The Quest for a New Education: From Oppositional Identities to Creative Inquiry

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When I meet with colleagues who teach in the ambitious educational institutions that are trying to broaden the scope and purpose of education today, there is almost inevitably a moment when we bring up the latest comments from students grappling with their own interpretation of "alternative education." A brief selection for your enjoyment:

- "Reading is not integral/transformative."
- "Lecturing is not integral."
- "Grades are not 'humanistic.'"
- "Why should I do a literature review? I'm creative—I don't need to read what others have said—and most of them are dead anyway."
- "Why should I read these mostly white men (Huntington, Fukuyama, Barber)? They're not spiritual and they're boring."
- "This is *just* intellectual."
- "I'm not interested in theory—I want something that's useful."
- "This is too mental."
- "I thought this program was about personal transformation, not reading a bunch of academic books."

These comments, both amusing and frustrating, are not confined to alternative institutions. What they illustrate for me is the extent to which it is important to address the implicit assumptions about alternative education (or any kind of education) that students come to class with. Constant exposure to these kinds of comments has led me to explore the underlying issues, to explicitly articulate some of my responses, and to address some of the deeper implications of my stance vis-à-vis some very basic dimensions of education.

Developing alternative, more inclusive, more integral forms of education is an enormously exciting challenge, but it is clearly not without its pitfalls. Incoming students, dissatisfied with mainstream education, often define alternative education in terms of what traditional academia is *not*. This is a fundamentally reactive process that posits alternative as the opposite of their interpretation of traditional. In fact, it involves a rather caricatured version of traditional education and academia. This "oppositional identity" manifests most clearly in the opposition between academic work and transformation. The dimension of self-inquiry and subjective processes, such as self-reflection, meditation, the creation of community in the classroom, personal disclosure, and the expression of emotion, is privileged as the transformative aspect of education. The traditionally objective academic activities, such as developing a body of knowledge, academic writing, and critical thinking, are at times viewed as unfortunate necessities of participation in a degree-granting program.

Unfortunately, this reactive oppositional identity also ends up rejecting much that is good about mainstream academic inquiry. The baby of academic rigor, vigor, quality, and objectivity is thrown out with the bathwater of oppressive tedium, constriction, and "Objectivism" (Palmer 1993). Legiti-

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mate critiques of the limitations of mainstream education can end up consciously or unconsciously rejecting some of the central values of education and inquiry. In the process, they fail to develop a viable alternative vision that frames education as a transformative and creative process rather than merely an informative one (Kegan 2000).

In this article, I will refer to two exclusionary, polarized views of education, the *Reproductive* and the *Narcissistic*, and propose an alternative I call *Creative Inquiry*, the practitioners of which navigate a middle way, a spectrum of possibilities between extremes (Montuori 1989, 1998a, 1998b, 2003, 2005a, 2005b). In Creative Inquiry the goal is to make the academic transformative and to ground the transformative in the academic. Creative Inquirers seek to navigate and integrate the skill building, knowledge base development, scholarship, and critical thinking of traditional academia with the emphasis on self-reflection, the excavation of values, the integration of the knower in the known, and the stress on transformation—personal and social—of alternative approaches, without falling into polarized excesses.

By *Reproductive* I mean an approach to education that sees the source of knowledge as almost exclusively outside the knower, and focuses on the accurate reproduction of that knowledge by the knower. It is about reproducing the content one has received; reproducing the disciplinary organization, instructional pedagogy, and power structures that generate this knowledge; reproducing the standard, accepted ways of conducting inquiry; reproducing the societal-industrial expectations for what a good member of the workforce is; reproducing the existing social and academic order.

Before I go on I must clarify the relationship between Reproductive education and mainstream (nonalternative, if you will) academia. First of all, as I present it here, Reproductive education is an interpretation of education by some students. It is a way they have come to frame and understand education and inquiry. I do not mean to suggest that mainstream academia is all about memorization and regurgitation. Clearly there are innumerable examples of wonderful educational experiences in "traditional" educational institutions. But it is becoming clear that there are also many, many instances where education is indeed reduced to memorization and regurgitation, for any number of reasons too complex to address here (cf. Morin 2001; Palmer 1993, 1997; Wilshire 1990). Furthermore, regardless of the vagaries of individual institutions, courses, instructors, and students, traditional academia has done little to recognize the creativity of inquiry, stressing instead the "scientific," rational and logical dimension of the process (Montuori 2005b).

By *Narcissistic* I mean an approach to education that sees the source of knowledge as primarily inside the knower. It focuses on the expression of the knower's experience and interiority and his or her personal growth and transformation. This approach reflects the students' feelings that they can finally bring to the table all that they had to hide and repress during previous academic experiences—their personal experience, feelings, and opinions. It is a reaction to perceived restrictions, and, when accompanied by a rejection of all things perceived as traditionally academic, manifests as an overcorrection.

Narcissists want to explore their feelings and their experience, and place faith in their intuitive insights. They want to rehabilitate all that has traditionally been ejected from academic inquiry, perhaps rightly so. They reinsert the inquirer into the inquiry and give voice to the many dimensions of inquiry and inquirer that were left out of academic discourse for so long. But if in the process they reject high academic standards, if they do not dialogue with the larger scholarly community, if they are not grounded in the literature, if they are not open to challenge and critique, if they defy the laws of science and common sense, the result is a narcissistic world of navel-gazing that adds little if anything of value to the field, where process replaces content and an entirely new set of oppositions is created.

Abraham Maslow's warning is as valid today as it was in 1969:

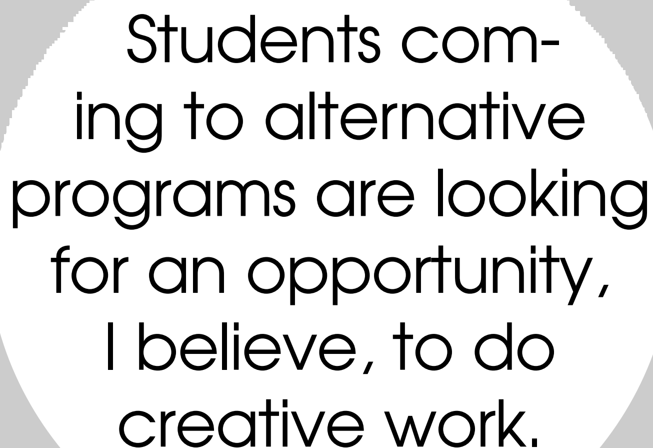
> I have been disturbed not only by the more "anal" scientists and the denial of human values in science, along with the consequent amoral technologizing of all science. Just as dangerous are some of the critics of orthodox science who find it too skeptical, too cool and nonhuman, and then reject it altogether as a danger to human values. They become "antiscientific" and even anti-intellectual. This is a real danger among some psychotherapists and clinical psychologists, among artists, among some seriously religious people, among some of the people who are interested in Zen, Taoism, in existentialism, "experientialism," and the like. Their alternative to science is often sheer freakishness and cultishness, uncritical and selfish exaltation of mere personal experiencing, over-reliance on impulsivity (which they confuse with spontaneity), arbitrary whimsicality and emotionality, unskeptical enthusiasm, and finally, navel-watching and solipsism. We should remember the Nazis and Fascists with their call to blood and sheer instinct, and their hostility to freely-probing intellect and cool rationality. (xv–xvi)

Creative Inquiry can integrate the best of traditional scholarship and expand what is meant by education and inquiry by including an ongoing process of self-inquiry that recognizes the role of the knower in inquiry. Creative Inquiry in the educational process is not merely an accumulation of facts and figures, the development of an academic specialization and expertise in a given topic, but can also be an opportunity to transform oneself, one's world, and the process of inquiry itself.

By *Creative Inquiry* I mean an approach that views inquiry as a creative process. In doctoral work, the dissertation is defined as an original contribution to the field. Yet questions of originality and, more specifically, the creative process involved, are hardly ever explicitly addressed (Guetzkow, Lamont, and Mallard 2004). As Kaplan (1964) points out, our conventional approach to inquiry focuses predominantly on the process of justification rather than the process of discovery. Popper (2002) explicitly states that the creative dimension of scientific discovery was not a proper subject for scientific or philosophical attention, given its aleatory, contingent nature and the fact that it does not involve logical method. (Surely a deeply misguided and polarizing statement in and of itself.) What mattered was what could be subjected to logical analysis, namely the testing of the idea—not how one got

there. And, in fact, the reality of the how—messy, contingent, imaginative, and exciting—has always been relegated to biography, and what has been presented in its place is a reconstruction based on logic and an assumption that what happened had to happen. Indeed methodology often serves as a handy cover story for the realities of inquiry.[1]

It should now be clear that what I am addressing here is not the nature and role of any specific methodology, but a premethodological attitude toward inquiry and scholarship that incorporates and is, in fact, founded on the creative, contingent reality of inquiry as opposed to a reconstructed, sanitized view of inquiry as a purely logical and rational process. Furthermore, in Creative Inquiry the product of the creative process is not just original research but, also, the self-creation of the inquirer as a participant in a community of inquiry and action.



