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The Postmodern Turn in Higher Education: Incorporating Narrative Literacy into the Discipline of Communication

Leeanne Marian Bell

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The Postmodern Turn in Higher Education: Incorporating Narrative Literacy into the
Discipline of Communication

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Dissertation submitted to the McAnulty College and Graduate School of Liberal Arts of
Duquesne University in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

Ph.D. in Rhetoric

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Ernest Boyer suggested that behind every young person who succeeds stands one major common denominator that is neither a grade point average nor an SAT score. It is a “someone”—a mom, a dad, a grandmother, a grandfather, a brother, an aunt or uncle, a friend, or a teacher—who, silently and confidently, says, “This project is possible” and “We will see this through together.” The old saying of “pulling yourself up by your own bootstraps” is not accurate. There are meetings of persons who, without ever saying so, make a pact together to succeed in life. One carries the vision, and the Other, the supportive Other, carries the heart to encourage the vision to completion (Arnett, Fritz, & Bell, forthcoming). The following individuals’ encouragement, support, and guidance have made this dissertation possible and at times pulled me up to help me succeed:

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Abstract

The consensus across the curriculum of the centuries is that education is imperative and important, a “good” for public life and a means by which to attain the good life. This dissertation will focus on a constructive hermeneutic that allows one to ask: “What is the conversation taking place during this historical moment in education, and how can communication and rhetorical studies provide one potential answer through communicative engagement with our postmodern moment?” This question, the focus of this project, rests on the need to recognize narrative multiplicity in the classroom, particularly in the communication classroom in higher education. This project recognizes the vital importance of narrative grounded thinking and idea engagement for civic life in the United States in the 21st century. This work, which is enriched by educational scholars such as Nussbaum, Noddings, and Palmer, addresses MacIntyre’s (1984) concern regarding a postmodern moral crisis, Lyotard’s (1984) postmodern concern regarding the “death” of the role of professor, and the concerns of Bok (1982), Postman (1985), Nussbaum (1997) and Putnam (2000) for a lack of civic engagement in today’s society. This work address these problems by forming an additive argument to Walter Fisher’s (1984; 1987) narrative paradigm through discussing the importance of narrative literacy and employing the work of Martin Buber and Paulo Freire to discuss the importance of dialogue in the class. This dissertation applies the concepts of narrative literacy, dialogue, and civic engagement to enhance the communication discipline in this postmodern age of difference and diversity.

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Chapter 1

A Historical Outline of Education

...mankind are by no means agreed about the things to be taught, whether we look to virtue or the best life. Neither is it clear whether education is more concerned with intellectual or moral virtue. The existing practice is perplexing: no one knowing on what principle we should proceed—should the useful in life or should virtue, or should the higher knowledge be the aim of our training; all three opinions have been entertained (Aristotle's Politics Book VIII Chapter 2).

Since antiquity, the concept of education has witnessed diverse opinions regarding its meaning and scope, each assuming education as a “good” for civic life. Isocrates (2001b), in *Antidosis*, states, “... studies which will enable us to govern wisely both our own households and the commonwealth ... should be the objects of our toils, of our study and of our every act” (p. 78). Jean Rousseau (1979), in *Emile*, his primary and most comprehensive work on education, argued that persons should be educated for society to enhance and improve society. John Dewey (1923), in *Democracy in Education*, stated that education is the means of “social continuity of life” (p. 3). Paulo Freire (2000), in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, demonstrated that education has a “transformative” (p. 50) function that allows individuals to change not only themselves but also the world in which they live. These philosophers all articulate the importance of an education that engages the world in which one lives.

The consensus across the curriculum of the centuries is that education is imperative and important, a “good” for public life and a means by which to attain the good life. From Isocrates to Dewey (Cohen, 1994) to Postman (1996), Nussbaum (1997), Noddings (1998), Palmer (1998), and Bok (2003) there has also been a link between communication, education and civic engagement, with their interconnection helping to define the good life. However, this postmodern moment witnesses a lack of civic

engagement (Postman, 1985; Putnam, 2000) and remaining traces of the modern turn towards the self (MacIntyre, 1984) that leaves us questioning what it means to live the good life with Others (Bellah, 1985; Taylor, 1989). The study of communication may assist in seeking answers to that question in this moment of postmodernity.

This historical moment offers a new opportunity to study the civic function of communication and rhetorical studies, addressing its power for shaping the world in which we live. As examined by Greene (2003), instruction in communication and rhetorical studies can be considered public pedagogy that takes the form of civic education, allowing one to attend to different discourses within the public domain. Or, as prominent educational philosopher John Dewey (1923) states, “Society not only continues to exist *by* transmission, *by* communication, but it may fairly be said to exist *in* transmission, *in* communication” (p. 4).

The study of communication and rhetorical studies has been essential for understanding the human condition since antiquity. Through the study of communication and rhetorical studies persons understand who they are in society and who Others are in society. The study of communication and rhetoric is:

. . . the process of the people, by the people, and for the people—all of the people, and how they are constituted as the people, and what the people means to various constituencies, and what happens to the people when their rhetorical resources are constrained, and how the voiceless people may be given a voice. (Turner, 1998, p. 332)

Human communicative action creates culture, and culture creates communication; therefore, scholars in rhetorical studies can inform understanding of the larger community

in which persons participate (Turner, 1998). The study of rhetoric from a historical perspective reveals that the resources for living in human community are a product of our choices (Turner, 1998). The study of communication helps us make informed decisions about our lives together, and a review of the role of communication in education throughout history helps us reappropriate issues and questions relevant for today's historical moment.

This chapter will focus on a philosophical and historical outline of education from antiquity through postmodernity, pointing towards the importance of education, communication, and civic engagement. In each historical moment, education has been shaped by questions confronting the human community, questions that emerge again in new historical moments and prompt learning from those past moments (Arnett & Arneson, 1999). Through examining different historical eras one finds that history is part of our learning that allows us to tell the story of human beings in community. As Alasdair MacIntyre states in a *Short History of Ethics*, "History is neither a prison nor a museum, nor is it a set of materials for self-congratulations" (p. 4). Attentiveness to history gives us a hermeneutic entrance into the present by alerting us to questions that may have relevance today and gives us clues to what may happen in the future; it is through careful attention to history that we respond wisely to the circumstances before us.

The classical era, medieval era, modern era, and now the postmodern era all play significant roles in laying the foundation of our educational history. This brief historical analysis from antiquity to the present record will illustrate the importance, and, I argue, the continued and increased necessity, of the study of communication and rhetorical studies directed toward civic engagement. This chapter will examine a brief history of

education, including essential time periods, places, scholars, and events that have shaped our current understanding of education as a place of engagement for the discipline of communication and rhetorical studies; for further information on the extensive history of education see Boyd & King (1966), Compayre (1885), Davidson (1900), Marrou (1956), McCormick (1915), Mulhern (1959), and Power (1962).

History of Education

Examining education through a historical lens allows one to see the association between what is going on in the classroom and what is going on in life. Authors might not always be in agreement with the content of the demand of a particular historical moment, but if we fail to listen and respond to that demand we sacrifice opportunities to shape the maturation of that same historical situation (Arnett & Arneson, 1999). Scholars who addressed their historical moments in the past contributed to that shaping, and the responses of each era formed the character of each historical moment. Though not all agreed about what was being asked or what was needed, it was those responses that created a legacy for the future. In each time period, particular questions emerge to engage education. This project will focus on a constructive hermeneutic that asks, “What is the conversation going on during this particular time period?” rather than “Was it the right conversation?” A constructive hermeneutic allows for a productive interpretation of different ideas about, perspectives on, and opinions regarding education that have existed throughout history. The goal of a constructive hermeneutic is to reflect and learn from history, not to stand above history in judgment and critique.

The sections throughout this essay will explore the importance of education through different locations, prominent figures, ideas, and questions that emerge

throughout different eras. This essay starts out by examining ancient education. In this section, I first look at the Homeric period because Homer's works, particularly the *Iliad* (1998) and the *Odyssey* (2003), were acknowledged as the foundation for education throughout much of history (Marrou, 1956). Second, I look at the specific locations of Sparta and Greece to see how education affected the polis. Third, I examine three prominent educational philosophers, Isocrates, Plato, and Aristotle, who shaped educational theory. Finally, I examine the Hellenistic era, which is considered part of ancient education. The Hellenistic era serves as a transition to the middle ages because it starts to foreshadow the liberal arts curriculum of the middle ages. This review, while not directly addressing issues of communication, lays the groundwork for this project's focus on communication in education and civic society, providing insight about a number of historical moments that have contributed to the character of our own.

Ancient Education

This section will examine education from the Homeric era to the Hellenistic era. This examination starts from the time period of Homer because he lays the foundation for an education in early Greece, and his works are still used in today's classroom. For some, Homer's works are considered to be the "bible" for the early stages of education. Homer's influence in all of Greek education was pervasive and enduring.

Education in the Homeric Period

The content of Homeric education was predominantly divided by class. Education in this time period focused on how to engage one's role in life. Peasant education consisted of teaching the next generation how to follow in the footsteps of the elder generation. The sons were taught how to do their fathers' work, which was farming and

laboring, and the daughters were taught to do the mother's work of weaving, preparing food, and performing light work around the house and farm. In addition to learning a trade from close friends and family, education for a peasant included learning the social rules of society. The peasants were taught to show respect to the nobles and especially the gods, because it was the gods who controlled their destiny. Education for nobles consisted of a broader study. Education for men focused on becoming a courageous warrior, a skillful athlete, an accomplished musician, and a good speaker in debates. Successes in these educational fields were imperative for someone of noble birth because it permitted them to continue in their noble status. Education for women of noble birth was not as important as for men. Their jobs were to be able to aid in making the men strong by taking care of the meals, house work, and children (Barrow, 1996; Marrou, 1956).

What links the two types of education is the importance of learning from experience and stories and implementing these lessons into the everyday. There were no specific books or teachers in the way later ages would understand it, but only narratives and actions guided by parents or trusted friends and family members that educated the next generation (Barrow, 1996). This oral culture allowed for the stories of the courageous characters within the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* to be heard and exemplified by all members of society.

In the Homeric era, the essential function of poets was to tell eloquent stories and thus educate society, illustrating what it meant to be an honorable hero. The oral culture allowed for stories, a significant mode of learning, to be passed down from generation to generation. Through stories, persons would learn how a hero should act. Marrou (1956)

states, “To understand Homer’s educational influence one only has to read him and see what his method is, what he regards as proper education for his heroes” (p. 12). This “proper education” (p. 12) was used to produce brave heroes in the Homeric society.

The secrets of Homer’s education lay within his characters’ heroic examples. Listeners looked up to and aspired to be heroic figures within the community. The highest of all rewards occurred when a character achieved greatness in glory for his community. Homer’s character Odysseus was known for his triumphant and glorious homecoming. Odysseus illustrates the importance of battling many evils to obtain glory (Marrou, 1956). The main characters in the work of Homer shape the future of classical education. Marrou (1956) states,

Homer supplied the whole foundation of classical education, and despite sporadic attempts to shake off his tyrannical influences, his feudal ethic of the Great Deed remained unbroken through all the centuries of the classical tradition, to fire all the hearts of all Greeks. (13)

This statement shows the magnitude and importance of the works of Homer, who laid the foundation for education in the Greek world. Through his stories, the Iliad and the Odyssey, Homer became the educator of Greece. These stories became the standard for education.

The Greeks in general regard Homer's two epics as the highest cultural achievement of their people. These stories acted as a touchstone for achieving greatness and glory. The characters of Odysseus and Achilles were carved into the mind of every great warrior. Throughout antiquity, everything was compared to these two works; events in history made sense when put in the light of the events narrated in these two narratives.

These two epics are the focal point of the values, virtues and world view that existed in the cities of Sparta and Athens (Marrou, 1956).

Ancient Greece contained many cities, but the two most famous in educational history were Sparta and Athens. Sparta's plan for education was founded on the values which were most useful to them in the art of war, and the educational goals of Athens were expressed by the political state of democracy. Both forms of education, differing in content, had a central focus on civic participation (Power, 1962), working for the good of that particular society.

Education in Sparta

Sparta was the first Greek city to focus on an educational arrangement that was designed by the state to produce courage and loyalty of the people for the state. Education was controlled by the state to benefit the state (Marrou, 1956). Sparta was predominantly a military state that encompassed Homer's notion of a glorious hero. Sparta's education was primarily a practical and theoretical apprenticeship in the art of war (Marrou, 1956). The work of education focused specifically on physical development, training citizens for current or future combat situations (Kendzierski, 1956). The intense physical training was designed to instill cohesion among the soldiers and a commitment to the state rather than produce free thought and reasoned opposition. This system promoted strength and courage for Sparta, which was foreshadowed in the character Odysseus who would fight for honor and glory for his city regardless of circumstance. This system worked for an extended period of time (Barrow, 1996), until the cost of winning became everything for everyone. The focus on war and battling each other for glory caused an increase in violence between members of society, resulting in

chaos and a greater need for government control. The following centuries witnessed education's transformation to an increasingly and explicitly totalitarian form. The military training became harsher and more brutal, causing inefficiency and a loss of its original purpose of protecting society (Marrou, 1956). Over the years, the educational system started to move from focusing only on training the body to a growing emphasis on an Athenian democratic purpose for education, which took into consideration both the body and the mind. This change was due to Athenian influence and was instituted to promote solidarity in community rather than hostility.

With the passage of time, Greek life and education as a whole became predominantly more civilian oriented, and, even though the military element did not completely vanish, a well rounded education was considered an important asset for citizens of the polis. Sports such as horse-racing, chariot-racing, and hunting still echoed the call from Homer's time for a hero or champion, but a stronger call for philosophy and music was emerging in Greek life (Marrou, 1956). This style of education is especially seen in Athens, where many of the great scholars and rhetoricians encouraged education for the whole person, mind and body.

Education in Athens

In Athens, we find that education focused on the formation and training of citizens, emphasizing a well rounded development of the mind and body while preparing individuals to be active citizens of the polis or community (Kendzierski, 1956). The purpose of education was to develop the citizen's body, mind, and morals for participation in and enhancement of the state (Mulhern, 1959). Athens moved away from a totalitarian system towards a democracy by a gradual process of extension; the people

won political privileges, rights, and powers in addition to a life and culture that in the early stages of civilization belonged only to the aristocracy. With the movement toward a democracy with wide political participation, the system of aristocratic education became available for most children in Greece; however, this development did not replace the system of individual tutors or schools where a small number of elite students, who could afford to pay the high prices, received a “better” education. Three noted educators who taught the elite during this time period in Athens were Isocrates, Plato, and Aristotle. These three figures are considered to have shaped the educational system from antiquity to postmodernity in significant ways and, therefore, will be examined in more depth for their contributions to education, rhetoric, and civic participation.

Isocrates

Isocrates (436-338 BC) was a Greek rhetorician and instructor (Audi, 1999). He was the son of Theodorus, a wealthy Athenian flute maker, which gave Isocrates the opportunity to receive a high-quality education (Edwards, 1994). Isocrates’s lifespan encompassed the Peloponnesian war, the Spartan supremacy, and the rise and fall of the power of Thebes (Audi, 1999; Dobson, 1967). Isocrates witnessed the rise to political power of many different individuals throughout his life and learned the importance of an education that enhanced one’s ability to participate in the polis. He studied under great sophists such as Prodicus, Socrates, and Gorgias. Isocrates’s love for learning caused him to open his own school of rhetoric around 392 B. C. (Chambliss, 1971). Through his teaching, Isocrates became known as the educator of fourth-century Greece and, subsequently, the Hellenistic and Roman worlds (Blacker, 1998).

Isocrates has been an important link in any attempted lineage of classical pedagogy and ranks as one of antiquity's preeminent educators. Isocrates was one of the most successful instructors of his time and is recognized to this day as a leader in the education profession (Wilcox, 1945). Benoit (1984) refers to Isocrates as "one of the greatest teachers of rhetoric, if not the greatest" (109). Isocrates has shaped the education discipline not only in rhetoric but in the technical art of instruction (Livingstone, 1995). He distinguished himself from other scholars and was recognized by prominent figures in society in both the Roman and Greek worlds. The well known Roman scholar Cicero articulates the power of Isocrates work by stating in the *De Oratore* (2001),

Isocrates, the Master of all rhetoricians, from whose school, as from the Horse of Troy, none but leaders emerged, but some of them sought glory in ceremonial, others in action. (p. 321)

These words give insight into the enduring influence of this influential instructor.

During this time period, many instructors claimed to teach the skills necessary for a successful life but did not produce successful students. Isocrates was considered a successful instructor by the people because he employed a rhetorical strategy that acknowledged the poor reputation of instructors and recognized the resulting legitimate frustrations of the people. He recognized that many instructors made empty promises to their students because they had little knowledge to enhance their skills (Cahn, 1989). Isocrates was an instructor who claimed to have the content knowledge capable of producing well educated and skilled individuals. Isocrates (2001a) states in *Against the Sophists*

For I hold that to obtain a knowledge of the elements out of which we make and compose all discourse is not so very difficult if anyone entrusts himself, not to those who make rash promises, but to those who have some knowledge of these things. (p. 74)

Isocrates was able to distinguish himself among many of the top educational scholars in the field. He had the knowledge to be a great instructor, and he used this knowledge to become an effective and distinctive educator. Isocrates taught his students the thinking skills necessary for civic engagement, starting his own school for this type of education.

Isocrates opened his school partly in response to the Peloponnesian War. He wanted his students to develop judgment that could be applied to any situation and not just skills that were used to mask little knowledge (Cohn, 1989). Isocrates relied on challenging students with very difficult material, requiring them to work at a variety of different intellectual tasks. Isocrates (2001a) stated in *Against the Sophists* that students not only have to study, but also participate and practice their discourse in the polis. Isocrates aimed to educate well-rounded students capable of working, living, and contributing to the polis. His teachings were pragmatic, focusing on developing good judgment in practical affairs (Audi, 1999). In instruction, Isocrates believed in the education of natural ability, sound teaching, and practice. Of these three ideas, Isocrates regarded teaching as the least important. He focused on his students' diligently learning knowledge and practicing their skills, and his job, as the instructor, was only to correct what the students practiced (Johnson, 1959). Isocrates's main purpose in his school and his educational method was to produce statesmen capable of participating in the polis (Johnson, 1959; Power, 1962).

Five years after Isocrates founded his school, Plato opened his own school, causing opposition between them. The men had similar ideas about education enhancing the polis but different ideas regarding philosophy. Isocrates did not oppose philosophy, but his ideas about its goals and value were much different than Plato's. Isocrates did not concern himself with seeking the absolute of goodness. He believed such philosophical efforts were senseless. Isocrates was convinced that virtue existed and wisdom can be recognized by all intelligent human beings if the proper care is taken in education. For Isocrates, an instructor cannot force individuals to be virtuous, but can provide tools to point students in the right direction (Chambliss, 1971). In addition to disagreeing with Plato's view of philosophy, Isocrates also rejected Plato's view of rhetoric. Plato believed rhetoric was useful only as the purveyor of truth for those who knew the truth, whereas Isocrates believed truth can emerge through rhetoric (Bizzell & Hertzberg, 2001). Isocrates was known for creating an educational system that prevailed throughout Greece and Rome and influenced the curricular structure of education, whereas Plato is known for influencing education's philosophical content (Bizzell and Hertzberg, 201).

Plato

Plato (428-348 B.C.) was born in Athens to a politically powerful and wealthy family. Plato's upbringing would have naturally prepared him for a life in politics; however, the political abuses and the disturbances of the Peloponnesian War caused him to look towards a philosophical and educational career. Plato began his philosophical career under his mentor Socrates. After the death of Socrates, Plato spent a great deal of time focusing on defending his master against his unjust death (Price, 1967).

Plato, for political reasons, left Athens loathing the decision to put Socrates to death. For ten to twelve years, Plato traveled, experiencing the world. These experiences and perceptions from his travels further shaped his mind in preparation for returning to Athens and opening his own school of philosophy, which he established as the Academy in 387 B.C. The Academy was the place where discourse and discussion became pathways to learning and engaging the world. His dialogues were the outcome of his oral style of teaching, which led to dialectical questions and philosophical answers (Jowett, 2000). These dialogues that took place in the Academy set forth his theory of education.

Plato's work in the sphere of education is of great historical importance. He built his educational system on a "fundamental belief in truth, and on the conquest of truth by rational knowledge" (Marrou, 1956, p. 66). Plato's ethical theory, which was essential to education in general, focused on the general theory of the nature of goodness based on upon Platonic metaphysics (Price, 1967). His views on education focus on key metaphors of "justice," "wisdom," "courage," and "temperance" (Price, 1967, p. 35).

Plato focused on the highest perfection of the both the body and the soul. His educational theory is said to be concerned with four kinds of statements of fact: 1) those of psychology, which describe the human soul or personality; 2) those that pertain to human society; 3) those that assert the relation between a certain kind of person and a certain kind of society; 4) and those that describe the training that leads to the existence of such persons and societies (p. 18; Price, 1967). For Plato, these four statements were imperative for a superlative education and were at the forefront of his educational theory.

Plato's educational theory contributed to establishing and maintaining the various social classes of people. For Plato, education was the outlet for determining who would

and would not have power in the polis (McCormick, 1915). The essence of Plato's educational system was his philosophical studies, which were reserved for only the specially gifted and elite who would have power in the polis. Plato was considered primarily a philosopher and secondarily a teacher. Plato's concern was to select and train a small but prominent group of philosopher-rulers (Marrou, 1956). His ideas laid the foundation for what is considered, in the history of education, the classical philosopher. Plato's students, who were considered classical philosophers, were few and elite. The most famous of these philosophers was Aristotle.

Plato and Aristotle both believed that the essential point of all education is a reference to some community—education is a necessary, integral part of politics. It is in this sense that Plato and Aristotle, in line with Greek tradition, stress the importance of working as a collective whole for the success of the polis rather than working for the success of the individual. The Greek philosophers believe that the beginning of all education starts with training of character in the young. This training serves the practical need to enable each youth to become a productive member of the community (Kendzierski, 1956). Even though Aristotle respected and admired his instructor Plato, Aristotle disagreed with Plato on several educational ideas.

Aristotle

Aristotle (384-322 BC) was born in Stagira in northern Greece around the time Plato was opening his Academy in Athens. He was the son of Nicomachus who was the court physician to the king of Macedon. Aristotle was trained in medicine by his father, and at the age of seventeen, he continued his studies by moving to Athens to study in Plato's Academy. After Plato's death (347 B. C.), Aristotle left Athens to conduct

philosophical and biological research in Asia Minor and Lesbos. Aristotle was then invited by King Philip II of Macedon to tutor his young son, Alexander the Great. In 334 B.C. he returned to Athens and founded the Lyceum; he lectured there for 12-13 years and died in 322 B.C. after fleeing Athens due to anti-Macedon sentiments (Audi, 1999; Bizzell & Hertzberg, 2001). In his lifetime, Aristotle saw the passing of the free Greek states into the Macedonian Empire and the start of the cosmopolitan movement of thought (Boyd & King, 1967).

Aristotle's instructional system included educating one's body, character, and mind (Kendzierski, 1956). Aristotle considered education to be a difficult art or skill, belonging by nature to the sphere of ethics and phronesis, or practical wisdom (Kendzierski, 1956). For Aristotle, education is largely ethical in nature because it implies 1) the molding of moral character in the individual and the community and 2) the preparation of the soul for the right enjoyment of leisure after practical needs have been satisfied (Kendzierski, 1956). Aristotle's ethical theory is contained, for the most part, in three treatises: *Great Ethics*, *Eudemian Ethics*, and *Nicomachean Ethics* (*Nicomachean Ethics*, 1999). In these books one finds his ethical education theory, in which he makes an explicit connection between ethics and public life. Aristotle's connection to public life is essential to understanding his perspective and ideas about education, including the role of communication in the public sphere.

Aristotle stresses that humans are political animals, and thus by nature take up the practical business of deliberation over public goods. Aristotle states in the *Politics*, "The human being is by nature an animal intended to live in a polis" (1253a). While contemplating the good life, political negotiations over public goods unfold in better or

worse ways; therefore, Aristotle considered ethics a part of politics (Bracci & Christians, 2002). Johnstone (2002) notes a connection between our life in communities and our responsibilities to those communities: “Aristotle calls upon us to recognize that we are also social, communal beings; that we live in communities; and that the performance of our proper excellence must include a practical involvement in the life of these communities” (p. 30). Aristotle’s approach to ethics and moral judgment arises from a vision of human life as fundamentally social, communal, and political. This essential unity between ethics and politics, so greatly stressed in Aristotle’s educational theory of *Nicomachean Ethics* and the *Politics*, is the basis for saying that the art of education is to engage the polis. Aristotle remains one of the prominent educational figures whose works are still thoroughly examined today. His works, along with those of Isocrates and Plato, stress the importance of a strong civic function in education. In the ancient times, a time in which communicative action was essential, these figures were considered leaders in education. These three scholars believed and showed that education had the power to renew a rapidly deteriorating society (Chambliss, 1971).

Before moving to the middle ages, a brief examination and overview of the Hellenistic era is in order. This era is receiving more attention in education than it did in the past; however, educational scholars do not possess many of the documents from this time period, causing many scholars to dismiss the notion of the Hellenistic era (Cribiore, 2005). It is important to reference the Hellenistic era because of the rich history that comes from this lengthy time period (Eby & Arrowwood, 1956). The Hellenistic era, which would encompass works of Isocrates, Plato, and Aristotle and extend into more than eight and a half centuries, is a time of learning from both scholars and significant

life changing events that occurred in society. This time period started to give rise to the importance of an educational structure determining when children should attend school and what content would be necessary.

The Hellenistic Era

The history of the Hellenistic Age is predominantly the history of the Greek polis (Wagner, 1983). The conquest of Greece by Philip II and the Persian Empire by his son Alexander meant both a decline of freedom and power within the old Greek cities. The Hellenistic period (300 BC-529A.D.) is a time period that encompass the historical moment of the fall of the Roman Empire from the 200s to about 476. The Roman Empire first began to decline in the 200s when barbarian tribes from Germany began to attack the boundaries of the empire. Over the next century, several emperors divided and reunited the Empire until it split into eastern and western territories for the last time in 395 under the rule of Emperor Theodosius I. The territories continued to be attacked from the outside, causing Romans to abandon the outer parts of the Empire. The last emperor in the west, Romulus Augustus, was overthrown in 476 (Cooke, Kramer, & Rowland-Entwistle, 1996). This major event played a role in shaping the educational system of the Hellenistic period because many people started to migrate and travel, bringing different ideas to bear on education. Even though there was turmoil and chaos in society, the education system continued to thrive and develop (Fox, 2001).

Despite the lack of documents addressing particular Hellenistic educational theory, though significant philosophers during this time period have been noted for writing treatises on education or *paideia* (Marrou, 1956). Marrou (1956) called the Greeks in the Hellenistic period “people of the book,” a “scribal culture,” and, most

important to this review, “a civilization of the paideia” (p. 95). During this time period education started to become more common, and even though education was still predominantly pursued in the wealthier class, options for an expanded pool of male citizens to pursue intellectual inquiry became more common. Children now began to learn at the age of seven in privately funded schools. The students started to learn to read, and they practiced writing sentences. Primary education for most boys lasted about seven years. Instruction on this level was largely through rote memorization and endless repetition. The failure to do well in education resulted in physical punishment. Once students learned how to read, write, and do simple arithmetic they proceeded on to secondary education. At the age of fourteen, they moved to the secondary stage, which was dominated by literary exercises (where they were taught the classical authors such as Homer, Menander, and Euripides), grammar, quizzes on Homer’s Trojans, and learning the names of landmarks (Fox, 1986; Starr, 1991).

Hellenistic education was still clearly designed to indoctrinate the essential virtues and skills of the governing class. Educators were very poorly paid and almost considered menial members of society unless they were famous scholars in the Academy or the Museum. Much education was still conducted orally because materials were scarce and students needed to be well trained in speaking. Teaching the art of speaking required little secondary material and a great deal of practice. The tool of rhetoric was essential for any type of success in the polis. Those men who wished to become specialists and move on in higher education (i.e., Aristotle) studied with leading experts in philosophy and rhetoric (Starr, 1991).

Education was also seen as a means of meeting the cultural needs of a more fluid and individualistic world—that is, students were given options to determine their own educational path through participating in their own particular interests. For example, literacy was more common among the rich, and it would be a great accomplishment for someone to go through a full course of instruction. Other students would participate in the gymnasium, funded under civic control, and focused primarily on the physical training of the body. Higher education for the most part was private, though endowments were occasionally made, and public supervision was frequent on the top level of the gymnasium (Starr, 1991).

One essential reason that the Hellenistic era is important to discuss is that the educational content of what is known today as the seven liberal arts (grammar, dialectic, rhetoric, geometry, arithmetic, astronomy, and music) started to develop and take shape during this time (Cribiore, 2005). Although all of the seven liberal arts were known and practiced in the Hellenistic world, they did not form a systematic course of study in secondary or higher education until they were adopted in the medieval West (Starr, 1991). One of those seven liberal arts was rhetoric, the foundation of the field of communication today.

The effects of the Hellenistic education system were both positive and negative. From Gaul to Syria, education allowed for members of the upper classes to polish their skills in many of the subjects that soon would be considered the liberal arts. The basic principles that descended from the Hellenistic world focused on the idea that every educated man should be instilled with the same ideals to promote the flourishing of society. The emphasis on education was ethical and conventional; education was used to

provide guidance through basic ideals that instilled wisdom and civic participation. Individuals who participated in higher education were typically members of the elite or upper classes, who were then given the responsibility of protecting and promoting the good of the polis (Starr, 1991). The Hellenistic era gives insight into the recognition that education is imperative for those participating in the polis, with the seven liberal arts tied to that recognition.

Education from the Middle Ages to Modernity

This section will examine the transformation of education from the early years of the Middle Ages (500 A. D.) to the beginning of World War II (1940). As education starts to evolve, we find the Middle Ages encompassing a curricular structure that is now called the liberal arts. This curriculum structure led the way to the newly established universities that taught classes found within both the trivium and the quadrivium (the two major areas of the seven liberal arts). As one moves to the modern age we find a push away from the liberal arts and more towards progress and science that promotes mathematical reasoning and rationality. This section will begin by examining the medieval era and will look specifically at the work of Thomas Aquinas. Second, I will examine education in the Renaissance and then move towards Modern Era, examining five key philosophers of education (Francis Bacon, John Lock, Giambattista Vico, Jean-Jaques Rousseau and John Dewey) who give a broad overview of different ideas that arose in education and are still present today.

Education in the Medieval Era

In the medieval era, the educational system was still grounded in the academics of classical Greece. However, two main educational features emerged and took preeminence

from this era—the system of the seven liberal arts and the idea of a university. First to be examined will be the seven liberal arts.

Many people have been credited for the categorizing education into seven facets; however, it is Anicius Manlius Serinus Boethius who formulated the scheme of the seven liberal arts that was used throughout this era (Huntman, 1983). The seven liberal arts were divided into the trivium and the quadrivium (Huntman, 1983; Mayer, 1966). The trivium consists of grammar, dialectic, and rhetoric. These areas of study were concerned with the ordering of experiences and the means by which expression was given to this knowledge. Subjects in the trivium sharpened the mind and provided ways of communicating understanding (Huntman, 1983; Mayer, 1966). Taken separately with a general definition of each element of the trivium, grammar was the art of writing and speaking correctly; rhetoric was the art of using secular discourse effectively in everyday life; dialectic was the study of understanding.

The quadrivium included the mathematical nonliterary technical arts of geometry, arithmetic, astronomy, and music. These areas of study concerned the acquisition of particular knowledge and measurement. Pedagogically, the quadrivium taught methods to prove facts about and understand the world in addition to teaching the soul to appreciate abstraction. Taken separately with a general definition of each element of the quadrivium, geometry found realization in the building of things; arithmetic examined the world by numbers; music was the science of time intervals as indicated by different tones; astronomy taught the laws of the cosmological world (Huntman, 1983; Mayer, 1966). It is also important to note that medicine and law are omitted from the liberal arts because these two vocations were concerned more with application than with pure science

(Cantor, 1994). The liberal arts subjects in the form of the trivium and quadrivium acted as a guide throughout the medieval era and the eras to come. These areas of study also acted as a guide for the newly developed idea of a university.

The idea of a university or a corporation for education describes accurately its development in the middle ages. The University of Bologna and the University of Paris were the major universities of this time period. The medieval universities were referred to as “general centers of studies” (p. 21; Mayer, 1966) that resembled a system of increasing knowledge and skills in each area, arranged hierarchically as apprentices, journeymen, and masters. Usually a student in the middle ages would have to study four or five years to obtain what is now called a Bachelor of Arts degree and three or four more years to achieve a Master of Arts degree. The courses in the bachelor’s degree mainly focused on grammar, rhetoric, and logic. Authors studied in the universities included Priscian and Donatus for grammar and Boethius for rhetoric. Aristotle’s textbooks were the primary influence in the universities; however, they were banned for a period of time due to their lack of theological emphasis (Mayer, 1966). This lack of theological emphasis was considered a fatal flaw in a time period in which Christianity was central. During this time period, learning had a strong religious bias; however, it is important to note that in the 1200s, the foundations of the universities brought study to a much wider group of people and the breadth and depth of knowledge was increased by various interests. This revival would soon be classified as the Renaissance (which will be discussed in the next section) (Cooke, Kramer, & Rowland-Entwistle, 1996).

Medieval culture and education were based primarily upon the incorporation and integration of the Church (Mayer, 1966). There was now recognition that a higher power existed and was an essential feature in one's life. McCormick (1915) states,

Man learned to seek the things which are above and not the things which are upon the earth, and, with a certain knowledge of the nature of this destiny, there came an appreciation of the individual and his place in society that the world had never before known. (p. 65)

This rise of Christianity introduced new elements into the idea of moral education, but the ancient influences of the Greeks still showed through in the works of many scholars, including those of Thomas Aquinas. Thomas Aquinas will be discussed at length because he approached the work of ancient educators in an additive fashion, integrating Christian theology and classical works.

