachers to carefully consider what an open-classroom program is. Posing these broad problems illuminated living contradictions as well as tensions between program aims and classroom realities The teachers as a group could then rethink their practices based on an examination of what desirable program aims are. By posing problems that went beyond the classroom context, these teachers set before them a cluster of previously unexplored problems. The problems are important not only because they challenge the limiting effects of technocratic-mindedness but because they create a bridge or a common terrain for teachers to discuss valuative issues that go beyond the confines of one or two classrooms. As one teacher noted:

Questions and issues were raised that I don't think I would have come to on my own. I think it was helpful to talk about issues that are common across the teaching profession, issues that are not just specific to the classroom. (interview, Marcy)

These teachers no longer have to uncritically accept "expert" determinations about what a good teacher is, or a good program for that matter, because they have generated a kind of practitioner knowledge that empowers them to discuss these common issues with supposed experts, teachers, and others.[16] With this practitioner knowledge, teachers can reshape their own classrooms and contribute in important ways to school debates that focus on issues that go beyond the classroom context.

[16]John Smyth, ed., *Educating Teachers Changing the Nature of Pedagogical Knowledge* (London: Falmer Press, 1987).

Acting on Understanding

To continue the discussion of how teachers challenged technocratic-mindedness, I turn now to the ways teachers acted on their understanding of schooling. Here a more complete picture of the "cycle of educative change" becomes clear—where teachers reflect on practice, act on their reflections, and then assess again the new practices. Illuminating the linkage between understanding and action also shows how teachers can avoid the trap of verbalism, where individuals continually reflect without ever acting, and activism, where individuals act without any sort of reflection.[17] Avoiding these traps is an essential part of educative school change because those who reflect without action cannot alter schooling, and those who act without reflection are likely to support the status quo by facilitating commonly accepted educational views and practices.

Unfortunately, teachers often fall into the trap of activism because the fast pace of schooling makes it difficult for teachers to find time to reflect. When they do find the time, their efforts are rarely rewarded.[18] Many practices, then, tend to remain unchanged because the underlying assumptions are not considered.

One of these commonplace aspects of schooling is the *banking* approach to teaching. This approach views students as a commodity or raw product to be finished. To "finish" the product, the teacher attempts to fill students' heads with what is assumed to be appropriate school knowledge. This approach to teaching has dramatic consequences for students and teachers alike. For students, the process effectively silences them, teachers need not ask what students think or inquire whether the deposited information has anything to do with their actual experiences. On the other hand, because the teacher is primarily concerned with finding ways to deposit these seemingly important bits of information, the political aspects of schooling often remain hidden. This technocratic view makes it difficult if not impossible for teachers to see inequalities and injustices of all kinds.

By posing problems that went beyond the limits of technocratic mindedness, the teachers in this study were able to see through and act on this commonplace orientation to teaching. Specifically, they challenged traditional student and teacher roles, as well as the structures that support these role boundaries. What follows are the teachers' impressions of how their practice changed, not my own accounts of the events.

Rethinking the Students' Role

A good student from the perspective of a teacher trying to deposit information is one who impedes the process as little as possible. Behaviors that

[17]Paul Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (London: Penguin, 1972)

[18]Andrew Gitlin, "School Structure and Teachers' Work," *Ideology and Practice in Education*, ed. Michael W. Apple and Lois Weis (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1983), pp 193–212

give teachers control of the learning process, therefore, tend to be most valued. While we can surely agree that chaos benefits no one, an emphasis on control often conceals the difference between a quiet student and one who is passive, a busy student and one who is learning, and an obedient student and one who is involved in an educative process. An emphasis on control also obscures consideration of the more political aspects of schooling. In Weis's ethnography of a black community college, because the teachers spent most of their time making sure that students were on time and attending regularly, they did not pay much attention to how the school curriculum forced blacks to choose between their cultural values and the values of the school.[19] An emphasis on control not only shifted the teachers' gaze from the political but limited their ability to act on this important aspect of schooling.

Because the teachers in this study had an opportunity to reflect on practice, they were able to see beyond the aim of control and to change how they interacted with students. In one case, a teacher confronted the notion that a good student is one who is quiet, docile, and obedient by viewing the assumption in relation to her stated aim to develop cooperative learning. After much discourse, the teacher acted on this understanding and introduced activities where students could talk and learn from one another.

