CRITICAL EPIDEICTIC PEDAGOGY:

FINDING RHETORIC AND REINSERTING FREIRE

INTO CRITICAL PEDAGOGIES

By

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Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of
AddRan College of Liberal Arts
Texas Christian University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

December, 2012

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> *Much contemporary epideictic rhetoric associated with civic rituals, for instance, or even academic ones, takes as its exigency a problem to be solved, a condition to be changed, a cause to be taken up.*
>
> Cynthia Sheard, "The Public Value of Epideictic Rhetoric"

> *It was through critical pedagogy that I* first *found a language with which to name my frustrations with dominant approaches to education.*
>
> Jennifer Gore, *The Struggle for Pedagogies*

Chapter 1. A New Way In: Recovering Freire's Legacy for Critical Pedagogies

Ever since reading about critical pedagogy in Composition theory class my first semester of graduate school, I have been trying to find a way into a critical pedagogy. I was inspired by Paulo Freire and wondered why I never had a professor like Ira Shor in my undergraduate schooling who gave students a say in the daily operations of the classroom. Critical pedagogies attracted me because of their revolutionary nature and their ability to seemingly spur students into life changing action, but I was still, as Maxine Hairston says, a graduate student who had not "been well trained in how to teach writing and [was] at a loss about what [I] should be doing" in the classroom (666). I was not immersed in discussions of critical pedagogy; I had just read a couple of versions of critical pedagogy that appealed to my enthusiastic, new-to-graduate-school sensibilities because of their radical visions of social justice in education. I was excited to start teaching and to employ a critical pedagogy in my classes. But then a bit of harsh reality set in. I read Henry Giroux and was shown the supposed immense (hidden/inherent) political opposition from American schooling institutions to critical pedagogies. I read Ann George's "Critical Pedagogy: Dreaming of

Democracy" and was sobered by the multifaceted debates swirling in critical pedagogy theory. And I had never taught a class, much less tried to liberate or empower students.

As I began teaching, other questions, some very naïve, arose in my mind: What right did I have to "empower" students? How would a critical pedagogy work with the primarily middle/upper-class student body where I started teaching? Why should I assume that I have the correct political stance and the right answers? In George's words, would my "pedagogy merely [reaffirm] the authority of the teacher who has the 'political clarity' (the term is Freire's) students lack" (100)? What right do I, as a white male in a graduate program, have to speak on behalf of traditionally oppressed groups in our country like women, minorities, or economically disadvantaged peoples? I moved from reading the idealistic "first wave" of critical pedagogy and discovered that the idealism espoused by Freire and Shor was not taken at face value (as I had) or merely replicated by later scholars theorizing about critical pedagogies. I had failed to realize the critical nature of the scholarship of critical pedagogy. I had focused on the exciting possibilities for teaching and embodying a critical pedagogy but had failed to realize, as Giroux reminds us in his introduction to *The Politics of Education,* that "Freire's work is not meant to offer radical recipes for instant forms of critical pedagogy; rather, it is a series of theoretical signposts that need to be decoded and critically appropriated within the specific contexts in which they might be useful" (*xviii-xix).*

Despite my hope that Freire's and Shor's versions of critical pedagogies would be immediately applicable to my (or others') situation, more recent scholarship on critical pedagogies enacts Freire's desire for critical pedagogy to be constantly updated and primarily (and correctly) critiques previous theoretical discourse, especially discourse by the "Big Three" (Freire, Giroux, Shor) that inspired me so much as a beginning composition teacher.

Peter Roberts, in a book evaluating Freire's legacy for critical pedagogy scholarship and the overall goals of contemporary theories of critical pedagogy, writes that one of the most prominent and recurring critiques of Freire and Giroux (in particular) is that they write "of oppression, liberation, humanization, and dehumanization in universal terms" (102). Jennifer Gore, a feminist critical pedagogue, calls into question one of the core components of critical pedagogy when she asks if educators even have the right or (ironically) the power to emancipate their students from their oppressed situations. Her critique is necessary because the power relations in many early theories of critical pedagogy seem to gloss over the fact that teachers can act as oppressors in an educative situation even when they espouse a critical pedagogy.[1] Her critique of critical pedagogy was and will continue to be pertinent to discussions of critical pedagogy because it helps critical pedagogues remain aware of power relations in their classrooms. However her piece feels like an attempt to write Freire out of critical pedagogy. By only focusing on Freire's earliest texts, in which Freire's position as a male who uses sexist language, does not mesh with Gore's project, which calls that kind of power into question.[2] As I will show in Chapter 3, Freire himself champions the same cause as Gore in this piece, but because his later works are largely ignored, Gore loses out on a chance to show that even one of the originators of critical pedagogy agrees with her point.

Similarly, Elizabeth Ellsworth, one of Giroux's most outspoken critics, but still a critical pedagogue, takes issue with the possibility of a "privileged," white, female professor helping "liberate" her students. She writes, "Dialogue in its conventional sense is impossible in the culture at large because at this historical moment, power relations between raced,

[1] I write about one such teacher in the next chapter.
[2] Freire's early books were so theory-heavy that he did not pay close attention to the language he was using to describe the situations of power dynamics involved in education. As I will show in the next chapter, this is one of the greatest regrets Freire has of his early books and worked hard to correct that mistake in his later writings.

classed, and gendered students and teachers are unjust" (316). Ellsworth is also concerned that the racial and socio-economic overtones of critical pedagogy would force a woman to "prioritize expressions of racial privilege and oppression when such prioritizing threatened to perpetuate … gender oppression" (312). Recent scholarship in critical pedagogy, in other words, critiques past iterations of critical pedagogy based on the tenuous nature of its overall goals, its setting, and its subjects. In addition, some American critical pedagogues, represented well by Amy Lee in her book *Composing Critical Pedagogies*, are questioning the possibility of implementing a critical pedagogy at a school with a privileged student body. Feminist critical pedagogues question why race and social status are the markers that define critical pedagogy's struggle when gender and sexual orientation can and should be included in discussions of inequality. And Bruce Horner adds to (and critiques) all of these evaluations of critical pedagogy in his article "Politics, Pedagogy, and the Profession of Composition: Confronting Commodification and the Contingencies of Power." Horner argues that brands of critical pedagogy, including those above from Ellsworth, Gore, and Giroux, could be defined as a pedagogy of "commodification" in which the goals of the course are, essentially, removed from a student's actual position and treated as something that has "use value" only in the course, not outside the course (125). Horner criticizes the commodification of critical pedagogy—especially the account offered by Ellsworth—because critical pedagogy is treated as something that can be used in order to gain "critical consciousness" or some other goal of critical pedagogy. In other words, critical pedagogy is used as currency to help students gain something they previously lacked. This type of thinking leads to the assumption that the teacher has something the students need in order to advance in life.

In addition to these theoretical critiques of critical pedagogy, more material critiques have surfaced, as well. The most obvious material constraint is the sheer amount of time enacting and embodying a critical pedagogy takes, especially for new teachers. In *Life in Schools*, Peter McLaren admits that teaching as a critical pedagogue took over his life when school was in session.[3] Ira Shor was able to write a lengthy book about *one section* of a composition class in which he implements a critical pedagogy. Educative settings also make implementation even more difficult. Henry Giroux had such pessimistic views about American schools in his early writings that he wanted critical pedagogues to dismantle the entire educative system and build another one—not tied to capitalism—because working within the system is, ultimately, futile. Later in his career, Giroux reflected on his seminal work, *Theory and Resistance in Education* and argued that even changing the educative system might not be enough—the system might be too corrupt. In the article "Public Pedagogy and the Politics of Resistance: Notes on a Critical Theory of Educational Struggle," Giroux outlines a theory of "public pedagogy" in which critical education for citizenry must take place in forums in- and outside traditional schools. In earlier works, Giroux used to the term public pedagogy to refer to the cultural work of neoliberalism that attempts to indoctrinate young minds into corporate, capitalistic ways of thinking. Giroux writes that schooling should take part in creating social movements that work against the "corporatizing of school" and in order to show students that they have the requisite skills to act in "real life" situations where "social agency" is needed (11). Giroux has since argued that a more critical form of public pedagogy is necessary because neoliberalism has created a kind of public pedagogy where "a powerful ensemble of ideological and institutional forces

[3] He has since changed his views of critical pedagogy significantly, but the type of "fumbling in the dark" he experienced is, I believe, a common problem for first time teachers who attempt a critical pedagogy in their classrooms. I will explore this idea in greater detail in Chapters 2 and 5.

. . . aim to produce competitive, self-interested individuals vying for their own material and ideological gain" ("Market Fundamentalism" 12). Giroux remains hopeful that critical pedagogy is possible, and that it can become part of a public pedagogy, but he argues pedagogy must be perpetually inventive in order to stop corporations from coopting avenues for critical pedagogy.

Giroux's thought process that led him to believe the entire system should be dismantled, changed, or redirected is shared in smaller ways by many compositionists. Sharon Crowley argues that we should get rid of the first-year composition requirement because it serves as a gatekeeper, allowing students who already have the "acceptable" capitalistic values into the academic community. While this is a far cry from destroying and recreating an entire educative system, her call for removing first-year composition would require restructuring many (if not most) liberal arts curricula in the U.S. Even so, Crowley's view mirrors Giroux's early thoughts on critical pedagogy and shows that the physical constraints of a curriculum can appear so insurmountable that throwing away the entire system seems more beneficial than working within the system. Institutional restrictions led Lester Faigley, in his 1996 *CCCC*s address, to write that institutions often "limit writing instruction to teaching students to replicate the traditional forms of academic and professional discourses" (32). As these arguments from compositionists suggest, the politics of education and institutional goals for composition courses limit the possibilities for critical pedagogues to practice their theory. Another material critique can be based on the three examples I just used: Peter McLaren, Ira Shor, Henry Giroux, three of the "big names" in critical pedagogical theory, are white males. Critics of critical pedagogy, whether they want to completely do away with critical pedagogy, like Hairston, or work within critical

pedagogies, like Lee and Gore, are rightly disturbed that many theories about a pedagogy aimed at subverting dominant discourses are written by members of one of the most privileged groups in our culture.

And all of these critiques are exacerbated for writing instructors when authors such as Hairston and Richard Fulkerson argue that critical pedagogy approaches in composition classes ignore writing in favor of "empowerment" (in addition to the continuing the general critique of critical pedagogies). In his 2005 article "Composition at the Turn of the Twenty-First Century," Fulkerson argues that in a "[critical/cultural studies classroom] the aim is not 'improved writing' but 'liberation' from dominant discourse" (660). Additionally, he writes that

> [a]xiologically, [critical/cultural studies] courses resemble the popular and durable literature-based composition courses. . . . The difference is that the lit/comp courses use belletristic texts, which students must interpret to the teacher's satisfaction, while the CCS course uses any text or other artifact thought to reveal cultural principles. In both courses, the writing is essentially a display of valued intellectual interactions with the relevant texts and is judged accordingly. Ungenerously, one could argue that this does not produce a writing course at all—any more than a sociology course in race relations that uses extensive writing is a writing course. (662-63)

Few critical pedagogues within composition have produced much scholarship to combat Fulkerson's argument that a composition critical pedagogy is aimed more at "liberating" or "empowering" than actual teaching of writing. Amy Lee does a good job using writing as the main site for a critical pedagogy, and I will show how my inclusion of epideictic rhetoric in a

theory of critical pedagogy can act as a means to foreground student writing in a critical pedagogy.

All of these critiques help strengthen the discourse of critical pedagogy, but, as I will show in the next section, critiques of earlier theories of critical pedagogy often come at the expense of Freire, either overtly or inadvertently rendering him inert in most recent discussions of critical pedagogy. However, the critiques of critical pedagogy presented in this section actually follow Freire's plea in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* that any pedagogical theory be continually critiqued so it can grow to benefit students. But being critical to the point of paralysis can hinder the goals of any movement. Peter Elbow repeatedly argues that we can learn as much, if not more, from "believing" theories that we read and understanding the good that can come from them instead of always finding their flaws. This is what compositionists need to do with critical pedagogy. Instead of looking at Freire's writings and finding ways they are incompatible with U.S. education, we would be well served as a discipline to look at him with a renewed, though not naïve, sense of optimism. His early writings, on which most critical pedagogy theorists, especially in composition, focus, stem from his experiences working specifically in Brazil. However, after being exiled from Brazil, Freire's adopts a more global scope and looks back on his theories in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* and revises them to be applicable to situations outside of rural Brazil. One of the overall goals of this project is to show *how* Freire has become less relevant in discussions of critical pedagogy (and one possible solution to his disappearance), especially concerning his applicability to U.S. classrooms. As such the next section will review some of the major movements in critical pedagogical theory and begin to show how and why Freire's influence on the theory has diminished over time.

Common Ends, Disparate Means?

Ann George, in her 2001 bibliographic review essay of critical pedagogy, writes that the distinguishing characteristic found in all examples of critical pedagogy is the combination of engaging "students in analyses of the unequal power relations that produce and are produced by cultural practices and institutions," helping students "develop the tools that will enable them to challenge this inequality," and "its usually explicit commitment to education for citizenship" (92-3). George's thorough bibliographic review does much of the same work that I want to do here. She wrote her essay to "reduce the bamboozlement of compositionists everywhere . . . by examining the goals, the realities, and the controversies of critical pedagogy" (92). The biggest difference between George's goals and mine is that I want to reduce the bamboozlement of compositionists by examining whether we can achieve the goals of critical pedagogy through epideictic rhetoric. In this section I review Freire's original texts that laid the groundwork for critical pedagogy in addition to some of his later works, largely unnoticed in composition, that help clarify and reiterate his theories. I then move on to the works of Shor and Giroux to show how Freirean theories split into two major groups in American schooling and how critical pedagogies have splintered into smaller and smaller factions, with each new faction carrying the theories farther from Freire, both literally and ideologically.

To understand the shift in critical pedagogy theory over the past 30 years, one must start with Paulo Freire. He is often thought of as critical pedagogy's progenitor, and while

the major themes of Freire's work are almost commonplace now,[4] they warrant reviewing here. In *Pedagogy of the Oppressed,* Freire lays the groundwork for critical pedagogy. In short, he wants critical pedagogy to "[make] oppression and its causes objects of reflection by the oppressed," (48) which, he believes, will lead to a revolution; to overcome the "banking style" of education where the teacher deposits knowledge in the students' heads and "impose[s] upon them the model of the 'good man'" (94). Freire uses intensive dialogue in the classroom to create a "problem-posing education" in which "the teacher is no longer merely the-one-who-teaches, but one who is himself taught in dialogue with the students, who in turn while being taught also teach. They become jointly responsible for a process in which all grow" (80). He believes a dialogic education is necessary so that "the revolution is made neither by the leaders for the people, nor by the people for the leaders, but by both acting together in unshakable solidarity" (129). In other words, Freire advocates teaching in solidarity with the oppressed by thinking critically and engaging in dialogue about oppression and how it can be overthrown through education. Freire was an educational reformer, and his goals are very clearly stated, but he does not set his educative method up as a monolith; "in the struggle [between oppressed and oppressors]," he maintains, "this pedagogy will be made and remade" (48). Freire acknowledges that critical pedagogy will need to be altered dramatically in different settings for it to work; he knows the means will vary from place to place, and the ends are held up as a set of beliefs to guide the pedagogy.

Freire's other (mostly subsequent) works have largely stated the same goals for a critical education. In *Education for Critical Consciousness* (1974), he writes that "the special contribution of the educator for the birth of the new society would have to be a

[4] The "commonplace" nature of Freire's theory found in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* is possibly one of the reasons he has been largely absent in more recent iterations of critical pedagogies. I explore this line of thinking in detail in Chapter 3.

critical education which could help form critical attitudes" (32). He also continues his emphasis on dialogue, arguing that dialogue "is nourished by love, humility, hope, faith and trust. When the two 'poles' of the dialogue are thus linked by love, hope, and mutual trust, they can join in the critical search for something" (40). In *Learning to Question: A Pedagogy of Liberation* (1989), Freire takes his theories of dialogue to a new level and performs a "talking book" with Antonio Faundez, in which they discuss pedagogy and their lives as critical educators. During their conversation, Freire repeats his goals for critical pedagogy: "critical understanding of cultural expressions of resistance by oppressed social classes is essential in drawing up political-pedagogical plans of action" (43); "education should … become a stimulus to the necessary deepening of change in society" (78); and education should be "in [the] process of constant renewal" (79). The same goals are repeated in *Teachers as Cultural Workers* (1998)*:* "The teaching task also requires the capacity to fight for freedom" (4); teachers must help students "grasp the social plots in which language, communication, and the production of knowledge are constituted and reconstituted" (32); "if we dream about democracy, let us fight, day and night, for a school in which we talk to *and with* the learners so that, hearing them, we can be heard by them as well" (68, emphasis mine). These themes for critical pedagogy are found again in all of Freire's publications, but I will focus specifically on the aforementioned texts and *Literacy: Reading the Word and the World* (1987, with Donald Macedo), *Pedagogy of Hope* (1994), *Letters to Christina* (1996), *Pedagogy of the Heart* (1997), and *Pedagogy of Freedom* (1998). I chose these texts because they contain the greatest variety in Freire's thinking and because they were published over the entire course of his career, which allows me to look at how his theories changed over time and what accounted for those changes.

Freire constantly insists on dialogue as the main site for learning in the classroom, hoping that dialogue will help teachers learn the plight of the oppressed and fight in solidarity with the oppressed to help overcome social injustice. His goals for education remained (mostly) the same throughout his career, and he grounds all of his theories in educative practice, but each book brings in experiences that allow him to share new insight into his ideology behind his theories and the urgency he feels for acting on them. In Chapter 3, I outline in detail these experiences and the ways each new book contributes to critical pedagogies.

The major theorist who shares most in common with Freire is Ira Shor. As someone who explicitly claims that his theories are based on those of Freire, Shor has similar goals for critical pedagogy, which he reiterates in a 2007 interview in *Radical Teacher*:

> For critical teaching to compete with the subjective appeal of patriotism, it has to assert affective and cognitive intensity, some emotional and intellectual daring, something at stake in the problem-posing. In addition, the unexamined ideals and ideas underlying patriotism (we are the good guys, conquest is good) have to be questioned so as to complicate student identification with this spectacle. (n. pag.)

Shor, like Freire, wants students to have a stake in the issues explored in his classrooms, but he also teaches students how to think critically about the issues. Later in the interview he states that the "central orientation" of teaching critically is "questioning the status quo" (n. pag.) This is a bit of a simplification from Shor's original iterations of critical pedagogy in his books, such as *Critical Teaching and Everyday Life* or *When Students Have Power*. The books echo Freire a bit more closely, arguing that students who are oppressed need to be

taught how to overcome their situation of oppression. The statements made in the interview are removed from this way of thinking in an important way: Shor now seems to believe that critical teaching can take place when educating any students to question the status quo, whether they are part of the status quo or oppressed by it. Shor's critical pedagogy is, like Freire's, very practical: it is not meant to be just theory; it is meant to be praxis. Both Shor and Freire base their theories of critical pedagogy on their experience in the classroom, making their theories localized and fairly context specific. Shor wants critical teaching to revolve around "local critical discourse synthesized in the immediate zone for the purposes undertaken there, different from the everyday language of students and from the academic language of the teacher" (*Critical Literacy* 15). In other words, Shor argues that when students are able to synthesize their academic and cultural languages, they will be able to function in and change their oppressed situations by understanding their cultural and academic situations through the opposite viewpoint. And, through his classes, he hopes to show students that "thought, language, and action are never fully under control, never fully determined by the status quo" (15).

Shor outlines his classroom practice in great detail; his books are just as much reflection on his own classes as they are theoretical.[5] He wants his readers to understand his classroom practice (and the theory behind it) on a meta- and micro- level, and, essentially, he attempts to show what a Freireian pedagogy would look like in an American school setting. Thus the goals he espouses are similar to Freire's, but different in one important aspect: unlike Freire's theory—which seems to be very globally aimed at oppressed, uneducated

[5] Sadly, this is a rarity in critical pedagogy scholarship. Much of the scholarship in composition about critical pedagogy is purely theoretical without much mention of classroom implications. In the chapters to come, I attempt to follow Shor in this aspect by providing specific classroom examples to help bolster the claims I make about Freire and critical pedagogy.

people—Shor's theory is aimed at teaching people who have already gone through 13 years of American schooling (if they started in American kindergarten) and at helping his students understand how they have remained oppressed because of *and* in spite of that education.[6]

In *When Students Have Power*, Shor also explains the difficulty of using a liberatory pedagogy in a traditional academic setting. When attempting to give students power over what they learned and how they learned it, he realized that some sort of control was still necessary when students tried to vote required attendance out of the syllabus. He writes that he "couldn't imagine being a critical educator without a class … but, how could I argue this awkward position, that they had to stay in class because…I needed them to test my theories of transformational pedagogy, which they had little or no interest in?" (104). Shor argues, however, that the notion that students need required attendance is a holdover from the education students are used to: if all students are expected to do is "memorize the lectures, read the assigned books or chapters (if any), show up on the days tests are given, and hand in any papers on their due dates," then students really do not need to be in class (109). But if we change the educative system and the way classrooms operate so that students feel as if they are contributing to the knowledge made in/with the class, then requiring attendance is no longer necessary. However, until students can get used to the type of liberatory pedagogy espoused by Shor, some sort of structure will necessarily remain in place so that students can educate themselves toward becoming a new kind of learner—ones who want to be in class because they are valued members of a learning community.

[6] Another important aspect of Shor's work is that he does not shy away from the irony of pointing out how his students are oppressed while at the same time taking part in "higher education." This is one of the difficulties of enacting a purely Freireian critical pedagogy at the college level because the very nature of participating in a university class gives students privileged status—in at least one aspect of their lives.

Showing how the educative system oppresses students is a goal shared by many critical pedagogues. Giroux's theoretical understanding of educative oppression is the most scathing and most helpful for understanding systematic oppression through education. Giroux also marks a break from Freire. Giroux uses the term critical pedagogy and much of his writing is indebted to Freire, but he seems more interested in reforming educative practices to be liberatory than he is interested in liberating the actual students. In other words, Giroux attempts to use critical pedagogy theory to liberate teachers. The only way to do both is by understanding the social and political nature of schooling and how teachers can use critical pedagogy to overcome the status quo in education—both for the student and teacher. One of Giroux's best-known ideas is his theory of the "hidden curriculum" that stands behind the "stated purposes of school rationales and teacher-prepared objectives"; it is "the myriad beliefs and values transmitted tacitly through the social relations and routines that characterize day-to-day school experience" (*Theory & Resistance* 45). The hidden curriculum resides inside and behind every school curriculum that, Giroux contends, inculcates students and instructors with capitalist ideology and is overtly encouraged by corporations. Thus it is easy to see that his brand of critical pedagogy foregrounds total educational reform instead of individual classroom practices.

Giroux's critical pedagogy focuses on resisting the hidden curriculum, which is different from merely taking oppositional action:

> central to analyzing any act of resistance would be a concern with uncovering the degree to which it speaks to a form of refusal that highlights, either implicitly or explicitly, the need to struggle against the social nexus of domination and submission. In other words, resistance must have a revealing

> function, one that contains a critique of domination and provides theoretical opportunities for self-reflection and for struggle in the interest of self-emancipation and social emancipation. (*Theory & Resistance* 108-09)

This resistance is different from "oppositional behavior" because opposing or contradicting the existing system necessarily affirms the "logic of ideological domination" in which the action takes place (109). Opposition, according to Giroux, uses the person or thing being opposed as a starting point for action, thus giving the opposed subject validity by affirming its power in the situation. Resistance, he says, starts with ideas and ideals completely outside of the oppressive situation, not even allowing the opposed subject validity as a starting point in the discussion. Giroux's goals are much more politically combative than Freire's and Shor's. While Freire and Shor want to overcome oppression through education, Giroux argues that this is impossible because the educational system itself is corrupt. Students are the beginning of the revolution for Freire and Shor, but Giroux bases his revolution in educators' attempts to reinvent the educational system. In *Pedagogy and the Politics of Hope*, Giroux states the problem faced by critical educators as "how public school classroom teachers might develop an orientation to curriculum development and implementation which acknowledges the important underlying ethical and normative dimensions that structure classroom decisions and experiences" (3). Before we can even start thinking about helping students overcome their oppressive situations, Giroux would say, we must first actively resist the system of education, which forces normative capitalistic behavior and ethical principles on unwitting students and teachers.

Giroux, then, was the original pessimist in critical pedagogy: he opened the door for later feminist and poststructuralist critiques by arguing that the goals of critical pedagogy

were admirable but impossible to attain in the current political climate in the United States. And by shifting his theory specifically to U.S. education, he also paved the way for later theorists to question whether critical pedagogies are only for the oppressed or if they can be used to "liberate" the oppressors as well—and if critical pedagogues even have a right to label students "oppressed" or "oppressor." However, Giroux still clings tightly to Freire's goals for pedagogy, stating, "the principles underlying Freire's pedagogy are essential to any radical theory of literacy" and education (*Theory and Resistance* 228*).* But by saying this, Giroux also distances himself from Freire, making Freire a starting point instead of a cornerstone (as Shor does). Giroux focuses on the underlying Marxist theories Freire espouses rather than the ways those Marxist principles would work themselves out in the classroom. Giroux agrees with Freire's overall political ideology, but he does not seem to have any of the same emphasis on actual teaching that Freire has. And by writing about changing school systems instead of directly helping students, Giroux shifts the focus of critical pedagogy, as Jennifer Gore notes in *The Struggle for Pedagogies*, from "liberating" students to shifting power relations in schooling so that teachers and students alike are "empowered" to change the system (94).

Peter McLaren was, at the beginning of his writing career, a good mix between Freire and Giroux. He started out as an ideologue or a teacher who wanted nothing more than the best for his students. He wrote in his book, *Life in Schools: An Introduction to Critical Pedagogy in the Foundations of Education,* that critical pedagogy

> attempts to provide teachers and researches with a better means of understanding the role that schools actually play within a race-, class-, and gender-divided society, and in this effort, theorists have generated categories

> or concepts for questioning student experiences, texts, teacher ideologies, and aspects of school policy that conservative and liberal analysis too often leave unexplored. In effect, critical pedagogy has sharply defined the political dimensions of schooling, arguing that schools operate mainly to reproduce the values and privileges of existing elites. (189)

McLaren came to critical pedagogy because of his experiences in the inner city, and his experiences in this type of school led him to think of critical pedagogy as an overall negative evaluation of the education system rather than something that happens in individual classrooms. While Freire wanted to work with individual humans, for the humanization of all individuals, McLaren, like Giroux, wanted to work within systems in order to humanize individuals. Just as Freire and Shor are often lumped together, so are Giroux and McLaren. *Life in Schools* is one of McLaren's most well-known works (referenced earlier), but he has, since writing it, distanced himself from that work, focusing more on educative systems—like Giroux. Oddly, however, McLaren often writes using Freire as the basis for his theories, not Giroux. In a recent (2008), very autobiographical article titled "The Fist Called My Heart: Public Pedagogy in the Belly of the Beast," McLaren shows his connections to both Giroux and Freire, stating a "[r]evolutionary critical pedagogy operates from an understanding that the basis of education is political and that spaces need to be created where students can imagine a different world" (477). McLaren focuses on changing political and educative systems to help students reinvent society. While his focus is more often on "the system," he, more than Giroux, seems to focus on helping students rather than society in general.

Critical pedagogy in the U.S. has often tended toward reorganizing educative systems rather than helping individual students with the social injustices in their lives. Feminist

pedagogues are at the forefront of critiquing and updating critical pedagogies, often focusing on types of critical pedagogy espoused by Giroux and McLaren as the starting point for critique.[7] According to Susan Jarratt, in "Feminist Pedagogy," a feminist pedagogy "is *not* about forcing all the students to subscribe to a particular political position but rather engaging with students on the terrain of language in the gendered world we all currently inhabit" (118). Similarly, Jeanne Brady argues that focusing on gender provides "not only new analyses for understanding how subject positions are constructed, they also reclaim the importance of linking the personal and the political as a legitimate foundation for how one speaks, what one says, and how one acts" (4). And a hallmark of feminist critical pedagogues is that previous, male-centric critical pedagogues—Freire, Giroux, Shor, McLaren—omit gender as a classification, instead focusing almost solely on social class. From this feminist and poststructuralist standpoint, Gore draws on Foucauldian analyses of power to question Giroux's (and McLaren's) constructions of "dualisms such as disempowerment (or powerlessness) and empowerment, silence and voice" because these dualities divide the world into strict "dominant and subordinate (classes, cultures, discourses)" (95). The trouble with this, she argues, is that power becomes seen as a property of the dominant group that the subordinate group is supposed to eventually possess. Like Horner, Gore is troubled by the commodification of different aspects of critical pedagogy. Two problems arise. First, because power is understood as property, Gore sees arrogance in educators' claims that they have the right and/or the means to distribute this possession to their students. Gore argues that the assumption of power as a commodity is a false premise. Even if a teacher has some kind of

[7] See Ellsworth, quoted earlier. Her critique of Giroux is still used as an impetus for feminist critiques of male-centric critical pedagogy. In a chapter in *Feminist Engagements: Reading, Resisting, and Revision Male Theorists in Education and Cultural Studies*, Patti Lather writes that she is "struck with the continued pertinence" of Ellsworth's comments on Giroux and critical pedagogy in general (183).

power, it cannot just be given to students; and if the teacher did have power to perform that kind of action, it would be just as hegemonic as any other move made by someone with power "giving" it to someone without. Second, these types of dualities "put forth a collective conception of social change" that "usually distinguish[s] self from social empowerment where the former is seen as necessary, but not sufficient, for social transformation" (95). The teacher's arrogance and focus on teaching practices that help social change cause the individual student to be lost in theories of critical pedagogy. Giroux's focus on educative systems instead of students has, in Gore's estimation, made Giroux less responsible for actual action through teaching and allows him to write about "the practice of others—[a] large amorphous group called teachers" (98). And, Gore points out, even though Freire and Shor focus on daily interactions with students, their theories show a different kind of arrogance by the teacher. The individual teacher is foregrounded in their theories so much that they implicitly argue their stature as the teacher gives them the right to bestow power on their students. Freire's theories are especially suspect for Gore because the liberatory nature of his pedagogy does not translate well to the United States—a fact Freire himself noted in *A Pedagogy for Liberation*.

The dualities found in Giroux and McLaren and the focus on the individual in Freire and Shor help Gore argue that "two main discursive strands" exist in critical pedagogy theory: "one strand emphasizes the articulation of a broad (and shifting) social and educational vision while the other shows greater concern for instructional practices in specific contexts" ("What" 55). Gore, however, argues that a pedagogy which combines the two is the best course of action because combining the focus on individuals *and* the educational systems that influence the individuals will force educators to look at all facets of

students' lives, including (and highlighting) gender. Thus, while she argues against Giroux's brand of critical pedagogy and does not think Freire's pedagogy would translate well to the U.S., she takes what she sees as the best from both theoretical standpoints and includes them in a "new" theory of critical teaching called "reflective teaching." The term has been used before and often originates in Dewey's "distinction between routine and reflective action" (149). However she bases her theory on Ken Zeichner's work, which focuses on "three 'levels of reflectivity' (the technical, the practical, and the critical)" (*Struggle* 149). These three different aspects correspond to different parts of teaching and allow teachers to focus on larger "critical" (theoretical) concerns while still staying practically grounded in the technical aspects of *how* they teach—an almost perfect marriage of Giroux and Freire. Gore, though, worries that the discourses provided by Giroux and Freire do not go far enough in their critique of current educational systems because gender politics were glossed over or completely ignored in their writings.

Not all feminist critical pedagogues have renounced their male predecessors so vehemently as Gore. bell hooks is known for her use of Freire for feminist purposes. She writes that she is "aware of not only the sexism of [Freire's] language but the way he . . . constructs a phallocentric paradigm of liberation (49). Like Gore, hooks takes this obvious flaw as a way to strengthen the discourse of critical pedagogy by drawing attention to the sexism and using it as a site for critique and improvement. (Unlike Gore, however, hooks still perceives value in Freire's writings.) hooks attempts to "put forward complex readings of male antiracist theorists who have often articulated goals of liberation and human rights in a powerful and poetic rhetoric but who have ignored women's concerns" (Weiler 6). Thus, all feminist critical pedagogues attempt to distance themselves from the male-centric

language used by gender-unconscious male writers, but writers like hooks attempt to find ways of using those theories anyway while writers like Gore attempt to find viable alternatives that fill in the gaps left by Freire and Giroux.

A good summation, or culmination, of these disparate views of critical pedagogy comes from Amy Lee. Like Gore, Lee wholeheartedly accepts the notion that Freire's theories are a good starting point but do not have much relevance beyond that for a U.S. education. She takes Gore's critique of Giroux and McLaren one step further and accuses them of writing about things distanced from the classroom and the actual practices of teaching. But Lee argues that being distanced from classroom critiques does not give them more authority in what they write about; rather it shows that they cannot make the transition from theory to praxis. She even questions the validity of their theories, which, she claims "ultimately function without the concerns and challenges posed by real and multidimensional people (teachers and students), or by fluid and intermediate contexts" (122).[8] But more than this, she wonders if existing critical pedagogies err by limiting their student base to only those who have been oppressed and need liberating. She asks, "Can a critical pedagogy serve to initiate and develop a counterhegemonic impulse, a radical consciousness, not only in those we identify as the objects of oppression but also in those we deem its (potential) agents and benefactors?" (117). Like Shor, she uses her own classroom experiences (because she believes classrooms should be the place where theory is created, not applied) to explore what critical pedagogies have to offer for students who are mostly white and come from

[8] While I agree this view has some merit based on the type of theory produced by Giroux and McLaren, I think that the critique is off base with McLaren. Writing *Life in Schools* as a diary showed a lot of interactions he had with students, and it was those interactions that led him to theorize how we might possibly be able to teach without the current limitations he faced when writing. It seems a bit harsh, then, for Lee to say that he offered "theory devoid of considerations of the concerns and challenges that accompany any actual pedagogical situation" when his optimistic view for critical pedagogy was born out of a distaste for the "actual pedagogical situation" that angered him to the point of being reduced to wishing (*Composing* 122).

middle- or upper-class families. While the projects of earlier critical pedagogies are noble, she contends, "[a]ny progressive pedagogy that ignores a large sector of potential agents limits its capacity to achieve social change" (117). Thus her goals are very similar to Freire's, but she wants to achieve them by helping all students to understand their situations—whether oppressed or (unwitting) benefactors of oppression—in order to overcome social injustices.

Because of her belief that theorists and instructors should formulate theories based on their work in the classroom, Lee thinks of her pedagogy as revision—re-seeing how she teaches—which allows it to be a "critical" pedagogy. She constantly critiques her own practices and attempts to see that the ends, or products, of other critical pedagogies (liberation, critical consciousness, radical social transformation) are actually processes. Teachers shouldn't hope for liberation, critical consciousness, or radical social transformations to come to fruition inside their classrooms; rather teachers should "foster the conditions that allow for them" to occur in and outside of the classroom (47). She also argues that writing is the perfect subject for a critical pedagogy because reading and writing are almost entirely cultural acts, thus helping students start the process of breaking cultural barriers and regimes and making writing itself "the basis of our pedagogy" (48). Previous critical pedagogues focused on helping students and educators "revise" their views of the world in order to get students to think more critically, and using writing as a metaphor for the process of critical pedagogy is pertinent and important because "it suggests an ongoing, continuous process" (151). Lee discusses her teaching and her assignments as rhetorical practices, but never once situates them in a rhetorical tradition outside of "revision." She, like many of the critical pedagogues discussed earlier, are aware that their teaching is rhetorical

and that they are teaching rhetoric, but even when discussing rhetorical acts in the classroom, very few have systematically analyzed how these classroom interactions operate as rhetorical acts and arguments. I propose that understanding the critical rhetoric underlying critical teaching gives us a way to understand and critically discuss the "how" both theoretically and in specific contexts.