Thomas Aquinas

A prominent scholar of the Middle Ages was Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274). His writings represent a synthesis of Aristotelian thought within a Christian narrative. Aquinas opens the understanding of Aristotelian work to the medieval scholastic tradition. In his work the *Commentary on Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics* (1999), he refers to Aristotle as "the Philosopher." Aquinas moved Aristotle's work on naturalism to fit the historical moment, which encompassed the idea of supernaturalism. Aquinas attempted to explain that God is all powerful, leading one toward the good life (McDermott, 1993). For Aquinas, the realms of faith and reason were complementary.

Aquinas was a noted teacher of theology and philosophy who brought scholasticism to its highest point through harmonizing doctrines of Aristotle with those of

the church. For Aquinas, scholasticism was both a method and system that brought together the study of philosophy and theology (Thompson, 1951). Mayer states:

The outstanding scholastic educator and teacher of the Middle Ages was Thomas Aquinas, who in the *Summa Theologica* made a magnificent synthesis of the medieval mind, of the world of *natura* and the realm of the *supernatural*. (p. 17)

The educational system for Aquinas was based on his consideration of the highest Good. This Good was not achieved in the everyday but in “the beyond” where one can achieve a complete vision of God. Unlike the periods before him, he emphasized the superiority of theological virtues. Aquinas maintained that the foundation of education was charity, which, was defined as encompassing the spirit of love. He confirmed that the love of God was primary, to which all others virtues were subordinated. Aquinas had a significant effect on the education of the middle ages and historical periods to come (Mayer, 1966).

During this time period, the meaning of “the good life” was anchored in a Christian understanding of existence in which human activity was to be directed to gaining God’s approval. Through education, one could live a higher level of life that would be closer to God (McDermott, 1993). Education became imperative for anyone who wanted to understand the thinking and ideas of the Church. This thinking was then challenged and changed again during the transition to the Renaissance and Modern eras in which a naturalistic approach to science directed toward human progress challenged the Medieval understanding of the meaning and aims of human existence. The Medieval era, however, provided the foundation for the Renaissance, as noted by Charles Nauert (2000):

Thus the beginning of wisdom for anyone who wants to understand the culture of Renaissance humanism is to realize that the high civilization of the Renaissance developed out of the high civilization of the Middle Ages and always retained marks of that origin. (p. 3)

The medieval era opened the doors for the Renaissance.

Education in the Renaissance

The transition from a strong emphasis on the supernatural to humanism is the next transition in education. *Renaissance* is a French word meaning rebirth. Some scholars argue that there was a rebirth of learning following what was considered to some as the “Dark Ages.” As noted by Cook, Kramer, and Rowland-Entwistle (1996), scholarship was still thriving in earlier periods, and the term the “Dark Ages” reflects a misguided perception that there was no scholarship taking place. The Renaissance is classified as a renewal of contact with classical Greece and Rome; it was an emphasis on humanness; it was a collecting of manuscripts, and a criticism and dissemination of their content; ... and finally, it was a heightening of the spirit of individualism. (Power, 1962, p. 269)

All of these ideas meant that education did not turn away from the practices and theories of the earlier years but attempted to give these ideas a new direction. Humanism, a term closely associated with the Renaissance, had a significant influence on the understanding and arrangement of society (Powers, 1962). The Renaissance’s intellectual development focused heavily on the spirit of humanism and a revival in the importance of learning. Humanists elevated reason above religious faith as a guide for human life. This

movement was largely aristocratic; however, there was a slow trickling down effect that spread to all classes (Powers, 1962).

A key figure in the spread of humanism in education was Manuel Chrysoloras of Constantinople. Maneul Chrysoloras was the first professor of Greek at Florence University. Other Italian scholars in the universities quickly adopted the work of the ancient philosopher and became interested in the notion that man and not God controlled the fate of human beings (Cooke, Kramer, & Rowland-Entwistle, 1996). This revival of learning showed the passionate interest of scholars in ancient Latin and Greek literature (Eby & Arrowood, 1958). Other questions that arose in education focused on the value of the classics, the relative claims of knowledge and style, the education of women, the role of physical education, and the use of the vernacular. The controversy of whether educational control should be invested in the Church or the state also became at the forefront of administrative issues (Powers, 1962). It is important to note the two major events that happened during this time period. These events will not be discussed in detail but they do offer insight into the historical moment.

The Protestant Revolt (later termed the Protestant Reformation) and the Catholic Reformation were both movements of the sixteenth century that looked to education for their fulfillment of their ideals. Luther was the religious leader who gave the Protestant Revolt a strong tie to education. His sermons and letters called fourth the importance of education for the people. The Catholic reform, led by religious orders and congregations, also touched on the importance of education. These movements allowed examination of religion in the schools, but they had little significant effect in education theory or policy in the long run (Powers, 1962) and therefore will not be examined in depth in this

historical overview. These movements show the importance of a faith perspective that was struggling against a movement that dismissed God and turned towards science. The next era, the modern era, looked to promote progress through the study of science.

The Modern Era

The heart of modern education starts to emerge in the Renaissance (Wilds, 1955). The Renaissance marks the modern period of history and a “rebirth” of learning. This learning developed rapidly with the invention of the printing press. During the transition from the Renaissance to modernity, people began to question the established ideas of religion, art, and what was considered science. Scholarship started to develop independently of the Church, the well-rounded individual became the ideal, and explorers began to open routes to new lands allowing for what was considered progress (Cooke, Kramer, & Rowland-Entwistle, 1996). Randall (1926) suggests that science became the keystone to building the new world in modernity. The modern period, identified as beginning around the seventeenth century, emerged with the notions of progress and materialism at the forefront of its ideals (Audi, 1999; Power 1962).

The modern era, which had a strong focus on science and progress, required a faith in universals. By privileging reason and science, the modern era displaced tradition, religion, and the humanities. Science, facts, and statistics become the “end all” in the conversation (Duprius, 1966). Modernity equated change with the positive notion of progress (Bloland, 1995). In modernity, it was likely to have one right answer to a problem because of a strong metanarrative based on the “good” of progress. Ronald C. Arnett and Pat Arneson (1999), in their examination of contemporary metanarrative decline, define metanarrative as “an implicit and uniformly agreed-upon public virtue

structure that functions as a universal standard” (p. 7). This period, modernity, was such a moment. This metanarrative allowed for education to focus on the narrative of science.

The seventeenth century has been considered the most active hundred-year period in the history of education (Power, 1962). The general movement in education focused on realism. Realism was based on a utilitarian philosophy in which the curriculum was grounded in “real knowledge” that could be tested by carefully specified methods. The schools’ purpose now focused on preparing students to step into a world that could be sensed and seen. It is important here to distinguish between the two types of realism: social and humanistic. Social realism focused on social reform as well as upon verifiable knowledge of society that might be obtained from the newly-formed social science, whereas humanistic realism focused on the real knowledge that might be found in the humanities (Power, 1962). Both forms of realism were considered important in education because they provided the student with the basic knowledge required for surviving in the world, and achieving a secure and happy life.

This focus on realism led to a change in education. According to MulHurn (1959), the central emphasis in education focused on four facets:

- (1) that the vernacular and its use as a path to knowledge are of primary importance, (2) that the method of teaching foreign language and method generally should be reformed by an approach to learning through sense experience of things rather than words, (3) that the things and laws of the material world and studies that enable man to master physical forces should be given a place of central importance in education, and (4) that the gates of learning should be opened to all classes. (p. 363)

This shift in education was established and promoted through the great educational thinkers of this period.

The educational philosophers of the modern era (Francis Bacon, John Locke, Giambattista Vico and Jean-Jacques Rousseau) discussed within the section below provide insight about the educational focus during this time period. Francis Bacon is cited by some as a “junction” figure between the renaissance and modernity because of his focus on science, so his contribution falls within the time period called modernity. The period of the seventeenth and eighteenth century was characterized by a radical departure from conservative learning. Students were now being asked to demonstrate their educational skills through various methods and forms. Unlike many of the educational theories that arose prior to this time period, these ideas focused on putting theory into practice. In education, many of the theories focused on some type of method, but there was no uniform agreement on how and what to study. However, when all of these ideas are put together, they make up a new fabric of educational theory and practice that focused on the educational score or outcome of the student (Dupuis, 1966), a forerunner of today’s assessment movement. Aronowitz and Giroux (1991) state, “It is important to note that modernism in both its progressive and reactionary forms has provided the central categories that have given rise to various versions of educational theory and practice” (p. 58). Through examining the works of Francis Bacon, John Locke, Giambattista Vico, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and John Dewey, one is given a representative picture of various educational philosophers that have shaped and continue to shape education.

Francis Bacon

Francis Bacon (1561-1626) was considered a teacher, writer, scholar, and theorist of education (Bizzell & Herzberg, 2001; Kane, 1954). Bacon's significance to the field of education lies within that of re-educating humanity. He believed knowledge was power and that if human beings knew better they could do better (Kane, 1954). He conceptualized the education system as based on science (Laurie, 1968) and believed that the human condition could be improved by the method of scientific investigation (Kane, 1954).

Bacon was not the originator of the scientific method, but he was one of its strong advocates. He believed that the study of facts was the beginning of the thinking process. He believed education should focus on scientific inquiry rather than a humanistic ideal (Thompson, 1951). Bacon transformed the education system through his works *Advancement of Learning* and *Novum Organum* (Laurie, 1968). In 1605, Bacon's *Advancement of Learning* was destined to move educational methods to a scientific foundation (Laurie, 1968). Ideas emerging in the *Novum Organum* were taught in Oxford and Cambridge in 1675 (Thompson, 1951).

Bacon's educational philosophy was grounded in the modern method of careful observation that characterized the Sense Realism movement. He believed in experimentation and classification with an inductive logic that advanced learning by revealing natural laws as discovered by a process whereby truth of things was ascertained through methods other than reflective psychology drawn from past experiences (Bizzell & Herzberg, 2001; Laurie, 1968). Bacon was concerned with the content, not the pure form, of thought. He found method in the ways in which things were known, dividing knowledge into branches of theology and philosophy and further subdividing these fields

into physics and metaphysics. Following the philosophy of Bacon, the next philosopher, John Locke, also focused on the importance of science in education.

John Locke

John Locke (1632-1704) is generally referred to as the founding father of the English Enlightenment and an important figure in the shaping of philosophy, religion, public law, and education (Weimer, 1962). Locke's philosophy searched for answers in the physical world and attempted to understand knowledge as a psychological phenomenon. Similar to Bacon, Locke believed that there is a real external world and that the knowledge of this world is possible if one is able to understand the process by which we attain the knowledge (Bizzell & Hertzberg, 2001).

Locke focused on education for men only. He believed that there were certain men who would succeed in becoming important figures in society and who would later shape society through their knowledge and education (Laurie, 1971; Weimer, 1962). His education theory begins as an endorsement of the classical theory that included training the mind and body. Locke believed that the human soul was at birth a blank slate and therefore could be molded and shaped through education (Weimer, 1962). For Locke, education allowed for the character formation necessary for becoming a person and reasonable citizen (Yolton, 1968). For Locke, the form of education was more important than the content. In his work on *Thoughts Concerning Education* (1693), he articulates an educational program that discussed when and how to train children. Locke wanted to shape the mind of a child through disciplining the body, feelings, and social activities (Cole, 1937). Locke's method of instruction consisted of "a collection of empirical rules and hints as to the easiest way of disposing of the difficulty of getting the work of mere

learning” (p.222; Laurie, 1971) over and done with. Locke did not see the educative importance of many of the liberal arts unless they were for professed scholars who would be well known in areas such as rhetoric and mathematics (Laurie, 1971). Locke emphasized the importance of tutors in education and had little or no concern for formal schools (Kane 1954). Locke also emphasized education through the senses rather than the memory (Thompson, 1951). The influence of Locke prevailed in education until the middle of the nineteenth century (Thompson, 1951). He can be considered a figure that has shaped modern education with his demand for rational (reasoning) and natural (what exists naturally in the world created by God) methods of education (Audi, 1999; Cole, 1937).

Giambattista Vico

Giambattista Vico (1668-1744) is not recognized widely as a central figure in philosophy of education, but his works *On the Study of Methods of Our Time* and *The New Science* are significant for education in their incorporation of the study of the ancients with a modern but non-Cartesian science (Audi, 1999; Bizzell & Hertzberg, 2001). For Vico, the Cartesian method failed to support independent discovery and focused too much on a process of moving from axiom to truth. The Cartesian method directed students to think in certain ways rather than inspiring students to be creative and use their imagination. He did not believe that science was the highest good in the educational conversation or that a formal study of any phenomenon or area would necessarily lead to the truth. Vico believed that it was a detriment to society if education privileged natural science and mathematics while devaluing other fields of study. For Vico, the humanities and the social sciences were both important and essential in

education—the more knowledge one had, the better off one would be (Bizzell & Hertzberg, 2001).

Vico's new science focused on human beings making history. All nations rise and fall within different cycles of history. At the core of Vico's conception of history, society, and knowledge was the idea of mythical thought or fantasy as the origin of the human world. Vico believed that fantasy was an important element of the human mind and that it was through fantasy that knowledge arose. Vico believed that if one studied sciences alone, one would be moved away from one's original creative endeavor (Audi, 1999).

In education, Vico proposed a curriculum that included the study of both science and eloquence. Vico saw the importance of communication within education, articulating the need to study it. In *On the Study of Methods of Our Time*, Vico asks, "Which study method is finer and better, ours or the Ancients?" (Bizzell & Hertzberg, 2001; p. 865). He addresses this question by allowing readers to see the importance of both forms of study; however, he does attack the Cartesian concept of metaphysics. Vico is important to the study of education because he bridges the educational gap between the social sciences and the humanities. He allows his readers to see the importance of different topics that fall within the sciences, both natural and social, and the study of human beings and their accomplishments—the humanities. In relationship to the field of communication, Vico is an essential figure in articulating the importance of rhetoric; as he emphasized the importance of human studies, rhetoric emerged as an enduring focus of study.

The next philosopher to be examined, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, moves educational theory back towards the modernistic thought of progress and science.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau

A prominent philosopher of education is Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) whose work *Emile* is considered part of the great educational works of this time period. In his introduction to *Emile*, Jimack (2000) states,

Rousseau's educational ideas, revolutionary in their day, continue to be discussed, and not just as historical curiosity; they are still controversial, they continue even today to surprise, to annoy, and to excite (p. xvi).

Rousseau's educational work inspired modern psychology that emphasized individual differences, psychology of growth, and growth of native interests and curiosities (Thompson, 1951). Rousseau is also widely known for his social philosophy articulated in *Social Contract Theory*. Rousseau believed in a civilized society that optimized love of nature, compassion, civic duty and a connection to a higher power. Rousseau wanted to integrate these ideas into education by asking how people could be educated to preserve their innate natural goodness and also stimulate a sense of civic responsibility (Noddings, 1998).

Rousseau espoused different philosophies of education for male and female students, consistent with the time period's adherence to traditional gender roles. Also consistent with practices of that historical moment, most of his educational works focus on the education of male children. Rousseau believed that children were naturally good and the task of an instructor was to preserve the goodness while still facilitating growth. Rousseau was one of the first to state that children or adolescents will choose the good simply because of their nature towards the good (Dupuis, 1966). In education, Rousseau believed that a child's inner interest should be cultivated and that the job of an instructor was to figure out the proper timing to introduce the student to different topics (Noddings,

1998). He also believed in the importance of the senses. Children explored the world on their own through their senses and would thereby “teach” themselves how to judge, learn, feel, speak, and respond (Cole, 1937). Rousseau derived some of his key ideas about instruction from Bacon and Locke (Kane, 1954), and his educational philosophies were likewise reflected in the work of prominent educational philosophers in subsequent years—Jean Piaget, Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi, Johann Freidrich Herbart, Freidrich Froebel, L. S. Vygotsky, Maria Montessori and John Dewey (Cole, 1937; Noddings, 1998). Even though many of these educational philosophers are important to the history of education, they will not be examined in this work. For further discussion of these philosophers see Cole (1937) and Noddings (1998).

The last educational philosopher to be examined in this time period is John Dewey. Dewey is important because he directly connects education and society. Unlike Rousseau, who believed that the persons should be embedded in nature, Dewey believed that person should be embedded in society to have learning experiences. Dewey believed that education and society could work together to promote growth and development. Dewey articulates a position that recognizes the societal and human embeddedness in community.

John Dewey

This work would not be complete without examining the work of the educational philosopher John Dewey (1859-1952), whose works reflect a number of modernist ideals. His educational philosophy embodies the notion of critical thinking, self-motivation, and exercise of social responsibility (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1991). Dewey has had a tremendous impact in the domains of philosophical and educational thought (Noddings,

1998). Dewey calls instructors to realize the importance of experience in the world in which we live—not as a means to an end, but for the sake of the continual learning process (Dewey, 1938).

Dewey considered education to have a direct correlation with the growth of the person. For Dewey, growth of a person leads to further growth, and the aim of education is to produce more growth and more education. Dewey states, “Education is thus a fostering, a nurturing, a cultivating, process. All of these words mean that it implies attention to the conditions of growth” (p. 10). For Dewey, education, then, functions as both an ends and a means for human development (Noddings, 1998). The public school system was considered the major means of social improvement and growth. The ideal school would function as a miniature society, with the aim of education as social efficiency, and in which actual living and working would take place. Learning would occur through the practices of living, allowing for personal experience and growth (Thompson, 1951).

Dewey produced many articles and books about education; however, this project will focus specifically on Dewey’s seminal work, *Democracy and Education*, which connects the field of communication and education through promotion of the growth of the individual, Others, and the whole society. For Dewey, social life and communication are essential for any and all education. Dewey saw the state and the individual working and communicating together to enhance the larger community. Dewey states, “...Not only does social life demand teaching and learning for its own permanence, but the very process of living together educates” (p. 6). Education for Dewey focused on the importance of democracy. It is through living in a democracy that one could be educated

to enhance society. Education was not just about the part, but about the parts that make up the whole. This approach to education attempts to “harmonize individual freedom with social responsibility” (Dupuis 1966, p.121). Persons have a responsibility to engage the world of human interaction. For Dewey, education allows for the cultivating and enhancing of a democratic society. Dewey is an important figure in the history of education because he reminds us of the strong connection that exist between education and civic participation. It is through education that one learns the importance of participating in the world in which we live.

The educational philosophies through modernism were marked by an underlying thread of common assumptions about the good and the good life found within methods, science, and progress. By examining this historical overview of education, one can see how education transforms to meet the shift in the historical moment. However, modern theories and practices are still found within many educational structures in today’s curriculum. The educational focus of today’s society calls for a focus on diversity and a turn towards a classical education that focuses on educating the whole person through both reasoning and imagination (Nussbaum, 1997); however, this transition is still battled by many of the modern presuppositions of education (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1991). Turning towards this postmodern moment, one finds multiple ways to understand various goods in society; such diversity of understanding is critical for higher education in this moment.

Postmodernity and Postmodern Education

The time period in which we live today is classified as postmodernity (Audi, 1999; Aronowitz & Giroux, 1991; Bloland, 1995). Postmodernity has been linked by

many scholars to the period after World War II (Brown, 1997) and is marked by the transition from one encompassing grand narrative to various petite narrative structures (Lyotard, 1984). The philosophical movement behind postmodernity began sometime around the 1970s and was developed by thinkers such as Jean-Francois Lyotard, Jean Baudrillard, Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari (Audi, 1999). There have been many different views of and approaches to postmodernity. Moreover, many scholars find the postmodern movement troubling. For example, Habermas (1983) sees postmodernity as a threat to the foundations of democratic public life, whereas critics such as Terry Eagleton (1985), Perry Anderson (1984), and Barbara Christian (1987) see it as a threat to or a flight from the real world of politics. Feminist critics such as Meaghan Morris (1988) and Nancy Fraser and Linda Nicholson (1990) approach postmodern discourse with caution, interrogating its claims and absence of theory that may lead to little change in gender relationships. Education scholars Allan Bloom (1987) and Nel Noddings (1998) dismiss the need to recognize this trend of postmodernity in education because of what they see as a lack in method or theory and what they believe is a focus on relativism. With all of the controversy and discussion over what it is, whether it exists, and whether it is an important topic to study, it would be easy to dismiss postmodernity altogether; however, the term postmodernty is important because it directs our attention to a shift in society where we are obligated to examine the challenges and changes that are before us (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1991). As Bloland states, "To see our postmodern condition through the lens of a new era is to focus on the rapid and unfamiliar changes that are taking place in the world" (p. 533). Therefore, this dissertation will take a closer look at

this postmodern moment, working from the assumption that it can be defined as a moment with a particular character that raises important questions for higher education.

Postmodernity examines the social and cultural tendencies that have dominated advanced capitalist societies since the late 1950s. This moment is characterized by dislocation, fragmentation, and the absence of a grand narrative that guides society (Brown, 1997). Postmodernity typically opposes foundationalism, essentialism, and realism (Audi, 1999). Postmodern scholars have discarded the Enlightenment pursuit for an absolute truth and believe that one all-encompassing explanation of knowledge is hopeless. Postmodernity reworks the structure of modern thought by challenging its assumptions, methods, attitudes, and values. Postmodernity calls for a reexamination of the world in which we live, arguing for an articulation of multiple goods and not one encompassing good of progress (Noddings, 1998).

Postmodernism's primary significance is the ability to account for and reflect on changes in our society and culture (Bloland, 1995). This postmodern era is a celebration of diversity and a clashing of narratives. Postmodernity destroys the myth that everything is solvable because individuals no longer have a shared understanding of the nature of the world sufficient to agree on a single answer. Postmodernity is associated with a metanarrative decline, which "is the gradual awareness of lack of agreement on virtue structures" (Arnett & Arneson, 1999, p. 7). With a lack of agreement on virtue structures, multiple viewpoints identify good/bad, right/wrong, and ethical/unethical. This multiplicity of virtue structures is significant for the task of education, which has historically served the task not only of informing, but socializing members of society into a set of "goods" (Dewey, 1923).

A postmodern age presupposes that we live in a world of narrative and value contention where ethical difference is normative and the good is in dispute. However, we cannot live without the good. The work of Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler, and Tipton, (1985) and Charles Taylor (1989) suggests that people are constituted with an orientation toward goods, but that often our underlying life goods are not articulated, causing a lack of understanding for why a given position, action, or idea is worthy of attention and allegiance. Through our experiences, we learn that diverse cultures understand “a good life” differently; however, we do not understand the underlying reasons for this understanding of a good life (Taylor, 1989). This lack of understanding of the good life is accompanied by lack of engagement in the public sphere. As a result, education bears a more challenging burden than in the past of promoting the importance of civic engagement in this postmodern moment. The discipline of communication can aid in this task, providing resources in educational settings to identify the ground for conceptualizations of “the good life” and how civic engagement can be understood as integral to those conceptualizations.

Communication instructors can assist students in understanding a constructive meaning for education. Education is a means for students to find and communicate their purpose in life. Postman (1995) argues that today’s students lack guiding foundational narratives, which can provide profound meaningful insight for the lessons that they learn. Postman argues that education can help them locate those narratives. Through education in communication, instructors are not only able to help students discover guiding narratives but also to help them articulate the narrative position from which they work. When there is a lack of recognized narrative adherence, students will have difficulty

understanding why they do the things they do. Without a narrative structure there is no purpose or motivation for life, including life in the public sphere. Narratives provide insight into the importance of participating with the Other as well as an understanding of one's purpose within a good life. (The importance of narrative within education will be further examined in a later chapter.)

We live in a time period where Putnam (2000) asks, in *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, why we have changed from civic engagement to civic disengagement, and Postman (1985), in his work, *Amusing Ourselves to Death: Public Discourse in the Age of Show Business*, wants to know why we would rather watch unreflective television shows rather than participate in any type of reflective conversation. In the United States, we have moved from the focus on the “we” to a focus on “me” that is situated in confusion about what is “good.” Without an understanding of the good life, it may be difficult to contribute to a meaningful public sphere that appears fragmented. If one assumes that only one “good” can guide public life, a pluralistic public sphere may not appear to be worth an investment of time and energy in conversation about potential “goods” in the public sphere. Furthermore, the task of education becomes contested terrain, with dispute about what “goods” are fitting to guide education for participation in the civic sphere.

Somewhere in the twenty-first century we have lost our ambition and purpose in life. We have lost the reason that gives us power to act, courage to speak, and the ability to produce change if needed. This time period, filled with scandals in the marketplace (Burns, 2007), increasing divorce rates (Cole, 2006), increasing hours at work (Hewlett & Luce, 2006), and children being raised by single parents (Glanton & Rubin, 2006), has

prompted a turn toward education for answers and change. Education in a pluralistic, postmodern public sphere, however, must turn from the modernist presupposition of metanarrative agreement underlying education toward an understanding of education as sensitive to the rhetorical power of particular narrative structures as guiding frameworks for varied lives. This call can be answered within the domain of communication studies.

Conclusion

The history of education is a project that will never be completed. Through examining education historically, one is able to see patterns and trends in education that point to the importance of education for civic participation and point to the need for communication. The vast array of philosophic thought on education has been, and still is, profound and extensive. When one examines a philosophy of education, one observes a focus on “the philosophical study of education and its problems” (Noddings, 1998, p. 4). Questions that have evolved throughout history are numerous: “What should be the aims or purpose of education? Who should be educated? Should education differ according to natural interests and abilities? What role should the state play in education?” (p. 4) These questions give insight into the changing roles of education. This chapter has offered a background picture of how education has grown and changed since antiquity to postmodernity. The next chapter will elaborate further on postmodern education, addressing the presence of modern presuppositions in our current educational system, which I argue is problematic for the educational enterprise. The following chapter will encourage the transition from modern education to postmodern education.

Chapter 2

Engaging the World in Which We Live:

From Modern Education to Postmodern Education

The review of historical eras in the first chapter shows the importance of and need for an education system that responds to the moment before it and rhetoric's position as an enduring, substantial force for the role of education in the public sphere. This chapter addresses the first part of the following two-part question: "What is the conversation taking place during this historical moment in education, and how can communication and rhetorical studies provide one potential answer through communicative engagement with our postmodern moment?" This chapter will specifically address the first part of the question by examining trends in education today and what this historical moment calls for by examining the work of Jean-Francois Lyotard on postmodernity. The second part of the question will be examined in chapter three, which addresses MacIntyre's (1984) postmodern concern related to moral crisis and Walter Fisher's (1984, 1987) narrative paradigm, concluding with an additive argument for narrative literacy. This chapter begins with an examination of today's higher education.

Today's Higher Education

Today's higher education has the potential to encompass various narratives, especially narratives for why one should engage the world and civic life. This engagement with the marketplace and civic participation is essential in postmodernity. Students need skills and education for a global marketplace and a reason for civic participation—a "why" for engagement. In most cases they are receiving neither, and they have no imported "why" that they can apply to what they might receive even if they

were getting those skills in the educational world. The crisis in education comes from education's failure to address the historical moment and from students' lack of recognition of their own guiding narratives. The result is often careerism and consumerism on the part of students, with resulting unmet expectations.

Crisis in higher education

For many years there has been the perception that education is in a crisis stage. Those who hold this opinion point to evidence of declining standards in our educational system. The declining standards in literacy and mathematics in combination with disciplinary problems that emerge in the classroom have caused scholars to reevaluate our educational system (Gardiner, 1994; Nuyen, 1995; Olson, 2007). Many education scholars have criticized our lower levels of education, believing they do not sufficiently educate our students in many of the key areas considered critical for a well-rounded citizen (Black, 2004). Jim Nelson Black (2004) states,

Today, after two centuries of "progress," American high school graduates about to enter the university have almost no knowledge of the nation's history and only a functional command of the English language—let alone any knowledge of Greek or Latin. In comparative testing of American high school seniors with students of other nations over the past twenty years, as it has often been reported, American students rank consistently near the bottom in head-to-head comparisons. Ironically, they have the highest "self-esteem" and lowest academic performance. This should be a matter of concern for every American. (p. xiv)

The students entering the university are not as prepared as they were twenty years ago (Gardiner, 1994). This shift in lower education, which has been associated with teaching

to test and meeting required standards, has caused higher education to re-examine the material being taught in the post-secondary context (Black, 2004). The purpose of this chapter is not to place blame on particular areas of education but to offer insight into the changes in higher education relevant to what communication and rhetorical studies has to offer.

Problems in higher education have existed since the first university opened. According to Hannah Arendt (1961), “The problem of education in the modern world lies in the fact that by its very nature it cannot forgo either authority or tradition, and yet must proceed in a world that is neither structured by authority nor held together by tradition” (p. 195). Today, the postmodern world has begun to move away from a standard of authority and tradition announced within a metanarrative decline (Lyotard, 1984); however, education still focuses on authority and tradition based on one guiding metanarrative of truth. Moreover, in a changing era of mass higher education and a consumer society, the faces of students entering the university are changing (Bloland, 1995; Welch, 1998), a shift that calls for a rethinking of the nature of education.

The Growing and Changing Face of Education

The historical moment in which we work has a significant influence on how we see the world. After World War II, the traditional vision of higher education as an “ivory tower grew obsolete” (Bok, 1982; p. 7) and college/university education became more widespread. The transition from post-secondary education at the college/university level from an elite to a mass institution was marked by over 60% of United States high school graduates’ going on to a college or university—when in years prior to the 1950s, less than fifty percent of high school graduates continued to higher education (Welch, 1998).

Despite predictions of declining numbers of college students in the 1980s and following (Dey & Hurtado, 1994), there has been a steady increase. The 1990's witnessed a record enrollment of 13.7 million students in colleges or universities. The top ten universities (Arizona State University, Indiana University, Michigan State University, Ohio State University, Pennsylvania State University, Texas A & M, University of Michigan, University of Minnesota, University of Texas, and University of Wisconsin) consisted of enrollments in the low 50,000's (Ohio State University 52,183) to the middle 30,000's (Indiana University 36,076) range—the size of a small city (Willimon & Naylor, 1995). Much of this growth comes from women and minorities entering higher education. Today we find a large number of ethnic, racial, and religious minorities are enrolling in higher education who are, in many cases, the first generation to attend a college or university (Dey & Hurtado, 1994). In addition to growth in the number of students there have also been major changes in the student's economic status, social experience, political preferences, intended majors, and extra curricular experiences inside and outside of the classroom (Dey & Hurtado, 1994). This increase in students has generated increased diversity in the classroom (Welch, 1998).

Diversity in the classroom, defined as ethnic, racial, economic status, and gender difference, is now more representative of Americans as a whole than were the preceding graduates of colleges and universities before the 1960s who were predominantly white, male, and upper class (Gardiner, 1994). Changes within the undergraduate student body in American higher education have forced reconceptualization of the notion of a typical college/university experience. The idea that the college or university experience changes the student has been unquestioned; however, the reverse has now been noted—students

can change a college or university (Black, 2004; Dey & Hurtado, 1994; Willimon & Naylor, 1995). As more students enter higher education, educators are finding more students less prepared for their academic experiences, their goals for education are different, styles of learning vary, and educational needs and wants are different (Gardiner, 1994). As instructors face this moment of diversity in education, the curricula of most colleges and universities are still focusing on a modern education that works on the presupposition that there is one underlying method of science and progress for education (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1991; Black, 2004; Rust, 1991). Val Rust (1991) states,

The major schooling lesson for us is that the factory model of schooling is directly connected with modernity, and it is as obsolete as the factory has become in postmodernity. We must contribute to a new definition of school that is appropriate to the new age. (p. 622)

This new age no longer focuses on one grand narrative structure.

The students of today's higher educational system have changed; however, most curricula have not changed to meet the historical moment of today's postmodern student. These students are embedded in a postmodern age where there is no one overarching narrative structure but, rather, petite narrative structures. Lack of a common narrative structure appears to have contributed to a lack of commitment to community and citizenship. Jim Nelson Black (2004) states, "As we embark on another century of progress, our prospects for developing future leaders with real knowledge, understanding, competitive job skills, and respect for citizenship and community have never been worse" (p. xiv). As it stands today, the educational system is struggling to reinstall the values of an education infused with notions of civic participation (Bok, 2003; Boyer, 1990) and is

producing students who have trouble competing in a world of diversity and difference (Nussbaum, 1998).

As instructors, it is important that we teach to the historical moment of the students that are before us in the classroom—a moment that has encouraged and pushed students to acquire some form of higher education, a moment in which students are expected to be treated as consumers (Smith & Webster, 1997), and a moment in which students have lost their focus on participation in the marketplace and public forums (Postman, 1995; 1985; Putnam, 2000) in a move towards the importance of careerism (Bok, 1982, 2003; Boyer, 1986) and promotion of the individual (MacIntyre, 1984). Instructors have the opportunity to engage Putnam's (2000) and Postman's (1985) concern that our society would rather “bowl alone” and “amuse ourselves to death” than participate in public discourse. Our higher education systems can help students understand the importance and power of education laden with civic participation. Higher education is more than an outlet for receiving a job. Higher education is a way to engage the world (Bok, 1982). Higher education is not the means to an end (Dewey, 1923), but a continuing conversation about ideas, which has the power to shape the world (Freire, 2000).

Today's education is producing a “flat” student that does not encourage the cultivation of ideas or the necessary civic component that once existed (Nussbaum, 1997). In this postmodern era engaging difference and participating in the community is essential. Nussbaum (1997) calls us to address the students of today by stating,

Our campuses educate our citizens. Becoming an educated citizen means learning a lot of facts and mastering techniques of reasoning. But it means something

more. It means learning how to be a human being capable of love and imagination. We may continue to produce narrow citizens who have difficulty understanding people different from themselves, whose imaginations rarely venture beyond their local setting. [...] But we have the opportunity to do better...

(p. 14)

Nussbaum (1997) is correct in that we need “to do better” in higher education. As instructors we can help students become aware of the narratives that embed their lives and the lives of other and that give insight into one’s ethical and civic responsibilities. Instructors can help students understand the various petite narrative structures that exist in this era—the students’ own and those of Others. If instructors do not address the historical moment in which they live, they will “sell our democracy short, preventing it from becoming as inclusive and as reflective as it ought to be” (Nussbaum, 1997, p. 297). Through education, students can be given the opportunity to be actively engaged with this world of difference and diversity in which we live.

