How Long Is Your Sentence?:
Classes, Pedagogies,
Canadian Literatures

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But for continental Europe we should go slow and for some areas shut out
their people as we would a bubonic plague. For all the Orient the only
policy is and must be exclusion. Where we cannot marry, where we cannot
worship, where we cannot eat, there we cannot live. The Eastern and
Western races cannot unite. Biologists tell us that where they intermarry
their progeny is an ill-joined product, two brains rattling in one skull.
— Stephen Leacock, discussing immigration policy in Our British Empire:
Its Structure, Its History, Its Strength (qtd. in Willinsky 14)

This cranky academic discussion has two aims.
One is to explore the uncanny presence of social class (more precisely,
working classes) within the Canadian literatures—and how this ghostly
revenant conjures in the classroom the related spectres of law, transgres-
sion, and power. To teach the reality of social class as both a literary trope
and a socio-political category, in other words, raises issues concerning, not
solely pedagogy or social hierarchy, but personal agency, identity politics,
and subject formation. In this modest proposal I share an understanding
with my friend, Alan Lawson, who approaches postcolonialism as “a
textual effect, as a reading strategy, as a politically-motivated and histori-
cal-analytical movement [that] engages with, resists, and seeks to dis-
mande the effects of colonialism in the material, cultural-theoretical, pedagogical, discursive and textual domains" (Lawson 156). Lawson's definition demands that any postcolonial activity, especially pedagogy, address both its own discursive and political construction (or determination) as well as the matrix of power relations in our social world. Postcolonial activity—in a manner quite different from Leacock's racist vision—also has two brains rattling around in one skull; but one looks inwards, one looks outwards. And both look critically.

Within these contexts a postcolonial pedagogy is by definition a demystifying activity that dismantles both our many inherited textualities and the very tools we use to read, understand, and teach them. As the platitude puts it, radical pedagogy is a political action that leads to personal and social change for both student and professor. My own timid attempts to explore literary representations of law and social class—and their intersections with race, gender, caste, and sexual orientation within the Canadian literatures—aim to participate in this very process. Simply to mention class awareness in Canada—a nation-state whose official narratives obscure the reality of social classes—heroically revolutionizes student awareness and constitutes a counter-discursive crusade against an axis of imperial and pedagogical evil.

Or does it?

My second aim is decidedly less sanguine than my first. I want to argue that radical pedagogy cannot exist within the precincts of the university—and even if it tries to come into being, it does so within a state of siege. But this siege no longer takes the form of the blunt, union-busting dismissals of the Winnipeg General Strike. It's a struggle, rather, whose Fanonian weaponry takes the form of endowed privilege. I'm thinking specifically here of the educational and economic privileges bestowed on the post-war, pseudo-radical, working- and middle-class students of the late fifties and early sixties: these are the subsidized baby boomers, many of whom have now become the conservative foundational pillars of the academy. I'm thinking most precisely, in short, about how economic and educational privilege is used to maintain a conservative agenda; or, as Fanon illustrates in The Wretched of the Earth, how too often the radicals of yesterday internalize the principles of their opposition and become today merely mimic versions of the original enemy at the gates.

Because of institutional conditions, political compromises, and the interpellated ideologies that constitute and sustain a still predominantly
White, male, heterosexist, middle-class academic elite, we have a professoriate that—whatever its claims to the contrary—replicates and perpetuates the class values of a capitalist nation-state. Research is commodified within a celebrity star system (i.e., the Canada Research Chair program; Ontario’s Premier’s Research Excellence Award; the Polanyi Prizes); many (albeit not all) chairs and deans value multiple notches in the desk-post over one or two long-fermented reflections; and pedagogy is so commercialized that we now celebrate super-classes of thousands, complete with hip-hop soundtracks and infomercials during intermissions.

How can one say with a straight face, not only that one practises a radical resistance, but that it has any material revolutionary effect, within this MuchMore mentality of the contemporary Canadian university?