Extrapolating a Pedagogy: Freire's Christian Communism

In the previous section I tried to show the goals of various critical pedagogies in the hopes of finding some overarching goals of the larger critical pedagogy movement. The overall goals of critical pedagogies as posited by George—educating critical citizens to become active participants in shaping a socially just society—appear in all the theories of critical pedagogy examined in this chapter. But, as is evident, there are many disagreements over exactly what a critical pedagogies should do and how they should be enacted/implemented/embodied. These questions are not bad for the field; in fact, Freire would argue that the field would not exist as critical pedagogy without the constant critique and introspection. However, sometimes theories of critical pedagogy can focus too much on critique of previous iterations and fail to answer the questions that I asked in the opening paragraphs of this chapter: Who should our students be? Should we liberate or empower or attempt to do neither? Can our classrooms actually be places where social change happens, or are we merely setting up our students to change things in the "real world"? And a couple more have surfaced when looking at these prominent views of critical pedagogy: (How) do we reconcile Gore's dichotomy between seeking for larger social change or individual change? And how do we continue the project of critical pedagogy as it seemingly fractures

into smaller and smaller factions, becoming obscure because of its overt and copious internal debates and, as Gore suggests, not taught to new teachers as a viable pedagogical choice?

Lee's work highlights the changes from the start of critical pedagogy to the present. She is attempting a critical pedagogy for students who may not need "liberating" in the same sense that Freire, Shor, or Giroux would use the term. She wants her classroom to be a place where her

> [students engage] in intellectual processes that will help them understand, articulate, and interrogate their relationship to others and to the world. How their concept of an individual self is composed according to these relationships, and to their material situatedness in the world, and to acknowledge the roles of discourse in determining—not only in representing—this self, those others, that world (155).

And I believe this is the way that critical pedagogies need to change for a good number of U.S. liberal arts colleges and universities because of the privileged nature of the student body. This is an important move to make—from liberating students to helping them question their interaction with the world—because it opens critical pedagogy to a new, and in some ways just as important, audience.[9] However, she is representative of a newer critical pedagogy in another respect: as I will show in detail in Chapter 4, Freire is being slowly phased out of critical pedagogical theories, especially in theories for Composition, because there is an assumption that the political context in which he wrote is different than the politics of a classroom in current U.S. colleges and universities. However, as I argue

[9] As I will argue in Chapter 3, this is an important move to make, but one that does not go far enough. I will argue that instead of thinking of our students as oppressed or privileged, we should think of them all as citizens who need to critically question all social systems, regardless of privilege.

throughout my project, this critique of Freire is undeserved because more critical pedagogy theorists only read his first work, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*.

In this light, phasing out Freire is understandable and necessary. What Freire offered the first generation of U.S. critical pedagogues such as Shor or Giroux (whom Lee relies on heavily) is now available from Shor's and Giroux's later works, which focus specifically on politics in American classrooms. Often, U.S. critical pedagogues mention *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* and then move on to Shor or Giroux or McLaren, thinking that those authors cover the same bases as Freire. However, the diminishment of Freire's direct influence on new theories of critical pedagogy is also due to the fact that they all use Freire similarly: he is used specifically because of his political approach to education—politics that most scholars in composition assume to stem solely from Freire's Marxism or, more broadly, "the politics of the left" (Gore, *Struggles* 41). This is not to say that the political nature of his theories is no longer pertinent; far from it. However, focusing solely on his Marxist politics has put ideological blinders on us when we read his work. As I will show in Chapter 4, his Marxist brand of education is so absorbed into the discussion of critical pedagogy that theorists no longer feel the need to include him in the discussion. Composition's lack of new interpretations of Freire has left his theories inert—even as his boiled down ideas have become commonplace. His theories have only been used in Composition by critical educators for the Marxist politics found within, but Freire was more than just a Marxist. In *Letters to Christina*, Freire makes an admission that would likely be shocking to many Marxists (and Christians): it was seeing "where the oppressed of Brazil lived coupled with my love for Christ and hope that He is the light, that led me to Marx" (87). Freire writes in his preface to *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* that he is "certain that Christians and Marxists, though they may

disagree with me in part or in whole, will continue reading to the end" (37). It seems, however, that in composition studies only the Marxists, or theorists making similar arguments using classifications other than socio-economic—gender, race, orientation—continued the discussion after finishing the book; the Christian audience has remained mostly silent.[10] Most critical pedagogues in composition understand and implement the Marxist ideals found within his writings, but most compositionists ignore his Christian goals, dismissing many of the radical, *Christian communist* leanings. Freire writes that humanization "is the people's *vocation*," and he wants to use pedagogy to help people realize their vocation (43; emphasis added). He writes that "injustice" must be stamped out, and in the introduction to *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* warns that "some will regard [his] position vis-à-vis the problem of human liberation as purely idealistic, or may even consider discussion of ontological vocation, love, dialogue, hope, humility, and sympathy as so much reactionary "blah" (37). Not only *reactionary* blah, but *religious*, specifically, *Christian*, blah.

McLaren notes a common criticism of Freire's writings in a memorial piece shortly after Freire's death: "Freire failed to articulate fully his position on Christianity" ("Reflecting" 52). However, I argue that Freire's writings articulate his position on Christianity very explicitly. The language Freire uses to describe his quest for a liberatory pedagogy is laden with Christian meaning. Vocation can mean simply an occupation, but it can also, of course, mean "a divine call into God's service or to the Christian life" (dictionary.com). Thus although Freire's motive for creating a liberatory pedagogy could

[10] I am convinced that the lack of Christian voices in critical pedagogy is partially due to the fact that liberation theology espouses many of the same arguments as Freire, but uses them in the context of theology instead of pedagogy—which I will discuss in more detail in Chapter 3. There is a large Christian audience for Freire's writings, but the audience has, so far, remained largely outside secular education, especially Composition.

stem from him wanting meaningful work, as I will demonstrate in the next chapter, and as Freire states quite clearly, it primarily stems from a sense of religious calling. Freire confirms this in *Letters to Christina*: "Something else explains my political pedagogical beliefs, something that cannot be underestimated, much less rejected; something that was never understood by authoritarian Christians, who are contrary, sectarian and fundamentalist: my Christian upbringing" (86). In these letters, Freire wrote that he struggled his entire life to understand how "to reconcile fellowship with Christ with the exploitation of other human beings, or to reconcile a love for Christ with racial, gender, and class discrimination" (86–7). Before *Letters to Christina*, in *Pedagogy of the Heart*, Freire gives one reason his writings are viewed as *only* Marxist. He states very plainly, "I do not feel very comfortable speaking about my faith," but he also notes that his faith is of "fundamental importance" in his "struggle for overcoming an oppressive reality and for building a less ugly society" (104). Also, his writings are not always as overtly religious because, to Freire (and to me), "having faith, believing, is not the problem; the problem is claiming to have it and, at the same time, contradicting it in action" (104). Faith should be shown in actions and claiming to have faith or not isn't the issue; anyone can have faith, but to be responsible with one's faith is acting on faith that something good can come from having faith. Freire had faith in many things: he had faith in a God, faith in social change, and faith that educators played a key role in that change. However, he argues that many critical pedagogues fall into a trap of teaching critically, but not having faith that their teaching will actually produce any real social change. He believes many of his actions stem from his faith (Christian and otherwise), and not acting against oppression would be to contradict his faith—but whether people know he is a Christian or not shouldn't matter; what should matter is the quality of his actions. He also

says that his "relationship with Marx never suggested that [he] abandon Christ" (*Letters* 87). Thus his admission at the beginning of *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* that both Christians and Marxists will want to read to the end makes sense: his Christianity led him to Marxism. In other words, Freire thought of his pedagogical vocation in a religious way. However, Freire never states that one cannot act without a faith in Christ. Instead he opens his theory up to be used in secular settings by making his Marxist politics, which are based on his religious principles, the basis for pedagogical and political action against oppression. And even though many people may object to using Christian principles and philosophy in a secular setting, the religious aspects of his pedagogy can be used secularly: Freire's reluctance to be overtly Christian while maintaining that his Christianity was a driving force behind his Marxism and his theories of pedagogy is proof of that.

In an attempt to recapture Freire's Christianity, my dissertation analyzes his texts as religious epideictic rhetoric, explained next, in order to understand how his texts can be recaptured for current critical pedagogical theories. Understanding Freire's critical pedagogy as epideictic rhetoric instead of understanding it as merely an evangelical tool will allow me to transfer his theories into more than just religious settings. Making this translation easier is the fact that religious rhetoric and pedagogy have much in common: in rhetorical theory, they both fall under the category of epideictic rhetoric. Gore writes that "the field of radical pedagogy appears to consist of separate strands of radical discourse, each existing and developing relatively autonomously as it tries to create its own spaces within its immediate intellectual and contexts" (*Struggle* 45). She then lists three similarities she finds in all discourses of radical pedagogy: "they all avow pragmatic concerns about improving conditions, they all hold positions of marginality relative to the 'dominant discourses of our

present' and, as pedagogical discourses with social visions and instructional processes (made more or less explicit), they all are, at least in part, discourses of social regulation" (45). The purpose of my dissertation is to add another commonality to that list. I propose that all discourses of critical pedagogy and all pedagogical acts in- and outside the classroom can be classified as epideictic rhetoric. In the next section, I show how epideictic rhetoric can be understood as a rhetoric that encourages critique and a rhetoric that permeates the writing classroom.

Reconfiguring Epideictic Education

Epideictic rhetoric is traditionally theorized as a type of rhetoric that advocates orthodoxies, sustains communal values and beliefs, and instructs future generations to value the same things as the current culture. Aristotle situated it between forensic rhetoric, which focuses on the past, and deliberative rhetoric, which focuses on future matters, and allows the present to be its domain. Issues of praise and blame are the "present" matters of epideictic, and Aristotle used "virtue and vice and honorable and shameful" as "the points of reference for one praising or blaming" (1.9.1). The focus on the present and the use of virtue and vice as the principle material for epideictic rhetoric has led rhetoricians to think of it as a practical celebration of the present, a display of the best a culture has to offer—both in content and delivery. For instance, Chaim Perelman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca, in *The New Rhetoric*, claim that epideictic's purpose is to increase the strength of accepted arguments, values, and beliefs, allowing the accepted norms to become even more entrenched in a culture (50). They write, "The very concept of [epideictic] oratory . . . results in its being practiced by those who, in a society, defend the traditional and accepted values, those which are the object of education, not the new and revolutionary values which stir up controversy and polemics"

(51). But recent epideictic theorists are challenging the traditional views of epideictic and education espoused by Aristotle and Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca. Epideictic is now often viewed as a type of rhetoric that causes change in an audience and helps foster critical reflection on the communal values and beliefs it was classically conceived to uphold.

This project takes as its starting point the challenge by Cynthia Sheard, in her article, "The Public Value of Epideictic Rhetoric," that "no commentator has yet connected epideictic's pedagogical potential with its critical function" (777). Her challenge comes in a section on audience response to epideictic rhetorics where she outlines the history of theories of epideictic education in the writings of Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, Dale Sullivan, Michael Carter, Walter Beale, and Bernard Duffy—all writers who theorized epideictic in updated, valuable ways (even if their "updated" version is not now the most current, as is the case with Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca). Sheard shows a general acceptance among most epideictic theorists that epideictic is the provenance of education, and she even shows how Beale and Duffy support a critical epideictic—a version of epideictic that not only reasserts present values (as Aristotle suggested) but also suggests future actions, even actions that challenge the status quo. Sheard, Beale, and Duffy argue that the rhetoric of values and beliefs can also be used to question the commonly held beliefs of a community by asking for a reexamination of those beliefs in order to change cultural practices and attitudes.

Sheard disparages the view that epideictic can only bring about agreement, that "the rhetorical effect of such discourse is self-contained, for it can elicit little more than nodding heads, applause, or, occasionally a standing ovation" (776). Instead, Sheard uses Duffy's interpretation of Platonic epideictic to find an epideictic with the capacity to change, rather than uphold, values and beliefs. Duffy interprets Plato's intended purpose for an encomiast as

"find[ing] words capable of conveying the philosophical ideas which form the basis of future judgment and action" (Duffy 86). If this is the case, then in an educative setting, epideictic "can be a vehicle for self-reflection and self-criticism, an expression of critical and rhetorical self-consciousness, both publicly and privately. It can help us to scrutinize our own privately and publicly held beliefs and prejudices, to evaluate them, and to decide whether to reaffirm or reform them" (Sheard 777). Sheard's view of epideictic allows for values and beliefs to be upheld, but only after critical reflection about why such beliefs are held in the first place. There is little room in her configuration of epideictic for an education that merely or necessarily upholds orthodoxy—a stance that, because of its lack of critical reflection on the part of the teacher or student, sounds much more like propaganda than does a critical and questioning education that aims at a change.

Sheard is not the only author that values epideictic for its critical ability to shift attitudes as the first step toward change. Gerard A. Hauser, in "Aristotle on Epideictic: The Formation of Public Morality," shows the civic teaching function of epideictic, allowing for epideictic to play an important role in the functions of a society. In order for epideictic to have an effect on society at large, Hauser says epideictic's teaching function must be realized. He writes, "When juxtaposed with the requirements for an audience competent to understand Aristotle's model rhetor, epideictic subject matter suggests that this genre served an important educative function" (10). The audience and the purpose of the speech are linked to find the purpose of epideictic in civic life. Hauser writes extensively of the rhetor as teacher in this article and connects epideictic's function with the function of a teacher. "Aristotle maintains that only a few have the ability to see the universal unaided and the requisite skill to help others to recognize it" (11). The ability to teach is rare, and those who

do it well do it epideictically. This translates to the civic sphere with epideictic because the epideictic teacher was the one who attempted to instill in the audience certain virtues that were necessary to participate in deliberative and judicial functions in society. "Making and judging public arguments presupposed then, as now, literacy in the community's political and moral values as an a priori condition to assessing their relative importance to collective judgment on a particular issue" (13). Hauser argues that in order take part in the critical discourse of a society, one must be educated on the epideictic values assigned to the matters being discussed. He, like Sheard, sees education as a place where students begin to gain understanding of values—their own and those of the society in which they live—and teachers must be aware of the epideictic nature of their teachings in order to help students become epideictically informed citizens.

The idea of teaching as epideictic and teaching students how to understand and critique their beliefs fits well within the realm of critical pedagogy. It fits even better into critical pedagogy within composition because composition deals exclusively with epideictic rhetoric—the writings we ask our students to complete all perform an epideictic function because of their content and their written nature (according to Burgess). Thus I see understanding epideictic to be essential for a critical pedagogue: when a critical educator asks students to examine their beliefs and the beliefs of a society, she is asking students to perform an epideictic critique—a critique based on the values and beliefs of certain groups. Similarly, the very act of teaching students to do this is an act of epideictic rhetoric because teaching students to be critical is a value of liberal arts education—of which writing is most certainly a part. In other words, if we are to understand the ways we teach critically and understand the types of critical thinking we are asking students to participate in in our

classrooms, we must understand how epideictic works in our classrooms—both in our teaching and in the assignments we ask our students to complete.

Explanation of the Method and Chapter Summaries

Yoking Freire's Christianity to epideictic rhetoric and Composition, my dissertation will theorize, using personal experience and Freire's writings, how epideictic's critical function can act as a critical pedagogy. The project will function, in part, as an historical recovery project by extrapolating and adding previously unused elements of Freire's educational philosophy into the discussion of critical pedagogies in Composition studies. It will help illuminate epideictic's critical function by showing how even something as controversial in Composition as religious rhetoric can be translated into secular epideictic and used for liberatory educative practices. And it will discuss the political ramifications for making such a move in a public educative setting. As a whole, my project aims to alleviate a large critique of critical pedagogies in composition in recent years—that teaching writing is not the focus of a critical pedagogy—by theorizing a critical pedagogy theory that is much more conscious of its rhetorical functions.

Most current attempts to understand the state of critical pedagogy in Composition (Lee's, for instance) try to make sense of the pedagogical movement by describing the different strands of critical pedagogy. While this chapter has reflected this pattern, the rest of my project is different because I want to take this "understanding" one step further and delve into the rhetoric that allows any pedagogy, but especially critical pedagogy, to operate, specifically in a composition classroom. Most current analyses of critical pedagogy, especially in composition, focus on *what* critical pedagogy should be doing, but I want to reframe the discussion to look at *how* critical pedagogies function rhetorically by introducing

epideictic rhetoric to the discussion. In order to show *what* critical pedagogy should be doing, my dissertation will trace the perception and use of Freire's theories through critical pedagogy's history in Composition and attempt to explain why his Christianity has *mostly* been left out of critical pedagogy discussions in composition; the project will also redefine epideictic's critical function and show how critical pedagogies operate rhetorically. In this chapter I have broadly traced the perceptions of critical pedagogy and shown its major theoretical shifts, starting with Freire and ending with Freire (mostly) written out of the story. I have shown, briefly, that Freire's Christianity is pertinent to his overall theories of education and connected his Christian leanings to epideictic rhetoric.

As Freire, Shor, Gore, and Lee argue, a good theory of critical pedagogy should stem from teaching. Thus the second chapter will use Candice Spigelman's theory of the personal academic argument to show how I became interested in critical pedagogy both as a graduate student and as a teacher. I chronicle my readings of critical pedagogical theory and the rhetorical disconnect I felt to many of the writings. I show how, for me, teaching critically and teaching epideictically became synonymous and how that affected my teaching and had an effect on the students.

In the third chapter, in an attempt at full disclosure, I situate myself as a Christian and an educator (though not necessarily a Christian educator); Freire's concepts of hope and love are central to my teaching. I introduce many of the ways in which Freire's educational theories could (and should) be understood as stemming from his Christianity so that I will be able to use the terms and ideas in subsequent chapters. I attempt to show that many, if not all, of Freire's theories stem from his religion, and I begin to show how these religious

theories of education can be secularized for a more general audience by translating religious beliefs into secular epideictic values.

The fourth chapter examines historical uses of Freire in composition in order to understand why his Christianity (explored in Chapter 3) has been so thoroughly acknowledged in other disciplines while it has been ignored in composition. Building off of the versions of critical pedagogy offered by Shor, Giroux, McLaren, Gore, and Lee explored in this chapter, I look at representations of Freire in three of the most prominent journals of composition scholarship, *College Composition and Communication, College English*, and *JAC*, in an attempt to capture a fuller picture of how and why Freire's Christian side has been forgotten. These three journals were selected for study because of their prominence in the field, their commitment to publishing articles about composition pedagogy and theory, and their existence in the field for the past 27years—including critical pedagogy's infancy in composition. In addition to these factors, *JAC* has published a special issue on Freire along with the articles about critical pedagogy published in other issues, and *CCC* and *College English* each have close to 50 articles pertaining to Freire and critical pedagogy since 1982 —the first year an article specifically about Freire was published in any of these three journals.[11] And even though *College English* is not specifically a composition journal (like *JAC and CCC*), it is the first journal of the three to publish a substantive article about Freire and critical pedagogy—and it continues to publish critical pedagogy articles because the subject pertains to teaching college English.

Recovering Freire's Christianity for composition studies will require me to translate the religious aspects of his writing into something easily accepted by our secular field. The

[11] Ann Berthoff has some very early comments on Freire in her 1971 article "The Problem of Problem Solving," but the first article that uses Freire to delve deeply into pedagogy, Kyle Fiore and Nan Elsasser's "'Strangers no More': A Liberatory Literacy Curriculum," appeared in 1982, thus 27 years.

fifth chapter will accomplish this by using Sheard's formulation of epideictic to show that epideictic *has* a critical function, extrapolating epideictic principles from Perelman's, Olbrechts-Tyteca's, as well as Kenneth Burke's writings to show that epideictic has a specific method for analysis and implementation, and then show how this understanding of epideictic can be used in a classroom setting as both the basis for the pedagogy and the assignments. I believe Perelman's and Olbrechts-Tyteca's method for analyzing and creating *rhetoric* is specifically pertinent to epideictic, despite the limited nature of their definition of epideictic. I will use their terms for analyzing contemporary rhetoric—especially their treatment of dissociation, arguments from part to the whole, and their focus on audience—as the basis for discussing how epideictic operates in a critical classroom. And using Burke's notion of identification and epideictic rhetoric,[12] I will show how epideictic rhetoric can help transform students into Freirean revolutionaries who are able to identify, and work in solidarity, with oppressed peoples to overcome social injustices or overcome social injustices in their own lives.

The redefinition of critical epideictic will move me into the sixth and final chapter of the dissertation where I will attempt to show how critical epideictic can be theorized as a critical pedagogy. Both teaching methods and students' assignments can be read as critical epideictic "texts" and sites for analysis, allowing both teacher- and student-produced rhetoric to be the topic of critical conversations in the classroom and in students' writing. This theoretical section of my dissertation brings together the first two sections by examining how critical epideictic pedagogy is different from a traditional theory of critical pedagogy because of what Freire's Christianity adds to an understanding of his theory. In this final chapter, I

[12] Found in *Auscultation, Creation, and Revision, Permanence and Change, Counter-Statement,* and *Rhetoric of Motives.*

will compare my new way of understanding a Freirean pedagogy with that of Ira Shor's much more traditional (Marxist) articulation of a Freirean pedagogy found in *When Students Have Power: Negotiating Authority in a Critical Pedagogy* and David Seitz's more recent re-vision of critical pedagogy in *Who Can Afford Critical Consciousness: Practicing a Pedagogy of Humility*. This comparison of my Freirean theory and Shor's and Seitz's will include an examination of their assignments and daily interactions. Using this understanding of how the Christian rhetoric applies to a theory of critical epideictic pedagogy, I theorize how a secular reading of Freire's Christian ideals can and should fit into a critical epideictic classroom.

I hope that my dissertation will live up to the epigraphs for this introduction. I hope that it can serve as an epideictic text that helps solve a problem, changes a condition, and champions a worthy cause. And even though I want to show an alternative to critical pedagogies as currently theorized, I hope my dissertation shows the respect that I have for critical pedagogy and its theorists because they introduced me to "a language with which to name my frustrations with dominant approaches to education" (Gore, *Struggles xii*).

> *I even told a friend a story that I will repeat here, about one of my experiences in the field of pedagogy . . .*
>
> Paulo Freire, *Daring to Dream* (75)

> *I couldn't keep my students from writing the events of their lives into their papers. And I found that I enjoyed those nods toward experience, which often gave texture and detail to their essays. It's the same when I read published essays, including composition articles: examples drawn from a writer's life, especially a teaching life, have their own special appeal.*
>
> Candace Spigelman, *Personally Speaking* "Preface"

Chapter 2. Finding an Epideictic Critical Pedagogy

In the first chapter, I showed many of the common criticisms leveled against critical pedagogies; in this chapter I show how I experienced almost every single one of those criticisms in a class where the teacher attempted to enact a critical pedagogy and how I have attempted to avoid the criticism in my classroom. Though I did not know it at the time, my experience with critical pedagogy started as an undergraduate at Northwestern College in Orange City, Iowa—a small, conservative, Christian college. The teacher attempted to force his liberal ideology onto the students; he assumed he had the right to "empower" his students; he perpetuated gender stereotypes by focusing solely on socioeconomic classifiers; and he let the weight of the class—the "responsibility" he felt to "educate" us toward a more liberal worldview—cause him to lose sight of the source material for the class.

The class was Introduction to Christian Missions, with a focus on Liberation theology.[13] The loudest voice of conservative Christianity was an intelligent student, a talented debater, and a good writer with whom I had taken classes previously. He

[13] In the next chapter I write about the clear connections between liberation theology and critical pedagogy—making my experience in this class even more disconcerting.

received Fs on all his papers. His personal theology even incited the teacher to slap his hand on the table and burst out, "You're wrong!" in a classroom discussion of opinion. In Freire's words, my teacher was one of the "innumerable well-intentioned bank-clerk teachers who do not realize that they are only serving to dehumanize" (*Oppressed* 75), who unwittingly relied on the banking method of teaching to convey his "liberatory" message. Freire would be the first to say that liberation through force is not liberation at all. My teacher preached liberation theology, solidarity, and student empowerment; he practiced a teacher-centered, totalitarian, banking model of education. He was fired at the end of the year.

I tell this story because, as I argued in the first chapter, every theory of critical pedagogy should be personal, and that experience was my first brush with critical pedagogy. Luckily, it was not my last. In my first semester in graduate school, I took a Composition Theory class, and the teacher encouraged us to use our personal experiences in our writing. In my final paper for the class I reflected on what I hoped for, wanted, and expected out of my first teaching experience (with a fairly homogenous student body). I wanted to be a critical pedagogue. I wrote that, "*I'm scared . . . that the critical theory that I want so badly to believe will fail me, thus failing my students. Even that last thought assumes many of the power structures I want to demolish.*" (Elder, Comp. Theory Final Paper). I remember writing this paper vividly because it helped solidify my belief that I needed to teach writing. And if I knew I wanted to be a critical pedagogue, I would be remiss not to include how I came to see teaching writing as an opportunity for an epideictic critical pedagogy.

However, this chapter will be more than a personal essay. I use Candace Spigelman's theory of the "Personal Academic Argument" as the driving force behind this chapter. Spigelman's book, *Personally Speaking: Experience as Evidence in Academic Discourse*, is applicable to all realms of academic writing, but I also subscribe to Spigelman's view that it is especially important for writing teachers as we attempt to navigate how and why we use our classroom experiences as data for theories about teaching. Spigelman argues that personal experience should be just as valuable as any other kind of evidence—whether it be research in an archive or quoting a source—when writing, either academically or otherwise, because "regardless of its form in first-person narrative or third-person exposition, all writing is personal in the sense that both style and interest are features of social, political, and individual values and investments" (25). In addition, every piece of evidence we use in our writing is subjective because of the ways we select and interpret what, when, and where we present our evidence.

Spigelman's theory about personal experience is also pertinent to my project because it is a sentiment shared by Freire. In *Pedagogy of Hope,* a personal recounting of the writing of and speaking about *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Freire writes, "for such a long time now, I have argued the need we progressive educators have never to underestimate or reject knowledge had from living experience, with which educands come to school or to informational centers of education" (84). Both Spigelman and Freire acknowledge the academic bias against personal knowledge. The biggest criticism, as Freire states, is that using personal experience means that a teacher (or theorist) "stay[s] spinning in an orbit, along with the educands, around their commonsense knowledge, without any attempt to get beyond that knowledge" (84). However, neither Spigelman

nor Freire argues for personal experience in a vacuum. Instead, they write that personal experiences must be one of the many devices used to create meaning—whether in the classroom or in a theoretical, academic piece. I take this idea—that personal experience is one of the many *necessary* types of evidence to use in a pedagogical theory—to heart in this chapter.

Graduate School: A Grounding in Theory

On the threshold of teaching after my first year of graduate studies, I had witnessed circled chairs, horrible lectures, Power-point classrooms, and an utter failure of a critical pedagogue, but I had never taught. After reading a good chunk of critical pedagogy theory, however, I found that I was unable to understand how to overcome the split I saw between theories of critical pedagogy and the reality of a first-year teacher putting them into practice. My introduction to critical pedagogy came from *Cross-Talk in Comp Theory*, so I was led toward Freire by bell hooks. I could relate quite well to certain aspects of the theory I read, but I knew that I was not part of the theoretical conversation because of my lack of teaching experience. I was unsure of how to read Victor Villanueva's "Considerations for American Freirestas," and after I read *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, I read *Life in Schools* by McLaren. I felt that there were parts of the conversation in critical pedagogy I could not even begin to understand because the arguments presented hinged upon knowledge I lacked. I barely knew what a Freirean educator was, let alone the feminist nature of Villanueva's Freiresta, and McLaren's experiences in an inner city elementary school and hooks's experiences as a black teacher in U.S. higher education were mostly lost on me. And despite their other experiences that

were different than mine—race, gender, socio-economic status, location—I hadn't even set foot in the classroom as the teacher.

As I prepared to teach my first semester, I was worried about how to implement a critical pedagogy in my first composition class, especially when many of the theories I had read, Freire, McLaren, hooks, and Shor, stated that critical pedagogies would need to be lived, not implemented. This is, however, a hurdle that first-time teachers must overcome in order to become critical pedagogues. I could "implement" process pedagogy by following certain, debatable, guidelines. I could "implement" expressivist pedagogy by, again, following certain, debatable, guidelines. I could not, however, "implement" a critical pedagogy because of the negative connotations implementation has for a critical pedagogy. But even thoughts of something as simple as "implementing" a pedagogy flew out of my head as soon as I walked into the classroom on my first day of teaching.

As I showed in the previous section, I was excited about becoming a critical pedagogue. Very excited. I wanted to use Freire's and Shor's pedagogies to help overcome all the injustices of the world (I was optimistic), but I walked into a corridor of a classroom with long rows of tables. Ann George, in her bibliographic review of critical pedagogies, writes that "despite [her] subversive intentions and the liberatory rhetoric of [her] course descriptions, [her] teaching often retreats to the level of sporadic creativity or, worse, to rather predictable English-teacher experimentation and circling of chairs" (92). But for a first time teacher, circling of chairs is a good start, no matter how predictable. From the outset, however, my dream of circling chairs was dashed. How does one "implement" a critical pedagogy with such physical limitations? With these

thoughts ramming against my forehead, I walked to the front of the class and chicken-scratched "David Elder" on the white board. We actually tried to rearrange the tables that first day, but the geometrical shape that ensued was even less conducive to discussion than the original two long rows of tables.

Shor had prepared me for the physical limitations of classrooms. He had prepared me for the students who inhabit the "Siberian" zone of the classroom—the area of the classroom in which students decide to sit to be as far away from the teacher and classroom participation as possible. Shor even writes that the Siberian section of the classroom is "one form of student agency in the contact zone of mass education" because it allows students to dictate their level of involvement in their education (*WSHP* 13). But nothing I'd read had prepared me for the entire classroom to be Siberia. And when the entire classroom is forced into a Gulag, it ceases to be an instrument of student agency and becomes another institutional detriment to student learning. It didn't allow students who wanted to be a part of the class much of an opportunity to do so, and it didn't allow students who wanted to resist by sitting in the nether regions of the room to do so, either, by forcing every student into an uncomfortable place in the long, narrow classroom.

I quickly learned, in the middle of my first day on the job—and throughout that entire first semester—that all the theory in the world could not have prepared me for the shellshock of teaching, but it had helped give me a survival kit, of sorts, to make it through the first semester. The fact that I was steeped in the language of Freire helped: I didn't want a "banking model" classroom; I wanted students to be involved in creating "generative themes" for classroom discussion and assignments, and I hoped to help students and myself become more critically conscious of their situation in the country and

the academy. That I had read Shor was a boon: I understood the physical limitations of my classroom; I saw that it was possible to be a Freirean educator in an American classroom, especially a privileged one, and was given some concrete ideas on how to make it work for my classroom.[14] I had some understanding of how to work within an existing educational system thanks to Giroux because his writings taught me what to expect from working under an administration and what to expect from students who had been, as Giroux might say, "corrupted" by a commercial society (even though none of his dire predictions about administration or schooling systems reared their ugly head during my first semester teaching). I also understood the theoretical limitations of all three of these theorists thanks to the authors I discussed in Chapter 1. I understood, in theory, how to run a critical classroom and how the enthymeme could help a teacher. The first semester teaching was more about survival for me than it was about attempting a certain theory of pedagogy.

My first semester teaching had given me a lot to think about. The students were resistant to being over(t)ly critical of their, or anyone else's, belief structures. And, when it comes right down to it, teaching writing is a difficult enough task without adding lofty goals of overcoming social injustices.[15] So I decided to slowly work my way up to a critical pedagogy instead of hoping to be Freire my first semester. One of the ways I accomplished this was by actually taking the advice I often give to students: write about what you love, or, in my case, teach what you love. I love writing, but I have been passionate about epideictic rhetoric since my first Introduction to Rhetoric class

[14] I will discuss these concrete ideas in much greater detail in Chapter 5 where I compare my idea of a Freirean epideictic critical pedagogy to Shor's more "traditional" Freirean pedagogy.
[15] This is an issue that has been consistently wrestled with in composition, and it is one that I will address in chapters 5 and 6.

sophomore year of college. As I mention in the first chapter, Cynthia Sheard's article was the starting point for this dissertation, but it also marked a turning point in my understanding of epideictic as it pertains to education. I read the article as an undergrad, but I had to reread the article for a graduate class during my first semester as a teacher. I was able to read it with an eye toward pedagogy, and what I read completely changed my approach to teaching writing.

Very broadly understood, Sheard argues that conceptions of epideictic need to change. Instead of being a rhetoric that focuses on ceremony and agreement, it should be seen as "an instrument for addressing private and public 'dis-ease,' discomfort with the status quo" (766). This is all I took away from the article on my first reading, but I noticed as I read a second time that Sheard was specifically asking for someone to study epideictic in conjunction with the teaching of writing: "Our students at all levels of literacy development need to be taught to appreciate epideictic rhetoric, to understand the ways in which it invokes shared values as a basis for promoting a vision of what could be" (766). I wanted to be a critical pedagogue to help overcome social injustices—to promote a vision of what could be. Sheard suggested that this is possible by teaching epideictic, and I decided to move epideictic openly into my classroom in my teaching style and in the papers I assigned.[16]

The first time I taught epideictic theory in a classroom, my second semester teaching, was a monumental failure. I had my first-year students read portions of Aristotle's *Rhetoric*. This was not a bad idea—in theory. Having a grounding in

[16] See Sheard's quote in Chapter 1 of this dissertation for the passage that calls for a project like mine. Her article does not deal specifically with classroom issues. Instead, she focuses on rebranding epideictic as a critical rhetoric and encourages someone else to carry the torch to the classroom. I think it bears noting that she wrote her article in 1996, and mine is the first project to explicitly connect a critical epideictic to the writing classroom.

classical rhetoric and understanding epideictic through the terms "praise" and "blame" is actually a very good foundation for understanding modern epideictic. However, having them read *Rhetoric* was a bad idea, in practice, for a few reasons. First and foremost: first-year students did not want to read Aristotle's *Rhetoric*. However fascinated I am by the document, they found it uninteresting—if they read it at all. I ended up having to spontaneously lecture about it, anyway, because of how little interest there was in the text. The lecture turned out to be the second bad idea: not because I did a poor job of representing epideictic, but because I also launched into future developments in epideictic (e.g., Sheard) that compounded the students' belief that it was a waste of time to read Aristotle.

While I still argued with them that Aristotle gave them a good epideictic foundation, they persisted that what they learned in *Rhetoric* about epideictic was much more understandably explained through my short lecture. This was a good lesson to learn as a new critical pedagogue—sometimes the students *want* us to lecture because it helps them understand their readings. Because I was attempting to become a critical pedagogue, I listened to the students and have since used Lloyd Bitzer's "The Rhetorical Situation" to teach epideictic.[17] The article is not specifically about epideictic, but in a step-by-step manner that is easy for first year students to follow, Bitzer lays out the conditions necessary for rhetoric.[18] I then usually ask students what epideictic rhetoric is

[17] The first chapter of the textbook I use in my composition classes, *Everything's an Argument*, has short sections on all three Aristotelian species of rhetoric, but epideictic is so glossed over and general as to be almost meaningless: "Sometimes called epideictic arguments or ceremonial arguments because they tend to be heard at public occasions, they include inaugural addresses, sermons, eulogies, graduation speeches, and *civic remarks of all kinds*" (my emphasis 19). In this book, with its title, it seems that a little bit more attention would be paid to "civic remarks of all kind," especially because the rest of the book is about civic remarks of all kinds: textual, oral, visual, aural, etc.