Creativity offers an important entry point into this discussion of alternative approaches to education for a number of other reasons. Students coming to alternative programs are looking for an opportunity, I believe, to do *creative* work. By this I mean that they want to do work that makes a contribution and is not just a vermiform appendix to their advisor's research agenda. They want to do this work in a way that is exciting, in a way that leads them to understand themselves and the world anew; they want knowledge of the world and self-knowledge, and the opportunity to develop and express a unique viewpoint that reflects their passion and commitment. This is precisely what they feel Reproductive education denies them. Having set these lofty and admirable goals, we must now explore ways of achieving them.

It don't mean a thing . . .

Let us assume two music schools. In the first, students learn music theory, history, performance, composition, and similar staples of music education. In the second, an "alternative" school devoted to a more holistic or transformative process of music education, students learn to get in touch with and articulate their passion for music, how to achieve a "flow state" in performance, meditation practices for spiritual development, and collaboration skills for their group performances. The holistic or transformative adds a lot to the more traditional school and can provide a rich and fascinating experience. If indeed it is the assumption that these musicians are being prepared for participation in the world of professional music, however, unless the alternative approach graduates musicians who have developed the skills to perform at a high level of instrumental ability and who can perform competently with others, the alternative approach is fundamentally useless.

Having said that, in the "holistic" school there is also the distinct possibility, as well as the assumption and aspiration, that musicians who develop the appropriate level of musical competence and personal development may actually turn out to be more well-rounded and better educated musicians and people. The assumption is that there is a connection between what one plays and who one is. Furthermore, I believe that in a truly transformative education, the development of basic skills—such as sight-reading, music theory, composition, and history—would be contextualized and approached differently, in ways that reflect the transformative potential of education. In a previous article, I have shown how a staple of traditional academic education, the literature review, can be reframed as a creative process (Montuori 2005b), and I will return to this example at the end of this paper. Throughout this article, I will stress the development of basic academic scholarship and suggest that the academic can be transformative, and the transformative can be grounded in the academic.

On being "mental"

Let us get more specific. How do the dangers outlined by Maslow and, generally, the problems of the Narcissistic approach play out in the classroom? I recently worked with a graduate student who presented me with a paper on the role of joy in volunteer work. His paper was interesting, ambitious, thoughtful but, also, quite problematic in several ways. Joy was never defined or contextualized, either in terms of the lived experience, the phenomenology of joy, or the literature.

Something else bothered me about the paper that I could not initially quite put my finger on. In a discussion about an article I had asked him to read, the student told me how the article I had given him was about the concept of joy, whereas his essay addressed the actual feeling and experience of joy. In his view, the other article was addressing a concept and, thus, came from the head, and his own paper came from the heart, addressing a feeling and an experience, not a concept; his paper was not conceptual.

It became clear to me that a substantial part of the problem with the student's paper was that the student was making a drastic split between "head"

and "heart," "concept" and "feeling." By doing so, he was simply not accepting that although he was interested in the experience of joy itself, his paper discussed a feeling and an experience in an academic context (whether he liked it or not) and proposed a different understanding and role for joy in social work. To write the paper effectively, he would have to recognize that he had to articulate the concept of joy as well as the experience of the feeling itself, precisely because he was actually reconceptualizing the role of joy in volunteer work. It also became clear to me that the student had performed the somewhat odd contortion of not giving himself credit for proposing the need to reconceptualize the role of joy in volunteer work because of his unarticulated belief that to deal with concepts is only intellectual, whereas to deal with experience and feeling is "real" and "where transformation occurs." The key for this student was the value of the experience of joy people were having during volunteer work—an interesting and valid subject matter. But what he should also have done is clearly articulate the nature of that experience, contextualize it, conceptualize it, and situate it in the literature.

In the student's mind there was a real polarization between concepts and experience, intellect and feeling, theory and practice. His paper was weakened by his refusal to recognize the role of intellect and concepts in the articulation of scholarly and transformative work. Although in his discussions with me the student told me that he did not approach the subject intellectually or conceptually, he obviously did. Because of his unwillingness to accept the conceptual dimension of his work, the concepts, theories, and intellectual discussion in his paper—although clearly there despite his claims to the contrary—were weak and underdeveloped. This is obviously problematic, particularly in an academic context, and illustrates precisely the kind of problem in attitude that I have outlined in my three approaches to scholarship and education—Reproductive, Narcissistic, and Creative Inquiry.

By not being able to accept that he was actually engaging concepts and ideas and not taking full responsibility for his participation in intellectual discourse, the student was left in a limbo that was neither experience nor reflection, neither theory nor practice. Part of my job was to help the student to see that if he wanted to participate in a certain world or community, or engage in a specific discourse, he would need to be able to speak convincingly in that context. Not without struggle, he started to see how his own thinking, his own language, and his own communications about his subject were, in fact, also occurring through concepts and ideas. The student came to see how he could develop a more satisfying relationship between the intellect and the emotions, between head and heart, and theory and practice, and that this was a creative challenge for him as it is for all of us. Ultimately, he was not offered a solution to the problem but a way of framing the relationship that offered the possibility of creativity rather than opposition.

Where does this polarizing, dichotomizing tendency come from? Academia historically identified itself in opposition to subjectivity, emotion, and intuition in the same way that science identified itself in opposition to the church. In the next two sections of this article, I step back and briefly address the cultural and psychological factors that contribute to a narcissistic, anti-intellectual view of education in the U.S. context.

The spirit of/and anti-intellectualism

It is ironic how often the search for holism, transformation, integralism, and alternative approaches in general can lead to the exclusion of what is sometimes disparagingly called "the mental." In this view, not uncommon with students entering alternative programs and in New Age circles, anything considered "intellectual" is, by definition, not spiritual, because the intellect is the "old paradigm," the foe of spirituality. It is precisely what separated us from the natural, spiritual, intuitive, spontaneous existence that our foremothers and forefathers apparently enjoyed in the days before Descartes, Newton, the industrial, and even the agricultural, revolution. The emphasis is on personal insight and/or connection with "higher wisdom" or God. Book-learning is seen as ultimately "relative," second-hand, and even part of a process of egoic self-aggrandizement, aloofness, snobbery, elitism, and a removal from the "real" world.

If students and faculty interested in alternative education sometimes think of it in opposition to mainstream education, this should really come as no surprise to us. What is now called mainstream education and considered rigorous inquiry originally also defined itself in opposition to values it rejected, as science defined itself in opposition to the church. Socialization into mainstream academic social science has historically involved learning the values associated with good or rigorous inquiry. These values can be summarized in a set of hierarchical oppositions.

- objective/subjective
- theory/practice
- reason/emotion
- fact/intuition
- universal/particular

Rigorous academic inquiry historically focused squarely on the left-hand side of these pairs. Indeed, Western thought has a long history of either/or thinking, which can be traced back to Aristotle's basic principles of logic, such as the law of contradiction and the law of the excluded middle (Code 1991; Diesing 1992; Morin 2001; Palmer 1997; Rosenau 1992).

The alternative to the extreme forms of this opposition, in the form of the deadly Reproductive education, can, all too often, become a glorification of the right-hand side of the categories, namely subjectivity, emotion, experience, intuition and the particular; a total rejection of the left-hand side. Subjectivity simply replaces objectivity, feelings replace logic and reason, intuitions replace facts and the result is equally partial and limited but in a very different way, leading to a focus that is almost exclusively "internal" rather than "external."

In many ways, the problems found in the quest for alternative approaches to education are not at all new. They are part and parcel of American culture. A good place to start is the influence of anti-intellectualism, which sadly transcends all barriers of class, race, gender, politics, and spiritual orientation. Hofstader wrote his classic work on anti-intellectualism more than forty years ago, but his words apply to our present situation:

> The American mind was shaped in the mold of early modern Protestantism. Religion was the first arena for American intellectual life, and thus the first arena for an anti-intellectual impulse. Anything that seriously diminished the role of rationality and learning in early American religion would later diminish its role in secular culture. The feeling that ideas should above all be made to work, the disdain for doctrine and for refinements in ideas, the subordination of men of ideas to men of emotional power or manipulative skill are hardly innovations of the twentieth century; they are inheritances of American Protestantism. (1966, 55)

Anti-intellectualism pervades American culture. It can be found in such seemingly opposite worlds as corporate culture, religious fundamentalism, and the culture of the sixties, through Humanistic Psychology, and into the New Age. The New Age critiques of "the mental" and the intellect are direct descendants of American Protestantism.

In New Age culture, there is much discussion of old and new paradigms. If the old paradigm was male, objective, authoritarian, rational, and intellectual, the new paradigm is usually portrayed as female, subjective, participatory, feeling-oriented, and practical. Much of the "spiritual" literature focuses on the problematic nature of thinking. Thinking is viewed as an obstacle to enlightenment. Intellectualism and "being in your head" are generally considered to be the antithesis of the characteristics of an enlightened person. Ironically, this New Age rejection and compartmentalization reflects precisely the kind of reductionism and disconnected compartmentalization it critiques in the "old paradigm."

Particularly interesting is that despite its often deeply anti-intellectual stance, many of the New Age appropriations of systems of spiritual development and transformation do not eschew conceptual systems. In fact, in many cases they develop quite elaborate frameworks of Blavatskian intricacy that incorporate everything from quantum physics to the chakras to Advaita Vedanta to shamanism to colonic irrigation to the evolution of consciousness. And, much like my student, many New Age systems simply deny that their work is theoretical or conceptual in nature. They believe that they are expressing eternal truths or deep insights that cannot be addressed intellectually but only intuitively or spiritually.