As Aijaz Ahmad so pointedly observes, “the characteristic feature of contemporary literary [and I would argue, pedagogical] radicalism is that it rarely addresses the question of its own determination by the conditions of its production and the class location of its agents” (6). He continues in a vein that surely must cut many of us to the quick: “in the rare cases where this issue of one’s own location—hence of the social determination of one’s own practice—is addressed at all, even fleetingly, the stance is characteristically that of a very poststructuralist kind of ironic self-referentiality and self-pleasuring” (6–7). Our knowledge industry, in effect, is grounded in a simple and complex system, one that prioritizes individual egos, individual ambitions; that disavows the reality of social class; and that constructs, through its apparatuses, a professoriate that cannot help but reproduce a hierarchical class structure which, in turn, guarantees their jobs, incomes, and social niches—all possessing vastly more social capital than the national average. It is precisely these jobs, incomes, and social niches—this social capital, I suggest—that should be the target of any truly radical, self-reflexive, and deconstructive pedagogical work.

I hope to elaborate upon these themes in my remaining discussion, which has three protagonists: (1) Marcel Marceau; (2) Julienne; and (3) Mr Chips.

Part 1: Marcel Marceau

In his brilliant book, White Mythologies, Robert Young discusses Emmanuel Levinas and his struggle with “ontological imperialism.” Levinas addresses
the problem that “when knowledge or theory comprehends the other, then
the alterity of the latter vanishes as it becomes part of the same” (13). This
“ontological imperialism,” Levinas argues, “though outwardly directed,
remains always centred in an incorporating self . . . [so that] freedom is
[always] maintained by a self-possession which extends itself to anything
that threatens its identity” (14). According to Young, then, Eurocentric
theory (and I would argue pedagogical practice) within the academy thus
duplicates Western foreign policy, where democracy at home is maintained
through colonial or neo-colonial transformation of the foreign Other (14).
John Willinsky puts it more succinctly in *Learning to Divide the World*,
when he points out that within Britain’s educational project in colonial
India, “knowledge operated as a force, with mastery of the subject the
operative educational metaphor and faith” (44).

Now within the postmodern academy, “theory” has become an
integral part of the average career path of most, if not all, Canadian and
postcolonial students. And yet theory, according to Levinas, “is constitu-
tively unable to let the other remain outside itself, outside its representation
of the panorama which it surveys, in a state of singularity or separation” (14).
Our principal tool of deconstruction or de-mystification, in other words, is
implicitly complicit with the object of our deconstruction and in need of
deconstruction itself. In teaching our students how not to divide the world,
have we inadvertently taught them how to divide it in ways that suit their
own (and our own) personal, professional, and postcolonial ambitions? You
are either with us (as postcolonialists) or against us (as fossilized academic
detrus). The question, of course, is how to de-totalize this naive binary:
how to decolonize the colonizing drive of postcolonial theory itself?

At this point I need to consider a second, perhaps more concrete
territory, but one that is no less antagonistic to a radical pedagogy, and
that, of course, is the university itself.

For the professoriate, the university was historically, and is now, a
place where people are forced to consume our goods and services, thereby
providing us with jobs and money. But, more complexly, as a field of
capitalist production, one based on principles of competition, commodi-
fication of knowledge, hierarchy, historical periodicity, and the purity of
disciplinary categories, the academy is, by definition, both ambivalent and
internally conflicted. Premised, as it were, on an archeology of disavowal.
Let me try to clarify this claim.
Any cultural field, as Bourdieu argues, constitutes a discursive "space of forces in constant tension and systemic interdependence[,]... an arena of permanent struggles and conflicts which, ultimately, involve the structure of the field itself" (Wacquant 72). In the case of the university, the various personal investments, the multiple cultural, social, patriarchal, governmental, institutional, and departmental configurations that coalesce to form it, also compete amongst themselves within and against it. In a word, these antagonistic, yet symbiotic, discursive forces coalesce to form an ambivalent, inwardly riven, yet outwardly united field, which, in turn, disavows its own ambivalence and political complicities. Inside the multiple folds of this disavowal, the university (like the law) seeks endlessly to reproduce itself while endlessly facing the constant threat of disintegration. Particularly in Tory Ontario.