[18] And, like many modern rhetorical theorists, Bitzer uses epideictic situations as the main sites for rhetoric in general. For example: the list he gives on page 2, the situations he mentions on page 5, his list of

(because it was in their textbook reading) and use that as a starting point for a discussion about the possibilities for an epideictic with Sheard's understanding of it. Bitzer is also helpful for this discussion because he does not, like so many other rhetoricians, distinguish between the species of rhetoric when giving rhetoric a function. Instead, he says that all rhetoric "is pragmatic; it comes into existence for the sake of something beyond itself; it functions ultimately to produce action or change in the world; it performs some task. In short, rhetoric is a mode of altering reality, not by the direct application of energy to objects, but by the creation of discourse which changes reality through the mediation of thought and action" (4). This definition of rhetoric is important when discussing epideictic in my classroom for two reasons. First, if all rhetoric, epideictic included, aims to "produce action or change in the world," then epideictic must ultimately be capable of creating change (and not merely upholding orthodoxies). Second, it reinforces the idea that change can occur without "direct application of energy to objects" to me and starts showing this concept to students. "The Rhetorical Situation" plants the seed that rhetoric can have an effect, that mere words and discourse can be used instead of force—and that these situations where words are needed to produce change are prevalent in our society.[19]

However, I usually do not encounter this type of success with an epideictic critical pedagogy. In fact, most of the time when I try to show students their agency, they hem and haw until I help them make a decision. For example, in the fall semester of 2007, I

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standard constraints includes only ten items, half of which pertain directly to epideictic: "beliefs, attitudes . . . traditions . . . interests, motives" (8).

[19] Bitzer's article is also extremely helpful when students are at an impasse in their writing, especially on an analysis paper. Using his three "constituents" of the rhetorical situation—exigence, audience, and constraints—is very helpful for students to wrap their minds around their topic and understand what is at stake with their issue.

decided to let the students choose their writing assignments. This is an idea I took directly from Shor in *When Students Have Power*, but I changed it a little bit in order to be able to, as a very new teacher, still conform to the course outcomes set forth by the university. Shor writes:

> As a routine feature of formal education, there are no democratic mechanisms for students to propose their own courses, themes, or syllabi. They have no institutional power to plan courses; curriculum is made for them by others, by teachers and academics who often love knowledge and have the best interests of the students in mind. Nevertheless, when people are not consulted about policy and process in their experience, they are denied citizen status as members of a democracy. (31)

As a second-year teacher, I didn't feel up to this task of creating new writing assignments on the fly with the students, but I did want them to be granted "citizen status" in my classroom and feel as if they had control over what they were learning in my classroom.[20]

Luckily, the graduate students at TCU are a close-knit group, often sharing assignments with one another, so I decided to put out a call for productive units that my colleagues have used in the past. Then in class, after having a discussion about epideictic—talking about personal values and what students wanted to learn that semester and what types of writing would best help them accomplish their goals—we spent a class period deciding on writing assignments. I printed out all the unit projects my colleagues had given me and asked students to read them and discuss their merits based on what

[20] I recently found an article in *College Teaching* (50.2) by Richard Leahy titled "Conducting Writing Assignments" which provides an excellent, step-by-step guide on how to create new writing assignments with students in the classroom. I have yet to try the method, but it was much more helpful than Shor's observations on the subject. Shor is much more reflective whereas Leahy is more pragmatic.

types of things they wanted to learn about writing and about their/others' values and beliefs. They spent the entire class period reading and discussing. Then when it came time to decide, they simply asked me which one I wanted to teach. I hadn't expected this type of student resistance. However, as Shor demonstrates and, in a recent (2009) article in *CCC*, Gwen Gorzelsky openly asserts, sometimes students resist when no boundaries are imposed upon them. In fact, Gorzelsky writes that giving students that amount of agency so early in the semester invites resistance because of "students' frequent expectation that teachers will impose their views to one degree or another" (74). By pushing them too hard to take control of their learning too early (indeed, on the first day of their first college class), students resisted because their expectations of learning were so ingrained they could not imagine that I had no predetermined choice. However, we ended up discussing the role of the teacher and the role of students in the educative process and they eventually came to the conclusion—I do not feel as if I persuaded them—to choose a personal essay about place that asked them to consider the values and beliefs of the people in a place near and dear to them (see Appendix 1). I did not write the assignment (the epideictic portion, which I added to the assignment, made sense based on our discussions of epideictic at the beginning of the semester). I had never taught "place" before and was forced to learn about rhetorics of place along with the students. It was a wonderful opportunity to learn *with* students about something. As a young critical pedagogue, I was worried about asserting too much authority in the classroom, but I still decided to have students read Gregory Clark and Michael Halloran's article "National Park Landscapes and the Rhetorical Display of Civic Religion" from the recent collection of epideictic theory *Rhetorics of Display*. The article is about the

epideictic nature of the national park system and what those places say about our country/culture based on the epideictic values of the United States when the Parks System was put into law.

I consider this one of my few critical pedagogy successes as a teacher. Sadly, their excitement at choosing their assignments for the semester waned quickly because they ended up hating—truly *hating*—the unit they chose. Whether they disliked it because of the way it asked them to examine their values based on place or whether they disliked it because the assignment was work intensive, I will not ever know. They seemed comfortable enough helping their peers critique the values/beliefs instilled in them because of their chosen place, but almost every student was reluctant to truly analyze how and why the place shaped him or her. In other words, they recognized epideictic at work in their peers' lives, but they had a hard time figuring out its influence on their own lives. As a result of how difficult this unit was for them, they refused to choose the next unit, instead deferring to me and what I was used to teaching because they assumed the units would "work" better for them.

I encountered a situation almost completely opposite of the one just described during the first semester at my first tenure-track position. I was given the task of teaching a first-year seminar course, called Passport, with two purposes: writing and introducing students to college.[21] I was comfortable teaching the writing portion of the course, but I did not really know how to approach the other part because that has never been a requirement in the courses I had previously taught. So, I found myself relying

[21] This course was much more of a "service to the college" class than any writing course I had previously taught. In one semester, I was supposed to introduce students to college-level writing, quizzes, tests, the liberal arts, critical reading, shared inquiry discussions, the college's course management site, the new e-mail system, college success skills (study habits, time management, etc.), and campus resources (student success resources, campus security, library resources, etc.).

fairly heavily on the required book for all Passport sections. The readings all dealt with some aspect of the transition into college life, and about half way through the semester, the students in one of my sections revolted. They argued that the readings insulted their intelligence—they understood exactly what they were "supposed" to get out of the readings, making class discussions stale and forced. This revolt started, as it often does, from the back of the room, but this was not just ordinary complaints from students choosing to sit in Siberia. The revolt quickly spread to the rest of the room, with the students giving me a firm "we're never reading from this book again" stance that was shared by almost every student in the room.

The insurrection didn't come out of nowhere, however. All semester I'd been asking students for feedback about assignments, and I tried to stress that their opinion mattered to me when it came to designing the course because I actually wanted them to gain something from the first of only two courses every student on campus was required to take. Because they asked me one day what I was writing my dissertation about, critical pedagogy is something we discussed at length one class period. In addition, we had discussed the values of a liberal arts institution, and they finally decided that the readings we were doing in class just didn't fulfill the requirements of the class, my pedagogy, or the institution.

My first thought when they threw the book down was actually elation. Finally! Critical pedagogy! So, I stopped what we were doing and had a half hour discussion with the class about what types of things they wanted to read. They wanted to read something with substance that didn't pertain to their lives in such obvious ways. They wanted to

read things that resembled our news clip discussions at the beginning of class[22]—things that were pertinent to them and to society more broadly. But they also didn't want to choose the readings themselves. They wanted me to find them—so much for critical pedagogy—despite my protests that they should be active participants in the selections if they were going to rebel against the readings I had already selected. So, I decided to bring in more readings about rhetoric—like "The Rhetorical Situation"—and more readings about uses of rhetoric in debates that would matter to the students' lives—including topics like the Dream Act and the gubernatorial election and articles like "Is Google Making Us Stupid." These readings interested students much more than the course text, and they also began to argue opposite sides of issues and begin to question or uphold their values and beliefs. This class section and I signed up for the college's day of service together as a group, and the students gathered all the materials together, bringing everything to me for a signature (instead of putting the onus on me to get the materials together). The students recognized their ownership of the class and decided to include me in the activity they all valued.

The students I taught in graduate school and the Passport class had shown me the power epideictic rhetoric can have in the classroom. I had theorized even in graduate school that epideictic rhetoric could be a major point of emphasis for a critical pedagogy. These experiences and others like them encouraged me to teach epideictic more overtly in the classroom because of the reactions it elicited from students.

[22] These "news clip" discussions will be discussed in greater detail later in the chapter.

Teaching Epideictic

Teaching students the rhetorical situation and epideictic rhetoric together in a composition classroom with a critical pedagogy focus is a good way to preclude one of the biggest (and most prevalent) arguments against a critical pedagogy from those who do not teach a critical pedagogy: that it has no substance, only ideology. Gorzelsky argues that, in a critical pedagogy, Compositionists must forgo their "emphasis on revolution, which is inevitably linear and focused on a single goal, in favor of the kind of change that ripples throughout the system while keeping [students] in the balance needed to support life and growth" (82). I agree with Gorzelsky that the type of change we, as critical educators, should aspire toward (especially at privileged institutions of higher learning) is the type that ripples through the system. I disagree with her that this type of change is not revolutionary. Indeed, for many students, getting them to examine their own values and beliefs and focus on their personal epideictic can be revolutionary—for students privileged or otherwise. These small ripples that epideictic can help students produce are revolutionary, especially for a first-year college student. And these types of changes and critical assessments of belief systems and structures of values can provide a writing classroom with content.

Epideictic rhetoric is, according to Aristotle, Kenneth Burke, and Theodore Burgess (to name a small few), the type of rhetoric most associated with writing. Thus focusing on epideictic rhetoric can be about writing and, if we believe Sheard's (and my) theory of epideictic, revolutionary critical thought. Epideictic being a written genre dates back to Aristotle, who states: "The epideictic style is most like writing: for its objective is

to be read" (3.12.5). I showed the connection between teaching and epideictic in the previous chapter, but even Aristotle would agree that the writing students perform in a composition classroom falls under the umbrella of epideictic. In addition, Burke, in *A Rhetoric of Motives,* writes about the connections between rhetoric and form, stating that epideictic is "the kind that lends itself best to the written word. For its effects can be savored, hence may profit by a closer, more sustained scrutiny" (72). And Burgess has written an entire book about the qualities epideictic shares with "literature," stating at one point that "in the department of epideictic oratory especially there was a strong tendency toward the preservation of poetic qualities or their renewed imitation" through writing (167). Taken together with Sheard's admonition that epideictic should be connected to a critical pedagogy, these statements indicate to me that a critical composition course can easily use epideictic as not only its *raison d'être*, but also its content matter—writing. In his recent chapter, found in the *Norton Anthology of Composition*, Russell Durst reiterates that many critical pedagogy studies "represent students as comfortable, advantaged, and in need of a serious wake-up call to recognize their own privilege and to work to make society more fair and equitable" (1663.) He asserts that politically motivated classrooms put the politics above the subject matter of the composition course. However, I argue that these two ideas—social justice and teaching writing—need not be mutually exclusive ideas. With epideictic as the focus of a critical classroom, the focus can be belief-laden rhetoric *and* writing. Epideictic can ask students to examine their personal beliefs and, hopefully, in the process help them see how their beliefs are/aren't in conjunction with efforts of social justice efforts in and outside of the U.S.

One of the ways I encourage epideictic analysis and focus on being critical of personal values in the first-year writing classroom is, as I stated earlier, by starting each class with a small news clipping and asking the students to discuss it. I try to focus at the beginning of the semester on news stories that students will connect with—either because the stories pertain to students' lives (because of the age of people involved in the story or because the story deals with something students brought to discussion earlier in the semester) or because the stories pertain specifically to what we're doing in class—and then around the middle of the semester turn it over to the students and ask them to bring in things to discuss. So, during my time in graduate school, when teaching a unit about different genres of writing, I chose a news story about teaching the Holocaust in middle schools by using the graphic novel *Maus.* This gave us an interesting way to think about genres and their appropriateness in different situations, but it also gave students a chance to reflect on their values and beliefs as they pertain to specific things happening in our culture.

I remember one morning while teaching a first-year writing course at TCU sharing a news clip from CNN about Congress's plan to increase taxes for families making over $250,000 per year and lowering taxes for families that make less. At the time I was teaching at a very affluent school, and all the (vocal) students in class were opposed to the bill because their families all fell into the category that would get taxed more. Many students made the argument that their families worked hard to make their money, so why should they get taxed more? They never once considered that many people who make less money also work hard for their money. Hard work was equated with financial success. Their conceptual data included a thought that people who made

less than $250,000 per year did not work hard and should not be rewarded for their perceived laziness. Thus two sides existed in their minds: those who work hard, make $250,000, and should not be punished for their hard work versus those who do not work hard, make less than $250,000, and should not be rewarded for their laziness. These two elements in their conceptual data were incompatible: a person could not be both hardworking and make less than $250,000 per year.

I tried to lead discussion down a path that helped them understand this was not necessarily the case, but by using abstract examples they stuck hard to their notions. I attempted to lead the discussion toward social justice issues, issues of United States poverty, budget deficit, and anything I could to get them to look past their immediate situation (which, technically, wasn't even their situation but their parents') until one astute student piped up from the left hemisphere of our discussion circle: "Elder, you're never going to make $250,000 a year, are you?" She was a student who had just been arguing against the tax bill. I would not even begin to count myself in the group of "oppressed," but by looking at my situation in connection with theirs, students were given a tangible way to think about their politics and even change their views. Luckily, the conversation did not end with a focus on my financial situation. Students started to discuss how the new tax bill would affect people who didn't have a post-graduate education or a college education or the capacity to hope for an education. The discussion actually took a turn toward themes of social justice and how laws and politics can hinder people in overt ways. The discussion we had that day happened to be about socio-economics, but the type of thinking the students and I engaged in during this class period

helped show us all that putting groups of people into boxes can be harmful to discourse about values.

Because of discussions like these I have had in the classroom, I came to understand why Freire eventually moved away from his dichotomy of "oppressed" and "oppressor" and why critics of his early work saw those labels as problematic. Rereading *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* before writing this chapter, I found a third category of person—apart from oppressed and oppressor—emerge: the revolutionary. For Freire, the revolutionary was a person who worked alongside the oppressed to help them overcome injustices. A revolutionary "cannot remain passive in the face of the oppressor's violence" (*Oppressed* 37), is

> not afraid to confront, to listen, to see the world unveiled. This person is not afraid to meet the people or to enter into dialogue with them. This person does not consider himself or herself the proprietor of history or of all people, or the liberator of the oppressed; but he or she does commit himself or herself, within history, to fight at their side. (39)

A revolutionary is someone who "must perceive the [overcoming of injustices], because of its creative and liberating nature, as an act of love" (*Oppressed* 89). I argue that a critical pedagogy can be more about teaching students to think like revolutionaries than it is about "liberating" our "oppressed" students—both terms that have been theorized out of critical pedagogy, by Freire and many others, because they assume too much about power and relationships.

Amy Lee is concerned with breaking down the binary in traditional critical pedagogy in *Composing Critical Pedagogies. S*he wants to understand how a critical

pedagogy operates at a school, much like the school where I teach, that consists mainly of privileged white students. She writes, "Rather than simply assign teachers and students to fixed and oppositional subject-positions, we must be attentive to moments in which we simultaneously challenge and uphold dehumanizing, destructive constructions of one another. . . . We are not, that is, easily categorized into classifications as oppressed/oppressor, object/agent of inequality, liberated/constrained" (116). The students in my class mentioned above could be neatly placed into an "oppressor" category because of their views about less privileged citizens in the U.S. However, because they started to recognize a set of beliefs different from what they spent their entire lives believing, they left the class with the potential to identify with oppressed groups—traditionally defined by race, class, sex, etc. or those groups who have not yet been culturally recognized, most of whom suffer needlessly. Not every student or teacher who doesn't easily fit into a category of oppressed or oppressor can/should be considered a revolutionary, but I think it is a good category to think about in critical pedagogy so that we have a way to understand what such a pedagogy can do in a situation like Lee's or mine: it gives us something other than "liberating" or "empowering" to strive for, especially in terms of students who are enrolled in private, liberal arts colleges and universities—a place that, no matter how inclusive, is still a symbol of privilege in the US.

Freire's revolutionary is the type of person who would fit well into most theories of critical pedagogy. By using epideictic as the course material for my composition courses, I was able to be a Freirean revolutionary while at the same time helping students foster revolutionary thinking in their own lives without pushing them toward a specific

ideology. A Freirean revolutionary, armed with nothing more than skill in epideictic rhetoric, could make a change in the world. I hope students become Freirean revolutionaries, but, as I will discuss in the next chapter, I also love students enough to respect their decision to reject a revolutionary life.

Freire, being influenced by Marxist ideas like the Frankfurt school of thought, has also influenced critical approaches in religious education.

Einike Pilli, "Longing for a Better World"

After all, indifference or solidarity as resignation or active citizenship is taught to us at an early age from schools and pulpits.

Marcella Althaus-Reid, "Education for Liberation"

Chapter 3. Freire's Hope for Love in Pedagogy and Revolution

Freire's importance in Christian circles is hard to ignore. Freire was appointed as educational advisor to the World Council of Churches in 1969, and, according to an homage of Freire written by the directors of the Paulo Freire Institute in Sao Paolo, Freire won the Association of Christian Educators of the United States' "Outstanding Christian Educators" award with his wife Elza in 1985. He finished his teaching career at a Catholic university in Brazil. He was eulogized in *The National Catholic Reporter* (twice), *Christian Century,* and *Catholic Worker*.[23] Scholarly articles are written about him and his theories in religious journals as broadly ranging as *Journal of European Baptist Studies, Journal of the American Academy of Religion, Studies in World Christianity,* and *Religious Education.* In other words, even though Freire did not always articulate his Christianity or his relationship to the Catholic Church, his experiences and choices reflect how much he valued the religious aspect of his life and how much religious institutions valued him. Freire's religion was such a big part of his life and his theories that we, in composition, need to at least acknowledge its existence if we are to discuss Freire's theories at all. In addition, Freire's Christianity is so

[23] "Influential Educator Dies." *National Catholic Reporter* 33.29. "Paulo Freire Shared Dreams of the Poor." *National Catholic Reporter* 33.32; "Literacy Pioneer Paolo Freire Dies." *Christian Century* 114.18 (1997): 254-270; "Paulo Freire, 1921-1997." *Catholic Worker* 64:6.

well documented, both in his own writing and in other disciplines (examined in the next two sections), that it should be hard for composition to ignore.

In order to reinforce the personal connection to this topic I started in the previous chapter, I start this chapter by explaining how I came to see a spiritual side to my teaching—even if the spiritual is not necessarily religious. Around the same time I started this dissertation, I was working on a chapter with Joonna Trapp about mentoring and teacher/student relationships for *Undergraduate Research in English Studies*. One of the arguments we made in the chapter is that

> the spiritual exists in such a relationship, regardless of whether the parties involved are religious people. Of course, articles, books, professional organizations and conference presentations arguing for increased scholarly attention to the spiritual side of education can be controversial. We appreciate the definition by Jon C. Dalton and Pamela Crosby (2006) . . . that equates "the inward search or quest for personal meaning, purpose, and authenticity" (1) with spirituality. (9)

Thus finding a way "in" to the spiritual side of my teaching was already heavy on my mind at this point—as was the quest to find a way for this spirituality to have bearing on both religious and non-religious people. I use this example because it shows my interest in the aspects of teaching that are usually religiously connoted but also have pertinence to "secular" teaching. The definition Dalton and Crosby present frames the discussions in a special issue of the *Journal of College and Character* (7.8). Another definition of spirituality in this special edition comes from George Allen: "[spirituality] is not about goals, beliefs, or judgments, but about a style of living that reflects the conditions accepted by one's

community for how goals should be sought, beliefs asserted, and judgments rendered—the conditions for determining goodness, truth, and beauty" (5). Taken together, Dalton and Crosby's definition and Allen's definition help show that the spiritual found in a teaching situation does not necessarily have anything to do with religion. Rather, spirituality comes into play when there is an inward search for meaning and significance in the present situation, teaching, in our case.

In this chapter I will use writing about Freire's Christianity in religion and education journals to show how important Freire's religion was to him and the ways it influenced his educational theories and the ways he understood and interacted with the world. I will also show the ways his theories of critical education have been used to forward scholarship in education, religious education, and religious studies. I will then outline arguments Freire made in his less known (within the field of composition) works to show the ways he articulated his Christian and belief-laden vision for pedagogy. In the next chapter, I show how Freire's Christianity and belief-laden rhetoric have been all but ignored in composition scholarship, and in Chapter 5 I explore how to possibly translate Freire's belief-laden rhetorical/pedagogical theories into something useful for a "secular" writing classroom. In this chapter, I show how ignoring Freire's religion performs a disservice to Composition. His religious rhetoric is fertile ground for pedagogical scholarship if properly and respectfully translated into (secular) epideictic.[24]

Freire's Relationship to Religious Scholarship

Though he did not often write explicitly about his Christianity or affiliation with the Catholic Church, Freire's educational theories have often been adopted for theological

[24] Looking into this will be the purpose of Chapters 4 and 5.

purposes by religious scholars. Lois Malcolm, writing about Freire's importance for teaching theology in a democracy, argues that Freire's theories "make an important contribution not only to the discipline of theology, but to an understanding of theology's role within the broader public life of American democracy" (78). Malcolm argues that Freire's pedagogy is especially important for Christians because of recent movements away from types of theology that "tended to separate the content of faith from the actual context of either ecclesial life or political struggle, reducing it to more abstract existential states or themes" (78). Malcolm goes on to say that Freire's educational theories have so shaped the Christian landscape that trying to teach theology in a seminary is almost impossible without some allusion to or use of Freirean pedagogy because Freire's theories are "engaged in testing and measuring the beliefs and practices of individuals and communities against some normative vision of those beliefs and practices" (79). In other words, Malcolm thinks that the "normative" theology of a given branch of Christianity is easier to understand when also presenting a critical theology, represented well by Freire and liberation theology.[25] Similarly, Marcella Althaus-Reid writes that a Freirean version of "Christian education for liberation" is something that should aim "not just to teach dogmas, but to allow dogmas to be rediscovered in order to change our lives in a communitarian, meaningful way" (3). Like Malcolm, Althaus-Reid focuses on the ability of a Freirean pedagogy to challenge traditional/formal doctrines of the church in order to formulate doctrines that are borne out of human need.

[25] Connections between Freire's theory of critical pedagogy and liberation theology have been well chronicled. Freire's theories and the theories of Gustavo Gutierrez, the "father" of liberation theology, are often linked. See Gutierrez's *A Theology of Liberation* for his original theories. See Dennis McCann's book *Christian Realism and Liberation Theology: Practical Theologies in Creative Conflict*, specifically chapter 7, pages 165-175, for the connections between Freire's critical pedagogy and Gutierrez's liberation theology. In addition, Bauer and Herndl's article which I cite for other reasons later in the chapter also has a good discussion of Freire's connections to liberation theology.

While Malcolm's version of a Freirean pedagogy is reduced to a single site (Christian education), it shows one way Freire is viewed from a religious standpoint: his pedagogy is important because it was designed to break down normative beliefs, including, Malcolm argues, educative, cultural, *and religious* norms. John L. Elias continues this strain of Christian thought in his article, "Models of Theological Education for the Laity." In the article, Elias writes that "there is a practical liberation theology found in Freire's writings and practice" (190). Practical theology, according to Elias, is "the relationship between faith and action in the world," and that is why Freire's educational theories should be viewed as an outpouring of Freire's faith (190). According to Elias, Freire's writings were often not overtly religious because they were Freire's way to live out his faith without having to preach it. According to Elias, Freire's educational theories were the manifestation of Freire's Christian faith being lived out in the world.

Elias takes his argument about Freire's Christianity even further in his book-length study of Freire and Ivan Illich titled *Conscientization and Deschooling: Freire's and Illich's Proposals for Reshaping Society*. Elias asserts early in his book that Freire's Christianity "provided [Freire] with principles about the nature of man, society, politics, and education, to which [he] can appeal in making proposals for reshaping society" (9). Even though Elias points to Marxist and revolutionary sources that Freire uses in his early writing (23), Elias shows that Freire's main sources for *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* came from the Catholic tradition in which Freire was raised. According to Elias, Freire relied heavily on the philosophies of Thomas Aquinas and more contemporary religious thinkers such as Martin Buber, Gabriel Marcel, and Karl Jaspers (24). However, Elias's most important evidence regarding the religious nature of Freire's theories comes from a 1970 speech Freire gave in

Rome: "I am not yet completely a Catholic; I just keep on trying to be one more completely, day after day. . . . I just feel passionately, corporately, physically, with all my being, that my stance is a Christian one because it is 100 percent revolutionary and human and liberating, and hence committed and utopian" (68).[26] This is a rare moment of candor from Freire with respect to his faith, but it shows with great clarity the points Malcolm, Althaus-Reid, and Elias make about the religious sources of Freire's critical theories. Statements like the previous one from Freire help Elias argue that Freire's Christian position is one that "influenced greatly all aspects of [Freire's] thought," including Freire's views "of the world, religion, human beings and human destiny that promote an education" based on revolution and overcoming oppression (102). And even though the revolutionary aspects of Freire's theories could be singularly attributed to Marx, Elias shows quite clearly that these thoughts stem, at least in part, from Freire's Christian humanistic point of view.

As I showed in the first chapter, Freire makes this connection himself. I quoted this in the first chapter, but it bears recognition again: in *Letters to Christina* he wrote that his "relationship with Marx never suggested that [he] abandon Christ," and further, it was Freire's "love for Christ and hope that He is the light, that led [him] to Marx" (87). In fact, Freire's Marxist leanings, according to Vernon Blackwood, should be referred to as "Marxian" instead of "Marxist" because Freire's ideology is much more in line with Christianity than Marxism. Blackwood writes that Freire's reliance on "Marxian analysis is in large measure simply descriptive, especially in his use of the idea of class struggle as a rubric for interpreting social structures" (212). In other words, Blackwood sees Freire's "Marxian" language as a means to an end, and, unlike most scholars in Composition, he

[26] Elias quoted this from J.W. Donohue's 1972 article "Paulo Freire—Philosopher of Adult Education" found in *America* 127.7.

labels the ideology that drives Freire's pedagogical theories "Christian personalism." According to Blackwood, Christian personalism "emphasiz[es] a critical optimism and hope that leads to engagement for transformation of society instead of apathetic fatalism that lets things simply run on" (210). The implication in this last quote is that Marxist ideologies enact the apathetic fatalism not found in the more "active" ideology of Christian personalism. Blackwood defines Christian personalism as a way "to inject a faith, a vision, a positive concept of the person and society as created in the image of God" which "is balanced adequately by the incessant struggle to exist as an historical being" (209). Thus, like Elias, Blackwood argues that all of Freire's writings should be viewed as a lived-out version of Freire's Christianity.[27]

Freire's Christianity from Multiple Disciplines

Freire's religion is a major theme in the field of religious studies. However, other disciplines rely heavily on Freire's Christianity to understand his pedagogical theories, as well. In fact, composition's silence about Freire's religion and theology (examined in the next chapter) is a bit surprising because his faith has been recognized often in different branches of education. In this section I show how education and religious education view Freire's Christianity, and in the next section I outline the Christian aspects of Freire's writings.

Secular and Christian educators have argued that Freire's educational theories are overtly Christian and can and should be used in Christian educative settings. One such religious education scholar, Wayne Cavalier, recently wrote an insightful article that very aptly lives up to its name as Cavalier endeavors to capture "The Three Voices of Freire: An

[27] The odd part of this assertion is that Freire rarely invoked religion to make his arguments in his early works. However, statements like these from Elias and Blackwood are given credence in Freire's later writings, like *Letters to Cristina* and *Pedagogy of Love*, which I will discuss in greater detail later in the chapter.

Exploration of His Thought over Time." To address the criticism aimed toward Freire over his entire writing career (that his dichotomy of oppressed/oppressor is too simplistic and that his theories involve "manipulation of the oppressed by elitist outsiders"), Cavalier focuses solely on how Freire's theories are still applicable to "contemporary adult religious education" (256, 254). He asserts that Freire's theories became progressively more religious to the point that they are only applicable to Christian educative settings. Cavalier sees Freire's impetus for writing a critical pedagogy in the same way I do: Freire's Christianity was the reason he wrote theories for education. Cavalier insists that as Freire's writings became more explicitly Christian as time moved on, they were less and less applicable to a secular educative setting. Dissertations have been written in droves over the past ten years about the subject Cavalier explores, as well.[28] But no scholar wants to tackle how Freire's religious rhetoric can be applicable to a secular classroom. I want to reiterate this point's importance: Freire freely admits that religion played a huge part in formulating his educative theories.

Paradoxically, Freire's writing has also been used as a secular segue into religious discussions. Glen Bucher introduces U.S. theologians to liberation theology via Freire's educational theories in the *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* (1976). Even though he considers Freire "primarily an educational philosopher," Bucher writes that Freire "provided conceptual foundations for many who write about theological liberation today" (521). Another education scholar, Einike Pilli, understands Freire similarly in "Longing for a

[28] Searching the dissertation abstract database for "Freire" and "Education" yields an unwieldy 506 abstracts; "Freire" and "Pedagogy" 196 abstracts; "Freire" and "Christian Education" 31 abstracts, while "Freire" and "Epideictic" turns up nothing. None of the 506, 196, or 31 in those searches connects Freire's Christianity and "secular" education, whereas 32 of 33 dissertations in the "Freire" and "Christian" search are about Christian education. Christopher Ferry's dissertation, titled "Liberation Theology, Freire's Liberatory Pedagogy, and Composition Studies" is the only one published which attempts to connect Freire's Christianity and Composition, but its focus is much more heavily slanted towards liberation theology and how Freire has been misappropriated by other writers rather than the rhetorical, epideictic focus I hope to achieve.

Better World: Towards a Critical Approach in Adult Christian Education." Although she sees Marx as one of Freire's main influences, she concedes that his writing contains "suitable and important principles for a critical approach to Christian religious education" (21, 26). She finds Freire's work adaptable to a Christian setting even though she sees Freire as primarily a secular influence.

So, education and religious education have used Freire's theories to explain Christian rhetoric's applicability to a secular audience and secular, social justice-driven educational theories' applicability to a Christian audience. In the next chapter I will even show how Freire's beliefs have been used to teach writing to Christian students in a largely secular setting. However, my project is the first, to my knowledge, that attempts to connect Freire's Christianity and his belief-laden rhetoric to any writing instruction situation with an emphasis on critical pedagogy. In the next section I show what it is in Freire's writings that allows scholars from other fields to find Freire's Christianity just as, if not more, compelling than his Marxism.

Freire's Christianity, as Told by Freire

The more evidence I found that Freire's Christianity had a huge impact on his theories and his life, the more I was surprised. And when I (finally) realized, during a routine database search for "Freire" and "Christianity," that Freire's theories were closely aligned with liberation theology, I was even more convinced that it was his Christianity, not his Marxist political views, that grounded his theories—and had the potential to ground mine. Because I was already searching for the spiritual in my teaching, as I showed at the beginning of this chapter, finding overtly Christian writings by Freire helped stimulate my argument for my dissertation.

In two little known texts, one written to a group of seminary students in 1977, the other published in 1984, Freire writes directly to Christians. He implores them to follow Jesus, a person who interrogated and resisted dogma and power structures, as an example for how to interact with the world. These two texts are the most overtly religious texts written by Freire and were published in the same issue of *Religious Education* in 1984. In the first, longer article titled "Education, Liberation, and the Church," Freire argues for the Christian Church's role in education and liberation. From the outset of the article, Freire asserts that churches should be evaluated as agents in history, stating "we can no longer speak of the neutrality of the churches or the neutrality of education" (524). Freire addresses Christians, like himself, who renounce their "ideology of domination" and "experience their own Easter, that they die as elitists so as to be resurrected on the side of the oppressed, that they be born again with the beings who were not allowed to be" (525). More than just imploring Christians, Freire wants all people, not just Christians, to renounce the dominant ideologies that inform their lives in order to be "reborn" as individuals who help others overcome injustices in their lives.

If Freire's description of the making of a revolutionary person as an "Easter" is not enough to prove the Christian influence of Freire's theories, the note published after the article, titled "Know, Practice, and Teach the Gospels," written to four seminary students in Geneva, should fill in the gaps. This note was written in 1977, the same time Freire was solidifying his educational theories with *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* and *Education for Critical Consciousness*. His theological and pedagogical beliefs were converging in very concrete ways: emulating his perfect embodiment of a teacher (Jesus), Freire was writing a pedagogical theory that helped him live and practice the revolutionary message he found in

the Gospels and the life of Jesus. The first sentence of the note makes Freire's position very clear: "I am accustomed to say, independently of the Christian position that I have always attempted to hold, that Christ will always be, as he is for me, an example of the Teacher" (547). In the note Freire says Jesus is his example of a perfect teacher because "Christ's teaching was not, and could never be, the teaching of one, who like so many of us, sees himself to be the possessor of truth which he seeks to impose or simply transfer" (547). In addition, Freire states that the message of the Gospels—one of revolutionary love—and the manner in which Jesus taught the message—by living the meaning of the message while preaching the message—are inextricable. Thus teaching the Gospels is, to Freire, equivalent with teaching revolution and love for the oppressed: "I understand the Gospels, well or badly, to the degree that, well or badly, I live them. I experience them and in them experience myself through my own *social practice, in history, with other human beings*" (548; emphasis added). Freire's attempt to live his method of teaching is equivalent with Freire's attempt to teach (and live) the Gospels, and the "social practice" he writes of includes his calls for revolution.

One aspect of living the Gospels, according to Freire, is understanding the text while also understanding the context in which the text was written and is operating in current culture. As Freire explains, Christ's teaching never described ideas without also explaining how they continue to function: "the word that he spoke could never be a word that, once spoken, it could be said that it *was*, rather it was a word that would always be *coming to be*" (547). Freire interprets the social project Jesus started in the Gospels to be an ever evolving, constantly changing vision for a person living in the world, attempting to ease the suffering of the oppressed. Freire ends the note with two sentences that sum up his view of

Christianity's relevance to his teaching: "Authoritarianism always results in the reduction of the Word to a mere sound. It is no longer a way of learning but becomes a negation of the pedagogical witness of Christ" (348). Freire sees his entire pedagogical project as a way to reduce authoritarianism (oppression) because oppression flies in the face of Jesus's example as a teacher.

While this attitude toward life and living out his educational praxis could stem solely from a humanistic point of view, the parallels between his thinking about praxis in *Pedagogy of Freedom*, "Education, Liberation, and the Church," (1984) and "Know, Practice, and Preach the Gospels" (1977) are astounding. His practiced Christian life is evident in many of Freire's later writings, which were much more autobiographical in nature than his early works. In "Know, Practice and Preach the Gospels," Freire writes that he lives out his understanding of the Gospels in order to emulate the perfect teacher he saw in Jesus. In *Pedagogy of Freedom*, Freire writes, "The teacher who really teaches . . . will deny as false the hypocritical formula 'do as I say, not as I do'" and continues, "words not given body (made flesh) have little or no value" (39). When put together with what he said in "Know, Practice, and Preach the Gospels," these comments from *Pedagogy of Freedom* seem to stem directly from his understanding of Jesus (Word made flesh, according to his Christian belief) as the ultimate example of teacher. Freire continues, "There is no right thinking that can be separated from a kind of coherent, lived practice that is capable of reformulating contents and paradigms" (40). Freire refuses to separate thought, word, and deed, which could easily be taken as a desire to live out his political ideology rather than a statement of religious faith.[29] But when we read these comments from his later writings after seeing how directly

[29] This explanation of praxis found in *Pedagogy of Freedom* is the explanation in his writings that has the most direct connection to his Christian beliefs. However, praxis is a common theme in all of Freire's writings.

influenced he was by living out his faith, the religious connotation to the quote above from *Pedagogy of Freedom* can be, at the very least, inferred. When writing about liberation theology in "Education, Liberation, and the Church," Freire states:

> I cannot permit myself to be a mere spectator. On the contrary, I must demand my place in the process of change. So the dramatic tension between the past and the future, death and life, being and non-being, is no longer a kind of dead end for me; I can see it for what it really is: a permanent challenge to which I must respond. And my response can be none other than my historical praxis—in other words, revolutionary praxis. (533)

This passage looks as if it could have come straight out of any other of Freire's works, and the meaning of this statement is the core of Freire's educational theories—but Freire intends it to be read as a call he responds to based on his religion. In fact, I would argue that the "reactionary 'blah'" he writes about at the beginning of *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*—"ontological vocation, love, dialogue, hope, humility, and sympathy" (37)—form the basis for his belief-laden rhetoric and his pedagogical theories, especially hope and love.