The New Age fascination with "new science," from physics to chaos theory to cosmology, and the development of ever more elaborate and omnivorous conceptual systems, is interesting precisely because it represents a desire to articulate a new paradigm, largely in opposition to the old paradigm. On the one hand, it utterly rejects what the old paradigm stood for, as I have already suggested, and on the other hand it reintroduces the same underlying principles of reductionism, disjunction, and simplification that were at the foundation of the old paradigm. The new paradigm emerges in an oppositional identity to the old paradigm, as can be seen clearly in the tables found in many New Age books, outlining key aspects of both paradigms:

Old Paradigm	*New Paradigm*
part	whole
quantitative	qualitative
masculine	feminine
competition	collaboration
head	heart
logic	intuition
authoritarian	participatory
hierarchy	network

It is clear that there is a cultural context that reinforces the polarization between Reproductive and Narcissistic approaches and that the latter has a long history in the United States, most explicitly in anti-intellectualism. An awareness of this cultural context is important, not least because it contextualizes the students' views about their own framing of alternative education and shows the extent to which they are embedded in a cultural context. This context does not simply inform the Reproductive dimensions they explicitly reject but, also, the very way they think about freeing themselves from the constraints of tradition.

Who is "inferior"?

After a brief sketch of some of the cultural factors informing approaches to alternative education, I turn to the psychological. My argument, drawing on Jungian psychology, will be that it is precisely the students who have the most resistance to the intellectual and academic who need to work most on developing their intellectual and scholarly capacities. Central to my argument is that this is not only for the obvious reason—that they are in graduate school—but for their own personal development.

Jung's study of personality can shed some light on the psychological dimensions of oppositional identity with his notion of the inferior function. In the Jungian personality typology, individuals make judgments based either on the function known as Thinking or the function known as Feeling. An awareness of one's own subjectivity, one's own background, motivations, and generally one's cognitive preferences (such as, for instance, the preference for global assessments of possibilities by Intuitives in the Jungian typology, and the stress on step-by-step, fact-based processing by Sensate types to give just one example) can give us an insight into how information is gathered and how decisions are made based on that information (Feeling or Thinking). Our preferred modes have strengths and weaknesses and offer us opportunities to better understand how inquiry is approached and how one might avoid the inevitable pitfalls ahead.

My experience is that students socialized in traditional, mainstream forms of education are socialized in a cultural system whose personality writ large is oriented primarily toward Thinking. Logic, analysis, and rationality are privileged. Feeling is generally the inferior (or underdeveloped) function in the personality system of academia. This is demonstrated in the categories discussed earlier and can be illustrated by the (admittedly caricatured) image of the tweedy professor who is "all up in his head," and whose judgments are made seemingly dispassionately by cold reason, analysis, and logic (which is how many students in alternative institutions define an "intellectual"). Although Thinking is the dominant function, Feeling does not actually go away. Such a professor is likely unaware of how his feelings are influencing him and the motivations behind his use of reason and logic. Despite the veneer of rationality and logic, he may, in fact be driven by a competitive and even aggressive spirit (e.g., in the debating society, in critiquing a colleague, in reviewing a submission to a journal) and

may be driven completely off course by sentimental attachments that make him "lose his mind" and "act irrationally." Reason can be used in function of rationalization, to create seemingly reasonable stories to support repressed, out of control emotions. Indeed, the belief that "the mental" can exist in splendid isolation from emotions, the body, and the environment, ironically, represents the worst kind of reductionism.

Let us assume, for the moment, that culturally and systemically, traditional academia is a Thinking system, with Feeling as its inferior function. As a reaction, some students see alternative education as a Feeling system, with inferior Thinking. My experience is that a substantial number, although by no means all, of students who choose alternative, transformative educational institutions are Feeling types with Thinking as the inferior function.[2]

Inferior thinking is articulated by von Franz and Hillman (1971) in a way that is very relevant to this educational context. Von Franz writes that inferior thinking types are "nervous about ideas" (101), and Hillman goes on to describe their distaste for "philosophical principles or abstractions or basic questions of life" (47). They base their views and judgments on feeling and are generally not interested in thinking critically about them.

Von Franz writes that, "Feeling puts things into place and they do need not to be looked at again. In that way feeling-types put a stop to discussion, because they stop further psychological observation. Once they are done with the evaluative process, the issue is rather closed (von Franz and Hillman 1971, 100).

This position places a lot of stock in the immediacy of feeling and experience but rejects theory, rationality, logic, and critical thinking—in the educational context things all associated with the mainstream old paradigm. As von Franz goes on to say,

> Feeling types tend to become fanatic and emotional in thought, but thought itself, so overwhelmingly important, cannot be thought further, cannot be carefully worked out. It remains doctrinaire. Rather than having ideas, ideas seem to have them. Frequently they read too much and indiscriminately or they do not read at all. The all-or-none reaction is common in other realms where thinking shows itself; for instance, thoughtful planning becomes either over-exact or carelessly magical. Feeling-types may well devote themselves to an idea, but the ideational programme will often turn out to be strange, archaic, crackpot. (101)

In my experience, this is an excellent description of Narcissists who reject anything that appears to be overly intellectual or elitist, and, yet, become uncritically focused on and enthralled with one idea or movement, whether it be an omniscient guru-du-jour, an author—preferably with an all-encompassing, totalizing system, that, with geometric precision, allows one to find an answer for anything and leaves no uncertainty or ambiguity—or a cause, such as a class-based critique of the wealthy and of industry of any kind (often accompanied by the student's own struggles to keep his or her financial head above water because, for them, wealth is, by definition, bad and what "they" have). Ironically, these same students will often embrace quantum physics and the "new sciences" in general, intricate models of the evolution of consciousness, and Byzantine revisionist histories and conspiracy theories that challenge traditional views of social evolution.

The rejection of "the mental" involves a rejection of critical thinking that increases Narcissists' risk of becoming victims of their own blindspots. A certain New Age gullibility emerges because they "want to believe." It leaves them open to manipulation and to the dangers of uncritical acceptance of beliefs, cults, practices, and individuals.

What becomes very problematic, as Hillman writes, is when the enthusiasm—surely the root of the word, "filled with God," is telling, both in terms of the experience and the potential for illusion—is accompanied by a rejection of critical thinking and deeper more philosophical questioning. Ironically, Narcissists often end up "reproducing" somebody else's view simply because they do not have the scholarship to develop their own perspective or the ability to think critically about their subject. In that case, it can mean

> simply repeating the concepts by heart in a mechanical way, but never working out one's own standpoint. It is a kind of pupil-like, uncreative attitude that just takes over the entire system unchecked and never asks: "What do I think about it? Does this really convince me? Does it coincide with the facts that I have checked?" If such people meet others who themselves know how to think, they get fanatical because they feel helpless. They fight for the system they have chosen with a certain apostle-like fanaticism because they feel uncertain about the basis of the thinking system: how the system developed, its basic concepts, etc. They are uncertain about it and have the feeling that it could be thrown over by a good thinker, so they adopt an aggressive attitude. (von Franz and Hillman 1971, 101)

This psychological dynamic, in the context of a larger cultural context of anti-intellectualism in America, can manifest systemically and create an atmosphere where, precisely because the inferior function is challenged and anxiety is raised in the process, the rejection of intellectualism becomes hardened. Whereas the students in many cases correctly critique academia's dry over-intellectualism and over-abstraction, they often do so without really understanding what they are critiquing. In fact, not infrequently, the critique emerges precisely because they do not understand the subject in question and feel threatened. In other words, the critique is purely emotional and not carefully thought out. As a result, when they explore nontraditional subjects, they are out on the bleeding edge without understanding what they are on the edge of. So, although while the critique of some forms of academic discourse may be on the mark, it is so because of the wrong reasons and comes from a position of insecurity. The students are often uncertain about their abilities as thinkers, as Hillman suggests. This perception of insecurity then manifests in phenomena such as mental rigidity and an aggressive oppositional identity vis-à-vis intellectual pursuits in general.

The problem, however, for most students in alternative institutions is not that they have too much "mental" work—it is that their "mental" capacities, if you will, are terribly underdeveloped and, therefore, the source of anxiety and insecurity. Paradoxically, it is "mental" work that must be integrated into their curriculum not only for the student's intellectual development but, from a Jungian point of view, also for

his or her psychological and even spiritual development. Jung, after all, argued that individuation or wholeness came about through the cultivation and integration of all the functions and, specifically, the inferior function.

Far from being a throwback to an old paradigm, the development of solid academic skills, including critical thinking and a deep and wide knowledge base, can be a powerful source of personal change in individuals who are insecure about their abilities and their identity and need to integrate their "mental." Students and faculty can see this as an opportunity for personal growth and to develop a more integrated, well-balanced person.

One of my students confessed she had some doubts about her own intellectual capacities but had been reluctant to discuss this sensitive topic. When she realized that the Creative Inquiry frame explicitly invited her to address her own feelings about her capacities to do the necessary work, rather than falling back into a Narcissistic rejection of intellectual discourse as "too mental," she recognized her own insecurity, and wrote:

Image © Majed.