Within this system, the pedagogue is constructed as magistrate and places his or her students (and him- or herself) within a syntax or sentence of mis-recognized regulated desires. This is a controlled linearity in which the pedagogue operates within, not so much a middle-passage between an author or information and student, but in what Neil Hertz calls "a dramatic occupation, more or less earned, of the position of authority itself" (qtd. in Murray 193). What interests me most in this relationship is that the method of perpetuation (and perpetration) of pedagogical practices and representations is essentially a semiotic of mis-recognized power relations. That is: although theoretically we teach our students to surpass ourselves in a continual re-reading and re-defining of a canon of Canadian literature, I wonder to what extent we, like theory itself, are "constitutively unable to let the [student] other remain outside [ourselves], outside [our] representation of the panorama which [we] survey, in a state of singularity or separation"—particularly separation from the rough and tumble world of the working classes?

The student body, as it were, is approached, not only as a blank and malleable surface, a body whose productivity is to be increased while its potential for subversive resistance is to be minimized, but essentially as an automatic mechanism, an object meant to mesh with the objects it manipulates until it becomes a replicant of the magisterial pedagogue. This dynamic, in turn, is executed through a conscious erasure of knowledge in the formation of knowledge itself, a kind of imposed "splitting," to use the language of abuse therapy. This disciplinary pedagogy, in other
Decolonizing the Classroom

words, as a type of scribal gymnastic and political interpellation, transforms the student-other into the clone recipient of seminal discipline. The student as colony; as “once-Other—but now-almost-self”; the student whose name is always and already that of the infamous and perfectly silent mime: Marcel Marceau.

Picked up with relish and incorporated into modernist principles of a unified subject, progressivist ideals, totality, and mastery, this ancient but still persistent pedagogy winds its reptilian way along the smooth contours of an historical telos, while it paradoxically inculcates an ahistorical sense of oneself. The mystifying signalizations, which Foucault pinpoints as the method of communication between teacher and pupil, not only remove both students and professors from a sense of their own historical and cultural particularity (and by extension, their own relativity, what Ahmad calls their “location”), this process also delusively suggests the transhistorical position of the authoritarian pedagogue. It also then paradoxically inculcates the belief in the possibility of historical mastery: there is one past, which one can master if only by becoming a pedagogue. Within this juridical sense of pedagogical sentencing there is, needless to say, little room for the bad grammar of postcolonial writing. And even less room for the flourishing of a postcolonial avowal—the disruptive de-sentencing of a postcolonial, resistant pedagogy.

As postcolonial pedagogues, how, if at all, can we stop this kind of intellectual “self-pleasuring”? One way, I would like to suggest, is by paying attention to the likes of Julienne.

Part 2: Julienne

One way, I think, to stop this kind of intellectual self-pleasuring is to dig very deep holes when we read and teach the Canadian literatures. By that, I mean we should begin to listen to critics and theorists such as John Willinsky and, to a lesser degree, the early Fredric Jameson. If reading a text is comparable to analyzing the dreams or unspoken desires of a culture, then we can learn and teach much by dismantling and understanding what Willinsky describes as “all that lies buried in this [imperial] body of knowledge” (3)—what lies repressed within the unconscious of the nation-state called Canada. Or, to put on it a very
different spin, consider Jameson’s notion of literary form as a socio-symbolic message:

In its emergent strong form a genre [and, I would argue, a pedagogy] is essentially a socio-symbolic message, or, in other terms, that form is immanently and intrinsically an ideology in its own right. When such forms are re-appropriated and refashioned in quite different social and cultural contexts, this message persists and must be functionally reckoned into the new form. . . . the ideology of the form itself, thus sedimented, persists into the latter, more complex structure, as a generic message which coexists—either as a contradiction or, on the other hand, as a mediating or harmonizing mechanism—with elements from later stages. (140–41)