Freire's Christian Hope for Cultural Change

Freire argues that critical hope is necessary for an educator. In *Pedagogy of Hope*, Freire writes that "we need critical hope the way a fish needs unpolluted water" (2). The use of "unpolluted" makes Freire's comparison very pertinent to the classroom: unpolluted water is the correct kind of water for a fish to thrive in just as critical hope is the correct type of hope needed to overcome fatalistic thinking about the world (and about God) for education. In order to help people overcome injustices in their lives, "the progressive educator, through

serious, correct political analysis"[30] must "unveil opportunities for hope, no matter what the obstacles may be" (3). However, Freire admits that unveiling opportunities for hope is difficult. In *Pedagogy of the Heart,* he writes that "the issue around liberation and its practice is not fighting against the religiousness of the popular classes, which is a right of theirs and an expression of their culture, but rather overcoming, *with it*, the vision of God at the service of the strong for a God on the side of those with whom justice, truth, and love should be" (103). While I do not necessarily share Freire's vision that "liberation" is the ultimate goal of a pedagogy, I agree with his sentiment that hope is involved in overcoming a vision of God that encourages fatalism, but putting that hope into practice, not relying on hope alone, especially in educative settings, is a necessity.

Freire suggests that as educators, our hope for a better world must be a lived condition because our students will be discouraged if our hope wanes. In the ever-present personal academic style of Freire, he shares one of his most practical reasons for living out hope in praxis. After a friend questioned Freire's unyielding hope for a better world (despite the countless reasons to despair), Freire "realized that, in my hope, he was seeking support for his" (*Heart* 105–106). However, Freire argues that, in education, we also need to sense hope in our students because the "struggle for hope is permanent, and it becomes intensified when one realizes it is not a solitary struggle" (106). For Freire, people struggle together towards a future based on hope, and that is how I have been able to envision myself as a critical educator—through hope.

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[30] Freire goes on to say what a "correct" political analysis looks like. He writes, "It would not be equitable that injustices, abuses, extortion, illicit profits, influence peddling, the use of offices and positions for the satisfaction of personal interests . . . should go uncorrected" (3). Thus, Freire argues that critical educators must constantly analyze the political climate for these things and teach in a way that unveils hopeful opportunities for the injustices to be overcome.

That Freire wrote often of hope is not a groundbreaking revelation. The hopeful nature of his theories is well documented by critical pedagogues, McLaren in particular. However, I argue just as it was Christ that led Freire to Marx, it was Christianity that led Freire to hope. As I showed earlier in this section, and will explore in more in more detail in Chapter 4, Freire believed it was his duty as a Christian to help reconcile all people—both oppressed and oppressors. And as he states in *Pedagogy of Freedom*, hope is a necessary component of this: "Hope is not just a question of grit or courage. It's an ontological dimension of our human condition. . . . Ideally, educators, students, and prospective teachers should . . . incorporate into their way of life the ideal of [a] permanent hope-giving search" for knowledge (58). Hope is not just part of a political ideology for Freire; it is ontological, a means of understanding his existence and his relationship to other humans.

The idea that Freire's theories stem from his religious beliefs is further evident in his discussion of hope. He wrote an entire book on *The Pedagogy of Hope* and included long sections about hope in *Pedagogy of the Heart* (pp. 42-51), *Pedagogy of Freedom* (Ch. 3), and *Letters to Cristina*.[31] It is also a recurring theme in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, which, at one point, stresses the importance of hope by stating that dialogue (a core tenet of his pedagogy) cannot "exist without hope" (91) and at another point states "as long as I fight [for the oppressed], I am moved by hope; and if I fight with hope, then I can wait" for a favorable outcome (92). Hope permeates his entire body of work, and in every section about hope mentioned above, Freire directly discusses his God and religion. In *Pedagogy of the Heart*, Freire wonders at the ways in which people falsely invoke God to hope for a better situation without performing any action of their own. In *Pedagogy of Freedom*, Freire similarly writes

[31] See especially letter eight, about "an abandoned hope"; letter 11, about his time with the Social Service of Industry [SESI] education committee; and letter 18 about current political and social struggles Freire sees as persistent in the world and his hope for their resolution.

that hope in God cannot be used as a substitute for action. And even though these claims might sound anti-religious, Freire always writes about the fact that a hope in a higher power can, and according to him should, be the impetus for action. As I will show in Chapter 4, conscientization and "the banking model" are the two things most commonly referenced in Freire's work by compositionists; hope *should be* referenced just as often because of its importance to Freire's theories of education and to Freire personally.

Just because a religiously based hope defines Freire's existence, however, does not mean hope is his only focus when teaching. For Freire, hope needs to be tempered in order for it to have any meaning. Inactive hope, the hope where a person "cross[es] one's arms and wait[s]," is not the type of revolutionary hope Freire espouses (*Oppressed* 92). When describing a hopeful struggle in *Letters to Cristina*, Freire writes that the struggle is

> for skillful people, the curious, those who are always willing to learn, willing to extract knowledge from their antagonizers. It is for the politically competent, those who do not isolate themselves, but on the contrary work to increase the number of fellow fighters. It is for those who know that politics without compromise is impossible and for those who know that compromise does not necessarily mean conniving. (180)

The type of person Freire describes as hopeful is full of action and knowledge. Hope is both a catalyst for action—without hope for change, action toward social justice would be unnecessary—and product of action—because their actions make perceivable changes leading to more hopeful action.

Freire's Belief-laden Love for Students

One of the actions Freire hopes will stem from and because of hope is love. Freire's love for his students, the oppressed, and all humanity is readily evident in his writing—both through tone and word. In *Pedagogy of the Heart*, Freire places himself on the side of the God of justice, truth, and love, expressing his love for humanity by educating for humanization. Elias argues that all Freire's theories are based on this view of God because "Freire sees the relationship between [people] and a transcendent Being as the norm for judging the relationship that should exist between [humans]" (*Deschooling* 30). Thus, according to Elias's view of Freire's religious beliefs, if God's relationship with humans is one characterized by justice, truth, and love, so should be the relationships between all people.

Love and hope are intertwined in Christianity and in Freire's writings. Thus a Christian Freire's critical pedagogy requires that we love our students—a requirement that can be as uncomfortable to discuss in an academic setting as is religion itself. But part of a critical pedagogy is unearthing uncomfortable or taboo topics (as Giroux attempts with his "hidden curriculum") and discussing—or living—them. Freire argues, "In short, it is impossible to teach without a forged, invented, and well-thought-out capacity to love," and "we must dare, in the full sense of the word, to speak of love without the fear of being called ridiculous, mawkish, or unscientific, if not antiscientific" (*Cultural* 5). Freire loved his students, which is something I attempt to do, as well. However, the idea of loving students is hugely problematic for many compositionists, and I explore these problems in greater detail in the next section.

His love for people did not start out as a political love; it was a love that stemmed from his Christian distaste for injustice, particularly the Judeo-Christian notion of *agape*. Love is a central (Christian) tenet of Freire's educational theories. In *Teachers as Cultural Workers*, Freire insists that teaching is a choice, and because teachers choose to teach, "it is not possible to be a teacher without loving one's students, even realizing that love alone is not enough" (15). Freire's insistence that loving one's students is at the heart of a critical pedagogy has received attention elsewhere, but very few scholars in composition have connected this love to his Christianity, specifically the type of love indicated by the Greek word *agape*. In an article about the decline of *agape* in the current Protestant Church, J. Jeffrey Tillman writes how *agape* is different from altruism. He defines altruism as "a normative concern for the well-being of others without a corresponding concern for one's own well-being," which would be a traditional definition for *agape*, as well (548). Freire's Christian, critical pedagogy, which is born out of a love for his students, fits better with Tillman's definition of *agape* than altruism: "a mutuality that balances regard for self and others. Under *agape*, a Christian works unilaterally to establish relationships earmarked by intimate understanding and unity" (548). Dale Jacobs, one of the only scholars in Rhetoric/Composition to connect Freire's pedagogy with *agape*, observes that "love as the binding force between human beings is imbricated in the act of communion and the process of hope; without love, there can exist no 'level of the us,' no relationship of communion, and, consequently, no real hope" (975–76). Anders Nyurgen, in his book titled *Agape and Eros*, defines *agape* as love that is "indifferent to value. That is to say, it is neither kindled by the attractiveness of the object nor quenched by the unattractiveness of its object" (ix). It is a love that is neither deserved nor underserved, and the person showing *agape* expects nothing

in return for the selfless acts spurred by the love. As a teacher, I expect students to balance the work required in the class and their own values. I expect them to at least examine their beliefs as epideictic, and in return, I understand when their conclusions about their values differ from my own. Political and social ideologies, including—or especially—Marxism, might account for Freire's views of justice and truth, but love, as long as it means something deeper than a caring relationship, does not stem from his political ideology. It stems from his moral code and his religious ideology. Freire's writings, however much they have been reduced to the altruistic types of critical pedagogy outlined by Tillman, were meant to help people live out *agape* by loving people and taking their causes as his own.

Agape: Not the Same as Nurture

One of the criticisms that I expect to be leveled against my project is that the call to unconditionally love our students sounds like I am asking for compositionists to once again take a "nurturing" stance toward the students. Janet Emig, in 1969, compared the role of a writing or rhetoric teacher to the role of a mother, stating that the mother metaphor of writing instruction "gives teachers of the native language a legitimate function" (197). She goes on to say that the mothering approach to teaching is one of the best ways writing and rhetoric can move forward as a discipline. In a similar vein, in the 1970s, Belenky et al. used the metaphor of "teacher as midwife" to explain what, in their minds, was a radical approach to teaching writing. They define a midwife teacher as someone who "help[s] students deliver their words to the world, and they use their own knowledge to put the students into conversation with other voices—past and present—in the culture" (219). The connections between their midwife teacher and a Freirean educator working against a banking model of education were clear. Helping students actualize their own ideas rather than spitting back

banked knowledge to the teacher was a method for them to subvert patriarchal pedagogies. And this strain of thought continued well into the 80s. Nel Noddings's *Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics & Moral Education* sought to bring "feminine" traits into the classroom in a way that aligned with "moral" education. She wanted teachers to be less like the "detached" parent—the father—and be more like a caring parent—the mother (3). Hers is an education built on empathy and nurture and the "primary aim of all educative effort is the nurturing of the ethical ideal" (173).

However, the call for teachers to nurture students, to help students give birth to their ideas, was heavily criticized in composition in the 1980s and 1990s. According to authors such as Susan Jarratt, Elizabeth Flynn, Susan Miller, and Miriam Wallace, the nurturing narratives should end because they help reinforce stereotypes that composition is a "feminine" discipline that holds secondary status in English departments. Susan Miller questioned the feminine stature composition maintained in English departments, arguing that the "sad woman in the basement" metaphor for composition teachers is neither fair nor based on true paradigms of composition theory. Wallace articulates this point most clearly when she writes that the nurturing "love-relationship" style of teaching is "more a resistant response to the [antagonistic classroom] than a truly feminist alternative which reexamines how knowledge is made and how learning happens" (185). She goes further to write that students "frequently demand" a "model of nurturing, caring for, or liking each other" from female or feminist teachers (185). Articles in *Feminist Teacher* often argue against the nurturing model of a feminist (often female) teacher. In their article "Surveying Feminist Pedagogy: A Measurement, an Evaluation, and an Affirmation," Kathryn Duncan and Michael Stasio write that many students expect women teachers to be "more nurturing,

warm, and approachable" (233). In her article "Beyond Love and Battle: Practicing Feminist Pedagogy," Miriam Wallace suggests that this type of nurturing perception of female or feminist teachers must be directly confronted, saying we need to avoid the type of classroom often assumed to exist under a woman's tutelage: "the model of nurturing, caring for, or liking each other which students frequently demand of feminist and female teachers" (185).[32]

I acknowledge that these labels have hurt composition, female teachers, and feminist teachers. These critiques of nurturing education are valid, and I can see how they have hurt female or feminist teachers in the past based on the types of assumptions that come with expectations in a nurturing classroom. It is also possible that I see this issue differently because of my position as a white male. The biggest problem with the nurturing composition teacher is that it essentialized the role woman educators were supposed to fill. Female academics were and still are working against the stereotype that women are, by nature, nurturing, and thus must act that way in the workplace—in this instance the composition classroom. Thus the concern that loving students is on par with nurturing is more than fair; it is necessary. However, I think a nurturing position might be resistant or critical coming from me because it is a stance that is not expected or stereotypical from a white male. This is not to say that I can write off the critique because of my situation; instead I am merely being forthright with my positioning and the ways my situation might contribute to me thinking about loving students. Even with all these concerns in mind, I still do not see the type of love I call for here as synonymous with nurturing, which I will explain in greater detail below.

The definition of *agape* that I believe Freire worked from, and that I attempt to teach with now, seems to have a different connotation. None of the definitions of *agape* presented

[32] She also resists what she calls the "battlefield" model which is the pedagogical opposite of a nurturing approach.

in this chapter imply any sort of nurturing or midwifery. In fact, a selfless love can just as easily seem combative as it can seem nurturing. *Agape* straddles the border between the "battlefield" and "love-relationship" models of teaching Wallace describes as diametrically opposed in her article. Selflessly loving a student can as easily mean letting a student fail as it does helping a student succeed. One example of this from my own teaching involves a student who had received high marks in class for his writing and speaking abilities in a class that was institutionally focused on argumentative research writing and public speaking. The student faltered on an assignment that asked the class to examine a law in their home state and argue whether or not that law benefitted the majority of citizens. The class helped design the assignment, set up parameters for the assignment, and they created the rubric by which it would be graded based on what they believed the institution wanted them to get out of an argumentative research paper. The student did not come close to following the guidelines set up by his peers and me. He took on the state's marijuana laws, but instead of looking at whether his beliefs coincided with the majority of the citizenship, he pushed his own pro-marijuana agenda. I have no problem with a student using personal experience as evidence in an argument, but his lack of ability to connect personal experience to a larger movement did not fit within the parameters of the assignment that the students had helped create. We talked about this in an individual conference, but he resisted any kind of change in the paper.

In a combative classroom, I would have pushed him so hard that he was forced to change the paper. In a nurturing classroom, I would have tried incredibly hard to coax a different argument out of him. But in a loving classroom, the student made a choice to turn in a paper that did not meet the standards set by his peers. He earned a "D" on the paper. However, after revisiting comments he received from other students in peer review and the

comments I gave him about his writing (not the argument he chose) in our conference, he understood the ways in which his argument did not fit into what the class agreed to try and get out of the assignment. The paper was paired with a speech, and he greatly altered his approach to the argument in the speech. He was able to come to a meaningful conclusion about his writing process and the ways he was constructing arguments and using sources on his own, without an overbearing teacher personality. Just as Wallace attempted to find a pedagogy that incorporated the best parts of both "battlefield" and "loving-relationship" models of education, I believe critical epideictic pedagogy does the same by incorporating both epideictic and a secular, Freirean *agape*.

A Loving Revolutionary

As I argued in the previous chapter, someone who enacts Freire's vision for humanity and works to overcome social injustices is termed a revolutionary. *Agape* is the love of a Freirean revolutionary because the revolutionary person hopes others will benefit from his or her actions and the people the revolutionary helps will give the revolutionary knowledge about their situation in order to continue helping other people—thus ensuring mutuality in the love experienced in the revolutionary's situation. Adding Freire's "revolutionary" as a category by which we define our students and ourselves is important because it is just as important to help other people overcome oppression as it is to teach students how to overcome oppression in their own lives, and a focus on *agape* is needed to teach students how to become a Freirean revolutionary. Freire's revolutionary—the person working alongside any person searching for social justice—is rarely discussed in critical pedagogy publications. Instead authors latch onto his dichotomy of oppressed/oppressor and the revolutionary attitude assumed by the teacher and the oppressed. Freire's revolutionary

attitude is discussed in detail in Antonia Darder's book, *Reinventing Paulo Freire*. However, I argue that her book only "reinvents" Freire in a Marxist way—completely ignoring his religion. In the introduction Darder discusses Freire's motivation for his pedagogy and writes that his "revolutionary vision…is uncompromisingly grounded in an *armed love*" (31). She goes on to say that "[h]e firmly held, as did Che Guevara before him, that it is this revolutionary love which fuels our political commitment to liberation and ultimately must embody our work in schools and society" (31). However, Darder's insistence that Freire's love is "armed" and purely political, like Guevara's, goes directly against Freire's own words. Beginning with *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* and in every subsequent publication, Freire wants a revolution based on "critical thinking and the quest for mutual humanization," which in no way implies the violence of Guevara (75). To further distance Freire's thought from any notion of a violent rebellion, he states in *Letters to Christina* that the revolution hopefully created through critical pedagogy "is a process of struggle strongly rooted in ethics. It is a process of struggle against *all* violence" (187; emphasis mine). I assume, as I read this passage that Freire is mainly talking about physical violence. However, the word "all" does imply other kinds of violence, as well—psychological, spiritual, emotional, cultural, etc. I cannot speak for Freire, but I take his admonition that "it is a struggle against all violence" to mean that he *hopes* for a revolution free of violence, and he *hopes* that the revolution can be peaceful in every sense, relying on dialogue to create an all-inclusive system. Freire's revolution is one based on critical thinking, and his critical pedagogy is based on the concept of dialogue—dialogue within one's self, dialogue in the classroom, dialogue of revolution, and, seemingly, dialogue with people from all aspects of society—thus the revolution would be one where any form of violence would be unacceptable because

of the ways all types of violence work to dehumanize the "other." Dialogue "is fundamental for building epistemological curiosity. Dialogue also implies a critical posture; it implies a preoccupation with the raison d'être of the objects that mediates the subjects of the dialogue" (*Heart* 100). Darder's connection of Guevara's love for revolution and Freire's love for the revolutionary is further complicated by Freire's statements in this chapter and the first chapter that show his politicism grew out of his Christianity.

Freire's revolutionary was not a militant, like Guevara. A Freirean revolutionary—what I hope to be and what I hope some the students I teach will become—is someone whose "revolutionary love . . . fuels [their] political commitment to liberation and ultimately must embody [their] work in schools and society" (*Reinventing* 30). A "revolutionary" is not necessarily someone who will work heart and soul to topple regimes; a revolutionary can topple small injustices to help overcome any level of oppression in his/her life or in the lives of others. The main point Freire makes about the revolutionary agent is that s/he acts out of selfless love for humanity, which might mean forgoing any kind of political unrest in order to take care of the most pressing needs of individuals first. The difference between the embodiment of love Darder talks about and the embodiment of love from Christian Freire is that Freire's love stems from a desire for every person to be human, which, in turn, might create a new political system. His love stemmed from a notion of love like the *agape* described by Tillman. Thus, the political changes aren't necessarily the endgame for Freire; he wants injustice to be stamped out because every person has the God-given right to live without oppression—Freire wants changes in humanity that will lead to changes in politics; he is a Christian first and a Marxist second. In the character of the revolutionary, love and hope are intertwined in Christianity and in Freire's writings. As Revolutionaries, as critical

educators, selflessly loving our students is the first step toward inspiring our students to hope for changes in society.

The difference between a Christian and Marxist Freire are subtle but very important when discussing how to enact critical pedagogy. Focusing on Freire's Christian rhetoric and its secular embodiment gives us the ability to focus much more specifically on individual students, helping them overcome whatever it is that disallows their humanization or whatever it is in their worldview that disallows the humanization of another. Thus the Christian Freire allows for students to be revolutionary, too—which is something I hope I foster in my classroom. We can translate Freire's Christian concern for fellow humans into a secular love appropriate for a composition classroom that isn't necessarily focused on religion—but is still focused on the types of values and beliefs that may stem from students' and teachers' religious or nonreligious but not necessarily political beliefs.[33] Freire's concern for the humanity of all people—and his insistence that the revolutionary love of humanity and hate injustice—are the cornerstones of his belief-laden epideictic rhetoric.

In the next chapter I show how composition has mostly ignored Freire's belief-laden rhetoric in favor of his Marxism. In the fifth chapter I outline the ways in which teaching epideictic and epideictically gives students and teachers an opportunity to examine their lives and see if they want to work against oppression in their own lives and in the lives of others by better understanding their values and their value systems. Teachers and students may come to conclusions about their lives that critical pedagogues would disagree with, but without giving students a choice, the pedagogy would become the type of "shoving ideology

[33] Political and religious beliefs need not be separated (as we've seen in recent U.S. elections); indeed, the two often intertwine. I focus here on Freire's, teachers', and students' religious beliefs because, as I will show in the next chapter, composition as a discipline has chosen to largely ignore religious beliefs in regards to critical pedagogy and especially Freire.

down students throat" pedagogy on which the naysayers of critical pedagogy focus. However, this type of open-ended, loving pedagogy allows teachers to be Freirean revolutionaries, and it gives critical pedagogues an opportunity to teach students how to be revolutionaries without forcing that identity upon them.

> *Some will regard my position vis-à-vis the problem of human liberation as purely idealistic, or may even consider discussion of ontological vocation, love, dialogue, hope, humility, and sympathy as so much reactionary "blah."*
>
> *I am certain that Christians and Marxists, though they may disagree with me in part or in whole, will continue reading to the end.*
>
> Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* "Preface"

Chapter 4. Believing In and "Believing" In Freire: Finding a Christian Freire for Composition

In a 1992 *CCCC* presentation, Ann Berthoff reminded the audience that Freire was a Marxist and a Catholic, and, as she reported in a *CCC* article two years later, "the panelists' response showed that they hadn't a clue what I was talking about" ("Introductory" 237). Beth Daniell seemed to be the only audience member with whom Berthoff's remarks resonated. In the same 1994 issue of *CCC*, Daniell writes that after Berthoff commented on Freire's Christianity, she thought, "that's it…. Economic and political analyses had never seemed adequately to account for the success of Freire's method" (239). She also remembers the "room at CCCC filled with embarrassed silence" because compositionists "did not possess a language that would permit us to discuss in an academic setting the spiritual aspects of Freire's work" (239). Since these remarks were published, Freire's religion and its applicability to the composition classroom have only been discussed (in detail) by three people: Daniell in 1999 (*CCC*), Dale Jacobs in 2005 (*JAC*), and Shari Stenberg in 2006 (*College English*).

In this chapter I will take Berthoff's observation about compositionists "cluelessness" about Freire's religion one step further and show how authors in three prominent composition pedagogy journals (*CCC, CE*, and *JAC*) used Freire's theories. This comparison

will help me show why and how Freire's Christianity has been written out of his theory in Composition. In the next chapter I argue that epideictic rhetoric can help translate religious rhetoric into secular rhetoric. This chapter is a necessary precursor. Translating religious rhetoric into secular rhetoric will have little meaning unless I can first prove that Freire's religious rhetoric has been largely absent in composition scholarship. In this chapter, I argue that composition has refrained from delving into Freire's religious rhetoric with much fervor because, as a field, composition finds the Marxist narrative more compelling for a variety of reasons—of which the most compelling argument is higher education's, and the field's, unwillingness to explore religion.

In fact, many composition scholars fail to delve very deeply into the theoretical nature of his writing at all, let alone the religious. U.S. compositionists latched on to Freire's writing as soon as *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* made its way to the United States in the early 1970s, but Freire's theories have not been as prominent in the discipline as one might think. Looking at three of the premiere journals in Composition (*College English*, *College Composition and Communication*, and *Journal of Advanced Composition*), I will chronicle how Freire's theories have been incorporated into U.S. composition studies in an attempt to show just how much of Freire we, as a discipline, have been missing. I argue that, as Elbowian believers, we need to reread—or read for the first time—Freire's subsequent books because they add to the poststructural movement in critical pedagogies, even though Freire, or more accurately, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, is often upheld as *the* example of what a poststructural critical pedagogy should avoid.

Chronicling Freire: Three Decades in Composition

In 2001 Kate Ronald and Hephzibah Roskelly wrote an article titled "Untested Feasibility: Imagining the Pragmatic Possibility of Paulo Freire," which reminded compositionists that Freire continually called for U.S. teachers and theorists to reinvent, rather than merely import, his theories. In the first chapter I showed a few ways that Freire has been reinvented for, and sometimes written out of, U.S. classrooms by Shor, Gore, and Lee. In the previous chapter I showed how Freire has been reinvented to be much more useful for American Christian education. However, Ronald's and Roskelly's eulogistic reminder that Freire's warning about reinventing his theories "should receive special attention now, when we no longer have his continual admonition as a guide" is a bit misleading (612). Ronald's and Roskelly's caution against appropriating rather than reinventing his theories is only pertinent if composition scholars had, in fact, been reinventing Freire. They write that composition theorists should continually "[put] Freire into a new context where he becomes more than an 'import' to North American classrooms" and "[examine] Freire through different lenses . . . to 'recreate and rewrite' his ideas in [our] own contexts" (613). However, 27 years' worth of *College Composition and Communication*, *College English*, and *JAC* articles (three main sites for composition's disciplinary thought) written about or using Freire show that, by and large, compositionists have failed to update, let alone reinvent, Freire.

Many Composition scholars have attempted to reinvent *critical pedagogy*, but Freire, his Christianity, and his later writings have been absent. Shor explicitly reinvents Freire for a U.S. classroom.[34] Amy Lee reinvents the notion that critical pedagogies are solely for

[34] I will explore Shor's reinvention of Freire's theories in much greater detail in Chapter 5 when I compare it with the way in which I reinvent Freire based on an epideictic translation of his Christian rhetoric.

"oppressed" students, but she relies heavily on critical pedagogy scholarship of the past twenty years while rarely mentioning Freire and never mentioning any of his contemporary works. Darder's book has *Reinventing Freire* in the title—which is about as blatant an attempt to do just that as any scholarly publication about Freire—but she is not focusing on composition nor does she incorporate many of Freire's works or his Christianity. Shor's work does a great job of attempting to be Freirean in a U.S. setting, but even he relies almost exclusively on *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* in his book projects.[35] And David Seitz, who wrote *Who Can Afford Critical Consciousness?*, thinks about critical pedagogy in a completely new, ethnographic way (which I explore in Chapter 6), but he completely ignores Freire in the process. Shor's work has a great deal of influence and Lee's book has cachet in Composition. These books are good examples of updated critical pedagogy scholarship, but they often ignore Freire (or use *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* sparingly). Articles in three of the most prominent and influential journals in Composition more often engage Freire's work (*Pedagogy of the Oppressed* most frequently) in their writing about critical pedagogy than do the monographs. I have decided to look at these three journals because they have actually dealt with Freire's theories, though in a manner I will argue is inconsistent and unhelpful, in ways books in the profession have not. These journals also represent changes in the scholarship of the field more accurately because of their timelier and consistently changing nature.

Since 1982, *CCC*, *College English*, and *JAC* have published over 150 articles that use Freire as supporting evidence. The majority of these articles simply mention Freire. They use Freire's theories of "conscientization" or "the banking model" from *Pedagogy of the*

[35] To be fair, though, Shor's later writings in *Radical Teacher* are heavily reliant on Freire's entire corpus. However, *Radical Teacher* is, like most publications that continue Freirean scholarship, outside of rhetoric and composition.

Oppressed to help readers, who had also most likely read *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, follow the theoretical conversation of critical pedagogy. I will concentrate only on the articles with an actual Freirean *focus*—the articles *about* Freire or critical pedagogy, rather than those that use his key terms in passing. The scholarship about critical pedagogies from the past three decades—1980s, 1990s, and 2000s— follows the general trends of composition scholarship Richard Fulkerson outlines in his *2005 CCC* article, "Composition at the Turn of the Twenty-First Century." In the article, Fulkerson writes that the 1980s were a time in composition studies when a coherent consensus appeared in pedagogical theory: process pedagogy was lauded. The 1990s showed a slant toward postmodernism and a critical view of "process" pedagogy.[36] The 1990s were "post-process," a term Fulkerson calls an "oxymoron" without meaning, the use of which "may just [have been] the latest way of showing yourself to be *au courant*" (668-69). He then writes, "At the turn of the twenty-first century, there is a genuine controversy—*within* the field, not in the eyes of the public, the administration or the legislature—over the goal of teaching writing in college" (679). Thus, the 2000s represented a broadening and reinvention of composition.

The ways scholars have applied Freire's pedagogical theories parallel the general trends in composition. Freire's English translation of *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* hit the U.S. in the 1970s, so the 1980s was a time for simply understanding and, often, accepting his pedagogical theories with little criticism. Conversely, Freirean scholarship during the 1990s was heavily critical as feminist and poststructuralist critical pedagogues and Giroux and his followers alike pondered the viability of critical pedagogy in U.S. colleges and universities. After Freire's death in 1997, more articles appeared that went beyond critique to reinvent

[36] I put process in scare quotes here because Fulkerson rightly argues that process was so widely accepted and boiled down to a simplistic pedagogy in the 1980s that the process pedagogy from the 1970s had been almost forgotten.

Freire and expand the ways in which his theories were used and applied to U.S. classrooms. However, one thing remained constant throughout the decades: scholars typically relied only on *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* and, hence, had a narrow view of Freire and his work.

Freire in the 1980s

Compositionists in the 1980s produced articles that mostly accepted Freire's theories. His theories were new, and U.S. scholars were slowly translating and appropriating them. The language surrounding Freire's theories is mostly positive; authors in the 1980s often found ways to translate his writing for the author's specific situation. Carolyn Blair, for instance, observes that "English departments…can be seen in Freire's terms as having internalized the oppressor" (386), and Chris Hall explains that he uses a section from *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* "to demonstrate how a topic can be clarified using comments and examples" (353). But the most common usage of Freire is the way Jasper P. Neel, in "Readers, Writers, and Texts: Writing in the Abyss," used Freire: as an unproblematized, shining example of how to teach literacy (90–91).

In 1984, Berthoff made the first entry with a Freirean focus in any of the three journals I examined. In "Is Teaching Still Possible?" Berthoff asks just that and answers that it is only possible by turning to "alternative views of language and learning [that] can help us invent a pedagogy that views reading and writing as interpretation and the making of meaning" (742). She looks to Kenneth Burke, I.A. Richards, Jean Piaget, and Lev Vygotsky, among others, to reinvent a Freirean "pedagogy of knowing" that aims at "giving our students back their language so that they can reclaim it as an instrument for controlling their

becoming" (755) and, in turn, gain more agency as citizens. Freire is largely unproblematized.[37]

Kyle Fiore's and Nan Elsasser's "Strangers No More: A Liberatory Literacy Curriculum" exemplifies the way Freire's theories were used in the 1980s. It was the first article in these three journals that specifically applied Freire's theories to U.S. classrooms—unlike Berthoff, who primarily discusses Freire theoretically. Fiore and Elsasser use *Pedagogy in Process*—not just *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*—to justify using Freire's pedagogical theories, which, they argue, do not take into account "the time constraint of semesters or the academic pressure of preparing students to meet English department standards" (117).[38] Their study attempts to determine if "advanced literacy teachers can modify Freire's pedagogy to fit the needs of their students and the demands of the college" (128). They combine Vygotsky's inner speech theory and Freire's pedagogical theory outlined in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* to design a curriculum that Elsasser tests during a semester at The College of the Bahamas. Their account fails to critique or question Freire's theories in any way. However, critique, or at least a reinvention, should have been necessary because 1) the Bahamas in the 1980s are very different from Brazil in the 60s; 2) they only show the successes of their new "curriculum"; and 3) they do not acknowledge the difference between a Bahamian pedagogical context and their own situations at the University of Albuquerque and the University of New Mexico. But they do show that by relocating Freire

[37] To Berthoff's credit, she goes on to publish a handful more articles about Freire, all of which challenge the notions presented in her earlier works.

[38] The notion that Freire's pedagogy is not applicable to U.S. institutions *only* because of departmental standards and semester time constraints is a telling sign of how early this article appears. Their critique has nothing to do with Freire's theories, per se, instead focusing on implementation. Later critiques fixate more on the flaws in his theories, e.g., the lack of any discussion about gender, whether teachers have a right to "empower" anyone, etc.

and reinventing his theories via Vygotsky, they can create an entirely new pedagogy based on their students' needs.

Freire in the 1990s

In his 1988 *JAC* article, "Some Observations on Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*," Chuck Knoblauch voices concern about the unproblematized Freire found in Composition journals in the 1980s. He worries that the iconic status of *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* blinded many rhetoric and composition specialists to the problems involved in using a "revolutionary political and educational [agenda that is] starkly opposed to prevailing American values and beliefs, even as they are institutionalized in the National Council of Teachers of English" (51). He feared that many compositionists read Freire as a "chic introduction to social constructionism or dialogics," whereas Freire imagined his theories as "a conceptual starting-point for educational activism and social change" (52). Knoblauch argues that "by his own line of reasoning Freire's educational praxis, emerging from the concrete socioeconomic circumstances of Brazil and Chile, provides no blueprint for transformative action amidst vastly different cultural conditions" (53). (Some later theorists have found ways to theorize around the difference between Freire's Brazilian setting and U.S. educative settings.) However, Knoblauch correctly forecasts how Freire will be used by many Compositionists writing in *CCC* and *College English* for the next decade: translating a rural Brazilian educational theory to U.S. collegiate and secondary classrooms is a common basis for critique in the 1990s. He hoped that *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* wouldn't lose "its capacity to name anything important or even very interesting" because of how nonchalantly compositionists use Freire's theories in their writing (54). He ends the piece by writing, "[*Pedagogy of the Oppressed*] intends to be taken seriously. The question is whether it can

escape the homogenizing process that we turn loose upon different and differentiating texts when we have powerful enough incentive to prefer the world as it is" (54). Knoblauch would prove prophetic.

Like Jennifer Gore and other feminist critical pedagogues, composition scholars in the 1990s followed Knoblauch's lead and found much more to critique in Freire. But they also found that critiquing Freire was a necessity when writing almost any critical pedagogical theory because he represented a monolith in the theory, someone whose theories represented an almost hegemonic view of who could exercise authority in the classroom—despite his liberatory message. Freire was always accepted for helping "understand" certain elements supposedly found in any pedagogy such as the presence or lack of the "banking model" or "problem-posing education." Freire was often used to frame pedagogical discussions as Mary Minock does in her article on interdisciplinary writing: "Following the methodology of Paulo Freire, I started my initial planning with a good deal of observation and listening" (504). Similarly, Marjorie Roemer, in "Which Reader's Response?" invokes Freire a bit more thoroughly, stating, "A reading of Paulo Freire suggests at least one model of what a different sort of practice might be" (918). But instead of delving deeply into Freire, she conjures the all-too-available Freirean concepts of *conscientizacao* and the "banking" model of education (918-919). Both are important Freirean concepts, but she spends little time on them and quickly moves past Freire. David Russell, in "Vygotsky, Dewey, and Externalism: Beyond the Student/Discipline Dichotomy," again uses Freire mainly as a conduit (and one-liner) to "caricature" U.S. education dominated by the "'banking' theory of education" (175). As Gary Olson notes in his 1997 review "Critical Pedagogy and Composition Scholarship," "Many of the notions of such theorists as Freire . . . that seemed so shockingly revolutionary

in the 1970s now regularly inform composition scholarship" (297). However, what Olson says "regularly informs" composition scholarship is only addressed in a cursory fashion and used as a springboard for critique.