The postmodern moment of multiple narrative structures has caused us to acknowledge, but not embrace, diversity, which cuts at the heart of civic participation. In today’s moment of multiplicity, it is difficult both to ignore difference and to offer a rationale for engaging it constructively. Therefore, disengagement and lack of civic participation proliferate due to vast differences between and among individuals. Persons lack agreement on the “good,” and often cannot articulate their own background narratives that define “the good” (Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler, & Tipton, 1985; Taylor, 1989). If one can articulate the good, one may find it problematic to do so, given these differences (Taylor, 1989). This inability to or unwillingness to articulate ground

for the good makes civic participation, in which discussion and continuing conversation about public practices is required, meaningless (Arnett, 2001). Higher education, which has historically been a forum for preparation for civic engagement, therefore faces a moment requiring a new approach to preparing our students to become citizens who engage public life.

Education for citizenship in a postmodern moment requires acknowledgment of narrative diversity and the ability to articulate a particular narrative structure through which students may engage civic life. In a moment of narrative contention, when it is difficult or controversial to articulate positions on the good, the default position of education for career emerges, rather than the dual and holistic focus of education for participation in marketplace and public forum, a concern noted by both Bok (1982, 2003) and Boyer (1986). This career focus could be considered the educational equivalent of MacIntyre's (1984) "emotivism" (p. 11), encouraging students to focus on their own career rather than the larger public good. This emotivistic tendency promotes students to believe they are only consumers of education rather than products of the institution in which they receive their degree. This consumer model of education permits and even encourages students to believe that they are buying an education, instead of engaging ideas that allow them to find their interests and calling in life. In discussing the student as a consumer, Edward LeRoy Long (1992) notes,

The creating of community in the educational process has been made problematic by the shift of paradigm from one that portrays the relationship between student and teacher as that between apprentice and mentor to one more analogous to the relationship between a consumer and a provided of services. (p. 52)

This notion of buying an education encourages students to believe that education is designed solely for promotion of the self.

This idea of consumer pedagogy arises from the consumer culture in which we now live. Living in a consumer culture is part of the historical moment that presents itself to us and becomes part of the task of higher education to address. Education can provide resources for students to understand life in a consumer culture, engagement with which requires reflection about what it means to be a consumer and discernment to note when the consumer metaphor is not helpful or appropriate. A consumer culture can be addressed through an approach calling “for higher education to prepare students, not simply to be producers and sellers of consumer goods, but to be intellectually and philosophically skillful and knowing consumers” (Bloland, 1995, p. 540). To engage this moment constructively, students need to understand the roles and responsibilities of being a consumer, and instructors need to understand that the students entering colleges and universities have changed. When this occurs, the nature of an academic culture begins to change (Cowen, 1996).

In a liberal arts curriculum, the focus of attention rests within a well rounded education permitting career paths to open up, emerging as a byproduct. In a moment in which participation from all is needed for a healthy, constructive public sphere (Bok, 1982. 2003; Boyer, 1986; Nussbaum, 1997), students who understand education as preparation for active membership in society—not just as professional training to get a specific job—have the potential to contribute to both community and marketplace. It is in this context that the communication discipline within a liberal arts tradition can offer assistance, a point to be elaborated in chapter five. In this chapter, the main focus is on

the crisis of education and how education can move from one encompassing narrative of progress to a recognition and welcoming of various narratives, each of which holds within it a particular “why” for engaging the world and civic life. To enhance this argument further, I offer an examination of the postmodern condition in which we live in order to address the crisis of education identified by a number of scholars (Nuyen, 1995).

Postmodernity

The postmodern moment in which we live gives insight into higher education because it is a recognition of new ideals for and in society. This postmodern era, marked by competing goods (Taylor, 1989) and various narrative structures (Lyotard, 1984), is in contradiction to many modern presuppositions that still exist and dominate education (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1991). Although postmodernity is transforming the American culture, the language of everyday people indicates that the vocabulary of postmodernity is not foregrounded, though there is a recognition the world in which we live is changing in identifiable ways. As articulated by Peter Stacks (1996), people acknowledge the modern paradigm’s eclipse by a new age; however, people do not consistently use the term postmodern. Stacks examined how explicitly one of the most prestigious newspapers, the *New York Times*, accounted for the notion of the postmodern and found very few references to the terms “postmodern” and “postmodernity.” In the academic setting, many undergraduate and graduate students in some form of higher education have encountered references to different terms related to the idea of the postmodern; however, they do not have a strong idea of what postmodernity is or whether this is the correct way to explain the world in which we live (Stacks, 1996). This chapter will first

examine the differences and similarities between the terms postmodernity and postmodernism in order to clarify the vocabulary associated with this school of thought.

Postmodernity and Postmodernism

The terminology of postmodernity and postmodernism have caused much discussion by a multiplicity of scholars (Audi, 1999; Bloland, 1995; Brugger 2001; Hargreaves, 1994; Lyotard, 1984; Slattery, 1995); in addition, these terms have been examined in multiple scholarly fields such as sociology, philosophy, anthropology, geography, women’s studies, literary criticism, art, architecture, cultural studies, and education (Roberts, 1998). Andy Hargreaves (1994) states, “Discussion of postmodernism and postmodernity have expressed different viewpoints, different cultural perspectives, different understandings of basic terms, even” (p. 38). Patrick Slattery, in *Curriculum Development in the Postmodern Era*, examines postmodernism from eleven different perspectives, all of which articulate varied ideas and assumptions about the world in which we live. Michael Peters states, “The terms *postmodernism* and *postmodernity* are catch-all concepts, allegedly signaling an epochal break not only with the so-called modern era but also with the various traditionally ‘modern’ ways of viewing the world” (p. 22). Hargreaves (1994) defines postmodernism as:

an aesthetic, cultural and intellectual phenomenon. It encompasses a particular set of styles, practices and cultural forms in art, literature, music, architecture, philosophy and broader intellectual discourse pastiche, collage, deconstruction, absence of linearity, mixture of periods and styles and the like. (p. 38)

He then defines postmodernity—postmodernity, “by contrast, is a social condition. It comprises particular patterns of social, economic, political and cultural relations” (p. 38).

From this perspective postmodernism would be part of the broader phenomenon of postmodernity. Postmodernism describes different perspectives that have emerged in the condition of postmodernity. These two terms coincide with each other to explain the world in which we live.

Postmodernity has been widely accepted in academe as a mode of thought; however, dispute occurs when postmodernity is seen as a new historical era and not just a mode of thought (Bloland, 1995). If one views postmodernity as a new historical era, one is able to approach many of the questions that higher education is confronted with but is not examining. By taking the approach that postmodernity is a new era that encompasses diversity and change within the world we live, one can address the challenges and benefits that comes with a postindustrial/information age (Bloland, 1995). Bloland (1995) states, "To see our postmodern condition through the lens of a new era is to focus on the rapid and unfamiliar changes that are taking place in the world" (Bloland, 1995, p. 533). Through examining postmodernity as a change in the world in which we live, we are able to address this historical moment in education. The next section will examine the philosophy behind postmodernity.

Postmodern Philosophy

Early postmodern philosophy originated primarily in France during the 1950s, 60s and 70s when there was a change in thought from the common presuppositions of modernity, such as one guiding metanarrative that focused on progress, to a recognition of more diversity and difference in the world, including modes of rationality, worldview, and aesthetics. This change in thought allowed many scholars to examine the transitions that were taking place in the world. Many scholars are not directly involved in the study

of postmodernity but have paved the way for future scholars. For example, Friedrich Nietzsche is quoted as the “spiritual grandfather of postmodernism” (Peters, 1995, p. 22) because, for some scholars, Nietzsche foreshadowed the end of the modern era.

Postmodern philosophy was also greatly influenced by the writings of early 20th century philosophers, including phenomenologist Edmund Husserl and Martin Heidegger, psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan, structuralist Roland Barthes, and logician Ludwig Wittgenstein. Their work influenced many of the influential early postmodern philosophers such as Michel Foucault—who approached postmodernism from a historical perspective, Jean-Francois Lyotard—who examined it from a narrational perspective, Jacques Derrida—who approached it through deconstruction and textual criticism, and in the United States, Richard Rorty—who approached postmodernism from a linguistic perspective (Audi, 1999; Bloland, 1995; Peters, 1995; Roberts, 1998). These scholars have all given insight into postmodernity and postmodernism.

It is also important to note that there are many in disagreement with the postmodern project. One main philosopher in opposition to the implications of postmodernity is Jurgen Habermas, defender of the “project of modernity” (Habermas, 1981, p.8). Habermas believed that the Enlightenment was an unfinished project and needed to be re-examined. Habermas (1981) stated, “I think that instead of giving up on modernity and its project as a lost cause, we should learn from the mistakes of those extravagant programs which have tried to negate modernity” (p. 11). Some scholars would agree with Habermas, and other scholars would agree with those who focus on postmodernity. What is helpful from the work of Habermas is a call to keep the conversation going. Val Rust (1991) believes that it is Habermas who is most responsible

for initiating and encouraging the current phase of postmodern discussion. Habermas gives us insight into a world encompassed with many disagreements, challenges and changes that cause scholars to continue the conversation on issues of the good. Habermas addresses a world of diversity and difference in modernity and calls for discussion of issues concerning identification of the good.

The works of Habermas and Lyotard have been used in conjunction with one another to examine the world in which we live, and both have implications for education in such a world. Nigel Blake (2000) calls for an examination of both Habermas and Lyotard to engage the transition of modernity and postmodernity. He argues that their offers insight for a world and educational system that is consistent with and supportive of the modern project but that recognizes the needs of today's historical moment. He encourages a balance between the extremes. Other scholars within the various fields will argue that the postmodern project is too relativistic (Bloland, 1995) or that it is just a passing fad (Rust, 1991). A constructive move upon recognizing the many critiques and criticisms of postmodernity is to heed the call of the historical moment to keep the conversation going between and among different modes of thought. This chapter will turn towards the work of Jean-Francois Lyotard for insight into postmodernity and its implications for the role of communication in education. This chapter specifically looks at the work of Lyotard (1984) because of his strong connection to education (Dhillon & Standish, 2000; Peters, 1995; Roberts, 1998) and narrative (Audi, 1999) in the postmodern condition.

Lyotard's Postmodern Condition

Jean-Francois Lyotard was a French philosopher and leading representative of the movement known as post-structuralism; in addition, he was a seminal scholar in the field of postmodernity (Audi, 1999; Bloland, 1995; Brugger 2001). He was born in 1924 in Versailles and died on April 21st, 1998 at the age of 73. Lyotard taught philosophy in secondary schools from 1949 to 1959 in Algerian *lycee* at Constantine. This was the timeframe before the outbreak of the Algerian war. During this time period, Lyotard became an active supporter of the Algerian National Liberation Front (FLN). This group opposed the French colonialist rule. Lyotard believed in the freedom of individuals and encouraged his students to not be controlled by the world in which they live. He articulated the importance of students' understanding different narrative structures and learning from difference. He was concerned that people were getting caught up in and controlled by the technological world that was emerging (Audi, 1999; Peters, 2000). Lyotard believe that students depended too much on technology and did not understand the ramifications that occurred with complete dependence on technology for knowledge. Lyotard did not dispute the value of technology, but believed it should not be the only means of knowledge.

After the Second World War and the defeat of the Axis powers, many Algerians believed they would experience the same benefits as the French, which included liberty, humanism, and democracy; however, this was not the case, and their subsequent opposition to French rule caused a brutal and bloody war. This issue divided the French intelligentsia, moving scholars such as Albert Camus to the background of educational reform and rallying the scholars such as Lyotard to produce new insights into education (Peters, 2000). In May of 1968, Lyotard was at the University of Nanteere focusing on

articulating a political activism which centered on the struggle against modernizing tendencies that focused on new selection of methods and changing conditions with regard to the baccalaureate examination. A number of ideas surfaced throughout this period, including ideas about education, including:

the critique of a class monopolization of knowledge and mercantilization of knowledge and education; an attack on the hierarchic magisterial relation of pedagogy; the refusal of a kind of education under capitalism which merely socially reproduces students to fulfill the technical demands of the system; and the expression of a moral ideal embodied in non-dialectical forms of dialogue as the ethical precondition for pedagogy. (Peters, 2000, p. 24)

These ideas were at the heart of Lyotard's instruction and formed the substance of what is now one of his most well-known works, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*.

Lyotard perceived postmodernity as a condition or mood (Jameson xiii-xv) and uses postmodernism to refer to a condition of contemporary Western civilization (Kincheloe, 1993). Lyotard has entered the postmodern conversation as one of the most-recognized scholars who defines the term postmodern (Brugger, 2001). Peter Roberts (1998) states, "... in the space of less than 70 pages Lyotard captured much of what has subsequently come to be regarded as important in postmodern work" (Roberts, 1998, p. 1)

1) The main metaphors within his work include modernity, postmodernity, meta-narrative, legitimation, paralogy, and petite narratives. Since Lyotard is of great importance to the work of postmodernity, and because he has a strong connection to educational theory (Dhillon & Standish, 2000; Peters, 1995; Roberts, 1998), his works on

postmodernity will become the focus of the next section and discussed in relationship to education.

Lyotard's connection to education

Lyotard (1984) does not coin the term postmodern; Arnold Toynbee first coined the term in the early 1950s (Peters, 1995), and the term's origin has also been attributed to sociologist Daniel Bell (1973). Lyotard adopted the term and ideas surrounding its definition from various American sociologists and critics. Lyotard (1984) acknowledges the vast differences and controversial ideas that go along with the term postmodernity in his first footnote to *The Postmodern Condition*. He notes the broad intellectual genealogy of the term as resting in literary theory, cultural studies, and the sociology of postindustrialism and indicates that these different perspectives provide insight into a changing society (Peters, 1995). Even in the work of Lyotard, the postmodern condition has given rise to many different interpretations and associated implications. Neils Brugger (2001) summarizes Lyotard's view on the postmodern by stating:

It remains, nevertheless, to elucidate what Lyotard actually means by "the postmodern" in *The Postmodern Condition*. This concept is used in several different, coincident, yet nonconvergent ways: three epochal and one modal. First, the postmodern refers to the very *crisis of legitimation* characterizing the two grand narratives of legitimation in the modern, and it does so in two respects: it refers to the crisis marking the beginning of the postmodern epoch that succeeds the modern (epochal) and it refers to the inner, constitutional crisis at the source of the grand narratives, as a mode in the modern (modal). Furthermore, the postmodern refers to a *civilizational epoch*, namely, the one succeeding the

modern epoch (epochal), characterized by the breaking through of the crisis of the narratives of legitimation and the appearance of the three other legitimating criteria (performativity, consensus, and paralogy) that are presented in the possible void that follows the grand narratives of modernity. And, finally the postmodern refers to a certain kind of *praxis* within science and the social bond in the postmodern epoch: the one that is legitimated through paralogy (epochal). (p. 85)

Lyotard's work offers insight into the varied implications for society that can emerge from the postmodern condition, especially in the education context. His philosophical insights into the post-industrial society and the postmodern culture call for a change in the process of pedagogy and research of higher education (Cowen, 1996).

Pradeep A. Dhillon and Paul Standish (2000) state, "Lyotard has sometimes been thought the postmodern philosopher *par excellence*. Whether or not this is apt, Lyotard is, it should be clear, a central figure in any debate on the potential, pitfalls, and possibility of a postmodern approach to education" (p. 1). The starting point for anyone interested in education is Lyotard's (1984) most famous work *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* (Dhillon & Standish, 2000), in which he analyzes how the legitimization of knowledge has changed in the computerized society. His work examines knowledge that arose after the Enlightenment and particularly since World War II in Western post-industrial, information based societies. Lyotard believes that the status of knowledge has changed and needs to be reexamined in the postmodern condition. In this work, he challenges those totalizing and comprehensive master narratives which serve to legitimate their practices for all people. Lyotard believes that metanarratives lock

civilization into totalitarian and logocentric thought systems that provide a restrictive theory of society and history, a modern view that examines knowledge and truth as based on abstract principles and theoretical constructs that can impose their perspective and rules on all other narratives (Rust, 1991).

Lyotard challenges many of the modern notions that still exist in today's society. Lyotard states, "I will use the term *modern* to designate any science that legitimates itself with reference to a metadiscourses of this kind making an explicit appeal to some grand narrative..." (p. xxii). Lyotard (1984) moves on to define postmodernity "as incredulity toward metanarratives" (p.xxiv). These metanarratives, which are "implicit and uniformly agreed-upon public virtue structure that functions as a universal standard" (Arnett & Arneson, p. 7), are foundational to our educational system. He suggests replacing these narratives with "little narratives" (p. 60), which open up the horizon of lived experience and thereby refrain from the totalizing of issues.

The Problem: Modern Education in Postmodernity

Lyotard's definition is essential in education because much of educational research still follows this underlying metanarrative of one truth that underlies scientific progress and technology. Bloland states,

The questioning of metanarratives is important for higher education, because metanarratives are the foundation of modern universities and college life, especially as they undergird the scientific-technological aspects of higher education, but also higher education's assumptions about progress, knowledge, and socialization. (p. 533)

Higher education is deeply embedded in the theories, vocabulary, and presuppositions of modernity (Bloland, 1995; Peters, 1995). Peter Sacks (1996) describes the conflict that arise in the transition from modern to postmodern education by stating, “The sphere of higher education has become an important cauldron for this conflict for the very reason that, for generations, education has been synonymous with the very notion of modernity” (p.110). Most, if not all, philosophers of and experts on education have viewed education in modernist terms (Peters, 1995). Higher education in the late twentieth century was “built around the intellectual authority inherited from the Enlightenment” (Peters, 1995; xxiv). This modern project still continues at the forefront of our educational system.

The modern project and social role of the university have gone hand in hand throughout the 20th century. William G. Tierney (2001) states, “Broadly stated, proponents of modernism have assumed that rational, objective knowledge discovered by scientific inquiry ultimately will set humanity free, or at the least improve the lives of men and women” (p. 353). Historically, secondary schools and the universities have legitimated themselves and their practices by reference to discourse of a subject-centered reason assumed to lead to knowledge and progress. The major problem that exists is that higher education still is focused on the metanarrative of progress which defines a particular, modernist notion of the good (Bloland, 1995). Bloland (1995) states,

For higher education is so deeply immersed in modernist sensibilities and so dependent upon modernist foundations that erosion of our faith in the modernist project calls into question higher education’s legitimacy, its purpose, its activities, its very *raison d’etre*. In attacking modernism, postmodernism presents a hostile

interpretation of much of what higher education believes it is doing and what it stands for. (p. 522)

Higher education is characteristically known as a modern institution; therefore, any attack on modernism is, in essence, attacks on the higher education system as it is now constituted (Boland, 1995). Aronowitz and Giroux (1991) state, “To question the most basic principles of modernity redefines the meaning of schooling” (p. 58). Through these assumptions and the authority that rests within them, there is call to attempt to reform education (Peters, 1995). Lyotard’s work is essential because he (1984) challenges this modern notion of thinking. He refuses any kind of education that reproduces students just to meet the technical demands of the system without reflection on the requirements of the historical moment.

One of the major questions of Lyotard (1984) is how knowledge is legitimized. Lyotard believes that whatever principle society uses to legitimate knowledge must also be the principle that is used for decision-making in society. In the Enlightenment, legitimate knowledge was tied to grand narratives or meta-narratives that focused on a quest for a progressive liberation of humanity through science. Lyotard (1984) believed that persons have lost the ability to believe in a meta-narrative. These meta-narratives that once functioned as a means of legitimation in society no longer work. Therefore, Lyotard argues, any attempt to legitimate knowledge in a grand narrative will achieve the exact opposite—delegitimation. Nuyen states,

The self-destructive nature of the process of legitimation calls for a postmodernist response, namely, the abandonment of grand narratives...Instead of a grand narrative that can legitimate other discourse, we are faced with a series of *petits*

recits, of local perspectives of diverse language game, each with its own set of rules. (p. 44)

Lyotard argues that taking refuge in a grand narrative is no longer feasible, but that the “little narratives” are more important for legitimation. He believes that the principle of consensus as a possible legitimating criterion at the level of a grand narrative is no longer sufficient because it discriminates against the Other (Brugger, 2001). For Lyotard, the *petite narrative* is the response to postmodernity. Lyotard argues that what used to be the legitimating principle linking science and philosophy to the discovery of the Truth has collapsed (Cowen, 1996). Postmodernity calls for a re-examination of an educational system that calls for the legitimation of one grand narrative or one universal Truth.

Postmodernity calls for an examination of *petite narratives* that give rise to learning about various perspectives. These *petite narratives* hold the potential for temporal stability in a world of multiplicity.

Lyotard’s working hypothesis is a call for educational scholars to recognize the changing world in which we live, in which grand narratives are replaced by *petite narratives*. Lyotard’s hypothesis states “that the status of knowledge is altered as societies enter what is known as the postindustrial age and cultures enter what is known as the postmodern age” (p. 3). Lyotard predicts that knowledge, instead of totalizing revelations of received truth, will become quantities of information valuable for process and research (Roberts, 1998). Lyotard states, “Knowledge is and will be produced in order to be sold, it is and will be consumed in order to be valorized in a new production: in both cases, the goal is exchange” (p. 4). Lyotard then moves on to examine a shift in our education and learning:

It is not hard to visualize learning circulating along the same lines as money, instead of for its “educational” value or political (administrative, diplomatic, military) importance; the pertinent distinction would no longer be between knowledge and ignorance, but rather, as is the case with money, between “payment knowledge” and “investment knowledge”-- in other words, between units of knowledge exchanged in a daily maintenance framework (the reconstitution of the work force, “survival”) versus funds of knowledge dedicated to optimizing the performance of a project. (p.6)

Lyotard (1984) warns scholars that students need to understand that education has an intrinsic worth or a “use value” (p. 5), not just an exchange value. When knowledge is seen as a commodity for exchange the questions “ ‘Is it true?’, ‘Is it just?’, ‘Is it morally important?’, become reduced to ‘Is it efficient?’, ‘Is it marketable?’, ‘Is it sellable?’, ‘Is it translatable into information quantities?’” (Lyotard, 1984, p. 52; Keane, 1992, p. 108). These questions view education as having one function—progress. Or, as Jacques Ellul (1964) suggests, the question of “can it be done” trumps the idea of “should it be done.” For Lyotard, modern education is not sufficient for today’s world. Moreover, modern education foreshadows a consumer model of education that focuses on education as a means for only one outlet—a job; in this model, the use value trumps all. The need for knowledge about petite narratives now needs to serve the legitimating function once served by the metanarrative.

Lyotard (1984) turns to Wittgenstein for more insight into knowledge in a postmodern world. Lyotard focuses on the specific notion of “language games” (p.10) in which society regulates members’ behavior through rules of linguistic conduct. Lyotard’s

philosophy adapted from Wittgenstein's notion of the language game is explicitly based on a normative theory of communication. For Lyotard, language is a social phenomenon that precedes and circumscribes individuals' lives. This language is limited in its referential ability, creating a small, fixed set of ways in which one can look at the world. Therefore, no determined criteria are available for one particular study of the world. This is similar to the Sapir-Whorf-Hypothesis that argues our language shapes our understanding of the world. The linguistic reality component states that if language is going to determine our thoughts, then speakers of different language will experience the world differently. Lyotard believes that when persons judge with a clear and stable set of criteria, they presume a totality of knowledge that results in unjust practices; injustice here refers to illegitimate limits that do not permit an expanded horizon of possibilities available with a less totalizing view of the world and, as a result, one authority assumes hegemony, eclipsing the contributions of various perspectives.

By declining universal doctrines, Lyotard develops a social and political orientation that is drawn from Wittgenstein's insight that meanings are within us, creating the diverse and difficult language games within which we live our lives (Dhillon & Standish, 2000). Peters (1995) states, "simply put, the linguistic turn of the twentieth-century philosophy and the social sciences does not warrant the assumption of a metalinguistic neutrality or foundational epistemological privilege" (p. xxvi); however, there are rules that give particular guidelines. The language game consists of rules to follow—there must be rules to follow because without rules there is no game. However, a person can advance by making a new move within the established rules or by inventing new rules that define a new game, or a new science of knowledge (Nuyen, 1995);

therefore, the ideas are not stagnant, but continue to grow and shape different ideas and perspectives. This idea creates different and smaller contexts from which one is able to work. Peters (1995) states,

While there are many different language games, Lyotard asserts, and each of us lives at the intersection of many of these, the decision makers proceed on the assumption that there is commensurability and the common ground among them and that the whole is determinable. (p. 31)

This moves the conversation to petite narratives as a form of legitimation. When one examines the vast contexts for judging action and knowledge, we avoid the need for a meta-narrative while retaining some basis for judgment and discernment of action. In a postmodern society the legitimation of knowledge falls within the particular narratives and not one encompassing narrative.

Lyotard also puts forth the term paralogy (p.60-61) to offer insight into the meta-narrative problem. For Lyotard, paralogy gives insight into finding new meaning in words. Paralogy works from the idea that old language games that focused on a metanarrative now work from petite narratives. He believes that postmodern education and science are legitimated by paralogy. He encourages postmodern education to flourish by searching for new ideas and concepts that disrupt previous consensus (Fritzman, 1995). Lyotard develops the paralogy concept through examining the instabilities and paradoxes that occur within the world of different theories, including chaos theory, fractal mathematics, and quantum mechanics. Lyotard states that postmodern science is

...changing the meaning of the word *knowledge*, while expressing how such a change can take place. It is producing not the known, but the unknown. And it

suggests a model of legitimation that has nothing to do with maximized performance, but has as its basis difference understood as paralogy. (p. 60)

Paralogy is a way to search for new meaning in old language games. It is through the search for new insights into existing theories by finding anomalies and paradoxes in both narratively based and scientifically based ideas that these ideas continue to grow and develop throughout history. Paralogy is not progress for its own sake, but it is a creative and productive resistance to a totalizing metanarrative. Paralogy respect both the desire for justice and the need for the unknown (Readings, 1991). The intent of paralogy is to create new idioms for thought that move away from a totalitarian system and push knowledge toward petite narrative structures. For Lyotard, paralogy does not aim for universal consensus but acts as a means of discussion (Bain, 1995). Paralogy is one way to engage the conversation in education; however, for Lyotard, paralogy is not a sufficient answer for education.

It is changing the meaning of the word *knowledge*, while expressing how such a change can take place. It is producing not the known but the unknown. And it suggests a model of legitimation that has nothing to do with maximized performance, but has as its basis, difference understood as paralogy. (p. 60)

Therefore, paralogy can not be used as a metanarrative that guides education. This concern is essential for education because, for Lyotard, the professor role will no longer be relevant in society if knowledge is seen as a means to an end. Knowledge which used to derive its legitimacy and meaning from metanarratives is no longer seen as universal. In postmodernity, knowledge is pragmatic, finding temporal meaning and stability in petite narrative structures. The multiplicity of narratives prevents one from claiming

hegemonic legitimacy. Hence, education is in crisis, because it has not adjusted to this new mode of petite narrative engagement for temporal legitimacy of “noncanonical” knowledge bases.

Lyotard’s (1984) prediction for higher education consists of a rocky road that entails of many challenges and hardships. In the section “education and its legitimation through performativity” (p. 47-53), Lyotard describes the issues of performativity as the only viable criterion in the postmodern world, meaning that higher education’s reason for existences is to contribute to the performativity of our economic system (Bloland, 1995), resulting in the creation of “skills, and no longer ideals” (Lyotard 1984; p. 48). His argument stems from the philosophical ways in which knowledge becomes linked with technology and then becomes technology based, being consistent with the notion of performativity (Cowen, 1996). Lyotard states,

...the process of delegitimation and the predominance of the performance criterion are sounding the knell of the age of the Professor: a professor is no more competent than memory bank networks in transmitting established knowledge, no more competent than interdisciplinary teams in imagining new moves or new games. (p. 53)

In a performatively driven society, one can rely upon machines to teach students what they need to know. The professor’s role in aiding and contributing to universal knowledge is no longer useful because it is a technique that can be learned by a machine. The role of a professor as a mentor, imparting knowledge like a legacy or heritage from a metanarrative as a character within a story, is no longer meaningful. Information and

knowledge are free-floating and detached, consumable, not “teachable.” In discussing the death of a professor, Nuyen states,

Lyotard’s assumption is that it takes a Professor to come up with a political, or speculative, theory and to transmit his or her theoretical views to the students who need them to see why something is, or is not, science or knowledge. However, if there is no longer any need for any such narrative (as the argument for delegitimation above has shown), this function of the Professor disappears. Graduates trained in theoretical narratives will quickly find themselves unemployed. Here, the performativity criterion comes into effect: Either students will no longer be attracted to the prospect of being unemployable or funds will not be allocated to institutions that produce unemployable graduates. (p. 46)

Lyotard is very explicit about the death of professorship; however, his work allows for one to examine how to approach an era of diversity and difference that calls for the importance of a professor and not the death of a professor.

Addressing Lyotard’s idea of the death of a professor

Many works have addressed Lyotard’s concern for the death of a professor. His argument has provoked criticism and caution to those who examine different philosophies of education. The common thread that emerges out of this conversation is the question: how can education address the world in which we live? Lyotard’s concern in today’s society encourages us to question the Hegelian professor that calls for an absolute Truth that no longer claims legitimacy in today’s society. Following an interpretation by Nuyen (1995) of Lyotard’s account of the death of a professor, the problem resides with a professor who believes that he or she can have the absolute

authority to state that such-and-such is legitimate knowledge and such-and-such is not. This modern notion, which forefronts the importance of one answer, is still seen in education and is now subject to reevaluation. Moving the professor out of a metanarrative stance and into a position in which the professor cultivates petite narrative recognition of each student is an appropriate move for postmodernity.

Lyotard discounts one encompassing grand narrative; this notion is relevant and imperative in education because one narrative no longer claims legitimacy. In discussing the work of Lyotard, Nuyen (1995) states,

Lyotard seems to think that (i) [The role of the Professor is to educate students in the understanding of narratives.] and (ii) [Narratives have zero performativity in proving scientific claims.] are sufficient for the elimination of demand for the Professor's services, and the Professor will go out of business as a result.

However, there is no evidence for this. Narratives have a fascination of their own that continues to excite the curiosity of a large number of people. Rightly or wrongly, many people believe that one is not "educated" until one has an understanding of and appreciation for narratives...the demand for the teaching of narratives will increase, ensuring a bright future for the Professor. (p. 47)

This statement is fundamental in describing the importance of a professor's roles to teach narrative; however, in postmodernity, professors are called to address petite narrative that make up the world in which we live rather than a grand narrative that can be pushed onto Others. Forming an additive argument to Lyotard, it is not postmodernity that causes the death of a professor, but teaching upon the modern presupposition of a metanarrative in a society that is in a metanarrative decline. Therefore, the role of a professor is essential

because teaching and learning in an embodied, meaningful context becomes imperative in a world of diversity and difference. This idea will be further elaborated on in chapter three with the proposal of narrative literacy.

Nuyen (1995) believes that Lyotard's insight into education allows for one to argue further for the importance of a professor. Lyotard creates a concern that allows for a later justification of the important work of a professor. Nuyen (1995) states,

In the context of education, what students need to know is *why* a certain move, a statement, is legitimate within some field of knowledge. This is a problem of *understanding*. To know how to make a move is one thing, to understand why in terms of the governing rules is another. Each move, each statement, has to be placed in a context for it to be understood. It is here that the Professor is required...students have to be taught not just how to retrieve information but also what it *means*. (p.50-51)

To teach facts and information does not mean that there is understanding on the part of the students. It is in this context that an instructor is needed to elaborate and explain the meaningfulness of information and its implications within a particular standpoint.

Lyotard does acknowledge that performativity requires more than retrieval of information. He states,

It should be noted, however, that didactics does not simply consist in the transmission of information; and competence, even when defined as a performance skill, does not simply reduce to having a good memory for data or having easy access to a computer. ... the advantage will be with the player who has knowledge and can obtain information. ...the best performativity cannot

consist in obtaining additional information in this way. It comes rather from arranging the data in a new way, which is what constitutes a “move” properly speaking. This new arrangement is usually achieved by connecting together series of data that were previously held to be independent. This capacity to articulate what used to be separate can be called imagination. (p. 51-52)

Even performativity requires some meaning structure in order to be understood as a performance. However, Lyotard does not believe that this need for meaning in performativity justifies the existence of a university or a professor. He states, “It matters little whether the latter [promotion and stimulation of imaginative minds] are officially a part of the university” (p. 53). Lyotard also states in the introduction of his book: “—at this very postmodern moment that finds the University nearing what may be its end, while the Institute may just be beginning” (p. xxv). Lyotard does not offer an argument for this conclusion (Nuyen, 1995), but other scholars do. For further discussion on Lyotard’s death of a professor and university see *Lyotard: Just Education* edited by Pradeepa A. Dhillon and Paul Standish and *Education and the Postmodern Condition* edited by Michael Peters.

Addressing the Problem

An unreflective approach to education that assumes the existence of only one underlying “good” is anachronistic, unresponsive to the moment before us. At the same time, education with no underlying “good” is impossible; underlying every choice rests a good, whether acknowledged or not (Taylor, 1989). Likewise, to provide a common center for a diverse society, some common ground based on minimalist assumptions (Bok, 2002) seems necessary for a democratic society (Arnett, 2001). Postmodernity

offers a way in which to engage a world of diversity through conversation and learning, recognizing diversity of petite narrative commitments and minimalist common assumptions that permit diverse communities to come together in constructive ways.

Postmodernism offers professors a plethora of important insights that can be examined within a broader theory of education. Aronowitz and Giroux (1991) argue, “Postmodern engagement with foundationalism, culture, difference, and subjectivity provide the basis for questioning the modernist ideal of what constitutes a decent, human, and good life” (p. 80). Moving from a modernist perspective to a postmodern perspective on education allows for engaging difference and diversity in the classroom.