In one sense we can use Jameson and Willinsky as starting points to unearth the burial of, for example, social class within the Canadian imaginary. Not unlike Derrida’s notion of the trace—or Freud’s theory of the uncanny—Jameson’s “sedimentation” simply and complexly points toward the archeological nature of texts (and people) and champions a sober and meticulous unearthing of the uncanny, a bringing to light of that which has (and, from a ruling-class position, should have) remained in darkness. Willinsky, especially, reveals the archeology of racism, homophobia, and sexism embedded in our post-imperial educational practices—how “learning to divide the world” is one way of not recognizing where is here.

I’m thinking here specifically of Hugh MacLennan’s excruciating but perennially taught novel, Two Solitudes (1945), which every undergraduate knows is a nationalistic parable sedimented upon the story of Ulysses and the quest motif. Now, interestingly, most readers will have no difficulty remembering and identifying Paul (the Ulysses figure) or Heather (his faithful Penelope) or even the irascible Captain Yardley (the Ancient Mariner) or the subtly named Huntley McQueen (the capitalist Cyclops)—all key players in this nationalistic odyssey. But who remembers Julienne? Who exactly is this woman with whom Kathleen compares herself when she complains to her husband, “You never want to talk to me about anything any more. I might as well be Julienne?” (88). Who is this woman “so familiar [that] Athanase scarcely noticed her” (82)?

Julienne—the doppelganger housekeeper of the Tallard family home—
is a fascinating minor character precisely because she is constructed to be so forgettable, so invisible, so both “here and not here” at the same time. What intrigues me, however, is not so much the fact that a minor working-class female character is marginalized or that her economic and social position is depicted as somehow natural or unquestionably and organically part of the social fabric. Rather, what is crucial is the fact that MacLennan should choose that fascinating word, familiar, or what Freud would describe as the heimlich, the homely, the very notion Freud found so crucial in theorizing the uncanny or the unheimlich. Consider.

On one hand Freud opined that the uncanny describes that peculiar fear that occurs when that which should remain repressed, doesn’t: when that which has been disavowed reappears and is terrifying—not because it is strange, but precisely because it is so familiar. And within this simple definition we have, I think, what Homi K. Bhabha has popularized as the crucial psychic displacement or cultural Entstellung of the colonial subject, what J. Laplanche and J.B. Pontalis describe as “latent thoughts . . . transposed, as it were, into another key [where] they are also distorted in such a fashion that only an effort of interpretation can reconstitute them” (qtd. in Bhabha 183). Is Julienne, in other words, so familiar, so heimlich, that she has been over-seen, forgotten, made invisible? Has she—like Marius’ very low-profile wife, Emilie (remember her?)—become a crucial part of the historical and cultural amnesia that makes up Athanase Tallard’s brave new world of a (male) industrialized Quebec (or, indeed, of Hugh MacLennan’s new post-war Canada)?

In one sense Julienne is metonymic: class, more specifically the working classes, have become invisible through disavowal, through what Freud and, in a very different context, Bhabha, both identify as an unconscious splitting of the Self, a disavowal of that Other who allows one to become one’s Self, but who, in turn—recalling Levinas—is re-incorporated into the over-seeing self. The working-class character, like the indigene of settler literature or the woman of MacLennan’s 1940s imagination, is simply not supposed to be there. When they do appear, it is as ghosts, freaks, weird upsurges from the underbelly of the Canadian body politic. Or, in this case, a scarcely noticeable familiar housekeeper.