Giroux criticizes this use of Freire in his 1992 *JAC* article "Paulo Freire and the Politics of Postcolonialism." He writes that these Freirean invocations "often contradict the use of Freire's work as a revolutionary pedagogical practice" and "speak less to a political project constructed amidst concrete struggles than they do to the insipid and dreary demands for pedagogical recipes dressed up in the jargon of abstracted pedagogical labels" (193). Richard Miller cynically agrees in his article "The Arts of Complicity: Pragmatism and the Culture of Schooling" when he writes, "[c]iting Freire is, thus, a way of establishing one's credentials in the field, of showing one's true colors" (10). Using Freire in this way, in other words, does not take seriously critical pedagogy's (or Freire's) charge to continually critique critical pedagogy's practices and assumptions in order to write new, politically motivated pedagogies.

In addition to critiques stemming from Freire's different cultural context, feminist critiques surfaced en masse in the 1990s. Gesa Kirsch sums up the way many feminist critical pedagogues in the 1990s "use" Freire: "there is an almost ritualistic denunciation of prominent male scholars in critical pedagogy—Henry Giroux, Peter McLaren, Paulo Freire, and Ira Shor—who have inspired and simultaneously angered" many feminist pedagogues (724). Laurie Finke acknowledges this "inspired/angered" dichotomy when she admits most feminist pedagogy is, at the very least, inspired by Freire's insistence that "oppression, once it is rationally exposed through a critical analysis that springs from dialogue between student and teacher, can be effectively resisted" (9). However, Freirean formulations of critical

pedagogy cannot account for the subconscious because Freire insists that humans are "conscious beings," and Finke argues that a feminist pedagogy must "demand some interrogation of" the connection between the unconscious mind and politics (9). Finke's simultaneously acknowledgement of and distancing herself from Freire's theories is representative of many feminist pedagogues of the 1990s. Although Finke is more overt about her use (and critique) of Freire than other feminist pedagogues, such as Gore, who are more reluctant to show such a connection, she still only uses critique as a starting point and then makes no further mention of Freire for the rest of the article—she uses Freire as a springboard and then makes the leap completely away from Freire, effectively writing him out of the conversation.

While the critiques of Freire are, as noted earlier, a necessary step in critical pedagogies, they often go so far as to ignore Freire completely (as is the case with Spellmeyer, Finke, and Gore). Freire constantly wrote about the need to critique the goals of critical pedagogy in order to fulfill critical pedagogy's goals of humanization and critical consciousness. However, Freire continued to write after *Pedagogy of the Oppressed,* and he contributed to the critiques in which subsequent critical pedagogues engaged—he also understood the problems of his early writings, and he also started to become a more postmodern thinker. However, rather than incorporating Freire's critiques of his own *Pedagogy of the Oppressed,* many writers continued to merely critique his work with the goal of writing his original, somewhat flawed arguments. In the same 1992 *JAC* article mentioned earlier, Giroux critiques the way Freire's theories were watered down or written out by critical pedagogues. Giroux argues that some leftist criticism of Freire's work as "overly totalizing" is, itself, discounting Freire's accomplishments (197). He asserts that we

should "engage [Freire's] strengths and limitations as part of a wider dialogue in the service of emancipatory politics" because it was the binaries in his writing that "raged bravely against dominant languages and configurations of power" (197). In other words, the oppressed/oppressor binary about which Freire originally wrote should not be criticized too harshly because Freire's language, as reductive as it may seem now, spurred social movements and progress toward critical pedagogies. Giroux wanted to continue using Freire because Freire's work is so powerful and it crosses borders: it "cannot be separated from either its history or its author, but it also cannot be reduced to the specificity of intentions or historical location" (202). Giroux understood the critiques of Freire; he just thought the critiques were taken too far because Freire constantly updated and shifted his theories while many of his early ideas "raged bravely." Giroux, in other words, wanted to show that Freire's theories about radical action could cross cultural, political, and pedagogical borders, but Giroux did not want to critique Freire the human being and theorist out of existence. Giroux understood Freire's importance to the field, but Freire focused on the people and Giroux theorizes critical pedagogy in terms of systems. Giroux understands Freire's importance, but he also understands that his goals for critical pedagogy are wholly different than Freire's.

Freire at the Turn of the Century and Beyond

The end of the 1990s and beginning of the 2000s mark the most dramatic shift in compositionists' thinking about Freire—writers started to embrace the paradoxes in his writings as constructive points for clarification rather than as contradictions that make his work untenable. As Ronald and Roskelly predicted, the articles about critical pedagogy published after Freire's death in 1997 appear the most likely to actually reinvent (rather than

translate or critique) some form of Freirean thought while still keeping Freire relevant to the discourse. Robert Yagelski's "The Ambivalence of Reflection: Critical Pedagogies, Reflection, and the Writing Teacher" (1999) looks at how Freire attempted to combat criticism of his work over the years. Even though Yagelski offers new (and a great deal of) criticism of Freire's work, he attempts to reframe the way past Compositionists critiqued Freire's theories. For instance, one common concern shared by theorists who praise and theorists who critique Freire is that "although the teacher must never usurp the student's autonomy . . . the teacher eventually must make some decisions about how and what to teach; indeed, the teacher makes a decision to teach, in many cases without being asked to do so by the student" (45). However, Yagelski argues that this very prominent critique of Freire "is a catch-22 I'm not sure we need try to wriggle out of" because embracing these "contraries" can help Compositionists "avoid the dogmatism that characterizes too much of our scholarly and public discussions about teaching writing" (46). Yagelski wants scholars to revel in the sometimes paradoxical concepts found in Freire's writing to discover how Freire's work could be useful in poststructural reconfigurations of critical pedagogies.

Richard Miller's article is a perfect example of a late 1990s publication because it straddles the border between critique and reinvention of Freirean pedagogy. It critiques how Freire's theories have been used, posits a new critique, and then attempts a Freirean reinvention. He asks at the beginning of his article:

> why is it that this image of the teacher as liberator of the oppressed, upon which Freire's pedagogy relies so heavily, has had such a perduring appeal? Or, to put this another way, working in the spirit of Freire's own pedagogical practice, what can we learn by problematizing our community's most

> cherished self-representation? If we aren't in the business of liberation, uplift, and movement, however slow, towards a better social world, what is it we're doing in our classrooms? (12)

Miller answers these questions by critiquing Freire: "if one begins, as Freire does, with a Marxist theory of the social sphere . . . then 'collaborating' with the oppressed seems positively counterproductive" (12) because the language Freire uses when writing about the oppressed still assumes that a critical pedagogue has the requisite information for the oppressed person to be liberated. Thus, according to Miller, Freire leaves the oppressed out of the Marxist revolutionary project until *after* they have been educated in a Freirean system. He then critiques how compositionists have used Freire's theories: "It would be foolish to equate the challenges Freire has confronted in the field … with the challenges we face teaching composition in the academy" (18). In other words, Miller uses the oft-cited argument that Freire's rural Brazilian educational program and a U.S. academy do not have anything in common—a critique that took a firm hold of the field in the early 1990s. Finally Miller argues that we should reimagine Freirean theory to design pedagogies that focus on providing "our students with the opportunity to speak, read, and write in a wider range of discursive contexts than is available to them when they labor under the codes of silence and manufactured consent" (27). Miller attempts to redefine Freire through critique instead of critiquing Freire out of existence—a move Giroux tried earlier in the decade.

The 2000s saw a resurgence of articles about critical pedagogy, but many of the most notable or most interesting refigurations included little or no mention of Freire. Leaving Freire out of an article completely is not, by itself, problematic. In fact, many of these pieces are wonderful additions to critical pedagogy scholarship, but they do not have as much

bearing to this particular chapter because they are about reconfiguring the field as a whole instead of reconfiguring the way the field understands Freire's contribution. Amy Goodburn's article, "It's a Question of Faith: Discourses of Critical Pedagogy and Fundamentalism in the Writing Classroom," tackles the issue of how critical pedagogy should handle "implications for how students' religious identities often conflict with the assumptions upon which critical pedagogy is premised" (333). Goodburn argues that Christian Fundamentalism, as a prominent religious identity among students, illustrates religious resistance to critical pedagogy's goals. Goodburn decides to tackle this topic because she believes many previous writings about critical pedagogy and religion have often painted the religious student in an unnecessarily negative light. She writes, "While I doubt whether Luke and I would ever agree on any topic, if I had understood more clearly the nature of our different world views, we might have at least come to a mutual understanding of each other's positions" (352). Goodburn admits what many teachers, especially critical pedagogues, are not willing to own: she misunderstood her Christian Fundamentalist student. One of the benefits of this admission is that it shows readers that she values her student's beliefs even if she disagrees with him, and she makes the argument that critical pedagogues need to more seriously engage their religious students in order to avoid her misunderstanding of the student she used as an example. This is the type of misunderstanding I hope the students and I can avoid by understanding epideictic rhetoric (discussed in the next chapter).

Another good example of critical pedagogy scholarship in the past ten years is Wendy Wolters Hinshaw's "Teaching for Social Justice? Resituating Student Resistance." Unlike Goodburn, Hinshaw mentions *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* at the beginning of her article, but like many scholars in the 1990s and 2000s, she uses a single quotation from Freire's earliest

work as a springboard to something else. Her "something else," though, is again an important contribution to the field and one that echoes the sentiments I find in Freire's later works. She writes, "In order to truly advance social justice, we need to teach our students how to become more compassionate" (224). This is an idea I wholly support, and it is an idea that I also believe can be found within a critical epideictic pedagogy. And it is an idea that, as I show in the next section, is a direct outgrowth of Freire's later writings—which goes completely unacknowledged in Hinshaw's writing. As Hinshaw says, students "may not be able to let down these defenses at all during our class" (351), but an understanding of Freire's theories in his later writings and Burkean identification can help (see Chapter 5). A cursory examination of Freire's later writings would have helped both Goodburn and Hinshaw articulate how to help students and teachers overcome the defensive posture that often comes from difference of beliefs in the classroom—which I will show in the latter part of this chapter.

The last three decades have produced many important additions to critical pedagogy scholarship, but most articles in these three decades only supported, critiqued, or reinvented a *limited* Freire. Articles like Miller's, which focus on Freire's impact on composition; articles like Finke's, which attempt to show Freire's inapplicability to feminist pedagogy; and even an article like Daniell's "Narratives of Literacy," which attempts to paint a completely new picture of Freire and his theories continue to only use one text written by Freire: *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Similarly, Michael Holzman's "A Post-Freirean Model for Adult Literacy Education," only uses *Pedagogy of the Oppressed,* so his new theory is really just a "Post-*Pedagogy of the Oppressed*" theory of adult literacy education. While many of the articles

published about Freire claim to reinvent him, they are only "reinventing" a small (though important) part of Freire's life work.

Of the 133 articles written from 1982-2009 in *College English* and *CCC* (I examine *JAC* individually in the coming paragraphs) that focus on Freire or critical pedagogy very few of them refer to any writing other than *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. In *CCC* from 1982–2009, of the 60 articles published that either cite or write specifically about Freire, only 13 use any Freire publication other than *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Three of those 13 citations were Freire's and Macedo's *Literacy: Reading the Word and the World* and five were Freire's *The Politics of Education: Culture, Power, and Liberation.* In *College English*, 73 articles have been published that cite Freire, but only 11 go beyond *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Only one of the 113 articles cites more than two Freire publications. Ronald's and Roskelly's article, which cites 6 of Freire's works, is the only article to actually focus on his body of work more completely, but none of the articles in these three journals in this time period focus on his work in anything nearing its entirety.

Freire's seminal work is inarguably his most influential publication in any field, but his other works serve to clarify and refine his pedagogical theories over time. His other works even help counter the arguments that his teaching is inapplicable to U.S. classrooms because he taught in the U.S. during his exile from Brazil. Giroux argues, in his 1992 *JAC* article, that Freire's work has to be "read in its totality to gain a sense of how it has engaged the postcolonial age" (202). *JAC* articles that use Freire reference his other works more frequently. This could be due to the fact that Giroux is on the editorial board; he writes numerous articles that incorporate Freire (in some capacity), and thus *JAC* boasts a larger percentage of articles that deal with a critical pedagogy—which, I argue, is partially because

potential authors know that kind of writing is valued in *JAC*. Since the publication of his article "Paulo Freire and the Politics of Postcolonialism" in 1992, Giroux has an article published in 10 of the 17 volumes of *JAC*. The critical pedagogy in *JAC* seems much more theoretically based (as does *JAC* as a whole) because Giroux's presence is such a force. The critical pedagogies found in *CCC* and *College English* are more focused on Freire (and *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*) and the strand of critical pedagogy Gore says emphasizes "greater concern for instructional practices in specific contexts" (*"*What*"* 55).[39]

The biggest problem with Freirean "reinventions" that relying solely on *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* , scholars miss Freire's contributions to poststructuralist pedagogies. Focusing on *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* even though Freire has written 13 subsequent books implicitly (and maybe very explicitly) suggests that those books are not worth mentioning—that they have nothing to add to an understanding of Freire and his work. And the focus on a single work makes many of the critiques seem unfair and unfounded. For example, Stephen Schneider's "Freedom Schooling: Stokely Carmichael and Critical Rhetorical Education" (*CCC* 2006) states that "taking seriously the pedagogical roles of location and language . . . complicates attempts to readily transfer critical pedagogies such as those of Freire . . . to more traditional classrooms (65). Schneider bases this criticism solely on *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* and doesn't take into account that Freire discusses the pedagogical roles of both location and language in subsequent publications. For example, in *Daring to Dream*, Freire speaks to students about being forcibly removed from Brazil and how his pedagogical

[39] Another trend I noticed has less to do with representations of Freire. *CCC* and *College English* seem to be the best sites for recent reinventions of Freire. The articles on Freire published in *CCC* and *College English* are very practically minded, targeting teachers who want more praxis-oriented writings. *JAC*, on the other hand, has published few articles in the last decade that focus specifically on Freire and critical pedagogy. However, *JAC* is much more theory-heavy, and publishes articles based on the critical pedagogies of Henry Giroux (in addition to numerous articles written by Giroux).

location is constantly in flux, but language helped mitigate his change in locale (31-32). In *Pedagogy of the Heart,* Freire vividly illustrates how his experience as a child in Brazil affected his views on exile. Schneider's of critique is as unfounded as it is unhelpful, but a reader would not know how unfounded his argument is without a wider knowledge of Freire other than *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*.

Critique will always have its place in academia, but we are just as likely to learn something from another theorist by "believing." As an alternative to being overly critical in any scholarly situation, Elbow suggests "a dialectical alternation [between believing and doubt] over time . . . apply[ing] the same method or principle of extremity to the believing game . . . in order to find virtue or validity that our habitual [critical] thinking hides from us" (39). I propose that we take Freire's entire body of work into account, and, as Elbow suggests, look at his theories less critically and more holistically and hopefully. In a recent (2005) *College English* article, Peter Elbow continues to clarify his now-famous "believing game," which is, according to Elbow, an alternative to overly critical thinking. He writes, "I don't see how 'criticism' can ever be pried away from its connotations of criticism, argument, doubt, and skepticism," but almost always in academia, the argument ends with extreme criticism and doubt (39). From my examination of articles in *JAC*, *CCC*, and *College English* from the past 27 years, I have shown that writers usually take only one side of Elbow's dialectical alternation—in the 1980s theorists only believed, in the 1990s theorists only critiqued, and it was only recently that critical pedagogues attempted to find interplay between the two in Freire's writings. My entire project started by believing in Freire's writings, and I have done so throughout the previous chapters. I will use the rest of this chapter and the subsequent chapters to more explicitly show what believing in *Pedagogy*

of the Oppressed and Freire's subsequent writings can add to composition's understanding of critical pedagogy. In short, believing in Freire's later works helps composition create a language to use when discussing religion, allows the field to grapple with the religious rhetoric found only implicitly in Freire's earlier writings, and gives the field new ways to think of poststructural critical pedagogies because of Freire's turn toward postmodern theory in his later writings.

One of the most controversial and intriguing ways to reinvent Freire is to start believing in his later writings and pay attention to his religious rhetoric and his move toward postmodernism. Most of the existing reinventions of Freire that focus on his work and life in their entirety still do not put as much importance on Freire's religion as Freire did himself. The epigraph to this chapter shows that Freire was just as concerned for his Christian audience as he was for his Marxist audience. He did not differentiate where each group could or should use his pedagogical theories, and he did not separate his Christianity from his Marxism. Instead, he explicitly connects the two, but few later composition theorists have shown how Freire's Christianity applies to theories of critical pedagogy, and only in a limited capacity. Because religion is often inaccessible as a generative theme in U.S. public classrooms, and we, as educators, often think of Christians as the "religious right" students who inhabit our classrooms, Marxist Freire is heralded while Christian Freire is forgotten. There are many reasons for this omission in Freirean scholarship. The inherent cynicism and critical nature of academic writing about which Elbow writes is partially to blame.

Additionally, Christianity or religions are subjects more difficult to discuss than political ideology.[40]

Starting to Believe in Freire's "Other" Writings

Freire's books published after *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* can be put into two main categories: books that reflect and expand upon *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* and books that reflect on his life and his teaching. The former category includes, most prominently, *The Politics of Education* and *Pedagogy of Hope*. The latter group includes *Teachers as Cultural Workers*, *Pedagogy of the Heart*, and *Letters to Cristina*. *Daring to Dream*, which is a book of essays by Freire published after his death, bridges both categories. *Education for Critical Consciousness* is another interesting example of Freire's work because the two essays found within were written before, and laid the groundwork for, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, but Freire thought he said it better in the later, more famous work. In *Education*, Freire delves into the his well-known themes of humanization, conscientization, and the banking method of teaching, but almost every chapter in the book contains a note, added to a later edition, that says something similar to "For further development of this theme, see *Pedagogy of the Oppressed.*"[41] Freire found value in the progression of his works, as is seen in the progression of his thought from the essays in *Education for Critical Consciousness* to *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, and we would do well, as Elbowian believers, to give him the benefit of the doubt and do the same. Incorporating Freire's other writings would enrich our

[40] This could be a dissertation unto itself. However, as my project deals more with rhetoric and religion than the emotion involved in discussing these topics. For more information on the emotion connected to religions, see *Reason to Believe*: *Romanticism, Pragmatism, and the Teaching of Writing* by Ronald and Roskelly.

[41] These notes are found in chapters 1 (twice), 2, and 4 in *Education as the Practice of Freedom*—all translators notes—and in chapters 1, 2 (twice), and 3 (three times) in *Extension or Communication*—all original notes penned by Freire.

understanding of a complex man and help composition see the ways Freire's writing could be useful for understanding more recent critical pedagogies.

I will show in the following pages what these books contribute to discussions of critical pedagogy. Generally, Freire's later books help explain his theoretical and practical decisions in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* and also help overcome many criticisms of Freire that are based solely on his most famous work. These writings demonstrate that Freire read, understood, and responded to criticisms of his work. For example, *Pedagogy of Hope* has a section in which Freire laments his use of masculine pronouns in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* and the process he went through in order to see how that type of language can be oppressive. He writes, "The rejection of a sexist ideology, which necessarily involves the re-creation of language, is part of the possible dream of a change of the world" (55). This shift in Freire—which he acknowledges was difficult for him because of what he was taught as a child—shows that he was willing to change his theories and adapt. His theories were not static, nor was Freire the human being, so focusing only on *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* does a disservice to Freire and a disservice to compositionists' understanding of critical pedagogy.

The books that reflect on his life and teaching are most helpful for understanding how his circumstances helped shape his pedagogical theories. *Letters to Christina* is informative for composition scholars who want to understand how Freire came to his theories and shows more explicitly than any other text how Freire's Christianity shaped his life and pedagogical theories. Freire uses letters to help his young niece understand him and to explain to her why he made certain decisions regarding politics or education. *Teachers as Cultural Workers* is similar in that it also takes the epistolary form to give specific, concrete advice to teachers on

how best to live out a critical pedagogy.[42] *Pedagogy of the Heart* is the most autobiographical of all Freire's works. In the book, Freire tells many stories of his childhood and shows the early influences that led him to critical pedagogy. He also describes many situations in the U.S. where he encountered religion and education, though not necessarily at the same time, thus making it a great resource for those of us who want to translate his theories to a U.S. setting. The book also contains quite a bit of information supporting the argument that Freire's theories stemmed from his Christianity. Below I offer brief reviews of every book Freire wrote (except *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*) [43] to support my argument that composition's reliance on *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* causes the field to miss out on his religious rhetoric and his turn toward postmodernism and the more nuanced (than merely oppressed/oppressor) approach to critical pedagogies this creates. Even seeing the general themes explored in each book, I believe compositionists would recognize issues in and strategies for teaching that would benefit the students in our writing classrooms.

Education for Critical Consciousness (1974) is technically Freire's first "book," though it is really just two essays—"Education as the Practice of Freedom" and "Extension or Communication"—with commentary, and it was published after *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* in the U.S. In these two essays, Freire lays the groundwork for *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* by defining many of the seminal terms found in the later work. For example, there is an entire section of the first essay dedicated to conscientization, which I think is

[42] While it is pure speculation on my part, I believe the "nonacademic" nature of these epistolary writings might be another reason the field has decided to ignore this group of later works. For example, *Letters to Christina* is the book that most impacted my teaching, but I have rarely seen it cited in a scholarly work about critical pedagogy—in the three journals mentioned earlier or otherwise.

[43] I decided not to overview this book because it has been done so often and so well elsewhere. For what I consider the best recounting of *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, see the Forewords and Introductions to the 30th anniversary edition of the book or Fiore and Elsasser's "'Strangers No More': A Liberatory Literacy Curriculum" (which, strangely, is one of the few early critical pedagogy works in composition to mention a publication by Freire other than *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*).

actually a clearer articulation of what the term means that can be found in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed.* Rather than a purely theoretical discussion of critical consciousness, as found in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Freire grounds it by comparing it to other kinds of consciousness. Freire also uses diagrams and illustrations, found in the appendix, to literally illustrate what steps are needed for critical consciousness to occur in a classroom setting. The second essay is mainly about the difference between knowledge that is "*extended* from those who consider that they know to those who consider that they do not know" (99) and communication, in which "there must be accord between reciprocally communicating Subjects" (125). Freire argues that communication, not extension, is an essential act on the way toward critical consciousness. While this is not a revolutionary addition to critical pedagogy now, at the time it formed the basis for the earliest theories of critical pedagogy from which most other theories stemmed.

Also found in these two essays are many of the themes for which feminist scholars will later criticize *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*: male pronouns; a binary, black-and-white view of oppressor/oppressed; and an implicit assumption that the teacher has knowledge that the oppressed needs are all present in this book. However, even with these flaws and the cursory examination of many themes upon which critical pedagogies are built, there are some nuggets that prove prophetic for his later works, overlooked by compositionists. Two examples: first, in one sentence he seems to negate the claims of critics who say critical pedagogy is just an opportunity for professors to shove ideology on their students. He writes, "The radical [teacher] . . . rejects activism and submits his actions to reflection" (9). In other words, the point of a critical pedagogy is not to produce activism but to produce radicals who think *before* acting. Second, Freire provides early evidence that his is a pedagogy of love

when he writes, "Education is an act of love, and thus an act of courage. It cannot fear the analysis of reality or, under pain of revealing itself as a farce, avoid creative discussion" (33). Love, according to Freire in one of his earliest published essays, is the courageous act that allows educators to teach critically.

The Politics of Education: Culture, Power, and Liberation (1984) is one of many Freirean books that contains a collection of essays previously unpublished for English-speaking audiences. It, like many of Freire's works, continues the discussion started in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* while revising and updating the themes for new audiences and new times. Freire continues to write about critical consciousness, lifting up the agrarian worker through literacy movements, and using education as a tool for humanizing oppressed peoples. However, it also contains some information often overlooked by compositionists: that his pedagogy stems from his Christianity. This theme was discussed in great detail in Chapter 3; however, it bears noting that this book marks the first time Freire makes explicit connections (in a widely circulated English publication) between critical pedagogy and liberation theology, between his desire for critical consciousness and his Christian faith. Even Henry Giroux, in the introduction to the book, cannot help but take note: in the shortest section of the introduction, Giroux writes that Freire's vision for utopia "views the kingdom of God as something to be created on earth but only through a faith in both other human beings and the necessity of permanent struggle" (xvii). This is a very early concession, by someone with connections to both education theory and composition pedagogy, that Freire's Christianity was the primary force behind his views of both humanity and the necessity for overcoming oppression. Two chapters at the end of the book, "Education, Liberation, and the Church" (previously published in *Study Encounter* and *Religious Education*), and "In

Praise of *A Black Theology of Liberation* by James Cone" focus specifically on the role of the church and theology in using education to overcome oppression and help form critical consciousness.

Pedagogy of Hope: Reliving Pedagogy of the Oppressed is exactly what it sounds like from the title. Freire continues to be hopeful for the future and show why by recounting the conditions in which he wrote *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. While it does, quite obviously, revisit themes from *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*—as he did in *The Politics of Education*—the book is more of a narrative of his life and writing process than it is a restatement of his original theories which helps show why he wrote *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* in the way that he did. In addition, Freire's writing is, well, more hopeful. He writes about his experiences as a new teacher in Brazil, and he writes about his experiences traveling the globe discussing critical pedagogy with educators from disparate educative settings. Most importantly, though, *Pedagogy of Hope* is where Freire first responds to critiques of *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, like the ones made by Ellsworth and Gore. He goes out of his way not to blame the translator and owns that he was somewhat naive in using elitist and sexist language—and while their critique is not merely about pronouns, the shift in his use of language is telling of his overall shift in thinking about critical pedagogies. Much of Chapter 2 is dedicated to answering many of the specific criticisms levied against *Pedagogy of the Oppressed.* And he did not just answer them in the book. He tells of the innumerable letters he received from women around the world who critiqued his use of language. He says that he wrote a response to every one of the women, explicitly thanking them "for having made [him] see how much ideology resides in language" (55). While answering critics is not the only purpose of the book, I would argue that this is its major contribution. Freire works hard

throughout the entire volume to elucidate the claims he made in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* by bringing to bear more concrete examples and more classroom examples than what he used in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*.

One of the most interesting sections of *Pedagogy of Hope*, though, is the section of notes published in the back of the second edition, written by Ana Maria in an attempt to further clarify Freire's response to criticisms of *Pedagogy of the Oppressed.* And as someone interested in adding Freire's later writings to the conversations of critical pedagogy in composition studies, I find her notes particularly insightful; they also give credence to the fact that she believes his later writings are just as important as his first. For example, she argues that his concept of "untested feasibility" is actually one of the most important concepts for a critical pedagogy because "the 'untested feasible' is an untested thing, an unprecedented thing. . . . And when it becomes something 'detached and perceived' by those who think utopian wise, then they know that the problem is no longer the sheer seed of a dream. They know the dream can become reality" (182). Ana Maria argues that untested feasibility is an underappreciated idea by Freire because it is the idea that allows critical consciousness and dialogic education to be possible. Untested feasibility is a concept that helps people look past the concrete limits of their situation and interpret means to overcome the situation. In other words, untested feasibility asks people to use critical consciousness to interpret their situation and find solutions to their problems that are not within their normal strictures: the ideas are untested but feasible. Wrapped up in this notion is the idea of hope because a nihilistic, hopeless view of the world or education would not encourage people to test the limits of feasibility. The notes Ana Maria wrote for *Pedagogy of Hope* could be the

subject of an entire chapter in a different project, but for my purposes, I mainly want to point out that Freire's wife saw the need to believe, in an Elbowian sense, in Freire's later writings.

Freire's next book, *Letters to Cristina: Reflections of my Life and Work* (1996), is the most important book for my project and for the composition's understanding of Freire's religious rhetoric and his emerging postructuralist thought. Freire uses personal narrative to articulate the relationship between his pedagogy and his faith. In the eleventh letter to his niece, he writes very specifically about the relationship between his Christianity and his Marxism, which I write about in this chapter and in much more detail in Chapter 3. However, Freire understood that many of his writings were important to many people, so when this book was published in 1996, readers can easily find evidence that he wrote the letters just as much for critical pedagogues as he did for his niece. At the end of letter thirteen, Freire writes, "above all, I hope not to disappoint readers who, by chance, may have enjoyed the first batch of these letters" (143). Freire understands that his personal experiences and his personal ideologies are of import to a large number of teachers around the world, thus his purposeful inclusion of Christian themes in this book seems especially pertinent. He knows the audience for his writing is increasing, and it is at this point in his career that he decides to start making the overt connection between his faith and his Marxism for readers. With the subtitle "*Reflections on My Life and Work*," Freire must have understood that he was nearing the end of his life, and he found space and time in his work to reflect on the entirety of his life and teaching career and include information about how his religious leanings had impacted his pedagogical theories.

Also in *Letters to Cristina*, Freire begins to back away from the binary of oppressed/oppressor found in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Though Freire still uses the terms

in this book, he no longer relies on this binary for most discussions of critical consciousness. In fact, Freire brings back an idea in this book that comes from his work with Donald Macedo: reading the world. This idea implies that anyone who employs conscientization is reading their situation—whether in a classroom, while reading a book, at work, etc.—and interpreting the situation's meaning. And, like he originally argued in *Literacy: Reading the Word and the World*, the ability to attain critical consciousness starts with reading the world and eventually leads to reading itself. Both situations require specific interpretations from the critical reader. By hearkening back to a previous argument and attaching it to situations outside of the oppressed/oppressor binary, Freire enters the conversation of poststructural critical pedagogy.

The rest of Freire's writings continue his foray into poststructuralism while also giving more credence to his religious rhetoric. Though *Letters to Cristina* was written near the end of his life, *Pedagogy of the Heart* (1997) was the last book that Freire wrote during his lifetime that he intended for publication. It is a personal book and focuses on the (then) current situation in Brazil and how that situation relates to Brazil when Freire wrote *Pedagogy of the Oppressed.* While all of Freire's books are personal, this is the one that contains the most personal stories and the most detail about his faith and its role in his life—as a teacher or otherwise. The book follows a mostly chronological organization with Freire starting the book with stories of his young childhood and progresses through his exile from Brazil to end-of-his-life reflections on the main themes that have been attributed to his work throughout his career. He redefines "hope," "dialogism," and "liberating education." But of all the important things Freire wants to include in a book written near the end of his life, he ends with a lengthy discussion of faith. Faith in a God, faith in fellow humans, and faith in

education make positive changes in the world. The only difference Freire sees between faith and hope is that faith requires less action than hope, but it is still, somehow, more difficult. Faith is a necessary part of hope, but it is the inactive, omnipresent optimism that hope is even possible. Freire's faith in humanity and in a God that he describes as "a presence in history that does not preclude me from making history but rather pushes me toward world transformation, which makes it possible to restore the *humanity* of those who exploit and of the weak" allow him to hope that the course of history can be changed through better and more critical education (102-3). Freire goes on to say that his faith in this kind of God and in humanity allows him to hope for "the denunciation, in no uncertain terms, of all abuses, schemes, and omissions" against any oppressed peoples including "blacks, women, homosexuals, the indigenous, the fat, the old" (106). For Freire, this list is not limiting; rather it shows how much his discourse has changed over his educative and writing career. He has gone from someone who was accused of sexist and elitist language to someone who tries to demonstrate through his pedagogical theories how his faith in humanity and God will not allow him, and should not allow *anyone*, to discriminate against any group—in thought, word, or action.

Though the book was published in 2004, the first section of *Pedagogy of Indignation* contains the last letters Freire wrote before he died.[44] In the letters, Freire writes directly about how critical pedagogies should work in disparate disciplines. No teacher, Freire writes, should ever accept "that the teaching of any discipline whatsoever could take place divorced

[44] It includes the final thing he penned—a letter decrying the merciless killing of a homeless native Brazilian by a group of teenagers who were just looking for a fun time. The title of the book was chosen by Maria to represent the tone of his writing near the end of his life: Freire, while not losing hope, was becoming increasingly frustrated that he had not accomplished more and that the world had not changed enough. The letters included in the book capture this feeling quite well, and Maria also included other, previously unpublished writings, that also represented indignation.

from a critical analysis of how society works" (20). He also writes in the second letter about how educators have an obligation to help students gain freedom from oppression because "education, which must never be neutral, can be at the service . . . of world transformation and of critical insertion within the world, or of immobility and the possible permanence of unjust structures" (36). These statements show that Freire was becoming increasingly frustrated with the status quo in the world and was hoping that by being indignant would help make changes. The part of the book that most perfectly illustrates this is the final section, titled "Denouncing, Announcing, Prophecy, Utopia, and Dreams." In this section, Freire uses what to him would be a very Biblical term, "prophecy," to frame his thinking about the future: if critical educators announce what we believe will happen in the future rather than only denouncing current practices, we have a more hopeful, more positive outlook on how the future will be formed. The section ends on a very hopeful note, announcing a future where critical education is central and all forms of violence—which "refers not only to direct, physical violence, but also to subliminal, symbolic violence; it refers to violence and hunger, violence and the economic interests of superpowers, violence and religion, violence and politics, violence and racism, violence and sexism, violence and social classes"—will cease and a true peace is realized (118). Freire argues that peace cannot be announced without a struggle for justice, but it must never include violence. And the book ends quite indignantly: "No matter what society we may be in, or what society we may belong to, it is urgent that we fight [for peace] with hope and fearlessness" (122). Freire would implore, however, that the fight for justice is marked not by violence but by education.

Daring to Dream: Toward a Pedagogy of the Unfinished (2007) is a book that was published by Freire's wife, Ana Maria Araújo Freire, after Paulo's death. It is a collection of

previously unpublished essays and conference presentations that Ana Maria thought were especially pertinent after Freire's death because they all hint at moving forward or the ideas of critical pedagogy being currently "unfinished." She sees the essays as a logical conclusion to Freire's writing career because they encapsulate many of his thoughts throughout the years while at the same time urging readers to continue teaching critically. After *Pedagogy of Hope*, Ana Maria saw a trend in Freire's writing that invited readers "to gradually incorporate our ethical and political dreams into indignation and love, as a human necessity, one even more radical when we need to face up, as we do now, to society's difficult problems" (xv). She saw love as one of the driving forces behind Freire's writings, and it was a love with an eye toward the future. In the last essay of *Daring to Dream*, Freire writes about utopia. The title of the book is taken from this essay, where Freire dreams for a future where utopia is a reality and all humans are able to feel human and experience a global love. I believe Ana Maria ended the essay section of the book with "A Few Reflections Around Utopia" not because it was the last thing Freire wrote before he died[45] but because the last sentence so neatly ties up Freire's writing career: "My discourse in favor of dreaming, of utopia, of freedom, of democracy is the discourse of those who refuse to settle and do not allow the taste for being human, which fatalism deteriorates, to die within themselves" (26).

Freire's writing and teaching career contained so many new and innovative ideas about teaching, and the field of composition is poorer for only focusing on one of his books and only focusing on his political views. Very few articles in composition even hint at Freire's religion, let alone accurately represent how much it meant to him. One article that quite accurately represents Freire's religion is Dale Jacobs's article, "What's Hope Got to Do

[45] The essay was not dated when written, and Ana Maria did not speculate about a date when it might have been written.

With It?" In the article, Jacobs looks at the way "a Christian notion of Hope can give theories of critical pedagogy a way of thinking about possibility" within material constraints (791). Hope, in other words, gives critical pedagogues a starting point for "fostering a critical belief in what is possible" (791). Because critical pedagogy, especially Freire's critical pedagogy (according to Jacobs), emphasizes using education as a means for changing society and the people in it, hope is a necessary starting point. Without hope, critical pedagogues cannot have an optimistic vision for the future.

Jacobs blends the theology of Gabriel Marcel and Freire's pedagogy to outline a pedagogy of hope—relying heavily on Freire's book of the same name. However, even though Marcel is a theologian, he, like Freire, prefers to keep God "always in the background" in order to provide a foundation for hope and communion" (785). Marcel's hope-based theology is most applicable to the classroom, according to Jacobs, when exploring the hope/despair dichotomy. Often teachers, especially "progressive" or "critical" teachers, feel despair when thinking about the possibility of a critical pedagogy in their institution. Jacobs warns against giving into despair, which makes us "passive—we are the objects, closed in on by time in a way that we see as inevitable" (793). Even though this may seem simplistic, Jacobs argues that hope is not the end-all of a critical pedagogy; rather hope is "a necessary condition of our work as educators attempting to bring about change" because, unlike despair, hope is active: "we exercise agency, piercing through time by seeing the alternatives, the possibilities available to us in moving beyond a particular limit-situation" (793–94). But Freire reminded us in *Pedagogy of Hope* that hope by itself is not enough: our hope, as critical educators, must be critical hope (as outlined in Chapter 3).