> Now that I can "confess" and acknowledge this situation within myself, I feel that a terrible burden is lifted. I know what I need to do, and that is to go beyond "accepting" or "rejecting" the traditional or narcissistic approaches, and aim for the more middle ground of creative inquiry.
>
> Now, that you've given some parameters of creative inquiry I'm much more optimistic about the program and my ability to "succeed." The aspiration of creative inquiry to connect and contextualize instead of reduce and separate, is inspiring my own aspiration for this course of study: relaxation with discipline.

The frame of Creative Inquiry allowed her to navigate between the two extremes of Reproduction and Narcissism, find a "middle way" she could steer through, and find a way of thinking about how to navigate the process of Creative Inquiry itself.

Creativity and Creative Inquiry

Creative Inquiry is, simply put, a process that involves the cultivation of creativity in the process of inquiry. This creativity is not limited to the development of a creative product, such as an original work of research, but also includes framing inquiry as a creative process, a process where the inquirer becomes both producer and product. The inquiry is also a process of self-inquiry and self-creation. I define creativity here as an attitude toward life as a whole that involves the ability to navigate between habit and possibility in a contextually appropriate way (cf. Barron 1995).

Creativity research has outlined a number of key dimensions of the creative person and the creative process relevant to the attitude of Creative Inquiry (Barron 1995; Dacey and Lennon 1998). I will summarize some of the major dimensions here. They include:

- A form of thinking that connects rather than separates and brings together terms and ideas that are conventionally thought to be separate, unrelated, or polar opposites
- Independence of judgment
- Tolerance of ambiguity
- Problem finding
- Complexity and asymmetry
- Intrinsic motivation

Beyond polarizations

Creativity involves bringing together terms or ideas that have not been brought together before. This kind of thinking, with some clear variations, has been called bisociation (Koestler 1966), Janusian thinking (Rothenberg 1979), Dialectical thinking (Basseches 1984) and more but, ultimately, involves thinking together terms that are not normally thought together. Koestler described "bisociation" as "the perceiving of a situation or idea . . . in two self-consistent but habitually incompatible frames of reference" (1966, 35).

In Creative Inquiry, there is an ongoing creative dialogue between terms that have historically been torn asunder. In both the Reproductive and Narcissistic views there is disjunctive, polarizing thinking: the logic of either/or. In Creative Inquiry it is not either innovation or tradition, where, for instance, innovation means ignoring the tradition. It is not either discipline or self-expression but an ongoing creative navigation of both terms. Creative Inquiry involves constantly navigating and creating one's own context-based dialectic between terms, such as:

objective↔subjective
theory↔practice
reason↔emotion
fact↔intuition
universal↔particular
innovation↔tradition

Let us start with these polarizations. Fay (1996) points out that the history of ideas is riddled with polarizations like the ones above. Dialectical sociologists have made this point extensively, arguing that philosophical positions emerge and develop in opposition to each other (e.g., Diesing 1992; Collins 2000). The relationship between Reproductive and Narcissistic approaches is a representa-

tive example. Although the two perspectives are diametrically opposed, the underlying organization of knowledge is grounded in a logic of either/or. Narcissists define themselves in opposition to Reproducers as a result of polarizing, either/or thinking, which leads straight into the creation of mutually exclusive, oppositional identities.

Both the creative process and the creative person demonstrate "paradoxical" qualities in the sense that they hold together terms and characteristics that are normally not held together.

> The creative process itself embodies tension, and individuals who distinguish themselves in artistic, scientific, and entrepreneurial creation exemplify vividly in their persons the incessant dialectic between integration and diffusion, convergence and divergence, thesis and antithesis. (Barron 1964, 81)

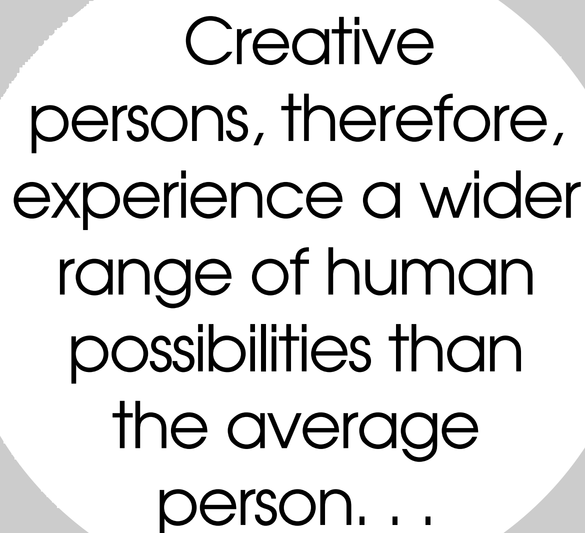
Based on his extensive research on the creative process, Barron concluded that "the secret of generation is the tension of opposites in duality. The antinomies raised to their highest intensity are the source of creation" (1995, 278).

The creative personality also shows seemingly paradoxical characteristics. Summarizing research on the creative person, Hampden-Turner writes:

> The creative person is by turns open and closed, tentative and certain, and flirting with disorder to create a better order. He or she is intuitive but the passes this over in favor of the rational mind for thorough assessment. The creative person scores higher on manifest anxiety, reporting more often despair, depression, anger, sorrow, and doubt; yet the creative person also recovers from these states far faster, showing ego-strength and reporting hope, elation, delight, happiness, and confidence. In other words, creatives rally more easily from setback, shift more readily between moods, and seem to destabilize more readily in order to reach higher equilibria. They are, from a mental health standpoint, both "sicker" and "healthier," more vulnerable to what happens around them yet more able to solve the problems that arise. (1999, 19)

Creative persons, therefore, experience a wider range of human possibilities than the average person: they travel widely across a spectrum of possible behaviors, thoughts, experiences, and emotions. They can be both open and closed, intuitive and rational, capable of experiencing both great emotional disequilibrium and restabilizing at a new equilibrium. This paradoxical relationship of apparent opposites or polarities is central to both the creative person and the creative process, and it is one key factor in what has made creativity so "mysterious," because open/closed, healthy/sick, reason/intuition, are more often than not, viewed as opposites, not as interrelated aspects of a larger whole.

One way of thinking about this through the lens of another characteristic trait of creative individuals is through the concept of androgyny (Dacey and Lennon 1998; Norlander, Erixon, and Archer 2000). Very stereotyped gender roles—the strong, hard, aggressive, male, the soft, nurturing female—correlate negatively with creativity. Creative individuals do not conform to such stereotypes. In other words, they do not see male behavior at one end of the spectrum and female behavior at the other in an either/or frame. They do not define male behavior in terms of what female behavior is not and vice versa (and where "crossing over" can lead to being called a "sissy" or a "bitch"). They see a continuum of human behaviors and experiences and feel free to move along the entire spectrum. In the same way, creativity involves seeing and navigating an entire spectrum rather than seeing only oppositions and polarities.



One intriguing etymology of the word *paradox* is, "something that is contrary to or conflicts with common opinion, something that goes against expectation." As I have shown, there is an expectation that one must fall on either side of the key polarities I have listed. In this way, both taking a position on either one of the sides ("taking a stand," "having the power of your convictions") and the logic of either/or are part of societal expectations (Fay 1996; Morin 2001).

Independence of judgment

Going along with common opinion at all times is referred to as *conformism*. Reproducers obviously want to be conformists. They want to know what they have to do to get the grade. Creative Inquirers are not anticonformity, they do not rebel against order for the sake of it as Narcissists tend to do. Creative Inquirers have what is known as *independence of judgment*. In other words, they do not assume that popular opinion is, by definition, the final word. They explore, dig deeper, question assumptions, and then decide. They ask why things have to be the way they are and wonder if they could be different. Creative Inquiry can be an opportunity to cultivate independence of judgment. When assessing a wide body of knowledge, Reproducers simply reproduce, and Narcissists simply express how they feel, but Creative Inquirers can review and make up their own minds in dialogue with the field.

Tolerance of ambiguity

Creative Inquiry is a process of exploration and navigation. It will therefore lead us into ambiguous situa-

tions, where there are no preexisting rules and regulations, "no framework to help direct your decisions and actions" (Dacey and Lennon 1998, 18). Creative Inquirers cultivate tolerance for ambiguity to do well in situations where there is no set way of doing things, where it is necessary to experiment and try out new things. Inevitably, situations for which there are no clear guidelines or a field where there are multiple and, at times, conflicting perspectives on one issue can create a lot of anxiety. One anxiety-reducing solution is to immediately attempt to impose a preexisting framework or set of rules on the situation and not remain open to the situation long enough to really assess it and allow an appropriate response to emerge. Anxiety can lead to very black and white, either/or thinking, and this shows up both in Reproductive and Narcissistic thinking.

In ambiguous situations where there is no clear framework for acting, some kind of order has to be created. Whereas some people might see the lack of existing structure and order as a source of anxiety, something to be immediately remedied, Creative Inquirers often appreciate unstructured situations precisely because they see them as an opportunity to explore and create. They are excited by the prospect of improvising, of getting to experiment and figure things out by trial and error, of developing new frameworks and ways of making meaning in the world. They take their time to explore without coming to premature closure and have developed more comfort with uncertainty.