> I work well with a quiet classroom. So when I do activities that the children should be able to talk and move around, I often don't let them go on long enough. I think I've tried to stretch that a little because I realized that by cutting them off I wasn't reaching my intent to develop cooperative learning. (interview, Becky)

The emphasis on depositing information also encourages teachers to be concerned with keeping students on task. The more time on task, the greater the likelihood that the information will be deposited in students' heads. But whether or not students are on task says nothing about the desirability of the task itself. By asking questions about the worth of the activity, one teacher saw that her learning centers kept students busy but had little educational import. Over the school year, she shifted her focus from developing activities that would keep students busy to developing activities that had more educational value.

> After talking with him [peer observer], I looked at those [learning centers] a little more closely, and I remember I changed the content. I developed activities that would accomplish some sort of goal so there weren't as many time fillers, so that there was a little more educational value. (interview, Leslie)

At the beginning of the study, many teachers saw students through an authoritarian lens and expected them to obey their directives without question. One teacher expressed this common sentiment this way:

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[19]Lois Weis, *Between Two Worlds. Black Students in an Urban Community College* (Boston. Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1985).

I assumed that kids ought to listen to me when I say they shouldn't fight because it's not the thing to do; they shouldn't question that. (Susan)

At the end of the study, this same teacher was able to see the limits of this authoritarian relationship. Specifically, she noted that silencing students made it difficult for her to understand their actions Without this understanding, she often imposed rules on all students regardless of the circumstances

There was really a lot of good reason for her to question that [teacher's rule about no fighting] because that's what her family does immediately. I was asking her to do something that was completely alien to her. I had no idea. (interview, Susan)

With these implications in mind, the teacher decided to establish more reciprocal relationships with students and allow their explanations to influence decisions about schooling:

That's [the experience with this student] happened more than once Now we [student and teacher] sit down and talk about the *why*s of what is going on Not just me saying, "You will not fight because it is a school rule." (interview, Susan)

In all these examples, the teachers confronted commonly accepted notions of a good student. They no longer designed activities and interacted with students primarily to keep them quiet, docile, and on task but rather provided experiences and responded to them in terms of desired educational ends While the teachers surely could have taken the process further in exploring the political, ethical, and moral dimensions of schooling, they did begin to establish more educative relationships with students.

Expanding the Teacher's Role

Because teachers often feel the need to deposit bits of information, a direct-teaching approach, which views learning as a one way process from teacher to student, becomes the preferred way to teach. Otherwise, the teacher chances that the "right" content will not be taught and that students' concerns may impede the efficient flow of information. Using horizontal evaluation, one teacher was able to assess this aspect of the teaching role, see its limitations, and act to expand her role boundaries.

I was a direct teacher. In fact, I was upset with the kids if they got ahead of me I thought that if they turned the page before I did, they would spoil the surprise, as if everything had to be anticipated. Now, students help determine what we are learning, what is important. If they get to it before the rest of us, then they have the responsibility to explain it to the rest of us so that we are all learning from one another (interview, Linda)

Another teacher who for years had used only a direct method of teaching also reached a similar conclusion and decided to try activities that were more child-centered.

I have done some different things this year. More child-centered things than in the past. I took a little more risk and left some of the safer things back Some of the things

I knew that worked I said, "Okay, I'll let this go, and we will try something else and see what happens." (interview, Joyce)

The importance of these changes is not that child-centered approaches are better in some universal sense but rather that these teachers could see possible ways to act where previously there had been none. The possibilities became apparent because discourse pointed to the limitations of traditional teacher and student roles.

Contesting School Structures

Challenging the notion that teaching is about depositing information also requires that teachers act on the structures that encourage them to adopt a direct approach to teaching. One structure that deflects attention from questions of what should be taught, while increasing the importance of finding ways to get that information across to students, is the textbook. It is especially powerful when the information presented is linked to a standardized test. Many teachers therefore assume that all they can do is follow the text and deposit information in students' heads. Otherwise, teachers fear penalizing students. The evaluative process helped one teacher realize that the structure did not determine her classroom practice, she could insert activities that reflected concerns about what should be taught without penalizing her students.