Jacobs's article stands out for two reasons. First, it was published in *JAC*, where Freire's religion had never been mentioned in any meaningful way until 2005 when Jacobs published the article. Second, he relied on more than one Freirean text to make his claims about Freire's theories while other "reinventions" of Freire rely on a single text: *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (as I showed above). And, while Jacobs's purpose seems to be quite similar to my own, he sought only to illuminate the fact that Freire was a Christian without any attempt to connect this fact's applicability to "secular" composition classroom settings.[46]

So my main question still remains: why has Freire's Christianity been left out of composition? I have shown how Freire has been used in *CCC*, *College English*, *JAC* in Composition and how his theories have been used in education, religion, and religious education over the past 27 years, and still no clear picture emerges of why Freire's Christianity has been largely ignored in Composition until very recently—and even when it is discussed, it is only discussed as being applicable to certain types of (religious) students or teachers. And when Freire's theories are used in a primary educational setting, it makes sense that his religion is left alone. Darder's decision not to discuss Freire's religion is defensible because religion is, by law, not supposed to be a part of the conversation in the public classroom—so the exclusion of Freire's Christianity in theories of education makes sense, as well. However, in theories of composition pedagogy in higher education, and the liberal arts especially—which purportedly accepts the "whole" person, including a person's religious beliefs—the lack of discussion is still a bit baffling. No laws exist to prevent a professor from discussing religion, and the liberal arts tradition should include discussions of spirituality—if not religion—as an academic exercise if nothing else. However, composition

[46] One could argue that this is all I am doing, as well, but I see my project as more of a reinvention because of the addition of epideictic rhetoric to understand his belief-laden rhetoric in "secular" settings.

still attempts to (mostly) ignore the fact that Freire's religion played a large role in the formation of his educational theories.

Religion in Classrooms

The disdain or mistrust of religion and the academic study of religion is alive and well in many academic settings, and it has been for quite some time. In a 1979 article, psychologist David Burnett discusses how clinical psychologists often fail to recognize religion's significance in other peoples' lives. He writes, "If [psychology professors] do not actually scorn religion as mere superstition, they often consider it to be outside their expertise, inaccessible to investigation, or unworthy of consideration. This lack of concern seems to have passed from the pure scientists of the academy to the applied practitioners of psychology and psychiatry we know today" (308). This scorn for religion in academia continues, as Terry Northcut shows in a 2004 article about social work: "social workers are trained to view the person-in-the-environment, but receive limited if any training in assessing and treating spiritual dilemmas within the varied religious traditions of their clients" (351). Northcut argues that the main reason students are often unprepared to discuss religion with their clients is because their professors (or institutions) do not want to broach the subject.

Stenberg, mentioned earlier in this chapter, is a perfect example of this line of thought. She did not want to "invit[e] students to reflect on their faith backgrounds" and did not even attempt to bring up the topic until a senior level course—when she thought students could handle the subject (280).[47] Stenberg recounts the history of academe and faith, especially as it pertains to composition, in a way that shows she values religion as a meaningful site for knowledge and identity formation. She critiques many other scholars in-

[47] And she was teaching at a Catholic university!

and outside composition for too easily glossing over students' faith and its importance in their lives. However, when it comes to Freire's religion, she finds it mostly (if not only) applicable to how she teaches her upper-division, Christian students. Stenberg treats her religious students with the respect they and their beliefs deserve, and she rightly critiques the way many other scholars in the field write about religion. A recent article in *Academe* by Matthew Kaplan suggests that the general negative attitude toward religion in higher education Stenberg shows is especially applicable to junior faculty because colleagues and students are becoming increasingly sensitive to "bias" toward religion in the classroom and have, in some places, started documenting and campaigning against professors who do mention religion in their classrooms, which can be a serious concern to professors seeking tenure.

This type of disdain can be found even at a small liberal arts college in a very Christian (by numbers) part of Iowa—like the school where I teach, for example. When discussing the topic of my dissertation with a colleague in my first semester at the school, I was told, "It's a good thing you're getting your PhD from Texas *Christian* University. A topic like that might not fly at a non-Christian University."[48] It did not matter to my colleague that my dissertation was a recovery project that focused on how to secularize Freire's religious message. Just the fact that I mentioned religion was enough for my colleague to get defensive.

However, my account of compositionists' use of Freire does suggest several additional reasons that Freire's religion has been left out of most mainstream scholarship. First, Freire generally has not been redefined in as many ways as one might imagine. Thus,

[48] I then informed my colleague that TCU is less affiliated with a church than our own institution, which cut formal ties with the Methodist Church in only the last 10 years and still has a Methodist appointed Chaplain.

the small discussion of his Christianity's application to teaching composition might make sense because his pedagogical theories have been framed mostly the same way for decades: through Marxism. Second, as I quoted Daniell saying at the beginning of the chapter, Composition still does not possess a language to discuss the spiritual aspects of Freire—even after the articles published explicitly about Freire's religion in the past decade. Composition's inability to come up with adequate language to discuss religion is partially due to the fact that whenever Freire's religion is brought into the discussion, it only pertains to either Christian pedagogues or Christian students. In other words, Freire's religion is treated religiously instead of academically, and any religion professor will attest that there is a big difference between a faith-based study of religion and an academic study of religion (which I am aiming for in my dissertation).

In the next chapter I will alleviate the problem brought forth by Daniell and attempt to extrapolate a language from epideictic rhetoric. Hopefully this will allow compositionists to discuss belief-laden writings in an academic setting without, as Daniell says, "imply[ing] that this quest [to find a method for discussing religion in academia] is necessarily associated with any formal religion" (239). In this chapter, however, I focused on the first possibility: the reliance on *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* as, seemingly, the only text Freire ever wrote. Even the three articles by Daniell, Jacobs, and Stenberg specifically about Freire's Christianity's relevance to the classroom only use *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* as their Freirean source material. His first, seminal book does mention his faith and is heavily influenced by it, but his later works are much more candid about his faith and show more clearly the connections between his faith and his pedagogy. Composition has done itself a disservice by ignoring these later texts. Not only does the exclusion of any of his other

works limit a full account of Freirean pedagogy and religious rhetoric; it limits the language we have available to discuss the applicability of his religion because we rely on words he wrote very early in his career. By believing in Freire's other texts, which I discussed in greater length in the previous chapter, and the importance of his Christian beliefs I hope to delimit Freire's pertinence to new iterations of critical (especially epideictic) pedagogy.

> *For [epideictic] contained the most essential motive of all: persuasion by words, rather than by force, on the part of those who loved eloquence for itself alone (those born verbalizers, so close to the very center of human motives, as distinct from the motives of other animals, those humane word-slingers who would rather fail in seeking to persuade by words than succeed in persuading by other means).*
>
> Kenneth Burke, *A Rhetoric of Motives*

> *Submitting these arguments to analysis, however, immediately reveals the difference between them and formal demonstrations, for only an effort of reduction or specification of a nonformal character makes it possible for these arguments to appear demonstrative. This is why we call them quasi-logical.*
>
> Chaim Perelman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca, *The New Rhetoric*

Chapter 5. Perelman, Olbrechts-Tyteca, Burke, Freire, and I Walk into a Burkean Parlor…

In the previous chapters, I focused my argument on what the field of composition had been missing by ignoring a large portion of Freire's work and the driving ideological force behind all of Freire's writings. One of the ways I argued the field could recover Freire's religious ideology is by thinking of it as epideictic rhetoric: a set of values that are ascribed to a rhetorical situation. By thinking of Freire's religious values and beliefs as epideictic rhetoric, I showed how those values can be translated into secular values that have use for any classroom—not classrooms with a religious focus and not only for religious students. The epideictic analysis of Freire's writing can serve as an extended example of the ways I ask students to use epideictic in a critical epideictic classroom. In this chapter, I show how to bring the type of analysis I performed on Freire, his Christianity, and his inclusion in composition theories of pedagogy in the previous three chapters into the classroom. In doing so, I argue that Chaim Perelman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca's and

Kenneth Burke's theories of rhetorical argumentation and analysis can work in concert and provide a framework for students to analyze and create epideictic in the classroom.

Many influential rhetoricians of the Twentieth Century, including Kenneth Burke, Chaim Perelman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca, Theodore Burgess, among others, have argued that epideictic rhetoric is an essential part of writing because the writing process and the timeliness of writing mirror epideictic. As I showed in the first chapter, Cynthia Sheard argues that epideictic rhetoric is an important part of any transformative rhetoric, in or outside of a classroom. Thus, understanding how epideictic operates can transform composition pedagogy, especially a critical composition pedagogy because it will help compositionists better understand the rhetorical practice of teaching. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's *The New Rhetoric* and Kenneth Burke's *A Rhetoric of Motives* form a framework for constructing and analyzing an epideictic pedagogy. Although in chapter 1 I criticized Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's claims that epideictic education is nothing more than propaganda that upholds the status quo, the rest of their book is a useful discussion about the efficacy of epideictic. The claim that *The New Rhetoric* is an epideictic handbook might be unexpected because Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca are wary of epideictic in their book. My claim might be especially unexpected because Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca claim to be "reviv[ing] an ancient and glorious tradition," not creating a new theory of epideictic (5). However, they also create new rhetorical theory and hope that their *New Rhetoric* "will, in certain respects, go far beyond the bounds of the ancient rhetoric and at the same time neglect certain aspects of the matter which drew the attention of the ancient masters of the art" (6). Their reinvention of Aristotelian rhetoric includes the spoken word and audience, but they do not limit their study to public rhetorics. What they do not state at

the outset is that, in their "neglect of certain aspects of the matter," they also almost completely ignore the deliberative and judicial branches of Aristotle's tripartite rhetoric. Near the beginning of the book they write that the three distinct categories of rhetoric are "of a purely practical order, whose defects and inadequacies are apparent" (21). Though epideictic is included in their critique, they also call epideictic's characterization "particularly unsatisfactory" and decide its classical understanding needs specific attention and revision.

It's clear to me that *The New Rhetoric* is actually a treatise on epideictic rhetoric; as the authors state, "Our own view is that epideictic oratory forms a central part of the art of persuasion" (49). Their reasons for stating this are fairly simple: deliberative and forensic rhetoric both attempt to persuade an audience toward a single course of action. Deliberative focuses on future events and forensic debates about the significance of past actions. My view of the entire book as a treatise on epideictic rhetoric is not a common view shared by *The New Rhetoric* scholars, who often focus more specifically on what's "new" about their rhetoric and their ideas about audience than epideictic.[49] However, before the argument can be made that the book is an epideictic handbook, it is important to understand Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's intentions for their tome.

The New Rhetoric serves to update Aristotle's classifications for argumentation for a modern world. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca view the last few centuries as devoid of any systematic updating of rhetorical practices and thus attempt to show how modern

[49] See Ray Dearin's 1969 *Quarterly Journal of Speech* article titled, "The Philosophical Basis for Chaim Perelman's Theory of Rhetoric" for a good early example; Lisa Ede's 1984 *CCC* article "Audience: An Introduction to Research," and David A. Frank's 2003 book review (in *Quarterly Journal of Speech)* for more recent examples. Another great resource is Gross and Dearin's 2003 biography and analysis of Perelman and his rhetorical theories titled, simply, *Chaim Perelman*. Their book only includes discussion of epideictic briefly in three footnotes.

rhetoricians work "to induce or to increase the mind's adherence to the theses presented for its assent" (4). More specifically, Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca wanted to understand the most philosophical method to attain adherence: rational arguments. They break their analysis of rational arguments into five distinct categories. Quasi-logical arguments are the most formally rational; as the name implies, the arguments rely on structures that appear logical but instead of relying on formal logic, these arguments rely on values to complete their form. Arguments based on the structure of reality rely not on the appearance of logic but rather use already accepted ideas or concepts to move an audience toward another concept. In other words, if the audience already accepts A, and B also exists in a world where A is accepted, it is not too far of a stretch for the audience to also accept B. The third classification of argument is the opposite of arguments based on the structure of reality: arguments that aim to create a structure of reality. These arguments attempt to attain adherence to a single concept from diverse and disjointed audiences. The next argument shown is the dissociation of concepts. Unlike the previous three types of argumentation, which Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca classify as arguments that attempt to "bring separate elements together and allow [rhetors] to establish a unity among them," dissociation aims to separate elements that were previously thought joined in order to "modify certain concepts" which are essential to a specific group (190). Finally, Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca show how all of these types of argument can work together to form stronger and more nuanced arguments. All of these argumentative structures are broken down into more specific types of arguments that fit into each category, and as a whole, the five types of argument constitute the majority of their theory of rhetoric.

However, I argue that the entire book is mainly about epideictic for a few reasons. First, epideictic is the only one of the three branches of rhetoric that is given detailed, specific treatment in *The New Rhetoric*. Second, they write that epideictic rhetoric "tries to establish a sense of communion centered around particular values recognized by the audience, and to this end [it] uses the whole range of means available to the rhetorician for purposes of amplification and enhancement" (51). The rest of their book is an attempt to understand the entire "range of means" an epideictic rhetor might use. Third, Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca stress the connection between epideictic and literature/written rhetoric, and after stating in the introduction that their treatise will focus on written rhetoric, the centrality of epideictic makes sense. The first example of "good" rhetoric in the book is from *Alice in Wonderland*, and the examples of good rhetoric used throughout the book continue this theme. The major portions of the book I will focus on in this chapter are "Quasi-Logical Arguments," "Arguments based on a structure of reality," and "Dissociation," and all of those sections are filled with examples of epideictic, almost exclusively. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca show how quasi-logical arguments work through the writings of William Pitt (*Orations on the French War)*, Marcel Proust (*The Guermantes Way*), and Jeremy Bentham (*Anarchical Fallacies*) to name a few (197, 199, 205). Arguments based on the structure of reality are exemplified through Wilhelm Bousset (*Sermons),* Robert Browning (*The Ring and the Book),* and Cervantes (*Don Quixote)* among others (261, 264, 265). And the entire idea of dissociation, which hinges on a hierarchy of values, showcases how epideictic rhetoric works.[50] For dissociation, Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca use Pitt a second time and quote the *Rhetorica Ad Herennium* in a section about amplification in which the writer of *Ad Herennium* uses multiple examples from

[50] This will be discussed in much greater detail in the following sections.

poetry *(417, 428)*. As I showed in the first chapter, many rhetorical scholars classify writing, generally, and literature, more specifically, as epideictic rhetoric. Most notably, Burgess's book *Epideictic Literature* points out the similarities between Aristotle's classification of epideictic rhetoric and written rhetoric (specifically literature). Based on the examples they use throughout the book—in literature, poetry, and famous orations—and the emphasis they place on the predominance of epideictic in current rhetorical practices, Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's "New Rhetoric" is an attempt to understand the epideictic nature of contemporary and ancient rhetoric and how those epideictic arguments operate.

Kenneth Burke, in *Rhetoric of Motives*, agrees with Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca about the centrality of epideictic, stating very plainly that "modern life itself becomes a kind of epideictic oratory, wherein social display itself, rather than the malaise behind it, is taken as a basic motive" (129). Further solidifying this strain of thought on epideictic, Burke writes that epideictic "readily becomes a catch-all" because it gains prominence "in periods of rhetorical decay, as when the democratic functions of public debate [are] curtailed" (70-71). That Burke thinks he was in a time of rhetorical decay is clear from his introduction:

> We do not flatter ourselves that any one book can contribute much to counteract the torrents of ill will into which so many of our contemporaries have so avidly and sanctimoniously plunged. But the more strident our journalists, politicians and alas! even many of our churchmen have become, the more convinced we are that books should be written for tolerance and contemplation. (xv)

This passage clearly shows Burke's unease with current rhetorical (and ethical) practices of the most prominent rhetors in the country. Burke argued that this country was in a state of

rhetorical decay, thus giving epideictic a place of distinction, for better or worse, in current rhetorical practices. [51]

That these two influential, modern books (*The New Rhetoric* and *Rhetoric of Motives*) seemingly make the same claims about epideictic is telling about epideictic's prominence in current rhetoric practices. The books show that epideictic is central to modern rhetoric; either book could be used to show how epideictic works in the classroom, but Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca write in a much more linear, straightforward manner, which provides easily understandable classification systems, whereas Burke is gloriously confusing at times. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's methods for rhetorical analysis are beneficial in my study for two reasons. First, their methods will help show how/why teachers should understand their entrenchment in epideictic rhetoric. And second, they will help teachers understand how to teach students to construct and be critical of their own epideictic rhetoric in their writing. However, since Burke makes similar claims about epideictic's role in contemporary society, I also rely heavily *A Rhetoric of Motives* to help unpack the theories put forth by Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca. The rest of this chapter will tease out the ways in which epideictic rhetoric manifests itself in the classroom and how Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's tools for rhetorical analysis in *The New Rhetoric* can be beneficial for a critical epideictic pedagogy. Then, I will turn once again to Freire and put his theories of pedagogy in conversation with Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's and Burke's theories of epideictic rhetoric and continue the analysis from the previous three

[51] Adding other Burke books, like *Grammar of Motives*, I.A. Richards's *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*, Wayne Booth's *Modern Dogma and the Rhetoric of Assent*, and even Lloyd Bitzer's article "The Rhetorical Situation" to this discussion would supply further evidence that rhetorical culture is shifting to epideictic prominence, but a thorough discussion of this claim is beyond the scope of this dissertation.

chapters to show that Freire's belief-laden rhetoric can be translated into secular epideictic and applied to a secular writing classroom.

Epideictic rhetoric is important in my classroom, but epideictic is difficult to teach without having some tools for analyzing it. Looking at two of Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's most important epideictic rhetorical concepts—dissociation and quasi-logical arguments—I show how their theories help analyze epideictic and demonstrate its importance in a critical classroom. These two concepts were chosen because of their utility in the classroom but also because they show the different sides of Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's argumentative classifications: those in which the argument creates a shared view and those in which a shared view is necessary for argumentation. In the next few sections I will dissect these two concepts and connect their methods and illustrate their use in my classroom with the help of Kenneth Burke's rhetorical theories, which share many features with Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's "new rhetoric."

Dissociation

Dissociation is Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's most important concept for understanding a critical epideictic because it is the type of argument that formalizes methods for modifying belief structures. Sadly, it is also one of their most confusing concepts.
In very general terms, dissociation is a rhetorical process by which the values or data a person brings to an argument is altered in order to show the difference between what appears to be true and what is actually true in a given situation. For example, I often have students ask if I will let them out of class early because they need to eat lunch before their next class. The term in their argument that requires dissociation is "need." The student appears to need the extra time to go eat, when in reality their need is little more than a

want—in order to avoid a longer lunch line. This example is particularly banal, but it shows how dissociation "involves a . . .profound change that is always prompted by the desire to remove an incompatibility arising out of the confrontation of one proposition with another, whether it is dealing with norms, facts, or truths" (413).[52] In other words, dissociation helps reformulate reality by removing misunderstanding between what is real and what is perceived—which is a major concept in dissociation termed the "Appearance/Reality" philosophical pair. The Appearance/Reality dissociative pair helps a rhetor to change the set of assumptions an audience uses to construct appearances based on a fundamentally different understanding of reality. Alan Gross and Ray Dearin, in their book *Chaim Perelman*,[53] write that dissociating concepts, simply put, is "a mode by which the speaker shares with his audience the truth as he sees it" (86). Using the appearance/reality pair is one of the main ways dissociation helps the rhetor and the audience come to an agreement of terms. Dissociating concepts helps the audience/reader understand a way of thinking provided by a rhetor, thus creating compatibility between the rhetor's conception of a term and the audience's conception of a term.

One of the easiest ways to understand how dissociation operates in situations with different values and starting points is through the notion of conceptual data. "Conceptual data" are the starting point for any argument—what each person involved brings to the proverbial table. Conceptual data form the entire set of knowledge different parties bring to

[52] Their definition of dissociation here sounds much like Burke's idea of identification (discussed later in the chapter), but they deny this, stating that dissociation is "more profound" than identification (413). Dissociation would also be a necessary component of I.A. Richards's rhetoric, which he defines as "the study of misunderstanding and its remedies" (5). Bitzer's rhetorical situation would also necessitate dissociations because the exigence of a rhetorical situation, "an imperfection marked by urgency," could be resolved through the dissociation of the imperfect concept (6).

[53] They make reference to Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca throughout the book, but their message is clear: the rhetorical theories belong to Perelman. I disagree wholeheartedly and believe she should be given just as much credit for dissociation as Perelman; hence, this footnote.

an argument, including facts, values, beliefs, the speaker's standing in the community, and, to borrow from Toulmin, any possible warrants someone might bring to the argument. Every person brings some unique conceptual data to an argument because of his or her unique experiences. So, in a classroom, each student has a set of conceptual data which is a reality to them but just an appearance to everyone else. Dissociation, as an argumentative technique, helps everyone in the classroom recognize that the other people in the classroom perceive reality differently.

Another way to make dissociations easier to understand is to think about them at work in epideictic rhetoric. As stated throughout this project, epideictic rhetoric focuses on values held communally by a group—either to uphold those values or suggest a change in the values. Either way, epideictic is helped by dissociations because dissociating concepts attempts to help groups solve an incompatibility in their thinking by showing the difference between appearance and reality. Thus dissociations are also important for a critical epideictic pedagogy because they help students see issues, and possibly their own values, differently. By teaching students how to dissociate concepts, I am teaching them how to distance themselves from their usual analytical framework—and from the usual/orthodox position. This works in very tangible ways in the classroom; for example, I point again to the anecdote in Chapter 2 about discussing the tax bill. The students in the classroom mostly came from wealthy families, and we were discussing the idea of adding taxes for families who earned over $250,000 per year. The students made many assumptions about people who made less than that sum. I grew up in a middle-class family in rural Iowa. My father is a professor at a small liberal arts college, and my mother stayed at home with the kids. I had never associated much with families making over $250,000, so the students'

assumptions about poor—even middle-class—people being lazy were new to me. We all dissociated our previous conceptual starting points so that we were able to identify and sympathize with the others' point of view. Students dissociated the pair "lazy poor"/disenfranchised, and I dissociated the pair "overbearing oppressors"/"students' parents." By putting real people into the "reality" side of our dissociative pairs, we were all able to discuss how appearance differed from reality and begin to talk about societal influences that helped create those appearances. While this may seem like an insignificant turn in a critical pedagogy, Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca write, "the dissociation of notions amounts to a compromise, but, on the theoretical level, it leads to a solution that will also be valid for the future, because, by remodeling our conception of reality, it prevents the reappearance of the same incompatibility" (413). In other words, the dissociation the students made during our epideictic interchange seems, at first glance, to only apply to that particular situation. But, while Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca believe the change in future actions is theoretical, I argue it is just as tangible in a classroom as the immediate compromise.

Dissociation can help change future actions because the old, "incompatible" way of thinking will not occur again. In my experience, this is the way epideictic rhetoric works. For example, in the spring of 2011 I asked students to define propaganda and argue whether or not it was ethical and/or justified in certain situations. The 17 students gave varying definitions of propaganda. Four students claimed propaganda was always unethical, five students claimed it was ethical in any circumstance, and eight students argued that the ethics of propaganda depended on the situation. The students who argued for a situational definition often said an ethical use of propaganda involved a propagandistic message with

which they agreed. Messages they disagreed with were unethical. By dissociating unethical/ethical propaganda, the students and I were able to uncover our biases for or against certain messages and connect our individual values to whether or not we felt propaganda was ethical or justified in a given situation.

The topics in these two scenarios hadn't changed—we were still discussing the tax bill in one instance and the ethics of propaganda in another. But we dissociated the appearance of our terms against the reality of our terms which allowed students and me to understand and in several cases shift our thinking on the tax bill, and the discussion set the stage for further discussions of social justice, poverty, and the government. At the end of our discussion about the possibility of ethical propaganda, I asked students how many of them planned on changing their definition after the class was over. Five students raised their hands. I never asked them how their answer changed, but the students who changed their definition performed an epideictic dissociation of their values based on the pair ethical/unethical. This dissociation affected their values and the manner in which they analyzed propaganda in the future. For the rest of the semester, these students used their new conception of propaganda in class discussions, speeches, and the next two papers they wrote.

Thus dissociation is a necessary part of a critical epideictic because it helps students think about and possibly embody other sets of experiences and values based on a different reality. It also helps students think critically about their own experiences and values and understand why someone else might disagree with them, making it easier for them to find common ground in subsequent arguments. As Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca write, dissociation "involves a … profound change that is always prompted by the desire to

remove an incompatibility arising out of the confrontation of one proposition with others, whether one is dealing with norms, facts, or truths" (413). Dissociation helps students find common ground and ensure "the thing that is valued is given its rightful place" in the argument (413). Even if students do not want to find common ground, dissociation will at least help students navigate their way through academic discussions by attempting to make their way of thinking compatible with someone else's.

Because of the compromises offered by dissociation, it shares similarities with Burkean "identification." According to Burke, identification is the main purpose of rhetoric. We use rhetoric to "join interests" with another person or group. Burke writes, "A is not identical to his colleague, B. But insofar as their interests are joined, A is *identified* with B. Or he may *identify himself* with B even when their interests are not joined, if he assumes that they are, or is persuaded to believe so" (*RM* 20). Identification, then, is the natural outgrowth of effective communication and the reason for argumentative or persuasive rhetoric. If two groups of people are able to join interests, then rhetoric has performed its duty and allowed groups to become identified. Burke writes that *RM*'s purpose is "to consider the ways in which individuals are at odds with one another, or become identified with groups more or less at odds with one another" (22). Dissociation prompts identification and helps antagonistic groups find common ground. Dissociation leads to identification because it focuses on changing the way two things or groups are connected. You might say, instead, that dissociation creates new sets of identifications and divisions.

Burke sees identification as the entire process and goal of rhetoric, whereas Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca see dissociation as a strategy toward identification, which

can then lead to persuasion. Dissociation is meant to bring about a Burkean identification, and identification is at the heart of any epideictic encounter. Thus one of the main goals of critical epideictic pedagogy should be helping students understand their beliefs by using dissociative pairs in their writing—even if they do not change their stance on any issue. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca also write about identification in their Quasi-Logical Arguments section (which I explore in greater detail in the next section), but their version of identification is merely a small part of what Burke's identification offers. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca focus on using identification, or comparison of objects through definition, as one of many different kinds of arguments that can be used to achieve what Burke would call identification. They classify identifications as either complete or partial and state that "the most characteristic method of complete identification consists of using definitions" (210). Burke laments the use of identification in this way in his section on "Ingenuous and Cunning Identifications" because "one can protect an interest merely by using terms not incisive enough" to create an honest identification (36). He argues that such a use of identification focuses on the persuasion that can come out of the identification rather than the identification itself as the ultimate goal: "the persuasive identifications of Rhetoric, in being so directly designed for *use*, involve us in a special problem of *consciousness*, as exemplified in the Rhetorician's particular *purpose* for a given statement" (36). However, Karen Kopelson, in her article "Rhetoric on the Edge of Cunning; Or, The Performance of Neutrality (Re)Considered as a Composition Pedagogy for Student Resistance" writes that a teacher's *performance* of neutrality can help students foster the types of identification Burke sees as necessary for rhetoric.[54]

[54] Kopelson's argument focuses on marginalized teachers and how neutrality can often serve them. I recognize that my position as a white male is not the same as the teachers about which Kopelson writes; however,

For example, in the tax discussion mentioned earlier, I was not trying to persuade students to think a certain way about the issue, I was performing neutrality to help students and I see all the requisite parts of the discussion. As a critical pedagogue, I *hoped* they would change their minds after the discussion, but I tried not to influence the conversation after starting it. Rather I was trying to help them see that another side of the argument exists. In the process, I was shown another side, as well. As I outlined in more detail in Chapters 2 and 3, I try my hardest to avoid pushing students in a direction toward my way of thinking on a subject. But in this instance, the goals for a critical pedagogy and the secular *agape* I feel toward the students in the classroom coincided: they came to a conclusion that meshed with my ideology, but I did not push them in that direction. We moved on from dissociation and identification to discussions of how just or unjust the bill was based on our belief systems, whether old, new, or revised based on the classroom discussion. And none of this would have happened had we not, at the start of our discussion, used dissociation to understand the beliefs with which we were working.

Dissociation helps students and teachers better understand how to cooperate with people of other belief systems. Dissociation and identification together allow critical classrooms to focus on the positives in an Elbowian, believing sense. The benefit of this approach is that the focus of any contentious discussion stops being negative and instead becomes positive. In other words, our differences helped foster discussion, and by using dissociation, we were able to use our differences to overcome incompatibility. Jessica Enoch, in her article "Becoming Symbol-Wise: Kenneth Burke's Pedagogy of Critical Reflection," writes that she wants her students **"**to adopt an attitude of patience and

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adopting a neutral position can be subversive for someone in my position as well. As someone who is assumed to have authority and assert power, using a neutral position can be just as subversive, albeit in a different way than the examples in Kopelson's piece.

withdrawal—an attitude that necessitates waiting, listening, reflecting, and analyzing before any arguments are made or action is taken" (292). As Enoch suggests, waiting, listening, reflecting, and analyzing are important actions on the path toward identification—and they are all important in the process of dissociation. I encourage students to perform all these tasks both in classroom discussion (like the one presented above) or in writing. However, when written, waiting and listening become reading and interpreting. Helping students change or better understand their conceptual data, while at the same time changing our own as teachers, is not an easy task. But it is a necessary and lively action in any critical pedagogy, especially one focused on critical epideictic.

Quasi-Logical Arguments

Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca note that quasi-logical arguments compose a majority of all rhetorical appeals. A quasi-logical argument is, simply put, an argument that has the appearance of logic, "in the degree that [quasi-logical arguments] claim to be similar to the formal reasoning of logic or mathematics," without following the strict rules of formal logic (193). Quasi-logical arguments must have a recognizable "formal scheme on the model of which the argument is constructed," and the rhetor must be able to "display the operations of reduction which make it possible to insert the data into this scheme" (193). For example, if a student made the argument, "I studied hard for the last four tests and I got As on all of them. I studied really hard this time, too, so I bet I got an A," the structure appears logical. It seems to follow formal syllogistic reasoning: if all A are B, and all B are C, then all A are C. However, because the students' arguments are based on probable, not certain, knowledge, its structure is only *quasi*-logical. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca list 12 different types of quasi-logical arguments and explain the "logical" scheme each model

represents.[55] "Division of the whole into its parts" and "inclusion of the part in the whole" have been very productive in the classes I teach. In the previous section, I showed how another of Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's argumentative schemes, dissociation, helped more for understanding identification than persuasion and the ways dissociation can help teachers and students understand the epideictic rhetoric at work in a classroom—especially one that is a self-proclaimed critical classroom. The examples used in the previous section could have also been used here. As I showed earlier, Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca know that almost any argument could be analyzed using any argumentative structure, depending on how the information is presented. I could have looked at the tax bill debate and the way students defined propaganda as arguments of parts and wholes—with the breakdown of student identification for one stance or the other as individual groups with varying parts. However, instead I focused on the conceptual data we all brought to those discussions. In this section I show how two quasi-logical arguments, which operate very similarly, can be useful for analyzing epideictic rhetoric by looking at the ways students and I participate in certain groups based on our values and beliefs. I again use Burke's rhetorical theories to help unpack these classifications and then show how they have worked in my classroom.

Inclusion of the Part in the Whole/Division of the Whole into Its Parts

Inclusion of the part in the whole and division of the whole into its parts are opposite sides of the same rhetorical coin and are easily connected to Burkean identification and epideictic rhetoric. The former argument is, according to Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, "based on the principle 'what is true of the whole is true of the part'" and "the value of the part will be considered to be proportional to the fraction of the whole which it constitutes"

[55] Arguments of contradiction and compatibility, using the ridiculous, identity and definition, analysis, the rule of justice, reciprocity, transitivity, inclusion of the part in the whole, division of the whole into its parts, comparison, sacrifice, and probabilities.

(231). The latter is just the opposite: "all arguments by division obviously imply relations between the parts such that their sum can reconstitute the whole" (239). Establishing a hierarchy of values allows people to see which values they or a group hold in higher esteem. Political candidates who run on a single-issue platform, like a "pro-life" platform or a nationalized healthcare platform, are a great example of a person who understands their constituents' hierarchy of values (or not, depending on how many votes they receive). Candidates who run on such platforms have established an ultimate hierarchy of values based on how they think they can best identify with the voters.

Burke's writings contribute a lot to a theory of hierarchy. Burke, when discussing how to create/recognize order (especially in relation to Marxist rhetoric), writes, "from the standpoint of rhetoric, the implanting of an ultimate hierarchy upon social forms is the important thing" (191). And, near the end of the book, he writes, "for better or worse, the mystery of the hierarchic is forever with us, let us, as students of rhetoric, scrutinize its range of entrancements, both with dismay and delight" (333). While Burke writes a lot about the importance of hierarchy, he doesn't give us too many methods for establishing or analyzing hierarchies in our belief systems.[56] Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's theories, inclusion of the part in the whole and division of the whole into parts, give us just that.

As it relates to hierarchy and epideictic, then, arguments based on part-to-whole relationships help people situate their personal values in relation to the values of certain groups to which they belong, where the group carries more hierarchical weight. Teachers in a critical classroom can use this type of argument to show students what types of beliefs they *actually* associate themselves with when they are part of a group (and it can be a

[56] He does a very good job of analyzing the hierarchical makeup of different ideologies, but he rarely stops to give anything close to a step-by-step method for repeating his analyzing process or for how to establish a hierarchy of values within our own belief systems.

humbling experience when the students show teachers the set of beliefs we ascribe to when aligning with certain groups). Using the example from above, it can be a humbling experience for a student to realize that the pro-life candidate they support also supports "enhanced interrogation" or something with which the student does not want to be associated. But, in an argument of whole-to-part, the student's support of the candidate will show that the students associate themselves with and implicitly agree with *all* of the candidate's policies, even the ones of which the students weren't aware.

As a teacher attempting to embody a critical pedagogy, I found it necessary to be acutely aware how arguments of inclusion or division have a quasi-logical nature. For example, many discussions in my classroom focus on politics because political topics are always timely and students usually have an opinion. This was especially true when teaching during the 2008 Presidential election.[57] Students were eager to argue, using inclusion of the part in the whole, against students from rival parties to point out the wrongness of the other's political set of beliefs: "You vote Democrat? How can you love abortion?" or "You vote Republican? Why would you want to start a war for oil?" Students thought these were syllogistic arguments: All Democrats are "pro-abortion"; you vote Democrat, you like abortions. All Republicans support a war for oil; you voted Republican, you support a war for oil. Pointing out that these types of arguments aren't actually logical, that they only seem logical because of their quasi-syllogistic format, can help show the power found in these arguments. It is also a great teaching tool when showing students that pathos features prominently even when students think they are being purely rational. One discussion got so heated I decided that critical pedagogy would be best served by civility, so I, as the teacher,

[57] I taught this course while still in graduate school. Thus, this example comes from my time teaching at Texas Christian University, not the school where I currently teach.

stepped in to moderate. I first asked students to pick a party (a "whole," if you will) and go to opposite sides of the room. Students then gathered in Republican, Democrat, and "Other" spots in the room and took stock of each others' locations, and we discussed why they chose the party they did. Then we made a list of issues the students deemed important for each party (students chose the "usual suspects" to discuss: abortion, health care, government sponsored programs, education, military) and divided the room up again based on where students fell on each particular issue—including a "neutral zone" for students who were unsure of how they felt or were uncomfortable identifying on a particular issue. What resulted was a lot of students not toeing the party line on all the issues, showing students that inclusion of the part in the whole isn't the *only* way to look at a political election—or anything, for that matter.