Problem solving and problem finding

Creative Inquiry involves engaging the unknown, the messy, the complicated, the complex, and attempting to understand and make sense out of it. Getzels and Csikszentmihalyi (1976) have demonstrated that *problem finding*, as opposed to merely problem solving, is central to creativity. This is also a central characteristic of Creative Inquirers. Creative individuals show a preference for asymmetrical forms over symmetrical ones. Barron summarizes:

> Creative individuals have a positive liking for phenomenal fields which cannot be assimilated to principles of geometric order and which require the development or, better, the creation of new perceptual schemata which will re-establish in the observer a feeling that the phenomena are intelligible, which is to say ordered, harmonious, and capable of arousing esthetic sentiment. (1995, 155)

Complexity, asymmetry, disorder, the unknown, the unexplained, and the edges of the paradigm become a source of stimulation and possibility, a challenge and an opportunity to create and make sense of the world in one's own way. A preference for simple order involves an attempt to maintain equilibrium at all costs. Barron writes that this equilibrium "depends essentially upon exclusion, a kind of perceptual distortion which consists in refusing to see parts of reality that cannot be assimilated to some preconceived system" (1995, 198–99). This leads to an increasingly closed view of the world and the reinforcement of set ways of doing things, as well as prejudices and stereotypes.

Arlin (1990) highlights three more relevant characteristics of problem finders:

1. *Openness to the possibility and reality of change*. The willingness to remain open to change, and to information that may lead to change, points to an ongoing process of self-transformation rather than a static, fixed sense of self and world.
2. *Pushing limits, which at times can lead to the redefinition of those limits*. Change and the detection of problems in the existing order can lead to pushing limits, whether cognitive, political, or personal. Pushing limits also leads to a redefinition of those limits as the person develops a new understanding of what is and is not possible. This requires courage and the willingness to take risks, hence the title of Rollo May's classic work on creativity, *The Courage to Create* (1994).
3. *A preference for addressing core or fundamental issues and problems, rather than an exclusive focus on detail*. Creative Inquiry, with its ongoing challenging of assumptions and integration of the knower into the process of knowing, usually leads to core or fundamental issues even if these were not part of the original inquiry.

Creativity Inquiry involves an attraction to the unknown, a desire to navigate uncharted territories as an opportunity to gain a greater understanding of the world and of oneself. Barron has referred to this as the "Cosmological Motive," or the desire to create one's own world and create oneself (1995).

Motivation

Motivation can be thought of as a person's attitude toward the task she or he is engaged in. To be motivated, write Ryan and Deci (2000), means *to be moved* to do something. Creative Inquirers are intrinsically motivated because they have a passion for their subject but also learn how to turn the process of research itself into something enjoyable. *Intrinsically* motivated people enjoy what they do, and they do so because they find the task itself rewarding. Intrinsic means "from within." Intrinsic motivation literally means that one is moved from within to do something. Intrinsically motivating factors can include fascination with the subject, enjoyment while performing the task, or a feeling of accomplishment. *Extrinsically* motivated people do the task because there is an external reward attached to it. They do not enjoy the task itself. It is the reward (getting the grade or the degree) that is the motivator. Extrinsic motivation is motivation that comes from outside sources. Obtaining a good grade or degree, financial incentives, and social approval are examples of extrinsic motivation. Creative Inquiry involves, among other things, reflecting on one's attitude towards every dimension and aspect of inquiry, and finding ways to approach them creatively, as opportunities for learning and change.

A particularly interesting implication of Amabile's research (1996), which has convincingly shown that intrinsic motivation is a key factor in creativity, is that whether a task is intrinsically interesting to us or not is, on some level, a personal choice. It is an aspect of the subjective dimension of work. A particular task can be seen as boring, but it can also be viewed as a something fascinating, useful or interesting. Even a literature review—something many students seem to find boring—can be interesting if performed with a creative frame (Montuori

2005b). It is possible to focus not just on the nature of the task itself (writing up one's references does not strike most people as an intrinsically fascinating task, for example) but on the nature of our consciousness while the task is performed. If the task is not interesting, performance and, certainly, creativity suffer. If the focus is on doing a good job, and working at one's peak regardless of the nature of the task, we can actually "be moved" by the task. It is also possible to reframe the task at hand, from one that is desperately boring to one that is potentially exciting—finding a new way of performing the task or seeing the task as an opportunity for learning and growth. This is called reframing. Creative Inquiry can act as a frame that is generative of creativity—in other words, a frame that sees every aspect of inquiry as an opportunity for creativity.

Summary

Creativity involves an attitude toward inquiry that draws on our deepest motivations and views the unknown and the complex as opportunities for inquiry and for making meaning in the world. The cosmological motive Barron (1995) speaks of is a form of self-making and world-making. It is an artistic process, requiring aesthetic skill and sensibility, and a scientific process, requiring both rigor and imagination.

Creative Inquiry invites us to cultivate our creativity. Independence of Judgment, tolerance for ambiguity, and the other dimensions of creativity I have listed, can all be cultivated (Barron 1995). They are not prerequisites for Creative Inquiry. Rather, Creative Inquiry presents us with an opportunity to engage them in our chosen context and develop them with others. They are aspirations in the process of Creativity Inquiry—touchstones along the way that remind us that the academic context can be framed as a yoga, as a spiritual practice. Once an appropriate frame is developed and an appropriate environment created, both intra- and interpersonally, creativity can emerge (Amabile 1996; Barron 1995).

A frame and three examples

In this section, I will briefly discuss the role of Creative Inquiry as a frame for first-year graduate students and then explore three classroom examples: the literature review, the development of an academic voice, and classroom interaction and collaboration.

Creative inquiry as a frame

Key to developing the spirit of Creative Inquiry and avoiding the pitfalls of the Reproductive/Narcissistic polarization, is to create a generative frame for inquiry in a first semester course. Creating the frame and the aspiration of Creative Inquiry can address a lot of the misconceptions about what graduate studies in alternative institutions are about. I invite students to reflect on their own educational experiences, their own assumptions about graduate education, and their understanding of the role of alternative institutions. I ask them about whether they identify with, or aspire to become, "intellectuals," the relationship between scholarly research and personal growth, the academic and the transformative, the historical developments that lead to the present condition (including America's history of anti-intellectualism), and the possibilities that lie ahead. I attempt to make explicit most or all of the issues that come before actual inquiry but that deeply influence that process. Creative Inquiry is a frame that introduces students to a kind of thinking that connects and contextualizes rather than separating and isolating. With that approach, we can explore some of the historical tension in the history of knowledge, education, and the development of alternative educational approaches. It is also a frame that taps into their motivation by making academic inquiry an opportunity to tap into and cultivate their creativity.

The three forms of inquiry I have proposed serve as a loose framework for understanding the perils of exclusionary polarization and decontextualizing and also outline how Creative Inquiry contextually navigates tensions and polarities. The challenge for students, like the challenge for great musicians, is to develop their skills, knowledge, and insights so that they can develop their own voice, their own way of being in this academic context, and in their work in the world. Framing inquiry as a creative process works on many levels, addressing several aspirations: to make the process of inquiry a creative process; to produce original, meaningful research; to engage in dialogue with others in ways that are generative and challenging; and to create oneself as an inquirer in the context of a larger community, whether one sees oneself as an intellectual, scholar-practitioner, or activist, for example. The great challenge is that every student has an opportunity to create her or his own interpretation of these several dimensions. And every student has the opportunity to create him or herself in the process of academic inquiry.

Students starting graduate school can sometimes understandably be quite anxious. In this new, challenging, generally less rigidly structured, and, in some cases, more seminar-based environment, students are required to be more self-starting, self-motivating, and self-directed. At the graduate level there is inevitably more ambiguity in terms of the studies themselves. The notion of one correct answer starts to become more problematic. Students begin to see that an issue can be approached from a plurality of perspectives, that these perspectives are sometimes antagonistic, sometimes concurrent, and sometimes complementary. They see that there may be considerable disagreements and even irreconcilable differences between them. This uncertainty can be confusing. Because the "one right way" approach seems not to apply, it may seem that "anything goes," that there are as many perspectives on an issue as there are individuals, and that "we create our own reality" (Perry 1998).

Anxiety is increased dramatically when there is considerable ambiguity and students are not clear about the basic parameters of the kind of experience they are encountering. Further, in many educational institutions, and not just alternative institutions, the relationship between the espoused educational philosophies and the everyday work of academic inquiry is sometimes quite tenuous. Students are not clear about the attitude or "frame" with which to approach the actual reality of their work or even the basic issues of scholarship. As a result, they can end up going back and forth between the extremes of Reproductive and Narcissistic approaches.

Students in alternative institutions may initially believe that the plurality of views and perspectives they encounter exists only in the "leading edge," "alternative" world of their institution. They may begin to think that in more mature disciplines, there is consensus and agreement about what is "right" and what is "wrong," that there are no heated debates, no major differences in perspectives. The uncertainty then leads to greater anxiety when students wonder if it is a function of the field, of their quirky "alternative" institution, of the nature of knowledge in general. Students, like all of us, often have a tendency to project their own fears and concerns onto whatever void they perceive to exist, in all areas where there are no explicit guidelines. In many cases, for example, they will demand "the answer" from the instructor or from the readings and assume that if the final and correct answer is not provided, there must be something wrong with the instructor or the readings or the subject matter as a whole.