Postmodernity gives insight into educators’ rethinking of the contexts in which authority is defined. Moreover, it allows for educators to have a variety of discourses for interrogating modernism’s reliance on progress and universals that encourage certainty and absolutes (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1991).

Lyotard’s argument is intriguing for educational scholars. He addresses a problem that exists in education but does not offer a solution. His argument stems from the postmodern presupposition that one meta-narrative is no longer sufficient. Lyotard is examining a university that still teaches modern notions in a postmodern world (which is occurring in today’s higher education). Many scholars have addressed moving away from Lyotard’s notion of the death of a professor and university to the importance of a professor and university. Nuyen states, “I fail to see how it can be argued that machines are adequate to the task of promoting and stimulating imaginative minds. On the contrary, it seems clear that this is the Professor’s job” (p. 51). Nuyen (1995) encourages one to examine the cultivation of imagination by a professor and J. M. Fritzman (2000)

offers Rorty's prophecy of a prophetic imagination to overcome Lyotard's pessimism for universities and professors.

Through using the work of Lyotard (1984) and Rorty (1989), J. M. Fritzman (2000) then examines the relationship between education and business. He addresses the call of Lyotard to be cautious about seeing education as a mean to an end. He states:

Hence, students would be served poorly if educationalists did not impart the knowledge, habits, and disciplines needed to succeed financially. Nevertheless, students would be even more ill-served if economic success were taken to be the goal of education, its *raison d'être*, as "learn to earn" would have it. Persons who only learn to earn may have full stomachs, but their lives will be empty. Further, they will have the ability neither to comprehend the world in which they live, nor to make informed decisions about which aspects of it should be preserved and which changed. (p. 46)

Fritzman (2000) addresses the importance of a well rounded education that promotes more than careerism.

Richard Rorty's (1989) philosophy addresses the topic of moving from modern education to postmodern education through literature and writing. Through literature one is able to understand the effects of our social practice and institutions that guide and shape our lives and the lives of Others. Martha Nussbaum (1995), in her works on *Poetic Justice*, addresses the importance of literature through her works on "literary imagination" (xvi). Nussbaum (1997) then moves the conversation to address the importance of *Cultivating Humanity* (1997), arguing for the transformation of education to include more than just facts and knowledge. She argues that today's universities are

producing a student unprepared to engage the world both professional and personally. She ultimately argues that students need more than one meta-narrative of progress. These scholars all recognize the crisis of education and offer great insight on Lyotard's warning of the death of a professor.

Education in postmodernity is faced with a historical moment that asks for focus on a learning model that resituates the importance of a well rounded education that encourages and promotes learning for the good of the community. Lyotard (1984) states, "Postmodern knowledge is not simply a tool of the authorities; it refines our sensitivity to differences and reinforces our ability to tolerate the incommensurable" (p. xxv). For Lyotard, postmodernity encourages and promotes difference. In summarizing some of the pedagogical implication of Lyotard's position Fritzman (2000) states,

Education should encourage students to develop new ideas and to challenge critically what passes as common knowledge and accepted wisdom. In addition education should teach students to be sensitive to the inevitable presence of differends. ...In addition, students would be taught to recognize differends through learning that persons are constantly creating new literature, music, painting, and philosophy that do not confirm to existing definitions and descriptions. (p. 69)

If one moves from a modern presupposition of one meta-narrative to a postmodern meta-narrative decline, many opportunities for learning about difference emerge.

Learning in postmodernity is essential. Learning from and about difference encourages the conversation to begin in the classroom and continue throughout one's life journey. Smith and Webster (1997) state:

But the university is, has been and can only be a place where thinking is a shared process, where the teaching is part of the unending dialogism of the outer society, 'where thought takes place beside thought'. There must be a future for the university in its work of thinking, which goes on outside the instruction packages of corporate excellence, one that has survived the attractions and repulsions of the nostalgic and the romantic. (p. 14)

A postmodern university can be a place that engages the world through continual learning. Aronowitz and Giroux (1991) believe the ideas surrounding postmodernity can have a significant impact on our education system. Postmodernism offers educators the opportunity to examine a variety of discourses that can engage learning about difference in the classroom. They state, "... postmodernism provides educators with a more complex and insightful view of the relationships of culture, power, and knowledge" (p. 81). When one moves from a modern view of education to a postmodern view, learning about and from difference becomes essential. Aronowitz and Giroux (1991) continue, Postmodern engagement with foundationalism, culture, difference, and subjectivity provide the basis for questioning the modernist ideal of what constitutes a decent, human, and good life. Rather than celebrating the narratives of the "master," postmodernism raises important questions about how narratives get constructed, what they mean, how they regulate particular forms of moral and social experience, and how they presuppose and embody particular epistemological and political views of the world. (p. 80-81)

Postmodern education is poised to address the importance of learning from and about difference. Postmodern education also encourages one to proceed with a new humility that encourages participation in the community (Dhillon & Standish, 2000).

Postmodernity and Civic Participation

In today's postmodern moment, scholars are called to address the lack of civic engagement. Bloland (1995) believes that institutions of higher education in postmodernity "need ways to construct and sustain community, and community at several levels: community on the campus and community in the larger society, a commitment to citizenship" (p. 552). He believes that instructors need to emphasize the reasons that education is so powerful and important in a democratic society. Moreover, he encourages an emphasis upon the Other, the marginal, and the outsider. He argues that this cannot be done by simply adding another elective on multinationalism, women studies, or cultural studies, but must be integrated into the core of academia. Rust (1991) believes that education must incorporate the voice of the Other. Educators must not only hear the Other's voice, but they must begin to listen. Postmodernism provides the key to engaging the Other not by some form of totality that focuses on the Other as an essence, but through collectively working together (Rust, 1991), which permits shared connection around a common goal, appreciation of difference that contributes to joint effort and outcomes. He states, "At the same time, we must increase our attention to small narratives, the far-ranging Others of the world" (p. 626). These small narratives now constitute and make up the world in which we live, encompassing greater diversity and difference. One must be cautious to engage these small narratives within the world in which we live in order to prevent discrimination and segregation.

Aronowitz and Giroux (1991) elaborate on the importance of reinstating the importance of education tied to working with diversity towards a greater good that instills the values of civic engagement. They discuss creating communities that embrace plurality and citizenship. In the classroom, a stress on the notion of democracy by emphasizing engagement with the Other that is not at the odds with the issues of justice, liberty, and the good life for all can work toward that end. Postmodern education points to informing students about a citizenship that does not separate individuals because of difference or define community as having one-dimensional historical and cultural narrative. Postmodern education allows for difference and diversity to be engaged within the public sphere (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1991).

Conclusion

This chapter begins with an invitational call for our higher education system to move into today's historical moment. The times have changed, but our universities and colleges have not met the needs of the students within this historical moment. More and more students are entering higher levels of education without an adequate understanding of the power of education. These students are concerned with a singular end product of receiving a job and earning money. Jim Nelson Black (2004), in *Freefall of the American University*, encourages students, parents, and academics to reevaluate why one goes to a college or university and to reevaluate the importance of colleges and universities as a whole. This crisis in education was predicted in the work of Lyotard examining the moment in which we live.

Today's society is moving into an age of postmodernity, a moment in which the idea of one unifying discourse has been abandoned. The postmodern world is constantly

changing without the constraints that existed in modern society. Philosophical theories of Adam Smith, Sigmund Freud, Georg Hegel, Auguste Comte and Karl Marx are all being challenged by postmodern scholars (Rust, 1991). Today's society is no longer held together by one Truth. Postmodern society is characterized by different forms of valid reasoning and experiences constituting many different language games (Lyotard, 1984). However, in today's educational system there are still the remains of the ideals found in modernity focusing on a universal knowledge (Bloland, 1995). This moment calls for the face of education to change from a knowledge-based outcome (modernity) to a learning based outcome (postmodernity). In postmodernity, "higher education especially has to be seen as much a part of the cultural and aesthetic sphere of society as it is part of the economic sphere, sustaining and promoting this differentiation of discourse, of self-understanding and of meaning" (Barnett, 1993, p. 37). Through education, students learn about difference and can be encouraged to engage the world in which we live through understanding their own narratives and learning those of Others. Narratives provide a "why" for the "how" of life, including participation in the marketplace and civil society. The answer to the decline of metanarrative is an embracing of petite narratives, which can still function to "legitimate" belief systems and a meaningful life.

Lyotard's foreshadowing of the death of a professor and the movement from universities of ideals to institutions of skills is a call for educational scholars to reexamine what is being taught in the classroom. Many educational scholars such as Nussbaum (1997) and Noddings (1998) have addressed the importance of engaging the classroom through more than just memorization of facts. This project will go on to address Lyotard's concern for the "crisis of narratives" (p. xxiii) and focus on his statement that

“little narratives remain the quintessential form of imaginative invention” (p. 60). The task of an educator falls within these little narratives and not a metanarrative that ends up totalizing and confining the conversation.

Lyotard’s work highlights the growing recognition that the modernist metanarrative in higher education can no longer provide a foundation for student engagement. This practice no longer works and calls for a new “praxis” of education in a postmodern moment. The following chapter will call forth the use of narrative literacy in the classroom to help students understand the plethora of petite narratives that exists in today’s society. Narrative literacy is a call for learning.

Chapter 3

Engaging Narrative Literacy in a Communication Classroom

Students in postmodernity are called to think about multiple perspectives in the complex world in which they live. The prevalence of ethical wrongdoings such as greed, financial fabrication, and blatant lying have shown through in Wall Street, in the media, and in the public domain generally (Burns, 2007). Terrorism, war, and hate crimes are at the forefront of today's world. These crises can be alleviated through re-nourishing the roots of education (Durden, 2003), and the communication profession is uniquely poised to provide the educational context for engagement of narrative diversity in postmodernity.

In the twenty-first century, many individuals entering into higher education have difficulty articulating a reason or a sense of “why” that gives them power to act, courage to speak, and the ability to produce change if needed (Black, 2004). This time period filled with scandals in the marketplace, increasing divorce rates, both parents constantly working to support a family, and children being raised by single moms and dads has prompted a turn toward communication education for answers and change (O' Hare, 2006). Education in a pluralistic, postmodern public sphere, however, would be well-advised to turn from the modernist presupposition of metanarrative agreement underlying education toward an understanding of education as sensitive to the rhetorical power of particular narrative structures as guiding frameworks for varied lives. As will be seen through the upcoming discussion, and as was foreshadowed at the end of the last chapter, even the supposed metanarrative agreement in education has faltered as modernist presuppositions are called into question, leaving nothing in their place to inspire student

learning or provide a “why” for civic engagement. A postmodern moment of metanarrative collapse has caught up with higher education, a condition articulated by Lyotard (1989) and discussed in the last chapter.

One of the major questions that arises is how instructors can work with students in the communication discipline to understand the nature of narratives as background articulations of “goods,” to identify students’ own narrative ground that guides their lives and shapes their communication, and to recognize the existence of competing narrative structures in a postmodern era while still providing students with some common ground for public life. In brief, I submit that the common ground of narrative literacy, of knowing one’s own narrative and being open to another’s, provides a philosophical common ground through which students can engage the “facts” of education, from history and literature through business and the sciences, and that the field of communication is uniquely positioned to provide that type of education. This question, the focus of this chapter, rests on the need to recognize narrative multiplicity in the classroom, beginning in the communication classroom, and the vital importance of narrative grounded thinking and idea engagement for civic life in the United States in the 21st century.

Need for Narrative in Education

Martha Nussbaum (1997) and Nel Noddings (1998), two prominent scholars in educational philosophy, both pursue the question of postmodernity in education, acknowledging the reality of diversity in the classroom; however, their arguments dismiss the need to acknowledge lack of agreed upon narrative structures in education. From a communication perspective, it is the narrative background of underlying “goods” that

provides diversity and must be acknowledged through communicative interaction. This work, which is enriched by both Nussbaum (1997) and Noddings (1998), addresses MacIntyre's (1984) concern regarding a postmodern moral crisis and forms an additive argument by using Walter Fisher's (1984, 1987) narrative paradigm to articulate the importance of narrative literacy in the classroom. This project calls educators to recognize the presence of multiple narrative structures in today's higher education with the hope that students will learn their ground, acknowledge and learn the ground of Others, and work together to identify and construct common ground to participate in civic engagement. When no narrative background provides a foundation for education, education is seen as a process without a purpose, and there is a lack of engagement with the Other. When narrative identification and discussion are encouraged in the classroom, there is an acknowledgement of and engagement with difference (Nussbaum, 1997; Postman, 1995).

Neil Postman's (1995) *The End of Education* offers insight into the importance of narratives in education and makes plain the collapse of metanarrative agreement articulated by Lyotard (1989). With reservation, he uses the word narrative as a synonym for god. This god (with a small g) guides and shapes a life.

The purpose of a narrative is to give meaning to the world, not to describe it scientifically. [...] Without a narrative, life has no meaning. Without a meaning learning has no purpose. Without a purpose, schools are houses of detention, not attention (7). [...] Even if a narrative places one in hell, it is better to be there than to be nowhere. (12-13)

Incorporating narratives into education provides purpose and meaning for students. Postman (1995) argues for the presence of shared narratives in schools that provide inspiration for the task of education itself. He encourages a narrative that does not focus solely on economic or vocational skills but one that encourages continual learning that focuses on civic participation. He calls forth a narrative that identifies what it means to be human, what it means to be a citizen, and what it means to be a continual learner. This connects to the idea of a “minimalist shared narrative” that starts with a common ground of learning. These narratives, when shared in the classroom, promote engagement with difference. As students engage the material, they gain a sense of contributing information.

Postman, although working from a modernist perspective with emphasis on metanarrative agreement for meaning, offers important insight for the power of narrative ground for meaning and direction in life. This project draws on his work for its recognition of the importance of narrative engagement in a postmodern world, offering additive insight by moving from the modern presupposition of one guiding metanarrative to Lyotard’s understanding of petite narratives. Postman (1995) believes that is through narratives that students are given a sense of continuity and purpose and that the exclusion of narratives leads to alienation and divisiveness, which have no place in the classroom. These ideas need to be at the heart of education. However, education, which used to provide a reason or purpose for learning, now has become known for inventing a method or theory that does not engage the student and lacks narrative form and content (Postman, 1995). This lack of narrative is troubling in a postmodern age of difference and diversity, but offers great opportunity to revitalize education, working from what remains of the

remnants of modernist presuppositions about education, identifying minimalist fragments of potential commonality to tie together multiple petite narratives that engage lives today.

Martha Nussbaum (1997) articulates a concern similar to that of Postman, suggesting that colleges and universities are producing students who lack “narrative imagination” (p. 85) and lack the ability to cultivate an enriched humanity. These students are divested of a sense of responsibility for the world in which they live and have difficulty engaging diversity and difference. Many students are worried about offending another person and therefore may choose not to engage the Other. Today’s students are well equipped to engage the world through methods and formulas but not through literature and imagination, causing a shift from a well rounded student with an inclination toward civic and marketplace participation to a student with the skills necessary to do a job—articulating Lyotard’s (1984) concern of education producing skills rather than ideals. Nussbaum argues that higher education is producing a flat student without purpose or meaning in life. When students have difficulty determining their purpose in life, they do not believe they can participate in the larger community. Today’s education, which curtails humanities requirements and is cutting back on humanities faculty, is selling our students and our democracy short. She believes that education must do better for today’s student and the world of which they will become a part (Nussbaum, 1997).

The concerns of Postman (1995) and Nussbaum (1997) both echo the call of Lyotard (1984), who warned educational scholars about the move from colleges and universities that produce a well rounded persons able to engage both their public lives in the community and their private lives at home to institutions that would teach skills that

make them marketable for one job. The colleges and universities of the 21st century are not disappearing, but flourishing; however, most of the students graduating from these universities have difficulty understanding the importance of civic participation. The purpose of a college/university for civic participation has been eclipsed with the collapse of metanarrative agreement. For Postman (1995), it is the narrative structure that engages students in the classroom that makes them realize they need to participate in the world in which they live; however, today's education is missing this feature, echoing Nussbaum's concern that it is the lack of narrative imagination that causes a disjunction with civic participation. This lack is not surprising, given Lyotard's (1989) identification of the collapse of metanarratives agreement. Through engaging narrative in the classroom and engaging what I will term narrative literacy, instructors can heed Lyotard's warning and many of Postman's and Nussbaum's concerns.

This dissertation examines two important features of narrative engagement. One is the "shared minimalist educational narrative" that invites participation from all citizens, one into which all can enter from a common ground of learning (Arnett, 2000; Postman, 1995), locating in remnants of the previous educational project, but with a cautious invitation rather than a certain dictate. The other is the need to engage students' "home narratives" or "narrative anchors," where such exist, or to assist them in identifying/constructing a "why" for the "how" of civic and marketplace engagement. In that sense, narrative literacy takes on additional texture; it involves learning one's narrative ground, learning the minimalist common ground offered by higher education, and learning Others' narratives in a diverse, pluralistic world.

If students are able to look beyond themselves towards some guiding narrative that anchors a sense of the good, they may be inspired and have a greater sense of the reason for engaging the world in which they live. In higher education, as students begin to understand the narratives that they have been following (or as they construct a narrative to guide a life), they will gain inspiration. If there is nothing to inspire students, then education may be seen as just a “hoop to jump through” on the road to life or as a means to an end for a job (Postman, 1995). Furthermore, a reflection on the historical moments from antiquity to the present has shown the importance of a narrative structure or why for the communication of educational content directed toward civic engagement. An education that recognizes various narratives and that encourages student engagement within a particular narrative invites a return to the value of civic education, which will propel individuals to work together for the good of the community, each working from a particular narrative engaged in the minimalist “why” for such participation.

Students have lost traction for thinking about education as more than a means to the end of employment, according to Postman, Nussbaum, and others. As seen in chapter two, students have come to view education as a means to an end instead of engaging education as a continual learning process with the hope of participation in civic life. Education at its historic best provides a way for students to find their purpose and meaning in life as engagement with Others. Postman (1995) argued that students lack a narrative which can provide profound meaningful insight for the lessons that they learn, and it is still education that can help them locate those narratives. Lack of narrative structures creates difficulty for students’ understanding of why they do the things they do.

Without a narrative to follow, there is no purpose or motivation for a student for either education or for its larger purpose: engagement with the larger community.

Instructors are called to heed and give thoughtful examination to Putnam's (2000) and Postman's (1985) warning that our society would rather "bowl alone" and "amuse ourselves to death" than participate in public discourse. Why is this the case in the twenty-first century? There are many reasons why—long work weeks, not enough time to relax, other responsibilities—but this dissertation looks towards education for the answer to this question, recalling education's historic role, as reviewed in chapter 1, in civic participation. It holds today's education system responsible for moving towards systematic methods for answers and calls for an embracing of postmodern education grounded in narrative structures inviting civic participation. When students understand that narratives ask for participation in the social structures that are part of the world in which they live, they become engaged with the public. Through inviting examination of students' narratives to engage classroom material, communication instructors can bring groups of individual together who have different narratives with a common purpose to engage in civic participation. Through examining "situating" narratives, students can identify a means by which to engage material in a way that honors the larger stories of which they are a part and also contributes to a healthy civic culture.

One of the major issues that can occur uniquely in communication education is students' learning to identify the ground upon which they stand and from which they work. Many students are not taught the stories and traditions that allow them to situate events in the world by giving them meaning, resulting in lost or forgotten narratives which then result in a turn towards the self for answers or what MacIntyre (1984) calls

“emotivism” (p. 11). Lyotard (1984) echoes this point: “A *self* does not amount to much, but no self is an island; each exists in a fabric of relations that is now more complex and mobile than ever before” (p. 15). This work turns towards to the work of Alasdair MacIntyre (1984), who, in line with Lyotard (1984), addresses the many problems that exist when one works from modern presuppositions in a postmodern age. MacIntyre (1984) gives great insight into the importance of narratives in a postmodern age of diversity and difference.

Alasdair MacIntyre

The ideas and questions situated within the work of Alasdair MacIntyre (1984, 1989, 1990, 1998) allow educators to understand the importance of finding a common ground to work from to enhance and promote learning. This common ground is reached through understanding one’s own narrative and the Other’s narrative but not necessarily agreeing with the Other’s narrative. MacIntyre (1984) address the problem of a postmodern student who is accustomed to finding answers in the self instead of narrative structures. MacIntyre (1984) reminds us of the importance of students’ working from different narratives rather than grounding ideas in self. MacIntyre’s insight on the importance of narrative in this age of difference and diversity makes his work essential for this project.

Alasdair MacIntyre’s works (1984, 1989, 1990, 1998) have constituted a powerful critique of modernity and the post-enlightenment project that believed in the foregrounding of science and progress for answers to the problems that exist in the world. *After Virtue*, his most widely discussed work, is an analysis and critique of modern ethical views from the standpoint of an Aristotelian virtue ethics. This work has been a

major contributor to the philosophical debate of the last decade. In this work, MacIntyre (1984) discusses the unresolved quality of modern ethical disagreements, which is due to the lack of any shared substantive conception of the ethical good. This lack is due to the modern denial of a human nature that would provide meaning and goals for human life (Audi, 1999, p. 526). MacIntyre (1984) is critical of modernity and the post-Enlightenment moral philosophy. He believes that the last three hundred years were filled with an empty promise of rationality that was independent of historical and social context; furthermore, it was independent of any specific understanding of human nature or purpose in life, causing fragmentation and chaos in society (Horton & Mendus, 1994).

MacIntyre (1984) opens *After Virtue* by stating, “The most striking feature of contemporary moral utterance is that so much of it is used to express disagreements; and the most striking feature of the debates in which these disagreements are expressed is their interminable character” (p. 6). MacIntyre believes that, as a society, we argue endlessly about justice of war, the morality of abortion, the nature of freedom, and many other ideas that are embedded in different communities. The problem does not reside in finding agreement, because we also disagree on the criteria that is satisfactory for a starting point to engage the conversation. In that case, no conversation occurs at all, and, if it is attempted, much of the conversation stems from one’s own personal ideas of what is right—there is lack of narrative that is grounded in a tradition or story (Horton & Mendus, 1994). In today’s society, we turn towards the self and ask: “What is good for me?” “What will benefit me the most?” “How do I feel about the situation?” instead of looking at the larger whole, whether a general sense of the good of society or more particular expectations of a narrative-guided sense of the good, to discern reasons for

action. MacIntyre challenges society to confront our emotivistic tendencies—defining emotivism as:

the doctrine that all evaluative judgments and more specifically all moral judgments are *nothing but* expressions of preference, expressions of attitude or feeling, insofar as they are moral or evaluative in character. (p. 11-12)

When one finds answers in the self, a common ground to engage the conversation is difficult to find. Moving from emotivistic tendencies toward narrative structures allow for a starting point to engage conversation with Others about collaborative action in civic life.

MacIntyre (1984) stresses the importance of finding narratives in society with the assumption that individuals can find a common ground from which to work. MacIntyre advance the concept of narrative through philosophy. He believes that narrative structures give persons an embedded response to the questions that reside within society. He states,

Man is in his actions and practices, as well as in his fictions, essentially a story-telling animal. He is not essentially, but becomes through his history, a teller of stories that aspire to truth. But the key question for men is not about their own authorship; I can only answer the question ‘What am I to do?’ if I can answer the prior question ‘Of what story or stories do I find myself a part?’ We enter human society, that is, with one or more imputed characters—roles into which we have been drafted—and we have to learn what they are in order to be able to understand how Others respond to us and how our responses to them are apt to be construed. (p. 216)

MacIntyre (1984) moves the conversation from pure agency to an embedded agency. He rejects the idea that a single person has the sole responsibility of finding answers to the problems that exist in society. A person's identity is grounded in multiple narratives that make that person unique. A person finds out personal identity in relationship to who the Other is; therefore, one finds answers in larger stories that situate persons-in-roles within a larger framework of meaning.

Through narratives, people are given the opportunity to shape the world in which they live. These narratives are grounded in a sense of the good that is articulated in a social context. MacIntyre (1984) states,

In what does the unity of an individual life consist? The answer is that its unity is the unity of a narrative embodied in a single life. To ask "What is the good for me?" is to ask how best I might live out that unity and bring it to completion. To ask "What is the good for man?" is to ask what all answers to the former question must have in common. But now it is important to emphasize that it is the systematic asking of these two questions and the attempt to answer them in deed as well as in word which provide the moral life with its unity. The unity of a human life is the unity of a narrative quest. (p. 218)

Through narratives, human beings are given the opportunity to engage the world in which they live. Through understanding and recognizing the narrative structures in which they are embedded, students have the opportunity to become a part of and shape the narratives to which they belong.

Narratives are not stagnant. Narratives can change to address the historical moment. Narratives are embedded in traditions, and those traditions may change as the

historical moment changes. As shown through MacIntyre's (1998) work on ethics, rhetorical interruptions emerge that move us from one era to the next. When those interruptions occur, there may be a call for change in a particular tradition. Narratives that do not address the historical moment may die off or cause a moral crisis. In addition, when a group of persons no longer reflects on a narrative structure or recognizes the importance of that narrative, it may cease to exist. This process has occurred in education with civic engagement. Education, which used to be a means to for civic participation, has moved into a tradition of marketplace employment. One still finds traces of the civic narrative in university missions and the writings of particular scholars; however, this narrative is no longer emphasized.

It is through examining narratives in postmodernity that individuals can understand diversity and civic engagement, because one learns that in today's society a multiplicity of narratives guide and shape the world in which all persons live, and one does not have to disengage with an Other who may be different. MacIntyre (1984) states,

It is because we all live out narratives in our lives and because we understand our own lives in terms of the narratives that we live out that the form of narratives is appropriate for understanding the actions of others. Stories are lived before they are told...(212)

Humans can relate to stories because we are "story telling animals" (p. 216). Children are told bedtime stories, and we tell stories to explain information to others (Bettelheim, 1989). It is through stories that we form our narratives and start to understand the narratives of the Other.

For MacIntyre, persons have to learn what narratives are in order to be able to understand and respond to the world. Furthermore, these narratives are situated in larger narratives of a community. MacIntyre (1984) states, “I inherit from the past my family, my city, my tribe, my nation, a variety of debts, inheritances, rightful expectations and obligation. These constitute the given of my life, my moral starting point” (p. 220). Our ideas are embedded in larger stories that have a rich history and tradition; however, many times one forgets to acknowledge those who came before us who have shaped who we are today. As stated by MacIntyre (1984) “Once again the narrative phenomenon of embedding is crucial” (p. 222). It is through embeddedness that we understand who we are in relationship to the Other. We learn how and why we and the Other reach given conclusions by understanding assumptions from which reasoning and decision making begins. Embeddedness allows one to see the importance of engaging and participating with our own communities and with various Others. Moreover, it is through embeddedness that we realize the importance of being part of a larger community that shapes the world in which we live.

MacIntyre is an essential starting point in the study of narrative in human understanding. Arnett (2005), examining the work of MacIntyre, states, “*After Virtue* implies that we live in a postmodern era lacking a unifying narrative standard announcing agreed-upon social practices that we consider virtuous” (116). This moral crisis comes from the postmodern contention of narrative and virtue structures. MacIntyre (1984) provides a theoretical framework for understanding the importance of diverse narratives. These narratives give insight into why people engage decision making and action in particular ways. These narratives also act as a starting point for conversation. Through

narratives, members of a diverse society can understand the importance of traditions that engage civic participation.

In summary, MacIntyre (1984) argues that narratives inform the way one sees the world to such an extent that these narratives determine how one identifies problems and searches for answers to those problems. Without these narratives, practical rationality resided in the self, resulting in fragmentation and a moral crisis. When narratives guide our lives and shape our communication, the potential for story-centered guidance and clarity emerges. For this reason, narratives are an essential facet of one's life and communication.

The discipline of communication provides needed scholarly resources to address the value of narrative in students' lives as a framework for understanding oneself and Others. Therefore, the next scholar to be examined, situated within the discipline of communication, working from the ideas of MacIntyre, who offers insight into narrative theory, is Walter Fisher. Walter Fisher's narrative paradigm gives greater insight into how these ideas can be situated within the classroom.

Walter Fisher's Narrative Paradigm

MacIntyre's ideas are the foundation of Fisher's narrative paradigm (Fisher, 1984; 1987). Fisher and MacIntyre both believe that all forms of human communication can be understood fundamentally as stories. These stories are shaped by history, culture, and character (Fisher, 1984; 1987). Walter Fisher (1987) states, "Humans are essentially storytellers" (p. ix) and argues that human communication should be interpreted and assessed from a narrational perspective: "By 'narrative,' I refer to a theory of symbolic actions—words and/or deeds—that have sequences and meaning for those who live,

create, or interpret them” (Fisher, 1984, p. 2). For Fisher (1987), “The narrative paradigm sees people as storytellers, as authors and co-authors who creatively read and evaluate the texts of life and literature” (p. 18). The narrative paradigm allows for individuals to depict reason, rationality, and values in a way that situates ideas in a larger story (Fisher, 1984). Moreover, these ideas can be strengthened and challenged through a given narrative’s interaction with competing narratives that coexist in society.

There are four presuppositions that underlie Fisher’s narrative paradigm. First, “humans are essentially storytellers.” Second, “the paradigmatic mode of human decision making and communication is ‘good reasons,’ which vary in form among situations, genres, and media of communication.” Third, “the production and practice of good reasons are ruled by matters of history, biography, culture, and character along with the kinds of forces identified in the Frenztz and Farrell language-action paradigm.” Fourth, “rationality is determined by the nature of persons as narrative beings” (Fisher, 1984; p. 64; Fisher, 1987, p. 7-8). These four presuppositions give insight into how narratives are created, maintained, or dismissed. Narratives are first created through a speech act—someone articulating the importance of ideas. When a speech act is collectively agreed upon by Others through modes of good reasoning it gives rise to a story. A story only becomes a narrative when it is socially agreed upon in society (Arnett & Arneson, 1999). These four presuppositions lay the groundwork for a paradigm that can be evaluated through probability and fidelity.

The narrative paradigm includes criteria for evaluating a narrative and the action taking place within that narrative, referred to as “probability” (coherence) and “fidelity” (truth) (Fisher, 1987, p. 64). Narrative probability constitutes a coherent story that is

logical and consistent with certain ideas whereas narrative fidelity examines whether or not the stories are true in relationship with the stories listeners know to be true in their lives (Fisher, 1987). This echoes the work of Lyotard, who states, “The narratives allow the society in which they are told, on the one hand, to define its criteria of competence and, on the other, to evaluate according to those criteria what is performed or can be performed within it” (p. 20). For a narrative to gain enduring adherence as a guide for life, it needs to exhibit both probability and fidelity.

Narrative probability allows for consistency in ideas. It is through consistency that ideas become embedded within us. Narrative probability also allows for one to see how a narrative can guide actions and evaluate differing actions. Narrative probability functions as means of understanding action taken by those adhering to that narrative. It gives a rationale for why a truth claim is accurate, according to this particular narrative, and why action taken within that narrative’s guidelines is fitting and appropriate. Narrative fidelity is the extent to which the claims of a narrative are reasonable and provide an adequate fit for life. These two components of the narrative paradigm allow for particular petite narratives to provide a guide for everyday communication and to form a basis for learning in the classroom. In order to work with the narrative paradigm in the classroom, students must first understand the narratives that guide their lives, identify assumptions underlying those narratives, and understand the “goods” that rest within those narratives.

In the classroom, when a narrative of adherence is understood by each student, narrative probability and fidelity will allow students to hold each idea and perspective advanced in class up to the scrutiny of a given narrative structure to determine whether these ideas are consistent with assumptions residing within these narratives structures. If

these ideas are alien to the narrative, students are challenged with new ideas that they in they can reject or adopt by considering the extent to which the narrative is able to accommodate that idea. The potential to identify narratives with which the alien idea might be compatible would provide an opportunity for learning, particularly in discourse with students who subscribe to different narratives. The components of narrative probability and fidelity allow students to become reflective thinkers about the narrative structures within which they are working. Moreover, probability and fidelity give the student insight into different narrative perspectives that call for different actions and ways of understanding the nature of the world. Narrative fidelity and coherence give students the opportunity to reflect on multiple perspectives that challenge them to understand a particular good and its associative narrative framework. These ideas also allow for a learning model that works from difference to find a common ground. Through discussion of narrative engagement of ideas encountered in the classroom, the potential to identify points of contact between and among multiple narratives is increased. In the classroom, therefore, one can learn the value of engaging a multiplicity of narratives that exist in today's society in a bounded environment.

Another important element to the narrative paradigm is the logic of good reasons, which “comes into play when anyone experiences an account that implies claims about knowledge, truth, or reality” (Fisher, 1987; 194). The logic of good reasons is important because it provides open and intelligent ground that includes the values of the interpreter and the critic. Fisher (1987) believes the logic of good reasons “acknowledges and encourages awareness of the contingent character of rhetorical communication and provides information that enhances discourse on truly fundamental matters” (p.110). The

logic of good reasons examines the questions of facts, relevance, consequence, consistency, and transcendental issues. By examining the latter question, one can use the logic of good reasons to identify different values that exist within different narrative structures, basing one's approach to decision making on idea engagement rather than on like or dislike for a particular person. The logic of good reasons promotes adherence to the assumptions and positions of a given narrative instead of personal emotivistic arguments, which moves the discourse toward content and away from personalities in a postmodern classroom. Moreover, the logic of good reasons allows one to make a case for the privileging of some stories over other stories. Narratives can compete in the classroom through the logic of good reasons. The logic of good reasons does not allow us to dismiss alien ideas, but helps one learn why these stories are important in a given tradition. The logic of good reasons allows individual to express stories that are central to understanding the truth without giving up their values found within their narratives.