Looking at arguments in terms of "wholes" and "parts" can be a quick way to determine a hierarchy of values in a given situation. It shows which ideals are held most highly by groups and where groups can find common ground in situations that seem impossible. In addition, it helps students see that the black-and-white platform and public image many groups espouse excludes many of the "parts" who believe they fit into that group. As Burke suggests in *RM,* division of a whole into its parts can be enlightening—especially in a classroom full of first-year students who define their belief systems in monolithic terms. The students saw only "Democrat" or "Republican," but after the discussion they were able to realize that they agreed on many of the issues on which their parties were purported to disagree.

Arguments based on division or inclusion are the main types of argument I ask students to perform in my first-year writing courses. Even though I try to get student input

on writing assignments, I usually just assign the first paper of the semester.[58] The prompt[59] for the first paper I usually assign asks students to write can be found in the Appendix, but generally it asks students to identify how a specific place had an impact on their personality. The purpose of this assignment it to get students to investigate how the places they belong to help orient them as individuals, but it also asks students to understand how people inhabiting other spaces view them. In other words, I ask students to examine the parts and the wholes during their time in high school. This type of argumentation and analysis sets them up well for a semester of epideictic critical pedagogy, but it also shows students that the places/groups they belong to are situated in a particular set of beliefs—and when reading peer drafts, students recognize that their particular set of beliefs is contingent upon the places that shaped them.

From this first writing assignment, students learn that their belief structures and communities are much more fluid than they appear. Michelle Smith, in a recent *RSQ* article titled "Containment Rhetoric and the Public Sphere," argues that the type of rhetoric students and I found at work in the political party exercise is powerful because of how hard it is to detect. She terms it "containment rhetoric" and writes that the two main

[58] At the beginning of their first semester in college, students are usually resistant to helping create a writing assignment. Students often resist creating the writing assignment because of the assumed "power" the teacher wields in the classroom—usually wrought from their experiences in high school. However, as Geoffrey Chase reminds us in "Accommodation, Resistance, and the Politics of Student Writing," students attempt to resist any dominant ideology, even when the dominant ideology (a professor with a writing assignment) tries to help them realize their own agency in a classroom. Chase argues that we must teach students "in a way that allows them to problematize their existence and to place themselves in a social and historical context through which they can come to better understand themselves and the world around them." When I try to get students to resist everything they have known about education during the first writing assignment they will complete in college—that the teacher supplies the assignments and the students perform the assignments—I do not give students enough time to contextualize the experience. Rather, giving students a task at the beginning of the semester and slowly working them toward helping me write the assignment gives them a chance to experience the type of epideictic analysis and argument that I hope they can accomplish in the class.

[59] This assignment was adapted from a fellow graduate student, Moriah McCracken. Her dissertation, "Locating Place in Writing Studies: An Investigation of Professional and Pedagogical Effects," examines the way place can be used as a signifier in much the same way as race, gender, religion, or orientation.

characteristics of this type of rhetoric are "a particular gaze that treats the community as a picture" and "a degree of praise undermined by a nostalgic attitude toward the community" (132). In other words, containment rhetoric attempts to show a group as static—a picture or snapshot—with the perfect static representation found in the past. This fits perfectly with students' assumptions about their respective political parties. They enacted containment rhetoric when they assumed inclusion of the parts in the whole, and it wasn't until we physically saw this rhetoric at work that we were able to detect it. After they realized their views weren't as static as they once seemed, they became somewhat nostalgic for their easier, less complicated view of the political climate in the U.S. Students were amazed at how many of the Democrat sympathizers were "pro-life" and how many Republican sympathizers were against the war in Iraq. Physically acting out our affiliations helped us recognize appearance/reality pairs with our beliefs about other groups and understand that other groups' values aren't as monolithic as we might want to believe. These two examples from the classes I teach show in a small way how students begin to work with arguments based on part to whole, and these types of arguments are actually fairly commonplace in different types of critical pedagogies.

Staci Perryman-Clark illustrates a critical use of part-whole arguments in her class about "Afrocentric education." She argues that an Afrocentric education is "valuable not only because first year writing students study alternative cultural traditions and communicative practices . . . but also because [she] understands Afrocentricity as a pedagogical approach that is inclusive to all racial, ethnic, and gender groups" (116). This is a radical claim, especially given that a minority of her students in this first-year composition course come from an African background. However, she "encourage(s)

students to make overt connections between African American communicative practices and literacies, and their own literacy experiences as they investigate personal literacy practices, online literacy practices, and disciplinary literacy practices" (117). She uses inclusion of the part in the whole as the basis of her pedagogy—and she helps many of her white students experience a different group in the process. Like my assignment that asks students to examine places and the values embodied by those places, Perryman-Clark asks her students to understand the beliefs of specific groups and interrogate their own positions with relation to the group. This type of analysis fits well within Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's designations for argumentation from the whole to the part by asking students to analyze the values of the groups to which they do or do not belong while at the same time fostering the kind of identification called for by Burke.

This kind of analysis/argumentation based on part-to-whole relationships can be fostered in many different ways. In a course titled "Rhetorical Theory, Mass Media, and Public Discourse," Teresa Grettano wanted her students to become part of a "critical democratic citizenry" (71) by asking them to "compare their experiences with different modes of texts, to see how they understood and reacted to public discourse differently if they engaged through print media, the Internet, or television" (74). She asked her students to argue about different parts of the media and how they (the parts of the media *and* the students) relate to "the media" as a whole. Though Grettano does not name it as epideictic, the type of discussion and writing she fosters in the course asks students to set a hierarchy of values and identify with groups based on their values. Grettano does exactly what Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca say someone should do when creating or analyzing quasi-logical arguments: she "[sets] forth the formal scheme on the model of which the argument is

constructed and after that [displays] the operations of reduction which make it possible to insert the data into the scheme" (193). First, she tells the students they will be dealing, essentially, with an argument by inclusion of parts into the whole, then she has students insert their values and beliefs as the data and they collectively analyze and argue about the media based on a part-to-whole scheme.

Kathleen Ryan's class comprises both sides of the "part to whole" argument by asking students to situate themselves inside and outside of groups and analyze their communicative practices as insiders and outsiders. In "Women, Rhetoric, and Writing," Ryan asks her students to, among other things, explore their "reflexive understanding of women's rhetorics in relationship to their communicative practices as located subjects in academic, personal, and civic spheres" (88). She asks students to perform what Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca call "the most characteristic" arguments of division of the whole into its parts: [argument] by exclusion" (236). The students in Ryan's class argue which spheres exclude women's rhetorical practices and then analyze different aspects of society in a part to whole scheme to show how those practices could and should fit into the whole. She blends well both of these quasi-logical arguments, and like Grettano, Perryman-Clark, and me, she does so in order to foster Burkean identification based on students' values—which is not a central goal of critical epideictic pedagogy, necessarily, but being able to foster identifications is necessary for Freirean revolutionaries. Without identification, a revolutionary would be unable to understand the situations that bring about social injustice.

The "Course Design" section of *Composition Studies* shows how other instructors are struggling with the same types of issues I am grappling with in a critical epideictic pedagogy. While their courses range from first-year composition to upper-level electives,

the rhetorics they teach their students fit well into a critical epideictic pedagogy and illustrate how inclusion of the part in the whole and division of the whole into its parts operate in contexts different from the ones in which I have taught. This type of evidence is encouraging because it signals—through observation of other scholarship rather than classroom observation—that what I am hoping to accomplish with my pedagogy is, at the very least, replicable. My project adds an understanding of the rhetorical methods at work in all of these pedagogical discussions. In this chapter I have shown how quasi-logical arguments of part to whole relations and dissociations operate in the classroom. What I hope to show though analysis of the previous three examples from the Course Design section of *Composition Studies* is that these arguments are used, if not explicitly taught, in multiple iterations of critical pedagogies and Burkean identification is often a byproduct of these types of argument.

Getting from Perelman, Olbrechts-Tyteca, and Burke to Freire

Most recent theories of critical pedagogy in composition use arguments of division of the whole to its parts in their discussion of Freire: Freire and his more recent works are excluded, implicitly and explicitly. In the next section, I show why the field should, instead, use arguments of inclusion of the part in the whole, thereby once again including Freire in the discussion. After all, as Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca write, the most basic argument of this type shows that "the whole includes the part and is consequently more important" (231). The entirety of Freire's writings includes *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, but his entire body of work is much more important than that singular book.

As I showed in the previous chapter, Freire's Christianity has been mostly ignored in theories of composition pedagogy. The exclusion can be understood simply as a reflection

of academia's and composition's unease with religion. In this section I show how the concepts covered in the first half of this chapter—provided by Perelman, Olbrechts-Tyteca, and Burke—are useful for understanding and employing religious concepts found in Freire's writings for epideictic purposes in the composition classroom. When looking at Freire's writings the question we need to ask is not whether, or how much, his religious beliefs impacted his pedagogical theories; rather it's a question of how the religious nature of his writing is applicable to a non-religious, or secular, setting. I believe the answer to this question is found in epideictic rhetoric, especially the epideictic rhetoric in *The New Rhetoric* and *A Rhetoric of Motives* highlighted in the first half of this chapter.

Before I can show how all the concepts covered in the first half of this chapter connect to Freire's belief-laden rhetoric, I must refer back to the previous chapter in which I outlined the religious principles found in a Freirean pedagogy. These concepts are not readily available in the texts most often cited by composition theorists (i.e., *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, *The Politics of Education*, and *Literacy: Reading the Word and the World*). In fact, other than an article published in the journal *Religious Education* in 1984, Freire did not start to write about his faith until near the end of his life in the 1990s. He usually wrote about his Christianity in books that reflected on his life as a whole—not just his life as a teacher (which Freire probably would not have separated, anyway). He writes of his Christian faith specifically in the aforementioned 1984 article, titled "Education, Liberation and the Church" (with a published note at the end of the article titled "Know, Practice, and Preach the Gospels"), *Pedagogy of Hope* (1992), *Letters to Christina* (1996), *Pedagogy of the Heart* (1997), and *Pedagogy of Freedom* (1998). As I have already stated in the previous chapters, religious institutions and traditions have found many applications of Freire's

Christianity, for obvious reasons. In Chapter 3 I briefly outlined the three approaches to Freire's Christianity for educators—his writings are a religious way into writing/talking about pedagogy, his writings are a secular way into theology, and his writings are a good introduction for how to educate religious students (both in Composition and out). In the last chapter I delved into how Freire's writings have been understood by compositionists in all three of these categories by looking at more writings from religious journals. In the last part of this chapter I show where Freire's religious principles are at work in his later writings and use what I have learned from Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca and Burke to translate these religious principles into a "secular" epideictic rhetoric for use in a composition classroom.

Thinking of Freire the Christian rather than Freire the Marxist is, alone, an interesting and necessary dissociation when thinking about Freire's belief-laden epideictic in a secular setting. Dissociating Freire's Christianity/Marxism means that even if I arrive at similar results as a traditional Marxist evaluation of Freire's theories, the structure of the analysis will have changed because the assumptions about how to treat people are different in a belief-laden rhetoric than in an ideology-driven rhetoric. However, I argue that more than just the conceptual data of Freire's theories has changed by highlighting his Christian beliefs and rhetoric. For example, the love espoused by Freire carries many connotations that might not exist were he not Christian. This is not to say that non-Christians cannot love selflessly. However, highlighting the exact type of love Freire meant when writing about his teaching and how he loved his students shows that the dynamic between teacher/revolutionary and student/(revolutionary) is not just one of mutual trust and respect. It is a relationship in which the teacher must selflessly help students question their values and beliefs and act on the injustices they see in the world—and as I argued in Chapter 3,

even writing is an important act because of the way it changes the way a student thinks. Freire even argued that writing is one of the most crucial responses to any injustice because it not only helps articulate the atrocity; it also helps disseminate the critical ideals behind the analysis. However, because this love is selfless, it should never turn into a situation such as the one I encountered with the "critical educator" from my days as an undergraduate (shown in Chapter 2). That teacher loved the idea of changing beliefs more than he loved his students. Unlike this teacher, I attempt to love the students in the classes I teach. The only thing I ask in return for this secular *agape* is that they actually examine their beliefs as rhetorical, often using the types of argumentation outlined in *The New Rhetoric*.

Dissociations, arguments from part to whole or whole to part, and identification constitute the majority of Freire's writings. However, the most important thing to understand about these epideictic arguments is that they should be the curricular basis for an epideictic critical pedagogy. While love is not necessarily part of the curriculum I argue that it is important for a critical teacher to embody a selfless love so she can be willing to take a step back and allow students to practice these epideictic arguments even if they reach conclusions with which the teacher might disagree. As I will show in the next chapter in the comparison between David Seitz's and my iterations of critical pedagogies, love is not the *only* way for a critical educators to embody this stance toward their students, but it is a practical and Freirean way to approach relationships with students. Freire would be the first to say that coercion does not produce constructive results, so a teacher in a critical epideictic pedagogy needs to prepare for students to reject change in their lives and use epideictic in a traditional sense to only uphold traditional, sometimes oppressive, values. However, the job of the critical epideictic teacher is to help students understand oppression through epideictic

rhetoric and love them enough to come to their own conclusions. Their conclusions might differ from what the teacher wants; however, hopefully some students will reevaluate their values because of the epideictic interchanges in class and want to become Freirean revolutionaries and strive to fight injustices through argument.

> *I found myself immediately and continually accountable to students, which is the practical meaning of teacher-student reconciliation and of democratic authority. Immediately accountable, class after class, I felt pushed to the limits of my teaching skills and my democratic commitment.*
>
> Ira Shor, *When Students Have Power*

> *My writing courses are organized around two goals that I conceive of as mutually determining and enabling. First, the courses aim for students to generate words, ideas, and confidence as writers who conceive of writing/composing as a process in which they can and must act, that is, intervene. Second, the courses work to initiate a sense of language as discourse, of language as not only a mode of inquiry but also as an object worthy of inquiry.*
>
> Amy Lee, *Composing Critical Pedagogies*

Chapter 6. In Conclusion

My dissertation has two driving forces: I attempt to legitimize discussion of Freire's Christianity in the field of composition, and I try to show the rhetorical (epideictic) workings of critical pedagogies. As I noted in the first chapter, Cynthia Sheard first argued for the connection between epideictic and critical pedagogies in her definition of epideictic: "[epideictic] is ultimately about conduct and values within communities addressed or invoked" and aims to "[take] as its exigency a problem to be solved, a condition to be changed, a cause to be taken up" "by instilling a sense of responsibility for and possibility of change for the better" (771; 776; 787). The content and purpose of epideictic arguments seem to fit perfectly into a critical classroom, as Sheard also notes (777). Specifically, her definition of epideictic fits well into Paulo Freire's conception of critical pedagogy, both in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* and, maybe especially, his subsequent works because, as I

showed in Chapter 3, Freire became more hopeful that change was possible in his later, more biographic works.

Reading Freire's writings again for this dissertation with an eye toward epideictic, I was struck by the values espoused by Freire—especially his religious beliefs. I originally planned to write a dissertation that showed how epideictic rhetoric could enhance Freire's pedagogical theories for use in a critical classroom. In doing so, I came to see a need to include information about Freire's religious rhetoric. I had always encountered Freire and writings about Freire in composition through his political ideology, but Freire himself wrote that it was his religious conviction that led him to his political ideologies. After digging into how composition scholars viewed Freire's religious beliefs, I strove to include the ways in which epideictic rhetoric could help make those beliefs accessible to more than just a religious audience. Thus the content of my dissertation is due in part to my obligation to a profession that has, according to Beth Daniell, not yet found a "vocabulary" to discuss Freire's Christianity.

The simplest explanation for including both religion and education is that they fall into the realm of epideictic rhetoric. I connected Freire's religious beliefs to epideictic argumentative techniques found in Chaim Perelman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca's *The New Rhetoric* and Kenneth Burke's *A Rhetoric of Motives.* I connected Freire's belief-laden rhetoric and epideictic rhetoric to show that the religious aspect of Freire need not be ignored if the religious values underlying Freire's rhetoric are translated into secular epideictic rhetoric. In short, I showed that composition should pay attention to the religious aspects of Freire's work in order to better understand a pedagogical theorist who is often

referenced in composition. Compositionists can apply these aspects of Freire's writings to all students, not just religious students.

In this chapter I synthesize the arguments from the previous five chapters to show how a critical epideictic pedagogy operates in the classroom and explain its major goals. In short, a critical epideictic pedagogy helps students see belief as rhetorical and thus malleable, which gives students the opportunity to change their values or beliefs to be more consistent with their newly reflective approach to rhetoric. In addition, because writing is thought to be inherently epideictic (by Aristotle, Burgess, and others), epideictic serves to help students investigate their beliefs through writing—something especially important in a composition class. I am delighted if a student decides to change his or her beliefs to be more like a Freirean Revolutionary. If not, I argue that a secular translation of Freire's *agape* stance toward students helps the teacher to recognize and respect the students' agency and ability to reach conclusions about their beliefs based on their recent critique of the values they espouse.

Finally, I will show how my project builds off of other projects in critical pedagogy and is an approach to critical pedagogy in composition that most accurately and fairly represents the beliefs of the man who started the movement. Freire's importance to the field of critical pedagogy is evident in every article or book that mentions critical pedagogy or critical consciousness, thus finding a way to accurately bring Freire and his many unnoticed works in composition can enrich discussions of critical pedagogy in this field. To show the benefits of bringing Freire and his later works back into the discussion, I compare my brand of critical pedagogy to Ira Shor's in *When Students Have Power: Negotiating Authority in a Critical Pedagogy* and David Seitz's in *Who Can Afford Critical Consciousness? Practicing*

a Pedagogy of Humility in order to show how my project builds off of theirs and what an epideictic approach to Freire and teaching can add to theirs.

These two books serve as pertinent comparisons for different reasons. *When Students have Power* because, even though the book is 16 years old, is still the most complete argument for what a Freirean pedagogy can look like at a U.S. institution of higher learning. Seitz's book contains a newer glimpse into critical pedagogy in U.S. colleges, but instead of focusing on Freirean pedagogy, Seitz contemplates student resistance to critical pedagogy and how a reflective approach to critical pedagogy allows teachers to foster critical consciousness. Even though he relies little on Freire, his approach to critical pedagogy focuses on integrating ethnographic concepts and methods traditionally not used to teach a critical pedagogy—much as I attempt to do with my project and epideictic. My comparison to Seitz is much less critical than my comparison to Shor because, as I argue in the section, Seitz and I want to accomplish similar goals though different methods. Together, these two texts present a useful representation of U.S. critical pedagogy—old and new, Freirean and not. After comparing Shor's and Seitz's pedagogy to mine, I argue that epideictic and the inclusion of Freire's belief-laden rhetoric shift a critical classroom's focus even more to the students and the texts the students can generate—something that is often missing from a critical pedagogy for a composition classroom. In short, I hope to show that critical epideictic pedagogy is no more or less valid than any other iteration of critical pedagogy based on a blend of research, theory, and experience, but it is more useful for composition because of its focus on writing and rhetoric. In the next two sections, I use my unique fall 2011 first-year composition course, called Passport (which I described more generally in

Chapter 2) as an example to help showcase the goals of a critical epideictic pedagogy and how epideictic can help make writing a central part of a critical classroom.

Critical Epideictic Pedagogy: Goals

I hope that epideictic rhetoric can help students move closer to critical consciousness without me pushing them in that direction. Most criticisms of critical pedagogy shown so far in my project assume that the teacher in a critical classroom attempts to guide the discussion of student beliefs to show students how they must change their beliefs in order to become more socially progressive. Other criticisms, which I contributed to in Chapter 4, attempt to work against critical pedagogies that focus on the teacher instead of what the students can and should contribute to a classroom. The types of writings and discussions I hope to foster in an epideictic critical pedagogy are the ones in which the teacher is, at most, an instigator, and the students start to take control of their own education by investigating the institution's, my, and their values. I am certainly not the only critical pedagogue to foster productive writing and discussions of belief in the classroom. As I showed in the literature review in the first chapter, Amy Lee, Jennifer Gore, Ira Shor, and many others accomplish this feat. And as I will show, Seitz has taken this idea to new levels by bringing ethnography into the first-year writing classroom. I do not mean to imply that other critical pedagogues cannot foster productive writings about or discussions of values and beliefs; I am merely suggesting that understanding the rhetorical workings of these writings and discussions can help critical pedagogy avoid the negative stereotypes that often plague it in criticisms of the teaching style.

The type of critical writings and discussions other critical pedagogues and I call for foster Burkean identification among the students—it creates a space where students begin to

hear and understand beliefs different from their own without being pushed toward them by the teacher. Sheard writes that epideictic has the potential "for overthrowing orthodoxies by showing another set of beliefs to be "not in any way truer," but apparently "better" (Plato, *Theaetetus* 167b)" because it helps people critique and question current practices that are currently deficient (777). In other words, using epideictic as a pedagogical starting point to help students generate themes for writing and discussing allows teachers and students to evaluate systems of belief and find other systems that are just as true or valid as the one they currently hold. Helping students make these kinds of evaluations is difficult in a required first-year writing course because institutions often set the parameters of the course.

Trying to balance these institutional expectations with the desire to help students take charge of their education can be one of the most difficult things about embodying a critical pedagogy. However, I am lucky enough to work at an institution where the mission statement is taken seriously. Two major aspects of the mission statement are helping students "cultivate a passion for life-long learning" and "a dedication to . . . civic responsibility." I have had lengthy discussions with the chair of my department about my desire to teach critically, and she is supportive. In addition, the administration is concerned that graduates from the institution do not critique arguments well enough, thus they support my desire to teach students to be critical of the institution's values as long as it helps them learn how to be more critical of written arguments. In the rest of this section, I show how I was able to still accomplish the goals of a critical epideictic pedagogy while working within the structures of Passport.

Even though every semester is different and every class progresses differently, I try to start every semester—much like Shor—with a day focused more on the students and their

perceptions of the class rather than what I hope to get out of the class. The first day of class is important for any teacher. As Malcolm Gladwell notes in his book *Blink*, researchers have compared student perceptions of teaching from an entire semester to student perceptions of teaching after the students are shown only three five-second, muted video clips of the teacher "and found that [the evaluations] were essentially the same" (12-13). I learned from Shor to start every semester (after my first) with the question "Why are you here?" in an attempt to get students talking and take ownership of the class in the first few seconds of class time. I do not even have to steer the conversation; it always comes to "we're here because we have to be," or "it's a requirement."

I try to get students to open up about how it makes them feel that they are supposedly adults but someone else is making their curricular decisions for them. This lent itself especially well to start discussing what the institution values based on the subjects covered in their required writing courses. The door is opened to values, and this is when I inject myself into the conversation a bit more and ask the students what they would put into a required first-year writing course in an attempt to get the students to talk about what they value. By this point, the first period of the semester is almost over, but I always try to do two things at the end of that first period. First, I ask students to write down their expectations of the course, of me, and of themselves so their first-day input can help guide the rest of the semester and give me something to point to throughout the semester to help explain why we do certain things in the class. Second, I explain to them that they have just performed a critical epideictic analysis of their school: they analyzed the core values of the school, agreed or disagreed with them, and given personal, belief-laden reasons to justify their analysis. Showing students that they can perform high-level critical epideictic analyses

on the first day of class sets the tone and allows students to see that their personal experiences and beliefs will matter in the classes I teach; it also shows that being critical of something or someone else's beliefs can be done in a civil and fair manner. I try this discussion on the first day because my class is often the first class they take in college, and they are usually hesitant about critiquing someone else's beliefs before they even know the other person. In general, students I encounter at the beginning of their college journey love to talk about their experiences, but they do not want to risk being overly critical of another student, thus they treat other opinions more civilly. As the semester progresses, we try to take this critical stance in all aspects of the class, especially in writing, and attempt to see value even in things that do not match our beliefs. Critiquing the beliefs of a school curriculum is an easy task, however, when compared with critiquing personally held beliefs. Finding a way to examine belief systems and give them all credence is a difficult thing to do in the classroom.

In the fall of 2011, I started Passport the same way. The biggest difference was that the Passport class I taught was part of a learning community with an Introduction to Religions course. The professor, Jessica de Vega, focused on theories of pilgrimage and pilgrimages in religions around the world, from Christianity to Hinduism to Jediism. Our courses consisted of the same students, and we shared a book, *Unlikely Disciple* by Kevin Roose, to help classroom discussions and bridge the two courses. The book worked perfectly for our two classes because it is about a politically liberal student from Brown University spending a year at Liberty University. It worked so well because his experience can be easily linked to different theories of pilgrimage while at the same time being a book-length discussion of values. Roose attempted to adopt the values of Liberty University,

founded by the late Jerry Falwell, in order to understand the type of student who would attend the university and the institutional values that lead to Liberty's far right-wing evangelical reputation. By the end of the book, Roose was able to identify with many of the students while still disagreeing with their views. By embodying another set of values, he showed that Liberty students have varied beliefs, and it took a semester's worth of identifications in order for Roose to be able to understand and value the experiences of Liberty students.

One of the goals of epideictic critical pedagogy is to help students identify with individuals outside of their own belief systems, and Roose's book operates as a good example. Students in the learning community were able to identify (in a Burkean sense) with Roose. While they attended a school with vastly different values than Liberty, they recognized the vast experience every individual student brought to the classroom. Grappling with others' values was especially evident in their informal writings. Students were asked to blog about their transition from high school to college, focusing on the material learned in their Introduction to Religions course.

Discussing and writing about familiar (Christianity for all but one of the students, a Buddhist) and fringe (Jediism) religions in terms of epideictic rhetoric helped the students and me separate ourselves from the religious devotion of our personal beliefs and attend to the values our religions held. The school where I work is in a predominantly Catholic community, with a mix of Protestant students, as well, and discussing religion was nothing new for them (nor for me, given where I studied as an undergraduate). However, the discussions and writings about religion as a rhetorical set of beliefs were uncharted territory for most of the students, and initially it made them uncomfortable. Thinking about religion,

let alone their personal religion, as rhetorical by separating the beliefs of the religion from the religious practice was new for most, if not all, of the students.

However, the discomfort in speaking and writing about religion in a less personal way was a point of identification for the students and me. As a teacher, I am used to discussing values with students, and as a student I was used to discussing religions, but because of academia's general dis-ease with religion, I had never experienced the two together. The first time we had discussions like this in class, I was honest with them that the discussions were as new for me as for them, and I promised to be respectful of their religious views as long as they would be respectful of the religious views they did not understand or hold. Even though they were put at ease with my reassurances, students were much more comfortable discussing and writing about religions they were not actively involved in. It was easier for them to see someone else's beliefs as rhetorical, while their own were capital "T" truth. One of their first writings for the course was to blog about which theory of religion—presented by Freud, Durkheim, Frazer, and Marx—they agreed with most. Almost all of the students chose the definition that connected best to the current manner in which they practiced a religion. However, I identified myself as Christian and attempted to model for them what it was like to discuss Christian tenets as rhetorical rather than Biblical by bringing in theories about Jesus as a teacher rather than a religious figure. We talked about whether or not his teachings still had merit even if they were not part of any formalized religion, and we all agreed that the philosophy he espoused would still be beneficial to humanity. The values separated from the religion still had merit and could exist outside a religious context.

My epideictic analysis of my own religion helped students in Northwest Iowa, a predominantly conservative Republican area of the country, to separate their religious

beliefs from the beliefs the rest of the country assumes they hold. Sheard argues that epideictic helps members of a community identify (in a Burkean sense) with other members and understand each other's beliefs to a degree that allows members to recognize other members' beliefs as valid, if not true. This is the type of thinking and acting that a critical epideictic pedagogy hopes to foster.[60] Politics, religion, lifestyles, etc. can be discussed in any class, but the benefit of using critical epideictic as the impetus for classroom discussion and course writings is simple: Students used writing as a tool for inquiry, and they were able to thoughtfully critique or understand and even embody another belief, and some students even changed their beliefs based on their epideictic inquiries. Critical epideictic, as Sheard explains, "grapples with the competing values and value systems to which speakers and writers appeal" (787). She goes on to describe epideictic as "a rhetoric of opportunity and possibility that invites critical thinking and participates in [a] kind of 'rhetoric of pluralism'" (790). In other words, students and I used epideictic as a "rhetoric of opportunity" to help us recognize the stereotypes of our religions in the course text and in society at large. Epideictic helped us understand the difference between stereotype and reality and then compare their reality to the beliefs represented of other conservative Christians in their course text. We participated in analyzing our own beliefs as rhetoric and were able to identify with each other even when our beliefs did not match because we were all participating in the same, evaluative exercise. By the end of the course, students and I had

[60] The learning community was a great experience, but it would be fair to ask whether or not it illustrates one of the major arguments of my project: that critical epideictic pedagogy is a good critical pedagogy for a first-year composition course. While the subject matter is a bit different from a "normal" FYC course, the learning community example shows not only that critical epideictic can help students with their writing; it also shows, in action, another major argument from my project: religion can be discussed academically and we can extrapolate rhetorical values from religious sites. Just as students in the learning community were able to discuss religions as a collection of values, the field of composition can and should be able to discuss Freire's religious rhetoric as a starting point for his pedagogical theories.

rhetorically analyzed our own religious beliefs, and we were able to separate ourselves from their religious views to write about religion as rhetoric.

While de Vega's class focused on the religious aspects of pilgrimage, my class discussed the values, beliefs, and rhetorics of the religions they were studying. In de Vega's class, the students learned about the religions and discussed them historically and contextualized them within an academic framework. In my class, we used epideictic as a means to secularize the religious conceptions of pilgrimage and other than class discussion, the main method we used to explore these concepts was through writing.

Critical Epideictic Pedagogy: Making Writing Central

As one might guess, the focus of a critical epideictic pedagogy is epideictic rhetoric. As I argued in the previous chapter, epideictic is the type of rhetoric that lends itself most easily to writing and teaching, making it a great subject for a writing class. Using epideictic rhetoric as the subject matter and a theory of critical epideictic as the pedagogy for a writing course helps a teacher and her students write about and with their values while also focusing on those values as rhetorical—helping students be critical of their own and others' beliefs in a way that helps generate themes for classroom discussion. Although the examples I provided in the previous chapter dealt mostly with classroom discussion, the learning community was finally a site where I was able to use writing more centrally, even though there was a theme to the class because of the link to Introduction to Religions. I detailed in Chapter 2 some of the frustrations students and I had with the Passport class based on institutional objectives, but the class for the learning community was different: I was told I could ignore certain objectives (like the "introduction to college" portion of the class) if it would help the learning community. So, rather than much of the college history and

readings about the liberal arts, we focused on writing and how writing could help bridge the gap between the two courses. What follows in this section is an overview of the ways we used writing in the learning community to foster the goals of a critical epideictic pedagogy outlined in the previous section.

The informal writing assignments and the three main writing assignments in the learning community highlight how writing became a central part of a critical pedagogy. Since de Vega's class focused on pilgrimage, I asked students to investigate their experiences in life using the terms of religious pilgrimage: the first assignment focused on where they were from, the second assignment focused on where they were, and the third assignment focused on where they were going (in the sense that they had to make a researched argument—something they would have to do throughout their college experience).[61]

Throughout the semester, we discussed values: the school's, mine, and theirs, and how these all related to what they learned in the classroom. The informal writing assignments were the site where they grappled with issues and beliefs they saw as "other." They used Roose's book as an example of a productive interaction between disparate beliefs, and they embodied his attitude as they blogged about their experiences in their first year of college: while many other students' beliefs were foreign, they treated all views with respect, sometimes even using writing to embody beliefs different than their own. Students were also asked to respond to each others' blogs in writing. The blogs became a place where students responded to another student's discussion of values. The Buddhist student in

[61] Finalized, class-negotiated assignment prompts can be found in the appendices. The first prompt is mine (students did not really want to change anything), the second prompt was de Vega's and students were a bit confused by it, so we discussed the paper in class and added the steps to complete the assignment and key questions they should think about as they were writing. The students came up with the steps and the questions during class discussion and thought having them in writing would help them think through the problem.

particular used the comment section of the blogs to try and figure how her life might have been different had she been raised Christian. She embodied Christian values in her blog comments in an attempt to understand her classmates. And, in turn, many students responded on her blog in kind.

The course's focus on epideictic rhetoric and the emphasis on helping students own their writing assignments allowed students and me to connect the process of "believing" in religion to the process of "believing" in their own writing. We were able to see, by discussing and writing about religious pilgrimage and discussing and writing about writing process, that beliefs and values impacted practices. Thus, we were able to find connections generally between beliefs and practices in many different aspects of life—whether the beliefs and practices involve religion, writing, or any other aspect of the students' and my lives.

The blogging and discussion of writing values helped move most class discussions toward some kind of writing exercise. One benefit of discussions analyzing beliefs and practices is the way it helps students think about their own writing practices. Many students coming into college are not confident of their writing abilities. Frank Pajares and Margaret J. Johnson performed a study that showed "students' confidence in their writing skills . . . accounted for [a] correspondence between writing beliefs and writing performance" (323). When students and I investigated our beliefs in our writing processes and our beliefs about our own writing in the same way that we investigated religious beliefs, we were able to determine what we valued in writing—and knowing what we valued about writing helped us believe in our writing. This argument is not meant to equate religious belief and practice with beliefs about writing process and enacting a writing process. However, the same type

of analytical, critical thinking we used when discussing and writing about religious beliefs helped us when discussing and writing about writing practices. Students were not willing (or asked) to change their religious beliefs, but their beliefs about writing were more malleable. After trying different writing processes, they were able to see the effectiveness of valuing a drafting process. Students saw the effect different values about writing could have on their final written products, and they were able to believe in their writing abilities better while at the same time better understanding their religious beliefs.

In addition to the writing students performed as a part of daily classwork, their formal writings in the class (found in the Appendix to this chapter) gave students an outlet for examining beliefs in a more research-oriented, formal writing situation. The institution sets parameters for different types/genres of writing performed in the first year sequence, and even though I was in the learning community, these objectives remained. I attempted to help students exercise as much agency as possible within the parameters set by the faculty of the college by showing students that their values mattered in creating assignments and rubrics. Because we discussed what they valued in writing, they were able to set the goals for what they wanted to learn about writing in all of their writing assignments. I do not like using rubrics when grading,[62] but when students understand what they value in writing and what they want to learn about writing in an assignment, it is easy for students to create the rubric that they want me to use to grade their papers. Telling me what criteria to use when grading their written assignments allowed students to assert agency over their own learning in the class.

[62] See Huot, "Writing Assessment" and *Rearticulating Writing Assessment*, Broad's "What we Really Value," and Maha Wilson's "Rethinking Rubrics" for good discussions about the place of rubrics in writing assessment and grading. Essentially, the reason I find them unsettling in a writing classroom is that they give students the illusion of objectivity to a practice—grading writing—that is wholly subjective. If I use rubrics, I use student-designed rubrics in order to help students control the methods I use to subjectively grade their writing.

Another practice that helped students understand the way they valued their writing was the peer revision in the course. Initially they resisted peer review because they felt that their limited writing experience and knowledge did not qualify them to comment on their peers' writing. However, after their first experience creating a rubric, they felt confident that they knew enough about the writing we were doing in the course to give peers constructive criticism about their writing. The peer review process in the learning community helped reinforce the idea that writing was epideictic because it asked students to use what they valued in writing to assess the written values of their peers. And the more students peer reviewed (we peer reviewed twice for each paper), the more they felt they owned the writing in the course.

Even though students in the learning community changed little about the writing prompts for the first two papers, they designed the rubrics to fit into what they wanted to learn about the genres they wrote in each unit. I always ask the students if they want to write the assignment prompts to fit better what they want to learn in the class, but they usually ask me to give them a prompt. Thus, the institution sets parameters about what students need to learn, and I usually give students a writing prompt that asks students to investigate their values or the values of a group. However, students in the learning community still wanted the agency to tell me how their papers should be graded in those mandated assignments. Students applied their values about writing to the rubrics we created together in class. And they used the agency gained from creating rubrics to completely change the third writing prompt.