Students, like all of us, often have a tendency to project their own fears and concerns onto whatever void they perceive to exist. . .

Faculty must also be careful not to assume that students come with the same background they do. Faculty members have, in all likelihood, had a somewhat traditional background with all the training in academic scholarship. They may be eager to "get to the leading edge." Students, are in many cases, unlikely to know the full extent of the territory that has been traversed to reach the edge. They may also be unaware of the complexities of working at the leading edge, which is an art in and of itself because of the inevitably speculative nature of much of the work.

Finding an introductory way to articulate ways of thinking about inquiry in this new context, based on the Reproductive/Narcissistic responses to this situation and preparing students for a more complex, creative approach to inquiry has, in my experience, served to set students on a good course. I invite students to explore their own thinking about inquiry through the three perspectives. Immersion in this underlying issue of how to approach inquiry (rather than a discussion of specific research methodologies, which I believe should come later) helps to address students' questions and anxieties while at the same time recognizing the reality of that very anxiety they may be experiencing, making it a subject of inquiry in the context of their educational experiences and the history of knowledge and education.

An example of this relationship between the academic and the transformative emerged in a class I taught recently on Creativity and Personal Transformation. Students were invited to explore the findings of creativity research and familiarize themselves with some of the key findings about the creative person and the creative process. At the beginning of the course, before they had read the material, they had been asked to explore questions based on this research and invited to address them in the light of their own experience. After they completed the readings, the students reflected on how to apply the findings of the research to expand their own creative potential. For instance, they explored their own relationship to such classic characteristics of the creative person as independence of judgment or tolerance of ambiguity or to their own experience of the creative process when viewed from Wallas's classic four stages of Immersion, Incubation, Illumination, and Verification. Grounding these characteristics in their own experience gave them an opportunity to develop a greater understanding of their complexities, implications, and applications—it made them more "real," rather than simply theoretical constructs.

Students then explored a variety of psychospiritual practices to assist them in the process of exploring the nature of their own creative process and addressing any blocks they were experiencing. The students were asked to stick with the practices for at least a month and to familiarize themselves with the origins, theoretical frameworks, and assumptions of the various practices. The underlying assumption was that the academic (the creativity research) was also approached in a transformative way and the transformative was also approached in an academic way. As a final integrative assignment, students were asked to write their intellectual autobiography from the perspective of age eighty, "reminiscing" on how they had applied their graduate studies in their lives and how their own voice had developed as they immersed themselves in their work and addressed the personal psychological obstacles revealed by the earlier exploration of creativity research. This was also an opportunity for them to address their voice since emphasis was placed on illustrating not only what they had accomplished but also who they had "grown into." Their voice, therefore, became a crucial aspect of their paper, because it would give the reader an indication of the person behind the actions.

So what does Creative Inquiry look like when it is at home? How does it differ from Reproductive and Narcissistic inquiry? I will give three examples: the literature review, the development of one's academic voice, and the capacity to dialogue in class.

The literature review

A Reproducer sees a literature review as merely the demonstration that he or she knows the knowledge base "out there," so that s/he can get a good grade. The literature review then often becomes a tedious catalog of information, a series of book reports, at best, organized in chronological order. There is typically little or no effort to connect the various approaches to a subject to each other or to contextualize them in the student's own research. There is an almost atomistic approach whereby "bits" of information are collected but seemingly with no effort to show if and how they are connected. There is no connection and therefore no dialogue with the community of fellow inquirers who have also immersed themselves in this subject. The student is not participating in the discourse but observing it as an outsider. Furthermore, there is typically no attention paid to an audience, in the sense of a contribution to an existing discourse and an articulation of where the student situates her- or himself in that context. The student has drastically reduced his or her context to a relationship with the instructor and, more specifically, focused exclusively on getting the desired grade.

A Narcissist might see a literature review either as an unnecessary affront to his or her creativity ("Why do I need to read what others have said—I'm creative") or as an opportunity to state what authors she or he "likes" or "dislikes" without any justification or contextualization, not giving the reader any insight into why the student prefers author X over author Y. Again, as with the Reproductive review, the student is not writing with an audience in mind and therefore, does not communicate effectively with others or actually participate in the discourse in any sort of acceptable way, because the writing is always primarily about the self and feelings. Again, there is no engagement with the scholarly community, which is approached from a consumer orientation—picking and choosing what one likes and dislikes based on what texts the student happens to have read. There is no sense of systematic, disciplined inquiry or a real understanding of the issue in the broadest sense. *Freedom* is misinterpreted here in the way that Kant's dove thought that it could fly faster if there were no air to hold it back.

For Creative Inquirers, a literature review is far from a simple, tedious rehearsal of what the "authorities out there" said or a statement of somewhat arbitrary personal preferences. Engaging in Creative Inquiry, a literature review becomes an opportunity for a dialogue between the inquirer and those who make up her intellectual context, situating her in that research context, paying tribute to her ancestors, and articulating the limitations and challenges of the field. The student begins to see that the issue she is passionate about is one that has been approached by others and that she is part of an ongoing community of individuals, sometimes stretching back hundreds of years, who have shared that passion. She then begins to see the literature review as the articulation of a set of relationships, an interpretation of the field, and her way of situating herself in that field (Montuori 2005b). She finds that she belongs in a community and, yet, can also see a way to articulate her own unique voice and contribution to that community.

Key to this process is the attitude of participation in a discourse, of communicating with people, both living and dead, who share one's interests and passions. I encourage students to write with an audience in mind and the assumption that their paper may be read by members of the new community. This may well be the case if the final assignment is a publishable paper, as it often is. By creating this feeling of active participation, the student's attitude is often transformed and enlivened.

Participation in a community also means developing an understanding of who we are vis-à-vis that community—our identity, our role, our passion, and so on. Exposure to other, perhaps conflicting, approaches can lead us to reflect on our own beliefs and to challenging our own assumptions. Where do we stand in the context of the discourse? What can we learn from the many perspectives that have informed our understanding of the subject at hand, from their interactions, oppositions, explorations? In this way, a literature review also becomes an opportunity for self-understanding, for the excavation of our implicit assumptions about our topic, our implicit theories, the origins of our beliefs and the relationship between our intellectual development and our biography, and the way we approach our subject.

One student told me that the literature review took her to places she did not think she could go—both emotionally and intellectually. In her research on the history of women healers, she became aware of a whole set of historical circumstances that she was unaware of, including the systematic killing of women healers portrayed as "witches." The literature review deeply affected her understanding of the world and of herself as a woman and a healer. Her immersion in the literature made her even more passionate about her subject and motivated her to expand her context in time and space to understand the global history and role of women healers and, at the same time, look more deeply at some of her own experiences from this broader perspective.

This student found a new way to see her participation in academic inquiry as a creative process—a process of self-creation, of exploring her identity in the context of inquiry. This has, in my experience, been one of the most exciting aspects of the Creative Inquiry frame for students. It creates the opportunity for self-creation and self-discovery through engagement with the academic work. This process is by no means easy—the same student described having a virtual nervous breakdown as she delved into the literature review and began to deeply question who she was, where she fit into the world she was discovering, and how she might participate in it. As she articulated it later, her research

> almost spun me into a crisis sometimes. It definitely uprooted all my assumptions and beliefs. It definitely challenged me on every level. It sent me down a rabbit hole that had no return ticket. It takes a leap of faith to do a good creative inquiry literature review and really let all of the new information transform you—which it will if you are doing creative inquiry correctly. The literature review was a death-rebirth-death-rebirth process. I did not just have to "see" my assumptions and beliefs but I had to "die" to them so new ones could be born. This is not always the most graceful process.

For some, a literature review can be an introduction to a world, a community, a discourse, and eventually a career, that we choose to pursue. It may therefore have a profound impact on the direction of our life. For this student, the literature review became a transformative experience in many different ways, allowing her to understand the world, her work, and herself in a radically different way. Her literature review became a research project that made her aware of a history of women and women healers that had generally been hidden and eventually led to a new self-understanding and a deeper sense of her mission in the world. Her own passion and involvement in the process gave her a richer appreciation for her subject matter and a depth of understanding that is lacking in students who have not immersed themselves quite so deeply in their work.

The voice

If Creative Inquiry proposes that every inquiry is also self-inquiry and that knower and the process of knowing are inextricably interconnected and mutually constitutive, then understanding the nature and development of one's voice in the academic context becomes a central issue. The typical Reproductive voice is determined by the requirements of a particular academic style manual. It is a dry, often jargon-laden "objective voice from nowhere." Many academic journals still promote this kind of writing, but in practice there is an emerging openness to a richer style, formerly reserved for books and essays.

Students often exaggerate and struggle with the constrictions of third-person approaches. As a result, they write overly formal papers where any trace of their own contribution and interpretation has been eliminated (typically the case in Reproductive literature reviews), for instance, resorting to referring to themselves, with evident discomfort, as "this author," even when there has been no explicit request by the faculty member that the student employ this style. A central challenge then is to encourage students to articulate their own interpretations and viewpoints, and their passion, in a way that is scholarly and appropriate to the target journal, rather than fall back on their own assumptions about the constrictive nature of academic writing.