The narrative paradigm moves students from pure agency to situated agency. Through viewing human communication narratively, persons are fully participating in the making and/or interpreting of messages that are connected to a larger whole (Fisher, 1987). Students come to understand that they are a part of a larger story and have the power to change and shape the maturation of that narrative as well as to draw guidance and meaning from it. Students learn to find answers in given narrative structure instead of focusing on the self. These narrative structure move students to find answers in given traditions. They give students a "why" for connection and action. Through understanding diverse narratives, students gain the opportunity to accept and reject different perspectives that guide both their private and public lives.

What makes this paradigm unique is the inclusion of values and their significance for human life. Even though, for Fisher (1987), values do not have a predetermined hierarchy, he argues that they are still pertinent in our communication and decision making process. The idea of including values allows for students to understand how their values shape their communicative actions. Values give insight into why persons place importance on particular ideas and why persons make choices to engage in or refrain from particular actions. Narratives provide students the possibility to gain an understanding of “why” something should be done and the resources to consider an action right or wrong. When students have a “why,” they understand action within a larger picture or framework for life and move towards a “how” to accomplish the task of informed, reflective living.

Narratives give students a “philosophical why” that is not answered by “it has always been done this way” or “because I said so.” In the classroom, a narrative approach to education provides students with the opportunity to find a ground that gives them a “why” to act. Nietzsche (cited in Postman, 1995) believed that when a person has a why to live they can bear with almost any *how*. As stated by Postman (1995), Nietzsche’s famous aphorism applies as much to learning as to living. Our values and virtues give us insight into what is right and wrong and answer the why question. Our values give us inspiration, passion, and motivation for succeeding in life, however that success is defined. Fisher’s inclusion of virtues (publicly held goods) within the narrative paradigm directly connects the study of narrative to communication ethics, a topic to which I now turn.

In a postmodern age, narrative is inherently tied to the concept of communication ethics (Arnett, 1987). In a time of competing understandings of what is considered good, a multiplicity of communication ethics exists, each tied to a given narrative structure embedding a particular good. Therefore, one's communication ethics is derived from the narrative structures that embed them. In today's historical moment, competing narrative structures embed different goods, resulting in different views of what is ethical. Connecting narrative with communication ethics provides a way to understand the connection of the underlying ground or framework from which one makes life choices regarding ethical communicative decisions.

Narrative and communication ethics were first brought to the forefront in Arnett's (1987) article *The Status of Communication Ethics Scholarship in Speech Communication Journals from 1915-1985*. Arnett (1987) adopted Chesebro's (1969) four categories of communication ethics (democratic ethics, procedural standards and codes, universal humanitarian ethics, and contextual ethics) and added a fifth category, "narrative ethics" (p. 52). This narrative category included "articles directly related to 'narrative ethics' and others that have paved a conceptual path to this approach" (Arnett, 1987, p. 52). Arnett made known the important work on narrative that was being added to the scholarly conversation on communication ethics, focusing on the scholarly conversation of communication ethics implicit within Walter Fisher's speech act, story, or narrative that guides persons' actions and offer insights into their daily lives. The addition of this category brought about insightful research that recognized the importance of narrative to communication ethics.

In 2006 an update to the review suggested that narrative ethics was still an essential part of the scholarly conversation. Ronald C. Arnett, Pat Arneson, and LeeAnne Bell (2006) articulated the importance of narrative in an age of diversity and difference. The authors of the review addressed Lyotard's (1984) postmodern concern:

Within a multiplicity of narratives structures, the conceptual foundation for a given communication ethic becomes a temporal backdrop for understanding and engaging the foreground issues of communicative implementation and engagement. (p. 79)

Through narrative structures, one engages the world through ethics that are tied to larger stories. By situating communication ethics within a narrative framework, persons are able to articulate a given perspective of what is ethical following the guidelines of Fisher's narrative probability, narrative fidelity, and the logic of good reasons. Therefore, one's communication ethics are informed by larger stories about what is ethical. In postmodernity, one's ethical commitments need to be grounded in narrative structures that provide a foundation for decision making that is deeper, more elaborate, and more communally grounded than emotivistic tendencies in order to engage this postmodern moment (Arnett, 1987; Cooper, 2002).

A postmodern concern for multiple perspectives resulting in various choices is at the heart of the impulse for ethical action (Arnett, 1987). Persons anchored within narratives draw from sources larger than the self to guide meaningful decision making and are not left "groundless" when seeking direction and guidance for a life (MacIntyre, 1984; Fisher, 1987). The power to make an ethical choice resides in the narrative[s] the individual follows or inhabits. Arnett (1987) believes that choice-making is a key

characteristic in postmodern communication ethics. Postmodernity allows for choice in communication ethics to emerge from a narrative-driven life once again. These grounding narratives can be engaged reflectively, whether they are frameworks one has engaged from youth or embraced when older. Reflection upon one's guiding narrative bestows the power to accept or reject communicative decisions derived from an ethic grounded in that narrative.

Persons need to have an understanding of communication ethics grounded in a narrative framework. When moral assessments of situations are needed, persons need to understand what kinds of arguments and justifications will best support their ethical assertions (Jaksa & Pritchard, 1988); these answers are found in communication about narratives that house ethical positions. In this postmodern world, persuasion grounded in a tradition of why something is right or wrong becomes essential. This type of grounding is located within stories and traditions. Moreover, these stories and traditions will be challenged and will change throughout history (MacIntyre, 1998). With these challenges and changes, communication becomes a direct link to discussion of difference.

Communication is vital when thinking about ethics of all sorts in postmodernity (Cooper, 2002). From a postmodern perspective, Martha Cooper (2002) argues that "communication is a means of ethical action, necessitated by the fact that power is embedded in all interactions" (p. 300). This postmodern approach recognizes that because power is inevitable, there must be an accompanying ethical impulse at the heart of our choice making. Power implies responsibility (Arnett, 1987). As human beings we have not only a right to communicate, but an ethical responsibility in our communication. One needs to know the assumptions and background of a narrative within which one

anchors a moral identity. Communication ethics is “not simply a series of careful and reflective decisions, instance by instance, to communicate in ethically responsible ways” (Johannesen, 2002, p. 11); communication ethics is a characteristic that is embedded and defined through individuals’ narratives. If individuals understand the importance of ethical communication in postmodernity, then they may be more likely to embrace and communicate about diversity, especially in higher education, where learning becomes a common ground for understanding and engaging the Other.

Postmodernity allows for multiple definitions of communication ethics because we have multiple narrative structures. Johannesen (2000) believes communication ethics and postmodernity cannot be captured in a single definition. To engage communication ethics, one needs to be willing to ask multiple questions that encompass a wide range of ideas. Moreover, communication ethics is appropriately open to a variety of definitions. Jakska and Pritchard (1988) believe that “ethics might be viewed as an umbrella term that refers to the study of a vast range of practical concerns that, although familiar to us, nevertheless are often not clearly understood and are often subjected to much controversy” (4). In postmodernity, it is difficult for communication ethics to have a universal definition. However, Christians and Traber (1997) argue, in *Communication Ethics and Universal Values*, that all cultures can offer a distinctive insight into some of the fundamental principles of communication ethics. For these authors, every culture depends on norms that order individual relationships and social institutions. Throughout the book, Christians and Traber find ethical protonorms—truth-telling, commitment to justice, freedom in solidarity, and respect for human dignity—as core values in communication cross-culturally. They argue that

the universality of these values is beyond culture. It is rooted ontologically in the nature of human beings. It is by virtue of what it means to be human that these values are universal. (341)

Christians and Traber offer insight into finding a common thread between cultures; nevertheless, the difficulty arises in the operational definition of these protonorms. These four protonorms can be defined differently depending on the culture. (For example, respect for human dignity may only pertain to a male gender or commitment to justice may be defined through oppressing the minority.) The importance of communication ethics resides in the fact that communication ethics is a fundamental interest of any morally responsible individual, and because all human beings experience a degree of accountability to a set of hypergoods (Taylor, 1989), communication ethics is an important and valid topic for discussion even if there is disagreement on the universality of communication ethics. Moreover, in a postmodern world, communication ethics needs to be grounded in narratives that give reasons for actions.

The potential for ethical issues to arise in communication are inherent in any instance of communication between humans (Johannesen, 2002). Communication ethics focuses on how we communicate with other human beings responsibly and in a manner that is in accordance with one's guiding narrative. Questions of right or wrong, fair or unfair, caring or uncaring, good or bad, and responsible or irresponsible all stem from our communication practices (Jaksa & Prichard, 1988). Communication ethics focuses on a question of practical concerns of how we should live our lives in relationship to Others. The National Communication Association (NCA) prompts professional reflection on the

importance of communication ethics. The preamble to the NCA Credo for Ethical Communication states,

Questions of right and wrong arise whenever people communicate. Ethical communication is fundamental to responsible thinking, decision making, and the development of relationships and communities within and across contexts, cultures, channels, and media. Moreover, ethical communication enhances human worth and dignity by fostering truthfulness, fairness, responsibility, personal integrity, and respect for self and other. We believe that unethical communication threatens the quality of all communication and consequently the well-being of individuals and the society in which we live. (National Communication Association, p. 5)

The importance of ethical communication emerges in this public declaration. Ethical communication allows individuals to engage the Other, various communities, and relationships as opposed to focusing solely on the self. Through recognition of diverse narratives, each housing different understandings of the good, diversity can be engaged as a constructive and helpful characteristic in cultivating our society. Engaging diverse perspectives allows for various voices to be heard (American Council of Trustees and Alumni, 2005). A narrative perspective on diversity encourages explanation of one's ethical perspective situated within a larger story, redefining the nature of responsible communication as one engages Others from different narrative standpoints. Working from a narrative perspective, communication ethics can be engaged in the classroom in a manner responsive to postmodernity. Communication ethics in the classroom is now

becoming a common feature in communication curricula (Bell & Sleasman, 2004), offering an increased scope for application of narrative literacy.

Communication ethics in the classroom

Research on communication ethics pedagogy became apparent in the communication field in 1959, when Jensen analyzed the literature of the previous five years on teaching ethics in public address. The basic question within the literature asked, “Should a teacher of speech teach the ethical considerations in speaking in addition to the techniques of speaking?” (p. 219). Almost all writers who discussed the subject asserted that instructors of speech should teach ethical considerations in public speaking. Jensen (1959) believed that a teacher of speech had ethical obligations toward truth, the political society (the nation), the field of the liberal arts, the speech profession, and the student of speech, and, as a result, the communication discipline had an obligation to integrate communication ethics into the public address curriculum. Jensen (1985) then moved the scholarly literature to focus on how to teach communication ethics within speech communication classes.

Jensen (1985) described a number of emphases that should be stressed in the teaching of ethics in speech communication classes. First, instructors “should include all contexts of the communication process, that is, take under our umbrella interpersonal communication, small group communication, public speaking, and mass communication” (p. 326). Second, “a meaningful structure for such a course would be to organize it around ethical issues which are clustered primarily in the communicative elements of the communicator, the message, the medium, the receiver, the situation and the effects” (p. 326). Third, instructors “need to draw on as many authentic and feasible sources as

possible for our standards of ethical communicating” (p. 326). Fourth, “a fundamental attitude and approach which should be encouraged is to think in terms of the *degree* of ethical quality, rather than whether something is ethical or unethical” (p. 327). Fifth, instructors “should continue to underscore the historic emphasis that ethics is involved inherently with *oughtness*, and thus is, whether we like it or not, associated with prescriptiveness” (p. 328). Sixth, “the apparent conflict between ‘absolute’ and ‘relative’ ethics might be eased if we think instead of ‘primary’ and ‘secondary’ ethics” (p. 328). Seventh, “the familiar admonition that so-called good ends do not justify the use of evil means needs to be continually emphasized” (p. 329). Eighth, “it is important to think in terms of ‘guidelines’ rather than ‘rules’ ” (p. 329). These ideas were all highlighted with the intention that instructors could or would use them in speech communication classes.

Eleven years later, the interest in communication ethics pedagogy continues within our discipline. A survey of programs in speech communication and communication studies indicates that a total of 39% of schools are teaching or planning free-standing courses on communication ethics (Christians & Lambeth, 1996). Turman and Brunner (2003) surveyed Central States Communication Association participants and found that 37% desire panels that focus on ethics. Moreover, researchers have addressed the issue of teaching communication ethics in general (Jacobi, 1990; Jensen, 1985; Kienzler, 2004; McCaleb & Dean, 1987; Peek, Roxas, & Peek, 1995; Sproule, 1985; Struever, 1998; Winegarden & Fuss-Reineck, 1993) and, more specifically, communication ethics in the organizational communication classroom (Anderson, 2003; Brown & Mausehund, 1997; Conaway & Fernandez, 2000; Dyrud, 1998; Golen, Powers, & Titkemeyer; Hynes & Bhatia, 1996; Kirkwood & Ralston, 1996; Krohn, 1985; Mahin,

1998; Nkomo, 2003; O'Rourke, 1995; Pomeroy, 1998; Ralston, 2000; Rentz & Debs, 1987; Stablein, 2003; Stevens, 1996; Vesper, Vesper & Byung-Ju, 1995).

Communication ethics has been an important area of research within our discipline's literature (Arnett, Arneson, & Bell, 2006) and promises to continue as an important topic for discussion. However, scholars' incorporation of narrative structures and narrative literacy in the classroom gives students an embedded ground from which to work. Discussion of narrative within communication classrooms allows students to understand the ground from which their ethics emerge. It is through narrative that students come to understand "principled" positions on issues and understand the differences that exist between and among narratives. By adding a narrative perspective to the conversation, not only in communication ethics classes but in the communication curriculum as a whole, students are given the opportunity to situate themselves within the narrative communities that embed them.

By examining different narrative structures that exist in postmodernity in the communication classroom, students can work together in a time of narrative and virtue contention. When students understand their narratives and contradicting narratives held by Others, they can work with Others to engage different perspectives, enriching their own perspectives and learning from those of Others. Understanding and learning about difference does not presuppose agreement but allows opportunity for discussion. When a narrative perspective is lacking, students risk turning towards the emotivistic self, laden with individualistic opinions. When the emotivist self is the only anchor for beliefs, no criteria for evaluation are available, effectively cutting off the ability to engage and evaluate ideas. If the self is always correct, students have no reason to take the

opportunity to engage and learn from different and (perhaps) contradictory opinions. Incorporating the narrative paradigm into the classroom moves discourse to a content focus, encouraging students to understand the importance of engaging multiple perspectives in the classroom and in the world. Moreover, it gives students the opportunity to develop their engagement with the narratives that guide their own lives.

Taking a narrative-grounded approach to identifying “the good” in the classroom can provide a background of assumptions and knowledge that can guide and offer meaning to the conversation (Arnett, 1994; Arnett & Arneson, 1999). Narratives allows for characters, history and direction for communities to have collectively agreed upon stories to guide and shape collective action. A narrative guides us towards praxis that allows us to understand our ideas and the ideas of Others (Arnett & Arneson, 1999). Examining multiple narratives in the classroom permits students to engage a postmodern world of diversity and be drawn to participate in both the public and private sphere. Arnett and Arneson (1999) state,

A narrative offers a baseline for public discussion. A narrative involves the public articulation of the story formation of a people, group, or organization. The narrative offers implicit guidelines for suggesting what is important and how we should act with respect to significant events and issues. (p. 49)

Narratives keep the conversation going and allow us to learn. The next section will develop the concept of narrative literacy within higher education, with particular focus on the metaphors of constructive hermeneutic, learning and praxis.

Engagement of Narrative Literacy within the Classroom

As Lyotard (1984) reminds us, we live in a world that no longer follows one encompassing metanarrative. A multiplicity of narratives guide and shape our lives and the lives of Others. Narrative literacy offers a way to explore the differences that reside in postmodernity. Narratives, working from MacIntyre (1984) and Fisher (1987), are socially agreed upon ideas that are accepted as true or representative of the way the world and human life is constituted. Narratives are based on tradition and history. Literacy is the condition or quality of being knowledgeable or having understanding of a particular subject or field (Freire, 2000). Narrative literacy is a call for being knowledgeable about and understanding different narrative structures in society. From a dialogic perspective, narrative literacy is a call for understanding one's own narrative and the narrative of the Other. Narrative literacy is a move from an emotivistic to an embedded, grounded, content-rich answer to the questions that reside in the world in which we live. Narrative literacy is a way to move from a modern understanding of critical thinking as the deconstructive action of a disembodied agent to a postmodern understanding of engagement of petite narratives that exist in a world of contention. Narrative literacy encourages bringing different narrative perspectives to bear on a given issue or idea.

Narrative literacy in the classroom moves from one encompassing "platonic truth" to a variety of embedded engagements with reality or "truths" that exist within society. Narrative literacy challenges the enlightenment search for science, progress, and a universal truth and encourages a postmodern approach embedded in learning. It engages education from a humanities based perspective that does not focus on proving a universal Truth but engaging different ideas that lead to varied engagement with understandings of

human life and existence. Narrative literacy encourages understanding difference and diversity in postmodernity.

Postmodernity permits us to understand communication as a carrier of one's ground, tradition, and understanding of a good found within different narrative structures. Postmodern education, to meet the needs of this moment, invites persons back to the ground upon which they stand rather than the self. The self makes no sense unless it is situated in a narrative structure (Taylor, 1989). Postmodernity invites a multiplicity of narratives to surface in the classroom, generating discussion of ideas, sometimes competing ideas, of the good. In postmodernity one cannot assume an identical "why" for everyone. Postmodernity allows us to re-story the world (Arnett & Arneson, 1999; Bloland, 1995; Lyotard, 1984) Understanding narrative literacy in postmodernity is a reminder of the pervasive difficulties before us in a postmodern age of difference, diversity, and narrative and virtue contention. Moving narrative literacy into the postmodern higher education classroom works with three essential metaphors: hermeneutics (Noddings, 1998; Slattery, 1995), learning (Nussbaum, 1997; Friere, 2000), and praxis (Kincheloe 1993; Schrag, 2003).

Hermeneutics in the Classroom

Hermeneutics is the art or theory of interpretation, as well as a type of philosophy that starts with questions of interpretations (Anderson, 1989). Hermeneutics was originally concerned with interpreting sacred texts, eventually acquiring a much broader significance in its historical development, finally emerging as a philosophical position in twentieth-century German philosophy (Audi, 1999). James Anderson (1989) indicates that the word "hermeneutics" makes an etymological reference to Hermes, the messenger of the gods. The Greek lexicological roots of the term hermeneutics lies in "the verb '*hermeneuein*,' generally

translated ‘to interpret,’ and the noun ‘*hermeneia*,’ interpretation” (Palmer, 1969; p. 12). Philosophers who engage in hermeneutic study accept contingency and historicity as properties of lived experience (Noddings, 1998). The study of hermeneutics allows for engagement of ideas that are grounded in various interpretations. A hermeneutic stance is essential in the classroom because various interpretations emerge within different narrative structures.

Approaching hermeneutic philosophy in the classroom engages meaning through both texts and life as they unfold historically. Hermeneutics focuses on a careful search for meaning without an expectation that there is one precise meaning. Hermeneutics in the classroom expands the scope of our students’ visions, suggests new meanings, and encourages further conversations about ideas (Noddings, 1998). Nodding states,

Whenever [educational] philosophers reject ultimate purposes and fixed meanings, whenever they urge a diversity of views and a continuing conversation, whenever they recognize pluralism and reject monistic tendencies, they are working in the hermeneutic spirit. (p. 72)

When this hermeneutic spirit is present within the postmodern classroom, space for multiple interpretations of the good is invited. In conjunction with narrative literacy, a hermeneutic approach opens the conversation up to include different ideas of the good grounded in specific narratives.

Patrick Slattery (1995) discusses the importance of hermeneutics in a postmodern education. He believes that the discourses that emerge in a postmodern classroom are interpretive and essentially a hermeneutic endeavor. He believes that hermeneutics within the classroom can challenge many of the modern notions of education. Slattery (1995) states,

Postmodern hermeneutics can be dangerous, for it uncovers, interprets, clarifies, deconstructs, and challenges all fields of study, including curriculum development

models and methods that have been enshrined in the sacred canon of curriculum tests for decades. Postmodern hermeneutics is troubling to the traditional curriculum magisterium in the 1900s but refreshing and empowering to curriculum theorists who employ it in their interpretive inquiry. (p. 120)

Slattery (1995) believes that a hermeneutic framework in the classroom allows for engagement of each Other in the process of understanding the text, lived experience, and the self in relationship to the Other. He suggests that curriculum development in the postmodern era needs to support efforts to include creative interpretations that respect the interplay of individuals and the narratives to which they belong. These ideas need to be woven into the fabric of an education experience (Slattery, 1995).

Slattery's (1995) work is informative and instructive. One addition to his treatment is sensitivity to the need for understanding and engagement beyond critique. If one moves the conversation from "hermeneutic" to "constructive hermeneutic," conversations about ideas emerge that are not situated in critique of the Other's interpretations but are directed towards understanding and learning different interpretations. A constructive hermeneutic allows students the ability to interpret different scholarly works as productive/beneficial documents. Even if one disagrees with ideas, one knows they still matter within the larger whole of society. A constructive hermeneutic allows one to be respectful of the ground upon which the Other is working. A constructive hermeneutic approach in the classroom gives students the opportunity to engage the Other and texts/material with a specific understanding of narrative bias, allowing for idea testing and a deeper connection with their own ground through engagement with the ground of Others.

A constructive hermeneutic moves the conversation forward and allows for engagement of different ideas. A constructive hermeneutic focuses on one's own biases

and permits the bias of another to texture insights emerging between conversational partners. Working from a Gadamerian (1982) position permits recognition of bias as an inevitable factor of human knowing that is grounded in a narrative. Hans-George Gadamer (1982) denounces the presupposition that biases are problematic. It is through bias that one understands who one is in relationship to the Other. For Gadamer, our biases are our starting point in the conversation. These biases are found within one's tradition or narrative. One's communication is the carrier of that narrative content, a bias about what is considered good. For Gadamer, bias is central to human understanding; he rejects the assumption that persons can or should eliminate the bias from which they see the world. Through hermeneutics, one learns one's own biases and the biases of Others, permitting reflective understanding of ideas and greater learning (Slattery, 1995).

Gadamer engages hermeneutics from a community of understanding that people work on together to learn together (Audi, 1999). In *Truth and Method*, Gadamer (1982) presents tradition as a condition of understanding. Tradition, for Gadamer, is a part of one's very being. It is through traditions that one becomes part of a narrative. For Gadamer, our language is the site of our traditions. It is through our language that we engage the Other to learn from the Other. Therefore, these ideas are helpful for the discipline of communication, a field that gives insight into the importance of what guides and shapes our communication. Through Gadamer's hermeneutic, instructors and students can see the importance of moving from just interpretation to learning about different interpretations. Paulo Freire's work takes hermeneutics into practical application. His work brings education to the streets, offering the opportunity for learning to meet lived experience.

Learning in the classroom

With the lack of universal agreement, postmodern education can forefront the importance of a learning model; without learning we cannot and will not understand other human beings (Arnett, Fritz, & Bell, forthcoming). In a time of narrative and virtue contention, students are called to focus on the importance of learning about difference and diversity as well as their own narrative ground in order to engage actively with the world in which they live (Nussbaum, 1997) Through examining the narrative paradigm, students are given the opportunity to reflect on their own narratives and differing narratives. If students start to understand the narratives structures from which they work, they learn why ideas become important, not in an emotivistic way but grounded in a larger structure defined by a particular good with accompanying social practices (Fisher, 1984; 1987). Through learning their own narrative ground, students start to understand how they can play a role as representative of that narrative in a changing society. Through learning the ground of Others, students reflect on multiple models of existence and reality, recognizing the need to work carefully and attentively with Others who understand the world differently—not giving up their own position, but recognizing the positions of Others, many of which may be in disagreement with their own position.

In postmodernity, a learning model trumps a telling model, a remnant from a modern era (Slattery, 1995). In postmodernity, instructors and students work together to learn together. Instructors cannot open up the students' minds and deposit information; this concept is termed by Freire (2000) the "banking concept of education" (p.72), in which knowledge becomes a possession that can be given to those who may be considered to know nothing. The instructor presents himself/herself to the students as

their necessary opposite; by considering their ignorance, he/she justifies his/her own existence. The banking concept of education regards the student as adaptable, manageable beings. The latter minimizes the students' creative powers and makes it difficult for students to develop a critical consciousness that would aid in the invention of the world. When students submit to this passive form of education, they simply tend to adapt to the world as it is and to the fragmented view of reality deposited into them in the classroom (Freire, 2000).

The banking concept of education is an ineffective method of instruction that does not lead to learning and is anachronistic in a postmodern moment. Moreover, in many instances the banking concept of education hinders the learning process. The banking concept of education is based on 10 presuppositions:

- (a) the teacher teaches and the students are taught;
- (b) the teacher knows everything and the students know nothing;
- (c) the teacher thinks and the students are thought about;
- (d) the teacher talks and the students listen—meekly;
- (e) the teacher disciplines and the students are disciplined;
- (f) the teacher chooses and enforces his choice, and the students comply;
- (g) the teacher acts and the students have the illusion of acting through the action of the teacher;
- (h) the teacher chooses the program content, and the students (who were not consulted) adapt to it;
- (i) the teacher confuses the authority of knowledge with his/her own professional authority, which is set in opposition to the freedom of the students;

- (j) the teacher is the Subject of the learning process, while the pupils are mere objects (Freire, 2000, p. 73).

These ideas focus on education as a linear, one-way process instead of a dialogue. (The issue of dialogue is central to narrative literacy and will be further examined in chapter four of the dissertation. Furthermore, Freire's ideas will be developed within the historical moment of postmodernity. From the former presuppositions about learning and knowledge one can see how the banking concept of education hinders learning. Moreover, the banking concept of education helps instructors understand the importance of a learning model (postmodernity) verses a telling model (modernity). Through the banking concept of education, instructors tell the student what they need to know; a move to narrative literacy grounded in hermeneutics, learning, praxis, and dialogue challenges and engages students to learn about and understand the Other.

Freire's banking concept of knowledge is a helpful way to examine what not to do in a postmodern classroom. Joe Kincheloe (1993), in his work on *Toward a Critical Politics of Teacher Thinking: Mapping the Postmodern*, articulates the importance of moving away from Freire's banking concept of education to promote and enhance learning about the other. Kincheloe engages the ideas of moving from a modern classroom where many students enter the university from the same social status, economic status, and intellectual status to a postmodern classroom where difference and diversity are common. He encourages a move from the linear methods of education to a circular form where instructors and students learn from and about each Other. He encourages instructors to develop insightful ways to engage a classroom of diversity and difference that moves away from modern methods and techniques (Kincheloe, 1993).

Patrick Slattery (1995) believes that the curriculum development in a postmodern age needs to seek the importance of learning and understanding rather than delineating information such as selective people, methods, and events. Slattery (1995) states,

Curriculum development in the postmodern era will challenge the traditional approach of modern logical positivism to the study of history as a linear timeline of events. Postmodern curriculum will encourage autobiographical reflection, narrative inquiry, revisionist interpretation, and contextual understanding.

Knowledge will be understood as reflecting human interests, values, and actions that are socially constructed. (p. 36)

Learning and understanding becomes essential in a world of difference and diversity; however, learning must lead to action, which engages the third metaphor of praxis.

From Praxis to Narrative Praxis

Education is a powerful tool when it is focused on engagement of praxis. Praxis is the relationship between theory and practice or, as stated by Arnett and Arneson (1999), theory-informed action. Mortimer Adler (1942) asserts that the function of theory is to describe and explain facts, and the function of practice is to decide what to do about them. When one engages in theory-informed action, one engages the world in which one lives through the theories learned in the classroom. Praxis is exhibited through learning and acting reflectively (Arnett & Arneson, 1999); “praxis assumes a narrative background of moral content that embeds, limits, and guides foreground action” (Arnett, 2001, p. 333). Narrative praxis, then, is narrative-informed action. Narrative praxis allows individuals to test ideas drawn from a particular narrative structure brought into the public domain. When individuals understand narrative praxis as “narrative-informed

action,” they engage knowingly in a complex web of informational, historical, and material conditions (Arnett, 2001). Through narrative praxis developed from narrative literacy, persons make decisions based on “why” and choose their communicative actions reflectively based on a narrative background. The better one understands one’s own narrative, the more reflective one’s actions can be. Moreover, narrative praxis gives emphasis to the importance of public theory rather than privatized judgment. It is through the metaphor of praxis that one engages the world in which one lives (Arnett, 2001); narrative praxis recognizes the reflective, narrative-driven nature of action.

Kincheloe (1993) discusses the importance of praxis from both an instructors’ perspective and a students’ perspective in a postmodern classroom, offering insights for narrative praxis. He argues that praxis is essential in today’s curriculum, which sometimes disconnects both student and instructor from the world. A praxis approach permits enrichment of narrative action with civic participation and liberatory engagement of self and Other. Working from a critical postmodernism educational perspective, Kincheloe calls for a transformative pedagogy situated in praxis that liberates individuals from oppression that occurs in and outside of the classroom. He encourages students and instructors to engage the classroom with a sense of responsibility to the communities in which they live. Kincheloe addresses the classroom with praxis as an essential element that helps students and instructors understand the importance of learning how to engage the world through critical thinking, which this project repositions as narrative reflection, and theory.

Praxis addresses the genuine need for theory and action in a given historical moment. Praxis is essential in a moment where civic engagement is lacking. Calvin

Schrag (2003) grounds his argument for praxis within Ancient Greece and the common good of the *polis*. As explained in *Communicative Praxis and the Space of Subjectivity*, Schrag (2003) stresses the *polis* as relevant to the understanding of *ethos* and action within “communicative praxis” to provide “the occasion for deliberative-political discourse and action” (p. 204). Through communicative praxis, students engage each other from different narrative grounds to participate in the world in which they live. Schrag’s reflections on praxis can be situated within narrative structures that inform our actions.

Calvin Schrag (2003) introduced communicative praxis as a way to describe the texture of complexity, uncertainty, and multiplicity of communicative options. Schrag frames communicative praxis within the prepositions “*about*”, “*by*”, and “*for*” (p.179). Communication is about something, by someone and for someone. Schrag (2003) states,

Communicative praxis, as word and deed, is a network of inscriptions and intentionalities *about* something. Our foray into the new horizon of subjectivity delivered a hermeneutical self-implicature of the subject as speaker, author, and actor, marking communicative praxis as performances *by* someone. Our sketch of the rhetorical turn is designed to render explicit the intentionality of

communicative praxis as the communication of something *for* someone. (p. 179)

The subject discovers communicative praxis in discourse and action. Theory and response to the historical moment drive action. Instead of *a priori* answers to complex, textured settings, responsiveness invites engagement with one’s own and the Other’s narrative. It is through engaging the Other’s narrative that Schrag moves the conversation towards ethics and responsibility. In the words of Schrag, “The language of morality is

the language of responsiveness and responsibility, and if there is to be talk of ‘an ethics’ in all this it will need to be an ethics of the fitting response” (p. 204). In his work on the *Self After Postmodernity*, Schrag (1997) states,

This constitutes the ethical moment in which one understands oneself as a self-in-community, implicated in an acknowledgement of another who is not of one’s making, and to whose voice and action one is called upon to respond in a fitting manner. (p. 100)

The multiplicity of narratives, ideas and traditions in this postmodern age calls forth these ethical moments, when voices and actions respond ethically in a given situation and invite the response and emergence of diverse narratives. Such a response guides a grounding of narrative and an understanding of the potential opportunities in dialogue with the Other through an understanding of this historical moment of difference. Through communicative praxis of narrative literacy manifested in narrative praxis, we learn to respect the ground of the Other and engage in narrative-grounded action.

The concept of narrative literacy embedded within hermenutics, learning, and praxis engages a shift in education from the modern presuppositions of metanarrative to postmodern metanarrative decline. Narrative literacy focuses on the importance of engaging the Other’s narrative with a hope of reaching a common ground to work from. In higher education, that common ground is learning. Narrative literacy moves from emotivistic conversations in the classroom to embedded conversations. Arnett and Arneson (1999) state:

‘Emotivism’ cannot replace narratives that tell us what the “good life” should look like and why and how institutions should be supported. If ‘emotivism’

accomplished all we wanted it to do, there would be little reason for education.

Learning narratives is part of an education, even if it does not happen within a traditional classroom structure. (p. 63)

Narrative literacy encompassing the metaphors of hermeneutic, learning, and praxis in the classroom moves toward understanding diversity and difference, allowing for participative, content-grounded engagement with the Other.

Conclusion

This chapter discusses the need for narrative in today's classrooms. In educational research there has been a concern that our colleges and university are no longer producing a student who can engage the world (Black, 2004; Bok, 2003; Nussbaum, 1997). Today's colleges and universities are producing students that can only engage a specific job. Through engaging narratives in the classroom, students are given the opportunity to understand different perspectives that exist in postmodernity, effectively engaging the world. The work of Alasdair MacIntyre (1984, 1998) and Walter Fisher (1984; 1987) give insight into the importance of narrative, laying the foundation for the importance of grounding ideas within different narrative structures instead of grounding ideas in the emotivist self. As a result, it is a natural transition to move the idea of narrative into the classroom with the hope that students can learn what propels their actions and the actions of Others.

The study of narrative in the classroom has not been addressed specifically within the communication education literature, although authors such as Nussbaum (1997) and Putnam (1995) have called for the importance of narrative grounded in civic participation. Within the field of communication, the study of communication ethics has

become an essential element of a complete curriculum (Arnett, Arneson, Bell, 2006). This chapter argues that one first needs to engage in narrative literacy with the intention of understanding one's own communication ethic. Engaging narrative literacy allows for students to understand the ground from which they work. Within the discipline of communication, narrative literacy becomes essential because it is one's narrative that gives insight into a given understanding of the good, providing insight into one's communication ethics. Narrative literacy in the classroom encompasses the metaphors of hermeneutics, learning and praxis. These metaphors allow for engagement in postmodern classroom where difference and diversity are common. Once students understand the importance of narrative structures, they learn to engage a world of difference and diversity.

The next chapter will focus more specifically on the idea of dialogue in the classroom, the means by which students engage narrative literacy. Dialogue in the classroom allows for an open engagement of ideas without the fear of humiliation or degradation. Dialogue becomes an essential element to invite the student into a postmodern learning experience.