Before, I stuck to the textbook and the curriculum that was available because I thought that was the only way you could do it to get students to pass the test or whatever criteria were being used. Using this method [horizontal evaluation], I realized I could do things I always wanted to do and still get the results. Things that I have been spending nine years worrying about took care of themselves when I let myself do the lessons I always wanted to do and not depend so heavily on the text. (interview, Aggie)

Another structure, the rationalized curriculum, also encourages teachers to deposit information in students' heads. The rationalized curriculum lays out a set of sequential objectives and tests students on each. Because the objectives for what to teach are predetermined, teachers are likely to spend most of their time finding ways to get the information across to students. When this structure was assessed as part of the horizontal-evaluation process, the teachers became critical of the information they were presenting. Specifically, they objected to the product orientation and decided to insert activities that were more process-oriented. Thus, they resisted the way the school structure shaped their behavior.

I thought I wanted to go through *Art Is Elementary* and do all the lessons. . . . I was really concerned with the product rather than the process. Then I thought, "Maybe it's more important just to have students enjoy art then to get through all the elements." I decided those things were more important than getting through *Art Is Elementary*. After we got to that point [in the post-conferences] I'd have students just draw outlines just looking at the shapes, etc. (interview, Judy)

School- or district-mandated discipline systems, such as assertive discipline, can also dramatically influence what teachers do [20] Based on behavior-modification techniques, assertive discipline instructs the teacher to ignore students when they misbehave and simply put their name on the board First, the teacher makes clear that so many checks will result in particular punishments. The teachers do not have to stop the class to respond to negative behavior, and yet students know they are off task This approach silences students, views them as a commodity, and reinforces a hierarchical relationship between teacher and students. When the teachers examined the implications of this management system in a post-conference, the seductiveness of teacher control became less appealing, and one teacher decided to replace the system with a more intrinsic approach.

I was using assertiveness discipline. M. [peer observer] came in and just said, "Why is that important? What does it do?" I just had to explain what it did. I am making these kids work for rewards. I realized they aren't going to work for anything unless I give them a reward. Just talking about it, I thought, "This is crazy Why am I doing this?" On the audiotape I didn't come to a conclusion. But later I kept thinking about it: 'That's right, they are only doing this for a reward I've got to stop this right now " So I haven't done it since the conference I don't have the control that I had, but I'm using an approach I believe in. Next year, I will start from the beginning with a more intrinsic approach. (interview, Mary)

By posing problems that challenged technocratic-mindedness and acting on this understanding, the teachers confronted one of the most deeply entrenched aspects of teaching, the banking view They contested assumed teacher and student roles as well as the structures that reinforced those roles By the end of the study, some teachers understood that this approach to teaching turned teachers into managers and record keepers To begin teaching again, they had to decide what to teach as well as how to teach

Because I was never asking myself or questioning myself about what I was doing, I just started doing things that I was told to do. It was like I was losing all my power of decision making. . . . I was becoming such a record keeper. Not teaching anymore. I feel like a lot of us are not teaching anymore. I honestly feel like after having done a lot of discussing and looking at teaching, I'll throw away the percentage chart [the chart used to show how many students had reached a particular objective within the rationalized curriculum], whether the district thinks that's real important or not. (interview, Susan)

CHANGING SCHOOL RELATIONS

For educative change to influence the nature of schooling, not just what happens in a few classrooms, the discourse started among individual teachers must expand to include all those with a legitimate interest in education. First,

[20] Lee Canter, *Assertive Discipline A Take-Charge Approach for Today's Educator* (Los Angeles Canter Associates, 1979)

most schools can accommodate changes in a few classrooms without altering in any fundamental way the nature of schooling. Only when teachers act collectively will they likely influence the powerful ideologies and structures that help define the educational process. Second, individual teachers can trade places with others in the school hierarchy, but they cannot challenge the hierarchy itself. To challenge school hierarchies, teachers must form alliances with others so that change is based on the strongest reasons for a particular view of education, reasons that take into consideration the moral, ethical, and political nature of schooling.

Clearly, using horizontal evaluation did not establish such school relations. It did, however, help a few teachers confront ideological barriers that reinforce commonplace school relations. One such barrier is that teachers often view themselves in competition with each other. If teachers are not willing to have discourse with each other, surely the process will not spread to other members of the community. Several teachers confronted the ideology of competitiveness and saw the need to develop more collaborative relations.

> There's this feeling in teaching that you're stealing my idea or you don't want to share because then you won't be as good, or someone will be better than you. We are in the same boat, so why not work together instead of worrying so much about being better than someone else or superior or out on your own island, so to speak. (interview, Margaret)

The teachers also started to develop more reciprocal relationships with parents. Teachers often react defensively with parents for the same reasons they do not want other teachers to observe their classrooms, they are unsure about what they do and get little or no feedback. After assessing each other for a year, the teachers were better able to communicate what they were doing to others and were more willing to involve parents in discourse about educational issues.