Narcissists tend to write in a style that is very personal, which, at times, reads almost like a journal entry. There tend to be a lot of references to their own personal experience and to the expression of feelings and opinions framed in terms of personal "insights." There is hardly any reference to the context, the larger dialogue that prompted those insights, and while there may be references to other authors, there is generally little or no effort to truly contextualize their views and critically engage the discourse. Like Jung's Feeling with Inferior Thinking, Narcissists have the tendency to become somewhat fanatical in their views and have a strong tendency to premature closure, precisely because they are so emotionally invested in their views and are generally unable to assess them critically. The fanaticism tends to appear when the student is questioned about his or her own views. This is because Narcissists assume that everyone has a right to their opinion and that this is an inalienable right of alternative education, no matter how off the wall their opinion might be. To challenge a person's views is almost considered an attack on freedom of expression and an attempt to deprive the student of something she or he has a right to.

Developing one's academic voice is a fascinating process. How we address our colleagues, articulate our ideas, express our thoughts and feelings and intuitions—this is where science also embraces art and "self-making." Developing a voice as a writer and an inquirer is not an easy process. It is actually easier, I believe, to write in an "objective," third-person research report style. Once we bring in our own experience, our subjectivity, and our feelings about the inquiry, the whole process becomes much more complex. It veers into the realm of art as well as science, and the criteria for judging the writing become more complex. The author needs to develop skills that are not usually addressed in academia, a coherent framework for integrating personal experience and the "first person" perspective, and articulate it elegantly. My experience has been that even highly trained social scientists can have trouble with a more essay-style or first-person form because their training has never required them to explicitly address their own participation in the work they do. The exploration of our own voice in an academic context, whether in our writing, presentations, or dialogue, is a wonderful opportunity to begin a process of self-inquiry and self-expansion, as the social scientist also becomes a writer, and a contribution to the literature can begin to mean something literary as well as scientific.

The exploration and development of one's voice in the academic context can be the nexus of Creative Inquiry, the place where all the creative tensions meet: the art and science, the objective and subjective, the rational and the emotional, and the universal and the contingent. Navigating these creative tensions is an ongoing process, and the development of a voice is also an aspiration, not necessarily a goal to be achieved once and for all; as an evolutionary process, our voice may change and develop over time.

To develop a real voice, students need to know themselves well enough and become skilled enough writers to contextualize their work in their own experience, to realize when it is appropriate to introduce a story or personal anecdote, when they can explicitly bring their passion into their work, and how to navigate the personal and the academic so that they interact synergistically rather than in a way that is awkward, disjointed, and/or self-indulgent. In this way, the introduction of the personal voice goes beyond Narcissism to ground the writing in lived experience, wedding the ideas to the realities of life, and perhaps giving an insight into the creative process that led the author to the development of her or his perspective.

One student wrote that,

> Finding my voice is a very organic and intuitive process for me. I have to listen deeply to all the voices I've read. I really try to "hear" what they are saying. Then I have to sit with it and let it sink in deeply. I have to hold all the opposite viewpoints without judging or comparing, just hold them all inside. Then I have to look for the words that create resonance inside of me. Why do they create resonance? Do they articulate a personal truth for me? Do they make me feel comfortable? Then

> I have to find the words that create dissonance. Why do they make me feel uncomfortable? Do they contradict my beliefs? Do they indicate a part or place in me that needs to grow/expand?
>
> Then I start to write—again without judgment or fear. I just write about my reactions, feelings, thoughts, intuitions, and insights about the topic. The more honest I am (even if it is uncomfortable) the more I get in touch with my authentic self. Sooner or later, through the process of writing I find that I do have an opinion, I do have a voice, I do have a unique perspective AND my writing has a context because I've established a relationship to everyone else who is examining this topic. I know the opinions, voices and perspectives of others and how they compare to my own. I know how my voice fits into the chorus of other voices.

The student tunes into herself and into her "community" and then just begins to write—without censoring herself in any way. This is an interesting and useful way of simply getting in touch with oneself and "turning on the tap," as it were. As the student states, sooner or later she finds that in her writing, she is articulating a perspective. The very process of writing allows her to articulate her views—views she may not have been explicitly aware of before she started writing. In other words, we create who we are and what we believe as we write. Writing becomes self-creation.

Writing and dialogue give us the opportunity to observe our own voice, to see our thoughts, feelings, and intuitions become public and interact with the world. This process points directly to how the academic can be transformative and the transformative is grounded in the academic. Looking back on their work over time, one can see the increasing confidence and maturity students develop in their writing, and the continual dialogue and integration of their own life experiences and perspectives with the literature and the community. Different contexts require different frames, different angles of approach—from the reflective paper to the varieties of submissions to scholarly journals—and students learn how to express themselves and find their voice for a multitude of contexts and audiences.

The assistance of friends and colleagues helps us understand ourselves, helps us understand what we are trying to say and how we can say it. In the process, we also gain a better understanding of who we are. This is truly an example of "I am because we are." Our own voice emerges in dialogue with ourselves and with others—and although there may remain some constant aspects of our voice, it is to be hoped that it will keep changing and transforming inasmuch as it will reflect our own changes over the years to come.

Classroom interaction and Creative Inquiry

In a Reproductive approach, classroom interaction emphasizes the importance of trotting out the "right" answer when called on with little or no attention paid to anything else. There is often an air of competitiveness in Reproductive classroom participation and it is not always constructive. It is easy, of course, to become extremely invested in one's positions, in being "right," in wanting to please the instructor to get a good grade, and it is harder to acknowledge the extent that our ego-investment upholds our positions and leads to rigidity and creates an attack/defend, discussion-is-war metaphor—particularly when the parameters set for inquiry do not recognize and make that ego-involvement in one's position itself a valid subject for inquiry. One's vehemence about one's position is then rationalized because it is "right." Indeed one can be passionate about something one believes in, but one can also simply want to win a debate, "truth" be damned.

Excessive and/or unexamined ego-investment can lead to an unwillingness to thoroughly examine the validity of one's own views, beliefs, assumptions, potential blind-spots, and so on, let alone the psychological dimensions of inquiry (Maslow 1969). Interlocutors in the classroom can be viewed as opponents to be defeated at all costs, and although competition between conflicting views and perspectives is perfectly appropriate, it all hinges on how one competes, how one treats one's interlocutors, and whether the exchange is viewed as an opportunity to learn and grow or merely to dig one's heels in and defend one's position from the opposition at all costs (Montuori 1998a).

The Narcissistic mode moves to the group level in classroom interactions, particularly among students sympathetic to the New Age. In a further oppositional identity to Reproducers and to "the old paradigm," students often make sure every voice is heard and focus on creating a largely uncritical and supportive environment where students can share their feelings about what they are going through, their emotional responses to their work, to their participation in the class, and so on. When the core assumption is that everyone is entitled to his or her own view, to question, challenge, or critique someone's view—no matter how outlandish it seems—is considered offensive. Typically, much more attention is placed on "process" and self-reflection in a group context, than on so-called content, the subject matter of the class. In fact, when the Narcissistic group-self is stressed or becomes the central focus of attention, it can easily become a vehicle for self-indulgence and emotional grandstanding. This collective Narcissism occurs because of the often explicit privileging of process over content. In my experience, if the framework, or the demand characteristic, is that the classroom is the setting for processing emotional self-expression in opposition to more "academic" matters, this is precisely what the students will deliver. Faculty must come with a clear and capacious frame for inquiry to avoid these kinds of problems.

Not surprisingly, Creative Inquiry draws inspiration for creative interaction from jazz. If classroom interaction in the Reproductive approach is about who can be "right," and the Narcissistic focus is on uncritical, group self-acceptance, Creative Inquiry stresses a spirit of adventure and creative collaboration. Students are invited to explore the unknown together, to embark on a journey of exploration, addressing the issues that really matter to them. Several factors are important and need to be cultivated right from the beginning.

Framing academic work as Creative Inquiry primes students to think of their work as a creative process that builds a sense of excitement. Students comment that this is an unexpected way for them to think about inquiry and graduate school in general. It stimulates them, not surprisingly, to think outside the box in

terms of their own work, their capacities, their goals, their understanding of collaborative work, and the way they can participate in an educational experience.

In the context of group and classroom interaction, students are encouraged to see their work as a collaborative creative process. Metaphors from the arts can be useful here, and I personally use the image of a jazz group, highly skilled improvising musicians who both support and challenge each other during performance (Montuori 1996, 1998b; Purser and Montuori 1994). Creative Inquiry provides a framework students can use to make sense of their new activities as an exploration of the unknown, a framework that nevertheless draws on a long tradition. In the same way that any explorer might prepare for an expedition and plunge into the unknown ready to deal with uncertainty, a student grounds himself in the field, develops skills, knowledge, and passionate attitude toward scholarship, and then embarks on a journey. The sense of a creative endeavor held by a group of jazz musicians is not limited to "the mind," "emotion," "collaboration," or "self-exploration" because the music can be viewed as requiring the ongoing interaction of all these elements and more.