Chapter 4

Dialogue at the Heart of Postmodern Education: Promoting Narrative Literacy

As discussed in chapter three, an educational setting needs to focus on students' developing narrative literacy in order to work with Others to make a difference in the world. Narrative literacy provides equipment for engaging the Other; part of narrative literacy, likewise, involves engaging a minimalist educational narrative of learning that can become an element of students' narrative frameworks. Narrative literacy, with its focus on learning one's own narrative and that of Others, requires a minimalist shared focus on learning; therefore, in this postmodern era, it is essential for an instructor to have an open environment where students can discuss a variety of ideas arising from multiple perspectives. Lyotard's (1984) concern for education calls for a reexamination of the type of instruction that occurs in today's postmodern classroom. This chapter will focus on the importance of a dialogic education that embraces narrative literacy in the classroom. Even though dialogue is a concept that cannot be forced and there is no technique to reach dialogue, it can be engaged fruitfully as a hermeneutic endeavor that invites the Other to join the conversation for the purpose of mutual learning.

As one learns from Freire (1993a, 2003), many traditional curricula disconnect students from life and center on words emptied of the reality they are meant to represent; curricula that lack engagement with ideas and the world are of little value to the student. Many of today's traditional curricula would not serve to develop in a student a critical consciousness for engaging the world creatively (Freire, 1993, 2003). Freire (1993) sought to make those who were not aware of and not equipped to handle discussion in the public realm reflective participants through developing a critical consciousness. This

chapter moves in the direction of recognition and development of students' narratives for a "narrative consciousness" emerging through narrative literacy. Narrative literacy helps students reclaim and/or rehabilitate lost narratives or construct new ones for grounded engagement in the world.

Within the past twenty years, education has been seen as a means to coerce conformity and discourage the creative process of free thinking (Boys, 1999). As discussed in chapter two, many of today's curricula still focus on a modern type of education that places processes and methods at the forefront of curriculum structure instead of engaging education from diversity and creativity (Bloland, 1995; Slattery, 1995). Lyotard's (1984) warning of the "death" of the professor identifies a modernist conception of education when he states that "a professor is no more competent than memory bank networks..." (p. 53). This recognition is a call for the examination of the power of a dialogic education that moves beyond an information model toward a transformed understanding of what it means to be a professor. In this model, a professor can never be replaced by a machine, because a machine does not have the ability to cultivate a genuine dialogue that can transform a student. This call also recognizes the need for some ground for education; the move away from modernist foundations risks chaos and forfeiture of coordinated action and understanding without some temporal anchoring structure for coherence. The move to narrative literacy provides the possibility for both a minimalist construction of agreement on the value of learning and liberation of knowledge from modernist foundations toward temporal re-anchoring within petite narratives for conceptual coherence necessary for meaningful knowledge. This shift in

the location of temporal foundations of knowledge permits the creativity advocated by Bloland (1995) and the stability necessary for theory-informed action, or praxis.

Another way to understand the need for a transformed classroom is through Abraham Kaplan's (1994) concepts of instruction and education. Kaplan believes that instruction is related to "the transmission of information and of certain skills in the processing of that information and in the handling of other materials" (36). Kaplan's definition of instruction permits this process can be carried out in a mechanical manner. A machine can be programmed to enter a classroom and give a scripted lecture, reflecting what Lyotard (1984) would call the death of a professor. Contrary to instruction is education. Kaplan (1994) understands education as "a process of human growth [that] can take place only when human beings are fully interacting with on another" (36). This process can be fully embodied only by human beings where the unexpected and unprogrammed can emerge. A good education requires more than a specific technique that can be programmed into a computer; it requires interaction, communication, and dialogue with Others. This chapter will address many of the warnings offered by scholars about education and will focus on moving from a modern classroom to a postmodern classroom through examining the importance of a dialogic education taking place among persons embedded in petite narrative structures.

This chapter will focus predominantly on the impact of dialogue in education. It articulates the important and powerful work of the dialogic philosophies of both Martin Buber and Paulo Freire. These scholars give insight into the importance of different types of dialogue within education. They articulate the power and importance of an environment that has the possibility to engage in a genuine dialogue that involves

narrative literacy. These authors articulate the importance of understanding one's own ground, learning the ground of another, and permitting education to emerge from dialogic pedagogical meeting. The first section of this paper will focus on the importance of dialogue in the field of communication. Next it will examine the philosophy of dialogue in education by two prominent scholars, Martin Buber and Paulo Freire. The last section will conclude by discussing the implications of a dialogic education within a postmodern curriculum that engages narrative literacy to cultivate civic participation.

Dialogue and the Field of Communication

Within the past ten to fifteen years, the disciplinary study of communication has witnessed a surge in the development of and practice of dialogue. Ronald C. Arnett's (1992) book *Dialogic Education*, Rob Anderson, Kenneth N. Cissna, and Ronald C. Arnett's (1994) edited book *The Reach of Dialogue: Confirmation, Voice and Community*, Leslie A. Baxter and Barbara M. Montgomery's (1996) book *Dialogue and Dialectics*, and Rob Anderson, Leslie A. Baxter, and Kenneth N. Cissna's (2004) edited book *Dialogue: Theorizing Difference in Communication Studies* are just a few of the works that have played a major role in advancing understanding of dialogue within the communication discipline. In journal articles, the work of Arnett, Arneson, and Bell (2006) illustrates the emergent category of dialogue within the scholarly journals that focus on communication ethics. These books and articles highlight the connection of dialogue to communication ethics and its growing prominence in the field of communication. A special issue of *Communication Theory* (Anderson & Cissna, 2007) focuses on communication theory and dialogue, demonstrating that dialogue continues as an essential topic within the communication discipline. As W. Barnett Pearce and

Kimberly A. Pearce (2004) state, “Dialogue can be understood better by articulating the theories of communication on which various concepts and traditions of practice are based” (p. 55). All of these works illustrate the importance of dialogue in the communication discipline.

The next section examines the roots of dialogue as it has emerged in the field of communication. Anchored in the tradition of philosophy of communication, dialogue invites communication scholars to examine its implications for human relationships in a variety of contexts.

Dialogic Philosophies

The word dialogue originated from the Greek work dialogos (dia means “through” and logos means “the word”) (Garmston & Wellman, 1998; 32). The meaning made through words or dialogue emerges differently depending on the situation (e.g. political, educational, interpersonal, philosophical, religious) (Johannesen, 2002), resulting in different meanings and definitions of dialogue from scholar to scholar. Definitions that fit within the discipline of communication and translate into the education context are those of communication scholars Kenneth Cissna and Rob Anderson (1994) and education scholar Nicolas Burbules (1993). Cissna and Anderson (1994) , both dialogic scholars, state that “dialogue implies more than a simple back-and-forth of messages in interaction; it points to a particular process and quality of communication in which the participants ‘meet,’ which allows for changing and being changed” (p. 10). This definition moves the issue of dialogue from a method or process to a hermeneutic endeavor. According to the work of Nicolas Burbules (1993), dialogue represents “a continuous, developmental communicative interchange through which we

stand to gain a fuller apprehension of the world, ourselves, and one another” (p. 8). This definition implies growth and transformation through dialogue, focusing on content implications of this unique form of human interaction.

Taken together, these definitions allow for an understanding of the importance and power of dialogue within communication classrooms as hermeneutic entrance to one’s own narrative and the narratives of Others for transformative experience. Dialogue has the power and potential to change the lives of instructors and students. Amid the plethora of definitions of dialogue within the field of communication and education, Johannesen (2002) discusses similarities that exist among dialogic scholars, all of which highlight the shaping power of dialogue in communicative encounter.

Richard Johannesen (2002) lists and explains six major components that almost all scholars writing on dialogue identify as essential for dialogic communication. 1) Authenticity—“one is direct, honest and straightforward in communicating all information and feelings that are relevant and legitimate for the subject at hand” (p. 59). Authenticity allows for one to be who one is but still respect the Other. This component focuses on the importance of one’s own ground, whereas the next component focuses on the ground of the Other in communication. 2) Inclusion—“one attempts to ‘see the other’, ‘to experience the other side,’ to ‘imagine the real’, the reality of the other’s viewpoint” (p. 59). Inclusion allows one to see the Other as an important part of the conversation. It is through inclusion that we work to understand the ground of the Other. 3) Confirmation—“a partner in dialogue is affirmed as a person, not merely tolerated, even though we oppose her or him on some specific matter” (p. 59). Confirmation allows for difference to exist without ending the conversation. It opens the idea of learning from the

Other. Presentness—“participants in dialogue must give full concentration to bringing their total and authentic being to the encounter” (p. 59). Furthermore, persons must be willing and not forced to participate. Presentness allows for individuals to show up for the conversation willing and able to learn from the Other. 5) Spirit of Mutual Equality—“although society may rank participants in dialogue as of unequal status or accomplishment, and although the roles appropriate to each partner may differ, participants themselves view each other as persons rather than as objects, not as things, to be exploited or manipulated for selfish satisfaction” (p. 59). The spirit of mutual equality allows individuals in dialogue the ability to view each other as human beings, not as objects to be manipulated and or exploited through different roles of power. 6) Supportive Climate—“one encourages the other to communicate” (p. 60). Individuals in dialogue need to encourage each other to communicate with free expression, limiting prejudgment and assumptions that may cause harm to the Other. These six components allow one to see the importance and power of dialogue emerging within life, especially within a classroom setting where the discussion can be focused deliberately on learning. Other conceptualizations of dialogue emerge from philosophers such as Martin Buber, Hans Gadamer, Jurgen Habermas, and Mikhail Bakhtin (Anderson, Baxter, & Cissna, 2004).

Buber, Gadamer, Habermas, and Bakhtin can be considered the four prominent philosophical scholars who emerge in the literature of dialogue within the work of communication scholars. (For further scholars on dialogue see Note 1 in Anderson, Baxter and Cissna, 2004, p. 17.) Buber’s works (1958, 1965a, 1965b) examine the fundamental aspects of human experiences within meeting and relations. He associates

authentic human life with dialogic meeting. Gadamer (1976, 1982) observes dialogue as the human ability to read relationships. Habermas (1971, 1975, 1979, 1984, 1987) looks at dialogue through public contexts. Bakhtin (1981, 1984, 1986) explores dialogue through language and human history (Anderson, Baxter, and Cissna 3-4). This chapter will look specifically at the work of Martin Buber and Paulo Freire (who is in note 1 of Anderson, Baxter and Cissna, 2004) because of their strong emphasis on education. Before these scholars are engaged, this chapter will first look at dialogue more specifically in the context of education, arguing for a dialogic model that is open to communication with the Other. Dialogue in education embraces the possibility of active engagement of learning.

Dialogic Education

The classroom in higher education provides a social context where instructors and students work together to achieve the common goal of students' learning, termed by Arnett (1992) as dialogic education. Education is a way in which students can learn how to think and become active participants in the world (Chory & McCroskey, 1999; McCroskey, 1992). Astin's (1984, 1999) theory of involvement states that students learn more when they are involved in both the academic and the social aspects of their collegiate experience. According to Astin (1984, 1999), the quality and quantity of the student's involvement influences several educational outcomes, including cognitive learning, satisfaction with the entire academic life, and an increased rate of retention. This developmental theory of learning in higher education supports the importance of a dialogic learning environment.

Through dialogue, students are actively involved in their academic experience. This involvement gives student the opportunity to raise questions about ideas and concepts that have not yet been grasped or understood with clarity, to encounter alternative ways of thinking about ideas that provide a different hermeneutic entrance for understanding. Dialogue engages the student and the instructor to ask questions, discuss ideas, and examine various examples with the intention of helping students understand the information. Through dialogue students take control of their own learning, thereby permitting them to take charge of their own education. This mode of dialogic learning balances the embodied guidance of an instructor with the self-learning necessary for internalization and eventual embodiment of knowledge through engaged praxis.

The dialogic classroom offers many benefits, of which classroom engagement is only one. The next section will discuss the emancipatory benefits of dialogue in the classroom, drawing on the work of educational scholar Bell Hooks.

Benefits of Dialogue in the classroom

A dialogic education has the capability to empower students to create space for reconstruction of “knowledge” and the learning process. As discussed above, dialogue in the classroom allows for increased feedback and greater classroom interaction than the traditional classroom (Hooks, 1998). This type of dialogue is enhanced through group discussion sessions and question and answer sessions that engage not only the student but the instructor, as well. The students and instructors engage the material together, listening to what the Other is saying (Johannesen, 2000). A powerful example of this type of learning is offered by William T. Strokes (1997), who offers his experience of discussing mathematics with a student. He states, “It is only when I listened and asked them to teach

me that we began teaching each other” (205). This dialogue is central to an enhanced pedagogy that moves from a curriculum structure of telling to engaging. A dialogic education allows for students to realize that their contributions matter and that they are responsible for their own success in learning (Hooks, 1998).

Hooks (1998) presents six additional benefits from a dialogic classroom. First, in a dialogic classroom, an instructor can assess the actual cognitive levels of their students with greater fidelity. Through dialogue instructors can easily become aware whether students comprehend the material being covered. Instructors discussing the material with the students, instead of telling the students what to know, allows for an open environment for constructing information and generating the type of probing questions that permit deep idea engagement and “on the move” assessment of learning. This type of environment makes it easier for students to ask for clarification without being embarrassed, because questions are common and encouraged in dialogic education. The practices of dialogic education, in other words, encourage engaged learning as a norm. Questioning also allows the students to see the importance of bringing different perspectives to the conversation, and questions in the classroom become routine way to facilitate class discussion (Arnett, 1992).

Second, through dialogue, students learn to ask questions of themselves, to appropriate information, and to relate formal subject matter toward their experience both in and beyond the classroom (Hooks, 1998). Dialogue allows for students to link theory to practice. Students are challenged to take their knowledge from the classroom and apply it to their lives and the marketplace, because dialogic education, by its very nature, encourages an “enlarged mentality” (Benhabib, 1992) that reaches beyond the physical

confines of the classroom for a phenomenological engagement with the larger world. They are given the opportunity to associate class material with practical issues that occur within their lives. Moreover, students learn the importance of participating in and outside of the classroom. Through dialogue they are encouraged to engage the world through learning and praxis.

Third, instructors and students are both enriched by the interaction of dialogue (Hooks, 1998). The learning process is beneficial for both the student and the instructor. It is not just the students who learn, but the instructor also learns from the students. This mutuality allows the classroom to be a place of learning and not solely evaluation, moving the focus attention away from grades and toward idea engagement. The student and the instructor can work together to learn together. It is through dialogue that an enriched respect for each other occurs. The student and the instructor come to appreciate the learning relationship that occurs, a relationship about ideas and between persons (Arnett, 1992).

Fourth, the dialogue builds students' self-confidence (Hooks, 1998). Dialogue gives students the opportunity to engage in the learning process without threat of humiliation or condemnation. Ideas, not people, become the forefront of the conversation. Through dialogue, students can share their ideas without feeling afraid of making a mistake or embarrassing themselves. Dialogue allows for an open discussion about ideas that does not lead to evaluation of a person. Ideas rather than people are evaluated, resulting in students' grounding their ideas in content and not the emotivistic self.

Fifth, dialogue cultivates a more democratic learning atmosphere (Hooks, 1998). This democratic learning environment allows individuals to see the importance of the

democratic world in which they live. They are given the opportunity to discuss different ideas and reach a conclusion about what is best for the situation. Arnett (1992) agrees with Hooks (1998), who argues that a dialogic education seeks a blend of democracy and a dialogic attitude of concern for individuals. Arnett states, “A democratic environment with a dialogic thrust seeks to discover what is best by vote, while working to maintain relational connections with the opposition” (p. 140). In this democratic style, all ideas are heard and discussed within class, allowing for discussion of oppositions, which opens up ideas with depth and breadth for hermeneutic engagement.

Sixth, in dialogue, the curiosity of students is cultivated, challenging instructors to explore new angles in their understanding of subject matter. Dialogue allows for both the instructor and the student to work through various examples that are relevant to their lives and to today’s society (Hooks, 1998). In dialogue, both the instructors and students address the historical moment in which they live, bringing relevant application of material to the world in which we live. It is important for instructors to be able to relate information to today’s society and to today’s student; examples that were relevant last year or even last semester may no longer be relevant (Arnett & Arneson, 1999). Moreover, with the diversity that exists in today’s classrooms, it is importance to explore multiple examples that have the potential to engage the lives of various students.

Hooks’s six reasons to engage in a dialogic classroom explain why dialogue can be a beneficial means of learning in our postmodern society. Instructors and students are working together to achieve the common goal of learning in higher education. For this purpose to be achieved, dialogue needs to be engaged not through a technique but through a hermeneutic process.

Communication is central to pedagogical practices, and the degree to which instructors are effective in the classroom depends upon the openness and engagement of their communication (Arnett, 1992). An obsession with technique in education instead of a focus on creating an environment that invites the possibility of dialogue can lead to the lack of awareness of the human dynamics that promote learning in the classroom (Sutherland, 2003). Such lack of awareness and subsequent decreased interaction in classroom may make students feel disconnected with the content of the learning. Within the discipline of communication, much of the educational literature has focused on different methods to engage a classroom. Variables such as humor (Wrench & McCroskey, 2001, Punyanunt, 2000; Gorham & Christophel, 1990; Wanzer & Frymier, 1999; Bryant, Comisky, & Zillmann, 1979; Downs et al., 1988) self-disclosure (Cayanus & Martin, 2002; Goldstein & Benassi, 1994; Downs et al., 1988; Nussbaum, Comadena, & Holladay, 1985), and story telling (Javidi & Long, 1989; Downs et al., 1988; Holladay, 1987; Kirkwood & Gold, 1983; Eble, 1976) become methods that instructors are encouraged to use. These studies focus on ways in which an instructor can appropriately use self-disclosure, humor, and story telling. When these variables are examined as a technique to engage the classroom, however, they lose their power and connection with the students, because the focus of attention moves to the method instead of the purpose of learning. The use of self-disclosure, humor, and narrative to clarify course content (Downs et al., 1988) is important, but cannot be used as fail-safe methods of teaching to gain student's approval. Within a framework of dialogic education that gives meaning and purpose to these methods, however, their emergence happens naturally, serving a larger, more holistic purpose beyond "technique."

Dialogue in the classroom allows for an open environment of communication in the classroom rather than a specific method, technique, or format (Johannesen, 2002). Dialogue allows for an inimitable interaction to occur between students and instructor. A dialogic education permits unique experiences in the classroom that are centered on content, not methods. These unique experiences can emerge from what Baxter and Montgomery (1996) classify as “Good Dialogue” (p. 222-226). Baxter and Montgomery (1996) give working parameters from which an instructor and student can engage a dialogic classroom. These parameters are not employed as a technique but engaged as a way to open up the conversation in the classroom without losing sight of the roles and responsibilities of an instructor.

Baxter and Montgomery (1996) believe that “Good Dialogue” emerges through four important ideas. First, in dialogic education there should be a respect for boundaries (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996; 222). In the classroom, it is important for the student to realize that an instructor does have authority over the classroom. The boundaries in dialogue allow a clear understanding of student/instructor roles. The instructor is able to work within a specified role to keep the class on task. If education is to be dialogical, the role of the instructor is important because instructors are given the responsibility to guide and shape the material that allows for interactions to occur in the classroom. In addition, an instructor’s role is to help students learn important information that will help them engage the world. This information must be explained in a variety of ways, using many different examples. Freire (1993) elaborates the importance of an instructor who can guide a class by focusing on questions that enhance understanding and clarify

information (e.g. why, how, what is the relationship, why does it matter). With these questions the instructor assists in guiding the conversation.

Second, dialogue should focus on “both/and” rather than an “either/or” orientation (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996, p. 223). It is important to accept and respect different viewpoints that emerge within an instructional setting. Not all information is linear; for that reason, many perspectives on one idea should be encouraged and brought forth within the classroom. Dialogue moves away from a platonic Truth and toward an emergent understanding of perspective and standpoint on phenomena. A dialogic education requires instructors to be committed to education and learning through seeing multiple sides of an issue, while avoiding propaganda (Arnett, 1992). This type of education allows for students to distinguish the differences between ideas and allows them to form rational arguments for their perspectives instead of having a “this is that” mentality (everything is similar) or “because I said so,” “emotivistic” (MacIntyre, 1984, p. 11) attitude (my way is the only right way).

Third, contributions to dialogue allow for scholarly conversation about content issues to emerge in the classroom (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996, p. 224). Dialogic education is based on knowledge that is content centered rather than person centered (Arnett, 1992). When the main focus is on content, learning about ideas and different perspectives trumps the fact of person-centered arguments. Students’ curiosities will then promote active, responsive, substantial conversations about the content. In dialogue, students are inclined to ask questions and explore different possibilities rather than immediately accepting information. As articulated by Arnett (1992), questioning is an essential part of education that provides the base for scholarly inquiry or content-focused

learning. Questioning allows for critical thinking skills to emerge that prohibit an “I do not understand” defense mechanism that allows for one to be disengaged from the material. Moreover, when content is primary, ideas are grounded with the scholarly literature, a publicly verified means of agreement on what counts as knowledge emerging from a “petite narrative,” as Lyotard (1989) would suggest—in this case, a petite narrative of professional “expertise” that does not claim hegemony over all knowledge, but offers perspective on a limited, temporal set of informational coordinates understood as a discipline or field.

Fourth, dialogue contributes to both the students’ and instructors’ understanding (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996, p. 224). The student is able to grasp the information through enriched, many-sided discussions, and the instructor is able to learn what is relevant to the student and what ideas are difficult to grasp. Dialogic inquiry does not promote agreement or consensus about ideas, but it does allow for multifaceted, sophisticated perceptions of social existence. Dialogue allows for a *why* explanation. Baxter and Montgomery state, “The purpose of dialogue is not to merge voices but to allow for the possibility of differences” (p. 223). Through dialogue, students can acknowledge the significance of different perspectives while discovering/creating grounding for their own perspectives, giving insight into understanding and articulating differences. The fact that students can acknowledge the presence of Others and multiple perspectives to issues enriches and enhances students’ integration of subject matter.

These concepts, articulated by Baxter and Montgomery, which focused on “good dialogue,” are consistent with the dialogic philosophies of both Martin Buber and Paulo Freire. Both of these scholars have contributed insights into the importance of dialogue

within a classroom. They are known throughout the literature in the disciplines of both education and communication as premier scholars of dialogue. Their work has been and will continue to be a significant contribution to both fields of study, and their work is essential for this project. The first scholar to be discussed is Martin Buber.

Martin Buber

One of the most influential writers of our time in the areas of religion, philosophy, communication, and education was Martin Buber. His writings, numbering over one hundred, have influenced many writers and scholars from multiple disciplines. This renowned Jewish philosopher was born February 8, 1878 in Vienna. At the age of three, when his parents divorced, he was sent to live with his grandparents, Salomon and Adele Buber. Martin Buber grew up in his grandparent's multilingual house, speaking Yiddish and German at home, Hebrew and French from his early childhood, and Polish in secondary school. Buber's grandfather was a respected scholar of Jewish tradition and literature, and his grandmother enjoyed reading German classic literature. Since his grandmother was an enthusiastic reader, Buber, too, was interested in reading, choosing the works of scholars such as Kant and Nietzsche at an early age. Buber's love for learning and knowledge made him a prime candidate for university study (Smith, 1967).

Buber went on to study in Vienna, Leipzig, Berlin and Zurich. While studying philosophy, art history, German studies, and philology in Vienna, Buber became interested in the Zionist movement. In 1903, Buber was exposed to the work of Ba'al Shem Tov, the founder of Hasidism. With his interest in Hasidism, Buber became involved in an intense five year study, which resulted in several well known publications including *The Tales of Rabi Nachman* in 1906, *The Legend of the Ba'al-Shem* in 1908,

and *Ecstatic Confessions* in 1909. After these publications, Buber made his way to teaching in higher education. From 1924 to 1933, Buber lectured at the University of Frankfurt in Jewish religion and philosophy. Immediately after Hitler's seizure of power, he resigned from his professorship; however, he secretly continued to organize adult bible courses. During that time period, Buber was also co-editor of the quarterly *Die Kreatur* (the creature), which produced insightful work in religion. In March of 1938, Buber left Germany to accept a professorship at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. In 1947, he began his first lecture tour of Europe, and, by the early 1950's, Buber was lecturing at universities in the United States. He was awarded the Peace Prize in 1953 for German Booktrade. His work on and in education continued until June 13, 1965, when he died. As seen in Buber's remarkable life history (which has been truncated for this project), his works have affected many scholars and educators as well as many disciplines (Smith, 1967). This work will specifically look at Martin Buber's work on dialogue and education.

Martin Buber can be considered to be one of the four prominent scholars (the other three are Gadamer, Habermas, and Bakhtin) of dialogue (Anderson, Baxter, & Cissna, 2004, p. 3). Buber's works (1958, 1965a, 1965b) examine the fundamental aspects of human experiences within meeting and relations. He associates "authentic human life with dialogic meeting" (Anderson, Baxter, and Cissna, p. 3-4). Buber's concept of dialogue remind us of "the importance of attending to the other" (Arnett & Arneson, 1999, p. 128) through dialogue. For Buber, life is lived in the between. Moreover, a dialogic life is lived *Between Man and Man* (Arnett & Arneson, 1999; Buber, 1965a).

For Buber, there are three ways in which humans are able to perceive others who are living before their eyes: as an observer, as an onlooker, and through becoming aware. The observer focuses on fixing the observed person in his mind and “noting” (p. 10) him. There is an acceptance that one is not alone in the world and that people engage the world through the Other. Observation allows one to notice the Other without necessarily engaging the Other. Next, the onlooker sees the Other in relationship to part and whole. The onlooker sees the Other as being a part of the greater whole. The onlooker does not attend to the Other, but recognizes the importance of the Other in the world. The last notion of becoming aware focuses on the idea of a word demanding an answer for the person (Buber, 1965a, p. 10). Becoming aware engages the Other with a conscious turn towards the Other. For Buber, this rare turning towards the Other is the basic movement of a life of dialogue (Buber, 1965a). Buber (1965a) states, “The life of dialogue is not in which you have much to do with men, but one in which you really have to do with those whom you have to do.” (Buber, 1965a, p. 8-10). Becoming aware focuses on the importance of the Other to the conversation—it is only through the Other that engagement between ideas becomes significant. For Buber, the key to dialogue is to be able to respond, sometimes without knowing, to the unsaid.

For Buber (1965a), there are three realms of dialogue: genuine dialogue, technical dialogue and monologue. All three elements are essential in dialogue. Genuine dialogue can be both silent and spoken because the essential element is not in the words but in “seeing the Other” or “experiencing the other side” (p. 87). This dialogue focuses on what each participant really has in mind—the Other or Others. In genuine dialogue, one turns towards the Other with the intention of establishing a mutual relationship between

the two parties. Genuine dialogue is rare; once one notices one is engaged in genuine dialogue, it no longer occurs. Genuine dialogue has the power to transform oneself and the Other. It is through genuine dialogue that instructors and students change one another. Technical dialogue focuses on the need for objective understanding. Technical dialogue may consist of explaining how something works or giving directions for a test. Through technical dialogue, persons become aware of essential information that allows them to follow rules in life. In monologue there is a lack of connectedness towards the Other person. Monologue can be disguised as dialogue when two or more people meet in a space to communicate and their focus is not on the Other but on something else. Monologue allows one to be present without fully engaging the conversation. Meeting the Other, even when distracted, shows the importance of attending to the Other. All three forms of dialogue are important and necessary in education (Buber, 1965a).

For Buber (1965a), there are two basic approaches to education and the task of the educator. According to the first approach, “to educate means to draw out of the child that which is in him; not to bring the child anything from the outside, but merely to overcome the disturbing influences, to set aside the obstacles which hinder his [her] free development—to allow the child to become himself (p. 149). This type of education focuses on what already exists in the child. Education is seen as a means for self-discovery that includes instructors helping the children “discover” things about themselves. According to the second approach, “education means shaping the child into a form which the educator must first visualize, so that it may serve as a directive for his work” (p. 149). This type of education allows the instructor to help the student understand the importance of topics that are essential for the child to know. The first kind

of education is more humble and passive whereas the second carries greater responsibilities. These two approaches examined within higher education can work together to engage the student as a learned and learning being. In the first approach the student is given the opportunity to engage the classroom through the narratives they already follow and know. The student is able to reflect on who they are as a narrative being in relationship to the Other, who is also a narrative being. The second approach allows for challenges and new perspectives about ideas to emerge within the classroom, inviting diverse narratives to become a part of and enrich the learning experience. These ideas can both challenge and enhance their views that already exist.

Buber's philosophy on education focuses on "the development of the creative power in the child" (Buber, 1965a; 83). These powers allow a student to engage the world creatively. The student is a part of reality that will become the future; therefore, it is important for education to become a reality that engages the student and the Other. Buber believes that an instructor's task is to choose and present material that is relevant for the student and for the student's engagement with the world. This material brings the students forth while respecting their integrity and curiosity about the world (Berry, 1985). Buber acknowledges a student's own ground. He calls forth a philosophy of education that does not allow for individuals to impose their ground upon Others. Berry (1985) states, "To be sure, someone who is teaching as Buber suggests [the instructor] will consciously seek to avoid imposing his or her views on the pupil" (p. 46). For Buber, the instructor and the student will both begin with knowledge of their ground; this ground may not begin with agreement; however, this difference in grounds can lead to learning. The instructor and student work together without feeling oppressed by the Other and with

respect for the ground each is working from. The instructor and the student are willing to learn from the Other.

When students and instructors connect with each other, learning emerges between them. Buber (1965a) believes that the relationship between an instructor and a student can become genuine dialogue. This genuine dialogue allows for a greater understanding on the part of both the student and the instructor. For Buber, one of the key components in a pedagogical relationship is that it does not rest upon full reciprocity, but that the instructor must “enclose” or “embrace” the student (Schaeder, 1973). The instructor’s role is, first, to get the students engaged with the content. This action of leading the student into learning allows the instructor to forefront information that is essential to the class.

When the instructor takes an active role in leading the student into the conversation of learning, the learning may appear to be forced upon the students, and the achievement will take the form of a one-sided event at first. Later, however, the learning becomes more reciprocal. Buber (1965a) states, “Only if someone grasps his hand not as a ‘creator’ but as a fellow creature lost in the world, to be his comrade or friend or lover beyond the arts, does he have an awareness and a share of mutuality” (p. 87). The instructor’s role is to invite the students in by grasping their hands and inviting them into the relationship. In a truly reciprocal conversation both sides will be equal, but in an educational conversation the instructor “has found direction” and the student “is finding it” (Berry, 1985, p. 45). The roles are not equal. As students learn to engage the conversation, becoming part of the classroom, they gain a greater sense of responsibility

for their own learning and, hence, begin to work with greater mutuality approaching equality. What emerges is a type of “idea equality,” not “role equality.”

For Buber, a student’s youthful spontaneity must be carefully nurtured, not cannot suppressed, by the instructor. Roles and boundaries still must be enforced by the instructor, but these roles and boundaries must not restrain the student from creative learning. When there is a sense of suppression by the instructor, students start to feel uncomfortable engaging the material and asking questions. It is important not to forget that a student’s questioning is an important part of education. The student engagement of ideas works best not by telling from the instructor, but by learning on the part of the student. This engagement helps students become active participants in the world in which they live. Buber states,

The world, that is the whole environment, nature and society, “educates” the human being: it draws out his powers, and makes him grasp and penetrate its objections. What we term education, conscious and willed, means *a selection by man of the effective world*: it means to give decisive effective power to a selection of the world which is concentrated and manifested in the educator. The relation in education is lifted out of the purposelessly streaming education by all things, and is marked off as purpose. (Buber, 1965a, p. 89)

When students feel as if they have a purpose in the world, they are empowered to engage the world and feel a responsibility towards it.

For Buber, students also need to feel a sense of responsibility for their own educational experiences. An instructor cannot force education onto or into a student. An instructor can invite a student into dialogue but cannot make that student join the

dialogue. It is the student's responsibility to participate in the classroom experience.

When a genuine dialogue occurs in the classroom, both the instructor and the student will be participating in the learning process voluntarily. This genuine dialogue can take many forms. For example, the question and raising of the hand can be genuine dialogue for the student. For the instructor, genuine dialogue can occur naturally, unrecognized, because once noticed, genuine dialogue loses its character and is no longer genuine dialogue (Buber, 1965a). These actions in the classroom take place through instructor initiation and are engaged in response by the student—neither can be forced.

For Buber (1965a), instructors need to make a connection with their students that allow them to become what they want to become, not what is mandated. Students need to be given the opportunity to figure out what path they wish to follow. This path does not have to be the same as the instructor would choose. In the classroom, although there will always be a hierarchy that places the instructor above the student, there must be a balance between guidance and roles/responsibility of the instructor in order to avoid suppression. Suppression causes a student to disengage from learning about different options. It is suppression that focuses on a telling model that informs the student what to do.

Roles are helpful in education. It is through taking the role of the student that students learn what their responsibilities in the classroom include. As a student, roles include, but are not limited to, participating, studying, and learning. It is through the roles of the instructor that instructors take the responsibility of being in charge of the classroom to help facilitate the learning. These roles and responsibility are never taken off the instructors shoulders during dialogue (Buber, 1965a).

The instructor is charged with responsibility for what occurs in the classroom. The instructor's role is to assist students in finding their way in life through understanding the rules that exist and need to be followed for the good of the community. The instructor's role "has to introduce discipline and order, he has to establish a law, and he can only strive and hope for the result that discipline and order will become more and more inward and autonomous, and that at last the law will be written in the heart of his pupils" (Buber, 1965a, p.113). Discipline and order in the classroom are starting points towards developing a character in the student. However, this discipline and order cannot and should not lead to suppression of learning different ideas (Berry, 1985). As noted by Buber, ideas that contradict the instructor's view often leads to insightful learning experiences for both the instructor and the student.