> In a way it [horizontal evaluation] has made me more able to tell them what my intentions are I have had more practice saying, "This is what my intention is, it is important because. . . " I have had more experience saying that I think I can communicate with parents better. (interview, Mary)

Some teachers also asked for student input on the education offered in schools. One teacher even asked 1st-year students for input.

> When we start a project or something, I'll say, "Now why are we doing this? What is it for? How is it going to help us? What kinds of things do you want to learn from it?" You'd think 1st-graders are not capable of this, at least I always thought that. But they come up with questions and some ideas that I would never consider. (interview, Linda)

In other instances, teachers actually extended the horizontal-evaluation process beyond the study. Several teacher leaders, who were required to evaluate other teachers, used this method in place of the suggested district checklist because it created divisions between the participants that limited

discourse on educational ideas. When one teacher switched methods, she described the change in her relationships with other teachers this way

I was on the career ladder, but I'd be observing people who are at least as good as me at teaching and who didn't get the opportunity then to come back and evaluate me. So, right away I was in a different position from them. Now, I'm more open to all teachers. All their ideas become valuable I confronted the vertical structure that's set up. (interview, Aggie)

Another teacher leader took the process a step further and actually required that the teachers she observed also observe her. This change in the evaluative procedure allowed both participants to speak their minds and be more straightforward about their impressions.

I feel like it has helped me as a teacher leader. It put me on the same level of a peer rather than someone coming in there, assigned by the principal, as a superior to watch what they were doing. There was a genuine comfort level. The teachers could point out things to me. Real good things I don't think they objected to me making comments to them as a result. (interview, Katherine)

Other teachers played a part in extending the evaluative process by writing a research grant to pay for substitute teachers and therefore enable more teachers to get out of the classroom and use horizontal evaluation. They summarized their proposal by saying:

We have barely scratched the surface of making effective use of this method. We would like to develop further in this method of peer evaluation In fact, we would like to share some of our experiences with colleagues For this purpose, we are applying for financial assistance and administrative support from [our] district

In all these cases, the teachers began to rethink the legitimacy of the school hierarchy and to move toward establishing more educative relations where reasoned discourse is the basis for decision making. While this change in school relations was partial and far from conclusive, the teachers' educative relationships encouraged them to set up similar relationships with other members of the school community. The teachers championed the process without outside incentive or help. The changes, therefore, are likely to avoid faddish comings and goings and to have a more long-lasting effect.

CONCLUSION

The lived experiences of these teachers indicates that educative forms of teacher evaluation allow them to challenge educational practices and views that are often accepted without question and to act on this understanding of school. Specifically, the teachers reconsidered the commonplace notion that evaluation is a one-way process where supposed experts try to fault what teachers do. Instead, the teachers viewed evaluation as an enabling process. Thus, they opened up their classrooms and asked critical questions of each other that would empower them to act on unquestioned aspects of schooling

They also escaped a narrow technocratic view of schooling by posing problems that considered the political, ethical, and moral aspects of schooling. The teachers who acted on this understanding reshaped an array of practices that reflect a banking approach to teaching. Finally, by extending the evaluative process beyond those in the study, they took some modest initial steps to confront the school hierarchy and to establish more educative relationships. Reasoned discourse about the aims and means of schooling, then, started a process of educative school change that penetrated deeply entrenched hierarchical and authoritarian school practices.[21]

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Purpel, David E. *The Model and Spiritual Crises in Education. A Curriculum for Justice and Compassion in Education.* Granby, MA. Bergin & Garvey, 1989. 174 pp. $39.95/$12.95.

Purpel's curriculum for justice and compassion is a response to his analysis of the paradoxes and conflicts in American culture. The plea is for educators to participate in forging a vision, amid society's pluralism and diversity, of a community of aspirations and moral principles that can focus education on transforming the culture. Purpel cites existing programs that recapture the cultural mythos of joy, love, community, and justice without losing intellectual freedom and cultural diversity.

[21]This article is an abridged version of a chapter in a book by Andrew Gitlin and John Smyth, *Teacher Evaluation. Educative Alternatives* (Philadelphia. Falmer Press, 1989)

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