Furthermore, a musician's ability to perform depends also on his or her life experience. As the old saying has it, "you play who you are." Students are, therefore, encouraged to draw on their own personal experience, their background, and to bring all of who they are to bear on the dialogue and the inquiry. This involves the ability to integrate the various aspects of one's being to be present in the moment with as much of oneself as one can bring to bear on the moment. This is in contraposition to a rather fragmented view of the academic or intellectual devoid of emotion, subjectivity, personal experience, or bias. In Creative Inquiry, the challenge is not removing all hints of subjectivity and bias but, rather, being able to bring all of oneself, biases and all, to the inquiry—and, indeed, the biases and assumptions become valid and even necessary subjects for inquiry in and of themselves, as part of our self-inquiry. In a collaborative context, students learn from their interactions and draw on the wisdom and experience of their colleagues. As one student wrote:

> I am amazed at the amount of learning that I'm experiencing in this shared context. It really has an exponential feeling to it. I am learning about music, art, dance, philosophy, history, language, thought, processing thought, emotions, ego, fear, humor, but mostly I am getting a sense of each of you! You are coming to life for me! Amazing! Anyone else blown away by all this?

Most of what the student has been learning about has not come from me, the instructor, or even the readings. It comes from her fellow students who are highly educated and intelligent and have an enormous amount to contribute to the dialogue. Asked about the role of instructors, another student writes:

> My instructors have an uncanny ability to meet right at the place where I am stuck or conflicted or resistant and give me that little nudge that I need to keep moving forward—much like a healer does. We have a saying in my field, "all healing is self-healing. All the healer does is support the process." I think the same is true of learning. "All learning is self-learning. All the instructor does is support the process."

I believe the Creative Inquiry framework—stressing as it does the role of rigor and imagination, discipline and improvisation, grounding in knowledge bases and creative speculation—can provide graduate students with a generative context for their learning through dialogue and interaction. The musical metaphor stresses the importance of developing a thorough skill and knowledge base to be able to perform and, also, the ability to collaborate together on this expedition. Interestingly, it soon becomes very clear that to collaborate together, to perform, collaboration requires both "soft" intra- and interpersonal skills and "hard" musical skills. It is not enough to be supportive and collaborative if one cannot perform well on harder, more technically demanding passages.

Creative Inquiry emphasizes the value of taking risks and utilizing not-knowing as an ally. Acknowledging our state of not-knowing becomes a way to deepen inquiry rather than a mark of ignorance (hence the use of the term not-knowing rather than ignorance, which carries decidedly negative connotations). The notion of not-knowing is directly related to creativity because the creative process, by its very nature, leads to something that cannot be known in advance. Research on creative individuals shows that they actively seek out the unknown, challenge assumptions, and have a preference for complexity—for whatever it is that does not fit into established orders and frameworks. Creative Inquiry cultivates these attitudes and characteristics in individual and collaborative settings.

Students are not encouraged to try to "look good" by giving easy, predigested, trivial answers or even focusing on demonstrating what they know. They are invited to share their questions and concerns, to use their not-knowing (the fact that they do not have all the answers, and that they are embarking into territory that, for them, is uncharted, both in terms of their overall academic experience and their chosen topic of inquiry) as an opportunity to challenge assumptions, to look at the material with fresh eyes, and to enjoy their journey. Interestingly, over the years, I have found that students find it surprisingly hard to approach a dialogue with questions—often because it is simply too unusual and uncomfortable for them to have to say, "I don't get this," "Explain that part better." They are also sometimes concerned that admitting ignorance, as it were, when a spiritual matter is involved, might be an indication of being somehow "un-evolved." Creative Inquiry helps students frame questioning as positive rather than negative—as creative not-knowing—and allows them to go beyond these concerns.

A key factor in creating an atmosphere of creative collaboration involves entering into inquiry with an attitude of curiosity and excitement. This is stimulated by the fact that the students really do not know the material and that, certainly at the graduate level—in the context of addressing the human condition in the largest sense—everyone, including faculty, can be thought of as an explorer. It is precisely this collective not-knowing and embarking on a journey of discovery together that can create the greatest solidarity, in the same way that jazz musicians do not know what will emerge as they embark on a collective improvisation of a particular song. It is important to reemphasize that this kind of collec-

tive improvisation is only possible with musicians who have, or are developing, solid instrumental skills and a solid grounding in the vocabulary of jazz. Likewise the students must do the required work, read the required readings, and immerse themselves in the field to avoid the pitfall of Narcissism. Faculty can model this creative not-knowing by showing how not-knowing can be a source and motivator for inquiry, rather than a weakness. One way of doing this is to discuss one's own intellectual development, one's present research agenda, and the pitfalls, uncertainties, as well as the uncertain and contingent nature of knowledge and inquiry themselves. In other words, to present inquiry into the creative process with a degree of transparency and not just the reconstructed logic of justification. I have used a forthcoming book of autobiographical essays from leading "new science" thinkers to give students insights into the development of eminent scholars they may be reading. This allows students to develop a more grounded and "human" understanding of the activity of inquiry, of participation in a community of inquirers, and of self-creation and self-definition in an academic context.

One student, in her first semester, writes:

> I asked myself how to be a Creative Inquirer. I think that a good place to start is to listen to myself: What is relevant for me in this moment of my existence? What is meaningful for me? It's like asking myself which instrument I am given to play for a jam session. So, I start playing with the instrument. And then I enter the learning community. I need to listen to others, to your voices. How can I enter and attune in the process? How can I attune my voice with your voices? How can my existential questions intertwine with your process? These questions are not meant to be answered: they are expressed to set the intention. We jam together and the instructor warns us: don't worry about the final outcome, don't worry about not being an experienced performer yet, we are just first month of the doctoral program.
>
> The talent of the inquirer is to emerge from the field with a melody that attunes with the community's "chord progression" and contributes to the unfolding of the collective performance. So, I would say that in Creative Inquiry originality pertains to the relationship between self/community. The community's learning process enhances individual learning that enhances system learning . . . a spiral process of mutuality and interdependence. Is the collective melody prior to individual voices, or are individual voices prior to collective melody? The Zen master would ask if the waves are prior to ocean or if the ocean is prior to wave.
>
> In this week's discussion I have experienced the power of jamming. Sometimes I got bored in this discussion; I felt lost; but I have tried to keep open. I have committed myself to drop in and give my 2 cents and read your posting, with focused attention and with relaxed awareness. I have learned that jamming is as important as performing. In other words, the process of learning as a value in itself, regardless of the content.

The student draws on her own experience, her needs and assessment of what is relevant, and seeks to align with the dialogue in the group, in the same way that a soloist in a jazz performance expresses herself with her own sound and her own interpretation of the song in the context of the band's overall reading of the song. She admits that she got lost at times and became bored but chose to participate, to show up anyway, and she recognizes the value in that participation—the opportunity to learn about the process of participating as well as about the subject matter itself.

Students learn to avoid the extremes of viewing classroom interaction as either a venue for excessive criticism, one-upmanship, and competition in its more unproductive forms or for excessive navel-gazing, group-processing, uncritical support, and unproductive cooperation. In other words, students develop an understanding of the way they can navigate the extremes, avoiding unproductive polarizations and moving toward generative tensions. I encourage them to support each other in the learning and explain that this is also done through constructive criticism. I frame this in the context of the final assignment, which is often a publishable paper: the participants in the course are there to help each other write the best possible paper to submit to a journal. And it is an obligation to the class colleagues to be critical if the paper has weaknesses. Surely it is better to be assisted by one's own classmates' criticism than to have the paper skewered by a reviewer. Students learn to support each other by challenging each other, in the same way that a piano player in a jazz group might challenge the saxophone soloist—playing chords behind him that provide a solid, supportive grounding but that, also, stretch the soloist with, for instance, unusual chord substitutions or syncopations.

The above examples give some idea of how I have used the framework of Creative Inquiry in the classroom. The approach can be developed in many different ways, and many different metaphors can be used, of course. I hope I have given some idea of the experience here.

Conclusion

I began this article by presenting some comments made by graduate students entering incoming alternative programs. I then presented three different frameworks for inquiry, two based on my assessment of students' polarized perception of education as either Reproductive (traditional) or Narcissistic (alternative). I explored some of the cultural and psychological roots of this tendency toward polarization and then outlined a third approach, Creative Inquiry, that integrates the best of both worlds: i.e., academic rigor and scholarship, and self-inquiry and transformation. I used a series of musical metaphors to highlight the differences between the three approaches and concluded by giving classroom examples in three different areas.

The quest for an alternative education can itself be an opportunity for transformation—personal, educational, and social transformation—and for the development of a creative approach to inquiry. Excavating the polarities that run through educational processes, uncovering the assumptions that split up functions that should be vitally connected, and beginning to bring them together, each in our own way, we can, as students, educators, and citizens, become engaged in an ongoing creative process where we not only challenge the way we have thought about education and inquiry and the very nature of our thinking about them but begin to formulate appropriate ways of envisioning and embodying new possibilities.

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NOTES

1. The intriguing relationship between methodology and anxiety-reduction has been explored by Devereux (1968).

2. Mitroff's work has articulated useful applications of the Jungian typology for social science inquiry (Kilmann and Mitroff 1976; Krippner and Combs 1998; Mitroff and Kilmann 1978).

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