For Buber, an instructor may cultivate and enhance a student's personality, but in education a main goal can become a constructive focus on the student's character. Character is not easy to develop, because once students notice a focus on character, they may not allow themselves to be educated (Buber, 1965a). Buber (1965a) states,

Only in his whole being, in all his spontaneity can the educator truly affect the whole being of his pupil. For educating characters you do not need a moral genius, but you need a man who is wholly alive and able to communicate himself directly to his fellow being. (p. 105)

The instructor's task cannot consist solely in educating great character, nor is it helpful to work solely with an information-based lecture style of education. Buber suggests that a dialogic education should be viewed as education of character and education of information. These component work together to form a well rounded individual

responsible for personal actions in the community. Buber states, “Genuine education of character is genuine education for community” (Buber, 1965a, p. 116). When there is genuine education, there is an education of the whole being that is responsible for the Other.

For Buber, genuine educators have three attributes that appear in the overall educational process: “humility”, “self-awareness”, and “student confidence” (Buber, 1965a, p. 107). The first attribute, humility, stems from the awareness of being only one element amidst the fullness of life. It is through humility that the instructor realizes and understands that the instructor’s role as only one part of the student’s life, a part that forms and shapes who the student will one day become. An instructor cannot select students, but the instructor’s destiny lies in the very meaning of educating those students, even if they do not want to be educated. The students also realize that they are one part of a greater community in which they live. It is through humility they learn to understand their roles and responsibilities for the Other and the community.

The second attribute, self-awareness, occurs when there is a feeling of responsibility for the ground of the student, the ground of the instructor, and the material selected; all of these elements will affect the whole person. It is through self awareness that both instructors and students understand the ground upon which they stand. Both the student and instructor come with a ground; however that ground can be shaped through the material selected in education. The instructor is given the role to help students become aware of who they are in relationship to Others. This self awareness becomes apparent through education because students are challenged by the instructor to engage different ideas and perspectives in the classroom.

The third attribute, student confidence, occurs when the student accepts the educator as a person and is willing to engage in learning. The student trusts that the instructor is not making a business out of students but is taking part in their lives. Students come to understand human truth and the truth of human existence and learn to ask questions in the classroom and in their lives. Confidence does not occur through an instructor trying to win it directly, but through indirect and sincere participation in the life of the students (Buber, 1965a). Buber (1965a) states, “It is not the educational intention but it is the meeting which is educationally fruitful” (p. 107). Even after confidence between student and instructor is instilled, the instructor must not forget the limits of education. Confidence does not imply unlimited agreement, nor does it imply a genuine dialogue constantly, but it allows for a starting point to begin engaging education.

For Buber, an instructor can “awaken in young people the courage to shoulder life again” (Buber, 1965a, p. 115). Instructors are given the opportunity to shape the lives of their students and the future. Buber (1965a) states

For the genuine educator does not merely consider individual functions of his pupil, as one intending to teach him only to know or be capable of certain definite things; but his concern is always the person as a whole, both in the actuality in which he lives before you now and in his possibilities, what he can become. (p. 104)

Martin Buber’s philosophy on dialogic education (1965a) inspires instructors and students to engage a classroom with the hope that one day genuine dialogue will appear and transform them both. The powerful insight of Martin Buber’s educational philosophy gives great insight into the importance of engaging education through the three realms of

dialogue. The second scholar who discusses the power and transformative function of dialogue and education is Paulo Freire, whose ideas are compatible with those of Buber and address another dimension of human life: the realm of power and face-saving.

Paulo Freire

Joe L. Kincheloe (1997) states, “I suppose Paulo Freire is the closest thing education has to a celebrity. Known and loved (or not) throughout the world, Paulo commands a presence unequal by anyone who calls himself an educator” (vii). Paulo Freire was more than an educator; he was a humanitarian and an influential theorist. He transformed education for the oppressed. His powerful words and actions called forth an education that would not only move the oppressed to liberation but would move all educational theorists and scholars to understand the importance and power of education. Paulo Freire’s scholarly influence on education has remade its landscape, addressing issues and ideas relevant for students and instructors of today’s postmodern era. His work shows the power and transformative function of education in a world of difference and diversity.

Paulo Freire was born on September 19, 1921 in Recife, one of Brazil’s poorest regions. His parents were devout Catholics which later had a great influence on Freire’s life. His father was a low level officer in the military where prestige was high but the pay was low. His mother was the educator at home, teaching Freire to read and write. Her instructional style was not that of the typical classroom setting. She taught her son by writing letters and drawing pictures in their mud yard. She believed that this would enhance his creativity and help him want to learn. In his earlier years, Freire’s public school teachers labeled him as having mild mental retardation; however, he was able to

overcome this problem and, unlike many of the children in his home town, was able to attend the University of Recife where he was trained to be a lawyer (Collins, 1977).

At the university, Freire was highly influenced by the growing Catholic Action movement, later known as the liberation theology movement. In school he joined a Catholic Action group that focused on the concepts of society and social change and was acutely aware of the conditions of poverty and hunger in the northeast region of Brazil. After abandoning his law career in 1946, Paulo Freire worked at a social service agency for the state of Pernambuco. His responsibilities were in the programs of education—educating the rural poor and industrial workers in the areas around his homeland. This job sparked his interest in the problems of adult literacy and popular education. In 1954, he resigned from the social service agency and found his calling in teaching, working at the University of Recife as an instructor of history and philosophy while continuing his education. In 1959, Freire received his doctorate from the University of Recife (Collins, 1977).

Freire's ideas on education were developed within university and state-sponsored programs that focused on the movements for democratic education in northeast Brazil. During the growth of these movements, in the late 1950s, the traditional social structure was changing. This period was one of the great awakenings and changes throughout the country. In 1959, Manuel Arraes, a nationalist and radical democrat, became the new progressive mayor, placing Freire in charge of the active adult-education program titled 'Movimento de Cultura Popular'. This program would carry out the initiatives of grassroots education, adult literacy, and development of critical consciousness of the masses. With the election of a new populist national government in 1960, multiple new

popular educational and cultural programs were formed. In 1962, Freire became head of a new cultural extension service established for popular education in the region. His educational goal was to reach five million illiterate people throughout the county, a goal that he never reached. In 1964, a military coup overthrew the Goulart government and, as a result, the national literacy campaign was halted. The new government enacted new laws depriving approximately one hundred influential members of the previous governments of their rights for decades. Paulo Freire was placed in prison for seventy-five days and was then forced to flee the country, along with hundreds of other activists and leaders in the government (Collins, 1977).

Brazil's attitudes toward education at the turn and earlier part of the twentieth century no doubt influenced Freire's work. The emphasis on human contributions supported by anti-positivism provided a foundation for Freire's humanistic approach toward education. In 1969, he was given the opportunity to discuss many educational methods when he was appointed visiting professor at Harvard. Freire continued his work on education, moving to Geneva, Switzerland to accept the role of special educational advisor to the World Congress of Churches (Collin, 1977).

Freire's work has shaped education not only in Brazil but for all educators concerned for the oppressed and marginalized voice. What is unique about the work of Paulo Freire is that he put forward a pedagogy for the oppressed to counteract pedagogies that represented and perpetuated the status quo. He wanted to give the oppressed the opportunity to have "the act of reading the world by reading the word" (Freire & Macedo, 2001, p. 9). His works are more than a method for literary education; they consist of a deep understanding of education that has its political nature at the core of its concerns

(Freire & Macedo, 2001). He has allowed people to see the important humanizing affect of pedagogy. Freire's personal vita (Cook, 2006) consists of many books and articles that have changed the way people think about education. Paulo Freire died in 1997; however, his work continues to be a strong asset to the field of education, an enduring legacy to the power of literacy.

The importance of Freire's work resides within a historical moment of oppression. His work cannot be directly translated into today's educational system in the United States, where there is very little oppression and few extremely poor people attending institutions of higher education. In this project, I examine Freire's work with the realization that today's college or university students do not share the same experiences as the oppressed students that Freire worked with; however, Freire's educational ideas, which include the notion of dialogue, challenge students and instructors of today to take part in transforming the world. Through his writings, he shows the power of education to call forth a responsibility for those educated to engage the world and help Others who are less privileged. Moreover, his ideas about dialogue can still play a strong role within today's postmodern classroom of diversity and difference.

Paulo Freire's works bring forth a pedagogy that shows why a dialogic education is essential. His works illustrates the importance of learning about difference through dialogue. One of his most famous works is *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970/2000); other relevant works include *Education for Critical Consciousness* (1993a), *Pedagogy of Hope: Reliving Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1992/1998), *Pedagogy in Process: The Letters to Guinea-Bissau* (1978), *Pedagogy of the City* (1993b), and *Pedagogy of the Heart* (1997). Indubitably, by the titles of his books alone, it is evident that Freire worked

for the development of education and improvement of society. Within his works, Freire incorporates the notions of freedom, liberty, and humanity in order to create ‘freedom’ for the oppressed within a pedagogical framework. He focuses on the importance of empowering the minority through education. He also addresses the question of humanity through education. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, in essence, presents itself as “a pedagogy of humankind” (Freire, 2000, p. 36). Paulo Freire is able to show how education can be a powerful tool used to liberate human beings (Freire & Macedo, 2001). For Freire, education should be relevant to the practice of freedom as opposed to the practice of dominance.

Freire’s (2000) philosophy of dialogue is situated in the notion of literacy and the oppressed. Freire reserves dialogue for those with a sincere desire to learn. This desire for learning opens up the possibility to listen and engage the Other. Someone who assumes the position of telling without listening or engaging the Other is unlikely ever to experience a true dialogue. He engages the classroom through a learning model that allows for both the instructor and the students to learn from one another. Along with reciprocal learning, that there must be two perspectives or tensional positions represented, for instance, the student and the instructor. These tensions push the instructor and the student to engage each other at face value. He encourages the students to teach the instructor and the instructor to teach the students. Each party is open to learning about different experiences and perspectives on ideas with the notion of saving face always in the forefront of the conversation. Learning takes place without the threat of loss of dignity.

Freire (2000) believed that an instructor has an obligation to engage a classroom without humiliating or degrading those who wish to learn. Arnett and Arneson (1999) state, “Paulo Freire has a dialogic voice that pragmatically protects the dignity of the other, permitting the learning process to proceed” (p. 168). His pedagogy supports the absence of embarrassment and degradation (Arnett & Arneson, 1999). This face saving style allows for educators to encourage student participation without fear of humiliation if a wrong answer is offered or an inaccurate response given on the part of a student. He encourages all to participate in making connections from what the student may already know or engaging the material with questions. He establishes an ideal learning environment for those who may fear not knowing enough and allows them to participate in multiple ways. The concept of allowing the Other to contribute without fear and humiliation encourages all to engage in the conversation, making a dialogic model of education possible.

Freire (2000) believed that the oppressed student would not be able to engage in an education that focused on a dictatorship model because of the fear of not knowing enough. However, like Buber, Freire, recognized the roles and responsibilities of an instructor. Freire made his students accountable for their education. The students were given the responsibility to engage ideas. It was also the students’ responsibility to be prepared for the classroom. For Freire, students have to give their all and be willing to sacrifice for learning. Freire believed if students were to benefit from education, they had to understand their responsibilities in education. Freire (2000) states, “I cannot think *for others* or *without others*, nor can others think *for me*” (p. 108). Everyone has a part in

education, and it is the responsibility of both the instructor and the student to uphold their side of the learning equation in the classroom.

Collaboration on ideas in the classroom allows for students and instructors to participate in the learning process together. He believed that an instructors' thinking was authenticated only by the authenticity of the students' thinking. Instructors cannot think for their students (Freire, 2000). Authentic education is not carried on by the notion of instructor *for* student or instructor *about* student but rather by the idea of instructor *with* student. Instructors and students need to work together to learn together (Freire, 2000). If an instructor believes that the instructor is the only one responsible for learning, a "banking concept of education" (p. 53) would occur.

The banking concept of education is a major idea throughout Freire's works. The banking concept of education refers to the idea of students as empty containers whom the instructor is to fill with knowledge. Students become passive individuals who do not engage in the learning process and only memorize information. Instructors who believe that education is the transfer of knowledge focus on a banking concept of education. These instructors have no love for dialogue. Moreover, these instructors memorize lessons plans and instruct by only telling a student what is right or wrong (Freire, 2000). The banking concept of education does not allow for a student's creativity to develop (Freire, 1993a). Freire believes that something powerful takes place when a teacher is able to engage the classroom dialogically, and he was convinced that education focused on a banking model destroys the true meaning of education. He (1998) states

The teacher who does not respect the student's curiosity in its diverse aesthetic, linguistic, and syntactical expressions; who uses irony to put down legitimate

questioning; who is not respectfully present in the educational experience of the student, transgresses fundamental ethical principles of the human condition.

(p. 59)

For Freire, education is an act of love and courage which must not fear the analysis of reality or avoid creative discussions (Freire, 1993a). Education should not focus on the banking concept that considers students' minds as vessels to be filled, but on dialogue, where reciprocal learning occurs.

Instead of depositing information into a student's head, Freire (2000) believed in drawing out what the students already knew. He articulated the importance of a dialogue that allowed for students to take information that was common to them and use it in the learning process. Freire (2006) moved the conversation from the modernist banking notion, where there is a fixed "truth" to be put in, to a true engagement, where instructors do have wisdom to offer, but they are offering it as situated within what they draw out, encouraging the student to identify the guiding petite narratives of their lives, in the terms of this project. Freire's concept of drawing ideas out of a student is consistent with the task of helping students figure out what narratives they follow and what narratives they would like to become part of.

In most of his works, Freire focused on a dialogic model of education that transformed the world through praxis. Freire (2000) believed that within learning there was both "reflection and action" (p. 87) and not transferred knowledge. The ideas of reflection and action would work together to form praxis—transforming the world in which one lives. Dialogue would allow for individuals to reflect and act on ideas that had the potential to change the world in which they lived. His primary goal was to prepare

individuals for dialogic encounters that could help shape the world. As individuals became able to speak and articulate their truths, they became able to transform their world of oppression into a world of opportunity. Oppressed individuals who became educated were unwilling to view Others simply as objects—both themselves and others were human beings capable of participating in the world (Anderson et al., 2004).

Individuals came to perceive themselves and Others as participants in the world who have the ability to produce change. It was through this dialogic education that individuals became historical beings and realized they had the power to transform the world in which they lived. Freire's notion of dialogue allows existence to occur "between men/women and men/women, men/women and the world, and men/women and their creator" (Freire, 1993a, p.18).

Freire's philosophy of dialogue allows for respect of the historical moment of teacher, student, and ideas within the dialogue. Freire provides instructors with a reason or a *why* to be in dialogue with their students. Additionally, he offers the student a *why* to be in dialogue with the instructor. Freire asks the student to bring a personal historical perspective to the classroom, and, as a result, instructor and students can learn from each other (Arnett & Arneson, 1999). True dialogue comes from thinking about the historical moment in which one is working, creating critical thinking skills. Critical thinking emerges in a dialogic education.

Dialogue allows for students to form a constructive hermeneutic that allows for critical thinking to occur in the classroom. Critical thinking allows for students to discern an indivisible solidarity between the world and people living in the world and admits no dichotomy between them. Critical thinking perceives reality as a process, as

transformation, as something more than a static entity. The latter is thinking that does not separate itself from action, but continually immerses itself in temporality without fear of the risks involved. For the critical thinker, the important entities are the continuing transformations of reality (Freire, 2000). When students are able to perceive critically the themes of their time, and thus to intervene actively in reality, they are able to distinguish times of change and be a key component in the changes that occur within life. Individuals who lack critical thinking skills, on the other hand, will have difficulty adjusting to change and may stay stagnant in their lives (Freire, 1993a).

Freire uses dialogue as a way in which persons achieve significance as human beings. Love is the foundation for dialogue in that one has to be committed to the Other. Dialogue cannot exist without humility and faith (Freire, 2000). Freire (2000) states,

Dialogue further requires an intense faith in humankind, faith in their power to make and remake, to create and re-create, faith in their vocation to be more fully human (which is not the privilege of an elite, but the birthright of all). Faith in people is an *a priori* requirement for dialogue; the 'dialogic man' believes in others even before he meets them face to face. (p. 71-72)

Dialogue, for Freire, is founded upon love, humility, and faith. Love, humility, and faith allow individuals to focus on the Other without the need for jealousy or distrust. As shown through Paulo Freire's works (1978, 1993a, 1993b, 1997, 1998, 2000), dialogic education gives individuals the opportunity to have an informed ground to stand on with the hope that different voices will emerge to keep the conversation about ideas always open to new possibilities. Freire would support the idea that life is not about the 'I,' but about the ground that *we all* stand on and the narratives of which we are a part of or

create in this world. A dialogic education focuses on the importance of knowledge and learning. This type of education allows students to have an informed ground to stand on. Instructors do not know everything there is to know about life and about the subjects they teach, but they can inform students of different ideas that promote discussion. From a Freirian perspective, instructors become learning workers who state their biases and focus on learning as a gift. This gift does not allow one to bestow knowledge on Others, but does allow one to learn from Others (Freire, 2000). Paulo Freire's work on dialogue is similar to that of Martin Buber (1965a) in that they both challenge the instructor and the student to be better communicators in the classroom.

Martin Buber and Paulo Freire: Connecting Dialogue to Communication,
Narrative Literacy, and Civic Engagement

In the preface of *The Martin Buber-Carl Rogers Dialogue: A New Transcript with Commentary by Anderson and Cissna* (1997), the authors discuss scholars' skepticism about the study of dialogue. This skepticism reminds us that researchers "should assume the responsibility to study dialogue and its potential in the most realistic, the most concrete, and the most pragmatic ways possible" (ix). Dialogue opens opportunities for students to enjoy education and be changed by education. In addition, dialogue allows for a transformative effect on the student, instructor, and the world.

Dialogue and the Field of Communication

The study of dialogue, most recently, has been grounded within the discipline of communication (Anderson et al, 2004). Both Martin Buber and Paulo Freire are essential philosophers in the study of education through the lens of communication. In the forward to Ronald C. Arnett's (1986) work, *Communication and Community*, Maurice Freidman

states, “The implications of Martin Buber’s philosophy of dialogue for the understanding of communication have been given much attention in recent years by scholars in the field of communication...” (vii). It is important that communication scholars continue to recognize the importance and power of both Martin Buber’s and Paulo Freire’s dialogue within the communication discipline.

In relationship to communication, these philosophers observe speech communication as the identifying feature of humanity (Anderson et al., 2004). Buber (1965a) articulates the importance of communication that takes place between human beings. He articulates the importance of communication that not only focuses on the self but engages the Other in the conversation. He grounds dialogue in recognizing the importance of the Other in our everyday lives. Similar to Buber, Freire analyzes dialogue as a human phenomenon that focuses on *the word*. Through dialogue, individuals have the ability to transform the world through their words or communication. Freire (2000) states, “Without dialogue there is no communication, and without communication there can be no true education” (p. 73-74). Only through one’s communication can human life hold meaning, and, as Freire states, “Only dialogue truly communicates” (Freire, 1993a, p. 45). For Freire, the lines of communication between the instructor and the student are essential in the classroom. Both of these philosophers believe that it is through communication that there is a better understand of both parties participating in education.

Within the field of communication, it is a natural move to understand the advantages of studying dialogue in general and in the classroom. Communication scholars believe that our discipline can help invigorate a classroom because, as a discipline, we are at the heart of dialogic study. Mary Mino (2000) suggests that the

discipline of communication can transform education by shifting the focus from a teaching paradigm to a learning paradigm, which emphasizes the quality of learning. She articulates the importance of the discipline of communication in transforming education. The discipline of communication is an excellent place to engage dialogic education because the study of communication examines many important topics that are at the heart of students' lives. The field of communication examines topics that are pertinent to both public and private lives. It focuses on the importance of communication in the world in which one lives and calls fourth engagement with multiple narrative structures.

Dialogue and Narrative Literacy

The use of dialogue in the classroom promotes narrative literacy by allowing for multiple narratives to be heard and discussed. The work of Buber and Freire supports the importance of one's narrative emerging within dialogic education. "For Buber, dialogue does not begin with the conversation at hand [...] it begins with the ground of conviction that one takes into the conversation" (Arnett & Arneson, 1999, p. 176). Freire (2000) supports Buber's (1965a) stance on the respect for the narrative of the student by articulating the importance of both the student and instructor learning from the ground upon which the Other is working. These scholars examine the importance of differences that emerge in the classroom with the hope of finding trust in the Other to learn from the Other. Both scholars believe in and work for the success of sincere human beings. Human beings stand upon and work from given narratives that allow for trust in the Other and the world in which persons live. Buber states "Trust, trust in the world, because this human being exists—that is the most inward achievement of the relation in education" (Buber, 1965a). Paulo Freire (2000) opens *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* by stating "from these

pages I hope at least the following will endure: my trust in the people, and my faith in men and women, and in the creation of a world in which it will be easier to love” (p. 22). For these scholars, dialogic education enriches humanity by allowing individuals with different narratives to participate in dialogue. It opens the conversation up for engagement with narrative literacy allowing for Others to participate in world of difference.

As shown through the works of Buber and Freire, a dialogic education allows for a conversation about ideas grounded in narratives. In dialogue emerges an attitude and concrete commitment to the conversation about ideas, persons, and values (Arnett, 1992). In a dialogic education, narratives make the difference in the quality of human life and in the way information is processed and applied. Arnett (1992) states:

The goals of dialogic education reveal the importance of accumulation of information and a recognition of the following: the importance of having a value base or ground from which to meet and interpret history and current events in one’s personal and professional life, as well as in the larger world; the significance of ideas as our common center of intellectual curiosity; the importance that time plays in the nurturing of relationships; and the hope that a student will develop a philosophical foundation open to revision and capable of assisting with the inevitable challenges that will be met in the course of a lifetime. (p. 27)

Arnett (1992) states the importance of a dialogic education that engages students’ narratives within the classroom and outside the classroom. He articulates the importance of students engaging the classroom and the world with a value base narrative or ground

from which to stand. Arnett also agrees with both Buber (1965a) and Freire (2000) in the power education can have on shaping the world in which one lives through civic engagement.

Dialogue and Civic Engagement

The importance of civic engagement emerges through dialogic engagement with Others. Freire (2000) and Buber (1965a) articulate the importance of an engaged pedagogy that leads towards civic engagement. They both recognize the importance of engaging the Other within the world. It is through civic engagement that one has the power to transform the world in which they live. Through a dialogic education, students recognize the importance of participation. They learn to understand the role they can play in engaging the world. Through a dialogic education students no longer become spectators of the world but engagers of the world.

Dialogue in higher education promotes the importance of transforming students to become ready for their life's journey of learning in the marketplace, graduate studies, or whatever path they may choose after a bachelor's degree. As shown through the work of Freire and Buber, dialogue allows for students to be engaged in the classroom experience. This engagement in the classroom may also lead to engagement in the community. As Arnett (1992) believes, dialogue is not only important for education but also for the community. He believes that dialogic education

assumes that the development of human character and commitment to lifelong learning needs to be part of a quality education. Great teaching in a liberal education tradition not only permits the acquisition of information but reveals

why such information should be used for the betterment of the human community. (p. 6)

This perspective on teaching, which stimulates students to participate intellectually with vital matters, allows for students to have a transformative effect on society. Other scholars, such as Mary Boys (1999), challenge instructors to implement this type of engaged pedagogy that is grounded in dialogue and critical reflection with the hope that these ideas are used to participate in the world. An engaged pedagogy requires a strong commitment to dialogue and to the students' critical thinking that allows for civic participation. Dialogue calls for engagement in the classroom from both the instructor and the student. This engagement shows the importance of participation and it makes the students aware of the need and the necessity of civic participation in the postmodern world.

Conclusion

Martin Buber and Paulo Freire are two prominent scholars whose works have shown the importance of dialogue in life and in education (Anderson et al, 2004). As shown through the above paragraphs their works on dialogue have a natural fit with the discipline of communication and the ideas of both narrative literacy and civic engagement. Their collective works call for dialogic engagement with Others who work from various narrative structures to enhance the world in which we live.

Dialogic education is more than learning; it is the engagement with learning. This engaged pedagogy requires attentiveness to relationships and a commitment to pursue communicative virtues as passionately as we do learning (Boys, 1999). Instructors need to spend time in their classroom assisting their students with the struggles that dominate

their lives (Arnett, 1992) to help them understand the narrative structures that can help guide their lives. Dialogic education represents relationships, values, and ideas that can be grounded within various narratives. The latter terms work together to allow for the importance of civil conversation between persons presupposing the importance and necessity of examining narratives of self and Others in education.

Dialogic education also allows for students to become engaged in their educational experience. Through a dialogic classroom, students are given the opportunity to become active participants in their learning. Dialogue moves the conversation from a modern notion of telling to a postmodern notion of reciprocal learning—both student and instructor learning together, each working from narrative ground that gives meaning to ideas. Dialogue is not the perfect solution to learning. Not every student will be willing to participate in dialogue. Dialogue is an invitation, not a requirement or demand for the student (Johannesen, 2002). Dialogue is one way in which students can learn from their own narrative structures and those of others in the classroom. A strong commitment to engaging postmodern higher education can encourage instructors to engage in dialogue.

The classroom can be a starting point for enhancing knowledge about multiple narrative structures that vie for adherence in today's postmodern age. As seen through the works of Martin Buber and Paulo Freire, the power of dialogue in education is transformative. It helps students realize the importance of engaging the world through the power of a narrative throughout life. The last chapter of this dissertation will take a closer look at the role that the communication discipline plays in higher education. It examines the strong connection between our discipline and civic participation and how

incorporating narrative literacy in the classroom can promote some of the core values found within our discipline.

Chapter 5

The Importance of the Communication Discipline in Higher Education: Civic Engagement through Narrative Literacy and Dialogue in the Postmodern Moment

The last chapter of this dissertation is an application chapter that argues for the centrality of the communication discipline in colleges and universities and shows narrative literacy to be a significant contributor to the unique role of communication in higher education. This chapter situates the communication discipline within higher education, revisits the history of the communication field to identify seeds of narrative literacy as articulated in this project, and offers insight into how the communication discipline of today can engage our postmodern modern moment by inviting civic engagement through narrative literacy and dialogue.

Communication and Higher Education

Today's higher education system requires a return to and reflection upon its historical roots to understand and renew the purpose of higher education (Black, 2004). Smith and Webster (1997) sum up the importance of the university which incorporates learning together.

But the university is, has been and can only be a place where thinking is a shared process, where the teaching is part of the unending dialogism of the outer society, 'where thought takes place beside thought.' There must be a future for the university in its work of thinking, which goes on outside the instruction packages of corporate excellence, one that has survived the attractions and repulsions of the nostalgic and the romantic. (Smith & Webster, 1997, p. 14)

Smith and Webster encourage a reflection on the civic meaning of an education, an education which moves away from the modern tendencies of producing only skills for their students and no longer focuses on reflective thinking and engagement with ideas. This type of higher education, one that promotes thoughtful, reflective engagement, is found within the communication curriculum. A brief historical look at some references on higher education reveals communication as a central facet of the heart of higher education that allows for thoughtful engagement with ideas, promotes communicative action in the marketplace, and permits meaningful participation in the human community.

In one of education's seminal works, John Henry Newman, in *The Idea of a University* (1941), sees the university as a human institution that produces a person with broad knowledge of the world, critical intelligence to engage the world, moral decency to participate in the world with others, and social sensitivity to engage the Other. He encourages a university setting that examines the importance of classes, such as theology, that help students understand religious narrative structures. With regard to the field of communication, he discusses students' having the ability to articulate their knowledge successfully. Newman summarized the classical view of liberal education to include the importance of communication by stating:

It is education which gives a man a clear conscious view of his own opinions and judgments, a truth in developing them, an eloquence in expressing them, and a force in urging them...he knows when to speak and when to be silent, he is able to converse, he is able to listen, he can ask a question pertinently, and gain a lesson seasonably ... (p. 196-197)

These ideas constitute the substance of communication classes. A careful examination of the background within which this type of education is discussed indicates that Newman's recommendations are not "skills based," but grounded in a philosophy of communication that enhances the importance of communicative action. Newman believed that a university is a place where persons grow in the areas of knowledge, spirituality and communicative action. It is through the university that students develop the philosophical background for foreground action of communicating ideas about the world in which they live to enhance the quality of that world through constructive action. Newman's emphasis on communication continues to this day as a theme throughout higher education.

In a report on *General Education in School and College* (1952), a committee representing educators from Harvard, Princeton, and Yale also articulated the importance of communication in relationship to a liberal education. They stated,

The liberally educated man is articulate, both in speech and writing. He has a feel for language, a respect for clarity and directness of expression, and knowledge of some language other than his own...He has values, and can communicate them to others not only by work but also by example...(p. 21-20)

These scholars recognize the power of communication in higher education. A more recent article in *Higher Education Reports* (Gardiner, 1994) discussed the importance of transforming university curricula to meet this historical moment, a moment pressed with the need for communication. Gardiner believes that students need to be engaged with ideas that make them marketable in society, the marketplace, and community. These ideas reside in communicative praxis. Gardiner articulates the importance of

- Conscientiousness, personal responsibility, and dependability

- The ability to act in a principled, ethical fashion
- Skill in oral and written communication
- Skill in critical thinking and in solving complex problems
- Respect for people different from oneself
- The ability to adapt to change and
- The ability and desire for life-long learning (p. 7)

All of these ideas are found within and are central to a communication curriculum (Morreale, Osborn, & Pearson, 2000). The field of higher education has embraced the field of communication (Boyer, 2003), and the communication discipline has found its home within many liberal arts curricula (Pearson, 2003).

Communication scholars within the early years of the discipline noted the importance of the field of communication for all who enter into higher education. In an editorial from the *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, Everett Hunt (1928) said,

A critical and analytic study of rhetoric and oratory should not be limited to those who expect to become professional speakers or writers, or to those who expect to teach it, it should be offered to all students who desire to understand the significance of rhetoric in modern life. (p. 266-267)

Hunt (1928) understood the importance of our discipline within the core mission of higher education. In a more recent article, communication scholars Shewyn P. Morreale and Philip M. Backlund (2002) discuss the field of communication in relationship to general education goals. They discuss the historical vision of a liberal education encompassing the ideas of the discipline of communication for all students. Other important articles that have emerged throughout the history of the communication field

discuss the relationship between a liberal arts education and the communication discipline. The articles found within the next paragraph represent works in scholarly communication journals that detail the importance of the communication discipline within the liberal arts.

Harrington (1955) argues that the discipline of speech communication is essential to a liberal arts education. In *The Role of Speech in Liberal Education*, he articulates how the discipline of communication engages the mission of a liberal arts education. In *A Liberal Arts Approach to Speech* (Kirn & Taylor, 1968), the authors articulate the objectives of a required course in speech for students graduating from a liberal arts program. They state that every student in a liberal arts curriculum needs to take a class in public speaking. Frederick E. X. Dance (1980), in *Speech Communication as a Liberal Arts Discipline*, discusses the importance of speech communication in all liberal arts core classes. He states:

The student who is denied study and experience in speech communication and in its subject matter of spoken language, is essentially denied the essence of a liberal education. Speech communication, the study of spoken language, is one of the foundations of a liberal education and is a basic requirement of all programs which intend to produce a liberally educated human and humane being. (p. 331)

This statement shows the power and importance of the communication discipline in the liberal arts curriculum. Fritz and Weaver (1986), in *Teaching Critical Thinking Skills in the Basic Speaking Course: A Liberal Arts Perspective*, discuss a series of exercises to be used in the college classroom for teaching critical thinking within a liberal arts framework. They articulate the importance of the communication discipline, which aids

students in becoming insightful thinkers who can articulate and understand various positions. Gronbeck (1989), in *Rhetorical Criticism in the Liberal Arts Curriculum*, articulates the importance of developing students' talents in rhetorical criticism to enhance a liberal education that focuses on the mental facilities necessary for leading a good life in society. Gronbeck describes our discipline as being one in which there is a direct correlation with enhancing one's life in society. Finally, Watson (1992), in *An Integration of Values: Teaching the Internship Course in a Liberal Arts Environment*, discusses how the integration of communication theory and research can enhance the core values of a liberal arts curriculum within the marketplace. Through internships in the communication discipline, students are taught the value of a liberal arts curriculum (Watson, 1992). All of these works from both communication scholars and education scholars point to the importance of communication within higher education. They articulate the growing importance and need to develop communication skills based on philosophies that are essential for the world in which we live.

The next section will take a look at the historical roots of our relatively new discipline of communication. This section shows how our discipline has had a strong connection with civic participation and dialogue from its inception. The purpose of this examination is to also identify points of emergence of the idea of narrative literacy developed in this project, which I argue is a unique contribution from the field of communication, a field that recognizes the shaping power of language, the need to articulate "goods" that reside in narrative structures, and the importance of "ground" from which to speak. Though our postmodern moment makes this recognition explicit, the field of communication, with its roots in rhetoric, has historically been poised to

frame such a perspective that addresses the need for civic engagement through narrative literacy, and dialogue within this historical moment.

A Short History of the Communication Discipline

Today's field of communication has historical roots that reach back to at least Aristotle; however, the discipline of communication is a fairly recent field of study that continues to thrive and grow. In 2003 there were approximately 1,136 institutions that offered communication programs (Pearson, 2003). According to the most recent data from the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Educational Statistics (2006), the number of bachelor's degrees granted by degree-granting institutions in the field of communication, journalism, and related programs has increased from 10,324 in 1970-1971 to 70,968 in 2003-2004. Even though there was a steady increase in the number of college students enrolling in colleges and universities, this is one of the largest increases within the 32 listed areas of study. In addition, master's degrees within the field of communication, journalism, and related programs have increased from 1,770 in 1970-1971 to 6,535 in 2003-2004 (U.S. Department of Education, 2006). In 2002 there were approximately 115 doctoral granting institutions, and between the years of 1995-1999 there were approximately 407 doctoral degrees granted within the field of communication (NCA, 2002).