But this is only one tip of the iceberg. What truly fascinated Freud in his linguistic play with the unheimlich is that ultimately the two opposites of heimlich and unheimlich collapse each into the other—ultimately both words mean the same thing. As Freud remarks: “heimlich is a word
the meaning of which develops towards an ambivalence, until it finally coincides with its opposite, *unheimlich*" (377). That which is familiar is simultaneously alien; the alien is simultaneously familiar. And it is at this point that we can begin a radical deconstruction of MacLennan's representation of the working-class Julienne. She is familiar, quite simply, because of past practice: Athanase doesn't see her because she's part of the furniture. But this familiarity masks or represses or mystifies the truly terrifying legal and historical violence by which the working classes were defined as transgressions by the ruling (and legalized) elite—aberrations to be legislated and confined within an untouchable social category.

At this point we can begin to see Athanase not so much as a tragically progressive, failed industrialist but more as a naive, complicit participant in the varying historical forces that both oppress him (as a francophone) yet sustain his economic superiority to other francophones which in turn oppress characters such as Julienne and others (as working-class minions). Similarly, Julienne herself may well be alien to Kathleen—a crumpled old housekeeper miles away from Kathleen's glamorous self-image—but Julienne is uncannily (and terrifyingly) familiar to Kathleen precisely because her gender intersects with her class and holds up to Kathleen an unforgiving and relentless mirror of her own gendered and classed existence within both francophone Quebec and patriarchal Canada. Julienne, in other words, is truly familiar and unfamiliar—and it is in this role that she becomes one key into our own analysis of class within the novel.

The point of such erasures, I think, is both obvious and important. They illustrate the kinds of social mystifications that authors can replicate in their literary representations. And to point out this kind of blind spot, this cultural amnesia, is one crucial step in *not* replicating authorial erasures, in developing both a postcolonial pedagogy and an anti-colonial, political awareness in students of Canadian literature. But is it enough simply to point out such erasures, to foreground this treatment of class in a classic Canadian text? What material effect would such classroom performances actually have? What material impact does one actually have with the academic publication of one's observations? How radical is one more essay, one more article, one more book, or (with respect to our superb organizers and a large dollop of self-irony) one more conference paper?

To begin to answer such leading questions I would like now to turn to the third protagonist of my discussion: Mr Chips.
One beginning answer, I think, to the question, “How do we proceed?”, is provided in the writings of such postmodernist educational theorists as Stanley Aronowitz, Henry A. Giroux, Nelida Pinon, R. Radhakrishnan, and Heather Murray—all of whom draw, in varying degrees, on the empowering theories of Paulo Freire. We must teach our students to read and write. But more importantly, we must teach them why and how we do and why and how they should learn to. Nelida Pinon, especially, provides me, at least, with an initial stepping stone. She argues in inimitable fashion that “You must know who is the object and who is the subject of a sentence in order to know if you are the object or subject of history. If you can’t control a sentence you don’t know how to put yourself into history, to trace your own origin in the country, to vocalize, to use your voice” (qtd. in Giroux and Aronowitz 114).

Syntax. History. Traces. Vocalization. Pinon’s aphoristic comment explicitly alludes to these four crucial topoi within the postmodern pedagogical enterprise. These four terms suggest for me how we might begin to evolve an educationally fruitful, politically active, and theoretically rigorous postcolonial pedagogy. This is clearly and elegantly obvious. The aphorism, however, also contains within itself some of the elusive slippages that are so often occluded in our various teachings of the Canadian literatures. There is initially the erasure of class (or origins in the country) within the classed room. There is moreover the seamless linkage of Foucault’s famous dyad: power/knowledge. And finally (and for me most interesting), there is the wondrously slippery play of juridical power and forceful discipline that exist in that odd postcolonial word, sentence. To understand a sentence truly is to recognize where and why one exists within a legal and legalizing discourse—and this, in turn, is a kind of state violence that sanctions or outlaws specific forms of knowledge.