During the third unit of the learning community, students read the prompt ("Considering the worldviews of various religions we've studied, argue for which

pilgrimage best exemplifies or interprets the values of that religion") and rolled their eyes. They were tired of discussing pilgrimage. So I asked them to write a prompt that was still argumentative but more interesting. The assignment they wrote (with a bit of wording help from me) was simple: "Taking into consideration everything we've learned about different religions this semester, in Intro. to Religion and this course, make an argument for the most important element of religion." It seemed like a good assignment to me because it still asked students to fulfill the outcomes of the course while being interesting to them, so we agreed that they could choose either one and write a paper that interested them, though many students still chose the first prompt because it would be "easier." However, the students who were active in creating the prompt took the opportunity to examine topics and beliefs of interest to them. One student, a devout, conservative Christian, wrote about the overt rhetoric and underlying ideology in spats between religion and science. Another student, who was raised a conservative Christian but had since declared "agnostic" status, interviewed a Christian preacher, a Buddhist monk, and a Wiccan movement leader in order to figure out what the different religions considered the most important of the aspects of religion outlined in de Vega's class (text, myth, ritual and rite, community, ultimate reality, cosmology or belief system, and sacred space). These are just two examples of the ways students used writing to better understand values that were different from their own. I did not hope they would change their religion based on this assignment, but I did hope they would recognize the similarities between their (mostly Christian) religious beliefs and those of other religions they are likely to encounter going forward and help them identify (in a Burkean sense) with people outside of their normal sphere. The students who molded the assignment to what they wanted to learn, like the two examples above, were able to do this

in a way that mattered more to them because they were involved in the process of creating the assignment and creating the way in which it would be graded.

The essays students wrote for this final paper showed clearly that they had moved past their first blog post and toward more in-depth analysis of religion. Whereas their first blog post defended a position that also defended their personal religious beliefs, their final papers wove together beliefs from multiple religions—including students' own—to discuss religion as a belief structure more generally. Only five students, out of 35, wrote their final paper in a way that compared "their" religion to other religions. In other words, 30 students in the learning community were able to separate themselves from their personal beliefs and write a rhetorical paper about religious beliefs and values. Students used the final paper as an opportunity to understand their own or another religion rhetorically and believe that a secular account of those beliefs contains merit. Participating in the learning community gave students and me the opportunity to embody and identify with numerous beliefs. The learning community was not a traditional first-year writing course, but emphasizing epideictic can have similar effects in a course that used writing as the sole subject matter.

Showing students the ways that their texts can be practiced beliefs is something I hope a critical epideictic pedagogy can do. Freire explicitly says that the act of writing requires people to rethink their beliefs and begin to embody new ones: "reading and writing of the word would always imply a more critical reading of the world as a 'route' to the 'rewriting'—the transformation—of the world" (*Hope* 33). As a critical epideictic pedagogue, I hope to show students that their beliefs can be enacted through writing and that their writing can help transform the world. This is a lofty goal, and I am not sure how much more we can ask of a first-year composition course. If the first class students take in college

can be a place where they use epideictic to examine their beliefs and then act out the changes they see (or not) in writing, that seems like a good step on the way toward becoming a Freirean revolutionary—if that is the route students decide to take.

Reasserting Freire: Benefits to the Field

In the classroom, I do not push a specific set of beliefs on the students.[63] Our beliefs about politics, religion, home, writing, etc. become the generative themes for the class (under the umbrella topic of epideictic rhetoric). The prevalence of epideictic rhetoric and its close connection to writing make it an extremely effective tool for students and me to examine and reexamine our beliefs. Sometimes fostering critical discussion and writing means that students do not know where I stand on certain issues. In one section of the Propaganda class, after a rousing debate about gay marriage and health care (and the propaganda politicians used on both sides of the debate), students asked me what I thought about the subject. I told them I thought it was pretty obvious where I stood, but they told me they had no idea if I were a Democrat or a Republican and kept pressing for my opinion. Instead of just telling them, I asked them to analyze the way I had brought issues to the class in the past and had them examine the patterns to see if they could figure out where I stood. After thinking back at the way I seemed to constantly bring issues of social justice to the class for discussion, they figured I must lean toward the left side of the spectrum. However, in other classes my political stances are pretty obvious. On one end-of-semester evaluation from the learning community, I had a student comment: "He's a good guy. He may be a

[63] However, I obviously have an agenda—as I attempted to show in the preceding chapters, my agenda is to get students to think critically about their beliefs. However, I attempt to have enough of a Freirean love for students to accept when they do not change toward more "revolutionary" beliefs. As I discussed in the first chapter, poststructuralist and feminist critiques of critical pedagogy would applaud this turn in critical pedagogies, but theorists like Shor, McLaren, and Giroux would probably call this stance "soft" for not actively trying to change students into Freirean revolutionaries.

liberal, but that has made me a better discusser [*sic*]. Also, some new insights and lots of good learning."[64]These two anecdotes show, in a small way, that I want my agenda in the classroom to be about writing, not politics. However, they also show two things about the students. First, no matter how I might try to keep my personal politics out of a class, students are adept enough to figure out where I might stand. Second, the anecdotes show that students are grappling with their values and beliefs in writing and in class discussions in ways that help them understand the rhetorical nature of their beliefs.

The epideictic approach to teaching critically I outline above and throughout the dissertation continues (but definitely does not complete) Freire's project of helping all people—especially the students in the classes I teach—strive toward humanization. In *Pedagogy of Freedom*, Freire writes, "without a correct way of thinking, there can be no critical practice. In other words, the practice of critical teaching, implicit in a correct way of thinking, involves a dynamic and dialectical movement between 'doing' and 'reflecting on doing'" (43). While it sounds prescriptive toward one way of thinking, Freire believes that a "correct" way of thinking is a way of thinking that embraces multiple and diverse values and beliefs. *Pedagogy of Indignation* points to the critical, "correct" way of thinking Freire writes about in *Pedagogy of Freedom*: "no education intending to be at the service of beauty of the human presence in the world . . . can fulfill itself in the absence of the dramatic relationship between authority and freedom" (9). Here Freire reflects that freedom of thought must be embraced, and though his hope is that any freely thinking individual would choose the socially conscious action, humans must be given the freedom to make that choice

[64] I know who this student is based on the writing, and as a *writing* teacher I feel it's necessary to point out that the student is actually a very good writer who acts like a country bumpkin for comedic effect. He attempts to portray himself as an "aw shucks" farm kid, but as the thought behind the poorly written comment suggests, he understands the rhetorical situation in the classroom and knows how to use his persona for effect.

because the absence of choice is violence. Later in *Pedagogy of Indignation*, Freire writes that no form of violence (which "refers not only to direct, physical violence, but also to subliminal, symbolic violence") needs to be avoided in order for the hopeful struggle toward utopia to mean anything. He writes:

> The struggle for peace—which does not imply struggle for abolishing or even denying conflict, but rather the struggle for fairly and critically confronting conflicts—and the search for concrete solutions to them, is an imperative requirement for our times. Peace, however, does not precede justice. Therefore, the best way to speak in favor of peace is to make justice. (118-119)

No form of "domination," as Freire calls it, can exist within a critical framework—even if that domination would serve the stated goals of a critical pedagogy. In other words, Freire sees just as much symbolic violence in a dominating action for social justice as he does in any violence denying social justice. Freire calls both the overbearing, justice-seeking mentality and the oppressive mentality as "narrow-minded" because all ideas in between must be given voice before we can truly strive for justice (121). In a critical epideictic pedagogy, students are given the chance to analyze and possibly embody many different sets of beliefs before deciding whether to reaffirm or change their beliefs. In *Daring to Dream*, in an exchange with students from 7th and 8th grade classes in São Paulo, Freire states, "in the world there are always hidden things; in life there are always hidden things, and one of the roles of the educator is to draw attention to those things. Sometimes it is not even necessary to show the hidden things. . . . It is necessary, at times, that the educators have the courage to take the responsibility for the job of showing the way" (35-37). So, while a

critical educator must allow many opinions, he or she must also show students that other possibilities exist; it is the students' job to accept or reject those possibilities.

In an academic setting that is not service learning, the "doing" Freire writes about could be as simple as students writing about their values while the reflecting on doing would be the discussion in class and the thought students put into their papers.[65] As Lu and Horner write, "the relation between experience and discourse is not polar and hierarchical but dialectical" (259). They argue that the interplay between experience and writing is just as important as the experience or the writing, and even though they are not directly writing about Freire, their argument pertains directly to Freire's experiences. In *Pedagogy of Hope*, Freire articulates the way in which writing *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* was a moment of creation/procreation. Writing itself can be an action because texts are "generated throughout [authors'] practice, within the greater social practice of which the ideas are a part" (42). In the "Foreword" to *Letters to Cristina*, Freire writes extensively about writing. He claims that writing is a joyful thing for him, but also "it has become a duty I cannot reject, for it is a political project that must be met" (1). The rest of the "Foreword" explains the political project of writing and how writing is an important part or precursor for acting in the world. In one moment that shows this and also helps support his reliance on his Christian beliefs, Freire writes, "I will lose the authority to continue to write or speak about Christ if I, at the same time, discriminate against my neighbor because he or she is black or because he or she is a blue-collar worker" (2). I hope students in the classes I teach can achieve similar types of self-revelatory writing about their beliefs. Freire's eloquence might elude them at times,

[65] Recent psychological studies looking at cognition and writing have separated "good thinkers" from "good writers" in significant enough ways that I believe the claim could be made that writing is much more of an act than is reflection. Flower and Hayes might agree. See "Cognition and Error in Student Writing" by Sarah Tinker Perrault (*Journal on Excellence in College Teaching*, 22.3, 47-73).

but many students in the learning community were able to make conclusions about their beliefs, whether the conclusion coincided with my critical goals or not. Because of the love I showed toward students, based on Freire's *agape* for his fellow humans, and the epideictic focus on values, students realized the meaning of their beliefs through writing.

In Seitz's and Shor's Writing

In this section, I compare my project to two similar projects to show how our projects differ and what all three add to the conversation of critical pedagogy. The closest, most in-depth version of a U.S. Freirean pedagogy to the one I propose, and the version that I most directly build off of, is Ira Shor's, which he outlines well in *When Students Have Power*. This may seem like a bold claim, given that the book is now 16 years old. However, as I have shown throughout my dissertation, most formulations of Freirean critical pedagogy can be found in academic journals. Shor's book was, and still is, unique because of the depth with which it presents an entire semester and every move the teacher made in an attempt to be a Freirean critical pedagogue. Other books do not quite articulate a Freirean approach to composition in higher education like Shor's. The list of books I could have chosen could be a chapter in and of itself, but none of the books I have read or seen are as founded in the praxis of engaging a U.S. college writing class in a Freirean pedagogy as Shor's.[66] I will also compare my pedagogy to David Seitz's *Who Can Afford Critical Consciousness?* not because his approach is Freirean but because his constant focus on

[66] Amy Lee's *Composing Critical Pedagogy* is a great book about critical pedagogy, but it is not Freirean in its approach as she actively distances herself from Freire and basing her pedagogy much more on the feminist, poststructuralist critical pedagogues of the 1990s. Patricia Bizzell's *Academic Discourse and Critical Consciousness* is quite Freirean in its thought, but instead of showing what her Freirean approach does in a classroom, she approaches the topic by showing how her thoughts about critical pedagogy have changed through her career—to the point where she leaves Freire behind. Knoblauch and Brannon's *Critical Teaching and the Idea of Literacy* is a wonderful contribution to the discussion of critical pedagogy, but their examples are so diverse that any comparison to my (admittedly limited) experience is difficult and ultimately not fruitful.

values and what students can expect out of his classes in addition to his writing process shares similarities to my project, but his ethnographic approach and my epideictic approach produce some important differences in theory and practice.

My project is similar to Shor's and Seitz's in many ways. *When Students Have Power* looks at a semester of what Shor calls "an unsettling exercise in democratic dreaming" (ix). Like many composition teachers who espouse a critical pedagogy, we both had "the peculiar situation of teaching an allegedly[67] 'empowering' and 'liberatory' course to people more or less forced to be there and wishing they weren't" (ix). He gives what I consider to be the best U.S.-centric definition of critical pedagogy because it shows the possibility for many different approaches while still maintaining a critical stance. He writes that critical pedagogies should be "a 'social-epistemic rhetoric' (Berlin 1988) that acknowledges the existing political obstacles to critical thought; it teaches about and against the power relations opposing the transformation of unequal power" (16). Seitz provides another useful definition of critical pedagogy's goals: "critical pedagogy's aim is to dig up the social contradictions—to foster skepticism of dominant ideologies" (165). These definitions state the goals of a critical pedagogy well, but I disagree with similar elements from both. From Shor's I disagree that it "teaches against" anything, and with Seitz I disagree that it should foster skepticism only of dominant ideologies: students should come away from the class making their own decisions based on their values and beliefs, and Freire would argue that all beliefs should be criticized, regardless of their merit for a critical agenda. I am sad when students choose to maintain the status quo, but a Freirean love for students encourages me to let them decide instead of advocating for one side or the other—which Shor does vocally and Seitz does implicitly by emphasizing skepticism of only

[67] Shor says "allegedly" here because "empowerment" is a difficult thing to assess.

"dominant ideologies." Together, the focus on epideictic and the reoriented emphasis on a secular *agape* found in Freire (instead of his Marxism) is what sets my critical epideictic pedagogy apart from Shor's Freirean vision and Seitz's ethnographic approach. However, before I start the comparison, I want to emphasize that my project of critical pedagogy is not necessarily a more valid approach; rather it emphasizes parts of Freire's theories that took more precedence in his writing as his career progressed and approaches writing more directly for a critical pedagogy in composition.

In Shor

Shor's book gave me incredible insights on how to become a critical pedagogue. I use many practical suggestions from his semester teaching Utopia to this day. I start every first-year composition course with a "Why are you taking this course" discussion (29), I discuss the physical arrangement of the classroom with students (Chapter 1), students negotiate writing projects, requirements for the projects (Chapter 2), and they help me build the rubric I use to grade their work (if they even think a rubric is necessary). These steps are important because they help students see that their voices matter in the classroom. In other words, if I have a writing prompt—which I often do, but not always—students have the right to negotiate what the assignment entails and what are the required steps along the way to write the papers. I have certain things I want students to get out of their papers in class, but students often want to change the prompt based on life situations, interests, or academic majors. I still hope to accomplish the same outcomes with the assignment, but I want students to be able to get to the outcomes in a way that they can own. In order to make class more relevant to their situation, I even use profanity in class purposefully (sometimes) because Shor encouraged his readers to get rid of the "teacher-talk" that weighs "like a stone

[on students' perceptions of the class and teacher] because of its institutional and disciplinary authority" (51). I figure using language students do not expect and that many of them use and can connect with shows that I try to undermine the traditional power structure of professorial privilege.[68] I circle the chairs for classroom discussion because of Shor. I discuss "protest rights" with the students (112), which asks them to protest anything in the class for any reason—but especially reasons having to do with an ethical issue in the way I teach or in the direction the class discussion is going—and I have them stop me if they need a break. We even negotiate early dismissal from some classes based on their needs (though they usually just want to be first in line for lunch). I try my hardest to get students to realize they have agency in their education, that they are "subjects and constituents in the process rather than . . . objects, clients, or spectators" (149).

Reading Shor early in my academic career and the concrete way in which he writes his theory has made a big impact on the way I approach teaching and the way I decided to write this dissertation, but I depart from his theory in significant ways. The biggest, most obvious, similarity between our works is that we think of Freire's writings as a major impetus for what we do in the classroom. One thing we both sincerely hope for is that our students learn to question the world around them. Shor, in a recent issue of *Radical Teacher*, writes that "questioning the status quo is the central goal while problem-posing

[68] Using this type of language and really trying to connect with students on a non-institutional level can sometimes help break down the power structures of the classroom. This semester, students felt comfortable enough with me that they decided to pull a different prank on me every day of class. Three pranks stand out as good examples for a critical pedagogy. One day they decided to replace my teacher desk and comfy chair at the front of the room with a broken plastic chair and a desktop podium on top of a trash can. I was amazed at how much I missed my comfy chair, but it was heartening to see that they valued the podium just as much as I did. I just wish it had fit into the can. Another great example is the day they decided to turn all the desks around to face the back. They thought I might just teach at the backs of their heads, but instead I went and sat in a desk at the back and students started leading discussion. Finally, one day an especially precocious student dressed up in a suit and tie (not something I wear) and sat at the front of the room. I sat down in a desk and asked him what we were doing for the day. He took at least half of the class period leading discussion on the readings for the day.

dialogue is the central method" of his teaching (39). I would say that teaching students how to write is the "central goal" of my teaching while investigating epideictic rhetoric with students and using epideictic rhetoric to help foster Burkean identification between participants in the classroom is the "central method."[69] To me, this is a major point of differentiation between our projects. Shor aims to question the status quo; I aim to help students become better writers by questioning and/or reaffirming their systems of belief. In this sense, I almost agree with Maxine Hairston's critique of critical pedagogy, which I presented in the first chapter. Shor is very open about his leftist leanings and wants his students to adopt those leanings as well. I, on the other hand, while I also have leftist leanings, hope students in the classes I teach write about topics that connect to the beliefs and values behind their system of thought and begin to question those beliefs and values only if they want to. Shor and I both teach "a large, unpopular, required first-year writing course," but my approach to critical pedagogy focuses on the writing while Shor hopes to get his students to question the status quo.

Shor's idea of a Freirean education and mine also differ in significant, theoretical ways, mostly stemming from our view of students and our relationship to them. Even though we both see students as subjects in their own education, Shor seems overly concerned with the students who refuse to share his democratic/liberatory vision for society/education. Shor seems very concerned with "empowering" his students—a phrase and act Bruce Horner, Jennifer Gore and other feminist critical pedagogues, and I have many problems with, as I outlined in Chapter 1. More than that, however, Shor often writes somewhat condescendingly of the students who do not buy into his vision of education

[69] I realize that teaching students to write a coherent argument is probably valued in most critical composition classrooms. However, few foreground the writing over critical nature of the classroom. I believe this is an important distinction to make.

wholesale. For example, when discussing the ways in which he shares authority with his students in *When Students Have Power*, Shor writes, "by sharing authority and consulting/accepting student judgment/discipline, I gained a new legitimacy to evaluate students and to teach to their limits of democratic participation and critical thought" (126). Shor writes only of what he gained from a power sharing system with his students and the ways he could now push the students to the limits of their abilities within the context in which he wanted to teach them. This implies that the students who do not participate in the after class groups, who do not speak out in class against his authority and do not share his view of a democratic classroom do not gain as much from his class as the students who do. In other words, students need to share his political vision in order for the course to be successful. In another instance, Shor writes about his students and their stance on campus parking: "despite my critical words on this issue, students stood by what Paulo Freire might call their limit logic—thought constricted within the limits of their existing social positions . . . they turned away from activist or visionary logic" (183). Even though Shor invokes Freire here, he seems to be insisting that the students' logic is automatically flawed because it relies on their current social constraints. After he enlightens them, they should be able to see a new, more visionary path toward ecologically friendly arguments about campus parking.

The way Shor writes of his students and of himself in the classroom was a major sticking point for me when reading his version of critical pedagogy. As I showed in the critiques of critical pedagogy in Chapter 1, much of the scholarship about critical pedagogy focuses on what teachers do and not what students can gain from such a pedagogy. In *When Students Have Power*, Shor rarely, if ever, even mentions that the class is a writing class.

He admits in *Empowering Education: Critical Teaching for Social Change* that his background is teaching writing, but the few mentions of composition theory in *When Students Have Power* do not quite get to the fact that his liberatory pedagogy is even aimed at teaching writing. Instead, we are given a broad view of a class, maybe aimed at allowing teachers from any discipline to glean information about critical pedagogy. However, the disservice Shor does to his students with this type of writing is that he seems more concerned with how he will teach them instead of what they will take away from his class. The content and skills the students learn is less important than the methods he uses to teach them.

Shor is not the only critical pedagogue to write of his students this way. In fact, I am sure some of my comments about students could be construed to contain similar meaning.[70] Writing about students is tricky enough without including liberatory themes and navigating ways in which students help overcome injustices in their own lives or the lives of others and a teacher's role in that process. However, I believe it is exactly in these tricky moments when relying on epideictic in the classroom and showing secular *agape* to our students best serve critical pedagogues. By loving students in a selfless way that stems from deep-seated beliefs, students are necessarily the focal point of the class, even if they decide not to accept the same critical view of the world that I possess.

Teaching an argumentative writing course during an election year has shown me some benefits of my approach. During the spring 2012 semester, we discussed belief systems, and students have analyzed their own values and the values of organizations

[70] In earlier versions of this and other chapters, I referred to students as "mine" or "my students." It was my negative response to this attitude in my own writing that helped me notice it in Shor's writing and change it in my own. Even in the final edits for the dissertation, I found over 20 instances where I had originally called students "mine" that I changed for the final draft. The only example I did not change was the quote in Chapter 2 from a paper I wrote before I had taught.

ranging from the Ad Council to PETA to Disney. At the end of the semester, we started investigating political candidates, and because the focus of the semester has been epideictic and understanding values different from our own, students jumped at the chance to research a candidate they were not inclined to agree with. Staunch Republican students researched the Obama campaign; staunch Democrats researched the Romney campaign (with one female student saying very bluntly, "I don't like how he treats his wife. I wanna know what his policies are on women's issues"); some students who are usually not interested in politics decided to research Ron Paul's campaign because he did not fit the normal political categories. And some students wanted to research within their chosen party, but not always because it was easy; they wanted to better understand their candidate's campaign to see if the candidate would stand up to scrutiny. Epideictic helps the students separate themselves from a candidate and analyze the policies separate from the party, especially after we have investigated beliefs as part of groups using the rhetorical strategies from Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca. But even when students and I try to separate ourselves from personal politics, it can still be hard not to critique them or have them critique me based on personal beliefs. This is where love matters. Love comes into play during classroom discussions when students represent positions I personally disagree with. However, I know students need to have a place to talk about and work through their beliefs without someone in a position of authority derailing them—and love helps me hold back from making comments that would make them think twice about speaking up in class again.

In Seitz

I regret not reading David Seitz's *Who Can Afford Critical Consciousness? Practicing a Pedagogy of Humility* until late in my dissertation process. His book could

have served to provide more theoretical or methodological framework for my project. In comparing our projects, I show that the type of pedagogy I attempt to embody has precedence in Seitz's book. We both ask our students to examine the values of groups in order to gain a better understanding of their own values, and we both do not push our beliefs on our students. What I hope to show through this comparison, though, is what epideictic and *agape* can add to the issues we both deal with in the classroom.

Seitz's is a very different project than Shor's even though it is a book that also interrogates the material limitations to a critical pedagogy. Seitz argues that working class students may not have the time or money to even begin caring about critical consciousness; rather, students are more interested in the education or the degree that will allow them to overcome those limitations. Seitz uses an ethnographic approach in teaching and in writing his book. He studies specific students' efforts in his own and another teacher's critical classrooms, focusing specifically on student resistance and the necessary part resistance plays in critical pedagogies. Gwen Gorzelsky sums up his book well in her review when she writes that "Seitz's version of critical pedagogy addresses emotional and cognitive issues and responds specifically to his local student population's perspectives, concerns, and interests" (434). Seitz's book is split into two main sections: the first is an ethnographic study of student experience and the second is a more pedagogically focused reflection of how ethnography benefits critical pedagogies.

Despite a focus on ethnography, Seitz's project and mine share many similarities, Seitz does not attempt to force his students to change their beliefs. As an ethnographic approach does not assume anything about beliefs because of its inductive, experiential approach, Seitz lets students decide whether or not to adopt the liberal agenda of a critical

pedagogy (220). In fact, Seitz writes that he welcomes student resistance to his teaching methods because the resistance can become a key moment when he can approach theorizing about critical pedagogy. With his focus on ethnography, Seitz attempts to get his students to "continually reexamine conventional assumptions with each new contradictory interview, observation or cultural inference" (229). Seitz helps students understand their experiential "interpretations of the group's cultural meanings" whereas I help students understand the rhetorical nature of those cultural meanings as it relates to students' experiences and their identifications with other groups.

These goals seem quite similar: we both want students to interrogate group values that have meaning in the students' lives. The difference is that I do so because of the reliance on Freirean love for students and epideictic rhetoric instead of ethnography. In either case, it is important to note that we both have an agenda: Seitz wants his students to consider subjects ethnographically, and I want students to critique sets of beliefs and values as epideictic rhetoric. However, our agenda in the classroom deals with methods, not ideology. The method of using epideictic to investigate an issue is outlined in detail in the previous chapter, but essentially, I ask students to use different types of rhetorical analysis extrapolated from argumentative techniques found in Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's *The New Rhetoric*. The different types of argument are techniques students are asked to emulate or use as the basis for analysis when looking at different groups' values and beliefs in their papers. Both Seitz and I ask students to approach writing a certain way—through ethnography or epideictic—but the critical lens that they bring to either methodology is up to them.

Another key similarity between Seitz's project and mine is our critique of the way Shor discusses the students in the classroom. Seitz is worried that the language Shor uses to describe students "implies neuroses and a backwoods lack of sophistication" (192). Seitz used this phrase when discussing Shor's use of the term "Siberian Syndrome" for students who like to sit in the back of the room, but based on how Seitz describes Shor's work elsewhere in the book, it is a fair assumption to make that Seitz feels Shor takes this attitude generally toward working-class students. In addition, Seitz categorizes Shor in a group of critical pedagogues who describe their teaching "in the most utopian terms" and believes his teaching can "serve to liberate [his] economically and socially disenfranchised students" (5). This critique is in line with feminist and poststructuralist critiques of critical pedagogy in general, but Seitz pins these critiques squarely on the shoulders of Shor and teachers like him. Seitz critiques Shor in ways that should be familiar to readers of my dissertation by now—these critiques are not new.

Our classrooms hope for very similar results: we want students to examine their cultural location and figure out ways in which they can become more critically active in the public sphere. However, one key difference in our agenda toward students is Seitz's desire to help his students become skeptical of dominant ideologies and my desire to help students use epideictic rhetoric to identify with other points of view and "believe" in conflicting ideologies. I appreciate Seitz's view of students, though, especially in comparison to how Shor views his students. Seitz writes, "Students without economic and cultural privileges may be understandably reluctant to wholly embrace" the ideological skepticism on a critical pedagogy (165). He feels guilty that his brand of critical pedagogy does not push students as hard toward a liberal ideology and action as some others' teachings. The fact that his

students are not engaged in immediate civic action during or after his class "nags" at his conscience and makes him feels as if his critical pedagogy is somewhat inadequate (220). He argues that the ethnographic approach he takes toward his classes gives students tools to engage in social action later in life.

However, even though Seitz offers poststructuralist critiques of many critical pedagogies, including Shor's, he shows how difficult it can be to stay away from the type of teaching poststructuralists decry. In the final chapter of the book, Seitz writes about his interaction with two students and how those interactions showed how he enacted inductive theorizing. In doing so, he is open about the way he uses texts in the classroom that fit very specifically with his ideology:

> Inductive methodology is not imposed as explicitly politically interested critical theory form above by teachers or critical texts. Ideally, these ways of reading culturally and rhetorically are structurally built into the practices of the inductive methodology. Although I will have the class read some critical texts, alongside model student papers, that raise systematic issues of social power, I offer them as supplements to students' own inductive work. (232)

Even as Seitz critiques Shor for his utopian and overly idealistic view of critical pedagogy, Seitz shows his own version of utopia. While he may argue that the overtly political model student papers are merely "supplements," I argue that students are savvy enough to recognize the politics found within the examples and attempt to emulate the writing style and the politics of the example papers. Using examples that only support his political views gives students more than a clue about how he wants them to view arguments, groups of people, or sets of belief in his classroom. I attempt to help this kind of student analysis by

overtly discussing with students why I assign every reading. One of the questions I always ask students when discussing a reading is, "Why did I assign this?" and because of the way we discuss values in the class, students often attempt to ascribe the values of the reading to me. However, I attempt to present an extremely varied spectrum of perspectives in the readings I assign, and students often help select the readings for a course. Thus, the students know that I am not attempting to push a certain agenda based on any of the assigned readings, or, as I showed earlier, through any of the writing assignments. Instead of explicitly pushing an ideology, like Shor, or implicitly telling students how to write certain assignments, like Seitz, a critical epideictic pedagogy allows students to examine every set of beliefs they encounter, including mine.

Critical Epideictic's Contributions to the field

The biggest contribution to the field from my project, which differentiates it from and Shor's and Seitz's (and other brands of critical pedagogies), is a new understanding of how epideictic rhetoric operates in a critical classroom, a reexamination of what Freire can mean to the field of composition—especially what a secularization of his religious values can add to a critical composition classroom.

My dissertation argues that epideictic rhetoric can operate as both a teaching strategy and a method of argumentation for students to use in writing and discussion. *The New Rhetoric* by Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca is a difficult to understand manual of rhetoric, but I have shown how it is directly applicable to the classroom. Chapter 5 focused specifically on dissociation and one type of quasi-logical argument (arguments of part to whole). Analyzing all their methods of argumentation (contained in the 324 pages dedicated to their various methods) would have been impossible for the scope of my project.

However, the usefulness of their argumentation techniques in an epideictic classroom extends beyond those two types of argument alone. My dissertation has started paving an avenue for Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's important work to be applied to classroom settings. I argue that their book contains such practical, though somewhat inaccessible, information about argumentative structures that much more work could be done to explore its usefulness for the composition classroom.

The secularized *agape* I added to the field's understanding of Freire is similar to the nuanced manner in which Seitz represents the students approaches secular *agape*. He helps students resist parts of his pedagogy that they dislike, and he encourages them to learn in a way that benefits them while also helping them become more critically conscious of their cultures. However, by only choosing readings for his classes that ally with his political stance—including student examples that make the same rhetorical moves he would make—he still shows a stance toward students similar to Shor's. What I hope adding secular *agape* to an approach like Seitz's or mine will do is allow students to bring readings, writings, and values into the classroom that might directly challenge the critical pedagogue's values. And adding epideictic to that type of loving situation allows all—the teacher's, the students' and representations of other values in the readings—to be analyzed as rhetorical. And if all values are up for analysis, none are given precedence, not even the teacher's.

More than just adding a secularized notion of *agape*, I hope my dissertation helps give compositionists a language to discuss religion and religious rhetoric, as Beth Daniell called for and with that language bring Freire back into the fold of composition's theories of critical pedagogies. Freire was a religious person, and his religion and belief-laden rhetoric have been too often ignored in composition. I see religion-as-epideictic as a viable way to

discuss religion's ramifications for a secular population, whether in the composition classroom or not. In addition, the argument that Freire's religious rhetoric should be admissible to any discussion of critical pedagogies through its secularization helps show the importance of Freire's later, much more overtly religious, writings. In Chapter 4 I argued that the field of composition has missed an opportunity to bolster discussions of poststructuralist critical pedagogies with Freire's later writings. Though they were often more overtly religious in places, they also were much more postmodern in their approach to critical pedagogy. Gone were the binary oppressed/oppressor and the need to "liberate" others. Instead, Freire became indignant in his later years when any discussion of teaching focused on something other than critical consciousness or humanization. These goals for a critical pedagogy are much more in line with poststructuralist formulations of critical pedagogies and thus would serve as a great point of connection between the modernist beginnings of critical pedagogies and the newer postmodern iterations championed by so many recent critical pedagogues.

Avenues for Future Research

One of the richest sites to continue the research in my dissertation is a more focused study of student learning in a classroom. The first half of Seitz's book would serve as a model example for how to approach this kind of work. I attempted to show the ways that a loving approach toward students can foster the goals of a critical epideictic pedagogy. But a more structured study of professor/student interactions in a Freirean loving classroom would show whether or not this loving approach actually helped students become revolutionaries or whether the loving approach helped students learn more about writing. Because of my limited teaching experience, I have focused more on the theoretical side of the

dissertation—the epideictic and the ways a secular love toward students can potentially help the goals of critical epideictic. However, I have shown through in-depth analysis of Freire's works that the field has largely ignored Freire's religious rhetoric—a side of his theories he valued greatly and had an impact in his life and his teaching. I hope I have shown, theoretically, at least, that these theories bear merit in composition, as well. I also hope this rhetorical discussion of religious language can open new avenues for researching the impact Freire's religious beliefs have on any iteration of critical pedagogy.

Finally, I hope this project is just the starting point for analyzing the rhetorical workings of different methods of pedagogy. Theorists have long envisioned teaching as an epideictic practice, but I examined only one aspect of Sheard's claim about critical epideictic's power in teaching. It is my sincere hope that other writers find varied ways to examine critical epideictic's function in pedagogy.

Appendix 1

Unit 1

This assignment asks you to think about different spaces and places you identify with and describe how a particular place has affected you. The physical geography, architecture, economy, people, school system, restaurants, sports teams, and countless other factors that create the identity of a place also play a part in creating the identities of the people who live and work there. You will need to implement your rhetorical analysis skills in determining how identity is formed through your understanding of this place/space. Remember to think both about how the place affects your perception of who you are and how the place affects others' perceptions of you. This assignment requires you to thoughtfully consider why certain places and spaces are meaningful to you while trying to develop an understanding of how others think about you and the place/space.

While there is no specific research element required for this project, you will be expected to demonstrate a thorough and accurate understanding of the place you are writing about, which may require some research. Also, you will be expected to be familiar with and implement the concepts and strategies covered in the readings and the in-class discussions (and incorporate at least two of the readings into your paper). Finally, your paper should have a well-thought out organization – you should attempt to construct your argument in a way that supports the points you are trying to emphasize.

Unit 2

Using at least 2 readings from Intro. to Religion or Passport, analyze the process of moving to college and how it operates as a pilgrimage.

The Compact Reader discusses what makes a process analysis. Follow those instructions as you break down the different steps of a pilgrimage and relate them to the process of moving to college. In the last unit, we took a look at where you're from. In this unit we look at how you transitioned from that place to this place (college).

To complete this assignment you will need to:
1. Choose a theory of pilgrimage you relate to.
2. Pick an aspect of moving to college that coincides with your pilgrimage theory.
3. Analyze the process of moving to college as a pilgrimage.

Some things to think about
Do the goals of a liberal arts education help or hinder your pilgrimage?
How is your pilgrimage to college different from Kevin Roose's?

Unit 3
Choose one of the following prompts:

Taking into consideration everything we've learned about different religions this semester, make an argument for the most important element of religion (of a definition of religion, of an understanding of religion).

Considering the worldviews of various religions we've studied, argue for which pilgrimage best exemplifies or interprets the values of that religion. Include at least two outside sources and at least one reading from our learning community.

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ABSTRACT

CRITICAL EPIDEICTIC PEDAGOGY:
FINDING RHETORIC AND REINSERTING FREIRE
INTO CRITICAL PEDAGOGIES

By David Ernest Elder, Ph.D., 2012
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My dissertation offers a re-vision and melding of critical pedagogies and epideictic rhetoric in an attempt to show the critical educative function of epideictic and how a critical pedagogy operates rhetorically. I define epideictic as any rhetoric that helps shape or critique cultural beliefs, values, and practices, and I show how the common understanding of epideictic in educative settings as a means for upholding orthodoxies limits epideictic's educative potential. Specifically, I look at how the Christian genesis for Paulo Freire's writings has been largely ignored in the field of Composition and how understanding religious rhetoric as epideictic rhetoric enables compositionists to more readily adapt and use Freire's theories in our classrooms. Not only does translating the religious rhetoric found in Freire into epideictic rhetoric allow the religious aspects of Freire's pedagogy to be applicable to any educative setting, it also opens up a conversation about how to use rhetoric to help teachers and students understand the

purposes of critical pedagogies. By focusing on epideictic, I add a substantive and tangible focus on writing and rhetoric to critical pedagogy.