The results of a survey of communication conducted by the Speech Communication Association (now National Communication Association—NCA) showed that out of 384 randomly selected institutions, 79% reported that they offered one or more communication-related courses in the institution's general education requirements (NCA, 1995). Moreover, the NCA office identified over 300 colleges where communication was

among the five most frequently selected undergraduate majors for the class of 2004, and 55 of these schools ranked communication as their most popular major (NCA, 2006). The discipline of communication seems to be growing, even though it is not listed as one of the largest degrees granted (U.S. Department of Education, 2006); it is witnessing a steady increase in the number of students graduating with a degree and the number of students taking communication classes. In the January 2007 edition of the Chronicle of Higher Education the annual nationwide survey indicated that of those who entered college in the fall of 2006, 2.3 percent checked communication or speech as their intended major, ranking the discipline 11th out of 80 possible majors.

As this evidence suggests, the field of communication appears to be thriving and is in a position to continue its historic contributions to civic culture. A look at the discipline's history allows us to revisit the story of how our discipline has become a strong contributor to today's higher education curricula, making explicit the value of civic engagement propelled by narrative literacy through dialogue by means of communication pedagogy.

Historical Roots

If one considers specific disciplinary identity as the beginning of a discipline, the First World War can be seen as that starting point for our discipline, though it is possible to claim origins with the ancient Greeks through Aristotle's Rhetoric (Cohen, 1994). The key figures in the transition from The National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) to the National Association of Academic Teachers of Public Speaking (NAATPS) in 1914 included James Milton O'Neill from Wisconsin, Charles Henry Woolbert from Illinois, and James Albert Winans from Cornell (Pearson, 2003). These scholars helped shape

what is now considered the discipline of communication through distinctiveness of identity and specificity of subject matter (Brubaker & Rudy, 1997).

As the discipline expanded, evolved, and changed so did the titles of the organization, demonstrating both a broadening of the field's scope and a greater understanding of disciplinary identity as focused on messages. First there was the National Association of Academic Teachers of Public Speaking (NAATPS) from 1914-1922. Then it transitioned into the National Association of Teachers of Speech (NATS) from 1923-1945. The next transition formed the Speech Association of America (SAA) in 1946-1969. Then there was the Speech Communication Association (SCA) from 1970-1996. Lastly, in 1997 to the present day the association is called the National Communication Association (NCA) (Pearson, 2003).

One key focus within the association of communication has been the importance of pedagogy. Concern for teaching has been a recurring theme from Aristotle and the sophists to the development of a discipline to the present day. The focus on teaching has embraced a variety of areas and has been nourished through scholarly engagement.

The discipline began as a performance field (Cohen, 1994); however, to be accepted into the academic community, a strong research component was required. From the beginning, this research component focused strongly on pedagogy. Authors wrote about experiences in the classroom, described pedagogical tools to be used within the classroom, and gave opinions about the discipline related to the classroom. These pedagogical recommendations were disseminated primarily through the *Quarterly Journal of Public Speaking* in 1915 (Cohen, 1994; Pearson, 2003). During this time period, many ideas about pedagogy arose from extra-curricular activities such as theatre

and debate, the work of the elocutionists on expression and oral readings, and instructors interested in voice, diction, anatomy, physiology, phonetics, dialects, speech defects, radio and broadcasting (Cohen, 1994). As one can see from the variety of forms of insight and research, the field of communication was very broad; however, as years passed, some of these areas of study found their own homes in The American Speech and Hearing Association and The American Theater Association (Cohen, 1994).

One of the most famous early works within our discipline on education was Karl Wallace's (1954) edited volume, *A History of Speech Education in America*, commissioned by the Speech Association of America in 1948. Three essential elements of this volume will be addressed here. The first section discussed the heritage of the discipline, examining *English Backgrounds of Rhetoric* (Howell, 1954), *Rhetorical Theory in Colonial America* (Guthrie, 1954), *Rhetorical practice in Colonial America* (Bohman, 1954), *English Sources of Rhetorical Theory in Nineteenth-Century America* (Edney, 1954) and *English Sources of American Elocution* (Haberman, 1954). These articles described the history of educating citizens for their duties in oral communication, articulating the importance of our background and history in civic engagement. The second section focused on the rhetoric, elocution, and speech components of our discipline, examining *American Contribution to Rhetorical Theory and Homiletics* (Hoshor, 1954), *Rhetorical and Elocutionary Training in the Nineteenth-Century Colleges* (Hochmuth & Murphy, 1954), *The Elocutionary Movement and its Chief Figures* (Robb, 1954), *Steele MacKaye and the Delsartian Tradition* (Shaver, 1954), *Dr. James Rush* (Hale, 1954), *The Literary Society* (Potter, 1954), *Intellectual Debating* (Cowperthwaite & Baird, 1954), *Speech Education in Nineteenth-Century Schools*

(Borchers & Wagner, 1954), *Five Private Schools of Speech* (Renshaw, 1954), *Phonetics and Pronunciation* (Emsley, Thomas, & Sifritt, 1954), *The Rise of Experimental Phonetics* (Curtis, 1954), *Some Symbolic Systems for Teaching the Deaf* (Hudgins, 1954), *Development of Education in Speech and Hearing to 1920* (Simon, 1954), *Some Teachers and the Transition to Twentieth-Century Speech Education* (Gray, 1954), *Origins and Development of Departments of Speech* (Smith, 1954), *Speech Education in Twentieth-Century Public Schools* (Gulley & Seabury, 1954) and *National Speech Organizations and Speech Education* (Rarig & Greaves, 1954). The titles of these articles reveal the breadth and depth of our discipline that became incorporated into institutions of higher education. Articles in this section focused on the importance of key ideas and people during this time period within the discipline. The third section discusses the educational theatre examining *Educational Dramatics in Nineteenth-Century Colleges* (Clark, 1954), *The Private Theatre Schools in the Late Nineteenth Century* (Hodge, 1954), *College and University Theater Instruction in the Early Twentieth Century* (Hamar, 1954), *Dramatics in the High Schools, 1900-1925* (Kozelka, 1954), *Professional Theatre Schools in the Early Twentieth Century* (Blanchard, 1954), and *National Theatre Organizations and Theatre Education* (Halstead & Behringer, 1954). This section shows the important role the communication field had on influencing theatre education. This edited book shows the importance of understanding the historical roots from which our discipline's pedagogical approaches arose and continue to develop.

A more recent discussion of the history of the discipline was written in 1994 by Herman Cohen. His work, *The History of Speech Communication: The Emergence of a Discipline, 1914-1945*, traces the origin and foundation of the communication discipline.

This work was published by the Speech Communication Association and is a comprehensive resource for the history of the discipline. The first chapter starts out by discussing the importance of the elocutionists to the field of communication. Even though the elocutionists' works predominantly focused on the canon of *pronunciato*, which may have been seen as having no real substance, their ideas about speaking led to the significant role of public speaking within the field of communication. Public speaking classes then led to the importance of civic participation, laying the groundwork for a future focus on narrative literacy and dialogue as contributing factors to civic participation. Within public speaking classes instructors started to incorporate participation with the local communities, understanding the audience to whom one speaks, and incorporating different forms of dialogue and discourse when speaking with the Other. The elocutionist movement dominated the teaching of oral expression in American colleges and universities; however, the study of rhetoric and other related matters did not disappear from most curricula.

In the second chapter of his book Cohen (1994) discusses the revitalization of rhetoric in departments of English. This focus on rhetoric traced back to Aristotle examined the classical proofs of logos, ethos, and pathos. During the second and third decades of the century, departments of English began to focus more on literary criticism; as a result, rhetorical criticism and theory were assimilated into the discipline of communication. The third chapter of the book discusses the new profession of communication that articulated the importance of both the humanities and the social sciences. The main dispute between Hunt and Woolbert provided the basis for the different orientations of writers who saw the discipline as a branch of the humanities and

those who envisioned it as a division of the social sciences. Hunt took a humanities-grounded approach to the field, seeing speech classrooms as a locus for general education through speech. Woolbert, on the other hand, visualized a world in which research was carried on to discover law-like generalizations about speech behavior. This intellectual dispute began with the discipline's development, giving rise to orientations towards the discipline focusing on humanities scholarship and social science scholarship, and remain as central features of today's communication discipline (Cohen, 1994). Framed as a unity of contraries (Buber, 1965a), these different orientations shows how the discipline has worked to accept multiple perspectives (see Corman & Poole, 2002, as evidence of growing recognition of the value of multiplicity in communication studies).

During the period of World War II there was a shift in education to produce more "scientific students." These ideas were felt within all fields of scholarship, including communication. Within chapter four, Cohen (1994) goes on to discuss how the discipline diversified in relationship to the teaching of public speaking and rhetoric. Debates arose over the meaning of the public speaking course. Some scholars believed that eloquence and style were essential, whereas others saw public speaking as a means for research skills and development of critical thinking. Chapter five focuses on the scientific shift towards mental hygiene, psychology and the personality movement within the discipline. Theories of psychology, including much of the work of Sigmund Freud, and new theories of social adjustment from John Dewey made their way into the communication curriculum. Scale development and survey research were seen as essential methods for studying and understanding human communication and education (Cohen, 1994). The

need for research in order to teach well continues to be a factor in our discipline—witness *Communication Education*. and *Communication Teacher*.

Even with the social science emphasis, the discipline continued to focus on the importance of civic engagement. The discipline of communication has always had a strong connection to civic engagement, as illustrated by chapter six of Cohen's work. For example, chapter six focuses on the goals and content of a public speaking course in relationship to the importance of ethics, freedom, and democracy as central components within our discipline to promote civic engagement (Cohen, 1994). Articles such as that by J. P. Ryan (1918) discuss the importance of ethics within public speaking to help students understand their responsibilities as citizens of the world. In his article he discussed the importance of responsibility and ethics within communication, accusing German academics in the First World War of lacking these characteristics. He argues that it is the responsibility of the communication discipline to teach the importance of ethics in speech, engaging the Other through factual knowledge rather than unsupported claims and deliberate untruths. Following this article, in 1921 William R. Connor (1921) discussed the role of speech classes as a means for promoting citizenship. He states,

The teacher of speech, as a teacher of public speaking and debating, then seems to have a duty in education for citizenship, which in itself, is probably of more significant than all the other services she can perform. (p. 113)

In this statement, it is important to note an assumed narrative “why” for the “how” of civic engagement, emerging from a historical moment of assumed “goods” of democracy and citizenship anchored in a unitary understanding of what it means to be an American citizen.

As the years followed articles such as *Ethics in Persuasion* (Schrier, 1930), *Public Speaking and Social Obligations* (Pellegrini, 1934), *Speech, a basic training in the Educational System* (Cable, 1935) and a forum in *The Quarterly Journal of Speech* articulated the importance of ethics and civic participation within our discipline. As one sees from the research of Cohen, our discipline, since its inception, has had a strong tie to engaging the polis with ethical communication. Today the communication discipline still embraces this important feature, recognizing more and more explicitly that it is through communication that we shape the world in which we live. What is clear now, however, is that there are multiple “whys” for engagement of civic responsibility; narrative plurality invites a focus on the underlying “goods” students bring with them, acknowledged or not, from their situatedness. As a result, the study of rhetoric becomes important in order for embedded persons to articulate their narrative structures and to engage the multiplicity of narrative structures that exists in society.

The subject of rhetoric has been an essential feature of our discipline since the beginning. Chapter one of this dissertation includes a discussion of the trivium within the liberal arts consisting of grammar, logic, and rhetoric. Our discipline embraced the study of rhetoric within the field of communication. Cohen (1994) moves on to discuss the importance of rhetoric within the field of communication. He discusses how the research that appeared in *The Quarterly Journal* diverged into two separate categories—rhetorical criticism and rhetorical theory. In chapter seven he discusses rhetorical criticism, “which sought to develop standards of critical judgment or to make judgments concerning particular oratorical works” (p. 159). Rhetorical criticism in the early works still had an influence from English and history; however, it found its home within the discipline of

communication because of its application of Aristotelian and Ciceronian works within the public speaking curriculum. In chapter eight Cohen (1994) discusses the importance of rhetorical theory “which sought to describe and define the nature of rhetoric, often from a historical perspective” (p. 159). Early rhetorical theory focused on the explication of ancient Greek and Roman works on rhetoric and was predominantly characterized by the study of historical figures; however, after 1945 a shift from Aristotelian scholarship to literary critics and social critics occurred. The insight of both rhetorical criticism and rhetorical theory gives insight into how one engages the persuasive nature of communication. Rhetoric allows for ideas to be tested in the public realm. Through rhetoric one is able to articulate the petite narrative structure or structures that guide one’s life.

The last chapter of his work Cohen describes the impact group discussion has had on the discipline. Group discussion becomes an essential asset in our discipline because of its focus on how to engage others. Even though the idea of group discussion was important in most disciplines at this time, our discipline focused on how communication differed between group members. The field of communication looked at the study of group work in terms of argument, persuasion, and rhetoric. Eventually group discussion became identified with the study of small group communication (Cohen, 1994). In each case, rhetoric, with its emphasis on persuasion, makes explicit the value-laden content of communication, which we recognize in a postmodern moment as inescapable.

Articulating and arguing for “the good” arising within the petite narrative or narratives within one is situated in is an explicit task for students in the 21st century. Students who learn to engage their own and other petite narrative structures with the intention of

promoting dialogue with the Other have the potential to engage the community and contribute to a vibrant public sphere.

Cohen's (1994) work has been the predominant source for the early history of our discipline; however, Rogers's (1997) *A History of Communication Study: A Biographical Approach* has also been used to discuss the development of our discipline. Cohen's work gives great insight into how our discipline has evolved and changed throughout the years with a focus on mass communication. Since this publication, the discipline has undergone numerous transitions, including the shift in the name of the discipline from Speech Communication Association to National Communication Association. Moreover, our discipline has grown in importance in many curricula of today's universities, as illustrated by the statistics earlier in this chapter. One consistency found within the work of Cohen (1994) and a more recent work from Shewyn P. Morreale and Philip M. Backlund (2002) is that there is little agreement about what courses should be offered and required. Moreover, the content of basic courses such as public speaking has varied from schools of humanities to schools of social sciences. Despite the disagreement on how and what to teach in the study of human communication one feature is imperative—communication is an important topic for study, and its variety of content and form is its strength.

The Importance of the Communication Discipline in Postmodernity

This postmodern moment that lacks civic engagement (Putnam, 2000), encourages literacy about various narratives (Lyotard, 1984; Postman, 1995), and calls forth dialogue with Others (Anderson et al, 2002) has as its greatest resource the discipline of communication, a field to which it can turn for insight. In this postmodern

moment of multiplicity, the communication discipline can help students understand the importance of engaging difference and diversity for a vibrant public sphere. The definition of the field of communication shows the importance of engaging various voices. The definition was developed in 1995 by the Association for Communication Administration. They stated:

The field of communication focuses on how people use messages to generate meaning within and across various contexts, cultures, channels and media. The field promotes the effective and ethical practice of human communication. (NCA, 2006; <http://www.natcom.org/nca/Template2.asp?bid=344>)

The discipline also offers a wide range of classes consistent with this definition that promotes ethical communication.

Many of the classes offered within traditional communication curricula include the importance of understanding and learning from the Other. Classes such as interpersonal communication help students understand the importance of developing greater interpretive competence in conversations, heightening skills that maintain high quality relationships, and building upon a wide understanding of relationships. These goals require a lifetime to master, but a course in interpersonal communication helps students recognize the importance of engaging and working with the Other. Classes in intercultural communication allows for students to understand the importance of difference that exists both abroad and in our day to day encounters with the Other. Intercultural communication allows us to recognize areas for change in human interaction with difference. Small group communication helps students learn how to work productively with others in groups, including how to maintain working relationships with

others who have various insight and perspectives. Lastly, organizational communication focuses on the importance of communication within larger institutional structures of society. These are only a few of the classes that are offered within different schools of communication. Other significant areas of communication pedagogy and research, listed by the National Communication Association, are nonverbal communication, persuasion and social influence, mediated communication, health communication, family communication, and instructional communication (NCA, 2006). All of these areas point to the importance of communication within our everyday live to enhance relationships with the Other. Most, if not all, of these classes can be found within most institutions of higher education (NCA, 2006).

Institutions of higher education have embraced the field of communication within their curriculum structure for various reasons. On the National Communication Associations website is a list of six essential publications that describe the importance of the communication discipline in postmodern higher education. The Boyer Reports (2003, 1998) called attention to the importance of communication education within curriculum structures. These reports articulate the importance of both oral and written communication education, highlighting the importance of classes that teach these theory-grounded skills. Moreover, they point towards the growing importance of communication in education to enhance the marketplace. The Boyer Reports offer justification for why the discipline of communication is needed in higher education.

The third resource by Sherwyn P. Morreale, Michael M. Osborn and Judy C. Pearson (2000) is a content analysis of 100 articles, commentaries, and publications articulating the importance of the study of communication in contemporary society. The

authors discuss four major themes that occur throughout the research that point to the importance of communication education in higher education and one major theme encompassing the importance of communication instructors. All of these themes include a brief description of sub-themes that fit underneath these categories; however, this section will briefly discuss the themes and three representative articles that point towards the importance of civic engagement, narrative literacy, and dialogue. Theme I:

Communication Education is Vital to the Development of the Whole Person discusses how the discipline of communication is essential in self-development. Articles within this category articulate the importance of the communication discipline in education with the intention of enhancing relationships with one's self, Others, and society. Representative articles are as follows: Backlund (1989) argues that speech communication education fulfills many of the core objectives of a general education. Diamond (1997) reports that in a survey of academic disciplines and institutions regarding important skills college graduates should have communication and interpersonal skills were consistently listed. Hart (1993) believes that it is through communication classes that the voiceless learn to find their voice and become important members of society. This category shows that the discipline of communication promotes education that engages the self and the Other through communication, which points towards understanding various narrative structures that guide persons' lives and the lives of others.

Theme II: Communication Education Improves the Education Enterprise discusses how the communication discipline is a key asset for improving the educational environment not only for the student but those involved in higher administration. The discipline of communication is important for school administrators, teachers, librarians,

and for faculty aspiring to in leadership roles. Representative articles are as follows: Garmston (1995) discusses the use of nonverbal communication in pedagogy articulating the importance of nonverbal gestures when communicating with students. Geddes (1993) discusses the importance of communication for organizational success, arguing that administrators must be effective communicators to be productive. A study done by Miller (1996) of 100 faculty governance leaders at research and doctoral institutions identified communication as necessary for effective leadership. This category shows the significance of the communication discipline in higher education, pointing towards dialogic engagement with Others.

Theme III: Communication Education Is Vital to Society and to Crossing Cultural Boundaries discusses the idea that “communication education is vital to the continuation of our society and to erasing cultural boundaries. Education in communication allows the development of skills and sensitivities that shape our social and political live” (Morreale, Osborn, & Pearson, 2000, p. 11). Two representative articles are as follows: Stotsky (1992) discusses the connection between language education and/or oral communication and civic responsibilities. He articulates the importance of citizens participating in public life through their everyday communicative actions to enhance the world in which we live. Herring (1990) examines the importance of studying nonverbal communication in cross-cultural counseling articulating the importance of understanding the Other through various outlets of research. This category shows the important connection our discipline has and will continue to have with civic engagement with a diverse population.

Theme IV: Communication Education is Vital to Career Success and the Business Enterprise discusses how persons entering the workforce are assisted by effective

communication skills and demonstrates that employers encourage communication education. Representative articles are as follows: Peterson's (1997) survey of 500 businesses in a Midwest City found that out of the 253 respondents, 90% believe communication is essential for success, but that many applicants lack effective communication skills in their job interviews. Harper (1987) surveyed 200 deans in the school of business and 200 corporations. The deans responded that oral and written communication were the most important learning areas, and the corporations included these areas in addition to interpersonal skills for marketplace success. Argenti and Forman (1998) argue that business schools should teach Aristotle, stating that among chief executives, half of their daily work involves communication, but their educational experience did not prepare them for these essential communication skills. The authors argue that those who participate in communication classes will have the advantage in the marketplace. This category shows that the study of communication is an essential element in today's marketplace, a vital part of the civic sphere.

Theme V: Communication Education Should be Taught By Specialized Faculty in Departments Devoted to the Study of Communication discusses the importance of faculty trained in the discipline of communication teaching classes devoted to the study of communication. The communication discipline is relevant to all fields of study; however, communication is most effective when it is taught by members of the academic community of communication. Representative articles are as follows: Scott (1998) discusses the importance of communication skills in the business world and articulates how instructors of business can learn from communication educators about key ideas in business. Englesberg and Wynn (1995) articulate the importance of developing a

standardized curriculum development process which can be used to justify the study of communication in higher education. The authors argue that by identifying communication competencies as a critical feature in almost every occupation, the study of communication becomes an essential feature in higher education. Engleberg (1996) develops principles for survival and growth of communication departments from the curriculum at Prince George's County Community College. This category gives justification for graduate studies in the field of communication. All of these categories shows that "the communication discipline is an essential component of the education enterprise" (p. 30) in the arena of higher education. These five themes found within this article are essential for any institution of higher education contemplating the value of communication classes.

The fourth excerpt from the National Communication Association is the *Pathways to Careers in Communications* (2003), which points to publications such as *The Wall Street Journal*, executives with Fortune 500 companies, and various case studies that describe the essential need for communication knowledge in today's marketplace. The fifth article, from the National Science Foundation Report, discusses the increasing importance and relevance of communication research. The sixth selection is a booklet entitled *Behavior Matters: Communication Research on Human Connections*, which points to how communication research leads to greater understanding of four areas—communication and political activity, communication and relationships, communication and health, and communication and new technology. This list of essential literature (natcom.org) identifies just a few of the many works describing the importance of the

communication discipline in higher education. The discipline of communication is also trying to develop new ways to engage the community further.

The National Communication Association has been working to create a more engaged communication discipline which fosters teaching and research addressing different public problems that occur in postmodernity. The project entitled “Communicating Common Ground” works at “advancing the communication discipline's role in reducing prejudice and hateful acts based on racial, ethnic, religious, and other human differences” (NCA, 1999). This project is working towards advancing research and teaching programs designed to enhance civic education, appreciate diversity, and create communities in which hate, hate speech, and hate crimes are rejected as antithetical to the values of a strong democracy (NCA, 1999). NCA is working to implement these programs that foster respect for diversity and reduce prejudice in communities across America. Communicating Common Ground mission included these elements:

- To educate people to the contributions of diversity to a strong democracy
- To foster engagement between higher education and P-12 education and between schools and communities
- To promote service-learning as an effective method for enhancing student learning and civic responsibility.
- To promote research that identifies ways to reduce prejudice and the problems it presents to a democracy (NCA, 1999).

This project shows the importance and power of the communication discipline for transforming the world in which we live.

The next section of this chapter discusses how this project can offer new insight into the field of communication by applying issues of civic engagement, narrative literacy, and dialogue within postmodern communication classes.

Application

To recapture the heart of the dissertation, I offer a brief summary of the preceding chapters. Chapter one offered a historical overview of education, focusing on a philosophical and historical outline of education starting in antiquity and concluding with postmodernity. The historical moments from antiquity to the present record illustrated the importance and, indeed, the necessity of some narrative structure or “why” for the communication of educational content directed toward civic engagement. Throughout each of the eras, up to postmodernity, a central feature of education was for civic engagement; therefore, in this era when civic engagement seems to be lacking, the narrative of civic engagement in education becomes essential.

Chapter two took an extensive look at the postmodern movement using the work of Lyotard (1984) as the central scholar for both postmodernity and education. His work addressed the importance of an education system that included producing a focus on theoretical grounding for students rather than disembedded skills. Lyotard believed that the educational system would soon be in trouble, however, if they continued to teach grand narratives. He concluded by warning that the death of a professor and universities will soon follow if one does not address the postmodern historical condition. Chapter two concluded by offering reflections on scholarship regarding postmodern education and encouraged an examination of petite narrative structures within the classroom—moving from a modern approach to a postmodern approach to education.

Chapter three addressed the problem that higher education is not meeting the demands of diverse narrative structures of this particular movement. This chapter looked specifically at the communication discipline's engagement of the postmodern moment by addressing the concern of MacIntyre's (1984) moral crisis through Walter Fisher's (1984, 1987) narrative paradigm in the classroom. This chapter articulated the importance of engaging narrative literacy within the classroom. Through narrative literacy, students are encouraged to recognize their own narratives and to address different standpoints that emerge. The chapter concluded by discussing the importance of three major metaphors: learning, hermeneutics, and praxis. These metaphors are central in engaging narrative literacy in the classroom.

Chapter four looked specifically at the importance of dialogue within a postmodern classroom, situating the discussion within the work of two important philosophers, Martin Buber (1965a, 1965b, 1958) and Paulo Freire (2000, 1998, 1993). Their work encourages a dialogic model of communication education that is not a technique but a hermeneutic endeavor that offers an invitational engagement with the student. When a dialogic environment is present in the classroom, students are given the opportunity to learn about different narrative structures and embrace narrative literacy without fear or humiliation.

The first section of chapter five offered a rationale for the communication discipline in higher education, articulating its importance through its extensive history and evolution. This last section will discuss how the metaphors of narrative literacy, dialogue and civic engagement, each of which can be seen in embryonic form over the historical development of the communication discipline, work together in an organic

unity with each other to promote and enhance communication between persons of various narrative structures to engage the world in which we live. In a moment of postmodernity, narrative literacy engaged through dialogue for the purpose of civic engagement can be best addressed by the discipline of communication.

Narrative Literacy

Through the discussion of narrative literacy in communication classes and classes such as intercultural communication, students are grounded in understanding their own background narratives and the background narratives of Others. The concept of narrative literacy in communication classes offers insight into the many of the core values in the discipline of communication. Narrative literacy allows for students to engage issues from a philosophical perspective that is grounded in larger ideas of society. Narrative literacy allows for the lines of communication to be open and engaged without fear of interacting with the Other. Narrative literacy gives insight into why communication with the Other is important without an “I am the only one who is right” mentality. Narrative literacy grounds communication ideas in stories with the idea of learning from these stories. Narrative literacy in the communication discipline offers insights for this postmodern moment.

Narrative literacy in postmodernity permits us to understand communication as a carrier of ground, tradition, and understanding of differing goods. Narrative literacy allows one to understand that there are multiple ways in which to see different ideas and perspectives. In postmodernity, one cannot assume that there is one universal narrative that everyone follows. Moreover, Lyotard (1984) reminds us of the importance of petite narratives structures that exist in society. Narrative literacy allows us to re-story the

world by examining different perspectives in the world. Narrative literacy in postmodernity is a reminder of the pervasive difficulties before us, providing tools, not for solving all problems, but for understanding the opportunities of learning before us in an age of difference, diversity, and narrative and virtue contention.

Postmodernity is propelled by diversity causing a world where narrative contention is common. In postmodernity it is very difficult to find a common ground upon which to stand with the Other; however, narrative literacy offers opportunities for communication and learning. Many times ideas of political correctness stops communication. Ideas of difference need to promote communication with the intention of learning from and understanding about difference. Communication scholars Arnett and Arneson (1999) answer the question of how do we offer a minimal basis for a public discourse with the metaphor of dialogic civility. Dialogic Civility as a public narrative allows one to have respect for one's own standpoint and the standpoint of the Other. In the public domain such a narrative background offers common ground from which diversity of persons and cultures can begin a conversation. This approach does have an ethical bias that allows for a practical concern and respect for the Other. This ethical bias allows for a personal restraint that helps us seek a "common good," and this common good may not always coincide with the private good (Arnett, 2001). Engaging narrative literacy through dialogic civility allows individuals to understand the importance of learning and, eventually, understanding multiple perspectives on ideas in the world in which we live. When narrative literacy is engaged in communication classrooms, students understand the importance and power of dialogue with the Other as a means of learning.

Dialogue

The literature on dialogue gives insight into the importance of dialogue in the everyday and in the classroom. Dialogue situated within the work of Buber and Freire allows for persons to engage a conversation with the hopes of having a learning and changing experience. In a communication classroom all three types of dialogue are essential for learning. These ideas help students understand the importance of embracing their education. The student becomes an active learner who has the ability to shape the educational experience. Moreover, the instructor is given the opportunity to engage the learning experience by becoming an active participant in the learning environment with the students.

The importance of the idea of dialogue within the field of communication is that it is not a technique. Dialogue can not be planned, pronounced, or proclaimed. Dialogue is a transformative encounter that encourages others to join the conversation without demand. For some scholars, dialogue may be seen only as communication between two people; however, the field of communication and education recognize the transformative function that dialogue has in life and in the classroom. Parker Palmer states,

Though I need sometimes to lecture and may even enjoy doing it, lecturing all the time simply bores me: I usually know what I am going to say, and I have heard it all before. But dialogical methods of teaching help keep me alive. Forced to listen, respond, and improvise, I am more likely to hear something unexpected and insightful from myself as well as others. (p. 24)

Dialogue is a way to be connected with the students and the material. Being connected with the material and the students is what makes a good instructor. Palmer states, “The

connections made by good teachers are held not in their methods but in their hearts—meaning *heart* in an ancient sense, as the place where intellect and emotion and spirit and will converge in the human self” (p.11). Dialogue opens up a communication classroom with an open invitation to the student to participate in the classroom and in life. Narrative literacy embraced and nourished through dialogue enacts and embodies civic engagement.

Civic Engagement

As shown from above our discipline has been historically connected to issues of engaging the world in which one lives. The postmodern moment, which lacks civic engagement (Gilbert, 1992), has turned to education for answers. Henry and Susan Giroux (2004) state, “Neither the decline of democracy nor the crisis of education has gone unnoticed” (p. 4). Giroux and Giroux argue that in today’s postmodern society the link between education and politics is a key feature in reclaiming higher education as a means for civic engagement beyond job training and competitive market advantages. The lack of civic engagement in our society and in our education system has been articulated by many scholars (Boyer, 1990; Nussbaum, 1997). The field of communication offers a means by which this concern can be addressed; it hosts scholars (Gastil & Dillard, 1999; McDevitt & Kiousus, 2006; Murphy, 2004) articulating clearly and distinctly the importance of the communication field and civic engagement. Other scholars such as Ernest Boyer offer a direct correlation between communication and civic engagement.

Ernest Boyer lists six features to help students become responsible citizen. These features are clearly evident in the discipline of communication. First, “civic education is concerned, first, with communication” (p. 5). Students need the knowledge to think

critically, listen with discernment, and communicate with both power and precision. The field of communication offers resources to students to educate them as both better communicators and listeners. Second, “civic education also must provide students with a core of basic knowledge regarding social issues and institutions to give their understanding of democracy perspective” (p. 6). Within public speaking classes, students are given the opportunity to engage ideas that lead to understanding a democratic perspective. Communication students learn issues of free speech and the importance of communication for all parties. Third, “civic classrooms should be active, not passive, places” (p. 6). Within communication classes student can be engaged with ideas with the intention of articulating these ideas to others. These ideas receive texture, shape, and meaning from the narrative ground upon which the student stands. Moreover, as seen in chapter four, all forms of dialogue are essential in communication classes. Fourth, “we must deal thoughtfully with our deepest differences” (p. 6). As noted by Boyer

Society today is characterized by such divisiveness that consensus seems almost impossible, and this puts the nation’s schools squarely in the middle. Educators are often confused—even abused—if they try to examine touchy social problems and to help students debate what constitutes the common good. Yet to ignore controversial issues is to offer students an incomplete education, an incapacity to think carefully about life’s most important concerns. (p. 6)

In today’s society of diversity and difference it is important for communication about various perspectives to occur without disengaging from civic participation. Fifth, “students, while they are in school, are members of an institution, and they should understand how it works and participate, within the school itself, in decisions that affect

their lives—just as they will be asked to do later on” (p. 6). Through associations such as the NCA, other regional affiliated communication organizations, the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA), and the American Advertising Federation (AAF), students learn the importance of participation in organizations embedded within larger societal structures. “Finally, education for citizenship means helping students make connections between what they learn and how they live” (p. 6). The idea of praxis within the communication curriculum is essential. Praxis, or theory informed action, allows one to make decisions about how to live life both publicly and privately drawing from theory. From a narrative perspective, praxis finds its theoretical traction from resources provided by the background framework or narrative that shapes one’s life. Dialogue provides the space for articulating one’s own narrative background and learning the background narrative of Others. These metaphors of engagement demonstrate that the communication discipline continues to be an essential asset for promoting the core values of higher education to promote civic engagement and needs to continue this connection to civic participation.

These three components—narrative literacy, dialogue, and civic engagement—work together to bring the resources of the communication discipline to life in the public sphere in a postmodern age of difference and diversity. Through engaging in narrative literacy, which works towards understanding narratives of self and Other, students are given resources to articulate their own background narratives while engaging in dialogue with the Other and learning about the Other’s narrative background(s). These interactions constitute civic engagement in the classroom, foreshadowing their public sphere civic engagement. Through applying these metaphors to the communication discipline students

are given the opportunity to become active participants in education and in life. These metaphors open up the conversation for engaging this postmodern moment.

Conclusion

This chapter has offered insight into the importance of the communication discipline within higher education. Through the field of communication students are able to grapple with ideas that are central to this postmodern moment. Communication students are given the opportunity to engage ideas not with a particular technique but a focus on creativity and new insight which addresses the historical moment. The discipline of communication, which now competes with many business schools as being an essential means of preparation for the marketplace, is important because it gives texture and substance to the “why” questions of the everyday. The field of communication, which used to focus on Berlo’s issue of process as a linear model of communication, now has layer upon layer of depth and breath. The discipline of communication has already forged the path to postmodernity, recognizing the need for learning about difference, articulating one’s own narrative background, and engaging diverse narrative perspectives of Others. The discipline’s continued embrace of multiple theoretical perspectives encourages diversity and difference within the discipline, a fitting response to this historical moment.

This chapter has shown that there are different orientations to the field of communication, and it is just these differences that make the discipline essential in higher education (Pearson, 2003). Drawing these differences together is a common center that unites us as a discipline—learning. It is through continual learning about human

communication that we learn more about what makes the discipline of communication so powerful and so important in this postmodern age.

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