I think we must address, in the first instance, the fact that the classroom is an interstitial symbolic field in which, as Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron argue, “both teacher and teaching are already ‘receivable’ by the students precisely because of the legitimation ‘already’ conferred on every pedagogic transmitter by the traditionally and institutionally guaranteed position he occupies in a relation of pedagogic communication” (qtd. in Murray 195). The classroom exists, therefore, as a site
of symbolic violence, a field of competing forces. And, as Heather Murray has so persuasively argued, we need to deconstruct this violent institutionalized charisma, to evolve an historicized pedagogy which avows its own forming configurations. “A ‘conditional’ analysis,” Murray argues, “conditional in both senses, as self-reflexive and cognizant of determinants, and as provisional—undertaken by both teachers and students, using the classroom, its situation, and its work as one example of the production of literary discourse is... a first step in teaching and learning theory theoretically. Which is to say, to teach and learn politically” (Murray 198).

The result of such a self-reflexive locating could be, not a new and unidirectional, reactive monolithic discourse, but a hybridized critical pedagogy, which incorporates a meta-critical plurality of (1) theoretical positions; (2) pedagogical methods (negotiated marking, for example); and, (3) most crucially, a range of interdisciplinary topics culled from the entire prism of cultural production (film studies, television, journalism, local histories, local arts, music, and political theory, to name but a few).

But I'm aware that hybridization can easily transform into an ineffective plurality: as Terry Eagleton has opined, in our postmodernist celebration of multiplicity, we run the powerful risk of simply reduplicating the dividing, commodifying, and regionalizing tactics of capitalism itself. I'm aware that if we risk a postmodernist strategy, as Arun Mukherjee has warned, we also take the risk to re-homogenize and re-totalize the multiplicities that are the postcolonial worlds. But I'm also aware that we currently run the more invidious liberal gauntlet of a self-imposed liberal silence: we run the risk of not saying anything about anything at all. How then do we tread between such fine lines of nationalism and internationalism, postmodernism and postcolonialism, appropriation and silence?

Consider, if you will, three keywords that guide my own, quasi-Mr Chipsean, thinking about pedagogical practices.³

1. Outreach

I strongly disagree with Eagleton and Jameson that the academy is not an ivory tower but rather the site of particularized class struggle. Ho ho ho. Simply to be able to make that remark is a signal of privilege and wealth, of
middle-class comfort and inertia. On the contrary, the university is most certainly, if not an ivory, then a platinum or silicon-chip or Pepsi-Cola tower reserved for either the rich or the poor-ish who are willing to become poorer by contracting a lifetime of debt through Canada Student Loan; as for being a site of anything, it is without doubt a site where people who are not especially hungry talk (a lot) about particularized class struggle. Whatever the subject taught within the university curriculum, as part of a "curriculum" it remains, if not a form of academic "self-pleasuring," then certainly the source of solid middle-class incomes, superb dental plans, and job security. But thankfully the university is a limited venue; the classroom, as Murray wisely points out, is only one site of educational practice.

My point is that we need also to teach in prisons, in working centres, in public libraries, in interdisciplinary programs off campus, in women's shelters, in hospitals and hospices, in factories, in reading circles, in group homes. We need to extend our precincts. My nice middle-class students produce superb Marxist analyses of class in *Two Solitudes* or indeed of gender construction in *Mootoo* or *Atwood*. But they also crave an A in order to get into MBA programs, Law School, or the public sector. I think we delude ourselves if we believe that our university classrooms are anything other than catalysts for the next generation of capitalists (academic or otherwise).

2. Administration

I never thought I would say this—especially given my previous point. But finally, to adapt Samuel Johnson, I suggest we participate more in the dull duties, not of an editor, but an administrator—either university administration or administration of our various collective bargaining units. (And I'm aware that either of these choices runs perilously close, not so much to abandoning, but crucifying one's career.) But this acknowledgement/proposal springs from a meditation upon one of John Willinsky's observations about the role of anti-colonial educators:

The question we face today is how the lessons that were drawn from the centuries of European expansion continue to influence the way we see the world. Even as imperialism's "period of real cultural authority" has been eclipsed by forms of neocolonialism and the new transnationalism of
science and technology, many of the ideas of the world generated by imperial designs on it "retain their position in education." (25)

The inclusion of a few more courses in Canadian literature, Canadian Studies, Canadian film, or whatever—however desirable—will do little to invigorate and radicalize a Canadian pedagogy. But as administrators who are also Canadianists, we then have the opportunity to perform that necessary excavation envisaged by Jameson, the un-dividing of the world called for by Willinsky. Not that administering a faculty or a union will change the world—but it can change the way we deploy the university and its apparatuses; it can open doors to interdisciplinary programs; it can mentor a saner and more carefully honed idea of what constitutes productivity; it can outreach to communities; it can destroy the institutionalized charisma of the professoriate—a charisma that is not only shamanistic but shameful.

But, most crucially, administrative activity can begin the real political work of reconfiguring how our universities are funded by provincial governments, how money—filthy necessary lucre—is directed away from funding chartered jets and golf-course renovations and toward new buildings for badly needed space, new hires to reduce professor-student ratios back to a reasonable number, and more money for books, writing technologies, and the time and space to develop critical thinking within and without the universities. These are the changes that would allow rather than vitiate a postcolonial praxis.

3. Careerism

I'm reminded here of a Zen paradox: that to follow the Way is to commit oneself to a long and arduous journey—all the while knowing that there is no self and that there is no journey. Obviously people need jobs, enjoy and need research, and produce critically important work that enriches the intellectual life of the nation. Writing and publication in many cases is a form of radical pedagogy. I don't dispute or carp against this kind of academic praxis. But I do challenge the overblown and ultimately self-absorbed sense of our own importance—the ideology that is responsible, not only for the comic posturings of a star system, but the ridiculously deluded assumption that academic literary pedagogues within the university perform radical political work. This is an ideology that accounted for a
situation a few years back where a colleague of mine remarked that I needn't read a particular essay this colleague had written.

"Why not?" I asked nervously.

"Because it isn't very good, it was just a toss-off that I needed to beef up the CV for tenure," my colleague quipped.

This is not learning. This is not the matrix for a radical pedagogy. On the contrary, it is evidence that we who were once Other to the official university Self have been incorporated into the same; and that we who are now the Same are modelling and grooming our students away from their innate alterity. We simply have to stop meaningless publication; senior members need to stop frantic writing and egotistical self-pleasuring and attend to the needs of their students; we need to erase our own academic egos and self-interests; we need to re-value the act of pedagogical interaction by agitating and fighting for more hires, more space, and better student-professor ratios. We all need, through our unions and administrations, to re-examine and re-evaluate the primary (fetishistic) role of publication in evaluations for tenure and promotion. And part of this process involves resistance to the pedagogical replications of such capitalist values as commodification, quantification, and fetishism.

As Henry Giroux remarks, "we need to combine the modernist emphasis on the capacity of individuals to use critical reason in addressing public life with a critical postmodernist concern with how we might experience agency in a world constituted in differences unsupported by transcendent phenomena or metaphysical guarantees" (117). In short, we need to look closely at the vestiges of Empire within our knowledges and histories and pedagogical practices. Because when we do, we may discover to our chagrin—but also our wisdom—the political reality that exists beneath our sunshine sketches of the educated imagination.

NOTES

1. See Freud's puzzlement in the same essay: "What interests us most... is to find that among its different shades of meaning, the word *heimlich* exhibits one
which is identical with its opposite, *unheimlich*. What is *heimlich* thus comes to be *unheimlich*. . . . on the one hand, it means that which is familiar and congenial, and on the other, that which is concealed and kept out of sight" (375).

2. This paper, like the others in this book, was first presented at the “Post-colonialism and Pedagogy” symposium at the University of Ottawa, 3–5 May 2002.


**WORKS CITED**


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